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## **PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND PERCEPTION SURVEY ON 2023 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN PUNTLAND STATE:**

A Pre-election Perspective on the Strength of Political Associations in Puntland

**JULY 2023**



EMBASSY OF SWEDEN



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The consortium hopes that the findings and recommendations provided in this publication will play a pivotal role in sustaining the gains made and advancing the democratization process of the Puntland Federal State.



# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>KAP</b>	Knowledge, Attitude and Perception
<b>LGE</b>	Local Government Elections
<b>OPOV</b>	One Person One Vote
<b>PA</b>	Political Association
<b>PAR</b>	Participatory Action Research
<b>PDRC</b>	Puntland Development and Research Centre
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>SIMS</b>	Strengthening Inclusive Multiparty System
<b>TOC</b>	The Oslo Center
<b>TPEC</b>	Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Puntland's democratization process is a significant development in the establishment of a democratic government in Somalia which has long been plagued by political instability, clan-based conflicts, and a lack of effective governance. Puntland, a semi-autonomous region located in the northeastern part of the country, has been actively working towards democratization since its establishment in 1998 and has overtime emerged as a beacon of hope for the establishment of a more stable and democratic government.

One of the key steps in Puntland's democratization process was the development and adoption of a constitution in 2012. The constitution outlines the rights and responsibilities of citizens, the structure and functions of the government, and the principles of democratic governance. By establishing a constitution, Puntland sent a clear message that it is committed to the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

According to a previous study conducted by PDRC in 2021, **56%** of respondents in Puntland expressed dissatisfaction with the traditional clan-based system of choosing leaders. It is against this backdrop, that the consortium conducted the KAP study on citizens' knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions about the democratization process. This study exclusively looked at how the citizens viewed political associations, their perception of the voter registration and education process, and their opinion on the One Person One Vote System.

The study adopted a Participatory Action Research approach in which a total of **599 study respondents** participated across five districts of Garowe, Bossaso, Galkayo, Baran, and Burtinle. **53%** of the study participants were males while

**47%** were females. The age disaggregation varied from 18 years to more than 41 years with the majority of the respondents (**56%**) being between the ages of 18 – 33 years. The study adopted a mixed research approach in which quantitative data was collected through a digital platform and correlated with qualitative data collected through focus group discussion. A desk review was done to collect secondary data that will provide a basis to fully understand the findings of the data.

*The key findings of the study are as follows.*

- a. There is a generally positive attitude and knowledge among the Puntland Citizens on the OPOV electoral system. **87%** of the respondents were registered as voters and were ready to participate in the local elections.
- b. There are some logistical challenges preventing citizens from registering as voters. Among the **13% who did not register as voters**, the majority reported logistical challenges such as long queues at registration centers, distance, and lack of adequate time as the reasons.
- c. There was extensive voter awareness and education conducted by TPEC. **78%** of the respondents understood the requirements to register as a voter. **65%** understood the complaint reporting channels while **53%** of the respondents had an opportunity to change their voter registration details based on identification of errors.
- d. There is a low awareness and understanding of the role of political associations in Puntland. **62%** of the respondents reported not being members of political associations.
- e. Political associations are still in the nascent

stages of conducting outreaches to create sensitization and attract members to join the party.

- f. There is a low understanding among the citizens on how to identify and elect leaders. **30.2%** of the respondents would elect councilors based on clan affiliations.
- g. There is a positive citizen attitude and trust placed on TPEC to conduct a free and fair election. **58.9%** of the respondents reported that election planning is well organized and **81%** reported that they believe the elections would be transparent.
- h. There is confidence among the citizens that elections would result in conflicts. **36.9%** of the respondents reported fear of post-election violence.

In conclusion, Puntland's democratization process is a significant step towards stabilizing Somalia and building a democratic government. Despite challenges, the region has made notable progress in establishing democratic institutions, developing a constitution, and addressing clan-based politics by planning for OPOV. The popular clamor and social yearning to exercise universal suffrage, cast ballots, and choose local representatives, however, overwhelmed the electoral and procedural problems. The gradual changes in the political sphere have provided a greater forum and more chances for the general public to voice their worries and opinions in public and have a role in their destiny. By investing in electoral, and political reforms and promoting inclusive governance, Puntland is paving the way for a more prosperous future for its citizens and setting an example for the rest of Somalia.







# 01 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY





Puntland is a Federal Member State that is situated in the northeastern region of Somalia. Puntland has been operating as a semi-autonomous and federal state member since its establishment in 1998. During the span of its existence, Puntland practiced a hybrid of a clan and modern democratic governance system, which in comparison to the rest of the south and central states in Somalia, has been functioning and relatively peaceful.

At the onset of its establishment as an administration, the Puntland government had a political aspiration to transition from the long-practiced clan-based system into a multi-party governance system. Even so, a slow but positive effort to progress the political system with the establishment of independent interim election committees, political associations, and the formation of election laws has been occurring in Puntland. The democratization process in Puntland includes the establishment of democratic institutions such as parliament, an executive branch, an independent judiciary, political associations, and an electoral system. The parliament is elected by the people, ensuring that their voices are heard and represented in decision-making processes. The executive

branch is responsible for implementing policies and regulations, while the independent judiciary ensures that these decisions are in line with the constitution and uphold the rule of law.

In late October 2021, the early first election in three districts namely Qardho, Eyl, and Uffeyn) were a historical milestone and a major step taken to materialize its long political aspiration. However, the One-Person-One-Vote (OPOV) process is still in progress and faces numerous challenges, including institutional, economic, social, and political factors.

The program surveyed the knowledge, attitude, and perception of electoral voters across five districts in Puntland. The survey examines the attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge towards the election and the electoral process of registered voters in 5 significant districts, Garowe, Bosaso, Galkayo, Baran, and Burtinle. Regarding the voters' practices, faith, affiliation, and preference for current Political Associations (PAs), the study further explores how the electoral process and the multi-party system progressed.

The survey also examines clan mobilization, clan power competition, and competing political associations, and the related effect on the attitudes and choices of individuals and that of peaceful democratic local government elections. Furthermore, there was a special focus on scrutinizing the role and performance of current political associations and how they engage with their supporters. More importantly, the expected findings of this report will give credible valuable information for policymaking, better comprehension, and insights for improving Puntland's nascent multi-party system and better designing the electoral system to improve election management and multi-party dispensation in the future.

