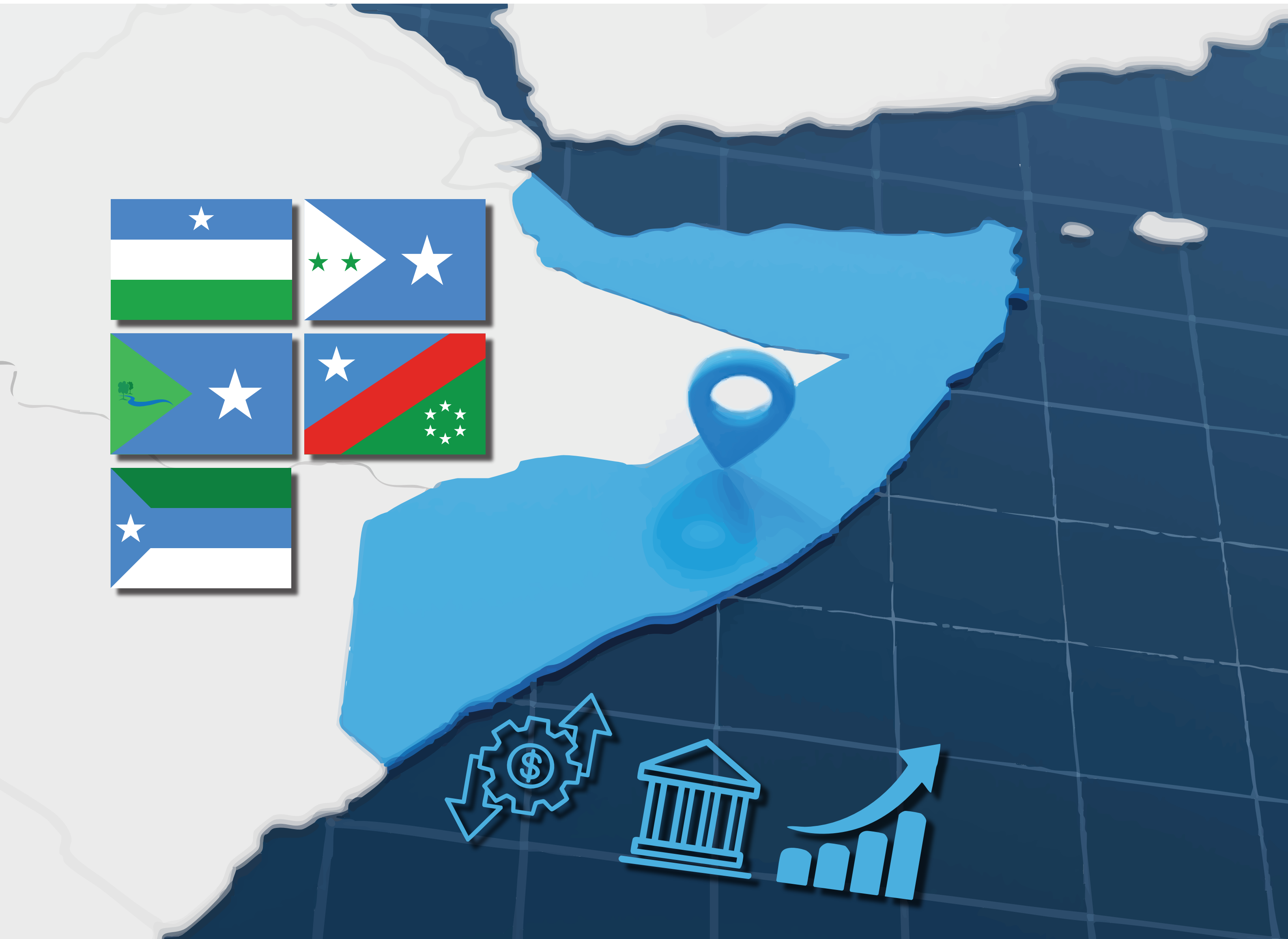
SOMALI PUBLIC AGENDA RESEARCH REPORT NO. 19

Examining the Role of Public Finance Management (PFM) Systems in Improving Fiscal Performance in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS)

Abdirahman Mohamed Nur | December 2025



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

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This Research Report is the first in a series of fiscal governance and federalism research publications under our EU-funded project, Increased Opportunities for Somali Citizens' Scrutiny of Fiscal and Financial Governance, which examines critical issues related to fiscal governance and federalism at the district level. The topics explored in this series are relevant to local financial management, such as fiscal federalism, debt relief, alternative financing models, new tax revenue streams, and public opinion on service delivery versus taxation trade-offs.

The report was edited by Peter Chonka (PhD), Senior Lecturer in Global Digital Cultures at King's College London and Fellow at Somali Public Agenda.

About the Author

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Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

TFG	Transitional Federal Government
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member States
MoF	Ministry of Finance
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
SFMIS	Somali Financial Management Information System
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PFM	Public Financial Management
RCRF	Recurrent Cost and Reform Financing
BFMIS	Bisan Financial Management Information System
SOMCAS	Somali Custom Automated system
ACH	Automated Clearing House
RTGS	Real-Time Gross Settlement
IFT	Instant Funds Transfer
AML	Anti-Money Laundering
CFT	Counter Finance Terrorism
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
SMP	Staff Monitoring Program

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Executive Summary

Somalia's public financial management (PFM) systems have evolved in the shadow of decades of institutional collapse, fiscal disorder, and fragile political settlements. Since the re-establishment of the first non-transitional Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in 2012, successive administrations, often under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, have pursued reforms aimed at rebuilding fiscal credibility, restoring donor confidence, and preparing the country for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. These reforms, however, have unfolded in a deeply contested federal landscape, where questions of fiscal authority, revenue sharing, and financial accountability remain unresolved between the federal government and Federal Member States (FMS).

This study examines how Somalia's Public Finance Management (PFM) systems have improved since 2012, with particular attention to their role in fiscal performance, revenue mobilization, expenditure management, fiscal transparency, and intergovernmental financial relations. The research draws on an extensive desk review complemented by semi-structured interviews conducted both in Mogadishu and remotely with officials from the Federal Government, Federal Member States, and fiscal experts. This mixed approach ensured inclusion of perspectives from across Somalia and generated grounded insights into the technical and political dimensions of fiscal reform.

The findings highlight that while Somalia has made important strides particularly in meeting externally driven benchmarks, its fiscal architecture remains fragile. Moreover, the study also reveals that Somalia's fiscal progress has been heavily dependent on external pressure and donor support. Domestic revenue remains weak, concentrated mainly in Mogadishu and trade hubs, although inland tax bases are quietly developing. Most FMS governments lack strong revenue streams, with Southwest, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle heavily reliant on transfers from the FGS and donor aid. This imbalance is compounded by the lack of a coherent revenue-sharing framework, leaving fiscal federalism unsettled and prone to disputes.

Technology-driven reforms, such as the Somalia Financial Management Information System (SFMIS) and the BISAN platform used in several FMSs, have introduced new levels of transparency and efficiency in expenditure management. However, fragmentation between systems, weak interoperability, and the persistence of parallel practices such as off-system spreadsheets hinder their effectiveness. The inability to produce consolidated national accounts raises concerns both for domestic oversight and for donors who view integrated reporting as a cornerstone of fiscal accountability.

