



# SOMALIA'S NEW ELECTORAL BILL: INSIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Somali Public Agenda Policy Paper No. 07

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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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## Contents

<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Key provisions in the electoral bill</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Election management .....	3
The electoral model .....	3
Local council elections .....	6
Voter registration .....	7
Candidacy and campaigns of political associations & political parties .....	7
Voting, vote counting, and announcement of election results .....	9
Election delays .....	10
<b>Parliamentary review and approval process</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Core challenges</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Policy considerations for legislators</b> .....	<b>13</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The FGS Council of Ministers approved the National Electoral Bill on August 8, 2024. This policy paper analyzes the key contents of the National Electoral Bill, which consists of 9 chapters and 79 articles.
- Article 11 of the electoral bill details three electoral models namely First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) Simple Majority System for the (1) President of the Federal Republic and (2) leaders and deputy leaders of the Federal Member States; Open List Proportional Representation (PR) for the two chambers of the federal parliament—the House of the People and the Upper House—and Closed List Proportional Representation (PR) for the election of (1) FMS parliamentarians, (2) the Mogadishu City Council, and (3) District Councilors.
- The bill states that Mogadishu will have Mogadishu City Council that will consist of 49 members (Article 22) plus the capital city mayor and deputy – a total of 51 members. Districts in Mogadishu will be divided into two categories – A & B – where A-level districts will have a 15-member district council while B-level districts will have an 11-member district council.
- The requirements for candidacy for the President of Somalia (Article 35) and FMS Presidency (Article 36) include (i) living in Somalia for the last two years, (ii) rescinding any second citizenship by dual citizens, and submitting the evidence of doing so to the EMB, and (iii) resigning from any other executive position six months before (with the exception of the incumbent President of Somalia). These requirements for the highest office in the country effectively exclude from the race any FMS presidents who might be willing to vvy for Somalia’s Presidency.
- Article 74 of the electoral bill gives the Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission the authority to delay the election if the circumstances do not allow the election to happen on schedule. The circumstances that might delay the elections include widespread insecurity in some or all of the country, natural disasters such as earthquakes, pandemic diseases, droughts, floods, hurricanes, and anything else that can be recognized as a national disaster. If the elections technically cannot happen on schedule, the electoral commission can also delay the election timelines.
- This policy paper analyzes core challenges including possible delays in the parliamentary review and approval of the bill, the absence of Puntland from the process, as well as implementation challenges. It concludes with several policy considerations for legislators.

## INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, August 8, 2024, the FGS Council of Ministers approved the National Electoral Bill and the Political Associations and Political Parties Bill. The two bills, along with the establishment bill of the election management body, approved by the cabinet on 19 July, are the three primary pieces of legislation that would govern elections in Somalia. The three bills approved by the cabinet are primarily based on the recent amendments of the Provisional Federal Constitution and will go through parliamentary view before they are voted on. This policy paper specifically analyzes the key contents of the National Electoral Bill.

The National Electoral Bill is lengthy compared to the other two bills and consists of nine chapters and 79 articles.

1. Chapter one (Articles 1-4) addresses some general provisions, including the definition of terms used in the bill, the scope and objectives of the bill, and the general principles undergirding national elections.
2. Chapter two (Articles 5-10) discusses election management issues and the role of the election and boundaries commission.
3. Chapter three (Articles 11-18) details the electoral model.
4. Chapter four (Articles 19-23) outlines the local council election process.
5. Chapter five (Articles 24-32) explains the voter registration process.
6. Chapter six (Articles 33-46) discusses candidates and campaigns of political associations and political parties.
7. Chapter seven (Articles 47-57) discusses preparations for elections and voting.
8. Chapter eight (Articles 58-71) details the counting of votes and the procedures for announcing election results.
9. Chapter nine (Articles 72-79) discusses several election-related matters, including election delays, election security, disciplinary measures, and crimes and punishments for breaking this bill once it is approved and becomes law.

## KEY PROVISIONS IN THE ELECTORAL BILL

The National Electoral Bill addresses key issues organized by chapter. Each chapter details one key component of the electoral bill.