## 1.1 OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS IN PUNTLAND

Political Associations (PAs) are a new phenomenon in the Puntland State of Somalia mainly culminating from the government's strategy to strengthen democratization, citizens' participation in politics, and the need to pave the way for various political actors to shape the future of Puntland State's governance and that of Somalia in general.

Through the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) III, several political associations applied for registration in 2019 and 2020. By 2021, there were 9 fully registered political party associations in Puntland, and these were eligible to participate in the one-person-one vote new election model which was piloted in Puntland in the early election districts of Qardho, Uffeyn, and Eyl. These included: KAAH (which is the ruling party association), Cadaalad iyo Sinaan, Mideeye, Horseed, Runcad, Shaqalaha, Ifiye, Dhalinyaradda, and Mustaqbal. These political associations (now political parties) are active but with limited visibility across Puntland partly due to limited finances that hinder massive citizens' engagement and outreach.

Although the political parties are operational, their replacement of the traditional system of appointing or selecting representatives both at local government and Parliamentary level by traditional elders from different clans is a journey. Thus, it is not an automatic shift from the traditional selection system to the One Person One Vote model which would later result in universal adult suffrage. Under normal circumstances, the existence of political associations however economically weak they may be, results in a strong contribution towards building democracies (Ben and Andrew, 2000).

A survey conducted by the Puntland Development and Research Centre (2021) revealed that 56% of the general public (from those who participated in the survey) were tired of the clan-based traditional system of selecting leaders. This would imply the majority of the population in Puntland is not willing to continue with the clan-based system of appointing leaders. However, there is limited research work on how the citizens perceive the political associations, how many registered voters are willing to vote and why, how many registered voters are not willing to vote and why, and their overall attitude towards political associations in Puntland State. The study intends to fill the gap of information on how the citizens of Puntland perceive the OPOV electoral system and their willingness to engage in the democratization process.

## 1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE SURVEY

The strengthened and inclusive multi-party system project focused on strengthening the political associations' capacity to have a meaningful connection and outreach to their citizens, incorporate different social groups in their circles, and become fitted with the institutional capacities to make effective policies and campaign messages to effectively participate in the upcoming local government elections. This pre-election survey sought to analyze how the public understands the political agenda, policy issues to be addressed by political associations, analysis of and how well these are aligned with their community priorities, the transparency and quality of election planning by TPEC, as well as the inclusion of women, youth, and minorities in the election process.



# 02

# STUDY METHODOLOGY





The survey adopted a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach involving various stakeholders. Before data collection, quantitative and qualitative tools were drafted and reviewed by the consortium partners to evaluate the content validity of the survey questions. This is aimed at ensuring the high quality and relevancy of the survey. Qualitative Data was collected using focus group discussions while quantitative data was collected using Kobo to collect data from a sizeable number of respondents. All these were administered by 15 enumerators with the guidance of the consultant/lead researcher. The enumerators were trained on how to use the data collection tools, ethical considerations during the survey, the length of time required for data collection, and how raw data was to be submitted to PDRC.

The consultant undertook a desk review of the available literature on political party associations in Puntland especially earlier studies and guidance from reports from other countries with political associations/parties.

## 2.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done using both descriptive and narrative techniques. Data was analyzed under each thematic area and categories to derive conclusions. The analysis process involved several steps that included – Data cleaning of the quantitative data and transcription of the qualitative data collected. The second step included analysis of the quantitative data through the Excel platform while for the qualitative data, thematic analysis was conducted followed by organizing the data into related topics. Finally, the qualitative data was used to corroborate the quantitative data, and quotations were used to communicate the findings.

## 2.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As part of ethical considerations in the survey, participation in the survey was voluntary for all respondents. Anonymity was adopted to promote confidentiality of the respondents and any sensitive data collected or identified during the survey was not published in the study. The study was guided by the annexed data collection tools.



# 03

## STUDY FINDINGS





### 3.1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The survey reached out to 599 respondents including 317 males (53%) and 282 females (47%) including youth, women, politicians, IDPs, and the public. These are illustrated in figure 1 below:

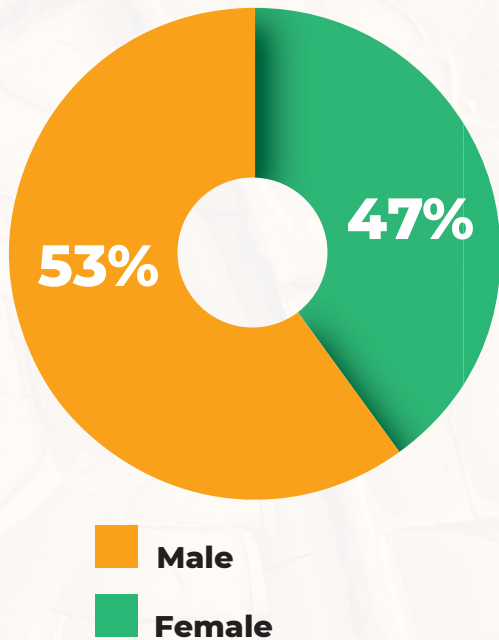


Figure 1: Gender Composition of the respondents

### 3.1.3 SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION

The majority of the respondents 162 (27%) were from the Nugal region, 145 (24%) were from the Mudug region, with the least number of respondents 22 (4%) from the Gardafu region.

Figure 3: Summary of Respondents by Region

### 3.1.2 AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The majority of the respondents, 35% (208), were aged 18-25 followed by those aged between 26-33 (32%), 34-41 (21%), and 12% (73) aged 41 and above.