The broader lesson of Somalia's PFM reform trajectory is that while externally anchored programs have provided crucial momentum, the sustainability of gains depends on domestic political will and institutional ownership. Legal reforms and donor benchmarks alone cannot resolve the structural tensions of fiscal federalism. Without binding agreements on revenue assignments, expenditure responsibilities, and fiscal transfers, Somalia risks building technical systems on shaky political ground.

This research paper recommends that Somalia moves from donor-driven compliance to nationally owned fiscal governance. This requires consolidating fragmented PFM systems into a coherent national framework, formalizing intergovernmental fiscal compacts through law, expanding the domestic revenue base beyond ports, and ensuring that debt relief translates into visible service delivery for citizens. Only by embedding these reforms into Somalia's political settlement can PFM systems become more than instruments of donor accountability and instead serve as durable pillars of state legitimacy and sustainable development.

1.0 Introduction

Public financial management (PFM) is widely recognized as both a cornerstone of fiscal stability and a foundation for state legitimacy in fragile and post-conflict environments (Gill, 2015). Strong and credible PFM systems provide governments with the ability to mobilize resources, allocate them transparently, enforce expenditure controls, and deliver essential services to citizens (Gurazada, 2019). For Somalia, the question of rebuilding PFM systems has never been merely technical; it has been tied directly to state-building, the restoration of trust in government, and the ability to re-engage with international partners.

Decades of statelessness and institutional collapse left Somalia without functioning financial institutions for over twenty years. The re-emergence of a transitional federal governments after 2004, and later the formal establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in 2012, created the space for gradual reconstruction of fiscal institutions. Since then, the FGS, Federal Member States (FMSs), and international partners have undertaken reforms to reintroduce standard PFM frameworks. These efforts were not only aimed at improving the technical aspects of the financial management but also at restoring fiscal credibility, building legitimacy, and laying the groundwork for Somalia's participation in the global economy.

The road to fiscal reform has, however, been shaped by enduring constraints. Institutional capacity remains weak, enforcement of financial legislation is inconsistent, and trust between the center and periphery remains fragile. Somalia's fiscal base continues to be undermined by the dominance of an informal economy and a heavy reliance on donor support to fill budgetary gaps. Political disputes over revenue assignments and expenditure responsibilities have made the creation of a unified national PFM system contentious. Despite these challenges, since 2013, significant reforms have been introduced, including efforts to harmonize tax frameworks across federal and state levels, to modernize revenue systems, and to establish stronger budgetary controls.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the role of PFM systems in improving fiscal performance in Somalia within this complex political and institutional context. Specifically, it examines whether reforms in PFM have affected outcomes such as revenue mobilization, budget discipline, fiscal transparency, and intergovernmental financial relations. The analysis also highlights the contributions of international partners, particularly the IMF and World Bank, while critically assessing the risks of dependency and emphasizing the need for greater domestic ownership of fiscal reforms.

This paper pursues three objectives. First, it documents and critically evaluates Somalia's progress in establishing credible PFM systems since 2012. Second, it identifies the gaps and persistent challenges that continue to undermine fiscal sustainability, including weak institutional capacity, donor dependency, and unresolved questions of fiscal federalism. Third, it offers actionable policy recommendations for the FGS, FMSs, and their partners, aimed at consolidating reforms, strengthening domestic fiscal institutions, and ensuring that PFM becomes not only an external benchmark for donor support but also a genuine driver of state legitimacy and stability.

2.0 Methodology

This paper primarily draws on qualitative data collected through interviews to assess the role of public financial management (PFM) systems in improving fiscal performance in Somalia. The analysis combined data and insights from semi-structured interviews with a desk review of secondary sources.

A total of twenty key informant interviews were conducted between 13 July and 11 August 2025, involving senior officials and practitioners from the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank of Somalia, the National Economic Council (NEC), and the Office of the Accountant General. All participants were men, reflecting the current gender composition within Somalia's senior fiscal leadership. Data collection combined in-person discussions in Mogadishu with remote sessions held with officials in Puntland, Jubaland, Southwest, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle. This approach ensured the inclusion of both federal and state-level perspectives while accounting for the security and logistical constraints that continue to affect direct fieldwork in some areas.

The consultations followed a semi-structured format built around core themes such as revenue mobilization, expenditure control, fiscal transparency, and intergovernmental coordination. Conversations were recorded through detailed note-taking and audio capture, depending on each participant's consent. Audio files were later transcribed verbatim, and both transcripts and field notes were securely stored in protected folders accessible only to the research team.

Before each discussion, respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the intended use of their insights. Informed consent was obtained both verbally and in writing. Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and all identifying details were removed during transcription to protect privacy. The material was examined through thematic analysis, which helped identify recurrent views, contrasts, and institutional patterns across the federal and state levels. Despite limited access to some regional officials and the underrepresentation of women in senior fiscal positions, the material obtained gives a reliable account of Somalia's PFM reforms, demonstrating their impact on fiscal control, transparency, and institutional accountability.

Moreover, the desk review complemented these findings by examining official financial statements, audit reports, and analytical publications from the World Bank, IMF, and other partners involved in Somalia's fiscal governance agenda. These sources provided the broader policy and institutional context within which interview evidence was interpreted.

However, the paper faced certain limitations. Security restrictions and accessibility challenges limited engagement with Federal Member State (FMS) officials, creating uneven regional coverage. The political sensitivity of fiscal relations and reform agendas also posed difficulties in securing relevant information. Furthermore, Somalia's underdeveloped data systems constrained the availability of quantitative fiscal indicators, limiting the depth of numerical analysis.

3.0 Evolution of the Public Financial Management Systems

3.1 The Unraveling of Fiscal Order in a Fragmented State

Following Somalia's declaration of independence in 1960, the country's public financial management (PFM) system evolved gradually, building upon the institutional and administrative frameworks established during the colonial period. The civilian government largely retained the fiscal practices and structures inherited from colonial authorities, particularly in revenue collection and expenditure control. During this period, the government introduced key PFM legislation, including the Financial and Accounting Procedure of the state as amended in 1961, and the Customs Regulations of 1965, which laid the foundation for determining customs duties and guiding fiscal operations (Federal Republic of Somalia, 1961).

Nevertheless, these legislative developments and administrative continuities did not necessarily translate into effective governance. The financial management framework of that period was characterized by weak oversight mechanisms, limited institutional capacity, and high corruption within government offices. Consequently, the delivery of public services remained inconsistent, and frequently inadequate (Zubair et al., 2023).

However, a significant turning point in Somalia's public finance management landscape occurred following the military coup led by Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1969. The socialist government presented a series of reforms aimed at strengthening fiscal governance, centralizing revenue systems, and improving expenditure management. Many of the administrative procedures and systems established at that era, such as revenue collections and centralized financial controls, laid the foundation for Somalia's current PFM practices.

Despite the adoption of financial policies, domestic revenues generated from customs and ports remained insufficient to cover government expenditures and the growing demands of development. This persistent imbalance resulted in chronic budget deficits, forcing the administration to rely heavily on external borrowing while making only limited efforts to mobilize domestic resources to close fiscal gaps. To Somali political leaders, debt was regarded as a tool to stimulate economic growth by financing capital formation, which, in theory, would raise national productivity, expand service delivery, improve economic well-being, and ultimately enable repayment of the debt. However, this expectation proved misguided (Cross, 2025) . In practice, borrowing became unsustainable, and by 1990 Somalia's external debt stock had escalated to an estimated 260 percent of gross domestic product (Ahmed, 2019). As the fiscal pressure intensified, the central authority administrative structures became more and more fragile. This erosion of their capacity weakened the development of governance, the rule of law, and stalled the growth of public financial management systems. The sudden escalation of political instability and armed conflict in the late 1980s and early 1990s further weakened the state's ability to service accumulated external debt, further isolating the state from global financial systems and deepening its political and economic crises (Majid et al. 2021).

