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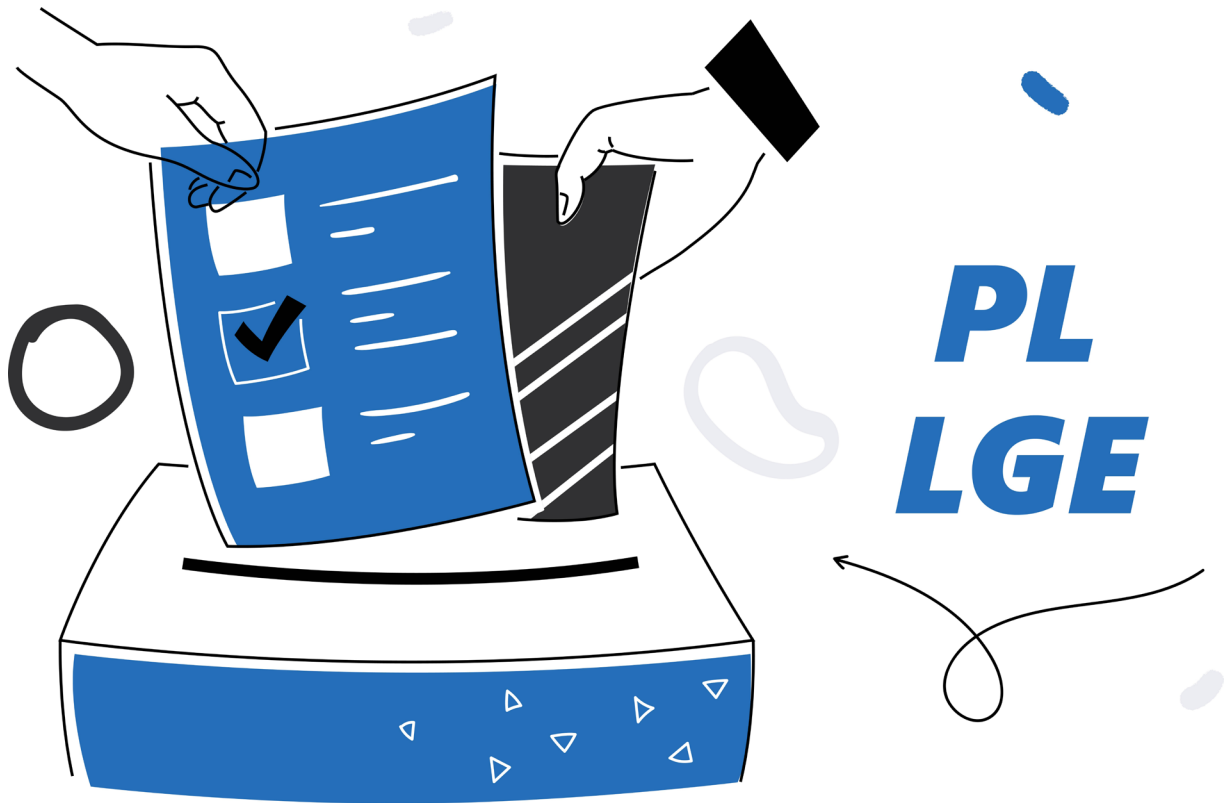
Puntland
Development &
Research Center

POST ELECTION STUDY

PUNTLAND EARLY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ELECTION

Puntland Development & Research
Center - PDRC





VOTING

Post Election
Study on LGE 2021

Eyl, Ufeyn
& Qardho

A Post-Election Study
**On Puntland Early Local
Government Elections
May, 2022**

**Support to Puntland
Democratization
Process (SPDP)**

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Voters casting their votes in Qardho district polling stations on 25th Oct, 2021.

PDRC Puntland, Qardho.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Puntland Development and Research Centre (PDRC) is an independent, non-partisan, nonprofit research institution based in Garowe, Puntland State of Somalia. Its prime focus is peace building, enhancement of democratic tenets and good governance, as well as promotion of respect for human rights. Currently, PDRC is implementing a project named: "Support to Puntland Democratization Process". Upon the request of TPEC, the Swiss Embassy funded the project, which was complimentary to the existing EU-sponsored "Somali Electoral Governance Transparency and Accountability Project (SEG-TAP)". SEG-TAP project aims to augment in strengthening the capacity of political associations (PA), voter education, and polling staff. PDRC has been tasked to carry out a post-election study and to engage an experienced consultant with particular knowledge and experience in elections, politics and democracy.

The study examines the process of democratization in Puntland for the purpose of acquiring practical lessons. In particular, the research analyzes the preparatory processes for the Puntland Early Local Government Elections, management of elections, and the outcome of the elections. PDRC engaged Mr. Abdulkadir Sh. Mohamoud, who is an independent researcher and former research coordinator of PDRC, to lead the research and produce a final analytical report. He is an authority on Somali politics, peace building, democracy and elections.

PDRC extends gratitude to the author of the report **Mr. Abdulkadir Sh. Mohamoud** and all those who have contributed to the valuable knowledge contained in the report. It also thanks those who commented on or edited the report. These include, among others, Ali Farah Ali, the Executive Director of PDRC and Abdinasir Mohamed Yussuf, who is the PDRC Coordinator. Appreciation also goes to those who supported in the design and layout of the report.

ACRONYMS

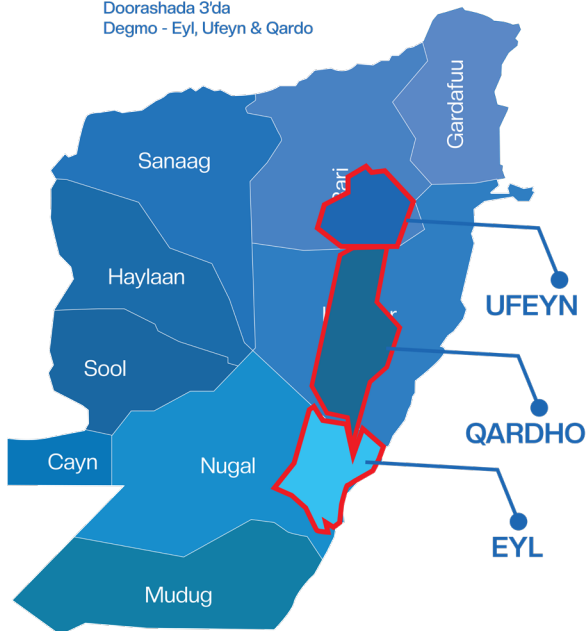
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Dispute Resolution Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced People
KAALO	KAALO Aid Development (local NGO)
LGE	Local Government Elections
MAP	Media Association of Puntland
MOIFAD	Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Democratization
MOLYS	Ministry of Labour, Youth and Sports
MOPEDIC	Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation
OPOV	One Person One Vote
PDRC	Puntland Development and Research Centre
PA	Political Associations
PUNSAA	Puntland Non-State Actors Association
SFG	Somali Federal Government
SEGTAP	Somali Electoral Democratization Process Project
SSF	Somali Stability Fund
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TPEC	Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission

EARLY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION RESULTS ON 25th OCT, 2021



Puntland
Development &
Research Center

25TH, Oct 2021
Doorashada 3'da
Degmo - Eyl, Ufeyn & Qardho



NATIJADA GUUD DOORASHADA

 **KAAH**
9,869 COD
35 Kursi

 **MUSTAQBAL**
243 COD
1 Kursi

 **MIDEEYE**
7,581 COD
25 Kursi

 **IFIYE**
231 COD
1 Kursi

 **SINCAD**
6,299 COD
20 Kursi

 **DHALINYARADA**
31 COD
0 Kursi

 **RUNCAD**
448 COD
2 Kursi

 **SHAQAALAHA**
97 COD
0 Kursi

 **MUSTAQBAL**
243 COD
1 Kursi

Kaarka
Qaatay
37,578

Dadka
Codeeyey
28,854

Codadka
Saxan
25,488

Codadka
Hallaabay
3,366

Dadka
Maqan
8,724

October 25, 2021: Early Local
Government Election Results in
three districts of - Eyl, Ufeyn &
Qardho Puntland Somalia.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the outcome of the Post-Election Study on Puntland Early Local Government Elections (LGE) held on 25 October 2021 at three Puntland districts, namely; Eyl, Gardho and Uffeyn. The Embassy of Switzerland funded this research to support the on-going democratization process in Puntland. The report examines and portrays a critical analysis on the performance of as well as the outcome of Puntland LGE. The research was conducted with the intent of learning practical lessons prior to holding across-the-board elections in Puntland. Specifically, the objective of the early election was to determine the technical capacity of the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) and the extent of preparedness of the Puntland State to hold full-fledged public elections to establish a democratic system of governance. The research had duration of 2 months. Following the desk study, the field work was carried out between 26 October and 17 November, 2021 at the electoral districts.

Public Participation

Puntland population demonstrated immeasurable enthusiasm towards a one-person-one-vote (OPOV) political system. When asked why they so zealously supported universal suffrage, they asserted a number of thoughts. These include: a desire to: a) transit the clan representative system, b) exercise citizens' fundamental rights of electing their political representatives, and c) achieve accountability of leaders. Despite this, all legible citizens of the three districts did not fully participate in the elections. The study found that this was due to a number of challenges: drought, election fatigue, limited coverage and duration of both the civic and voter education programmes, differing samples of ballot papers during public campaigns and at polling stations, and limited coverage and duration of voter card distribution.

Security Provision and Government Support

Puntland government is accredited to realization of this LGE. Without its commitment and guidance, the election would not have materialized. In addition, it had guaranteed security provision at the polling sites as well as at the electoral districts. Despite the concern that Al-Shabaab might attempt to disrupt the elections, particularly in Uffeyn district neighboring the high mountains, which are a hideout of Al-Shabaab, the election process and voting progressed without security interruptions. No violent incident or political confrontation was reported during the election campaigning, on Election Day, or after declaration of election results. From another standpoint, the Ministry of Interior had beforehand defined the borders of each of the three electoral districts and submitted maps to TPEC and the concerned three district authorities. Border limitation did not pose a challenge to the subject three electoral districts because none of them shared borders with the other.

Efficacy of TPEC

The study respondents unanimously valued the performance of TPEC and expressed appreciation to its work. Both the ruling political association supporters and the opposition associations' supporters commended TPEC's commitment and impartiality. The study, however, identified a number of TPEC technical flaws, which need to be addressed in future elections. These include: a) disproportionate allocation of voters to some polling stations, b) inadequate training of polling staff, c) positioning of some polling stations at clogged sites, which obstructed proper queuing, d) differing ballot papers in the sense that the demonstrated papers and the ones delivered at the polling stations were somewhat different, which confused illiterate voters and resulting in spoilage of a considerable number of ballot papers, and e) absence of emergency health units in the polling sites.

Voting Results

A total of 28,854 citizens cast their votes out of expected 37,578 individuals who obtained voter cards. Major reasons for absence of voters are explained in the above "Public Participation" section. However, one additional constraint emerged during the voting day. Many dislocated pastoralist voters either could not reach their voting sites in time for election or were not permitted to vote when they showed up at nearest polling sites within their respective districts. This was because the Registration Act restricted voters to vote at the original locations where they requested to vote during their registration. On the other hand, of the total votes cast, 3,366 votes were spoiled as a result of wrong marking, which constituted 12% of all cast votes. The study identified various reasons behind spoilage of cast ballot papers. Among these were: high illiteracy rate of voters, low voter education and some minor changes made to the earlier exhibited ballot paper.

Functionality of the Dispute Resolution Committee

An Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) formerly instituted was tasked to resolve any disputes or complaints that developed during and after of the election. The committee stationed one of its secretaries at each of the three electoral districts. The chairman of DRC reported that after elections, some complainants went to the media channels to air their individual concerns for lack of knowledge of the existence of this committee. However, he stated, the competing political associations were aware of the mandate of the DRC and had approached them on several occasions, in which the committee intervened accordingly. The chairman noted that, in all, DRC received 7 cases during the Election Day, the counting of votes and the few days following it, which they successfully managed to resolve.

Performance of the political associations

In the Puntland Early Local Government Elections (LGE), 8 political associations contested. 499 candidates from these 8 political associations vied for a total of 87 seats. The three political associations of Kaah, Mideeye, and Justice and Equity emerged victorious in the elections – winning 35, 25 and 20 seats respectively over the overall 87 contested seats. Although the ruling Kaah Political Association won the highest number of seats in all three district local councils, nevertheless, it gained a slim majority in each, which did not permit it to win the mayorship in any of the three councils. This means that no particular political association appeared an outright winner in the elections. Rather, the two opposition political associations of Mideeye and Justice and Equity together filled a majority that can enable them to master leadership in at least two local councils. Another probable scenario can materialize if the ruling Kaah Political Association and one of the other two top-ranking political associations team up.

Women participation and representation

Women in Puntland are under-represented in politics and public leadership. Out of 16 female aspirant candidates to 2019 legislative organ nomination, only one woman secured a seat. In the judiciary organ, women are missing altogether, and, in the current executive organ, women have only 1 minister and 3 deputies. With regard to the recent Puntland LGE, women accounted for 50.8% of those who registered to vote. On the other hand, women candidates to local council seats numbered 147 (29%) against a total of 499 competing candidates.

Women achieved remarkable gains in the recent LGE. Of the 87 contested seats, women won 23 seats, which symbolize 26% of the overall numbers of seats. The Puntland Election Gender and Social Inclusion Guidelines developed by TPEC sets a standard of a 3 to 1 model to maximize the chances of women to be elected in municipality seats. In addition, this model was applicable to all political association's candidates across the board and was meant to ensure a minimum of 30% quota provision for women's political participation.^[1] In fact, in the new district council of Uffeyn, women attained the pursued 30% goal. In terms of increase, women's share in the local councils in the three districts registered an average upsurge of 383%.

Youth participation and representation

Three-quarter of the people in Puntland are under 30 years old, while in the rest of Somalia the population aged 10-34 form half of the population.^[2] Unemployment is recognized to be the major challenge to Puntland youth. Unemployment is rated to be lowest among those who have no formal education and among graduates of tertiary level of education. Puntland youth complain of neglect on the part of successive governments,

[1]. Source: Puntland Election Gender and Social Inclusion Guideline by TPEC

[2]. Source: a report by Puntland's Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation

although a Ministry of Youth, Labor and Sports is always included in cabinets. Despite that, there are encouraging indications elucidating signs of improvement and hope. Puntland Youth had made headway in the last parliamentary elections of December 2019 where, in the 66-chamber legislative organ, 20 winning members were under the age of 35.

