



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2023 was another productive year for Somali Public Agenda (SPA). We published a record 19 papers, held a new record of 24 forums, produced 24 podcast episodes, trained 39 bloggers, trained 18 humanitarian actors in fostering resilience in line with core humanitarian standards, started intensive 3-months long research training to young researchers, engaged and talked to local and international media, attended conferences and workshops, trained 4 interns, and started working with like-minded institutions.

In 2023, SPA conducted and published various extensive studies. We published a total of 19 papers including 4 [research reports](#), 1 [policy paper](#), 7 [governance briefs](#), and 7 [commentaries](#). This was by far the year with the most publications over the past six years. We undertook research and analysis on key governance and public service issues in Somalia including security, fiscal and service decentralization, durable solutions, public participation in political processes, the National Consultative Council (NCC) agreements on contentious political issues, education, and urban mobility.

SPA produced joint research reports with other research institutions in 2023. We published a study with the Rift Valley Institute (RVI)'s Somali Dialogue Platform on [expanding public participation in politics](#). SPA published a joint study with the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC) & Tana Copenhagen on [safety and security](#) in Mogadishu. We also co-published a study on [durable solutions capacities](#) in Kismayo and Afgoye with the Research and Evidence Facility (REF) led by SOAS University of London.

Moreover, SPA published a policy paper on the NCC election agreement. SPA published seven governance briefs on the NCC agreement on power allocation and judiciary, Hirshabelle political settlement, review of the national budget, the role of 4.5 in democratization and governance, the university foundation year, formation and functioning of local councils, and fiscal decentralization in Somalia. SPA also published seven commentaries on several governance and public service issues including the new bajaj rotation system, urban mobility complexities in Mogadishu, increasing rent prices in Mogadishu, and youth employability.

Our [Public Agenda Forum](#) organized a record 24 forums in 2023. We introduced bimonthly Off-the-record Discussions with policymakers. We convened forums online via X Spaces and in person. Over 700 participants attended our in-person forums while around 4000 tuned in to our X Spaces Discussions. Different governance and public service issues were discussed in these various forums including elections, public participation in Somalia's political process, peace, local

councils, education, security, accountability, and transparency in Somalia's public sector, service decentralization, debt relief, Mogadishu status, and climate change and natural disasters.

In 2023, we produced and released 24 podcast episodes. We introduced a video version of our podcasts. The [Maamul Wanaag Podcast](#) produced 12 episodes. The Maamul Wanaag Podcast delves deep into various governance matters in Somalia. The guests of the Maamul Wanaag Podcast broadly discussed and analyzed governance topics including local council elections in Puntland, Hirshabelle, and Jubaland political settlement, the federal government budget, the National Security Architecture (SNArch), Vision 2060, reconciliation and developments in LaasAnod.

SPA also published 12 [Adeeg Wanaag Podcast](#) episodes. Adeeg Wanaag discusses public service matters in Somalia in depth. The 12 episodes released in 2023 discussed youth employability, rent prices in Mogadishu, service decentralization, the university foundation year, local council formation, and the issuance of national IDs. In 2023, these two episodes were downloaded and listened to over 8340 times. That is almost triple of 3,100 downloads in 2022.

The [SPA Policy Lab](#) partnered with the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) on designing human-centered, evidence-based programmes for the displaced communities in Somalia. The SPA Policy Lab and ReDSS co-designed interventions that amplify the voices of minority IDPs in Mogadishu, Baidoa, and Kismayo that would allow them to have a greater impact on the decisions made about resources and aid that affect them. Moreover, in 2023, the SPA Policy Lab & The Policy Lab[®], based in Boston, USA, signed an MoU to collaborate on action research as well as designing & testing policies, programs & services.

The [SPA Center for Learning and Development \(CLD\)](#) conducted two successful blog writing trainings in January-February and July-August 2023 for 39 talented young bloggers. During the two training, trainees wrote over 160 blog posts and shared them with their social media networks. Throughout the eight weeks of the 4-week long training, eight renowned Somali bloggers mentored the trainees, shared their blogging journeys, and gave invaluable advice. Moreover, in partnership with RedR UK, the SPA Center for Learning and Development has successfully concluded a three-day Training of Trainers (ToT) course offered to humanitarian actors operating in Mogadishu and 4 Federal Member States namely Jubaland, Southwest, Galmudug & Hirshabelle. The training was conducted by certified RedR UK trainers. Further, after months of preparation, the SPA Center for Learning and Development has started a 3-months-long practical research training course for young researchers in mid-October 2023.

Four interns (one male and three female) completed three-month internships in 2023. The interns contributed to the work of the different SPA departments and research productions. The internship provides much-needed experience for recent

university graduates. Four interns who took the three-month-long internship wrote reflections (published on the SPA website) about their [internship experiences](#).

SPA maintained a collaborative relationship with our partners and donors and started new relationships. We are currently working with the Rift Valley Institute's [Somali Dialogue Platform](#) on research and engagement related to contentious political issues in Somalia. In 2023, we continued our working relationship with [the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat \(ReDSS\)](#) & [the Life and Peace Institute \(LPI\)](#), and the [Overseas Development Institute \(ODI\)](#). We started working with the [Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation \(CSV\)](#). We also strengthened our engagement and relationship with civil society organizations in Somalia.

We maintained a good relationship with the media. We were regularly interviewed by international and local media outlets. Somali Cable TV, Goobjoog TV, and Dalsan TV were some of the media houses that regularly interviewed or invited our team members to participate in debates. Le Monde quoted our researcher in an article on Türkiye in Somalia. Radio Centre-Ville in Canada interviewed one of our researchers. Local radios also started airing our podcasts in 2023.