### **ELECTION MANAGEMENT**

The Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission manages the elections (Article 5). The Commission will establish offices in the capital cities of each Federal Member State (FMS); the Commission will also establish offices in districts where this is possible. The structure of the election management committee offices would be as stated in Article 6: (1) the Commission headquarters, (2) the commission offices in the capital cities of Federal Member States, (3) district-level election offices, and (4) polling stations.

The core mandate of the Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission includes conducting feasibility studies on polling stations; deciding election date and time; deciding the location of polling centers; administering the budget allocated to elections; the interim announcement of election results until the relevant court announces the official results; and registering political associations and political parties (Article 7).

These responsibilities and the core mandate of the elections and boundaries commission discussed in articles 5 to 10 in the electoral bill are in line with (and a repeat of) the articles in the Establishment Bill of the commission. However, the National Electoral bill does provide further detail on how the election management commission offices will be structured in a decentralized manner. Centralization of the election has been one of the major weaknesses of unifying elections at all three levels of government – federal, state, and local governments. The National Electoral Bill, particularly Article 8, illustrates that the Federal Member State-level offices will lead the election efforts in each FMS and will have a director/manager, a deputy, a secretary, and their own dedicated staff. District-level offices will also be structured in the same way.

### **THE ELECTORAL MODEL**

Article 11 details the electoral model.

- The elections of the (1) President of the Federal Republic, (2) leaders and deputy leaders of the Federal Member States (elected on a joint ticket), (3) capital city mayor and deputy, and (4) district mayors and deputies will be based on First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). The candidate with the most votes wins these seats, and there will not be a second round of voting or a coalition of votes to reach a desired threshold.

- The electoral model for the two chambers of the federal parliament—the House of the People and the Upper House—will be an Open List Proportional Representation (PR) system.
- The electoral model of the (1) FMS parliamentarians, (2) the Mogadishu City Council, and (3) District Councilors will be a Closed List Proportional Representation (PR) system.

These are three different electoral models – First-Past-The-Post, Open List Proportional Representation, and Closed List Proportional Representation. Article 48 in Chapter 4 of the amendments made to the Provisional Federal Constitution removed and did not include in the chapter the electoral model that the National Consultative Council (NCC) agreed on May 27, 2023, which was Closed List Proportional Representation and based on a Single National Constituency. Article 48 of the recent amendments to the first four chapters of the federal Constitution only stated that the elections will be One-Person-One-Vote (OPOV) and will be detailed in separate legislation (this bill). Although three electoral models were proposed in the electoral bill, the proposals do not contradict the amendments made to Chapter Four.

Citizens will directly elect the President of Somalia (article 12) in a single national constituency, and three candidates from the three national political parties will compete for the Presidency. The Presidential candidate with the most votes becomes the President of Somalia with a 5-year mandate. Article 12 is in line with the changes made to the Constitution. However, it excludes independent candidates in the race and limits the contest to three candidates from three national political parties. The three national political parties will be those that are the most successful in the local council electoral process, where political associations would compete for district council seats ([see our separate analysis on the political associations and political parties bill](#)).

The House of the People (HoP) election process is detailed in Article 13. The three national political parties will compete for the 275 HoP seats. The electoral model will be Open List Proportional Representation. Each HoP seat will have a designated code number – HoP#001 to HoP#275 or GSH#001 to GSH#275 (the Somali version of the acronym). Each of the three political parties submit 275 candidates, one candidate for each HoP seat – a total of 825 candidates competing for the House of the People (HoP) seats. The bill states that the process of submitting the list of candidates will ensure clan representation in the House of the People, which effectively means maintaining the parliament's current 4.5 clan power-sharing at the lowest seat level; this reason is probably why the government preferred an open list (where politicians can see the clan composition of lists submitted by political parties although Closed-list PR can also ensure representation). A separate regulation, which will be drafted and agreed later, will detail the process of ensuring clan and women representation in the HoP.

After the conclusion of voting for political parties and vote counting, the political



party that won the highest number of seats would start submission of its official winners of the House of the People seats out of the 275 candidates it submitted as candidates (Article 66). The political party that garnered the second highest votes will follow and submit its winners to the House of the People and then the third political party. Upon submitting the names, political parties have to use a 70%-30% formula for their internal seat allocation process, where 70% of the seats would be allocated to those who garnered the highest votes while 30% of the seats should be allocated to clans who did not get seats from the submitted 70% (Article 66).