In another drive, during the last two years, youth strived for representation in the local councils of Bossaso, Garowe and Galkayo which in the end brought about a remarkable outcome. 50% of the councilors in these three cities turned out to be under 35 years of age. Furthermore, in the recently concluded Early Local Government Elections, Puntland youth waged a strong campaign aimed at increasing their participation in local councils of the three electoral districts. This study ascertained that over 80% of elected new councilors in the three electoral districts are youth (both genders), which signified a great leap forward. In fact, in Gardho's new council, only 5 out of 33 members are aged above 35 years.

IDP Participation and Representation

Puntland, in October 2021, the local government elections registered a historic record. For the first time, a member of the internally displaced community (IDP) living in a makeshift camp was elected a councilor in Puntland. For the last 30 years, the life of the IDP communities prospered in Puntland and the host community interacted with them without prejudice or alienation, treating them as their brothers and sisters. Article 5 of the Puntland Voter Registration Act stipulates that any Somali citizen, whichever region of the country he/she traces back to, and who lived in Puntland for not less than ten years, has the right to vote and be elected. While the number of IDP populations was limited in the other two districts, Gardho town hosted a large number, who registered and were provided voter cards. Several political associations had, to attract their votes, included IDPs at the higher echelons of their candidates' lists. Mr. Muhsin Abdullahi Haji, an internally displaced from the southern riverine regions of the country ultimately won a seat in Gardho's new council.

International Partners

Support of international partners constitute a pivotal ingredient of Somalia democratization process. Both Puntland local authorities and TPEC, in addition to financial constraints, lacked technical know-how and expertise in management of OPOV elections and initiation of a multiparty political system. Thus, international partners had, from start of the process, provided technical and financial assistance to TPEC and execution of LGE, which served an indispensable impetus and a success cornerstone to elections.

Facilitating Factors to Puntland LGE

- ◊ *Puntland government's commitment to realize elections.*
- ◊ *TPEC's neutrality and independence, which improves the opposition's confidence and trust in the institution. TPEC organized monthly and quarterly meetings with the political associations, listened to their concerns and responded accordingly.*
- ◊ *Strong public desire to transit the clan system and practice a universal suffrage democratic system.*
- ◊ *Puntland civil society and political associations' support to the elections and participation in public and voter education programmes*
- ◊ *Puntland media backing to implementation of elections*
- ◊ *Early preparation for elections*
- ◊ *The unwavering support of the traditional elders*
- ◊ *The technical and financial support of the International Community*

Major Challenges to Puntland LGE

- ◊ *Covid-19, which delayed the timeframe of elections as well as political associations public meetings*
- ◊ *Limited financial resources of TPEC delayed and constrained its operations and geographical coverage*
- ◊ *Election Doubt. Some Puntland people thought that this endeavor would not succeed like the two earlier failed attempts and did not participate the election effort*
- ◊ *Existence of a high rate of illiteracy amongst voters, which substantiated considerable number of spoiled ballot papers, and necessitated assistance to illiterate voters. This exerted great pressure on polling stations and delayed progress of voting*
- ◊ *The Puntland Early Local Government Election process coincided with the Somalia's Parliamentary Elections. This created a significant hurdle, which led to several delays in the planned schedule of the LGE*
- ◊ *Proliferation of arms in the hands of public created a persistent concern of the possibility that at any time, during the elections, armed violence could erupt. Luckily, this did not occur*

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

In response to a request, which TPEC had submitted to the donors, The Swiss Embassy funded the “Support to Puntland Democratization Process Project”, which was a complimentary package to the existing EU-sponsored “Somali Electoral Governance Transparency and Accountability Project (SEGTA)”. PDRC had implemented the project and a component of it constituted conducting a post-election study. The objective of the study was to gauge the performance of the Puntland Early Local Government Elections to be held at the three districts of Eyl, Gardho and Uffeyn. The ultimate goal of the assignment was to produce an analytical research report evaluating the implementation approach of the election, related challenges and opportunities, and subsequently producing findings, relevant recommendations and practical insights. The research work was conducted after conclusion of the elections, which was held on 25 October, 2021 at the targeted three districts.

Contents of the Report

This report presents the outcome of the post-election study and documents the goals achieved, gaps identified and challenges encountered before, during and after the Puntland Early Local Government Elections. It also features conclusions, relevant recommendations and lessons learned. The report is divided into the following chapters:

- 1. Introduction (this current chapter)**
- 2. Preparation for Early Local Government Elections**
- 3. Post-Election Study Findings**

A list of essential annexes is provided at the end of the report.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The research methodology of the study was participatory and interactive. The study had a duration of two months. Following the desk study, field work was carried out between 26 October and 17 November, 2021 in the districts of Eyl, Gardho and Uffeyn, where early local government elections took place. The study employed a Participatory Action Research Methodology in all its phases. The lead consultant Senior Research Consultant Mr Abdulkadir Sh. Mohamoud initially submitted an inception report and in consultation with PDRC and TPEC – the client agencies – finalized the scope of the assignment and specific issues that needed to be addressed in the research work. The inception report also identified the research questions, checklists and relevant stakeholders to be interviewed. To triangulate data, it was decided that the research divide its activities into four stages: a) desk study, b) observation on election day, c) fieldwork across the three target districts after elections, and d) validation workshop after production of the draft report.

In the desk study, the lead consultant reviewed the existing secondary data on Puntland Democratization process to identify gaps that need consideration during the field research. In addition to a literature review, this phase examined the political, operational, technical and legal aspects of the Puntland Early Local Government Elections, as well as the successive Transitional Puntland Electoral Commissions' (TPEC) reports. In the second stage, in compliance to the TOR, the research team visited Gardho district on Election Day. The intention was to assess the process of implementation and the general public response towards election participation. On Election Day, the team visited a number of polling stations and monitored the electoral process. The team also held some preliminary interviews with informed individuals to gather their views on implementation of the electoral process, public perception and enthusiasm to the initiative.

Subsequently, the team carried out the third and most important stage of the research process, the fieldwork. To gather primary data, the research work mainly relied on a qualitative method of interviewing key informants and focus groups while ensuring gender sensitivity. The duration of each key informant interview was approximately 45-60 minutes while focus group discussions continued up to 90 minutes. Stakeholders' interviews provided in-depth understanding of the modality of implementation of the early local government elections and shed light on gaps, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities, as well as best practices learned for replication in future elections in Puntland. For each key informant and focus group, prior to the start of interview, the team explained the overall objective of the assignment and its significance to future elections, which will build on the lessons learned from this early election.

Interviewed individuals and groups represented a wide range of stakeholders including district authorities, operative TPEC and polling staff officials, PUNSAA, traditional and religious leaders, competing political associations, youth groups, womens' groups, new women councilors, women activists, business groups, and pastoralists. The research team met 25 key informants and 13 focus groups, totaling, in all, 129 respondents. Out of this, 47 (36%) were female while the other 82 (64%) were male. Youth – of both genders - represented 71% of total respondents.

After the conclusion of the field work and the compilation of the draft report, the research team, with PDRC assistance, organized a two-day validation workshop where representatives from the stakeholders were invited to deliberate on the outcome of the study. Attending Participants came from TPEC, Puntland Government, political associations, PUNSAA, target districts' representatives, research institutions, women and youth groups, funding agencies and other concerned actors. The final report was submitted to PDRC after incorporation of the comments and contributions of the validation workshop as well as the input from PDRC and TPEC.

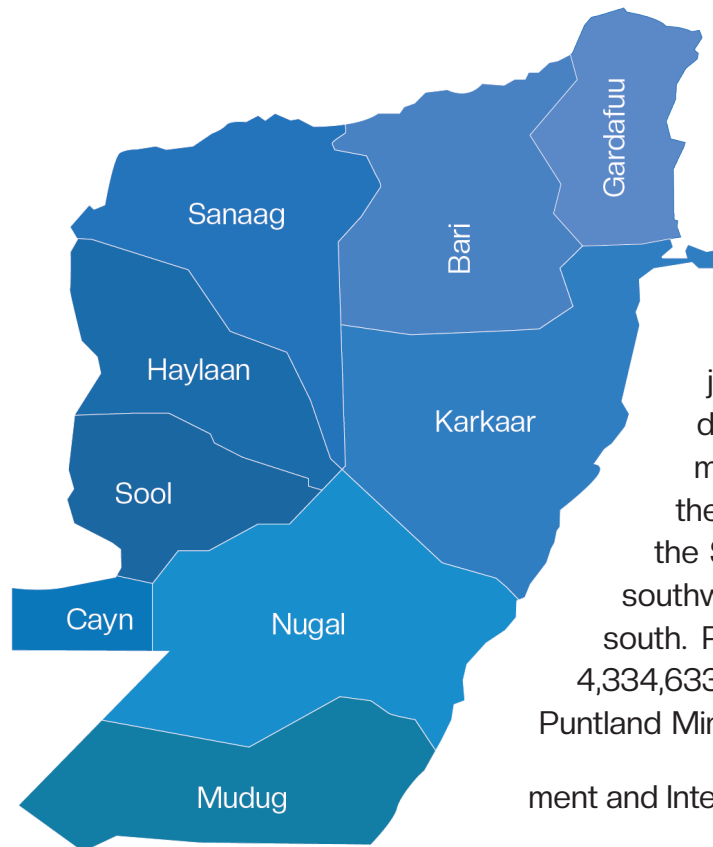
Establishment of Puntland State

In January 1991, the Somali State collapsed and the country plunged into anarchy and civil strife. Clan fiefdoms ruled by warlords competed for acquisition of central power. The international community organized 16 successive reconciliation conferences held in the capital towns of Djibouti, Addis Ababa, Cairo and Nairobi. All ended in failure. Thus, after 8 years of chaos and poor prospects of immediate reconciliation or formation of national government, the traditional leaders and political elite of the five regions of Bari, Nugaal, North Mudug, Eastern Sanaag, and Sool formed their own local authority to administer the region. Therefore, it can be stated that Puntland State formation was not a premeditated episode but an off-shoot of the prolonged Somali predicament.

Between 15 May and 23 July 1998, the traditional and political leaders of the above five regions organized an all-inclusive Constitutional Community Conference in Garowe. The Conference brought together representatives from social, political and traditional groups of women, youth, business people, elite, politicians and traditional leaders to deliberate on the future of the region. Tired of condoning lawlessness and anarchy, political uncertainty, an internal Islamist upheaval, and deteriorating economic conditions,^[3] the conference resolved to create a local government. On 1st August, 1998, the conference inaugurated a new state named; the Puntland State of Somalia, which was guided by a three-year Provisional Charter.

[3]. Puntland's Political Transformation, PDRC, Nov 2014

The Charter endorsed nomination of a 66-member legislature, which elects an executive organ headed by a President and a Vice-President. It was predicted that – within the Charter's three-year term – Puntland would transition from a clan-based political system to a multiparty democratic system. The Charter charged the executive with the tasks of conducting a census, drafting a new constitution, holding a referendum on the constitution, and establishing a Puntland Electoral Commission to usher in a one-person-one-vote multiparty system.



The name Puntland traces back to ancient Egyptian Pharaoh inscriptions, which described their sizeable trade relations, particularly frankincense trade, with a legendary Land of Punt believed to have existed in the current subject regions. Puntland State is bordered by the breakaway region of Somaliland in the west, Gulf of Aden in the North, the Indian Ocean in the East, the Somali Fifth Region of Ethiopia in the southwest, and Galmudug State in the south. Puntland's population is estimated at 4,334,633 according to the 2015 census of Puntland Ministry of Planning, Economic development and International Cooperation (MOPEDIC).^[4]

Progress of Puntland Democratization Process

23 years after its foundation, and the succession of six Presidents and/or governments, a clan-based political system still prevails and Puntland is yet to attain a multiparty political system. Once every five years, when the term expires, the traditional leaders 'Isimmo' nominate a 66-member legislative Organ, which in turn elects a President and a Vice-President to head an executive organ. Despite this, credible steps were taken towards democratization and tireless efforts were expended in this regard. The Provisional Charter (1998-2001), which founded the State and the subsequent draft Provisional constitutions all called for speedy transition to a modern multiparty governance system,

[4] <https://pl.statistics.so/population-of-puntland/>

based on one-person-one-vote paradigm.^[5] It is worth noting that, in Puntland, democratization efforts purposefully commenced in May 2005 when President Mohamed Muse Hirsi (Adde) (2005-2009) commissioned a Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), which reviewed an earlier draft version. The committee produced a Provisional Constitution but the president suspended the commission in 2008 due to unspecified reasons.

This Provisional Constitution, however, though de facto operational, nevertheless lacked legitimacy as it needed approval by a public referendum. President Abdirahman Farole, the fourth president (2009—2014), can be considered to have been the most committed to the project of democratization, especially in view of the commendable steps he took towards its realization in Puntland. In his first year of office, Farole established a Constitutional Review Commission, which revised and finalized the existing Provisional constitution. In January 2011, he passed a Puntland Electoral Commission law through the legislative organ and formed the first Puntland Transitional Electoral Commission (TPEC-I) in April 2011. This body, with the guidance of President Farole, accomplished a number of tangible achievements; it organized a 480-delegate Puntland Constituent Assembly, in the same month of April 2012, and presented the Provisional Constitution for review and ratification. Subsequently, on 18 April 2012, an overwhelming majority of 472 out of the 480 delegates formally adopted the constitution^[6]. In order to pave the way for running local government elections, Puntland legislature promulgated three requisite laws: 1) the Local Council Election Law^[7] and 2) the Political Association Law^[8], and Puntland District Electoral Law.^[9]

From September 2012 onwards, the commission oversaw public awareness campaigns as well as the formation of the first political associations in Puntland, where ultimately six political associations were accredited, in February 2013.^[10] These political associations would go on to contest in the local government elections scheduled to be held on 15 July, 2013. The first six political associations were: HORCAD, Horseed, Midnimo, UDAD, PDPA, and Wadajir.