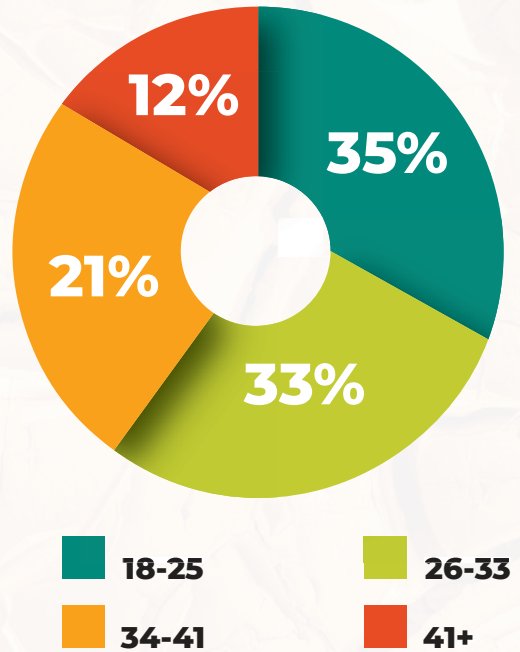
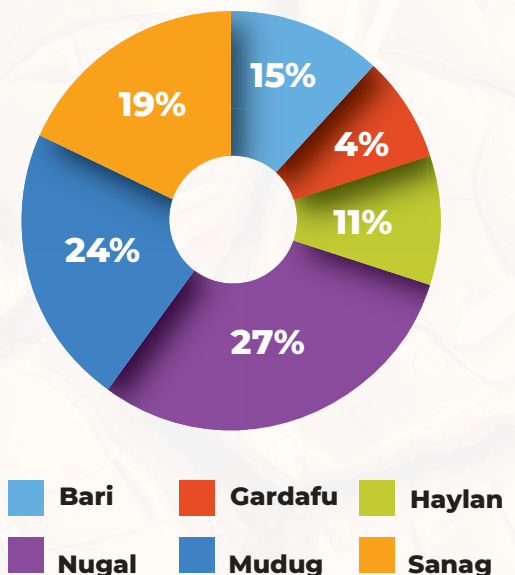


Figure 2: Age of the Respondents



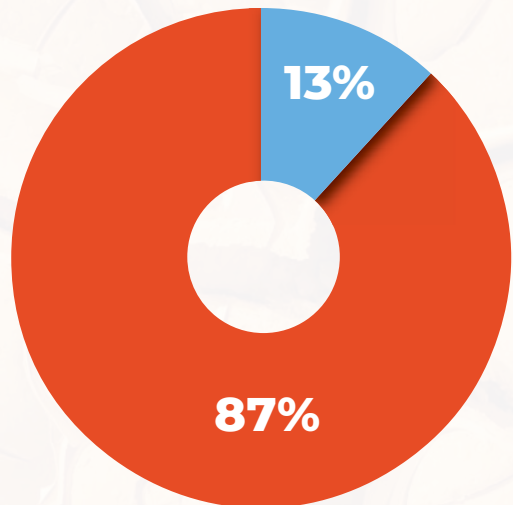


### 3.2 VOTER REGISTRATION

This section of the analysis presents the data on the voter registration status of the respondents as well as the push factors that influenced the respondent's decision to register or not to register as a voter.

#### 3.2.1 VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS

The respondents were asked about their voter registration status to ascertain eligibility to participate in elections. 87% of the respondents reported that they are registered as voters and are willing to participate in the forthcoming elections while 13% reported not to have registered as voters due to various reasons. The findings are summarized in figure 4 below:



**Registered as a voter**

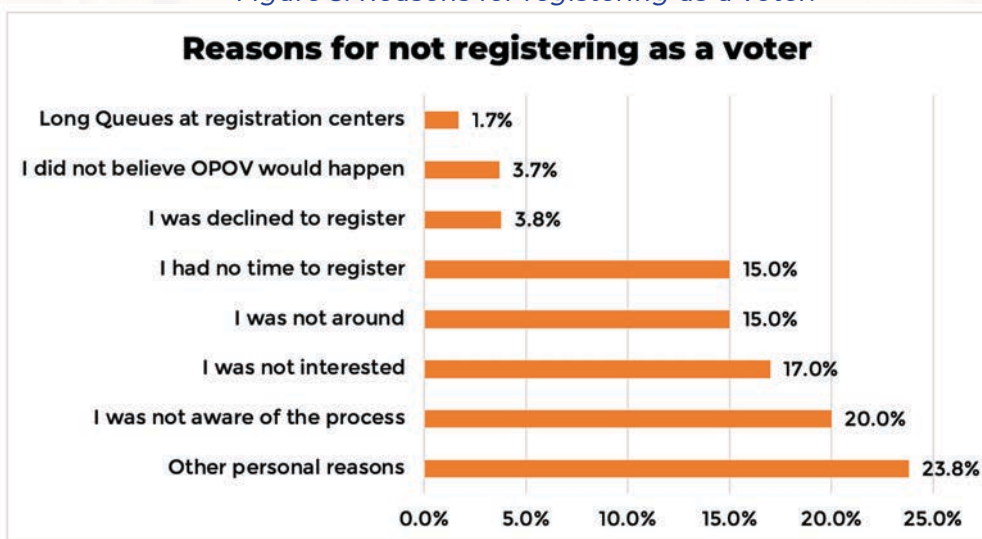
Yes No

*Figure 4: Proportion of respondents registered as voters*

#### 3.2.2 REASONS FOR NON-REGISTRATION

The respondents who had not registered as voters were asked the major reasons for not doing so. 20% reported not being aware of the process, 17% were not interested due to various reasons, and 3.7% did not believe that the OPOV system would happen. About 31.7% of the non-registered respondents reported logistical challenges that deterred them from registering as voters such as long queues in the registration centers, distance to the registration centers, and lack of time to register. This means that if the logistical challenges were resolved by TPEC then this group would equally register as voters.

*Figure 5: Reasons for registering as a voter.*



Besides these forementioned factors, the other attributable reasons for low voter registration trace back to the discontinuation and low commitment that emerged after the early elections. In the aftermath of the historical local government election on 25 October 2021, there were unnecessary delays and setbacks in completing the process. For instance, the formal approval of the election results and the unnecessary delays of the Eyl internal council election took almost one year after the election. Moreover, the incumbent administration lost the momentum to proceed with the remaining local district elections because of the national federal parliament, presidential elections, and President Said Deni's bid to compete for Somalia's Presidency.

### 3.2.3 VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS BY AGE GROUP

From the table below, the majority of the registered voters 34.1% (177) were aged 18-25, 33.1% (172) were aged 26-33, 22.0% (114) were aged 34-41, and the least 10.8% (56) of the registered voters sampled were aged 41 years and above.

Similarly, the majority of the unregistered voters 38.8% (31) were aged 18-25, 23.8% (19) aged 26-33, 21.3% (41+), and 16.3% (13) aged 34-41. This implies that the majority of the registered voters are youth aged between 18 and 33. Out of 519 registered voters sampled, 67.2% (349) are youth aged 18-33. However, a considerable number of the unregistered voters are youth aged 18-33. For instance, out of 80 unregistered voters 50 (62.5%) are youth aged 18-33. This requires a clarion call to integrate youth into leadership positions and intensively educate them about their constitutional duty to vote.