The Upper House seats will remain at 54 (Article 14), and, understandably, the FMS allocation would remain the same – 11 for Somaliland and Puntland and no seats for Benadir. The Upper House members will be elected at the Federal Member State level (state-level constituency), and each political party will submit a list of 54 candidates, which means there would be a total of 162 candidates for the Upper House. The electoral model will be Open List Proportional Representation system. Upper House members from Somaliland would be elected in Mogadishu by registered voters from Somaliland (Article 14). The political party with the highest number of seats will submit their winners for the Upper House seats first, followed by the second and third political parties. Similar to the House of the People, the Upper House seats will have designated code numbers – UH#001 or AQS#001 (the Somali version of the acronym). This effectively means Benadir will not have a representation in the Upper House, though Mogadishu will have elected mayor and city council as discussed in the local elections sub-section below. Clan representation in the Upper House should be balanced (article 67) and any clans that have one seat in the current Upper House should not win more than one seat. This, again, effectively means maintaining the current Upper House clan representation in a direct electoral process.

The FMS leaders and deputies will be voted for by voters in each FMS with one ticket through a First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) electoral system where the candidates with the highest votes win the election (Article 15), with each FMS becoming one constituency. The number of seats for the FMS parliaments will be as written in each FMS constitution (Article 16). Each of the three national political parties would submit the list of their candidates for the FMS parliamentary seats; there is no indication that the party list should follow the clan power-sharing formula same as the federal parliament. The tenure of the President of Somalia, federal parliament, FMS leaders and deputies, FMS parliaments, and Mogadishu mayor and deputy would be five years starting from the date they are sworn in after their election (Article 17).

On electoral timelines, article 18 states that the federal president and parliamentary elections would happen once every five years. The election management body would specify the election date 180 days (6 months) before the election day. Moreover, FMS leaders, deputies, and parliamentary elections would take place once every five years, and the EMB would specify the election date 90 days (3 months) before the voting date. This electoral timeline indicates that the FGS and

FMS elections will happen at different times although FGS and FMS elections could happen at the same time if the EMB announce the electoral timelines at different times. Separate timelines for FMS and FGS elections would mean a contradiction with article 50 (2) of Chapter Four of the recent constitutional amendment, which states that the FGS and FMS elections will be harmonized and will take place at once while the local council elections will be organized beforehand. Similarly, the Mogadishu City Council, Mogadishu mayor, district mayors, and FMS-level district councilors election would take place once and ahead of FMS and FGS elections, and the EMB would specify the election date 90 days (3 months) ahead.

## **LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

Mogadishu will have elected officials, including the capital city mayor (and deputy) and a city council (Article 19). Each district in Mogadishu will also have a district mayor (and deputy), and district council members. All other districts in Somalia will also have a district mayor, a deputy, and district councils. The Mogadishu City Council will consist of 49 members (Article 22) plus the capital city mayor and deputy – a total of 51 members. Districts in Mogadishu will be divided into two categories – A & B – where A-level districts will have a 15-member district council while B-level districts will have an 11-member district council. The Minister of Interior will decide on how the districts are categorized.

There are some important aspects of the arrangements for the election of Mogadishu that are worth highlighting. First, the definition of the electoral process for Mogadishu comes without clarifying the status of Mogadishu as part of Somalia's federal framework in the constitutional amendment process or in separate legislation. The Mogadishu election arrangement has already decided a status for Mogadishu, which is a Capital City administered by the federal government. If the parliament approves the electoral bill, Chapter Five's constitutional amendment – which is yet to be submitted to the parliament – will need to be adjusted to harmonize with the election arrangement in the National Electoral Bill.

Second, while categorizing districts to A or B might not be contentious (and certain criteria such as population and size might define which district qualifies A or B category), limiting the districts to those formally recognized on December 31, 1990 will exclude several districts in Mogadishu from the electoral process. The electoral bill does not indicate whether the districts recognized after 1990 would vote as part of the district they were part of in 1990 or not, although the bill implies such an arrangement. Although the boundaries of the districts formed by several Federal Member States over the past two decades are unclear, excluding these districts from the elections could create a political outcry and opposition to the electoral bill in the parliamentary debate and hamper the subsequent implementation of the election law.

