REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE CONTROVERSIAL NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL (NCC) AGREEMENT ON ELECTIONS

Somali Public Agenda Policy Paper No. 05

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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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Somali Public Agenda
Mogadishu
Somalia
Tel: +252(0)85 8358
Email: info@somalipublicagenda.org
Website: <https://www.somalipublicagenda.org>

Design and layout: Somali Public Agenda
Copyeditor: Peter Chonka
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The National Consultative Council (NCC) members – except the Puntland President – signed a controversial agreement on elections at national, state, and local levels in Somalia. The agreement proposes proportional representation - closed-list, electoral model, and a single national constituency in Somalia's elections. While the proposed model has been considered a pragmatic approach to Somalia's political and security landscape, the single national constituency has proved contentious in the past. The agreement would necessitate revising the current National Electoral Law that stipulates First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) electoral model based on 4.5.

The agreement limits the number of political parties to two. The two political parties would come out of local council elections scheduled to take place in June 2024 and would compete for the state-level elections and then the national elections. The dual parties limit the choices of citizens and politicians, block the emergence of state-level political parties, and have no precedent in Somalia's history. This would require reviewing and amending the Political parties' Law (Law No. 19 of 27 June 2016).

While harmonizing the elections might be a valuable approach to reduce election costs and time, the proposal has several complications. These include unrealistic election timelines, the ignoring of different timelines and mandates stipulated in FGS and FMS constitutions, the legitimization of term extensions across the majority of the FMS, and the failure to adequately consider the deep political fault lines at the FMS level.

The NCC agreement proposed moving away from the current hybrid system to a presidential system. The proposed system would eliminate the role of the Prime Minister. It would require a broader consensus among political stakeholders, a parliament endorsement with a two-third majority as well as a referendum for the Constitution.

The NCC agreed on the establishment of a 15-member new National Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission and changes the number of the current NCC members from 9 to 15. It invites FMSs to appoint 2 members each for the committee. The Elections and Boundaries Commission legal framework is not clear; it risks creating a politicized and dysfunctional election body; and the term of the 15 commissioners in office is not clear.

This policy paper analyses additional challenges including lack of constitutionality and clear connection with the constitutional review; the absence of Puntland in the proposal; a lack of consultation and feedback; and the mixing of several issues. It concludes with several policy considerations.
On 27 May 2023, after three days of meeting in Mogadishu, members of the National Consultative Council (NCC) – with the exception of Puntland – issued a communique and a new agreement focused on democratization. As in the previous NCC meeting in March, Puntland President Deni was not in attendance. The NCC communique applauded recent military successes against al-Shabaab and the preparations for the second phase of operations. It also emphasized the need to accelerate fiscal governance reforms as part of a continuation of the debt relief process, and highlighted agreement on elections detailed in a separate document.

This detailed agreement on national and sub-national elections is perhaps the most ambitious democratization roadmap in Somalia’s history and has introduced some radical changes to the Somali dispensation. It has generated a range of reactions across the Somali landscape, including criticism from certain quarters. In response to this controversial agreement, this policy paper analyses the key components of the controversial NCC election agreement, highlighting the prospects and challenges for its implementation.
ISSUE ONE: ELECTORAL MODEL AND CONSTITUENCY DEFINITION

The NCC agreed to hold one-person-one-vote (OPOV) elections, between two political parties, based on a Proportional Representation – Closed List (PR-CL) model and a single national constituency (SNC). Under this model, political parties would submit to the electoral body a closed list of candidates for the 275 members of the House of the People of the Somali Federal Parliament, up to a maximum of 550 members, with a minimum of one and maximum of two candidates per seat per political party.

The PR-CL electoral model that the NCC agreed on has been considered the pragmatic option for implementing elections in Somalia for some time. The same model was agreed upon in Baidoa in June 2018 by the National Security Council members and later reflected in the National Electoral Bill approved by the Council of Ministers in May 2019. However, the model was entirely scrapped by a parliamentary ad hoc committee assigned to revise the electoral bill. The current National Electoral Law, approved and signed by then President, Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo, in early 2020, defined the electoral model as First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) and maintained the 4.5 clan power sharing.