Age Group	Number of Registered Voters	Percentage	Number of Unregistered voters	Percentage	Total number of Voters
<b>18-25</b>	177	34.1%	31	38.8%	208
<b>26-33</b>	172	33.1%	19	23.8%	191
<b>34-41</b>	114	22.0%	13	16.3%	127
<b>41+</b>	56	10.8%	17	21.3%	73
<b>Total</b>	519		80		599

*Table 1: Voter registration status by Age Group*



### 3.2.4 VOTER REGISTRATION BY REGION

The data below shows that the Nugal and Mudug regions with the highest population had their voters registered at 91.4%(148) and 72.4%(105) respectively. Similarly, low-populated regions such as Gardafu (Raas-Caseyr) and Hayland also had most of their voters registered at 95.5% (21) and 82.6% (12) respectively. Having said

that, the figures of the study respondents solely correspond to the number of interviewees in the visited locations. However, in general, the critics point out that the total number of registered voters for LGEs (401,120 individuals) falls short of the actual eligible voters in Puntland. However, the underlying generalization concludable from this voter registration by regional study findings pinpoint the status of registered figures in six reached districts.

Region	Registered Voters	Percentage	Unregistered Voters	Percentage	Total
Bari	77	88.5	10	11.5	87
Gardafu	21	95.5	1	4.5	22
Haylan	57	82.6	12	17.4	69
Mudug	105	72.4	40	27.6	145
Nugal	148	91.4	14	8.6	162
Sanag	111	97.4	3	2.6	114
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>519</b>		<b>80</b>		<b>599</b>

Table 2: Voter registration by Region

### 3.2.5 KNOWLEDGE OF VOTER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

From the table below, 78% (468) of the respondents were aware of the eligibility criteria to register and participate in voting. Only 22% (131) were not aware of the eligibility criteria for voting. The findings corroborate with those respondents who received voter education (72%) as presented in figure 15. Thus, those who didn't receive voter education were completely unaware of the voter eligibility criteria. Similarly, from FGDs, citizens indicated a thorough understanding of voter eligibility.

"Any citizen who reached 18 years of age is eligible to register as a voter.,

“Any Somali who stayed in Puntland for five years is eligible to register and vote”  
FGD Bosasso.

“Foreigners were not eligible for the registration.”  
FGD Garowe.

Knowledge of Voter Eligibility Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	468	78%
No	131	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 3: Citizens' Knowledge of Voter Eligibility Criteria*

One of the specific objectives of this study was to measure the extent of voters' eligibility criteria knowledge in connection with any form of awareness or voter education received. Based on these related questions, it was obvious that there is above-average election awareness. However, in some places, the outreach of TPEC was limited due to known factors including the abundance of eligible voters in a wide area particularly the rural communities due to their pastoral-nomadic way of life and climate-related factors, moving from place to place periodically. The process of disseminating the election procedure and registration criteria was not straightforward. Therefore, TPEC used its Facebook, website, Golis SMS short number, and dedicated WhatsApp number to disseminate the voter eligibility criteria. Besides, as the majority of the voters were youth (34%), it facilitated voters to easily grasp the procedure and requirements for voter registration as stated by a young FGD respondent in Dhahar.

### 3.2.6 KNOWLEDGE OF THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO REGISTER AS A VOTER.

From Table 2 below, 60% of the respondents had knowledge of the required documents to register as a voter compared to the 78% who had received voter education as illustrated in figure 15. 40% were not aware of the required documents to register as a voter compared to 22% who had not received voter education. This implies that the voter education conducted was insufficient. Some of the information, especially on the required documents to register as a voter, was ignored during voter registration, rendering many would-be eligible voters unable to register for the 2023 local government elections.

Knowledge of Voter Eligibility Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	362	60%
No	237	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 4: Citizens' Knowledge of the required documents to register as a voter*

“With no previous experience in an election, the process to register was not difficult for me.”  
FGD, Dhahar



### 3.2.7 KNOWLEDGE OF WHERE TO REPORT IN CASE OF VOTER REGISTRATION COMPLAINTS

Similarly, only 65% (388) of the respondents knew where to go in case of complaints about voter registration procedures. 35% (211) were not aware of where to go in case of voter registration complaints. Although voter education was extensively conducted, the depth of the information provided to voters was insufficient as illustrated in figure 6.

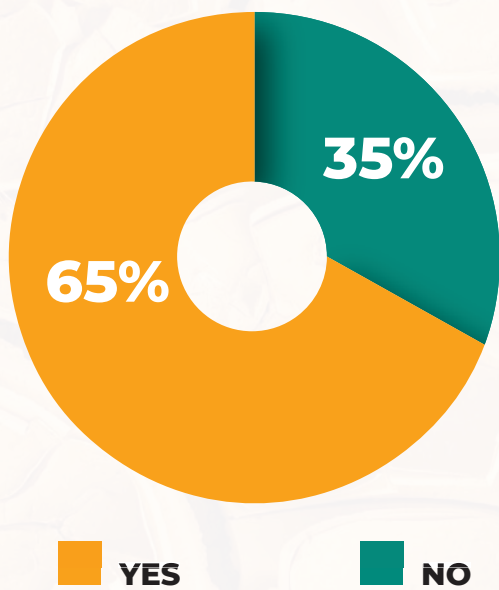


Figure 6: Citizens' Knowledge of Where to Report in Case of Voter Registration Complaints

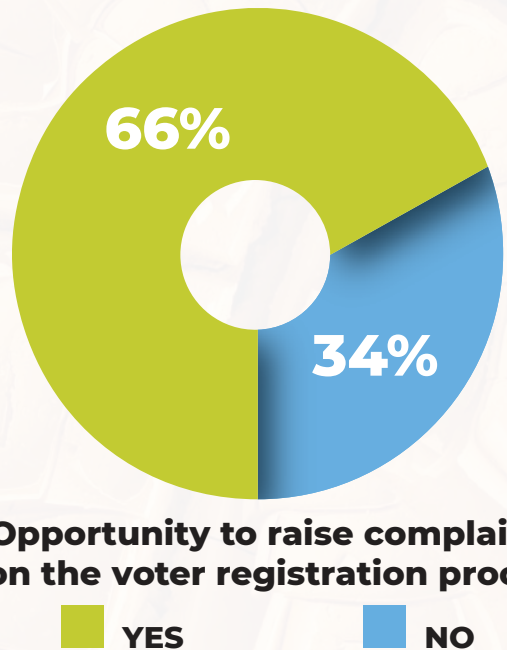
From FGDs, voters complained of TPECs' failure to make corrections in case of errors in voters' registration details

“ At first, I registered to vote from East Africa University (EAU) Bosasso, which lies at the southern end of Bossaso and requested to vote at the Biyo-Kulule polling station. But I was registered at Haji Mire/Dayaxa zone at the southern end of the town near the Bosasso, which I didn't know where it is located ”

FGD Bosasso

### 3.2.8 OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE COMPLAINTS ON THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS.