With a Closed-List Proportional Representation electoral model, citizens would vote for political associations in the first round of local council elections (it will

political parties that will then compete in subsequent local council elections). The local elections will be organized according to pre-1991 districts (Article 19). Political associations will compete for local council elections, and the three political associations with the highest seats will become the official national political parties. Citizens over 22 years old are eligible to compete for local council seats (Article 21). The category of districts in Federal Member States (A or B) will be decided in line with FMS local government laws and will be based on pre-1991 districts. The main point of contention for local elections at FMS levels would be the limiting of the districts to the pre-1991 boundaries. Successive FMS Presidents and parliaments have endorsed new districts in most of the Federal Member States.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION**

The Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission would be responsible for registering voters. Voters can only vote in the locations where they registered (Article 25). Citizens aged 18 years and above would be eligible to be registered and vote (Article 26). Voters can only be registered once, but the voting card will be renewed in every election cycle. All candidates for electoral seats should be registered voters. The registration system would be Unique Biometric Identification (Article 27).

The voter registration process faces a number of challenges. First, there is the absence of key infrastructure needed for any type of voter registration, including national ID. Although the federal government has started this in Mogadishu, security issues there and across many different locations might delay the registration process. Second, lack of political consensus on the electoral roadmap would limit the scope of the biometric voter registration. Citizens in Puntland and Somaliland would likely not be registered as neither administration is currently part of the election process. Third, successful biometric voter registration requires human and financial resources as well as sufficient time. The government only has less than two years to implement the entire electoral process.

## **CANDIDACY AND CAMPAIGNS OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS & POLITICAL PARTIES**

The requirements for candidacy for the President of Somalia (Article 35) include (i) living in Somalia for the last two years, (ii) rescinding any a second citizenship, and submitting the evidence of doing so to the electoral commission, and (iii) resigning from any other executive position six months before (with the exception of the incumbent President of Somalia). These requirements for the Presidency of Somalia effectively exclude FMS presidents who might be willing to vie for Somalia's Presidency. The requirements also rule out any politician who was not in Somalia during the last two years ahead of the election. The same eligibility criteria apply to candidates for the FMS presidency (Article 36).

Candidates competing for parliamentary seats in the federal parliament – House of the People & the Upper House – should be citizens older than 25 years of age, with a minimum secondary school certificate or equivalent experience. They should have resigned from any government post six months before the election, and should pay the candidacy fees (Article 37). Dual nationals would be eligible for federal parliamentary seats but not for the federal Presidency and FMS leadership.

The candidacy fees are defined in Article 38.

1. **President of Somalia:** Candidates for President of Somalia should pay \$50,000 registration fees.
2. **Federal Parliament:** \$10,000 registration fees are required from candidates of both houses of the federal parliament – the House of the People and the Upper House.
3. **FMS Leadership:** Candidates for FMS leadership should pay \$30,000; deputy leaders at FMS candidates are obliged to pay \$15,000.
4. **FMS Parliaments:** The candidacy fees for FMS parliamentary seats would be \$1,000.
5. **Mogadishu Mayor:** Candidates for the Mayor of the Capital City should pay \$30,000 registration fee; half of that money (\$15,000) is required from candidates for deputy mayor of the capital city.
6. **Mogadishu City Council:** Aspirants for the Capital City Council should pay a \$1,000 registration fee.
7. **District Mayors:** The registration fees of district mayors and deputies would be \$250.
8. **District Councils:** Finally, candidates for district council membership should pay \$100 registration fee.