The commission had also successfully undertaken all the necessary technical and operational provisions necessary to conduct the anticipated local government elections. International partners provided technical support and sufficient financial resources. Due

[5] A Survey of Public Perceptions on Democratization and Local council Elections in Puntland, PDRC, June 2021

[6] Ibid

[7] Law No. 3 of 09/04/2012

[8] July 2012

[9] Aug 2012

[10] Participatory Poll on Prospects on Democratization In Puntland, PDRC, March 2014

to violent incidents flaring up in Gardho and Galkayo districts which culminated in the death of at least four, however, President Farole indefinitely suspended these elections on July 14, 2013, one day before they were scheduled to take place. Investigations found that the opposition was responsible for the disruption of the election process and instigation of the violence.^[11] Political analysts judged that, although Farole's government and the TPEC at the time proved technically competent and acquired sufficient financial and material resources, they did not encourage adequate buy-in among competing associations, Puntland's political elite and traditional leaders.^[12] This was believed to constitute one of the core weaknesses that jeopardized the success of the democratization process, which consumed tremendous efforts on the part of the government, the supporting public, and international partners.^[13]

Critics, additionally, cited Farole's individual political ambitions as a major factor hampering Farole's efforts to realize the democratization process. They criticized him for intentionally postponing the elections until his last year in office, unilaterally extending his term of office by one-year on the premise that the new Puntland Constitution, adopted during his term, sanctioned him to stay one additional year in office. Contrarily, the opposition contended that this constitutional stipulation did not legally apply to the incumbent president, instead starting from the impending president's term.^[14] Other research work likewise attributed, among others, the failure of local government elections to: a) a lack of common understanding among stakeholders about the democratic process and its goals, b) absence of genuine political outreach, c) neglect of opposition participation in decision making at all levels, and d) skepticism about the independence and impartiality of TPEC.^[15]

In spite of the fact that the subsequent President Abdiweli (2014-2019) had established a new Ministry of Constitution, Federal Affairs and Democratization in his cabinet, and had appointed a new TPEC-II,^[16] the democratization process stalled and remained dormant during his tenure. However, TPEC-II had made some achievements, namely: a review of certain existing electoral laws, a formulation of new electoral laws and procedures, and the development of a strategic plan. The under achievement of TPEC-II was mainly due to the lack of commitment on the part of the leadership and inadequate financial resources.^[17] Notwithstanding, the Puntland public yearned for a democrat-

[11] Sidra_Policy_Brief, No2_Web

[12] Puntland Democratization: Process, Challenges and Way Forward, Somali Public Agenda, August 2021

[13] Ibid

[14] Ibid

[15] Puntland's Political Transformation, PDRRC, Nov 2014

[16] March 2016

[17] A Survey Of Public Perceptions On Democratization And local Council Elections In Puntland, June 2021)

ic system and abandonment of the clan political system. Manifestly, a participatory poll administered by PDRC in 2014 revealed that 91% of respondents were in favour of transitioning from a clan-based political system to direct elections.^[18] Additionally, the public was disappointed by the failure of the Farole Government's democratization efforts and President Abdiweli's deficient will to continue the process.

In contrast, the incumbent sixth President, Hon. Said Abdullahi Deni, fulfilling the pledge proclaimed in his campaign manifesto to prioritize democratization, has invigorated the stalled process in recent years. He created a Democratization department under the existing Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs, resulting in the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization (MOIFAD. In his first year in office, he established a new Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC-III), which the Puntland Legislature endorsed on 16 November 2019. Due to technical and financial limitations, the need to procure local and international partners' confidence, and to gain practical experience in election management, TPEC, in consultation with President Deni's government, decided to hold local government elections in three districts as a pilot endeavor.

A Chronology of Puntland's Democratization Process

May 1998	Constitutional Community Conference convenes in Garowe
July-August 1998	The conference ratifies a three-year Charter and establishes Puntland State
1 June 2001	The Charter expires. The term of President Abdullahi Yussuf ends but he makes a unilateral two-years extension. The opposition objects and Puntland plunges into a Constitutional Crisis
2003	The constitutional crisis ends. Abdullahi Yussuf re-instates his authority as President of Puntland and reconciles with the opposition
10 Oct 2004	The Somali National Conference at Mbagathi Nairobi, elects Abdullahi Yussuf president of Somalia. He vacates the leadership of Puntland

[18] Participatory Poll on Prospects on Democratization In Puntland, March 2014

Oct 2004- Jan 2005	Puntland plunges into constitutional leadership crisis and the traditional leadership organizes a legislative session of Puntland legislature to elect a president
Jan 2005	Puntland Legislature elects Adde Muse President
May 2005	Adde Muse nominates a committee to review a Draft Constitution but later suspends the committee
2009	President Farole nominates a Constitution Review Commission, which revises and finalizes a Provisional Constitution
Jan 2011	Puntland Legislature approves Puntland Electoral Commission Law
April 2011	President Farole's Government establishes the first Transitional Electoral Commission (TPEC-I)
15-18 April 2012	Puntland Constituent Assembly convenes in Garowe and endorses the Provisional Constitution
July 2012	Puntland Legislature passes Political Association's Act
Aug 2012	Puntland legislature approves District Electoral Law
9 April 2012	Puntland legislature passes Local Councils Elections Law
Sept 2012	Political associations' registration commences and closes on 31 December 2012. Six political associations are registered and provided accreditation
May 2013	Cabinet approves the Puntland Constitutional Court Law
13 July 2013	Violence against the election flares up in Gardho, Galkayo and other locations
14 July 2013	President Farole suspends elections scheduled on 15 July 2013 with no definite time for resumption

March 2016	President Abdiweli's Government nominates a Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC-II)
16 Nov 2019	President Said Deni's Government inaugurates the Third Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC-III)
14 Dec 2019	Political Association's Registration Guideline, 14 Dec 2019
14 March 2020	TPEC-III invites aspiring political parties to apply for registration
August 2020	Registration of political associations closes and TPEC accredits 10 parties to compete in the upcoming local government elections
16 May-7 June 2021	Voter registration period in the three districts of Eyl, Gardho and Ufeyn
20 Sept 2021	Distribution of voting cards starts in Eyl, Gardho and Ufeyn
26 Sept- 22 Oct 2021	TPEC accords each political association in the election, three days for public campaigning, and demonstration of its political base
25 October 2021	Election Day
27 October 2021	TPEC announces the preliminary results of elections to be endorsed/rejected by the Puntland Supreme within 30 days of announcement

Preparation for Early Local Government Elections

Under the stewardship of President Deni's Government, TPEC, after its legislative endorsement on 16 November 2019, initiated early local government elections. However, to succeed in its enterprise, it had to address formidable challenges potentially impeding its efforts. For that reason, TPEC had taken the following steps: i) a public consultation expedition ii) development of a strategic plan and a roadmap for implementation of local government elections, iii) fundraising advocacy, iv) finalization of electoral laws and procedures, v) engagement of pertinent stakeholders, vi) capacity building of TPEC personnel, vii) selection of electoral districts, viii) registration, vetting and certification of political

associations, ix) launching of civic and voter education, voter registration, distribution of voter cards, and x) institution of an Electoral Dispute Resolution Guideline and an Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee.

Public Consultation Expedition

To explore the viability of holding elections in Puntland, TPEC-III started its work with public debates. It launched public consultation tours throughout Puntland's nine regions, visiting sixteen districts, and meeting diverse stakeholders: politicians, community leaders, women's groups, youth groups, members of the business community, IDPs, universities, civil society organizations, concerned ministries, and lastly TPEC-1 and TPEC-11 members. In these meetings, it gathered people's views and opinions on the possibility of holding elections and identified potential challenges.

Development of a Strategic Plan and a Roadmap for local government elections

Obtaining positive feedback and insight from the extensive public deliberations, TPEC moved forward with its plans to conduct a pilot election, which would be limited to three districts, before organizing fully-fledged, Puntland-wide elections. Accordingly, it developed a roadmap for these local government elections, which was inducted on 16 December 2019 at PDRC Conference Hall with the participation of President Deni, who gave his full support to the plan.

Fundraising Advocacy

TPEC did not inherit any funds from the previous commissions. Likewise, Puntland Government could not afford to provide adequate financial support and its assistance was limited to a monthly financial supplement of USD 26,000. Therefore, TPEC, during 2020-2021, unleashed an intensive fundraising campaign targeting donors and international agencies. It held quarterly coordination meetings with potential donors to solicit funds. Interpeace, SSF, Sahan, and Diakonia were among the international agencies which responded and provided vital technical and financial assistance to TPEC. On the donors' side, the EU, Switzerland and Denmark were the first to provide both technical and financial support to Puntland democratization process and TPEC. Despite these tremendous efforts, TPEC received limited financial resources which hardly covered its operational costs and espoused the Early Local Government Elections in 2021.

Finalization of Electoral Laws and Procedures

TPEC inherited numerous legal and institutional frameworks from the two previous electoral commissions. Basic organizational structure and considerable electoral laws and procedures already existed. To finalize the electoral legal framework, TPEC supplemented the remaining laws, policies procedures while reviewing some of the existing laws that required improvements. Existing laws and acts comprised:

- ◊ *Puntland Electoral Commission Law, Jan 2011*
- ◊ *TPEC establishment Act 2012*
- ◊ *Political Associations Act, July 2012*
- ◊ *Local Councils' Elections Law, 9 April 2013*
- ◊ *Amended TPEC Establishment Act, 5 Jan 2015*
- ◊ *Amended Political Association Act, 19 Aug 2017*

In addition, TPEC-III promulgated, through government, the following laws, policies and procedures:

- ◊ *Political Association's Registration Guideline, 14 Dec 2019*
- ◊ *Voter Registration Bill of 1st March 2020*
- ◊ *Electoral Dispute Resolution Guideline, 2020*
- ◊ *Election Observer Guideline (PUNSAA)*
- ◊ *Women's Political Participation Policy 2021 (Gender Policy)*
- ◊ *A Guideline for Women and Vulnerable Participation*
- ◊ *Political Associations' Financing Regulation, 14 August 2021*

Engagement of Stakeholders

Using lessons learned from the previously foiled 2013 elections, TPEC ensured inclusiveness and involvement of all stakeholders at all stages of the electoral process. This was considered vital to the success of the process and required to secure the confidence of stakeholders and enhance public trust. To this end, TPEC established five-levels of stakeholder coordination mechanisms, which included: i) monthly coordination meetings with civil society organizations, ii) monthly coordination meetings with Cabinet Task Force, iii) monthly coordination meetings with political associations, iv) quarterly coordination meetings with donors, and v) quarterly coordination meetings with all stakeholders. Furthermore, TPEC-III engaged such leading civil society organizations as Puntland Non-State Actors Association (PUNSAA), Puntland Development and Research Centre, youth and women organizations, as well as the Media Association of Puntland (MAP) Umbrella in the democratic process tasking each its respective role.

It is important to note here that TPEC, in order to prevent misinformation and the initiation of violence before, during and after the elections, had signed an agreement with the Media Association of Puntland (MAP) on 13 May 2021 relating to the respect of the Puntland Journalists' Code of Conduct, particularly with regard to election reporting. To ensure the Code's importance and vitality to the elections, the Ministry of Information, PUNSAA and PDRC all participated in and commemorated the signing event.

While the Code guaranteed the right of journalists against intimidation and government interference, Article 4 of the Code required journalists to observe ethical journalism, ethical election reporting, and to desist from detrimental excesses such as biased reporting, misinformation, and instigation of violence, all of which could undermine the smooth

operation of the electoral process, as well as public security. The Code proscribed journalists from seeking information on harassment or bribery, and resolutely advised journalists to positively contribute to the nascent democratic process in Puntland. Article 5 also accords journalists the right to access to information including: covering the registration and election processes, as well as the right to obtain information regarding registrants, candidates, political associations, voters, polling stations, and registration centres.

Capacity Building of TPEC Personnel

TPEC started its work with in-house organization by operationalizing existing personnel and recruiting new ones to fill in the vacant positions that are vital for efficient running of the organization. The new positions were advertised and filled through standard procedures. TPEC, thereafter, opened offices in the capitals of the three electoral districts and recruited sufficient staff to carry out the activities of voter education, citizen engagement and distribution of electoral materials. To enhance its efficacy, TPEC approached supporting international partners, who provided the requisite training.

Selection of Electoral Districts

During its initial public consultations in the Puntland regions and districts, TPEC conferred public representatives on the most suitable criteria for selection of pilot electoral districts. On the basis of these discussions, the following criteria were established for classification of three pilot districts:^[19]

1. The district must have enough stability to allow for free assembly of citizens to vote
2. The district must have ample border security to deny voter transplanting
3. The three districts must not be in the same political region but from different regions
4. The three districts must have diverging political and environmental characteristics, in order to provide an effective benchmark. For example, one district to be a highly populated district, another from the coastal regions, and the third to come from predominantly rural/pastoral districts.
5. The districts must have a high percentage of its residents willing to partake in the early elections.

After rigorous screening of Puntland districts, TPEC selected the three districts of Eyl, Gardho, and Uffeyn for the early local government elections (**LGE**). Eyl was selected to represent the rural coastal context, Gardho to represent high populated districts, and Uffeyn to symbolize the pastoral districts. To prevent confusion and territorial disputes among the electoral districts, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization (**MOIFAD**) worked on demarcation of the boundaries of the three districts and sub-

[19] TPEC_Annual-Report_2020

mitted the map to TPEC^[20] and respective districts' authorities.

Additionally, TPEC conducted an assessment in the three districts estimating population distribution to determine voter registration centres and polling stations. At end of the assessment, it sanctioned 54 polling stations at the three target districts, which distributed as: 25 polling stations in Gardho district, 18 in Eyl district and 11 in Uffeyn district. It was estimated that 350 TPEC staff would operate these polling stations during the Election Day.