This choice of election model has in principle several advantages that can enable the implementation of universal suffrage. It sidesteps a number of practical challenges that would complicate election implementation, such as the fact that some Somali territory is still controlled by al-Shabaab, that there is a lack of political consensus around the Somaliland-FGS relationship, and that the status of Banadir is undecided. Moreover, the PR-CL model has been recently used fairly successfully in Puntland for its local council elections. It could therefore be a pragmatic step towards the establishment of political parties that actively participate in Somalia’s national politics and a government that the public sees themselves being represented by.

The agreement on the federal election model, if made in good faith, can therefore provide a strong basis for election implementation in Somalia. However, in the current context, it faces several challenges in implementation. First, the selection of a Single National Constituency (SNC) has proved contentious in the past. After it was agreed in 2018, it was later rejected by FMS presidents who met later that year in Kismayo. This time around there is also a risk that FMS presidents are not completely genuine about this aspect of the agreement and could seek to revisit the issue of constituency. This is especially likely if Puntland re-joins the NCC because it has historically opposed a single national constituency.
Second, PR-CL electoral model would necessitate revisiting the current National Electoral Law, based on First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) model and the 4.5 system. Whilst this would have likely been necessary anyway, it may potentially be time-consuming to revise the election law and have it passed, which may impact election timelines.

Third, the model does not define an approach to clan representation. This appears to be a deliberate effort to do away with clan power-sharing in Somalia. The Office of the Prime Minister stated that the agreement removes the longstanding 4.5 clan quota system: “The dismantling of the 4.5 system is particularly crucial as it opens the door to a more diverse and representative leadership. The new proposed system will ensure that politicians are held accountable to the people and not power brokers, thereby eliminating backdoor deals that are often based on money and clan loyalty.” Whilst the desire to move away from clan-power sharing is commendable and may open up opportunities for much greater inclusion in Somalia, moving away from the 4.5 system without addressing the exclusionary risks for some groups in Somalia could trigger conflicts. If this is indeed the intention, it would be beneficial to make such a move with much greater consultation with the public and wider politicians. Several options exist that could maintain some aspects of 4.5 with universal suffrage, such as zebra listing.
ISSUE TWO: POLITICAL PARTIES

The NCC agreement also proposed shifting the country from a multi-party system to a dual-party system, limiting the number of national political parties to two. The two parties would be chosen from those that fared best in the district council elections that would take place across Somalia in mid-2024. These parties would then compete for both state-level parliamentary and presidential elections as well as the national parliamentary and presidential elections.

This proposal has taken Somali politicians and the public by surprise, and there are several drawbacks to this system. First, the agreement has no real precedent in Somali history or in discussions on elections. Currently, political parties and their participation in politics are defined in the Political Parties’ Law (Law No. 19 of 27 June 2016). The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) registered 110 provisional parties in the past six years. In the period before military rule (1960-69), Somalia’s democracy was based on a multi-party system – 64 political parties participated in the last 1969 parliamentary election. A two-party system would thus herald a major, and at this point unexplained, divergence.

Second, it may be challenging for such large-scale national parties to operate in every FMS. One of the primary reasons why the 110 provisionally registered political parties could not qualify for permanent party status was the condition that they must open offices in at least 9 of the pre-1991 regions and have at least 10,000 registered members. They could not open offices in the FMSs primarily because of the perceived clan dominance of party leadership. For instance, it was difficult for Hawiye politician-led political parties to operate in Puntland, the only FMS that has relative security where political parties can operate. With all these dynamics, it may be challenging for only two parties to operate across the country. On the other hand, both parties will be forced to have a diversity of clans represented in the party.