Our researchers and analysts were invited to forums, workshops, and conferences including the Build Peace Conference held in Nairobi; a digital democracy workshop in Nairobi; the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC) grand meeting, in Dar es Salaam, where we presented the Mogadishu Safety & Security Domain study findings & joined plenary & working group discussions on lessons from city studies, cross-city & cross-domain findings, authorship & research uptake; seminar on 'Enhancing the Role of CSOs in Policy Advocacy for Financial Transparency & Accountability' organized by The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute (HESPI) in Addis Ababa; a workshop on strengthening the role of CSOs in IGAD member countries in mediation and peacebuilding processes organized by IGAD Mediation Support Unit in Rajaf, South Sudan; a workshop on the development of a national mediation strategy for Somalia organized by IGAD Mediation Support Unit in Garowe.

Our work also shaped policy-making in Somalia in 2023. SPA analysis and recommendations on the [NCC election agreement](#) led to high-level dialogue among current and former Somalia leaders. The Somali Public Agenda Policy Paper critically examined the 5 core points of the NCC election agreement, evaluating their strengths, and weaknesses. Our core recommendation for increased political dialogue was subsequently [taken up by the federal government](#). That the SPA Policy Paper's recommendations led to such important high-level dialogue among current and former Somalia leaders is evidence of the value of balanced analysis and constructive recommendations on key political decisions and policy matters in Somalia.

Contributing to our significant achievements in 2023, seven competent and committed core team members joined the organization over the last year. Each has contributed conscientiously to the work SPA performs. Our work in 2024 will focus on national elections, accountability and transparency, local council formation, reconciliation, durable solutions, transitional justice, and education. Studies, briefs, policy papers, commentaries, forums, and podcasts on these issues will be our priorities in 2024.

It has been an honor for me to lead our talented, youthful, and competent SPA team. Despite the limited human capital and financial resources, security concerns, and other challenges of 2023, SPA has been able to consistently produce high-quality papers and create a space for important discussions both online and in person.

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

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

KEY 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



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ABOUT SPA

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: Somali citizens are able to access public services that are responsive, evidence-based, and inclusive.

Mission: To increase the capacity of Somali governance institutions, civil society, and international partners to deliver effective public services to Somali citizens.

Our History

Somali Public Agenda is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit think and action tank based in Mogadishu, Somalia, that works to advance the delivery of responsive, evidence-based, and inclusive public services in Somalia. Founded on 10 January 2018 in Somalia, the Somali Public Agenda's analytical work started with monthly commentaries published in both English and Somali languages in 2018.

SPA's work and focus expanded gradually over the years. In 2019, the Somali Public Agenda introduced Governance Briefs. In 2020, SPA started conducting in-depth studies across Somalia. In 2022, the Somali Public Agenda introduced Policy Papers as the fourth type of publication. In six years, between January 2018 and December 2023, the Somali Public Agenda published a total of 85 publications: 42 commentaries, 26 governance briefs, 5 policy papers, and 12 research reports.

To realize SPA's objective of co-designing policies and services with public and civic institutions as well as building capacity in the public sector, two centers were introduced in August 2020. The SPA Policy Lab was launched to become the action research center that helps public institutions design human-centered public policies and services. The center has a director and has been doing action research and co-designing work on governance and service matters in Somalia.

Moreover, the SPA Center for Learning and Development was launched in August 2020. The center has a director and introduced a flagship blog writing training for the Somali youth. The center also introduced research training and started to build capacity in the public sector.

The Public Agenda Forum created a much-needed space for dialogue among Somali stakeholders. The Public Agenda Forum together with Maamul Wanaag and Adeeg Wanaag podcasts creates a space for discussions and dialogue on key governance and public service matters in Somalia. ‘SPA Podcasts’ were started in mid-2019. In August 2021, our podcasts were rearranged; the previous name was changed and the new Maamul Wanaag podcast was launched. This podcast delves deep into various governance matters in Somalia. On October 1, 2022, Adeeg Wanaag Podcast was launched. The Adeeg Wanaag Podcast’s episodes focus on discussions and analysis of service issues in Somalia.

The SPA team has been growing gradually. Several graduates from our flagship internship programme became full-time members of the executive team. SPA’s work is primarily led by youth who studied and live in Somalia. Our headquarters is in Mogadishu. However, SPA’s work in Federal Member States has been increasing since 2020. The combination of research and analysis, dialogue, podcasts, co-design policies, and services with public and civic institutions, and providing training to workers in the public and nonprofit sectors is designed to amplify citizens’ voices and positively impact policy-making and service delivery in Somalia.

Our Approach

To advance the understanding and improvement of public services and governance in Somalia, we apply policy-oriented and evidence-based research. We convene dialogue and podcasts and create a space to discuss key governance matters in Somalia. We co-design public programmes and projects at both the service delivery and policy-making levels with public and civic institutions. We also conduct practical and sustainable training on governance and service delivery.

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: Public Agenda Forum 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. The [Public Agenda Forum](#) 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](#).

Public Service Design: 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 [Center for Learning and Development](#) offers training courses to contribute to the building of administrative cadres that can deliver public policies and programmes to the community. Moreover, the center 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. The thematic areas for the professional training programmes are:

1. Leadership & Good Governance
2. Human Resources Management
3. Information Management and Data Science
4. Public Policy Planning
5. Public Budgeting
6. Public Finance Management
7. Planning and Programmes Management
8. Monitoring and Evaluations
9. Strategic Communication and Public Relations
10. Bespoke Courses for Public and Civic Institutions

RESEARCH OUTPUTS AND PUBLICATIONS

2023 was a productive year for Somali Public Agenda. We published a record 19 papers. This was by far the year with the most publications over the past six years. SPA conducted and published various extensive studies. Our 19 papers included 4 research reports, 1 policy paper, 7 governance briefs, and 7 commentaries. We undertook research and analysis on key governance and public service issues in Somalia including security, fiscal and service decentralization, durable solutions, public participation in political processes, the National Consultative Council (NCC) agreements on contentious political issues, education, and urban mobility.