Table 1: Distribution of Electoral Districts' Polling Stations

LOCATION	POLLING STATIONS
Eyl	18
Gardho	25
Uffeyn	11
Total	54

Registration, Vetting and Certification of Political Associations

Subsequent to the identification of electoral districts, on 14 March 2019 TPEC-III declared the start of registration of aspiring political associations under the established registration criteria, which took place in two stages. After completion of vetting, 17 aspirant political associations, which applied for registration, 10 political associations eventually met the registration criteria and acquired certification. On 1st August 2020, TPEC proclaimed the names of the 10 political associations, which met the registration norms and, on 15 August 2020, organized a ceremony in Garowe, where it formally awarded certificates to these associations. High profile individuals, who participated in the ceremony included: the Vice President of Puntland, His Excellency Ahmed Elmi Osman, and two Puntland former Presidents, Hon. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gas and Hon. Abdirahman Mohamed Farole. Other attending participants included: political associations, members of Puntland legislative organ, Cabinet, and civil society organizations. The names of the accredited political associations are:

1. Truth and Justice Political Association (**RUNCAD**)
2. Labor Political Association, (**SHAQAALAHA**)
3. Youth Political Association (**DHALLINYARADA**)

[20] TPEC Chairman interview, Nov2021

4. Justice and Equity Political Association (**SINCAD**)
5. Kaah Political Association (**KA AH**)
6. Mideeye Political Association (**MIDEEYE**)
7. Mustaqbal Political Association (**MUSTAQBAL**)
8. Horseed Political Association (**HORSEED**)
9. Ifiye Political Association^[21] (**IFIYE**)
10. Himilo Political Association (**HIMILO**)

Civic and Voter Education, Voter Registration, Distribution of Voter Cards and Registration of Candidates Civic and Voter Education

Months prior to the elections, TPEC finalized the requisite technical preparations for civil engagement and voter education. While TPEC played the role of overall guidance and supervision, approval and messages and guidelines, a number of local civil society organizations were tasked to implement this component. These included: PUNSAA, KAALO, PDRC, MAP, youth organizations, universities. The international partners of EU, Swiss Embassy, Sahan and SSF directly interacted with and funded these implementing local organizations.

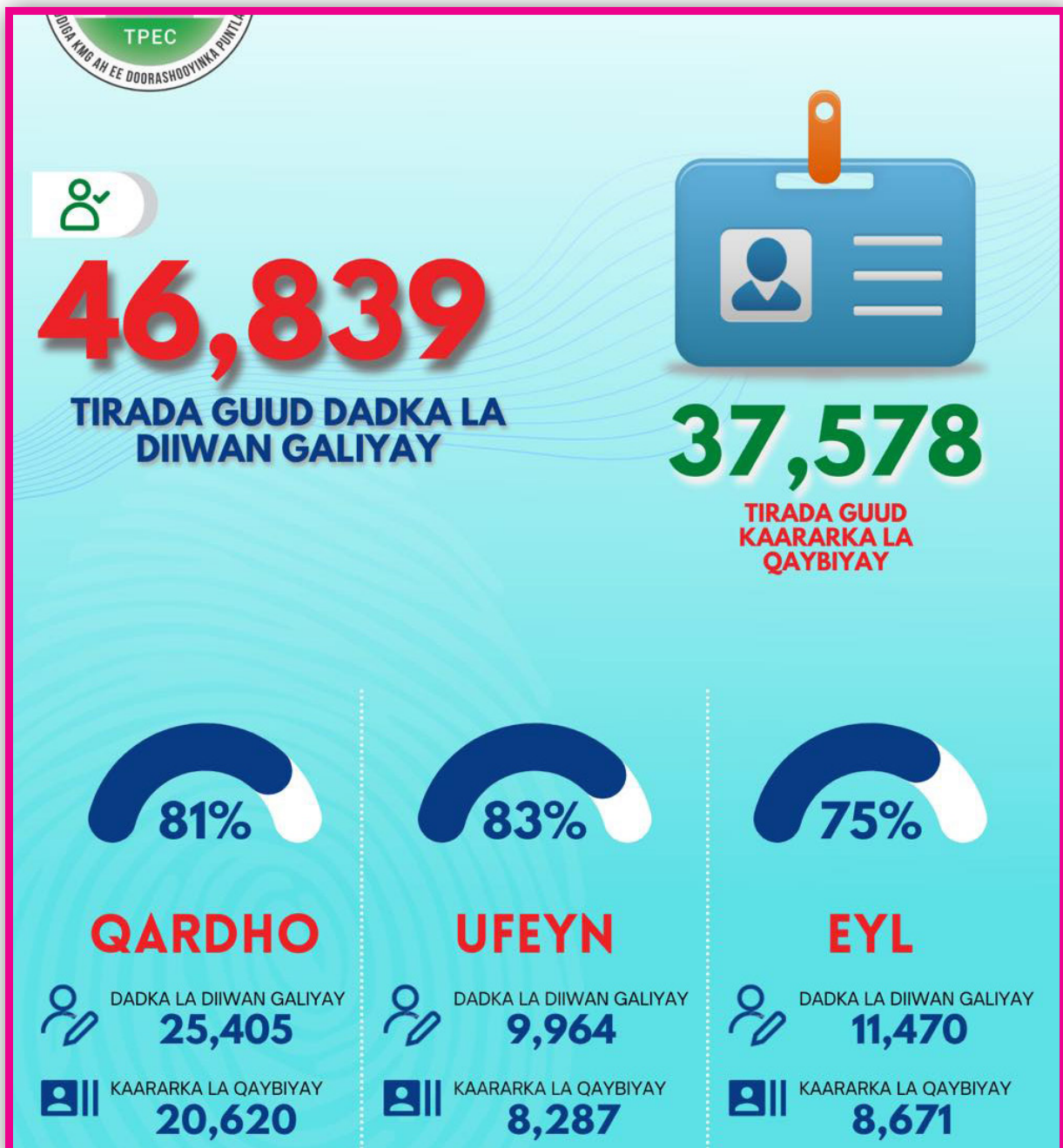
Voter Registration and Establishment of the Voter Registration Complaints' Resolution Committee

After the public awareness campaign, TPEC launched a voter registration drive inviting eligible citizens in the three target districts to register in order to receive voter cards. According to TPEC statistical sources, those who registered in the three districts numbered 46,839 legible citizens, who were expected to cast their votes at the sanctioned 54 polling stations. To strengthen the transparency of the registration process and all-inclusiveness, TPEC established a Voter Registration Complaints' Resolution Committee to deal with any concerns in the registration process. The Committee operated from start of the voter registration course to the publication of preliminary and final voter registration lists.

Distribution of Voter Cards

When the registration exercise concluded, distribution of voter cards followed. Nonetheless, a considerable number of registered citizens did not appear to collect voter cards. Out of the registered 46,839 legible voters, only 37,578 citizens reported to take their voter cards. The picture below presents the respective numbers of registered voters (the upper line), in contrast to the actual number of voters (bottom line), who later on collected voter cards at respective districts.

[21] TPEC_Annual-Report_2020



Registration of Candidates

The ascribed political associations^[22] submitted to TPEC their competing candidates at each of the three target districts. Before submission of lists, TPEC conditioned that one in each of three proposed candidates submitted by political associations should be a female. This provision strengthened the opportunity of a substantial number of female candidates winning seats. The local councils of Eyl and Uffeyn had each consisted of 27 members, while Gardho local council comprised 33 members. For this overall total of 87

[22] The tenth political association of Himilo merged with the ruling Kaah Political Association

local council seats, 499 candidates contested and of these 352 (71%) were made up of male hopefuls, while 147 (29%) were female contenders.

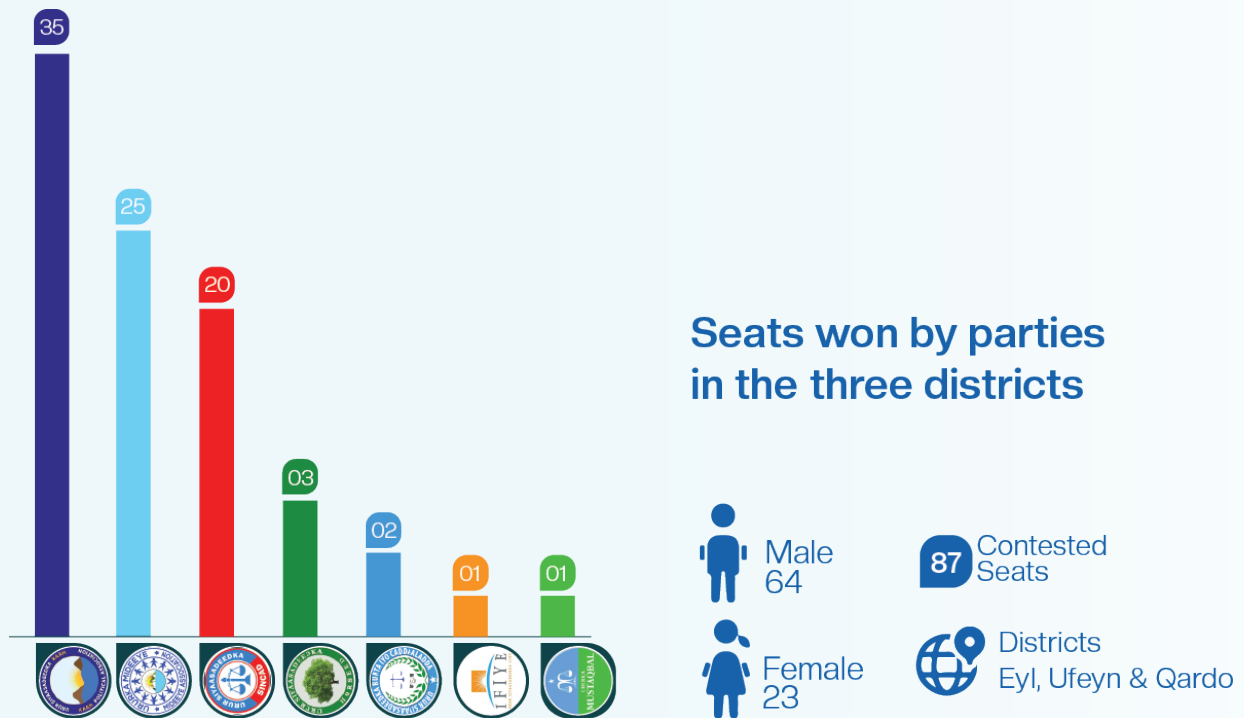
Institution of an Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee

Article 8 of the Puntland Electoral Commission Law delegates to TPEC the authority of dispute resolution during and after the elections. In order to fulfill this obligation, TPEC developed an Electoral Dispute Resolution Guideline to serve a foundation for operations. Additionally, it formed an Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee tasked to deal with these issues. However, the law explicitly placed the ultimate responsibility of arbitration of disputes over election results on the Constitutional Court. Regrettably, although every presidential candidate pledged to form a Constitutional Court during his campaign drive, each victor to the presidential office eventually abstained from establishing one, likely because a Constitutional Court would represent a direct threat to his power. Thus, after 23 years of existence, Puntland State remains without a Constitutional Court empowered to arbitrate electoral disputes and Constitutional Disputes.

The above Electoral dispute Resolution Committee was formed in September 2021, just one month before the elections. It consisted of seven committee members and a four-member secretariat. Its guideline mandates the committee to resolve disputes arising out of the planned elections scheduled to take place on 25 October 2021. The committee is mandated to deliberate on disputes and complaints over election administration, vote counting or election results, which are submitted to it during and after elections but before TPEC's declaration of final election results.

Post-Election Study Findings

At the end of the marathon, Local government elections took place simultaneously in Puntland, on schedule, on 25 October, 2021, at the districts of Eyl, Gardho and Uffeyn. This chapter presents the findings of the post-election study on Puntland Early Local Government Elections. It examines the implementation process of the election starting from a range of preparatory steps to the convening of elections and the aftermath of the election results. The chapter also sheds light on encountered challenges, key recommendations and the lessons learned from the election experience.



Public Participation

Puntland population demonstrated immeasurable enthusiasm towards the one-person-one-vote (OPOV) political system. When asked why they so zealously support universal suffrage, they provided a number of reasons. Some explained that they detested the archaic clan representative system, which dominated the Puntland political spectrum during the last 23 years. This system, they argued, on the one hand, confines people's destiny to the hands of a small group of traditional elders who often do not appoint suitable representatives and, on the other hand, the system entrenches clannism, which is detrimental to good governance and is not inclusive. Another group explained that they want to exercise their fundamental right of determining their future by directly electing their political leadership.

A third group maintained that they support the OPOV democratic system solely because they want to elect those with whom they share the same vision, political program, and who demonstrate good qualities of leadership and trustworthiness. These elected members will be accountable, they added, to the citizens and not to a handful of elders, nor to the Puntland state.

A fourth view thought that the OPOV system or the democratic governance system in general keeps the state authority at bay with regards to district autonomy, where local councils and mayors are directly elected by the district citizens in line with the government's bottom-up decentralization program. In this system, they explained, the state government cannot come and simply dismiss the mayor, nominate a new one or outright dissolve the entire local council as happened many times prior to the onset of the democratization process.

One Focus Group Participant in Gardho informed that the OPOV system forces the candidates to reach out to the rural communities to secure their votes, and in order to get repute, many invested in community basic service infrastructures. He concluded that, in contrast to the past, in the OPOV system the politicians are obliged to listen to the people rather than aspiring to win the hearts of a few elders.

A key informant in Uffeyn attested that, since the formation of Puntland State in 1998, very few government officials had ever visited their locality to find out of the plight of the people. But he added: “thanks to the impending OPOV election, today the Puntland Vice-president and 5 ministers and deputy ministries have now stayed in Uffeyn for 9 days with the objective of garnering support for their ruling political association. For the same purpose, 2 opposition political associations’ chairpersons with many of their activists also remain in Uffeyn for quite a time. This has never happened before. They would have never come here without this direct election. Sincerely, I support the OPOV system”.

Despite public euphoria regarding elections, not all legible citizens of the three districts participated in the elections. Some registered but did not appear to obtain voter cards, while others got cards but did not actually vote. The table below illustrates that 38% of those who registered did not practically call at polling stations or take part in the voting. The study found that this was due to a number of factors including:

Table 2: *Citizen participation in Elections*

Location	# of Registered Voters	# of Voters Registered but did not collect cards	# of voters who Collected Cards but did not Vote	Total Absenteeism	% of Absenteeism
EYL	11,470	2,799	1,905	4,704	41%
GARDHO	25,405	4,785	3,898	8,683	34%
UFEYN	9,964	1,677	2,921	4,598	46%
TOTAL	46,839	9,261	8,724	17,985	38%

1. **Drought:** The vast majority of the populations of the three districts, where the elections were taking place, constituted pastoralists, who often follow rain patterns. The autumn rains, expected to fall in October, were below normal and mostly missed these districts. Hence, a considerable number of nomadic pastoralists, whose livelihood always depended on livestock, migrated with their livestock to

distant places outside their districts, where it rained and they could access fresh pasture for their animals. Thus, they were unable to either travel back to obtain voter cards; or, for those who took the cards were forced to find pasture for their livestock and follow suit their compatriot nomads, who had earlier migrated away.