Third, the dual political parties’ system limits choices for both citizens and politicians. Citizens would have to choose from only two parties at the ballot box, reducing the chances that there would be a choice that represents their specific standpoint and perspective. The two political parties would be primary stakeholders for a country whose national indirect elections have hitherto involved multiple actors including clan elders, FMSs Presidents, incumbent federal government leadership, opposition politicians, and the international community that often finances the elections. Likewise, politicians would be constrained in their own vision and agenda and be forced to choose between a narrow selection.
Finally, this will likely affect the prospects of some politicians and political parties. Politicians with a more localized agenda might be disadvantaged in district elections, as voters may make their choices based on which political party they would like to see progress in national elections. This may therefore shrink the space for politicians who want to focus on FMS and local politics, creating further exclusion in a country whose politics have been dominated by a major city-based political elite.
ISSUE THREE: SUB-NATIONAL ELECTIONS, SEQUENCING, AND TIMELINES

The NCC agreement also outlines modalities for sub-national elections, as well as their timing and sequencing with national elections.

- **Local Council Elections**: The agreement outlines that OPOV district council elections will be conducted by June 2024 (i.e. in just over a year) in all districts in Somalia.

- **Election of FMS Assemblies and Presidents**: The agreement also stipulates that these would be based on OPOV between the two political parties that fared best in the local elections, marking a significant shift from the clan-based model all state assemblies currently use. These would take place on 30 November, 5 months after the conclusion of the local elections.

- **Election of the House of the People**: National elections would follow from district elections, once two parties had been selected through this process. The agreement did not clarify the date that the federal parliamentary and presidential elections would take place. However, the agreement stated that elections at different levels of government will take place every five years starting from the date elections are concluded. For instance, if local elections are successfully held in June 2024, the next local elections will be in June 2029. It could also imply the next federal elections would take place in 2027.

- **Election of the Upper House**: The electoral approach that would be used for the election of the members of the Upper House is not defined in the NCC agreement, although the constituency was agreed upon as the FMSs. The agreement also stated that the representation of the Benadir region in the Upper House would be clarified in legislation defining the status of Mogadishu according to Article 9 of the Provisional Federal Constitution.

Harmonizing election timelines may be a valuable approach to reducing costs and the dominance of elections in the political landscape. However, there are several complications and hard-to-implement assumptions here. First, the electoral timeline is not realistic, especially regarding sub-national elections. An election is not a one-day event; it is a complex operation that requires security, funding, political will, political stability, and human capital. It took almost two decades for Puntland to transition from state formation to organizing local council elections, and even this came with difficulties.

Many of the Federal Member States that the NCC members expect to organize the elections do not have complete control of their own territory and rarely use roads to transit from one district to another for security reasons. Many FMSs have struggled to conduct district council formation in main districts within their jurisdictions,
which should in theory be a simpler process. More broadly, to implement these elections, there are an array of institutional and legislative frameworks (including constitutional change) that need to be adopted or revisited to lay the foundations for the implementation of the proposed plans, which may take many months. For instance, the electoral body that would manage the election is not yet formed, and it will take time for it to develop its institutional capacity to implement a series of elections across the country. Funding the elections will also be a major challenge, especially in states with very limited revenue generation capacities. There is little time to support the revision of legislation governing political parties and support the capacity-building of political parties that can build public support and effectively compete for elections. Mistrust also remains high among Somali clans, and conducting an election requires extensive civic education and reconciliation to avoid conflict around the processes.

In essence, an electoral infrastructure that would enable the conducting of district council elections in Somalia in one year's time does not yet exist. Failing to conduct the election after one year, which seems inevitable, would mean keeping the incumbent FMS leaders in office for an indefinite period as there is no clarity in the NCC agreement on the FMS presidents' terms if the first step of the district elections is not conducted on schedule.

This leads to the second issue - the NCC agreement ignores the different timelines and mandates stipulated in FGS and FMS constitutions, and in effect legitimizes term extensions across the majority of the FMSs (except Hirshabelle) and hints at the same for the FGS. As well as going against existing constitutional frameworks, this can run counter to democratic principles, and would need widespread political and public consensus to avoid creating instability. For now, it risks speculation that such agreements have not been made in good faith. An alternative measure to manage these challenges effectively may be a sequenced approach that allows the FGS to focus its efforts on FGS elections and dealing with FMS elections separately as guided by the FMS constitutions.