No.	Elected Position	Registration Fee
1	President of Somalia	\$50,000
2	House of the People of the Federal Parliament	\$10,000
3	Upper House of the Federal Parliament	\$10,000
4	Leaders of the Federal Member States	\$30,000
5	FMS Parliaments	\$1,000
6	Mogadishu Mayor	\$30,000
7	Mogadishu Deputy Mayor	\$15,000
8	Mogadishu City Council	\$1,000
9	District Mayors and Deputy Mayors	\$250
10	District Councilors	\$100

This is the first time candidacy fees were specified in an electoral bill for all elected positions. While the candidacy fee of the President of Somalia is the highest, it is \$10,000 higher than the \$40,000 registration fee that over 40 Presidential candidates paid in the last 2022 indirect election (and in subsequent elections only 3 candidates will stand). Upper House candidacy registration fees for the last election were, however, 100% higher than those now mandated at \$20,000. In a country like Somalia, these registration fees are high and exclude large segments of society from competing for elected seats. However, given the amount of money exchanged in the last two indirect elections (2016 & 2021-22), these registration fees are not likely to be surprising for the political elite who are unlikely question the amounts. The registration fees reinforce the status quo where the privileged few who have access to financial resources alone compete for important leadership positions in Somalia.

Political associations and parties should submit the list of candidates 120 days (4 months) before the election day (article 40). The position that candidates are contesting and the evidence of registration fee payment should be included in the submission of the party's list. The election management body will check that the candidates fit the candidacy criteria and then announce the list of candidates (Article 41). The election campaigns start 45 days before the election day and end 48 hours before the polling starts (article 43). The EMB will allocate campaign days for specific political associations and parties.

## **VOTING, VOTE COUNTING, AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS**

Registered voters alone can vote and get the ballot papers once the registration card is checked (Article 55). Indelible ink will be applied to the left hand of everyone who voted to avoid double voting. The voting will take place on one day, from 7 am to 6 pm (Article 56). The EMB is responsible for counting the votes in the presence of representatives from political associations or parties (Article 59). The vote counting should be completed within 24 hours (Article 60). The Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission will announce the election results within 24 hours after the counting of votes is completed, and the commission will specify the swearing-in date for those elected (Article 65).

The replacement process for an elected person, as defined in the National Electoral Bill, is different from the previous norms. Article 69 states that if a member of the House of the People (HoP) vacates the seat before the end of their term in office, their political party will propose three names to the House, and the House members vote for the three candidates, with the candidate with the highest vote winning the seat. If a member of the Upper House (UH) vacates the seat, the parliament of the Federal Member State, represented by the Senate seat, would vote for three candidates selected by their political party. For representatives of Somaliland regions in the Upper House, registered voters in Mogadishu will vote for three candidates selected by the political party. This is primarily meant

to maintain clan representation in the federal parliament. However, if a seat in an FMS parliament, Mogadishu City Council, or district councils is vacated, the political party selects a replacement without the need for voting.

## **ELECTION DELAYS**

Article 74 gives the Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission the authority to delay the election if the circumstances do not allow the election to happen on schedule. The circumstances that might delay the elections include widespread insecurity in some or all of the country, natural disasters such as earthquakes, pandemic diseases, droughts, floods, hurricanes, and anything else that can be recognized as a national disaster. If the elections technically cannot happen on schedule, the EMB can also delay the election timelines.

While natural disasters could understandably delay the elections, postponement due to inability to implement elections on schedule or a lack of technical readiness could imply an extension of the existing federal government mandates – the federal parliament and president. The FMS leadership mandates (except Hirshabelle & Puntland) have already been extended. A significant amount of time will be required to conduct proper elections. Given the hitherto limited progress in making preparations for elections – the electoral bill has not been passed by the parliament, the election management body has not been formed, and the political parties bill has not been reviewed and approved by the parliament – it is obvious that elections are very unlikely to be successfully conducted before May 2026, when the mandate of the current federal institutions expires. If this article of legislation is followed, an extension would be inevitable, but would risk further conflict, as happened in 2022.

## PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The National Electoral Bill addresses some of the most critical and contentious electoral issues. Historically, the parliament has changed some elements of the electoral bill before it was approved. For instance, the speaker of the House of the People appointed an ad hoc 15-member parliamentary committee in 2019 to review the previous National Electoral Bill. When the ad hoc committee submitted the draft electoral bill to the members of the two chambers of the federal parliament, it changed the Closed List Proportional Representation electoral model and a Single National Constituency to a First Past The Post 'FPTP' System' based on Single Member Plurality (SMP) and maintaining the 4.5 clan power-sharing formula.