2. **Election Doubt:** Some people believed that elections cannot be successfully implemented under the current circumstances. Due to two failed earlier attempts, many politicians, elite, and populace built this opinion and had no confidence in the likelihood of holding elections. Likewise, donor fatigue prevailed and they were reluctant to fund the Puntland elections.
3. **High Public illiteracy Rate:** The executed LGE had revealed a high illiteracy rate across the voting communities, and particularly amongst rural/pastoralist communities. Thus, two issues appeared; on the one hand, many ballots were mismarked and hence spoiled by illiterate voters, who attempted to cast votes without external assistance, while, on the other hand, a large number of illiterate voters, who requested external support in marking their ballot exerted a great burden on the polling stations staff, in addition to delaying the progress of voting.

Security Provision and Government Support

The Puntland government is accredited to realization of this LGE. The Puntland Government is applauded for its determination to and leadership role over the timely resumption and implementation of the democratization process, as well as the provision and maintenance of security at the polling sites as well as at the electoral districts. And above all, its respect to independence of TPEC and operational management of elections. Another equally import matter is the government's acceptance of the election results.

Despite the concern that Al-Shabaab may disrupt the elections, particularly in Uffeyn district neighbouring the high mountains, which are a hideout of Al-Shabaab insurgents, the election process and voting progressed without any security interruptions. No violent incident or political confrontation was reported during the election campaigning, on the Election Day, or after declaration of election results. One participant noted *"Security was made tight at the polling stations and the districts' borders. I can admit that the security forces were effective, impartial and maintained order."*

From another standpoint, the Ministry of Interior had beforehand defined the borders of each of the three electoral districts and submitted maps to TPEC and the concerned three district authorities. Border limitation did not pose a challenge to these three electoral districts because none of them shared borders with the other. However, it is important to note here, that in the planned 47 Puntland districts' elections, the situation will be different and critical with regard to district borders since a large number of the districts shares borders. Elections will provoke serious border conflicts among these districts over control of villages. Thus, the Ministry of Interior, has to pay sufficient at-

tention to this issue and finalize district border delimitations, effecting consensus among target districts, at a good time before holding elections.

Efficacy of TPEC

Study respondents unanimously valued performance of TPEC and expressed appreciation to its performance. Both the ruling political association supporters and the opposition associations' supporters commended TPEC's commitment and impartiality. They all agreed that TPEC had conducted free and fair elections and that vote counting was transparent. The political associations, local and international non-governmental partners, and other stakeholders supporting and directly involved in elections acclaimed TPEC and urged it to continue its demonstrated professional conduct, ethics, and impartiality.

While such levels of reputation, trust and interest are well-earned dividends and demonstrate the credibility of TPEC as well as the broader democratization process, TPEC nevertheless needs to preserve this momentum to succeed in the coming up Puntland wide district elections. Furthermore, TPEC must put in place conflict-resolution and in-house advisory mechanisms to reach out to, and/or accommodate the critical views of the political associations and other interested actors.

One participant noted the independence of the polling station staff in that at one polling station, some government ministers and accompanying officials entered with the intent of supervising the progress of voting. The polling staff allowed them to enter and observe but when they stayed longer, the polling staff openly requested the ministers and officials to vacate the station and give space to voting citizens to which the government officials had obeyed. This is evidence of the independence and impartiality of TPEC and its staff. Another participant justified independence of TPEC by the mere fact that, after conclusion of elections, no opposition political association raised any complaints on the election results, vote rigging, or lack of transparency in the counting of votes.

Not with standing, the study identified a number of TPEC technical flaws, which included:

- 1. Limited Coverage and Duration of civic and voter education:** Many key informants expressed concern over the coverage of the civic education and voter education programs. They observed that these campaigns were carried out hastily during the last few months of the election and even all the polling station villages were not covered. They pointed out that: a) although TPEC supervised and authorized the content of messages, billboards and stickers, yet the overall coordination of the program among the local implementing CSOs was weak. This was because various local civil society organizations, funded by different international partners, independently carried out the program. This resulted in a) overlaps in some locations and concentration of the activities to limited villages and to the electoral districts' capitals, while vast areas of the districts were not covered, and b) in general

terms, inadequacy of program out-reach to the pastoralist communities, who constituted the majority of eligible voters.

2. ***Disproportionate allocation of voters to some polling stations:*** TPEC had, at the start, conducted an assessment throughout the three districts to determine population distribution and, thus, based the number and locations of polling stations on the outcome of this assessment. It also had acquired, after the registration exercise, the number of voters listed at each polling station. Despite all this information, TPEC was unable to accurately predict the capacity of voters which a particular polling station could accommodate. This resulted in an imbalance of voters at polling stations in populous locations, and created confusion and congestion on Election Day. This was particularly observed in Hasbahale and Qarhis polling stations in Eyl district as well as in the three polling stations of Qorya'ad, Hanuninta and Horgoble in Gardho town. Over two thousand voters converged into each of the above stations, which created commotion and great pressure on the polling staff forcing the polling station to operate late after the 6pm deadline.
3. ***Inadequate training of polling staff:*** the training of polling staff was organized in haste with short durations a few days before the Election Day. Furthermore, trainees were congregated in extremely large classes. This undermined apposite transfer of knowledge and skills.
4. ***Locating some polling stations at clogged sites:*** in Gardho city, a number of polling stations to which large numbers of voters were assigned had no space for voters to queue up. This triggered disorder and turmoil.
5. ***Minor variations in ballot papers' format:*** Many believed that this phenomenon constituted one of the causes of some spoiled ballot papers during the election. The ballot paper, which TPEC submitted to the political associations for public awareness and demonstrated to the voters, had minor variations from the one proffered in the polling station. Consequently, some voters confused and marked incorrectly.
6. ***Absence of emergency health units at the polling stations:*** with the exception of polling stations located in the three districts' capitals, the rest of the polling stations in the villages lacked health units to assist vulnerable voters. A number of pregnant women, who experienced labour while at the queuing lines, and other vulnerable groups had to be assisted by volunteers. This happened in all the three districts. In response to this issue, TPEC informed that this task was the responsibility of the Puntland Ministry of Health and it had signed an agreement with the Ministry to organize health facilities at all polling stations. TPEC has to consider this deficiency in planning future elections

Voting Results

The Early Local Government Elections (LGE) were ultimately realized. Voting took place simultaneously, on 25 October 2021, at three the pilot electoral districts, namely: Eyl, Gardho and Uffeyn. At each district, TPEC posted one representative, who acted as Chairperson of the District Election Committee, which monitored progress of elections and supervised the counting of cast votes after closure of the polling stations. TPEC chairpersons led the tally of votes in the polling stations in the districts and after completion of counting in the presence and signature of the political associations' representatives certified the election results. Each TPEC chairperson, then, immediately passed the detailed election results of his/her district to TPEC Head Office in Garowe. On 27 October, 2021, TPEC declared the preliminary results of the elections at the three districts (refer Annex 1).

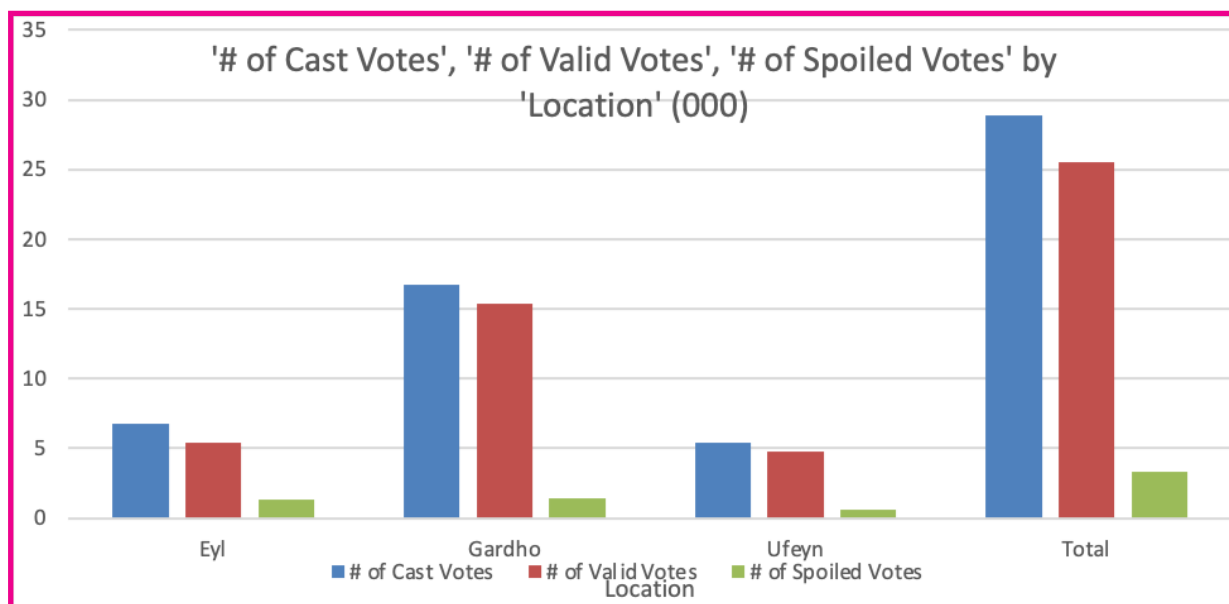
In accordance to/with Puntland Constitution, the Constitutional Court should endorse or reject, within 30 days from the Election Day, the validity of the TPEC declared election results. In the current Puntland situation, in the absence of a Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court was charged to perform that function and had declared the validity of the results. On the other hand, the law stipulates that political associations have right to lodge a protestation or dispute against declared results within the 10 days following the declaration of the election results. During and after expiry of this deadline, no complaints or disputes over the declared election results were submitted to TPEC or to the Supreme Court.

A total of 28,854 citizens cast their votes out of the expected 37,578 individuals, who obtained voter cards. Major reasons for absence of voters were earlier explained in the above "Public Participation" Section. However, one additional constraint was observed at the voting day. This constituted the tying of the voter to one specific location/polling station, where he/she registered and had earlier obtained the voter card. Due to the drought and frequent movements of the nomadic pastoralists, on Election Day many re-located nomad voters either could not reach their voting sites or were not permitted to vote when they showed up at nearest polling sites within their respective district.

Of the above-mentioned cast votes, 3,366 votes were spoiled as a result of wrong marking which constituted 12% of all cast votes. This raises a serious concern. For detailed breakdown refer the table below.

Table 3: Voting Results

LOCATION	# OF CAST VOTES	# OF VALID VOTES	# OF SPOILED VOTES	% OF SPOILED VOTES
EYL	6,766	5,406	1,360	20%
GARDHO	16,722	15,343	1,379	8%
UFEYN	5,366	4,739	627	12%
TOTAL	28,854	25,488	3,366	12%



Functionality of the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC)

The Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) formerly instituted was tasked to resolve any disputes or complaints that developed during and after elections. The committee stationed one of its secretaries at each of the three electoral districts. The chairman of the DRC informed that after elections, some complainants went to the media channels to air their individual concerns for lack of knowledge of the existence of this committee. However, he stated, competing political associations were aware of the mandate of DRC and had approached it on several occasions, in which the committee intervened accordingly. The chairman noted that, in all, DRC received 7 cases during Election Day, counting of votes and the few days following it. Major events reported included:

1. *Mideeye Political Associations lodged complaint over 240 cancelled ballot papers in Eyl. The committee reopened the ballot boxes and examined the ballot papers under question in the presence of the political associations. Cancellation of these*

ballot papers proved valid and Mideeye Political Association was convinced.

2. *In one of the polling stations of Uffeyn electoral district, three representatives from three competing associations, realizing that they had no supporters in the location, conspired to create disorder in order to close the polling station in the Election Day. The polling staff instantly reported this to DRC, which ordered immediate replacement of the three representatives. The concerned political associations complied and executed the replacement.*
3. *In Gardho, 400 KAAH supporting voters arriving at a polling site in Gardho after 6pm, when the polling station closed, and demanded access for voting and re-opening of the station. When the polling staff objected, these voters complained to DRC. Upon scrutiny, the committee declared the complainants' request illegitimate because they were not present at the polling station by 6pm when it was scheduled to close.*
4. *At one of the polling stations in Gardho, 2 women supporting the same political association contrived against another woman, whom they knew was voting for a competing political association. They came to her and intentionally tore her voter card into pieces. Fighting ensued. When the matter was brought to DRC, the committee called the police to deal with the case. The police imprisoned the three ladies. Eventually, the two belligerent ladies confessed their offence and apologized. While the offended lady lost her voting opportunity, the offenders also lost two voting opportunities.*

Performance of the political associations

As earlier mentioned, TPEC had at the start certified 10 political association to participate in the Early Local Government Elections' (LGE) race. Nonetheless, one political association, Himilo Political Association, had, after receipt of certification, merged with Kaah Political Association. Furthermore, one of the remaining 9 political organizations, Youth Political Association, withdraw from the race at the last stages of the electioneering process and did not compete in the three electoral districts for reasons not specified. This left 8 political associations in the field to contest for the local councils' seats. Later on, one of the 8 competitors, Mustaqbal Political Association, decided not to run in the district of Gardho. This concluded in 8 political associations competing at Uffeyn and Eyl elections, and only 7 in Gardho. In the 6 months prior to the elections, the associations prepared themselves for the contest with technical support from TPEC. The Commission allocated the period between 24 September and 22 October (just three days before election) for election campaigning, in which competing associations intently canvassed support and held public meetings.

The study revealed that the internal governance systems and operational capacity of political associations were. Additionally, political associations faced difficulties in mobiliz-

ing supporters/voters, establishing permanent presence and visibility in the districts and villages, generating resources from their supporters, and developing their organizational political agenda and vision into a written policy and political programs.

In the Early Local Government Elections, 499 candidates from eight political associations vied for a total of 87 seats. The electoral race was based on a closed list election system, where people voted for political associations and not for individuals. Many study participants disapproved this system arguing that the closed list denotes loyalty to associations and gives leverage to associations' preferences and/or interests, while the open list system facilitates election of candidates on their individual merits.

The three political associations of KAAH, Mideeye, and Justice and Equity won the majority of council seats gaining 35, 25 and 20 seats respectively on an overall 87 contested seats. Although the ruling KAAH Political Association gained the highest number of seats in the three district local councils, nevertheless, it had a slim lead over the others in each council, which did not allow it to win mayorship in any of the three councils. This means that no particular political association appeared an outright winner in the local councils' seats. Instead, the two opposition associations of Mideeye and Justice and Equity collectively fielded a majority that could enable them to muster leadership in the two local councils of Gardho and Uffeyn. Another probable grouping scenario to win majority seats in councils could materialize if KAAH ruling political association and one of the two top-ranking political associations formed an alliance.