In 2004, after years without functioning central institutions, a federal system was endorsed as the basis for renewed state-building, leading to the formation of the first sustained legitimate government since 1991 (Somali Public Agenda, 2021). Despite this institutional breakthrough, the new government struggled to operate effectively. Authority remained fragmented due to warlord domination, persistent conflict, widespread instability, and the presence of alternative governance and taxation arrangements in local communities and market domains. These challenges intensified with the emergence of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in 2006, which established parallel systems of administration, security, and revenue collection in several parts of southern Somalia (Barnes & Hassan, 2007; Menkhaus, 2007). The subsequent Ethiopian military intervention to dismantle the ICU reignited armed conflict and further weakened state authority, creating conditions that constrained subsequent efforts to consolidate governance and rebuild coherent public financial management systems (Marchal, 2009).

3.2 Modernizing PFM for State Building and Credibility

Federal Reforms

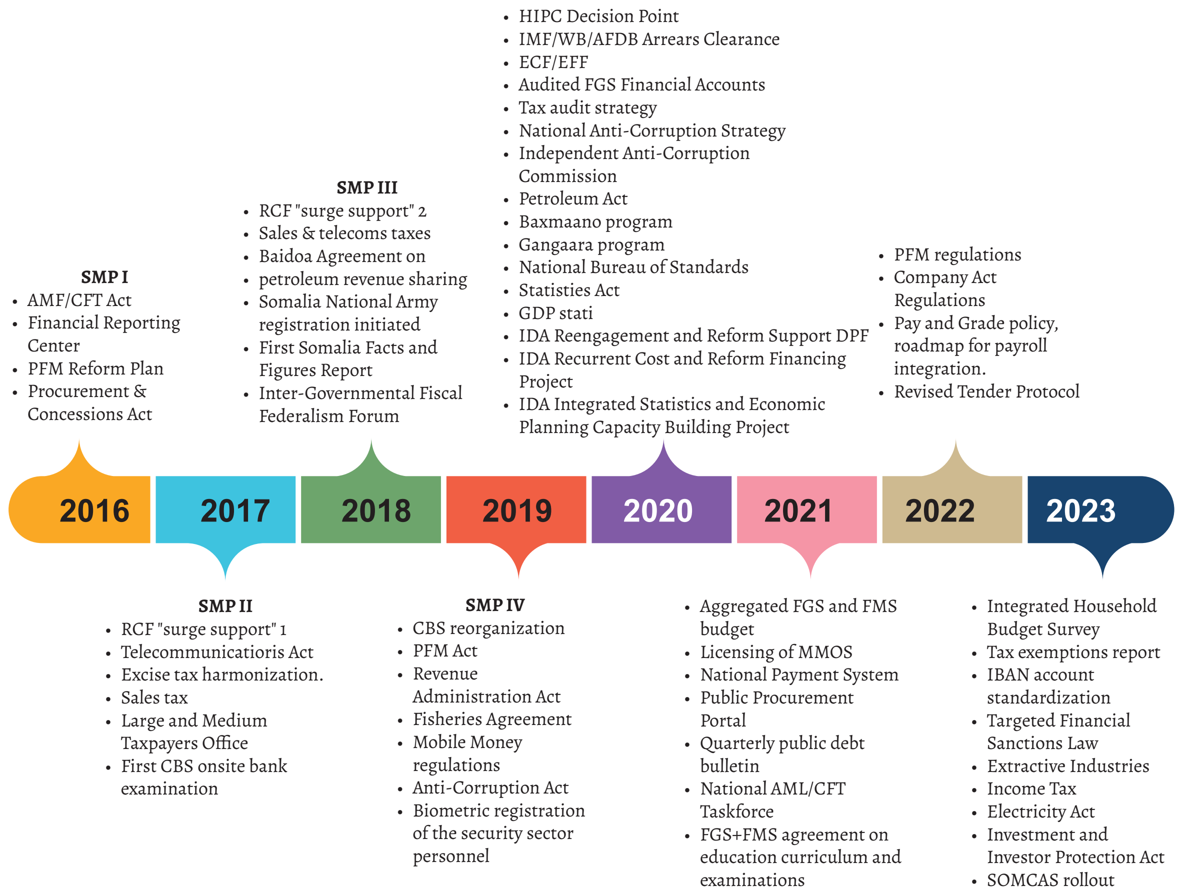
A new dawn of reforms began in 2012 with the revitalization of major government institutions and agencies. Somalia was at a crossroads and a critical juncture, carrying both a broader state-building mandate and the urgent responsibility of restoring the rule of law, governance, and public trust that had been eroded for more than two decades particularly in service delivery and financial transparency. This transition enabled the reactivation of the Ministry of Finance and the promulgation of a new Central Bank, both of which were instrumental in re-establishing the foundations of fiscal and monetary infrastructure. As emphasized by an official from the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the federal administration under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's first term (2012-2017), in collaboration with the executive and legislative branches, unanimously prioritized the integrity of public financial management within the national development agenda. This prioritization, in turn, culminated in the formulation of the PFM bill in 2013, thus signifying a decisive step toward the institutional consolidation of fiscal governance.

All of these advances in fiscal governance have fostered renewed donor confidence, paving the way for the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund to channel aid through the government's budget. Moreover, subsequent agreements between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), international donors, and development financial institutions created a Financial Governance Committee by 2014, an enabling framework for high-level oversight and policy dialogue. This mutual agreement provided both the institutional safeguards and the advisory space necessary to guide and monitor the implementation of key reforms within the public financial management system.

In 2016, reform momentum accelerated under the Ministry of Finance's engagement with the IMF Staff-Monitored Programs. Development partners, particularly the IMF and World Bank, set benchmarks that required the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to draft and adopt critical legislations, including the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) Acts, as well as procurement and financial institutions legislations. These required benchmarks, supported by extensive technical assistance from international donors, were central to aligning Somalia with the upper-credit tranche (UCT) quality standards, a key climax on the path toward reaching the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Decision Point (International Monetary Fund, 2016).

Despite persistent insecurity and political fragility, these initiatives opened new avenues for institutional development, fiscal reforms and battle towards clearing the external debt During the first Staff Monitoring Program (SMP), several benchmarks that had long appeared difficult for Somalia proved attainable, including increases in domestic revenue and the initial maintenance and modernization of the civil service payroll system. This progress involved a shift away from hand-to-hand cash payments toward electronic and mobile-money–based salary disbursements, reducing practices that had long been associated with inefficiencies, payment delays, and limited transparency and accountability. These reforms marked a decisive step toward strengthening fiscal discipline, reducing leakages, and building public trust in government systems.