Third, these electoral timelines ignore the specific political dynamics and settlements in each FMS. The agreement fails to adequately consider the deep political fault lines that exist at the FMS level, thereby undermining previous agreements. For example, the recent Southwest State's Baidoa agreement in February of this year agreed that the Southwest State's Presidential elections would be held in December 2023 in order to reduce instability in the state. Each FMS deals with critical inclusion and representation issues differently, and the rapid introduction of OPOV elections could risk major conflicts.
The NCC election agreement also proposes a move away from the current semi-parliamentary system to a presidential system, eliminating the role of the Prime Minister and changing it to a Vice Presidency. The President and the Vice President will be elected on a joint ticket by the public. The system of government has continued to be one of the contentious political issues in Somalia. At the federal level, Somalia has only had a presidential system during the 21 years of military rule. The pre-1969 civilian government (the first republic) and the governments that came to power from 2000 (the third republic) have to date had a president and prime minister. At the FMS level, Somalia applies a semi-presidential system. Puntland, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle have Presidents and Vice Presidents elected by state legislators. Southwest has no Vice President as yet, while Jubaland has two appointed Vice Presidents. The common denominator is that the parliament elected the presidents, which makes the system a mixture of presidential and parliamentary systems.

There are several challenges associated with this shift towards a presidential system. First, the proposed presidential system would eliminate the role of the prime minister. While this might bring political stability and avoid a rift between the President and Prime Minister in the future, it might also lead to a more autocratic rule in the absence of strong opposition political parties. Avoiding a system that produces a strong President was one of the main reasons behind the introduction of a Prime Minister who has significant executive powers. The proposed change will also remove the role of parliament in electing the President, potentially adding to the President’s powers, by reducing the reach of parliamentary oversight.

Second, although the provisional federal constitution is in a review process, it has provisions that outline the role of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers (Articles 97 to 104). Moving to a presidential system requires a broader consensus among political stakeholders as well as a referendum on the Constitution. While the parliament would deliberate the issue, the buy-in and support of other political stakeholders, a review of the constitution, and a referendum would be vital for such decisions to change the current government system. Indeed, changing the system of government could be considered an unnecessary complication in the already complex process of agreeing an election design.
The NCC agreed on the establishment of a new 15-member National Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission. The FGS would appoint three members while each FMS and the Benadir Regional Administration (BRA) would each appoint two. The names were scheduled to be submitted within a month of signing this agreement, which is 27 June 2024. This election body would be responsible for the electoral processes and related security.

This new agreement on the electoral body departs from the structure of the previous National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) established in 2015. It changes the number of committee members from 9 to 15. It also invites FMSs to appoint 2 members each for the committee. In principle, this would allow a more federated election management body, where the FGS and FMSs would share influence over its appointment. It would also sidestep the need to have Election Management Bodies (EMBs) at the FMS level as well, which would pose major challenges to capacity, coherence and coordination in elections.

There are several other challenges related to the newly agreed election body. First, the NCC agreement allows only 30 days for the NCC members to submit members of the election body. It rules out any opportunity for the parliament to deliberate on the election agreement. It also ignores efforts to reflect the agreement in relevant laws.

Second, the legal framework governing the establishment of the electoral body needs to be revised, including the constitution. Even if a political agreement has been reached on the structure of the election body, it would be important to revise the NIEC establishment act, reflect on the agreement, and approve the legislation before appointing members of the body. Moreover, the constitution mandates that the NIEC should have only nine members – this would need to be changed, to ensure the body is clearly grounded in law.

Third, it risks creating a politicized and dysfunctional body where both FGS and FMS leaders appoint political confidants, whose main focus is to control the process, rather than lead on technical implementation.