Table 5: Distribution of Seats to Political Associations

Name of Association	Eyl District	Gardho	Uffeyn	Total # of Seats for each Political Association
Kaah Political Association	13	12	10	35
Mideeye Political Association	6	11	8	25
Justice and Equity Political Association	4	9	7	20
Horseed Political Association	2	-	1	3
Truth and Justice Political Association	2	-	-	2
Ifiye Political Association	-	1	-	1
Mustaqbal Political Association	-	-	1	1
Youth Political Association	-	-	-	-
Labour Political Association	-	-	-	-
Total	27	33	27	87

Women participation and representation

Somali female activists advocate that Somalis are a patriarchal society and male elders exclude women from political participation and leadership positions. However, female inclusion in political decision-making gradually improved since the 2000 Arta Conference, held in Djibouti, where women received 12% of parliamentary seats. In the following two Somali parliaments, the status of women advanced as they gained 14% and 24% respectively.^[23]

Despite these gains, the situation proved contrary in the Puntland political arena. Although women in Puntland constitute at least half of the population, are a founding pillar of the society and play a vital role in security maintenance, conflict resolution and advancement of democracy, they nevertheless receive minimal representation in leadership positions. They are understated in the political decision-making circles, political associations as well as government employment. In the first parliamentary 66-member chamber which was established in 1998, the Community Conference harmoniously granted women 5 seats. In the following successive governments, however, instead of making gains, women parliamentary representation gradually dwindled. Women activists blame their plight to Puntland traditional leaders and political elite who, they accuse of intently excluding women from the legislature and high-ranking administrative posts.

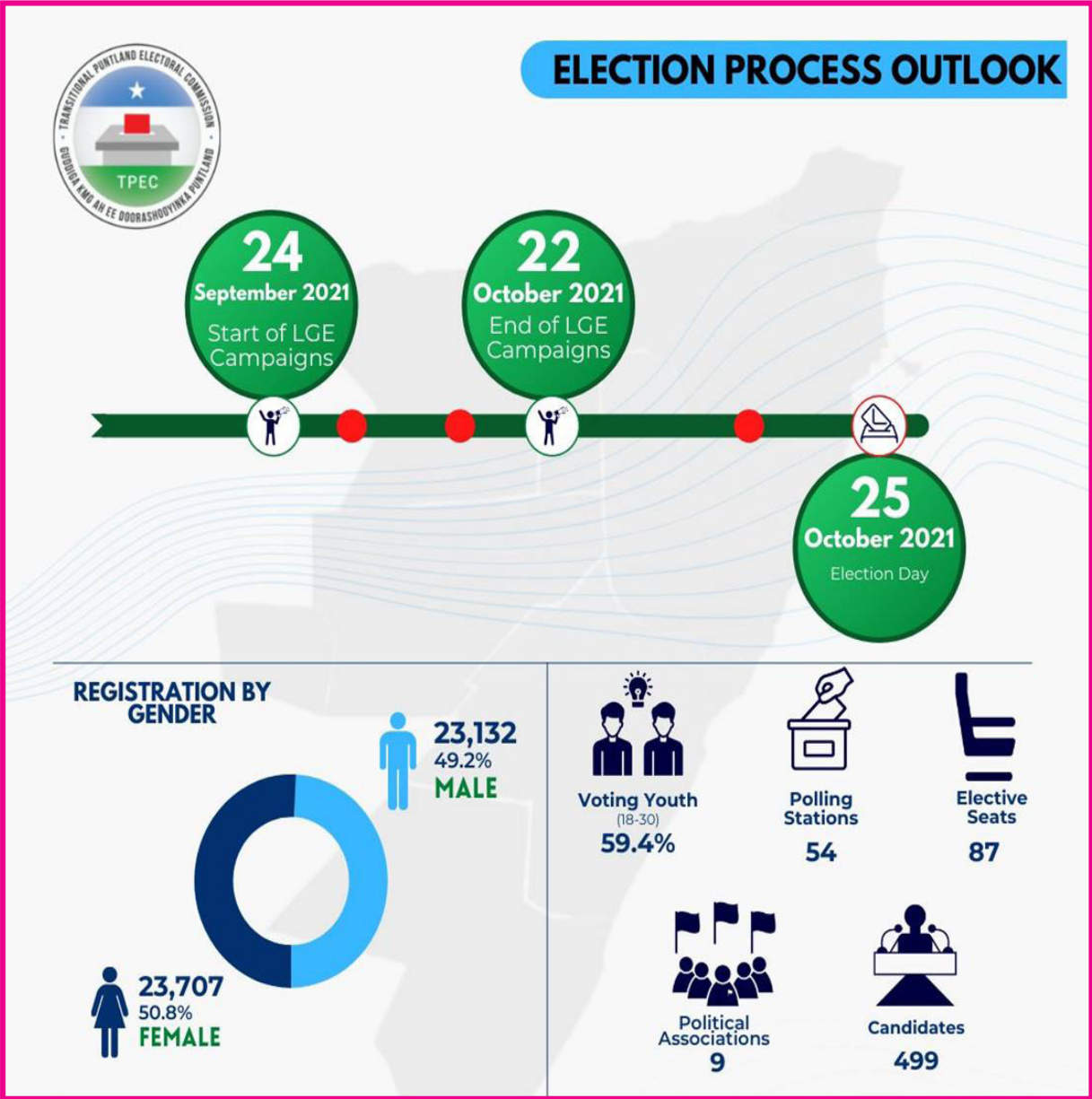
However, women continued their struggle with unwavering support from the local civil society, particularly PDRC and PUNSAA. In this regard, PDRC submitted a position paper in 2018 to President Abdiweli advocating for women's' support and outlining opportune strategies of increasing their participation in the succeeding parliament. The paper proposed the following options: decreeing the 30% quota, organizing a conference between women and titled elders, and including women in the Conflict Resolution and Rectification Committee (CRRC).^[24] In response, the President issued Decree No.11, on 29 Oct, 2018 endorsing a 30% quota and calling for a dialogue between women and titled elders.

PDRC and PUNSAA seized the opportunity and organized, on 6 November, 2018, a large forum to launch the Presidential Decree and, for the first time in the history of Somalia, bringing together women advocates and titled elders face-to-face to discuss the issue of women's' inclusion in political and administrative leadership. Despite these ef-

[23] Excluding women: the clannization of Somali political institutions, Ladan Affi, 2020: Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI Brief no. 2020:9)

[24] Women's Political Participation: Case of Puntland 2019 Elections, July 2019

forts, the campaign failed to produce the desired outcomes. In the following year, out of 16 aspirant female candidates to the 2019 legislative organ, only one woman secured a seat. In the judiciary organ, women are excluded, while in the current executive organ, women have only 1 ministerial and 3 deputy positions.



Persevering to overcome challenges in order to win their constitutional rights, women liaised with and pressured the Deni government and TPEC to implement the decreed 30% women quota in the ensuing local government elections. Eventually, they succeeded in convincing TPEC to condition, in the late local government elections, that each political association enlists one female in every three of its local council candidates and ensure that this process starts from the top of the lists. The political association accepted to conform to the condition.

Achieving this initial objective, women's' groups unleashed a full-scale campaign all over Puntland regions calling on women to seek seats in local councils utilizing the approved 30% quota and to come out for registration and voting. Women responded to this appeal. As shown by above picture, women accounted for 50.8% of those who registered to vote. In relation to women candidates for local council seats, out of the total of 499 competing candidates, 147 (29%) were women aspirants.

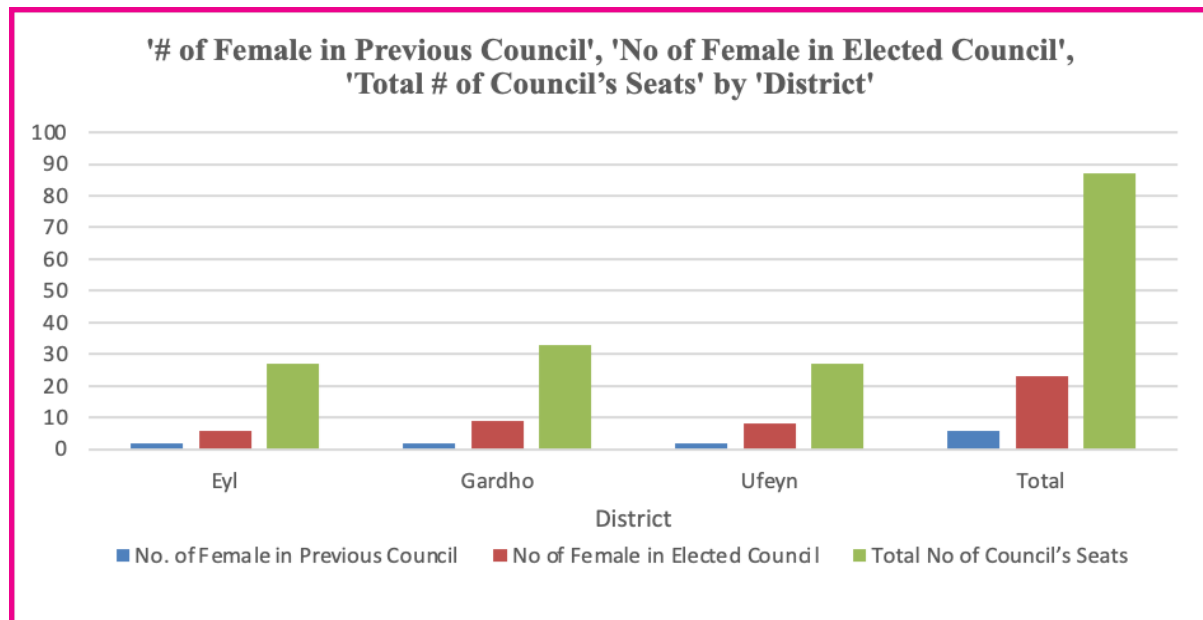
In the OPOV election, the results were astounding. One preliminary investigation carried out after the elections, revealed that 70% of voters were women. From another perspective, whereas elders often allocated only two seats to women in each Puntland district local council as token to women inclusion, this time things went differently. Women achieved remarkable gains in the recent LGE. The table below exposes the voting results of the Puntland Early Local Government Elections.

Of the 87 contested seats, women won 23 seats, which symbolize 26% of the overall numbers of seats. The Puntland Election Gender and Social Inclusion Guidelines developed by TPEC sets a standard of a 3 to 1 model to maximize the chances of women to be elected in municipality seats. In addition, this model was applicable to all political association's candidates across the board and was meant to ensure a minimum of 30% quota provision for women's political participation.^[25] In fact, in the new district council of Uffeyn, women attained the pursued 30% goal. In terms of increase, women's share in the local councils in the three districts registered an average upsurge of 383%.

[25] Source: Puntland Election Gender and Social Inclusion Guideline by TPEC

Table 4: Distribution of Women Seats in New Councils

District	# of Females in Previous councils	# of Females in elected Council	Total of Council's Seats	% of Females in New Councils	% Increase
EYL	2	6	27	22%	300%
GARDHO	2	9	33	27%	450%
UFEYN	2	8	27	30%	400%
TOTAL	6	23	87	26%	380%



These results were not expected by both genders. One woman, who was among a womens' focus group discussion, lamented: "I was in Uffeyn town in the Election Day but I did not bother to register and vote because it had no significance to me. Now when I saw the results, where 8 elected women became councilors, I realized the importance of OPOV elections to women and I am determined not to miss any future elections."



Maryan Abdi Ali

Newly Elected Female Councilor

--

Mss. Maryan Abdi Ali, a resourceful young new female councillor, who won a seat in the new Gardho council proclaimed: "in the clan system, elders nominated only males. But this democratic system gave women the opportunity to vote and to be elected. In Gardho, women succeeded in winning 9 seats which is almost one-third of the council. My message to Puntland women is: O! My peer females; you can make it. Be brave, confident and unite your voice to access your fundamental inalienable rights."

Youth participation and representation

According to statistical records, more than three-quarters of Puntland population are under 30 years of age, half of which are aged between 10-24 years. Unemployment is recognized as the major challenge to Puntland's youth. Unemployment is rated to be lowest among those with no formal education and among graduates of tertiary education. Youth are always considered as a principal asset and future resource of any society. As agents of change, it is therefore imperative and a responsibility of Puntland's government to pay considerable attention to youth development. However, Puntland's youth have complained of neglect on the part of the successive governments, though a Ministry of Youth, Labour and Sports was always included in cabinets. Recent research conducted by Puntland Ministry of Planning identified major challenges facing Puntland youth, including: high illiteracy levels, limited education and training opportunities, unemployment and underemployment, absence of political participation, lack of health services, radicalization, insecurity, consumption of drugs, particularly khat, early marriage, and ineffectiveness of a youth policy established to promote social, economic and political participation of the youth^[26].

Despite the above, there are encouraging indications of improvement and hope. Puntland youth had made headway in the last parliamentary elections of December 2019, where, out of the total of 66 parliamentarians, 20 winning members were under the age of 35. Informed youth noted that this success culminated a tenuous and drawn-out struggle waged by the youth. To make their voice heard, the Puntland youth had during the last years launched platforms and organizations advocating for youth needs, rights, empowerment and participation in political decision-making. Among these are: Puntland Youth Peer Network,^[27] Mudan Youth Umbrella,^[28] and Puntland Youth Associations Network (PYAN).^[29] These networks and umbrellas spearheaded a social media campaign with the motto: 'Give Youth a Chance',^[30] which mobilized youth. In another drive, youth focused on inclusion of youth in local councils of Bossaso, Garowe and Galkayo which

[26] Puntland Youth Report, MOPEDIC

[27] <https://www.puntlandyouthpeer.org>

[28] <https://www.mudansom.org>

[29] <https://www.pyan.org>

[30] <https://unsom.unmissions.org/aways-ahmed-sardheye-youthful-puntland-lawmaker-advocating-youth>

in the end brought about a remarkable success: 50% of councilors in these three cities were under 35 years of age.