Research Reports

During 2023, SPA produced 4 reports. SPA produced joint research reports with other research institutions in 2023. We published a study with the Rift Valley Institute (RVI)'s Somali Dialogue Platform on expanding public participation in politics. SPA published a joint study with the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC) & Tana Copenhagen on safety and security in Mogadishu. We also co-published a study on durable solutions capacities in Kismayo and Afgoye with the Research and Evidence Facility (REF) led by SOAS University of London.



Safety and Security in Mogadishu

The first report was published in March, in collaboration with the African Cities Research Consortium. This study delves into the [intricacies of insecurity in Mogadishu](#). The city's instability is rooted in a volatile 'political marketplace,' urban property disputes, and the government's struggle to provide effective services. Focusing on the Hodan and Kahda districts, the research highlights distinct security concerns, such as Al Shabaab attacks in Hodan and widespread robbery in Kahda, especially affecting vulnerable populations in IDP camps. The study identifies pervasive inequalities in gender, social class, and clan affiliations, impacting exposure to violence and access to resources. Notably, emerging trends

include a shift in public concern towards youth-related crimes, necessitating further research on the role of urban inequalities and youth unemployment. The police face challenges balancing counter-terrorism and community engagement, with initiatives' success linked to the prevalence of Al Shabaab in specific areas. Community-police relations vary, with police perceived both as sources of security and insecurity. Displaced populations, particularly in informal settlements, grapple with security vulnerabilities tied to social belonging, discrimination, and patriarchal norms. Urban residents' perceptions of safety are shaped by past experiences of evolving violence, suggesting a need for mental-health-focused research to understand the cumulative impacts of security threats, such as the apparent rise in armed robbery.

Decentralizing Taxation and Public Services to Local Governments in Somalia: Findings from Puntland, Galmudug, And Benadir

The second report was published in March. This study assesses [fiscal and service delivery decentralization in Puntland, Galmudug, and Benadir](#). Covering nine districts across these regions, the research emphasizes the need for effective devolution in support of Somalia's federalized state-building endeavors. The study reveals that Puntland possesses legal frameworks for decentralization, but it remains largely unimplemented. Similarly, Galmudug lacks complete legal and policy instruments for local-level decentralization. Both regions withhold powers from local governments, citing concerns about their capability. However, local officials dispute this, alleging fear of losing financial resources by higher authorities. Federal Member States (FMSs) collect local taxes but often fail to allocate revenue to local governments, impacting service delivery, notably in Benadir. Only a few locations, including Garowe, Galkacyo, and Qardho, have functional financial systems and accountability mechanisms. Others lack crucial structures, hindering effective governance. The study also highlights challenges faced by local governments, such as limited technical capacity, high staff turnover, and insufficient revenue mobilization.

In response to these findings, the study recommends several actions. FMSs, with support from the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and donors, should enhance local government capacity for effective service delivery. Establishing clear timelines and action plans for fiscal and service decentralization in FMSs, particularly where it has existed on paper for an extended period, is crucial. Allocating a specified percentage of domestically raised revenue and federal transfers to local governments is recommended to ensure regular and formalized resource sharing. Collaborative efforts among FMSs, local government officials, civil society, and supporting organizations are needed to raise awareness about the role and functioning of local governments.

Examining the durable solutions capacities in Kismayo and Afgoye

The third report was published in June, in collaboration with the Research and Evidence Facility. This research delves into the [dynamics of durable solutions](#) in two key cities: Kismayo in Jubaland and Afgoye in South West. The study delves into five key areas: assessing federal-level initiatives, unraveling coordination mechanisms, understanding community priorities amid displacement, examining the impact of climate change on solutions, and exploring the involvement of NGOs, donors, and the private sector.

The study presented key recommendations and action points for the different sectors. For the government, it suggests establishing local durable solutions units at municipal levels. Improved collaboration between federal and member state levels, especially regarding engagement with the EU, is emphasized to build trust and enhance communication. Settlement schemes for internally displaced persons (IDPs), promoting decentralized job creation, and addressing national security concerns are also recommended. The study advocates for funding programs to respond to climate change, proposing a trust fund coordinated with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Aid transparency efforts, accountability, and good governance are highlighted to prevent disputes over donor funding. NGOs are advised to reorganize cash distribution, tailor interventions for IDPs and returnees, construct football pitches for integration and enhance capacity. For the private sector, the study recommends increased engagement in resilience and development plans, collaboration with NGOs in skills training, advancing access to education and healthcare, and supporting financing for small businesses in displaced communities. EU involvement in these efforts is considered crucial for sustainable solutions.

Expanding public participation in political processes in Somalia

The fourth and final report of 2023 was published in partnership with the Somali Dialogue Platform in July. This study delves into the possibilities and challenges of [enhancing public engagement in Somali politics](#). It identifies factors hindering meaningful public participation, including top-down peace processes, insecurity eroding public confidence, the exclusivity of the 4.5 system, a closed political space dominated by a wealthy class, the absence of a multi-party system, and low civic education levels. While barriers persist, the report identifies emerging avenues for citizen engagement, such as the use of social media, public demonstrations leading to policy changes, interactions during elections, political leaders leveraging public consultation in negotiations, and clan consultations around political processes. The recommendations emphasize direct citizen involvement in discussions and the constitutional review process, with a focus on engaging universities and youth groups. The report suggests creating both in-person and online forums for dialogue between government and citizens, expanding civic education, strengthening media for objective reporting, supporting civil society capacity, encouraging candidate-public engagement, empowering women and youth, moving towards

a multi-party system, and urging external actors to promote inclusive political processes while avoiding initiatives that diminish local ownership.

Policy Papers

During the 2023 year, SPA produced only one Policy paper.

