

IESG Newsletter

SOMALIA ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG)

AUG - SEP
2022

ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL UPDATES

The Federal Parliament endorsed the 75-member Cabinet nominated by Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre from 7 to 8 August.

The Jubaland State Assembly voted on 21 August to change the term of office for the State Parliament and the Executive from four to five years. The next Jubaland State Assembly elections are scheduled to be held in August 2024.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, along with Puntland President Said Abdullahi Deni, held a meeting with the Transitional Puntland Electoral

Commission (TPEC) in Garowe on 28 August where they were briefed by the TPEC Chairperson and Commissioners on Puntland's democratization processes and preparations for the local council elections.

On 29 August, TPEC received the BVR kits to be used during the upcoming local council elections in Puntland. The equipment was provided by PIITECH through UNOPS with the financial support of the Somali Stability Fund.

Voter registration in Puntland is expected to be completed during the last quarter of 2022.

Highlights

TPEC Chairperson briefed President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on the upcoming one-person-one-vote

TPEC receives Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kits

In South-West State, the Hudur local council indirect elections concluded on 4 September with the selection of 27 members, including five women. On 10 September, the District Council elected the District Commissioner and two Deputy Commissioners, one of whom is a woman.



Garowe: UN electoral experts and TPEC Puntland staff during a training session on election management, 8-14 August 2022.
Photo Credit: UNSOM



SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NIEC)

Engagement with NIEC Legal Department

The IESG Legal/Procedures team continues to provide advisory support to the NIEC Legal Department. A meeting was held on the a) drafting and compilation of a NIEC advocacy package on legal reform, b) the Galmudug draft political parties bill and, c) follow up on the draft NIEC Regulation on Secondary Legislation, Policies, and Guidelines. An in-person workshop was hosted by IESG on 11 September with the NIEC Legal Department about Electoral System Design and the Somali Electoral System, as reflected in the current legal framework. The session provided insights into the different types of electoral systems with presentations on the advantages and disadvantages of the two most prominent electoral systems, Plurality/Majority systems, e.g. First-Past-the-Post and Proportional Representation systems. Follow-up discussions on comparing electoral models and options are planned.

Reflection Session on National Advisors' Support to NIEC

On 18 September, IESG Capacity Building Advisor met NIEC National Advisors to assess the impact of knowledge and skills transferred by the advisors to NIEC staff over the past six years. While significant capacity was transferred, it was noted that the NIEC found it challenging to apply the knowledge and skills gained on electoral operations due to political developments which removed NIEC from involvement in the recently concluded indirect electoral process.

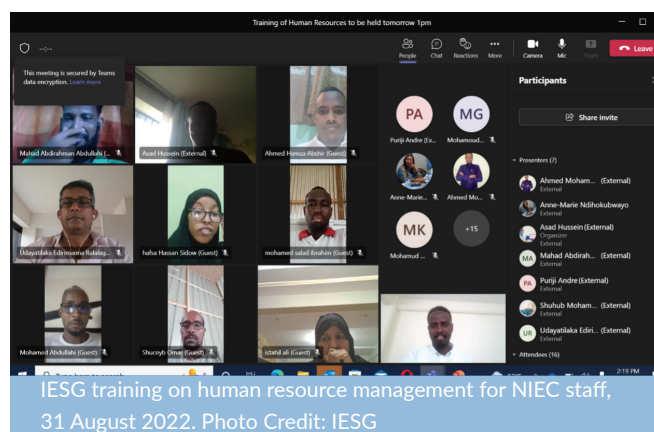
Emphasis was placed on the important role of NIEC in providing technical advice to help the government consider options on the electoral models for the 2026 federal elections and the need to provide NIEC with sufficient resources to conduct its mandate in preparing for the next cycle of electoral activities, in line with the NIEC 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Development of Software for Political Party Database

IESG provided technical support in the finalization of the Political Party Registration software design for NIEC Political Party Registrar's Office. The software is now ready for use and is awaiting the procurement of hardware.

Training for NIEC on Finance, Human Resources, and Administration

On 14 September, IESG organized and conducted three administration and finance training modules for NIEC staff: Financial Awareness Training (24 August), Basic Human Resource Management (31 August), and Procurement in Elections (14 September). Participants included 18 NIEC staff, including six women, from the six NIEC Field Offices.



Assessment of New NIEC Compound

On 27 September, IESG and UNSOS engineers visited the new NIEC compound with the goal to assess the readiness for the handover of the building to the NIEC. IESG assessed the security infrastructure, data center, and warehouse finalization works. The team identified and agreed on the remaining work that needs to be completed before the final handover.

IESG, UNSOS engineers, and NIEC Warehouse Manager agreed that the x-ray machine will be installed after work in the security room is complete. Further, NIEC Logistics Manager will oversee the cleanliness of the warehouse.