66% (395) of the respondents agreed that they had an opportunity to raise complaints on the voter registration process, and 34% (204) did not have an opportunity to complain about the voter registration process as illustrated in the figure below:



Opportunity to raise complaints on the voter registration process

Figure 7: Opportunity to raise complaints on the voter registration process.

### 3.2.9 COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS.

The respondents gave various complaints that they had against the voter registration process. The majority of the survey respondents (42%) provided other complaints against the process including possible conflicts propagated by the process, 22% complained of distant voter registration stations, 14% revealed that the time for the registration was not enough, 11% complained of long queues, and 11% lamented about poor registration equipment.

## Complaints against the voter registration process

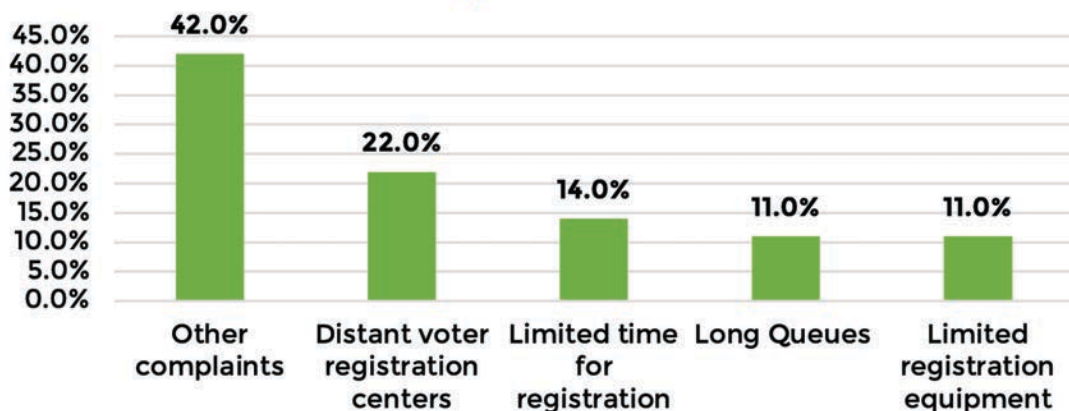


Figure 8: Complaints against the voter registration process

### 3.2.10 KNOWLEDGE OF VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES

The majority of the respondents (85%) were aware of the voter registration deadlines in their localities. Only 15% of the survey respondents were not aware of the voter registration deadlines as illustrated in figure 9. This highlights higher chances of registering at least 85% of the eligible voters from each locality within Puntland.

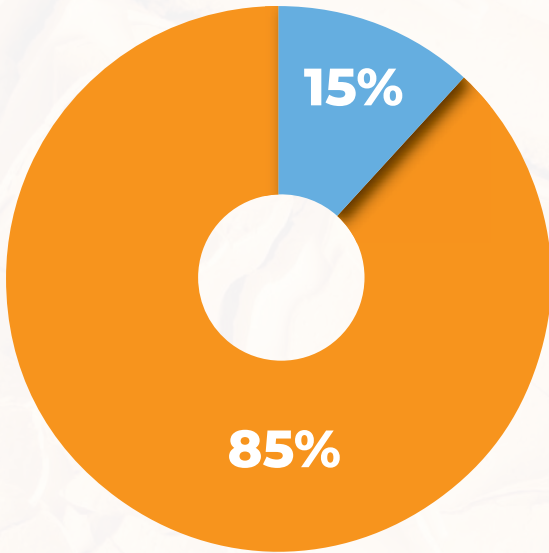
FGD findings slightly differed from those in figure 9 as respondents argued that localities were not uniformly sensitized. They highlighted that the level of awareness of voter registration deadlines varied depending on the location. Urban residents, particularly those in Galkayo district and nearby villages, were well-informed about the registration process. However, rural communities and pastoralists lacked adequate awareness.

“ I live in Galkayo town, I was aware that 12 days were allocated for the registration process and two more days were added by TPEC, but my mother in the village was not aware. ”  
**FGD Galkayo**

“ The deadline for registration was 15th April 2023. In some towns, TPEC extended the deadline and added some extra days for citizens to register. ”  
**FGD Garowe**

“ There were no clear messages of deadlines in the communications received but when we visited the registration places, information about deadlines was forwarded ”  
**FGD Dhahar**





### Knowledge of voter registration deadlines

■ Yes
 ■ No

Figure 9: Citizens' Knowledge of Voter Registration Deadlines

This is why at least 84% (504) of the respondents were able to register on time compared to only 16% who were unable to register to vote. On a similar angle, 98% (588) of the respondents knew where to register as voters compared to 2% (11) who were not aware of where to register. These findings coincide with most of the FGD responses on voter registration deadlines.

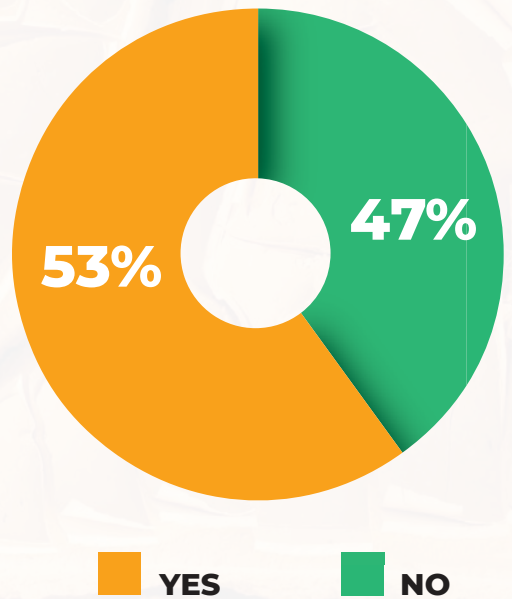
“Overall, the citizens were informed of the registration sites and working hours of TPEC staff. Those who did not know were guided by the other informed citizens. The working hours of the TPEC staff or the polling staff were from 6 am to 6 pm”  
**FGD with Bosasso Politicians**

Others complained of the shortness of the voter registration period.