Review and Analysis of The Controversial National Consultative Council (NCC) Agreement on Elections

In June 2023, SPA published a policy paper on the [NCC election agreement](#). On 27 May 2023, after three days of meeting in Mogadishu, members of the National Consultative Council (NCC) – except 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.

Governance Briefs

SPA produced a record 7 governance briefs in 2023, more than double the briefs we published in 2022. SPA published governance briefs on the NCC agreement on power allocation and the judiciary, the Hirshabelle political settlement, a review of the national budget, the role of 4.5 in democratization and governance, the university foundation year, the formation and functioning of local councils, and fiscal decentralization in Somalia.



Agreements on power allocation and the judiciary through Somalia's National Consultative Council: how to move beyond the current political impasse

The first governance brief was published in February. In late December 2022, the NCC agreed on the [judiciary model for Somalia and the power allocation arrangement](#) and had scheduled for late February 2023 deliberations on other contentious political issues including elections and fiscal federalism. However, Puntland withdrew from the NCC after the agreements on power allocation and judiciary model and froze its role in the NCC. The FGS leadership sees this political forum as a suitable platform that meets once every two months to discuss and agree on the key contentious political issues in Somalia that have crippled the review and completion of the provisional federal constitution. This governance brief examines the NCC agreements on the judiciary model and power allocation. It explores the further challenges it faces and puts forward several policy considerations.

Hirshabelle's political settlement Opportunities for meaningful and inclusive political processes

The second governance brief was published in February in partnership with the Somali Dialogue Platform. Unstable dynamics have rendered the Hirshabelle state government dysfunctional, hindering any prospect of development and good governance. Such dynamics arise from the absence of a sustainable and inclusive political settlement in the state—that is, a shared understanding of and commitment to the exercise of power, in which political actors share a basic agreement on which institutions hold what power, and how these powers can be peacefully contested. While it is clear that Hirshabelle's political actors remain deeply divided over such questions, the new military campaigns ongoing in the state, once concluded, may create an opportunity to establish stronger political fundamentals. This [policy brief](#), based on extensive empirical research, therefore provides an overview of the contentious issues at play before outlining a possible framework for transforming the political settlement.

Review of the Federal Government of Somalia's Near Billion-dollar Budget for 2023

The third governance brief was published in March. The federal government of [Somalia's budget for 2023](#) was approved by the parliament in a joint session on December 28, 2022. The 2022 budget totals \$977 million, a 4 percent increase on last year's \$929 million budget. Although the theme of this year's budget is 'Relying on Our Domestic Revenue', 68 percent of the budget (\$667 million) is expected from donors through project support (\$496 million, or 74 percent) and budget support (\$170 million, or 25 percent), while domestic revenue is \$283 million, or 29 percent. 26.6 percent of the budget goes to social service delivery; 20 percent goes to defense and security sector institutions; and 17 percent is allocated to economic development institutions. This brief analyzes the 2023 federal budget and its main allocations for the administration, security, social services, and economic

development sectors. Finally, the brief outlines key recommendations including increasing accountability, building public trust, improving social services, encouraging domestic production and international trade, and expediting the debt relief process.

The role of 4.5 in democratization and governance in Somalia: Implications and considerations for the way forward

The fourth governance brief was published in May in partnership with the Somali Dialogue Platform. Amid the major changes to Somalia's political landscape seen over the past two decades, an abiding feature has been the reliance on clan-based power-sharing models, including the '4.5' formula. Despite the Somali Provisional Constitution containing no reference to the formula, it continues to determine the allocation of seats to clans in the Federal Parliament's House of the People (HoP) and Council of Ministers. Related clan power-sharing arrangements are in place in the Upper House, within key national leadership positions, in the political dispensation of the Federal Member States (FMSs), and at the local level. [This brief](#) aims to promote and inform such discussions on 4.5, as well as clan-based power-sharing arrangements more generally.

Analysis of the University 'Foundation Year' Directive: Substance, Concerns, Consequences, and Policy Considerations

The fifth governance brief was published in September. Considering the persistent challenges underlying the quality of higher education in Somalia, the FGS Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education proclaimed, on 16 August 2023, [a directive authorizing the introduction of a 'foundation year'](#) that would precede the university undergraduate first year and will take effect in this academic year 2023/2024. The directive was issued at a sensitive time when the start of the new academic year was only a few days away. This governance brief analyses the concerns and criticisms related to the directive, and explores the potential consequences it could have on students, parents, and universities. The brief also looks at the possible positive outcomes that the new instruction could have for students and universities. The brief concludes with policy recommendations that include, among others, that the Ministry put in place the necessary bureaucratic mechanisms to address the higher education quality, including a separate higher education law, and an effective national higher education commission, which remains transitional and inactive; the Ministry of Education needs to base its decision on legislation that provides such conditions to guarantee its universal application.

Examining the formation and functioning of local councils in Galmudug & HirShabelle

The sixth governance brief was published in October. Although the formation of the Federal Member States (FMSs) was concluded in 2016 (except for Puntland) less attention has been paid and less progress has been made on forming district

councils (DCs). The few district councils formed so far, according to the preliminary findings of our ongoing study, are facing formidable challenges that block them from discharging their primary responsibilities. There also remain considerable hindrances towards forming DCs in accessible urban districts. With that said, this [governance brief presents preliminary findings](#) for an ongoing study on district council formation, functioning, and way forward in Galmudug, Hirshabelle, and South West states. The findings in this paper only deal with Galmudug and Hirshabelle as data collection is yet to be concluded in Southwest. The brief discusses the current status of DCs in Galmudug and Hirshabelle; challenges to the DC formation process in Galmudug and Hirshabelle; key issues hindering DC formation in accessible urban centers in Hirshabelle and to a lesser extent in Galmudug; and major Challenges to the functionality of the formed DCs in both FMS. Finally, the brief concludes with recommendations. These include the need for existing local governments to demonstrate integrity and prudence as a key for the local business community to pay taxes; that for legitimate and functioning DCs to form, state government must allocate adequate time and available resources to establish a single DC and allow relevant communities to engage in the process, discuss issues seriously and reach compromises.