Figure 1 Somalia Economic Reforms since 2016



Source: IMF, 2023. Enhanced HIPC initiative – Completion Point Document, p1

Speaking to the political aspects of federalism, four new federal member states appeared within relatively short span of four years: Jubbaland (2013), Southwest (2014), Galmudug (2015), and Hirshabelle (2016) all formed their respective administrations, enabling international donors to enhance capacity building programs to regional states in a manner similar to federal authority staff. This process contributed not only to the state drafting of financial management procedures but also demonstrated a crucial step toward institutionalizing governance practices and boosting fiscal efficiency and accountability across different tiers of authority, while simultaneously advancing the country's progress toward the benchmarks required under the HIPC debt relief capability.

A new President, Mohamed Abdullahi "Farmajo" came into office in February 2017. Farmajo's administration carried a heavy mandate not only to keep Somalia's PFM reforms on track, but also to weave them into the heart of his political agenda. At the center of this was the HIPC journey, which promised to lift the country's crushing external debt.

SMP II sowed the seeds for this, following the successful fulfillment of SMP I. This had achieved satisfactory rate for the adaptation of financial reforms under one year. However, the stakes could not have been higher, and in the eyes of many Somalis, meeting these commitments was less about ticking boxes and more about demonstrating that the state could function predictably, however limited its capacity.

The program comprised 9 assignments that were supposed to be marked step by step and were mainly focused on the macroeconomic stability of the country. It demanded reforms in areas that cut to the heart of fiscal governance. Cash and commitment controls had to be enforced, quarterly fiscal reports published, and the Treasury Single Account (TSA) tasks that required ministries long accustomed to discretion and fragmentation to operate under collective discipline. The passage and enforcement of a modern PFM Act, procurement rules, and an arrears clearance plan signaled that rules, not informal bargains, were to govern public finance. On top of that, revenue mobilization benchmarks, such as the creation of a Large Taxpayers Office, issuance of taxpayer IDs, and harmonization of customs and sales taxes at ports and airports, challenged entrenched interests that had thrived in fiscal opacity. At the same time, the Central Bank of Somalia faced its own new situation including publishing external audits, strengthening licensing and supervision of commercial banks, implementing AML/CFT regulations made under SMP I, and preparing the ground for long-awaited currency reform. Each of these steps was small in isolation, but together they formed the architecture of a state trying to claw back credibility.

As one of the technical leads for the HIPC process underscored, Somalia achieved a high level of performance by fulfilling 7 out of 9 structural benchmarks. The outcomes of these reforms were reflected in strengthened fiscal capacity, as domestic revenue rose by 29 percent in 2018 compared to the US$143 million collected in 2017 (Ministry of Finance, 2020). As highlighted in the Ministry of Finance's analytical report, this increase was not merely a statistical gain but a demonstration of PFM reforms particularly in revenue administration, expenditure control, and financial reporting that were beginning to translate into tangible improvements in state capacity and fiscal credibility.

Thus, SMP III and SMP IV were designed not only to consolidate the progress made under earlier programs but also to confront unresolved benchmarks that remained critical for advancing Somalia's state-building and HIPC trajectory. These included completing the delayed rollout of the Treasury Single Account, expanding the scope of the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF), strengthening and expanding public financial management systems, enhancing fiscal transparency and accountability, drafting the National Development Plan, and enacting the Public Financial Management and Revenue Bills.

The two SMPs went beyond the minimum thresholds expected in such programs, enabling the Federal Government to campaign vigorously that the country had already reached the HIPC Decision Point. This narrative bore fruit in early 2020 when the World Bank and the IMF jointly announced that Somalia had fulfilled the conditions necessary to qualify for debt relief.

The decision reduced Somalia's external debt stock by nearly US$4.5 billion, equivalent to about 63 percent of GDP and bringing it down to roughly 6 percent of GDP. While this was a historic achievement that restored access to concessional financing and renewed international credibility, it also underscored the extent to which Somalia's fiscal progress was dependent on meeting externally defined benchmarks rather than on internally driven consolidation of state capacity (World Bank, 2024).

State Reforms

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the enactment of PFM laws was not confined to the federal level but occurred in parallel with developments in the Federal Member States (FMSs). In some cases, local governments proved to be even earlier adopters in implementing PFM legislation than the federal authorities. For instance, member states such as Puntland, Galmudug, Southwest, and Jubaland, passed their respective acts and regulations prior to the enactment of federal legislation in 2019. This illustrates the collective need and efforts of systems at both federal and state levels to institutionalize public financial management and strengthen the overall governance frameworks in their respective mandates. Nonetheless, there remain many disagreements regarding the fiscal federalism of Somalia on sharing revenues and expenditures. These originated from the early drafting of federal constitution, which in the eyes of many Somalis did not adequately address the country's pressing economic and governance challenges.

4.0 Technological Shift of Public Financial Management

Global Context

In many fragile nations, the management of public accounts has long relied on manual processes or has been backed up only by poorly maintained software systems. This seriously impacts the effectiveness of public expenditure management systems (PEMs), and limits their performance (Diamond & Khemani, 2005). Furthermore, the absence of reliable and timely data on expenditure and revenue dashboards has adversely affected the efficiency and credibility of budget management processes, including planning, expenditure order, and both internal and external reporting.

The outcomes indicate misallocation of state resources, lack of efficiency and erosion of trust among the state government and civil society, amplifying governance problems (Dener et al., 2011). To escape this financial dilemma, plenty of fragile countries have implemented some type of Financial Management Information System (FMIS) projects with the support of international donor institutions, in order to boost their ability of controlling budget implementation.

An FMIS is a computerized IT-based system that connects the budget, treasury, accounting, and reporting processes into a single digital platform. It aims to enable accountability, efficiency, and transparency across government financial operations. Despite adopting such digital automations, many low-income countries have encountered challenges in implementation due to insufficient long-term financing to sustain system upgrades, poor infrastructure to support reliable operations and also limited technical capacity within government institutions (Hashim & Piatti, 2018).

Introduction and Evolution of Financial Management Information Systems (FMIS) in Somalia

In Somalia, however, two distinct financial management information systems have been implemented at both the federal and state levels. The first initiative, the Somali Financial Management Information System (SFMIS), was introduced under the Recurrent Cost and Reform Financing (RCRF) Project I in 2015 and was initially undertaken by the Federal Government. It was later expanded to Puntland State (PFMIS) in 2017 and Somaliland (SLFIMS) in 2018, though the latter continues to claim self-declared independence (Goobjoog News, 2015). The SFMIS was introduced as an expenditure management system that is being used in 70 different FGS offices including ministries, departments and agencies of the government. On the other hand, Federal Member States (Jubaland, Hirshabelle, Southwest, and Galmudug) use another model known as the BISAN funded by the World Bank, although public reporting on the specific offices employing this system remains limited.

Since its introduction, SFMIS has grown from a small pilot project into a fully functioning system that continues to be upgraded and expanded. Currently, it connects with several other platforms, including the Central Bank's systems such as Automated Clearing House (ACH), Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), and Instant Funds Transfer (IFT), as well as the Integration with Inventory and Asset Register (IAR), Contract & Tender Management system (CTM), Treasury Single Account (TSA) and Somali Customs Automation System (SOMCAS), the revenue platform managed by the Revenue Authority and the human resources module used to keep employee records. These systems have contributed a key role in strengthening the functionality and credibility of the SFMIS. They also have enabled secure and timely electronic payments between government entities and the Central Bank, reduced manual processing and cash handling, supported real-time fund disbursement, improved liquidity management and transparency, minimized risks of contract duplication or off-budget spending, and enhanced the reconciliation of domestic revenue data with national expenditure records.