Training on Drafting Reports for NIEC

On 9 August, the IESG/UNDP team conducted a training for the NIEC staff and national advisors to improve their ability to prepare narrative and financial reports. The virtual session had 24 participants, six of which were women.

The attendees learned about types of reporting, as well as how to structure a narrative report and to use illustrations and styling while drafting the documents. The participants found the activity useful and practical. They suggested the next sessions focus on the monitoring and evaluation aspects of reporting, and to include practical examples to help establish a baseline, indicators, targets, and goals.

SUPPORT TO THE TRANSITIONAL PUNTLAND ELECTORAL COMMISSION (TPEC)

BRIDGE Workshops on Voter Registration and Electoral Administration



Garowe: UN electoral experts train TPEC Puntland staff on election management, 8-14 August 2022. Photo Credit: UNSOM

TPEC Chairperson and Commissioners, TPEC Regional Chairpersons and the Secretariat staff participated in two Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) workshops in Garowe between 8-14 August on Voter Registrations (35 participants) and Strategic Planning for Electoral Administration (37 participants).



Garowe: TPEC staff participating in the BRIDGE training, 8-14 August 2022. Photo Credit: UNSOM

The workshops, funded by Norway, Sweden, and USAID, used training modules from BRIDGE, a training methodology focused on electoral processes and administration. Participants noted that the workshop provided a systematic and structured roadmap toward implementing TPEC's mandate.

Other participants noted the training was useful to help guide them on fulfilling the strategic direction of the Commission. Ninety-six per cent of the participants said the workshops' objectives were met. IESG remains committed to reinforcing TPEC's capacity through various trainings and workshops.

Training for TPEC Public Outreach and Training Unit

The IESG Public Outreach Advisor conducted training for the TPEC Public Outreach and Training unit focusing on the types of information centers, hotlines, and call centers for the voter information campaign.



IT Assistance to TPEC for Voter Registration

On 21 September, the IESG Information Technology (IT) Advisor met with TPEC Voter Registration (VR) Director, Registrar and Database Administrator. Specific IT training on the Linux Operating System administration, data queries, and analysis and IT security was requested by the VR Director to enable staff to maintain the electoral IT infrastructure after the completion of the local council elections.

Technical Support on Issues Related to Puntland Electoral Legal Framework

On 18 September, IESG met the former TPEC Legal Advisor to discuss legal issues concerning the local council elections, including the delimitation of districts, women representation, the use of Voters Cards, and Secondary Legislation of TPEC. As a follow-up for further discussions, IESG provided technical insight on the Puntland Electoral Legal Framework noting the importance and use of the Voters Card for polling purposes. Concerns were raised regarding the establishment of the Voter Register and the Card Distribution process.

IESG held a meeting with TPEC staff between 2-3 August where TPEC Polling and Counting Guidelines, BVR Manual, the Recruitment Plan for Training on Voter Registration, Voters Card Printing, Card Distribution, and Polling and Counting were discussed. IESG advised that the Voter Registration Manual and all documents should be in line with the Operations Plan.

Coordination with UNSOM Police and TPEC

On 21 September, IESG Field Office in Garowe organized and attended a meeting between the TPEC Chairperson and UNSOM Police Commissioner to discuss how UNSOM Police could provide support to TPEC and the Puntland security authorities during upcoming local council elections.

Technical Support Workshop for TPEC Logistics Staff

IESG Logistics Team conducted a workshop for TPEC Logistics staff between 22-24 August and provided technical support to TPEC in developing the Voter Registration Logistics Plan, the Deployment and Retrieval Plan, the Asset Management, Warehouse Management Policy and Procedure Manuals, the relevant warehouse documents/forms, inventory list/register, and deployment and retrieval tracking form.

Improving TPEC's Ability to Prepare Financial Documentation

During August and September, IESG/UNDP focused on improving the ability of TPEC Finance and Admin Staff in preparing the financial documentation and procurement processes, related to the Puntland local council elections. A new Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) was developed. More, operational and finance policies were revised during field missions in Garowe.

A face-to-face practical training session was delivered by the UNDP Quality Assurance Specialist on implementing Letter of Agreements (LOAs) signed between UNDP and national partners, payment modalities, cash transfer aspects, and procedures to be followed for submitting payment documentation.

TPEC staff from different departments interacted with the team. They worked jointly on developing Terms of Reference (ToRs), procurement documentation, financial templates, ToRs for staff recruitment, and technical specifications for equipment and supplies. The TPEC staff and IESG/UNDP team also worked closely on developing the operational budget for the Puntland electoral process for July 2022 – June 2023. A set of coordination meetings were organized to prepare for the meetings with donors for resource mobilisation.



Garowe: Financial management, procurement and results-based monitoring training. Photo Credit: UNSOM Twitter on 17 September 2022

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