The state of fiscal decentralization to local governments in Somalia

The final governance brief was published in November 2023. Decentralization has been emerging as a policy issue in Somalia since 2012. However, it has not been a dominant concern, in comparison to other problems that have overwhelmed policy forums of the executive and legislative branches in both the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS). One expectation from the federal arrangement was that power would be decentralized to lower levels to enable local communities to effectively participate in deciding matters of their particular concerns, including devising local-level policies that reflect their immediate needs, such as the collecting local taxes and provision of essential services. However, these expectations remain an unobtained dream as new and long-standing local governments in FMSs still don't engage in collecting taxes that are, in theory, set out in their respective local government acts. Instead, only the Finance Ministries of the FMSs collect revenue, and this has rendered local governments largely nominal structures that are unable to respond to the needs of their constituencies. This [governance brief sheds light on the state of fiscal decentralization](#) in Puntland, Galmudug, and Benadir. The brief specifically analyzes the budgets they operate; the financial systems they use for collecting and dispensing expenditure; and whether there are fiscal transfers from state governments to local governments. The brief also highlights key obstacles to fiscal decentralization in local government. Lastly, the brief recommends, among other things, that FMSs provide fiscal transfers to local governments to be able to deliver some services to their population and set deadlines for the devolution of fiscal powers to local governments to collect taxes and translate these into services.

Commentaries

SPA published seven commentaries in 2023. The SPA commentaries shed light on several governance and public service issues including the new bajaj rotation system, urban mobility complexities in Mogadishu, increasing rent prices in Mogadishu, and youth employability.

1. Youth Employability: Is the Quality Deficit of Higher Education Contributing to Youth Unemployment in Mogadishu?
2. Mogadishu's Spiraling House Rents: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions
3. Urban Mobility Complexities in Mogadishu
4. Accessing Government Identification Documents in Mogadishu
5. Marginalization and Social Cohesion among Minoritized Clan Groups and Dominant Groups, Aid Actors, and Local Authorities in Mogadishu
6. How the neglect of public goods in Buulaburte epitomizes Somalia's state of governance
7. Mobility and Security in Mogadishu: Examining the New Bajaj Rotation System

PROGRAMMES AND CENTERS

SPA Policy Lab

The SPA Policy Lab is a research and action center at the Somali Public Agenda (SPA). The Lab's main objective is to assist public and civic institutions in Somalia in designing human-centered, evidence-based policies and services using context-specific design tools and primary data.

Somalia's governance system has been recovering over the past decade, following the protracted civil war in 1991. Government institutions that provide public services have been reinstated gradually. However, public institutions still face significant challenges in designing effective policies due to a lack of human resources. Moreover, policies and services developed by the public sector in Somalia are seldom customized to meet the needs of citizens. The donors' interests and satisfaction play a significant role in shaping policies and service provisions, as they provide more than half of the government budget through project support.

Further, Somalia receives billions of dollars in official development assistance, most of which comes from projects run by international organizations. However, these projects are designed by foreign professionals who may not have a clear understanding of the local population's actual needs. Moreover, it is crucial to consider the social and cultural values of the community while designing these projects. Therefore, the SPA Policy Lab, with its diverse team of design researchers, strategists, and network of experts, was founded to help design policies and services for Somalia's public and civic institutions, as well as international organizations, in an innovative and contextually appropriate manner.

For the design of policies and services, the SPA Policy Lab collaborated with the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) to design human-centered and evidence-based solutions for displaced communities in Somalia. The SPA Policy Lab co-designed an innovative solution that amplifies the voices of minority IDPs in Mogadishu, Baidoa, and Kismayo to allow them to have a greater impact on the decisions made about resources and aid that affect them.

Moreover, the SPA Policy Lab has collaborated with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) on a research project on transitional justice. The project examines formal and informal cases, including the national reconciliation framework. The findings and recommendations from this research initiative will be used in designing a human-centered and locally-owned transitional justice process.

In January 2023, the SPA Policy Lab & The Policy Lab[®], based in Boston, USA, signed an MoU to collaborate on action research as well as designing & testing policies, programs & services. Moreover, the SPA Policy Lab started collaboration

and engagement with similar organizations to address design issues and share experiences. The Public Policy Lab, based in New York, cooperated with the SPA Policy Lab in developing design skills and shared their expertise in design tools. Besides, the SPA Policy Lab has engaged with esteemed institutions that specialize in evidence-based policy design, including the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the EU Policy Lab, to explore potential opportunities for knowledge sharing and collaboration and build partnerships.

Apart from collaborating with like-minded organizations, the SPA Policy Lab has engaged with various public and civic institutions, discussing them working closely together and developing and designing policies and services jointly. Such public and civic organizations include the Poverty Reduction and Durable Solutions Department of the Ministry of Planning, Investment & Economic Development, Benadir Regional Administration's Directorate of Planning, Investment & Economic Development, the Durable Solutions Units of Benadir Regional Administration and the Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development of Galmudug State of Somalia, the National Identification & Registration Authority (NIRA), and Qatar Charity. This collaborative approach has allowed the Lab to gain a deeper understanding of the needs and challenges faced by these institutions and to create tailored solutions that address the services they are mandated to deliver.

The SPA Policy Lab serves to expand Somalia's understanding and expertise in policy and service design by providing citizens, policymakers, and international stakeholders with comprehensive knowledge and information on the latest developments in these fields. Accordingly, the Lab has produced a commentary that discusses promoting social cohesion between marginalized and dominant groups in Mogadishu and addressing the barriers that exacerbate their social distance. The commentary was composed based on the views of marginalized IDP groups, which ultimately led the SPA Policy Lab to design a human-centered solution mechanism to amplify the impact of minority voices among IDPs. The mechanism aims to ensure that decisions made about resources and aid that affect IDPs in Mogadishu, Baidoa, and Kismayo are inclusive of their perspectives.