“The period of registration was short, ..... which was just 10-12 days for each location, that's why many people didn't register to vote”  
**Youth FGD Bosasso**

### 3.2.11 LIBERTY TO CHANGE VOTER REGISTRATION DETAILS IN CASE OF ERRORS.

From figure 10 below, 53% (264) of the respondents had the liberty to change their voter registration details in case of errors. 47% (235) of the respondents had no access to alter their registration details before elections.



■ YES
 ■ NO

Figure 10: Liberty to Change Voter Registration details in case of errors.

### 3.2.12 ACCESS TO VOTERS' REGISTER ON DISPLAY

It was also found that 82% (491) of the respondents had access to the voters' register on display compared to 18% (108) who did not access the voters' register before the elections as illustrated in figure 11. Conversely, findings from focus group discussions revealed that citizens did not have access to voters' registers emphasizing that there was no display of the voters' register.

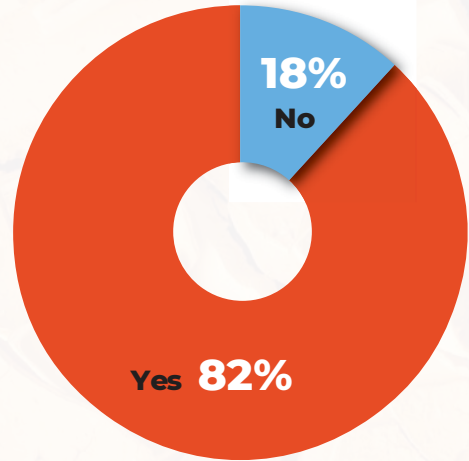


Figure 11: Citizens' Access to Voters' Register on Display

“...No opportunity was provided to citizens to access registers. Errors in the voter registration were rarely corrected”  
**FGD Bosasso**

### 3.2.13 THE LEVEL OF TRANSPARENCY IN VOTER REGISTRATION

From figure 12 below, 70.3% of the respondents rated the voter registration as transparent, 6.2% rated it non-transparent, 7.2% didn't know how to rate it, and 16.4% declined to rate it.

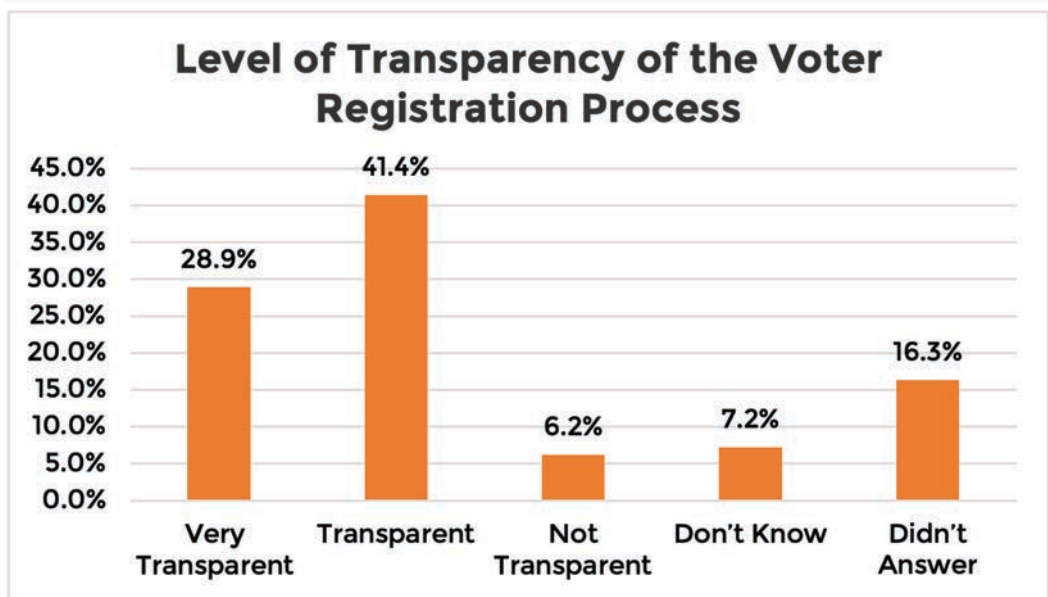


Figure 12: Level of Transparency in Voter Registration for 2023 Local Government Elections



### 3.2.14 WHETHER ILLITERATES WERE FAVORED BY THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS

From Table 5 below, 94% (564) of the respondents agreed that the voter registration process accommodated illiterates. Only 6% (35) argued that it did not favor illiterates. On the other hand, findings from FGDs indicated that illiterates needed further guidance and simplicity such as allowing them to use thumb prints during voting instead of ticking.

“ I propose that illiterate voters be allowed to use their thumbs with ink (provide ink pad in stations), instead of ticking, to mark the space of the PAs they choose to vote for ”  
**FGD Bosasso**

“ The ballot papers are A-4 in size and in Portrait form while the space for ticking is very small and the illiterate voter will extend his/her ticking in the small, allocated space ”  
**FGD Galkayo**

Whether the Voter Registration Process favored illiterates	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	564	94.0%
No	35	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5: Whether Illiterates were favored by the Voter Registration Process

### 3.2.15 INCLUSION OF MINORITIES IN THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS

From Table 6 below, 91% (545) of the respondents agreed that the voter registration process included minorities such as women and youth. Only 9% (54) argued that it did not include minorities. These findings matched with those of FGDs. At all levels of the voter registration process, women and youth were well represented.

“ I propose that illiterate voters be allowed to use their thumbs with ink (provide ink pad in stations), instead of ticking, to mark the space of the PAs they choose to vote for ”  
**FGD Bosasso**

“ The ballot papers are A-4 in size and in Portrait form while the space for ticking is very small and the illiterate voter will extend his/her ticking in the small, allocated space ”  
**FGD Galkayo.**

Whether the Voter Registration Process included minorities	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	545	91%
No	54	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6: Inclusion of Minorities in the Voter Registration Process

### 3.2.16 PROMPTNESS OF VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS

From figure 13 below, 83% (497) of the respondents agreed that the voter registration was done promptly, and 17% (102) argued that the voter registration process was delayed. However, the process of voter registration was scheduled in each district with times of extension due to law flows of people. These added times have given more time for eligible citizens to register.