The current National Electoral Bill proposes three electoral models – First-Past-The-Post, Open List PR, and Closed List PR – unlike the previous National Electoral Bill passed by the cabinet on May 2, 2019. Moreover, it addresses other critical issues. While maintaining the 4.5 clan power-sharing formula, the new electoral bill combines political parties, Open-List PR, and 4.5 for the House of the People and state-level constituency for the Upper House. It also introduces an electoral process – and an implied status – for Mogadishu. Moreover, the National Electoral Bill illustrates the sequence of elections from local elections to state-level and then to national elections. It details the voter registration process, registration fees for candidates, and election delays.

It is not clear whether the parliament will change core elements within the current National Electoral Bill as it did in late 2019 or whether it will pass it into law without changing any of the substantive provisions. However, it is obvious that the National Electoral Bill will initiate heated discussions in the parliament when its deliberations commence.

## CORE CHALLENGES

There are a number of challenges that the National Electoral Bill and its implementation would face. First, the review process will be a crucial test. The bill is based on the amendments made to Chapter Four of the federal Constitution. Members of the parliament, albeit a few in number, publicly opposed these amendments, which means these same MPs will likely oppose the electoral bill, further delaying the parliamentary approval process. The fact that, historically, parliament has changed the electoral models implies that the federal government will need to invest time in engaging members of the parliament and seeking their consent before deliberations and approval of the bill. This might further delay the prospect of conducting direct elections.

Second, Puntland remains outside of this electoral roadmap. Although Puntland's view on the electoral law is not clear, what is obvious is that Puntland is currently positioning itself outside of this electoral process. Moreover, Puntland's President might want to run for the Presidency, and some provisions in the electoral bill necessitate him to step down from his position before the election. The National Electoral Bill only clarified special arrangements for representatives of Somaliland in the Upper House, which means the assumption is that elections would take place in Puntland. Yet it would be challenging for the election management body and political associations/parties to operate in Puntland unless it is brought on board quickly.

Third, the implementation of this electoral bill and related bills after parliamentary approval would require time. The electoral bill mandates biometric voter registration. With less than two years remaining from the mandate of the federal president and parliament, building core institutions and conducting local elections and state elections ahead of the federal elections within this timeframe would be unrealistic. Extensions of the federal government mandate would be inevitable if stakeholders agreed to go for direct elections.



## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEGISLATORS

- There is a need for clarification on the justification and reasoning behind three different electoral models for the federal presidency, state presidency, and Mogadishu and district mayors (First Past The Post), in comparison to the federal parliament (Open List Proportional Representation), and state legislators and local councils (Closed List Proportional Representation). Given that many Somalis do not understand electoral models and constituency definitions, clarity on why these electoral models have been selected would ensure openness, fairness, representation, and inclusion. Moreover, voter education is essential. People want one person one vote, but the different systems that could be used to achieve this are complicated. The government should be communicating with citizens about how these models would work in practice.
- It is necessary to harmonize the electoral arrangement for Mogadishu with the ongoing constitutional review process. The electoral process for Mogadishu implies that the status of Mogadishu will be a Capital City under the federal government (a Federal Territory). There is a need to ensure that the status of Mogadishu, which is expected to be clarified in amendments to Chapter 5 of the Constitution, and the electoral process for Mogadishu are in line with each other. For now, it seems that the constitutional amendment will follow the electoral bill, although the rest of the elements in the electoral bill are based on amendments already made in Chapter Four of the Constitution.
- There must be clearer definition of legitimate reasons for election delays. Although Article 74 clearly articulates natural disasters as a reason to delay elections, delays to election timelines based on technical and political challenges imply an indefinite extension. Ensuring that electoral delays do not occur is essential to avoid violence and an escalation in armed conflict in Somalia, as has happened before. The parliament can further define reasons for election delays or can provide an alternative process if authorities fail to conduct one-person-one-vote (OPOV) elections on schedule. For instance, the parliament might clarify in the electoral bill that if the federal mandate expires without an election, the direct election process could be halted, and an indirect electoral process might be pursued to avoid a power vacuum and election-related violence.

## ABOUT SOMALI PUBLIC AGENDA

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

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