Over the past couple of years, the SPA Policy Lab has been working tirelessly on developing design tools that could revolutionize how public and civic institutions approach policy and service design. The development of these tools is expected to be completed in the coming year, and the Lab is gearing up to test and operate it to design interventions that will benefit the Somali people.

Centre for Learning and Development

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

In 2023, the center conducted four training sessions. The first, a blog writing training, took place twice: in January-February and July-August. During the initial session in January, 52 applicants applied, and after screening, 24 candidates were shortlisted. Of these, 16 trainees successfully completed the one-month training, each crafting 4 mandatory blog posts. The resulting 48 blogs underwent a review process before being published on individual sites



The second training session, held from July to August, attracted 23 applicants sponsored by the [Digital Shelter](#), all of whom were considered and shortlisted. All 23 trainees completed the 4-week program, collectively publishing 66 blogs. Each participant contributed 4 blogs, meeting the minimum requirement. In total, 114 blogs were published, with some students continuing to write and publish on their sites.

Additionally, the Center for Learning and Development enlisted 8 mentors, assigning 4 to each session. Selected for their blogging expertise, each mentor dedicated one hour weekly to share personal experiences and tips, enhancing participants' blogging skills and effective communication. Upon completing each training, participants received completion certificates, encouraging them to pursue more advanced writing exercises through blogging.

The second training, a three-day Training of Trainees (TOT) on capacity building for humanitarian actors in fostering resilience in line with core humanitarian standards, was conducted in collaboration with RedR UK from September 11th to 13th. 65 individuals applied and underwent a screening process, and 20 candidates were shortlisted based on meeting training requirements. From this group, 18 trainees successfully completed the three-day program, earning recognition through completion certificates.



In October 2023, the Center launched a three-month intensive research methodology training, which has been in preparation for months, to enhance and hone the research capacity of Somali young people who are interested in the research but lack the training opportunity. The graduates are expected to contribute to the local knowledge production and take a role in the research activities being undertaken at home and beyond. The training is due to be concluded in early January 2024.

Public Agenda Forum

The Public Agenda Forum (PAF) is a platform and space for discussions on governance and public service issues in Somalia. The PAF focuses on a wide range of issues that affect the public in the areas of, among others, public administration and public services and serves as an avenue for critical examinations of issues of public priority, as well as creating a space to disseminate SPA research and analysis and enable policymakers and civil society to exchange ideas while also generating data and ideas that inform SPA analysis. Generally, PAF creates five main dialogue spaces, namely On-the-record Forums, Dissemination Forums, Gaxwo & Gorfeyn, X Spaces Discussions, and newly introduced Off-the-record Discussions.

The platform had a successful year in 2023. Around 700 participants attended our in-person events, which reached a new record of 24 forums, while around 4000 turned in our X Spaces Discussions. The annual sharp increase in participants shows how the Public Agenda Forum is contributing to the public's awareness of key critical issues of governance and public agendas in Somalia.

Our Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meetup, which brings together intellectuals—primarily youth—to discuss pertinent and current governance and service issues in Somalia, was held eleven times. Over 200 intellectuals attended these discussions, which are often held on the last Thursday of each month, with the participation of around 15 to 25 participants and without a keynote speaker.

On the other hand, the On-the-record Forums, Dissemination Forums, and Off-the-record Discussions greatly contributed to the platform's public engagement and dialogue convenings. Throughout these different forums and discussions, more than 500 intellectuals attended our events. Additionally, nearly 4,000 listeners tuned into four X Spaces discussions we held in 2023.

Different issues on governance and public service in Somalia were discussed in these various forums including elections, public participation in Somalia's political process, peace, local governments and their formation functionality, education, security, accountability, and transparency in Somalia's public sector, service decentralization, debt relief, Mogadishu status, and climate change and natural disasters.

Internships

In mid-2020, Somali Public Agenda initiated a 3-month internship program, designed to equip recent university graduates and last-year students with essential skills, particularly in research and writing. Four interns (one male and three female) completed three-month internships in 2023. The interns contributed to the work of the different SPA departments and research productions. The internship provides much-needed experience for recent university graduates. Four interns who took the three-month-long internship wrote reflections (published on the SPA website) about their internship experiences.

Since the program's inception in July 2020, more than 18 interns have graduated. Since 2022, the SPA internship alumni have engaged in a dedicated WhatsApp group. In August 2023, we held our second SPA Internship Alumni annual gathering. It was an opportunity to get our internship alumni to know each other, reflect on their internship experiences and how they helped them & get updates about the new SPA Center for Learning and Development reforms on the internship programme.



Podcasts

In 2023, we produced and released 24 podcast episodes. The Maamul Wanaag Podcast produced 12 episodes. The Maamul Wanaag Podcast delves deep into various governance matters in Somalia. The guests of the Maamul Wanaag Podcast broadly discussed and analyzed governance topics including local council elections in Puntland, Hirshabelle, and Jubaland political settlement, the federal government budget, the National Security Architecture (SNArch), vision 2060, reconciliation and developments in LaassAnod.

SPA also published 12 Adeeg Wanaag Podcast episodes. Adeeg Wanaag intensely discusses public service matters in Somalia. The 12 episodes released in 2023 discussed youth employability, rent prices in Mogadishu, service decentralization, the university foundation year, local council formation, and the issuance of national IDs.

In 2023, our two podcasts were downloaded and listened to over 8340 times. That is almost a triple the 3,100 times that our podcasts were downloaded and listened to in 2022. Since its introduction in mid-2019, our podcasts have been downloaded over 17,800 times.