Fourth, the agreement does not clarify exactly how these members would be selected. NIEC members were approved by the parliament in 2015 after they were appointed by the former FGS administration; the parliament then voted for the 9 members one by one. This gave the body the legitimacy to operate independently from the executive since they were endorsed and voted on by the parliament. The new NCC election agreement does not clarify how members of the new election and boundaries body would be approved.
Fifth, the proposed new body would work both on elections and boundaries. There is already a constitutional Independent Boundaries and Federation Commission. The NCC agreement did not suggest whether this commission would be dissolved or not since the electoral commission would also deal with boundaries.

Finally, the term of office of the 15 commissioners is not clear in the NCC agreement. This is often defined in the establishment acts. The NIEC had a 6-year non-renewable term limit for its 9-member commissioners.
ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

The NCC agreement raises several broader concerns that require extensive political dialogue and consensus before the agreement can be implemented.

Lack of constitutionality and clear connection with the constitutional review: The NCC election agreement sparked a debate on constitutionalism. The members of the NCC are executive leaders who did not come to power through democratic elections, and the body is not explicitly mandated by the federal constitution. The agreement contradicts key articles of the provisional federal constitution such as the structure of the government (parliamentary system), multiparty democracy, and mandate of the president and parliament. The agreement also ignores the FMS constitutions and provides an undefined extension to the current terms of FMS presidents. The hasty process leading up to the NCC agreement, particularly the lack of broader consultation on important constitutional matters has therefore raised some concerns about the function and the credibility of the NCC. Some of the provisions of the agreement also do not appear to take into account the need to operate within constitutional frameworks. For example, the NCC asked for an implementation of elements of the agreement such as the appointment of the election management body within 30 days despite the need to change relevant legislation and the constitution to do this legally.

Crucial will be working out how such agreements now go through formal constitutionally-mandated constitution review (by The Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission [ICRIC] and the Parliamentary Oversight Committee [POC]) and legislative processes. Although this has been recognized as a priority, parliamentary leadership was not part of the NCC, nor was parliament consulted in the process. Therefore, once passed to the parliament for review, organized groups within the parliament might change core elements of the NCC agreement as was the case in 2020 when the proportional representation closed list electoral model was changed to First-Past-The-Post. This could lead to new tensions between the executive and parliament.

The absence of Puntland: Puntland President Said Abdullahi Deni has not been part of the recent NCC agreements on power allocation, judiciary model, fiscal federalism, National Security Architecture, or elections. The absence of Puntland weakens the legitimacy of the NCC decisions. The NCC election agreement sets the date for elections of the district councilors (30 June 2024) and FMSs parliaments and presidents (30 November 2024). But, by its own existing schedule, the Puntland presidential election is expected to take place in January 2024 in a process that is entirely different from the one agreed in Mogadishu on 27 May. This would mean that the agreement cannot be implemented in Puntland and is only relevant in south and central regions.
A lack of consultation and feedback: More broadly, the agreement has been criticized for a lack of consultation, especially as it has introduced ideas that have not been widely discussed before, such as the two-party political system. In response, opposition groups issued letters and opposed the agreement except for the general principle of moving towards one-person-one-vote elections. The agreement may hasten opposition regrouping and stiff opposition to the government agenda early, which could lead to the government slowing down its action on its other priorities (aside from elections) due to this political pressure. Opposition was also raised amongst various FMS political groupings, and the agreement lacked wider public consultation.

Mixing several issues: The NCC agreement is more than an election agreement. It touches on political parties, the system of government, the electoral management body, and state elections. These issues are defined in the federal and state constitutions and several other laws. It would have been useful if the NCC separated these different, but related discussions and clarified the process that would be followed to legalize these agreements.
CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WAY FORWARD

The NCC election agreement will at some point be debated in the two chambers of Somalia's parliament. We present several policy considerations that can be considered.

