



UNDP/UNSOM INTEGRATED ELECTORAL SUPPORT GROUP (IESG) TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA



Direct elections deferred for indirect, clan-based electoral model

FOLLOWING A SERIES of intense discussions between the (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS) over the past three months, agreement was finally reached on 17 September on a revised electoral model. The Electoral Constituency Caucus will replace the model contained in the recently passed electoral law, which proposed universal suffrage as required under the Constitution. The new model is similar to the 2016 electoral process of clan-based indirect voting with minor changes including: 1) an increase in delegates from 51 to 101; 2) electoral constituencies increase from one to two locations in each FMS; and 3) and a 30 per cent % quota for women’s seats in Parliament. Representatives of the Upper House will be indirectly elected through the Federal Member State Parliaments. The Federal Parliament approved the agreement on 26 September, and clarified that the current Parliament will remain in office until the new Parliament is sworn in. There is no role for the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), and political parties are excluded from the process. Planning for the new model is expected to begin on 1 November; however, the electoral timetable is not yet clear. The current term of the Parliament is due to expire in December 2020, while the President’s term of office expires in February 2021. It is expected that an electoral taskforce will be established both at national and federal member state levels to manage the electoral process.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Direct elections deferred for indirect, clan-based electoral model
- Preparations for electoral security pick up momentum
- International Assistance Partners Group review progress on technical assistance to NIEC
- Training on electoral logistics for NIEC staff
- 100 political parties have provisional registration
- Strategy to strengthen the NIEC M&E Unit
- Induction training for new IESG colleagues
- NIEC workshop on political parties’ official registration process
- IESG and NIEC legal teams collaborate to review the Political Parties Law

Preparations for electoral security pick up momentum

ON 9 AUGUST, the first NIEC Security Working Group meeting was held, attended by representatives from the NIEC, UN IESG, UNPOL, and AMISOM Police. Participants discussed the survey of polling sites in Mogadishu, and additional support needs for the Secretariat of the National Electoral Security Task Force (NESTF). The NESTF Secretariat continues to be supported with its office functions by UN IESG.

A draft NIEC Personal and Safety and Security Guide prepared by the UN IESG was submitted to the NIEC, in English and Somali versions. This is a key document to enhance NIEC staff personal safety and security.

IESG has commenced aligning its Peacebuilding Fund project to equip Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) for the control and management of elections security operations, according to the agreed electoral model. AMISOM reaffirmed its readiness to start training JOCs once the Joint Police Program (JPP) meeting approves its 2020-21 training plan, which includes training for elections security.

On 20 September, Major General Abdi Hassan Mohamed, the Somali Police Force Police Commissioner and NESTF Chair, updated the UN leadership on preparations for elections security. The newly agreed upon electoral model has added momentum to NESTF work.

On 28 September, the Folke Bernadotte Academy of Sweden met with IESG to discuss its support to elections security, and the protection of women in particular, in light of the revised electoral model.



International Assistance Partners Group review progress on technical assistance to NIEC

ON 18 AUGUST, the NIEC and IESG co-chaired the International Assistance Partners Group meeting to discuss progress on implementation of assistance to the NIEC. The group ensures coordination and coherence on the provision of technical assistance by international partners to the NIEC to ensure maximum impact of partner's resources. The NIEC outlined the institution's plans to review internal policies, programmes and preparations to ensure the organization is ready to conduct the federal elections.

The IESG emphasized the importance of the ongoing consultations in Dhusamareb to provide guidance on the way forward regarding operational planning and implementation for federal elections, and highlighted the delays in completing the electoral legal framework and political agreements which will impact the electoral timelines.

Training on electoral logistics for NIEC staff

ON 19 AUGUST, IESG conducted a warehouse logistics training using a virtual platform, to build the technical capacity of the NIEC headquarters logistics and operations staff related to the principles of inventory and warehouse management.