Moreover, a video version of the podcasts was started in early 2023. The full podcast videos published on YouTube received over 6,000 views. We also shared short videos from the podcasts on social media primarily Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram. The combined views of these short videos were 85,075 including 46,030 views in TikTok, 1,792 views in Instagram & 36,393 views in Facebook, and 860 views in YouTube shorts. In total, the podcast audio and videos were downloaded or viewed close to 100,000 times.



OUTREACH AND IMPACT

SPA's online audience has increased in 2023. We maintained a good relationship with the media. We were regularly interviewed by international and local media outlets. Somali Cable TV, Goobjoog TV, and Dalsan TV were some of the media houses that regularly interviewed or invited our team members to participate in debates. Le Monde quoted our researcher in an article on Türkiye in Somalia. Radio Centre-Ville in Canada interviewed one of our researchers. Local radios also started airing our podcasts in 2023.

Our researchers and analysts were invited to forums, workshops, and conferences including the Build Peace Conference held in Nairobi; a digital democracy workshop in Nairobi; the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC) grand meeting, in Dar es Salaam, where we presented the Mogadishu Safety & Security Domain study findings & joined plenary & working group discussions on lessons from city studies, cross-city & cross-domain findings, authorship & research uptake; seminar on 'Enhancing the Role of CSOs in Policy Advocacy for Financial Transparency & Accountability' organized by The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute (HESPI) in Addis Ababa; a workshop on strengthening the role of CSOs in IGAD member countries in mediation and peacebuilding processes organized by IGAD Mediation Support Unit in Rajaf, South Sudan; a workshop on the development of a national mediation strategy for Somalia organized by IGAD Mediation Support Unit in Garowe.

Our audience and outreach increased in 2023. Our website security was tightened and the SPA work was widely found online through searches. Our Twitter followers increased to 7,981 from 7,252 in 2022. Our Facebook page followers increased from 33,500 in 2022 to 39,181 followers in 2023. The number of followers on our LinkedIn page significantly increased from 2,690 in 2022 to 5,502 followers in 2023. The number of followers of our TikTok account increased from 480 followers in 2022 to 2,544 followers in 2023. Our Instagram followers reached 1,585 followers by the end of 2023. Our YouTube channel subscribers increased to 809 by the end of 2023. We created a Threads account in 2023, which has 238 followers. A new Telegram account was also created, which had 202 subscribers by the end of 2023. The subscribers of our mailing list reached 1,642 emails. Moreover, the SPA podcasts also significantly increased in 2023. 24 podcasts were produced. Our podcasts were downloaded over 8340 times in 2023.

We started a monthly bulletin in October 2023. The monthly newsletter is a news bulletin that covers SPA activities in the past month including reports, or briefs released, forums held, design projects worked on, important meetings or conferences participated, and the number of media appearances and SPA citations/quotes of that month. It is sent by the end of each month. It updates the growing SPA mailing list by sending up-to-date information about SPA work at the end of

each month. A communications officer joined us in 2023 and led the engagements and outreach of the organization.

Our work also shaped policy-making in Somalia in 2023. SPA analysis and recommendations on the NCC election agreement led to high-level dialogue among current and former Somalia leaders. The Somali Public Agenda Policy Paper critically examined the 5 core points of the NCC election agreement, evaluating their strengths, and weaknesses. Our core recommendation for increased political dialogue was subsequently taken up by the federal government. That the SPA Policy Paper's recommendations led to such important high-level dialogue among current and former Somalia leaders is evidence of the value of balanced analysis and constructive recommendations on key political decisions and policy matters in Somalia.

In 2023, four interns – Asma (February), Hiba (May), Arale (August), and Bahja (October) – wrote and published reflection blog posts on their internship experiences with the Somali Public Agenda. These blogs were published on the SPA website and were shared with the growing SPA social media followers. After exceptional performance during her internship, Bahja joined SPA as a research assistant on a full-time basis.

Most of the feedback we received on our 2023 publications has been positive. We received favorable and encouraging feedback from different segments of society. Somali Public Agenda published papers on contentious political issues including elections, power allocation, and the judiciary model. The feedback we received was positive and highlighted the objectivity of our analysis. SPA is not affiliated with any political association, and its employees are determined to produce high-quality, evidence-based, and balanced analyses on crucial governance and service delivery issues in Somalia.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

In 2023, we strengthened our collaborative partnerships and working relations with several institutions. We continued our long-term partnership with the Rift Valley Institute's Somali Dialogue Platform on research and engagement related to contentious political issues in Somalia. The Somali Dialogue Platform (Madasha Wadahadallada Somaaliyeed) is a programme implemented by the Rift Valley Institute to facilitate agreement amongst Somalis on contentious political issues. The SDP became part of the Somali Stability Fund (SSF) III in mid-2023.

We have also maintained a working relationship with international NGOs including International Media Support (IMS), the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS), the Life and Peace Institute (LPI), the Research and Evidence Facility (REF), and Tana Copenhagen. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) supported a study on the formation and functioning of local councils in Somalia in 2023.

In 2023, we also started a new working relationship with new institutions. The SPA Policy Lab & The Policy Lab[®], based in Boston, USA, signed an MoU to collaborate on action research as well as designing & testing policies, programs & services. We started working with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVr). Our Center for Learning and Development collaborated with Digital Shelter in training 23 youth on blog writing training. We also strengthened our engagement and relationship with civil society organizations in Somalia.