Notable here is the addition of a commitment control module that has been integrated in the SFMIS in 2018. This tool permits users (officials) to follow every stage of a financial transaction, from the release of the budget to the payment order, and finally to the recording of the expenditure. Each transaction is given a unique code, and its journey through different offices is tracked and time stamped. This makes the process more transparent, reduces room for misuse, and helps government operations run more efficiently.

Although operated by different financial enterprises and developed under separate arrangements, the two systems have similar core modules, including budget formulation and budget execution components for revenue and expenditure management. However, SFMIS demonstrates a more extensive capacity than the BISAN system, particularly in its ability to integrate with other critical platforms.

Once the budget is approved by Parliament, its execution is carried out through the SFMIS/BISAN systems. According to a PFM expert, these systems have common expenditure management modules, allowing payments such as salaries and procurement vouchers to be processed in a single click. On the revenue side, Federal Member States (FMSs), except Puntland, use the BISAN system to register businesses and issue tax identification numbers within their jurisdictions. Compared to Puntland Financial Management Information System (PFMIS), which integrates revenue registration with budget execution, treasury operations, banking interfaces, and consolidated fiscal reporting, BISAN operates as a more limited and stand-alone application, reducing its effectiveness for comprehensive revenue administration and real-time fiscal oversight. By contrast, the FGS has developed an Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS) and Somali Customs Automation System (SOMCAS) as revenue mechanisms to collect customs duties as well as other direct and indirect taxes. These revenue transactions are then automatically transmitted to SFMIS, where they are consolidated and reported.

Government utilization of the SFMIS was estimated around 100%, implying that no expenditure payments or revenue transactions were to be authorized outside the system, thereby streamlining all financial operations through a single platform (World Bank, 2021). However, this claim was contested by several scholars interviewed during this study, who argued that parallel practices continue to exist. They pointed to the use of off-system spreadsheets by certain government actors, particularly in the areas of revenue collection and procurement purchases, suggesting that informal work-arounds still undermine the system's full integrity.

In general, feedback from interviewed officials highlighted that SFMIS has generated substantial cost savings for the government. Directly, the system identified and eliminated "ghost workers" who had been drawing multiple salaries under different identities, ensuring that each civil servant receives a single and accurate payment. Indirectly, the system reduced hidden operational costs, such as transportation expenses and resource outlays previously incurred when line ministry staff were required to travel to the Ministry of Finance to process payments for their offices. These efficiencies not only saved public funds but also reinforced accountability and streamlined government operations. Together, these web-based cloud automations have strengthened fiscal accountability and transparency by providing the government accurate, timely, and verifiable information for oversight bodies such as Parliament, the Supreme Audit Institution/Office of the Auditor General, and external donors. This enhanced reporting capacity has proven critical in meeting performance-based conditions imposed by international partners, as well as internal performance agreements, given that a substantial portion of compliance and performance assessments relies on data extracted directly from these financial management systems.

Political Economy Drivers of System Choice

Notably, as stated by one of the officers from Jubaland state, the adoption of BISAN over SFMIS is related to structural, institutional, and political differences within Somalia's federal system. He underscored that the initial establishment of the SFMIS was designed to only be for the FGS because the system required stable treasury functions, trained personnel, and ICT infrastructure conditions which certain local governments could meet at that time. Once the web-cloud successfully completed its pilot period, Puntland and Somaliland, with stronger fiscal institutions and established revenue authorities, later adopted customized versions (PFMIS and SLFMIS) suited to their administrative structures. To bring other FMS on board the same boat as Puntland and Somaliland, international partners introduced BISAN, a lighter, web-based system that was easier to deploy, required minimal hardware, and could operate remotely under donor supervision.

The second dynamic that respondents identified as influencing the adoption of BISAN instead of SFMIS was persistent political tension among the federal government and the states. SFMIS, being integrated into the federal treasury, is often viewed by some Federal Member States as a mechanism of central control. BISAN, in contrast, renders more operational independence, which appeals to states wary of federal oversight.

Officials from both the FGS and FMS noted that there is currently no integration or systematic information sharing between SFMIS, PFMIS and BISAN. This fragmentation is rooted in unresolved questions of fiscal federalism, particularly the lack of a formal agreement between federal and state authorities on revenue collection responsibilities and the division of fiscal powers. The lack of harmonized systems has significant implications; it weakens the government's ability to generate consolidated national accounts, complicates efforts to track revenue performance across jurisdictions, and lowers fiscal transparency. Moreover, the lack of interoperability raises concerns among stakeholders, who view integrated financial reporting as a cornerstone of accountability and donor confidence. Without a coherent framework for revenue sharing and system integration, the risk remains that duplication, inefficiencies, and mistrust will continue to illustrate intergovernmental fiscal relations, slowing the progress toward sustainable state-building and long-term fiscal stability.

Prospects for Sustainability of SFMIS

Despite interviewing different key officers among ministry finance entities, they share similar views regarding the continuity of running the SFMIS system without the intervention of development institutions. They argued that the federal government has an ability to continue running these systems without direct support from the World Bank or IMF in areas like capacity building and technical management. They further noted that local staff have already developed strong skills in operating, maintaining, and improving the systems through years of training and practical use. However, several challenges remain serious and require great assistance, such as poor ICT infrastructure and limited fiscal space. Without reliable connectivity, stable servers, and dedicated funding for system maintenance and upgrades, the long-term sustainability of SFMIS and related platforms may be at risk.

5.0 Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations and Resource Sharing

The nexus between the Federal Government and Federal Member States is at the heart of Somalia's fiscal future. Strong fiscal federalism that clarifies the precise scale of revenue sharing and expenditures across levels of government has been elusive, complicated by political mistrust and constitutional ambiguity (Farah, 2024). The Provisional Constitution (2012) left many fiscal questions unanswered, leading to recurrent disputes between FGS and FMS over power and resource distribution (Mohamud, 2025).

Emerging Platforms for Intergovernmental Coordination

Over the past decade, there have been concerted efforts to negotiate practical arrangements and improve cooperation on fiscal matters, even as tensions periodically resurfaced. One of the key initiatives that helped shed light on Somalia's fiscal challenges was the formation of the Finance Ministers' Fiscal Forum (FMFF) in 2016. The FMFF, comprising the federal Minister of Finance and all finance ministers from the Federal Member States (FMSs), began meeting regularly, often with donor facilitation to discuss fiscal policy and resolve disputes. Complementing this forum was the Technical Intergovernmental Fiscal Federalism Committee (IGFFC), a working group of technocrats from both the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the FMS tasked with working out technical details and advising the FMFF (Somali Dialogue Platform, 2025).

Together, these bodies created a structured venue for intergovernmental fiscal dialogue, enabling agreements on harmonizing certain tax rates nationwide such as excise on tobacco, khat, and international passenger fees as well as aligning customs tariffs and payroll tax regimes across federal and state administrations. However, despite these agreements on paper, respondents interviewed for this study emphasized that the actual level of implementation has remained minimal and that this is linked to the political climate among the Federal government and the state members.