**On Political Parties:** First, there is a need to have an extensive political dialogue on the number of political parties Somalia should have. This has been a major issue in both Somaliland and Puntland. Subsequently, the parliament should review the current Political Parties' Law (Law No. 19 of 27 June 2016) and revise the 12 requirements for permanent political parties outlined in Article 6 of the law, which stipulates ten thousand (10,000) signatories who are registered voters in at least nine of the eighteen Somalia regions that existed before 1991. Key issues to highlight here include separating the national political parties and state political parties. The national political parties law focuses on only national elections. It would prioritize options and approaches that enable multiple parties to qualify to become full political parties. A total of 5,000 registered voters in 3 or 4 Federal Member States may be a more reasonable approach to reduce the current number of political parties (110) but also facilitate the permanent registration of viable and effective political parties in Somalia. Alternatively, the parliament could eliminate the permanent registration option. If the electoral model is a Proportional Representation, Closed List, and Single National Constituency, provisional political parties could participate in the national parliamentary elections. However, a condition would be (and this could be clarified in the National Electoral Law) that political parties must receive at least 7% of the total votes to be eligible to obtain seats in the parliament. The political parties that fail to garner 7% or more of the total votes would then be dissolved.

**On the Electoral Model:** The Proportional Representation, Closed List, and a Single National Constituency could work in Somalia as it addresses key questions such as insecure areas and voting in Somaliland. However, it may be valuable to consider the advantages of state-level constituencies, especially to persuade Puntland to come on board. Moreover, a key detail to clarify would be how the electoral model ensures inclusivity. Any electoral model that requires direct elections would most likely disrupt the 4.5 power-sharing formula that has been in practice since 2000. Inclusivity, particularly of less dominant clans and women, should be clarified, through processes such as zebra listing. The NCC agreement would necessitate the parliament to revise the current National Electoral Law. The zebra listing could also be included in the parliamentary review process.
On Election Harmonization and Timelines: The federal government and parliament have jurisdiction over only federal elections while state elections are under the jurisdiction of state authorities. The parliament should first separate the processes for national and sub-national elections. The existing federal election and Political Parties’ Laws do not address district and state legislators’ elections. The state elections should be left to the states to address, except for key areas of harmonization such as voter registration and political party development. This can also allow states to develop realistic and incremental roadmaps to state-level OPOV elections recognizing the complexity of the process. Importantly, any agreement on term extensions should flow from inclusive FMS-level dialogues, and if agreed should be reflected in the FMS constitutions. This may also be necessary at an FGS-level as well. Any agreement to change the terms of the parliament and president should ideally start from the next government.

On the Electoral Management Body: First, the parliament may request the executive leaders to halt the appointment of commissioners within 30 days as stated in the NCC electoral agreement until a legal framework is set for the election body. Second, the parliament should revise the current NIEC establishment Act, to reflect the NCC agreement, and create a legal framework for the election and boundaries commission. As part of this process, there should be a real sustained dialogue on the role of the national election management body, vis-à-vis existing state-level bodies – the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) and the Galmudug Independent Electoral Commission (GIEC) respectively – to consider how best to implement elections at various levels using existing capacities.

On the Political System: Moving away from the parliamentary system to a presidential system is a decision that requires a collective broad-based agreement. This should be entirely separate from the election debates. It is a constitutional matter that has no direct impact on electoral processes. Whether Somalia has a presidential or a parliamentary system, the priority should be holding elections. The Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission (ICRIC) and the Parliamentary Oversight Committee (OC) could organize parliamentary debates and public discussions on the subject and reflect on the constitution. Changing the current government system will require a two-third majority voting of the two chambers of the federal parliament as well as a public referendum; once this is concluded, the decision would become binding.
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. 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.

What We Do

**Research:** Somali Public Agenda contributes to the understanding and improvement of public administration in Somalia through research and analysis on various issues that affect public policies and the provision of 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 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, policy-makers, and practitioners are invited to meet and discuss issues on equal terms. The Public Agenda Forum convenes dialogue with policy-makers 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, programmes, and projects with the relevant 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 Center for Learning and Development offers short training courses to contribute to the building of administrative cadres that can deliver public policies and programmes to the community. The Center for Learning and Development’s aim is 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 to join the public sector as well as professionals engaged in the civil service and non-profit sectors.