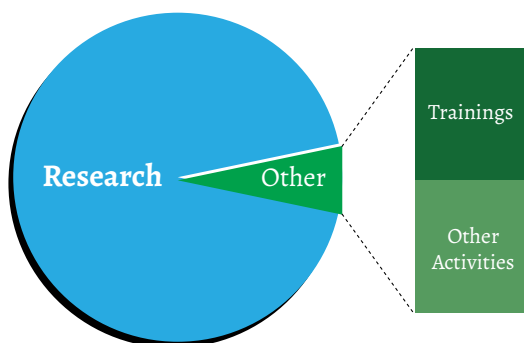
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Somali Public Agenda's financial status has been growing for the past years. Somali Public Agenda earned an income from several institutions in 2023 for its research, training, and other initiatives. The Rift Valley Institute's Somali Dialogue Platform (RVI-SDP), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the Life and Peace Institute (LPI), SOAS University of London, Interpeace, Danish Refugee Council (DRC Mogadishu), Overseas Development Institute (ODI), RedR UK, International Media Support (IMS), Digital Shelter, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Tana Copenhagen and Finish Consulting Group (FCG Sweden) provided project-based funding to Somali Public Agenda in 2023.

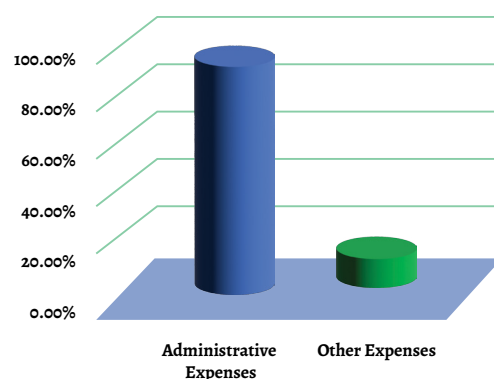
To achieve sustainable growth, the 2022 Audit's recommendations for improving financial stability, cash management, procurement, and logistics were implemented. The implementation of the transparency and accountability guidelines are helping SPA get ahead in the future by boosting the confidence of partners and stakeholders. The SPA's strong financial processes were proven by the external audit's successful completion.

Looking ahead, SPA's intention in 2024 is to further improve the efficiency and compliance of its financial system. Developing comprehensive financial policies and a thorough system of documentation will undoubtedly aid in managing the organization's finances more effectively and transparently. This proactive approach toward financial management will likely support SPA's continued success and growth in its endeavors.

Income from activities in 2023



Expenses in 2023



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The SPA Human Resources Department hired seven employees and four interns in 2023. In general, SPA accommodates 20 full-time staff and an intern. To maintain operational effectiveness and transparency, SPA adheres to a set of HR policies and procedures that comply with the local and international laws of labor rights and workplace well-being.

Under SPA's Institutional Capacity Building program, which aims to strengthen and develop the institutional capacity of our employees at different levels, the Human Resource Department recruited an external training agency, in 2023, to deliver personalized training to the Operation Department Officers. SPA's Finance, Procurement and Logistics, and Human Resource Officers completed extensive training on QuickBooks online, Human Resource training, and Procurement and Logistics training, respectively. Also, following a preliminary assessment by the HR Department in 2022, SPA's manual laborers received in-house teaching in Basic Mathematics, Somali, and English.

Additionally, to promote a habit of reading and to increase the interaction among employees from various departments within the organization, SPA began monthly book presentations. By the end of each month, one of our staff members delivers a summary presentation of a book of their preference to the rest of the staff members.

Since Time Management is a crucial skill for employees working in a dynamic environment to boost productivity, manage deadlines, and improve overall performance, SPA invited a trainer to deliver an informative seminar on how to efficiently manage time, compartmentalize tasks, and allocate appropriate time and effort without feeling stressed or burnt out at work to our team members in our office.

Furthermore, to ensure the safety and well-being of SPA workers and visitors, as well as to strengthen our staff's awareness of safety protocols in the event of fire emergencies and emergency evacuation, a complete Personal Safety training and fire drill training was delivered to the SPA staff in 2023.

2024 PROJECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

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

Our work in 2024 will focus on the following thematic issues:

1. National elections
2. Accountability and transparency
3. Local council formation
4. Reconciliation
5. Durable solutions
6. Transitional justice, and
7. Education.

The Public Agenda Forum will continue the Gaxwo iyo Gorfeyn series and the bimonthly off-the-record discussions with policymakers. We will also plan to convene 9 forums in 2024, one every 45 days. We will convene dissemination forums and X Spaces discussions. We are also planning to convene an annual conference in mid-2024.

In 2024, the SPA Center for Learning and Development plans to conduct two blog writing training slots that will produce 15 graduates at least. Similarly, it will organize a three-month research methodology training in September, which will graduate 20 trainees. The Center for Learning and Development will also start capacity building in the public sector.

The SPA Policy Lab plans to collaborate with government and non-government organizations to co-design policies or services that will address critical issues affecting the citizens of the country. The SPA Policy Lab will also finalize the development of a design manual that will become a guide for the co-designing work the Lab will do.

SPA will continue the two podcast programmes (Maamul Wanaag & Adeeg Wanaag) and will increase its outreach. We will aim to produce a podcast from our publications and invite guests to our podcasts on key governance and social service matters.

APPENDICES

Staff

Mahad Wasuge, Executive Director

Farhan Isak Yusuf, Deputy Executive Director, Director of SPA Center for Learning and Development

Sadia Ma'ow, Finance Officer

Idil Omar, HR & Administration Officer

Farhia Mohamud, Researcher

Qamar Osman, Procurement & Logistics Officer

Aweis Ahmed, Director of SPA Policy Lab

Mohamed Adam, Forums Manager and Researcher

Ibrahim Jibril, Research Assistant

Jacfar Mohamed, Communications Officer

Bahja Mohamed, Research Assistant

Abass Mohamed, Multimedia Producer

Ruweido Farah, IT Officer

Fellows

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mohamed Abdimalik, data journalist and founder of Jaantus

Manar Zaki, the Co-Founder, and Co-Director of the Sababi Institute

Board of Advisors

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

Ahmed Yusuf, Former Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor for Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC)

Ahmed Elmi, an Independent Senior Strategist, and Private Sector Development Specialist

Hodan Hassan, the executive director of Kulan Consulting



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