In June 2018, FGS and FMS presidents reached an agreement in Baidoa on the ownership, management, and revenue-sharing of petroleum and mineral resources. This accord forwarded in formalizing natural resource revenue-sharing arrangements, particularly in relation to Somalia's potential offshore oil and gas reserves as well as its lucrative fisheries (Ministry of Finance, 2024). It has also become a base for the review of Chapter Three of the Provisional Federal Constitution, which was endorsed by the Federal Parliament in a joint session as part of Four Chapters amended on 30 March, 2024.

Implementation Challenges and Political Tensions

The 2018 agreement proposed a division of revenues between the FGS, producing states, and all states via a solidarity share. However, this deal became contentious as states (Jubaland and Puntland) with long coastlines and therefore high stakes rejected the petroleum revenue-sharing deal after it was approved by the federal parliament in 2020. Their objection was fueled in part by a trust deficit earlier. In 2018, the FGS had unilaterally signed a separate agreement to license tuna fishing to a Chinese company, yielding about $1.68 million by 2020, which was not shared with the FMS despite a prior understanding to do so. This breach of promise, the FGS keeping all tuna licensing revenue, severely damaged confidence. Puntland and Jubaland cited it as evidence that the central government might not honor future sharing agreements, and thus they balked at the new petroleum framework (Puntland Mirror, 2017).

Besides resource revenue sharing, another equally critical challenge is the allocation of donor-financed revenues, which requires careful balancing. Since international grants constitute a substantial share of Somalia's budget, disputes frequently arise over how these funds should be distributed between the FGS and the FMS. Respondents interviewed for this study underscored that competition among states over these resources has effectively become a battleground within the federal system.

Larger or more established states often argue that donor revenues should be allocated based on performance, rewarding those that demonstrate stronger fiscal and economic management. In contrast, newer or less established states contend that donor funds should be distributed as a matter of equity and inclusion, ensuring that all states receive a share regardless of their performance levels. This divergence created a heating discussion on Garowe meeting in 2020, some FMS propose a "gentleman's formula" with 60% for the FGS and 40% for Member states, with the latter share distributed horizontally among the states.

As of 2024, there has only been a modest improvement in fiscal transfers from the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to the Federal Member States (FMS). According to the official budget reports, approximately US$120 million was transferred in 2024 to support state administration. However, the distribution of these funds was uneven. Some states received larger allocations, while others received considerably less, with the amounts often appearing to depend not on transparent formulas or agreed fiscal arrangements but on the degree of political alignment and loyalty to the federal government (Ministry of Finance, 2025). This pattern reflects the deeper structural problem of Somalia's incomplete fiscal federalism; without a binding revenue-sharing framework and clear legal rules governing intergovernmental transfers, fiscal relations remain vulnerable to political bargaining and short-term patronage.

6.0 Fiscal Performance of FGS and FMSs

In the aftermath of the Mbagathi Peace Conference (2002-2004), the country's fiscal framework was little more than a stop-gap arrangement. Fiscal budgeting was rudimentary, often built as emergency spending plans and executed on a cash-only basis with almost no formal oversight. In practice, this meant that expenditure decisions were ad hoc and frequently outside lawful standards. The outcomes were predictable: arrears mounted as civil servants went unpaid for months; suppliers were left with unsettled bills; and the delivery of even the most basic public services was routinely interrupted.

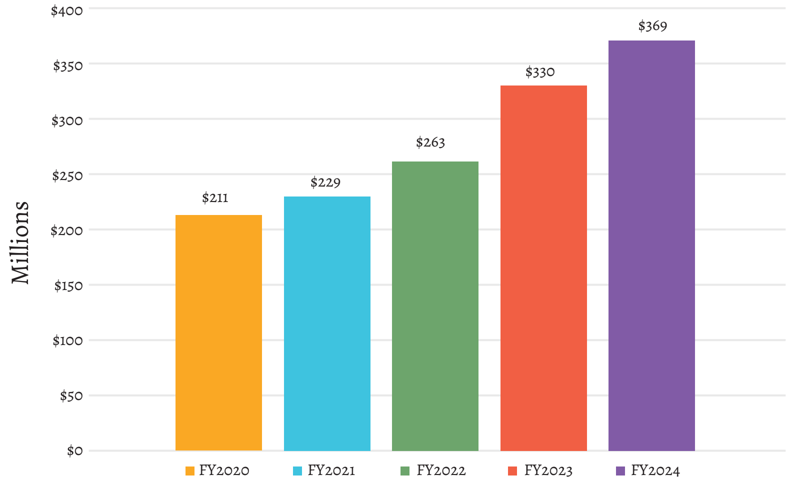
These cases disappeared slowly after the country was formally established as a federal state. Although the government inherited a virtually empty treasury and skeletal financial institutions, it resurrected financial institutions such as budget formulations, budget approval, revenue collection, and expenditure controls from scratch with assistance from development institutions like WB and IMF.

Waves of tax collection undertaken by the FGS were witnessed in 2013 and gathered the significant amount of $69 million (although this was around 1.2% of the gross domestic product in that year). Tangible results were visible in 2014, after the FGS managed to formalize budget processes through Parliament's passing of its first annual appropriations of $118 million and its initiation of published budget plans. During that year, domestic revenue surged by 22% compared to 2013. This modest increase reflected initial gains from improved collection at Mogadishu port and airport and a new rudimentary tax on telecommunications companies (Ministry of Finance, 2023).

While external grants continue to play a central role in filling Somalia's fiscal gaps, domestic revenue streams have expanded more than fourfold since 2012, driven by consistent fiscal reforms and reinforced by revenue floor benchmarks set under programs with international financial institutions.

As shown in Figure 2, over the past four years Somalia's domestic revenue has surged, rising from $211 million in 2020 to $369 million in 2024. This surge mirrors the efforts to develop an environment of PFM systems, including the introduction of laws supporting tax administration and the adoption of digital tools that reduce reliance on manual tax collection, contributing to greater accountability and which have improved the overall effectiveness of fiscal governance.

Figure 2 Domestic Revenue Collection



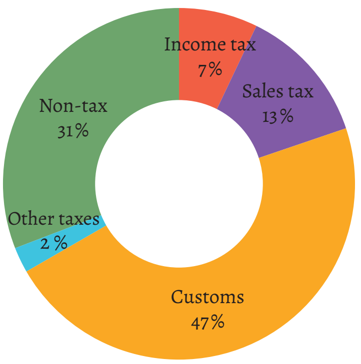
Source: MoF (2024)

As figure 3 shows, taxes on international trade accounts for 47% (approximately $174 million) of total domestic tax revenue in recent years, while general sales tax, largely on imports and telecom services comprises 13% and income taxes contribute 7%. These are small proportions but have grown steadily. Non-tax revenues such as state-owned enterprise dividends, license fees, and fines are estimated to be around 32% ($118 million). They have also grown, but from a low base and remain a minor part of the revenue mix (Ministry of Finance, 2024).

Figure 3: Revenue components

This low revenue base is partly a product of Somalia's federal structure and the limited geographic reach of the federal tax authority, which is effectively able to collect taxes only in Mogadishu (Benadir region), while the FMSs levy taxes within their respective territories. In practice, this means that outside the capital, where most major ports and markets are controlled by Federal Member States, federal tax collection remains minimal, and no unified revenue harmonization system operates across the country. [1]

Figure 3: Revenue components



This results in a situation where the revenue capacity of the country remains among the weakest in the world (World Bank, 2025). In 2021, tax receipts were equal to only about 4% of GDP compared to the tax-to GDP ratio of East Africa regional standards which is a rout 16 percent.[2] Put differently, while the government has collected more in absolute terms each year, it has not yet broadened the tax base enough to markedly increase revenue as a share of national output.