Similarly, in the recently concluded Early Local Government Elections, Puntland youth waged a fierce campaign aimed at their participation in the local councils of the three electoral districts. This study ascertained that over 80% of the elected new councilors in the three districts were youth (both genders), which signifies a great leap. In fact, in Gardho's new council, only 5 out of the 33 members were aged above 35 years. One youth activist informed: "the OPOV system is beneficial to youth and women, who are the two groups that elders and governments marginalized in political participation. In this system, we produce our representatives rather beg elders to include us in the lists they submit". Another youth optimistically predicted: "We support the OPOV multiparty system because it will eliminate nepotism and corruption which is frequent within the public institutions."

IDP Participation and Representation

The recent Puntland local government elections registered an historic record. For the first time, an IDP living in a shift camp was elected a councilor to the Gardho district council. Since the collapse of the Somali Central State in 1991, a considerable number of IDPs from riverine southern parts of Somalia settled in Puntland. These people fled to this region for two reasons: first, due to a continuing civil strife in their homeland, and second, as a result of cyclic droughts that characterized their native climate. From the outset, Puntland community welcomed these affected IDPs and provided them all affordable assistance. IDPs mostly settled in the urban centers of Bossaso, Gardho, Garowe, Burtinle and Galkayo, where work opportunities were available. With the help of international support, IDPs settled in camps in the neighborhoods of these big urban centers. The local communities donated land while international agencies provided shelter, food and basic education.

In the following 30 years, IDPs from southern Somalia led a peaceful life and prospered in these camps and, in addition to international support, were able to earn income from these centres. Host communities interacted with them without any prejudice or alienation treating them as their brothers and sisters. Additionally, Puntland people pioneered integration of the IDPs to the extent that they had not only allowed them to settle in their land and but also to vote in the elections. Article 5 of the Puntland Voter Registration Act stipulates that any Somali citizen, from whichever region of the country he/she traces back to, and who lived in Puntland for not less than ten years, has the right to vote and be elected in elections. While the number of IDPs was limited in the other two electoral districts, Gardho town hosted a large number, who registered and were provided voter cards. Several political associations had, to attract their votes, included IDPs at the higher echelons of their candidates' lists.



Khadija Salah Ayub

Hormuud IDP Qardho Resident

The result was remarkable: Mr. Muhsin Abdullahi Haji, internally displaced from the southern riverine regions of the country won a seat in Gardho council. This was an outstanding achievement as well as an encouragement to all Somalis in other regions of Somalia to integrate displaced compatriots, who seek refuge in their localities. One IDP voter regretted: “we could have won at least two seats had we united our votes and not dispersed our votes among the competing political associations”. Furthermore, Mss. Khadija Salah Ayub living in Hormuud IDP camp in Gardho hailed: “this election changed my perspective. Now I feel that I am a citizen of Puntland. I, who migrated from Lower Shabelle Region of southern Somalia, and the one who was born in here today bear equal rights. This is a dream realized and I am honoured to live up to it.”

International Partners

The support of the international partners constitutes a pivotal ingredient of Somalia democratization process. Both Puntland local authorities and TPEC, in addition to financial constraints, lacked technical know-how and expertise in managing OPOV elections and initiation of a multiparty political system. International partners had, from the start of the process, provided both technical and financial assistance, which served as an indispensable impetus and a cornerstone of Puntland LGE's success.

Facilitating Factors to the Local Government Elections

1. Puntland government's commitment to realize elections.
2. Government security forces demonstrated neutrality and maintained security at the polling stations and over all the electoral districts.
3. TPEC's neutrality and independence, which improved the confidence of the opposition towards it. TPEC organized monthly and quarterly meetings with the political associations, listened to their concerns and responded accordingly.
4. Political will of politicians to pursue multiparty elections. This was expressed by the political associations' collaboration on elections. Their electioneering raised the interest and enthusiasm of the public.
5. Strong public desire to transition from the clan system and pursue a democratic system based on universal suffrage.
6. Early preparation for elections.
7. Puntland civil society's support to one-person-one vote elections and participation in implementation of public and voter education programmes
8. Puntland media backing to implementation of elections.
9. The political stability and security prevalent in Puntland.
10. Youth interest and enthusiasm about elections since they never witnessed a OPOV system
11. Women were supportive because the clan system marginalized them.
12. The democratic cultural heritage of Puntland people.
13. The unwavering support of traditional leaders to the election process.

Major Challenges to Puntland Local Government Elections

1. Covid-19, which derailed the timeframe of elections as well as political associations public meetings.
2. Election Doubt. Some Puntland people thought that this endeavor would not succeed like the two earlier failed attempts and did not participate the election effort
3. Limited financial resources of TPEC delayed and constrained its operations as well as its geographic coverage. This necessitates that sufficient financial support be availed to TPEC, without which it cannot accomplish its goals.
4. Existence of a high rate of illiteracy amongst voters, which resulted in a considerable number of spoiled ballot papers, necessitating the provision of assistance to illiterate voters. This exerted great pressure on polling stations and delayed progress of voting.
5. The Puntland Early Local Government Election process coincided with the Somalia's Parliamentary Elections. This created a significant hurdle, which led to several delays in the planned schedule of the LGE
6. Proliferation of arms in the hands of public created a persistent concern of the possibility that at any time, during the elections, armed violence could erupt. Luckily, this did not occur

CONCLUSION

Puntland LGE represented an outstanding achievement at this junction of the turbulent Somali socio-political history. Prevailing contextual challenges included: fragile security and deficiency of technical expertise in managing elections. This election set a precedent for the rest of the country and proved the viability of holding elections despite formidable challenges persisting in Somalia. To conduct elections, the study found the following to be preconditions of its success:

Existence of political will of the incumbent government.

Prevalence of adequate level of security and stability.

Solid preparation for elections.

Delimitation of districts' borders before embarking on elections

Due consideration should also be given to atypical livelihood conditions of rural and nomadic pastoralist communities, who constitute the bulk of eligible voters and whose availability is determined by rain patterns. Thus, providing them with voting opportunities obligates planners to conceive of practical outreach strategies as well as address widespread illiteracy in these communities. In addition, external financial and technical support is of paramount significance to realization of a credible elections in Somalia.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

To TPEC:

1. TPEC needs to preserve its demonstrated impartiality and consensus building among the election stakeholders.
2. Schedule elections at the Gu (Spring-June) season in Somalia when rains are more reliable and pastoralist communities are available.
3. Start preparations for elections at an early stage.
4. Commence delivering civic education and voter education at least six months before Election Day. In this regard, devise tailored civic/voter education message contents and mediums/means of communication.
5. Devise practical outreach strategies to access the pastoralist communities, who are the majority of the voters. Consider use of multiple message dissemination methods such as utilizing mobiles and radios to facilitate reach of public awareness information to the pastoralist communities. Create mobile teams to access pastoralist communities holding open meetings at rural shift camps, water points, where nomads mostly frequent
6. Extend the election duration from one day to two days to enable public, particularly nomads, to attend and cast their votes.
7. Improve coordination of civic education activities implemented by different projects and partners. TPEC should supervise and ensure coordination of programmes to avoid overlapping.
8. Extend voter card delivery duration to until the last days of the election. The study proposes that voter cards be handed over to the TPEC representatives posted in the electoral districts for regular distribution.
9. Provide training to the security forces manning the polling stations, particularly in the area of improving public relations.
10. Balance polling stations in relation to number of voters. To avoid overcrowding , the number of voters in any particular polling station shall be commensurate to its capacity. Allocate to each polling station a reasonable number of voters, approximately between 800—1,000 voters.

11. Locate polling stations at spacious areas to enable voters to have room to line up. In several polling stations in Gardho city, people had difficulty in queuing up for lack of open space in the vicinity of the polling stations.
12. Provide training to the polling staff at a good time before the Election Day and with adequate training duration. It is advised to not exceed each learning classes more 40 attendants.
13. To eliminate confusion of voters, maintain one standard ballot paper during public campaigning or public demonstration and at voting at the polling stations.
14. TPEC and security forces should not allow political associations to conduct political lobbying within the queue lines during the election day. This was frequently reported in the recent elections.
15. Ensure the head of the polling station staff to be mature enough to rationally and professionally resolve emergent issues during voting.
16. Establish emergency health facilities at polling stations.
17. The study proposes review of the Voter Registration Law restricting the voter to one specific polling station and allow the pastoralist voters to cast vote in any polling station in his/her district. However, TPEC opposes this view advocating that it does not possess enough internet and other resources to check authenticity of the voters' specific details in every polling station
18. Initiate an intellectual debate on viabilities of the closed list voting system and the open list system.
19. Minimize government officials and political associations' officials supervising and entering the operation of the polling stations during the Election Day.
20. Create mobile polling stations to reach out to the nomadic pastoralists during the Election Day/s.
21. Train polling and security staff on queue management.
22. Engage private vendors to sell food and drinks to voters at polling sites.

To National/State Authorities:

1. National and local authorities should in principle be committed to holding elections.
2. National/state authorities should ensure security before, during and after the elections.

3. Provide financial support to political associations.
4. Train the police units adequately and professionally on election security management, respect for human rights and enable them to maintain the balance between prevention of election violence and protection of rights of the voters/citizens.
5. Support TPEC with both material and financial resources needed in enhancing its operational capacity and technical competence to achieve the ultimate goal holding democratic OPOV elections.
6. Reaffirm a full and regular recompense of the pledged financial allocations for the political associations and TPEC in the Puntland annual budgets.

To Political Associations:

1. Simplify associations' badges. Change batches to simple ones like camel, sheep, goat, horse to enable illiterate people to easily recognize and mark the ballot papers during voting
2. Support an intellectual debate on viabilities of the closed list system and the open list system.
3. Ensure that representatives of the political associations observe working time at the polling stations. On several occasions, polling stations could not open on time due to absence of some representatives of political associations.
4. Strengthen technical and organizational capacities of political organizations.
5. Participate in public and voter education campaigns

About Women participation and representation:

1. Continue advocating for the women 30% Quota
2. Unite women's voices and efforts
3. Raise awareness of women and provide capacity building, particularly, in leadership training to women aspirants
4. Lobby for financial support to women
5. Build women's' self-confidence

To International Partners:

1. Provide financial support to holding elections in Somalia.
2. Strengthen the technical capacity of TPEC and civil society organizations and provide financial support to TPEC and civil society organizations involved in elections.
3. Support political associations and the civil society organizations involved in elections in the areas of:
 - ◇ Internal governance systems and operational capacity to develop their management capacities.
 - ◇ Development of a responsive and representative political program and along with a stronger organizational communication/visibility strategy and to become competitive in the democratization process.
 - ◇ Reaching out to as much people as possible and to mobilize financial and political support from supporters.
 - ◇ Running visible and stronger political campaigns actively and meaningfully.
4. Invest more in civic and voter education components of the democratization process.
5. Pool the financial resources earmarked to civic and voter education to ensure that implementing partners do not overlap to increase outreach.
6. Establish a coordinating mechanism, comprising of donors,, civil society and TPEC, to plan civic and voter education activities which are implemented by assorted civil society organizations to avoid overlapping and squandering of resources. .

LESSONS LEARNED

1. In any election venture in the current Somali context, incumbent government's commitment to elections is a prerequisite.
2. Existence of political stability and security are paramount to holding elections.
3. TPEC's independence, commitment and persistence to challenges is a key to success of elections.
4. The multiparty system of elections is creative in that it raises the interest and enthusiasm of the public and mobilizes public.
5. To succeed, preparations for elections must start at an early stage.
6. Clan hegemony and superiority diminishes in the one person one vote system (OPOV)
7. The OPOV system is beneficial to women, youth and the educated in the sense that they get the opportunity of exercising their voice and accessing their fundamental rights.
8. In the OPOV system, people build allegiance on ideology and political programme rather than on clan loyalty.
9. Despite existing challenges, holding OPOV elections in the current Somalia predicament is visible as demonstrated by Puntland OPOV elections.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Election Results by Electoral District



Total Result by District

District
Ufeyn



5,366

TOTAL VOTES



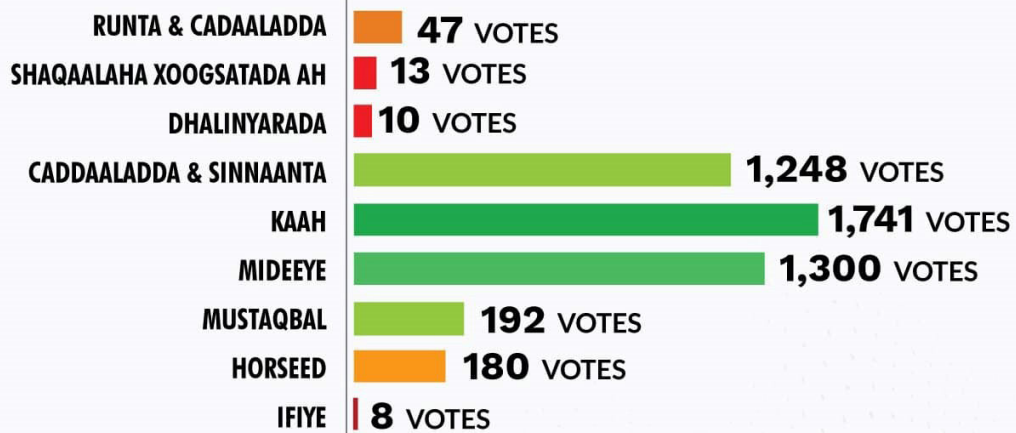
4,739

VALID VOTES



627

INVALID VOTES



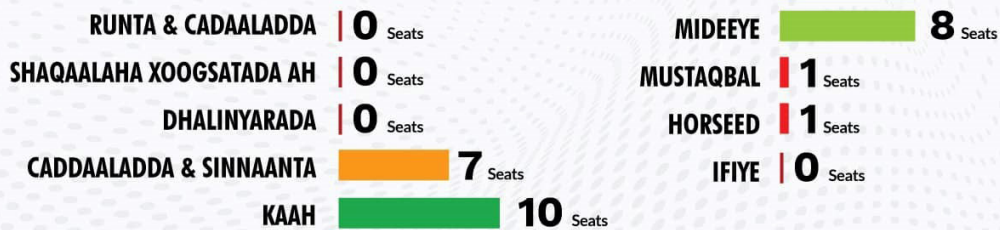
27 SEATS



19 MALE



8 FEMALE



For more information Scan the QR Code below, or visit
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Ufeyn Election Results