The training is part of a series designed for Training-of-Trainers, who will train NIEC field staff with IESG providing the resource persons to support the trainers. Topics included: principles of inventory and warehouse management; electoral materials receipt; electoral materials inspection and sorting; electoral materials checklist; electoral materials quality control; electoral materials loss and damage management;

electoral materials labelling and dispatch; and kits packaging following distribution plan (by region and FMS).

IESG supported the NIEC in revising their procurement policy, which included defining the scope and composition of the Procurement Review and Approval Committee (PRAC) and establishing thresholds and classifications of procurement actions subject to committee review. PRAC will ensure that procurement activities are conducted in compliance with the FGS procurement rules and regulations, and with accepted professional purchasing practices. PRAC will confirm that offers received are the result of a fully compliant process, sufficient funding exists, and risks have been assessed and mitigated.

100 political parties have provisional registration

ON 17 AUGUST, in Mogadishu, the NIEC issued certification of temporary registration to ten new political parties.

The NIEC stated that political parties represent the only way to compete politically and reminded the parties to adhere to the Political Parties Law as official registration will enable the political parties to compete in the federal elections.

As at the end of September, 100 political parties have received provisional registration.



Strategy to strengthen the NIEC M&E Unit



ON 20 SEPTEMBER, the NIEC Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit convened a virtual working session with the UNDP M&E Specialist and IESG training officers. The session is part of a series of capacity building initiatives for the Unit to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation activities of NIEC's programmes. The NIEC staff discussed the M&E activity plan for the last quarter of 2020.

The team will be supported with the development of a dashboard to monitor the progress of NIEC projects and other essential skills on conducting surveys, data collection and quality control during the next quarter. The NIEC team plans to establish an M&E working group at NIEC HQ to help improve senior manager's understanding of the importance of M&E, develop an M&E infographic to facilitate more effective presentation findings, and conduct a quarterly review of the NIEC's annual workplan.

Induction training for new IESG colleagues

On 20 September, an induction training was provided to three new IESG colleagues. IESG heads of units briefed the new colleagues in their specific technical fields including Legal and Procedures, Field Coordination, Logistics, Training, Security, Operations, Outreach, Information Technology and GIS, Administration, Procurement and Finance and the UNDP Electoral Support Project.

A general overview of the history, recent developments, and challenges to the electoral process in Somalia were provided by the IESG Senior Management. The three new colleagues will be reinforcing the following units: IESG Field Coordination, Reporting and Information Technology.

NIEC workshop on political parties' official registration process



THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT Electoral Commission (NIEC) and Office of the Political Parties Registrar (OPPR) held a workshop in Dhusamareb, Galmudug State, from 5-to 7 September, with assistance provided by the Joint Programme for Electoral Support. The workshop, attended

by all NIEC field staff from Federal Member States, aimed at introducing OPR members to the NIEC field staff, as well as explaining how the different phases of the political parties official registration process would be implemented.

The OPR explained the procedures being prepared for the conduct of the registration, and shared copies of the forms required to be completed by the political parties. The Chair of the NIEC and the acting President of Galmudug addressed the staff and urged them to be election ambassadors by encouraging all citizens to view elections as an important process for the development of their country.

The official registration of political parties is currently on hold pending the President's assent to the recently passed Amendments to the Political Parties Law.

IESG and NIEC legal teams collaborate on reviewing the Political Parties Law

SEPTEMBER WAS A busy month for the IESG legal and procedures team who collaborated with the NIEC legal team to analyze the amendments to the Political Parties law 2016, which were passed by the House of the People in July 2020 and are currently awaiting the assent of the President. The teams drafted a paper, which was shared with donors, comparing the Political Parties Law 2016 with the amendments.

The paper will be revised when the signed version of the amended Political Party Law is published. The legal teams provided advice to the Office of the Political Party Registrar (OPPR) on how the parties can register their members in compliance with the Political Parties Law.

The advice was presented in advance of the three-day workshop held by the OPR in September for NIEC field staff on the official registration of parties and the registration of party members (see above). The legal teams drafted an electoral dispute regulation (EDR) guidelines and terms of reference for the various staffing positions in the proposed EDR model.

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