Source: MoF (2024)

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.

Conversely, the FMSs have developed their own nascent tax systems over the past decade, albeit with considerable variation in their performance. Puntland, with its relatively established administration and the sizable Bossaso port, has consistently been the top revenue earner among the states. In May 2025, for example, Puntland generated approximately $8.9 million in tax revenue, more than triple the amount collected by any other FMSs that month. Jubaland, benefiting from the Kismayo port, collected around $2.0 million during the same period.

By contrast, other FMSs without operational ports or trade hubs continue to struggle to raise revenue. For instance, South-West State collected only about $444,000; Galmudug around $839,000; and Hirshabelle approximately $440,000 in May 2025.[3]

These disparities underscore the critical importance of trade taxation in which states with functioning seaports, such as Puntland and Jubaland, enjoy a much stronger fiscal base than those with no functioning ports or are reliant on modest inland revenues (e.g., livestock market fees, small import checkpoints, and service taxes), which together yield only a few million dollars annually.

On the public expenditure side, the federal government has enlarged public expenditure as Benadir revenue mobilization and international budget support surged. At the time of this study, the FGS budgeted little more than $905 million, which stands close to 84% of the appropriation act of 2024. The way the budget is put together shows the tough choices that government faces; it has to cover urgent needs like salaries, security, and daily operations, while also finding room for investments that will benefit future generations, such as schools, hospitals, and infrastructure.

As stated in the 2024 Budget Performance Report published by the MoF, FGS expenditure falls into 4 categories: (1) administration and general services, (2) the security sector, (3) social services, and (4) the economic sector. Administration and general services remain the largest expenditure category, accounting for 36 percent of total spending in 2024. This sector covers the central institutions of governance, including the executive, legislature, judiciary, and ministries responsible for public administration, financial management, and policy coordination. Even though its share has sunk from 41 percent in 2023 and 42 percent in 2022, it still represents an extensive portion of the budget due to high administrative and civil service costs necessary to keep the state functioning. The security sector absorbs the second-largest share at 26 percent of total spending, down from 33 percent in 2021. This category provides for the army and internal security authorities such as police and intelligence services.

Social services follow, with an allocation of 24.2 percent of total FGS expenditure, an encouraging increase compared to 21.4 percent in 2023, suggesting a shift toward investments in human development sectors such as education, health, and social protection programs. Finally, the economic sector accounted for 14.3 percent of expenditure, up from 11 percent in 2021. Spending here supports agriculture, livestock, fisheries, energy, public works, and other growth-oriented programs. Even though still comparatively tiny, the surge signals mounting attention to activities that promote production, livelihoods, and infrastructure (Ministry of Finance, 2025).

3 Consolidation Report; May 2025. Office of the Accountant General.

As a senior official told us, raising the expenditure share for the social and economic sector demonstrates the FGS's eagerness for the formulation of pro-growth and pro-poor budgets. From public financial perspectives, this means that the increased revenues have primarily enabled the government to meet payroll and security costs more reliably, a necessary condition for stability, but the impact on public service delivery has been modest so far and hasn't changed much.[4]

Table 2: Expenditure by sector in Million USD

Sector	2022			2023			2024		
	Budget	Actual	%Share	Budget	Actual	%Share	Budget	Actual	%Share
Administration	351.7	306.3	42.00%	336.6	296.1	41.10%	380.1	321.2	35.50%
Security	171.3	167.6	23.00%	197.3	191.6	26.60%	256.2	235.3	26.00%
Economic Services	83.1	57	7.80%	139.1	78.3	10.90%	177.4	129.3	14.30%
Social Services	323.8	198.2	27.20%	244.4	154.3	21.40%	265.7	219.4	24.20%

Source: MoF (2024)

At the FMS level, budget expenditure practices are still maturing, but there have been parallel efforts to institute controls. Each state now formulates its own annual budget with varying degrees of donor assistance and presents it to its regional assembly for approval. For example, Puntland has long had a formal budget process as it has functioned autonomously since 1998, and other states like Jubaland, Hirshabelle, Galmudug and Southwest also began doing so after their formation. For instance, Puntland's Ministry of Finance reportedly improved expenditure controls and started publishing quarterly fiscal reports in recent years, enhancing transparency for citizens and donors. However, it must be acknowledged that PFM reforms in expenditure management are still fragile and uneven.

4 Interview with senior official, Somali Revenue Directorate, Mogadishu, 8 August 2025.

7.0 Conclusion

The fiscal situation in Somalia over the past decade demonstrates both the promise and the fragility of public financial management (PFM) reform in a post-conflict state. From the re-establishment of fiscal institutions in 2012 to the achievement of the HIPC Completion Point in 2023, the nation has made notable progress in restoring credibility, mobilizing domestic revenue, and introducing a more disciplined approach to expenditure management. Utilizing PFM tools such as PFMIS, SFMIS and its regional counterparts have enhanced transparency and reduced leakages, while legislative reforms like the PFM Act, the Revenue Act, and related regulations have provided a legal foundation for improved fiscal governance. These reforms have not only unlocked debt relief and donor confidence but have also begun to shift public perceptions toward a government capable of delivering on its financial obligations.

Yet, progress remains uneven and deeply dependent on external anchors. The Somali state's fiscal base continues to rely heavily on international grants, with domestic revenue still among the lowest in Africa when measured against GDP. The persistence of parallel practices, fragmented FMIS platforms, and unresolved questions of fiscal federalism underscores the limits of technical reforms in the absence of deeper political settlement. In addition to that, trust deficits between the Federal Government and Federal Member States remain acute, particularly in the areas of revenue sharing, resource management, and expenditure responsibilities. These tensions risk undermining the very systems that have been painstakingly built over the past decade.

Ultimately, Somalia's public financial management illustrates that debt relief and donor benchmarks, while essential catalysts, cannot substitute for nationally owned fiscal capacity. The test for the coming years will be whether Somalia can consolidate these externally driven gains into durable, domestically anchored systems that not only satisfy international partners on paper but also deliver visible benefits to Somali citizens. Stronger intergovernmental fiscal compacts, broader revenue mobilization strategies, and genuine transparency in resource allocation will determine whether PFM reforms evolve from donor conditionalities into a sustainable fiscal contract between the Somali state and its people.

8.0 Policy Recommendations

Somalia's fiscal institutions stand at a turning point: the country has made significant progress since 2012, yet the gains remain uneven and vulnerable to political tensions, fragmented systems, and weak administrative capacity. The following recommendations outline practical steps that federal and state authorities can take to strengthen fiscal governance. Each policy recommendation aims to support national stability, improve service delivery, and reinforce trust between citizens and government.

- **Establish a Nationally Coherent PFM System Across the FGS and FMSs:** Somalia's reliance on separate financial systems such as SFMIS at the federal level, PFMIS in Puntland, and BISAN across several Federal Member States has created fragmentation, uneven reporting, and weak visibility over how public funds are managed. This limits effective oversight and complicates the preparation of credible national accounts. To address these challenges, the FGS and FMSs should move toward a coherent PFM framework that links all systems through a shared data interface. Such an approach would allow governments at every level to record revenues, payments, and commitments using consistent standards. A more unified system will strengthen expenditure control, improve the accuracy of financial reporting, and reduce the need for donor-driven workarounds. Progress in this area requires clear technical guidelines, regular coordination between federal and state treasuries, and a sequenced roadmap for harmonizing financial practices. Advancing a coherent PFM system is essential for improving fiscal transparency, supporting intergovernmental trust, and building a more reliable fiscal federation.