Total Result by District

District
Eyl



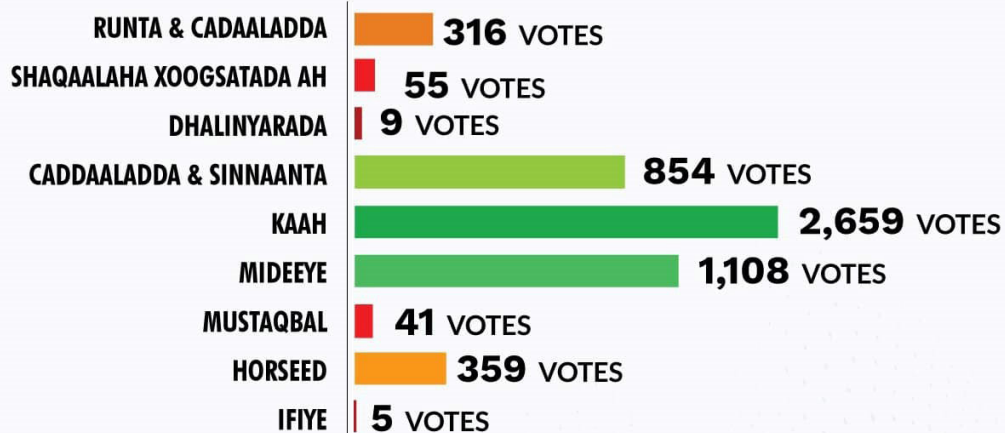
6,766
TOTAL VOTE



5,406
VALID VOTE



1,360
INVALID VOTE



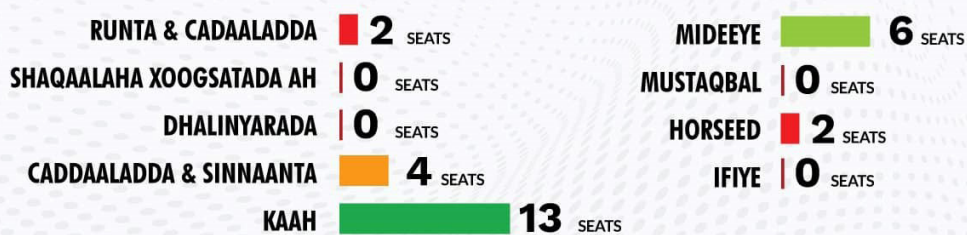
27 SEATS



21 MALE



6 FEMALE



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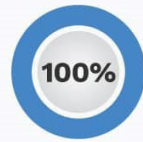
Eyl Election Results



Total Result by District

District

Qardho



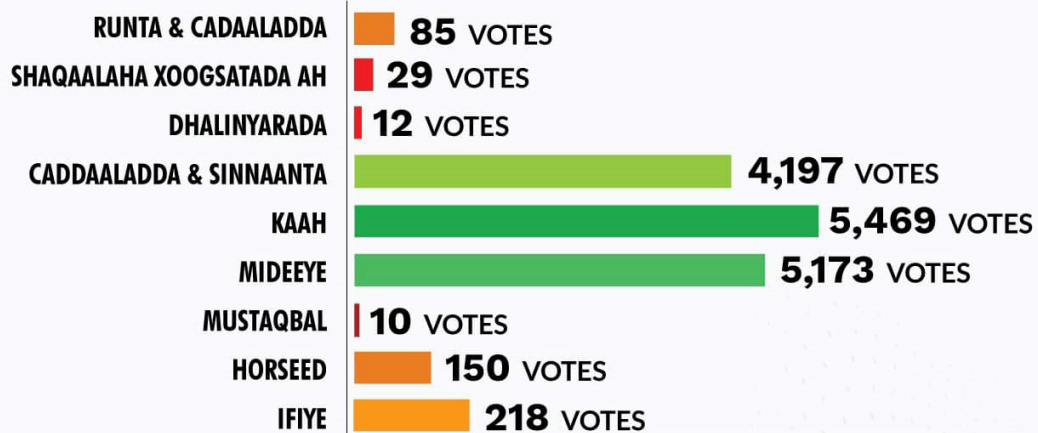
16,722
TOTAL VOTES



15,343
VALID VOTES



1,379
INVALID VOTES



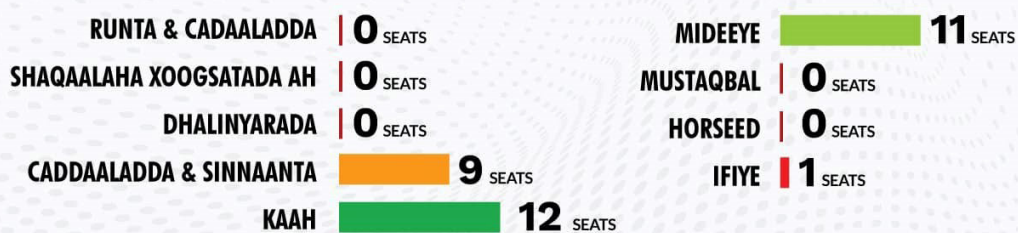
33 SEATS



24 MALE



9 FEMALE



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Qardo Election Results

Annex 2: List of Elected Councilors by Electoral District

 Xafiiska G. Doorashooyinka Degmada Qardho		Taariikhda 26. 10. 2021
Shaacinta Liiska Xubnaha Golaha Deegaanka la doortay Ee Degmada Qardho		
NO.	MAGACYADA XUBNAHA	URURADA AY KA TIRSANYIHIIN
1	DR. XUSEEN MUUSE NUUX MAXAMUUD	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
2	MAXAMED CABDULLAHI SICIID DIIRIYE	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
3	KHADRO JAAMAC NUUR CUMAR	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
4	ENG. BASHIIR SICIID XIRSI GUULEED	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
5	AW. CABDIRIXMAAN XASAN CABDI SICIID	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
6	MARYAN CABDI CALI SICIID	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
7	MAXAMUUD CABDULLAHI CUMAR FAARAX	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
8	AXMED JAAMAC MAXAMUUD GUULEED	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
9	FARXIYO CABDI AXMED MAXAMUUD	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
10	MAXAMED FAARAX BURAALE CABDI	KA AH
11	MAXAMUUD MAXAMED CIISE CISMAAN	KA AH
12	WARSAN SHIIKH AXMED CABDULLE	KA AH
13	MURSAL MAXAMUUD AXMED CALI	KA AH
14	AXMED CABDIRISAAQ MAXAMED ROOBLE	KA AH
15	FAA'IZA SICIID CALI AXMED	KA AH
16	CABDIRISHIID SICIID HIIRAD IRBAD	KA AH
17	CAASHO KHADAR CABDI MIRE	KA AH
18	MUSTAFE YAASIIN SALAAD FAARAX	KA AH
19	XASAN CIISE MAXAMED FAARAX	KA AH
20	MUXSIN CABDULLAHI XAAJI CABDI	KA AH
21	CABDIKHADAR MAXAMED SHIRE	KA AH
22	MAXAMED XUSEEN AXMED FAARAX	MIDEEYE
23	CABDULQAADIR SICIID CABDI MAXAMED	MIDEEYE
24	FAADUMO CABDISALAAH XIRSI CALI	MIDEEYE
25	SULAYMAAN BASHIIR CIISE CAARSHE	MIDEEYE
26	CABDULQAADIR CUMAR MAXAMED MAXAMUUD	MIDEEYE
27	MAXAMUUD SICIID JAAMAC FAAHIYE	MIDEEYE
28	CABDIRISAAQ FAARAX CABDI JAAMAC	MIDEEYE
29	MARYAN MAXAMED BARE MUUSE	MIDEEYE
30	CALI SICIID MUUSE CALI	MIDEEYE
31	HODON AXMED AADAN CARAALE	MIDEEYE
32	CABDI MAXAMED CUBEED MAXAMED	MIDEEYE
33	AXMED CABDIRIXMAAN XASAN DUCAALE	IFIYE



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Xafiiska G. Doorashooyinka Degmada Ufeyn

Taariikhda
26. 10. 2021

Shaacinta Liiska Xubnaha Golaha Deegaanka la doortay Ee Degmada Ufeyn

NO.	MAGACYADA XUBNAHA	URURADA AY KA TIRSANYIHIIN
1	BIDDE NUUX MUUSE CUMAR	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
2	AXMED ABSHIR SICIID MAXAMAD	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
3	CABDULLAAHI CABDICASIIS CABDULLAHI MAXAMED	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
4	CAASHO SICIID YUUSUF MAXAMED	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
5	MAXAMED SALAAD MUUSE SAALAX	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
6	CABDUQAADIR FAARAX MAXAMED MAXAMUUD	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
7	FAADUMO HAYAAN SICIID MAXAMUUD	CADAALAD IYO SINAAN
8	AXMED MAXAMED MAXAMUUD MAXAMED	KAAH
9	BASHIIR ISMAACIIL MIROOD GUULEED	KAAH
10	DR. FAADUMO KEDIYE SALAAD MUUSE	KAAH
11	AXMED YAASIIN MAXAMED ABOKOR	KAAH
12	FAADUMO MAXAMED NUUR JEEDAL KEEN	KAAH
13	DR. CABDIRAXMAAN ABSHIR JAAMAC SAALAX	KAAH
14	MAXAMED FAARAX SALAAD MAXAMUUD	KAAH
15	FAADUMO SHIRE MAXAMED CABDIRAXMAAN	KAAH
16	SAHAL SICIID SAALAX MUUSE	KAAH
17	ENG CABDIRAXMAAN SALAAD CUMAR MACAAWIYE	KAAH
18	MAXAMED XASAN CISMAAN BARI	MIDEEYE
19	CABDULLAAHI MAXAMUUD MAXAMED MAXAMUUD	MIDEEYE
20	FAADUMO CABDULLAAHI SHIRE MAXAMED	MIDEEYE
21	BASHIIR GEEDI HAYAAN YUUSUF	MIDEEYE
22	MAXAMED AXMED CARAB MAXAMUUD	MIDEEYE
23	LAYLA AXMED CABDIRAXMAAN WEYRAX	MIDEEYE
24	MAHAD CABDI XASAN AXMED	MIDEEYE
25	CANAB GAACSHE JAAMAC XUSEEN	MIDEEYE
26	AXMED MAXAMED AXMED SAMATAR	MUSTAQBAL
27	AXMED CALI JAAMAC AXMED	HORSEED





Xafiiska G. Doorashooyinka Degmada Eyl

Taariikhda
26. 10. 2021

Shaacinta Liiska Xubnaha Golaha Deegaanka la doortay Ee Degmada Eyl

NO.	MAGACYADA XUBNAHA	URURADA AY KA TIRSANYIHIIN
1	MAXAMED CALI GUUREEYE KAARSHE	RUN IYO CADAALAD
2	MAXAMED CABDI AADEN MAAX	RUN IYO CADAALAD
3	AXMED KHALIF WACAYS NUUR	CADDAALAD IYO SINNAANTA
4	MAXAMED XASSAN BOTAAN CABDI	CADDAALAD IYO SINNAANTA
5	MUXUBO CALI MIRE YUSUF	CADDAALAD IYO SINNAANTA
6	BASHIIR MAXAMED XIRSI GUURE	CADDAALAD IYO SINNAANTA
7	MUUSE CISMAAN YUSUF MAXAMUUD	KAH
8	FAYSAL KHALIF WACAYS NUUR	KAH
9	XASSAN CABDI KILWE IBRAAHIM	KAH
10	MARYAN CABDISHAKUUR FAARAX CALI	KAH
11	CABDIRISAAQ KILWE YUUSUF MAXAMED	KAH
12	BILAAL XUSEEN XIRSI MUUSE	KAH
13	MAXAMED XIRSI CIISE AADEN	KAH
14	CAASHA CABDIKARIIM XIRSI FAARAX	KAH
15	SHUGRI AXMED MUUSE CILMI	KAH
16	YUUSUF CALI XARBI JAAMAC	KAH
17	SICIID SALEEBAN MIRE CIID	KAH
18	CABDIFATAAX MAXAMED XUSEEN XIRSI	KAH
19	AAMINA XASSAN CEEGAAG ABUUKAR	KAH
20	MAXAMUUD SALAD MAXAMUUD YUUSUF	MIDEEYE
21	SHUGRI MANSOR MAXAMUD FAARAX	MIDEEYE
22	CABDINUUR MAXAMED AWMUUSE FAARAX	MIDEEYE
23	HAASHIM XAAJI AXMED XIRSI KHAYRE	MIDEEYE
24	CABDIQAADIR AADAN MAXAMED RAAGE	MIDEEYE
25	CABDICASIS NUUR CALI BOOTAAN	MIDEEYE
26	CABDISALAAM XUSEEN BOOTAAN AWCABDI	HORSEED
27	AXMED MAXAMED AXMED BOOTAAN	HORSEED



JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

Annex 3: International Partners Welcome Local Elections in Puntland 29th Oct, 2021

Mogadishu – With the peaceful completion of polling and announcement of preliminary results from ‘one person, one vote’ electoral process in three districts of Puntland, international partners* congratulate the people of Puntland for leading the way towards instituting a system of universal suffrage elections across Somalia.

The international partners welcome the enthusiasm shown by the population of the districts of Qardho, Eyl and Ufeyn, as shown by the high number of voters who turned out. We look forward to the completion of additional voter registration and the roll-out of state wide local government elections in Puntland in 2022. The partners commend all stakeholders for their role in the process, noting in particular the effective collaboration between the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC), the political associations and civil society organizations.

This encouraging achievement shows the feasibility of universal suffrage elections in Somalia. The international partners underline their collective commitment to supporting elections as they roll out at local, state and national levels across the country.

* African union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Canada, Denmark, Egypt, European Union (EU), Finland, Germany, Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), Kenya, League of Arab States, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, and United Nations.



PRESS STATEMENT

Annex 4: UN in Somalia Welcomes holding of Direct Elections in three Districts in Puntland, 29th Oct, 2021

Qardho, 25 October 2021 – Representatives from the United Nations today visited Qardho in a show of solidarity with the people of Puntland as citizens participated in a 'one person, one vote' electoral process in three districts of the Federal Member State. The United Nations in Somalia believes that the successful completion of 'one person, one vote' elections in Qardho, Eyl and Ufeyn would be an important step in showing the feasibility of universal suffrage elections at local, state and national levels across the country.

The United Nations in Somalia commends the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC), the government and people of Puntland for their commitment to holding direct elections, as enshrined in Puntland's Constitution.

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