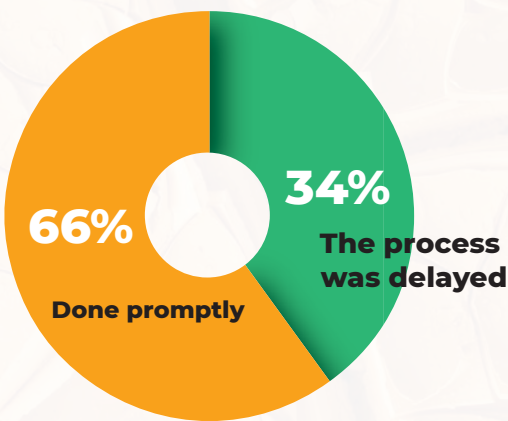


Figure 13: Promptness of Voter Registration

### 3.2.17 FACTORS THAT PROPELLED CITIZENS TO REGISTER FOR VOTING

From Table 7 below, 34.7% (208) registered to exercise their constitutional right to vote. 27.0% (162) registered after awareness raising from TPEC/CSOs. 23.4% (140) of the respondents were attracted to registering after seeing their friends or relatives registering. On the contrary, 8.9% (53) of the respondents had no major reason for registering to vote, 4.0% (24) registered for other reasons, and 2.0% (12) declined to respond to this survey question.

FGDs also acknowledged the efforts of TPEC/CSOs in raising awareness about elections. According to the respondents, the awareness-raising activities were attributed to PDRC's awareness campaigns, which sensitized citizens through Mobile Audio-Visual screenings.

*“ PDRC held here in Burtinle film screening forums on the registration process which were attended by most Burtinle residents to learn about the requirements for registration. ”*  
**FGD Burtinle**

However, findings from FGDs revealed that some eligible voters deliberately refused to register to vote arguing that the OPOV would neither improve the quality of governance nor address their community priorities.

*“ Some do not see any benefit from the OPOV exercise. These OPOV elections will not bring any governance enhancement or change the mismanagement and misuse of public funds ”*  
**FGD Bosasso**

Moreover, some of the FGD participants in Dhahar highlighted how clan mobilization and intra-competitions impacted their voter registration.

*“ We registered individually and families to maintain our presence and representation as a clan in our district/constituency ”*  
**FGD Dhahar**



There were some obvious callings and arrangements among clan members in almost all districts recruiting voters to outshine their clan dominance. This starting slowly initially has attracted remarkable competition among clans. The other observations made by the study researchers was that the demarcations of districts and allocations of constituencies in areas where some clans dominate or challenge the one-clan dominance became very influential factors for voters to register.

What Propelled you to register to vote?	Number	Percentage
After awareness raising from TPEC/CSOs	162	27.0%
After seeing my friend/relative registering	140	23.4%
I had no big reason	53	8.9%
I wanted to exercise my constitutional right to vote	208	34.7%
Other reasons	24	4.0%
Unanswered	12	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	

*Table 7: Factors that Propelled Citizens to Register for Voting*

### 3.3 VOTER EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

This section focuses on assessing the extent to which TPEC conducted voter sensitization and awareness campaigns and the perception of the citizens towards voter education campaigns.

#### 3.3.1 EXTENT OF VOTER EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

On whether the respondents had received voter

education or awareness raising, the majority of them (72%) agreed to have received voter education. Only 28% had not received voter education. This is summarized in figure 14 below.

On the contrary, findings from FGDs indicated that some citizens who were not provided with voter education complained of TPEC's insufficient investment in educating the public about elections.

“ There was no official system or website designated by TPEC for people living in Baran district to get information about the registration process. You can easily tell that awareness was very low, for instance, only 401,120 people have registered across Puntland State, yet the population is approximately 5 million excluding IDP

**FGD Baran**

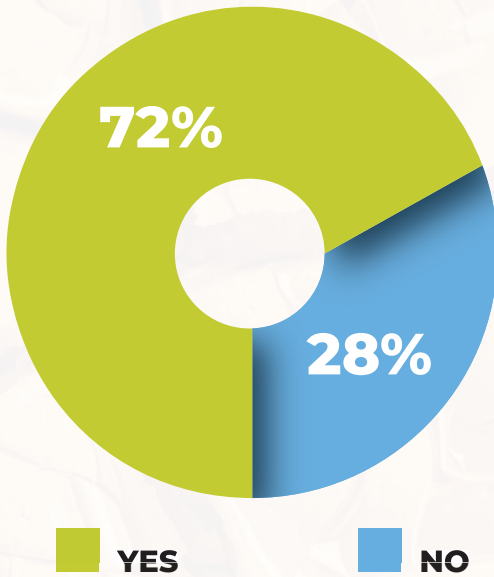


Figure 14: Voter Education and Awareness Raising

education information through social media such as Facebook and other related sources. Few of the respondents had received voter education through conferences, forums, friends/peers, radios, and political associations as illustrated in figure 15.

This is similar to the findings from FGDs.

“ We received voter education knowledge from Radios, TVs, social media, TPEC public meetings, TPEC sponsored loudspeakers mounted on cars, PDRC field teams conducting public voter education, and through our mobile phones ”  
**FGD Baran.**

### 3.3.2 HOW CITIZENS RECEIVED ELECTION INFORMATION

In the same angle, survey respondents were asked how they received information about the 2023 local government elections. Out of the 335 respondents who responded to this question, the majority of them 24% (80) received voter

“ TPEC sent voter registration notices through GOLIS SMS that almost reached every GOLIS subscriber ”  
**FGD Garowe.**

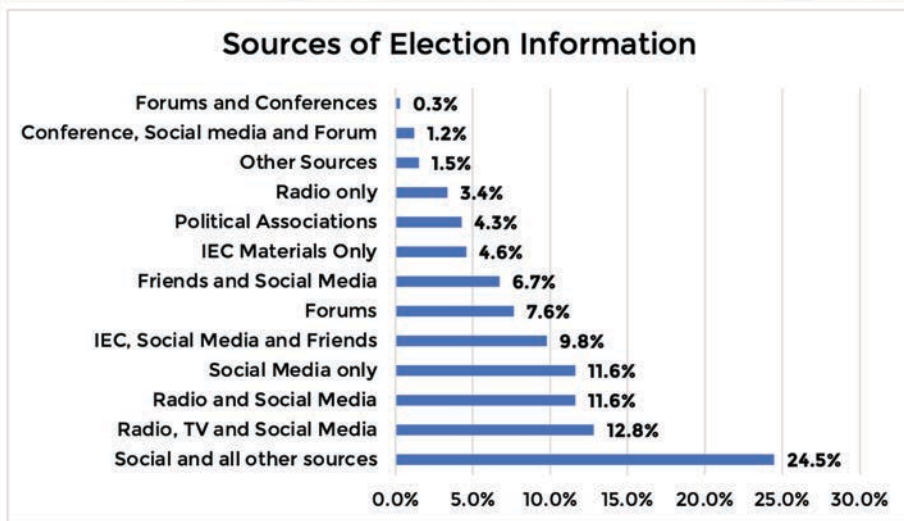


Figure 15: Source of Election Information



### 3.3.3 WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS TO VOTE IN THE 2023 LG PL ELECTIONS

From figure 16 below, the majority of the respondents 89% (533) were willing to recommend other community members or friends to vote, and 11% (66) were not willing.