- **Strengthen ICT Foundations to Support Reliable Financial Systems:** Somalia's shift toward digital financial systems has improved transparency, but the foundations required to sustain these platforms remain weak. Many federal and state ministries operate with unreliable internet, aging hardware, unsecured servers, and limited in-house technical capacity. These gaps threaten the stability of SFMIS, PFMIS, and BISAN, and expose the government to operational disruptions and data risks. To strengthen system sustainability, FGS and FMS should invest in modern ICT infrastructure by establishing secure data centers, improving network connectivity, and allocating predictable budgets for system upgrades and maintenance. Building dedicated ICT units within finance ministries is equally important. These teams should be trained to manage system operations, address technical issues, and ensure data integrity without depending on donor missions. Strengthening ICT foundations will help Somalia maintain reliable PFM systems, support accurate financial reporting, and ensure that digital reforms continue to function as the backbone of fiscal governance.

- **Strengthen Enforcement and Political Commitment to Revenue Sharing Frameworks:** The Technical Intergovernmental Fiscal Federalism Committee has taken an important measure toward clarifying revenue-sharing arrangements through the Baidoa Agreement, which later informed Chapter 3 of the revised constitution and was endorsed by parliament. As this represents progress in codifying the principles of revenue allocation, the central challenge remains in ensuring that these commitments are respected fully and implemented consistently across all parties. The existing framework needs robust enforcement mechanisms, transparent procedures for compliance, and credible channels for resolving disputes when they arise. Equally important is securing genuine political buy-in from both federal and state authorities, so that negotiated agreements are treated as binding obligations rather than aspirational statements. Staying in same path will ease uncertainty, erect trust among stakeholders, and create a more stable foundation for a functional fiscal federation.

- **Introduce Clear and Transparent Procurement Standards Across All Levels of Government:** Public procurement remains one of the weakest areas of Somalia's PFM system, with frequent gaps in transparency, inconsistent procedures, and limited oversight. These weaknesses create room for discretionary decision-making and increase the risk of poor-quality public works. To improve integrity and value for money, all federal and state institutions should adopt clear and transparent procurement standards. The Contract and Tender Management (CTM) system should be used as the primary tool for managing tendering, contract awards, and supplier records. Publishing tender notices, bid results, and awarded contracts on official government platforms will enhance openness and allow citizens and oversight bodies to track procurement decisions. Establishing clear evaluation criteria and standard documentation requirements will also reduce discretion during the selection process.

- **Strengthening the Role of FMFF and IGFFC in Managing Fiscal Coordination**: The Finance Ministers' Fiscal Forum (FMFF) and the Intergovernmental Fiscal Federalism Committee (IGFFC) have emerged as key mechanisms for dialogue between the FGS and FMSs. Yet their influence remains limited because decisions are not always implemented and their mandates are not formally anchored in law or policy. To improve fiscal coordination, both platforms should be given clear mandates that outline their responsibilities, decision-making authority, and reporting obligations. Meetings should follow a predictable schedule with agendas agreed in advance and minutes published for transparency. A structured follow-up mechanism is needed to track progress on decisions and ensure that commitments made during meetings translate into action at both federal and state levels. Strengthening these coordination bodies will help reduce political tensions, improve consistency in revenue and expenditure practices, and support a more stable fiscal relationship across the federation.

- **Strengthen Oversight Institutions and Promote Open Fiscal Reporting:** Somalia's oversight framework remains weak, largely because the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) is not fully respected across government institutions. Many ministries and agencies do not act on audit findings, which limits accountability and allows recurring problems to persist. To improve fiscal governance, the OAG and Public Accounts Committees need stronger institutional backing, adequate resources, and protection from political interference. Government entities should be required to respond to audit observations within defined timelines and demonstrate steps taken to address identified issues. In parallel, both federal and state authorities should publish budget execution reports, audit statements, and revenue data consistently and in accessible formats. Regular public reporting strengthens transparency, supports informed debate, and reinforces trust in how public resources are managed.

- **Reduce Overreliance on Donor Benchmarks and Strengthen National Ownership of PFM Reforms:** the country's PFM progress has relied heavily on donor-driven benchmarks under IMF and World Bank programs. While these have supported important reforms, they have also created a compliance-focused environment. Government should shift toward nationally defined priorities guided by the National Transformation Plan and sector strategies. Building internal capacity, strengthening civil service skills, and establishing domestic monitoring mechanisms will help ensure that reforms continue even when external programs change. Greater national ownership will make Somalia's PFM reforms more stable, predictable, and aligned with long-term state-building needs.

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About Somali Public Agenda

Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit, non-partisan, and independent public policy and administration research and action organization based in Mogadishu. It aims to advance understanding and improvement of public policy and services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis, dialogue, policy and service design, and training.

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.

Vision & Mission

Vision: Responsive, evidence-based, and inclusive public services for a better Somalia

Mission: To advance responsive, evidence-based, and inclusive public services in Somalia through research and analysis, dialogue, co-design of evidence-based policies and services, and capacity development.

What We Do

Research: The Somali Public Agenda contributes to the understanding and improvement of public administration in Somalia through research and analysis of various issues that affect public policies and the provision of public services. SPA regularly publishes research reports, policy papers, governance briefs, and commentaries (most of the time in both the Somali and English languages). These publications often inform and influence citizens, policymakers, practitioners, and international actors on governance and public service issues in Somalia.

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

Podcasts: Somali Public Agenda has two podcasts namely Maamul Wanaag and Adeeg Wanaag. Somalia faces multiple governance challenges. The country is recovering from years of conflict, lawlessness, and weak administration. Understanding and improving governance in Somalia is one of the core missions of the Somali Public Agenda. Mahad Wasuge, SPA Executive Director, and his guests delve deep into governance issues in Somalia in the **Maamul Wanaag podcast.**

Public services in Somalia are limited due to the weakness of government institutions struggling to recover from the destruction caused by conflict. However, even those government services that do exist fail to serve people effectively. Access to public services is a fundamental right for Somali citizens. Aweis Ahmed, the director of the SPA Policy Lab, and his guests intensely discuss public service matters in Somalia in the **Adeeg Wanaag podcast.**

Co-Designing Public Services: Based on the findings and policy recommendations of our studies, we design public policies, programmes, and projects with the relevant public and civic authorities through our SPA Policy Lab. In collaboration with policymakers, public administrators, and the community, we design knowledge-based public services. Before the government invests resources in the policies, programmes, and projects designed, we envisage experimenting with the public service at a small-scale level to test the efficacy of the services designed.

Training: Based on the findings of our research and our co-designing work, Somali Public Agenda through its SPA Learning Lab offers training courses to contribute to the building of administrative cadres that can deliver public policies and programmes to the community. Moreover, the learning lab offers training to Somali professionals who have the desire and passion to advance the art of writing and research as well as those interested in joining the public sector or are engaged in the non-profit sector.

Better Governance for Brighter Somalia

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