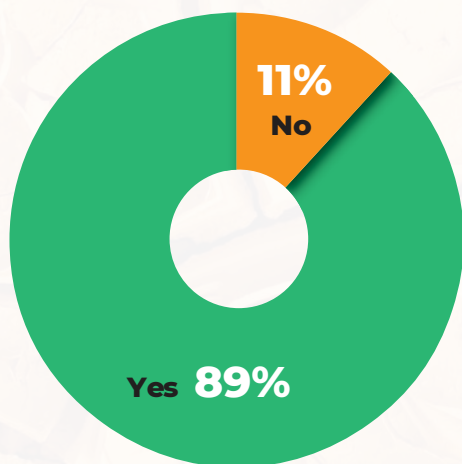


Figure 16: Willingness to Recommend others to participate in elections

### 3.3.4 VOTER EDUCATION BY REGION

From Table 8, despite having a small number of voters, the Gardafu region had the largest percentage of citizens that received voter education (95.5%) higher than that of Nugal (82.1%). Mudug region was the worst in failing to receive voter education with 33.1 %, and Bari with 32.2% of citizens who didn't receive voter education.

Region	Respondents who received voter education	Percentage	Respondents who didn't receive voter education	Percentage	Total respondents by region
Bari	59	67.8%	28	32.2%	87
Gardafu	21	95.5%	1	4.5%	22
Haylan	49	71.0%	20	29.0%	69
Mudug	97	66.9%	48	33.1%	145
Nugal	133	82.1%	29	17.9%	162
Sanag	91	79.8%	23	20.2%	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>		<b>149</b>		<b>599</b>

Table 8: Voter Education by Region

### 3.3.5 CITIZENS' KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR RIGHT TO ELECT AND TO BE ELECTED.

From figure 19 below, 89% (535) of the Citizens were aware of their right to vote or be elected in leadership positions and 11% (64) were not aware of their right to vote.

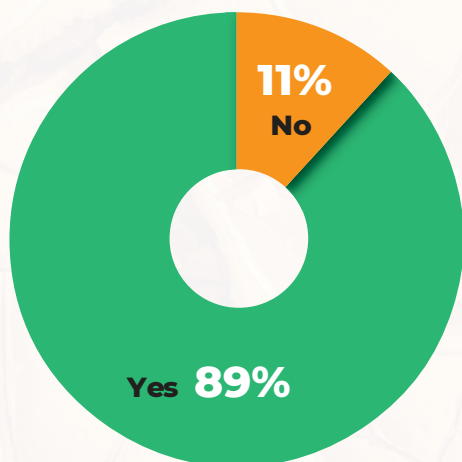


Figure 17: Citizens' Knowledge of their Right to Elect and to be Elected

### 3.4 POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PUBLIC IN PUNTLAND

#### 3.4.1 CITIZENS' KNOWLEDGE OF PAS

From Table 9 below, MIDEEYE was the most known political association with 90.7% popularity among voters. This was followed by KAAH known to 85.8% of the voters, and Caddaalada & Sinnaan known to 81.1% of the voters implying stiff competition among these three political associations. Mustaqbal followed with 54.6% popularity and Ifiye with 54.3%, Runcad had 41.7%, others including Shaqaalaha, Horseed, and Dhallinyarada were least known among the voters.

What political associations do you know as a citizen?	Number	Percentage
Caddaalada & Sinnaan	486	81.1%
Dhallinyarada	154	25.7%
Horseed	158	26.4%
Ifiye	325	54.3%
KAAH	514	85.8%
Mideeye	543	90.7%
Mustaqbal	327	54.6%
Runcad	250	41.7%
Shaqaalaha	203	33.9%
<b>Total Number of respondents</b>	<b>599</b>	

Table 9: Citizens' Knowledge of their Right to Elect and to be Elected



### 3.4.2 MEMBERSHIP TO A POLITICAL PARTY

From the survey, the majority of the respondents 62% (373) did not subscribe to any political association, and only 38% (226) subscribed to a specific political association as illustrated in figure 20 below: in the gauge of low PA membership, there are many explanations to make. First, because of the nascent political system 'Multi-Party System' adopted recently, many ordinary citizens do not have a full comprehension of how it works or misunderstand the democracy itself. Secondly, the institutional capacities of political associations/parties are tremendously poor and unable to engage with the wider population. One of the key baseline survey findings conducted by PDRC (2022) on capacities, gaps, and needs of PAs indicates institutional defaults to recruit and attract supporters due to financial constraints.

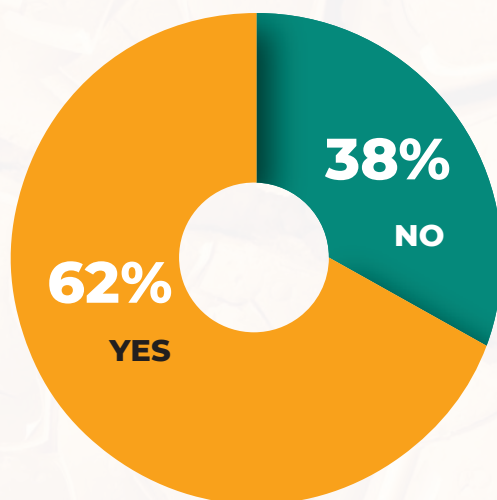


Figure 18: Membership to a Political Association/Party

### 3.4.3 MEMBERSHIP TO POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS BY GENDER

From Table 10 and Figure 19 below, most of the female respondents 66.0% (186) did not subscribe to any Political Association compared to 59.0% (187) males who were not affiliated with any Political Association. Similarly, 34.0% (96) of the female citizens and 41.0% (130) of the male respondents were affiliated with political associations. This implies the majority of the citizens were not interested in political associations at the time of the 2023 PL Local Council elections.

Gender	Member to a PA	Not a Member of a PA	Total
Male	130	187	317
Female	96	186	282
Total	226	373	599

Table 10: Membership to Political Associations by Gender

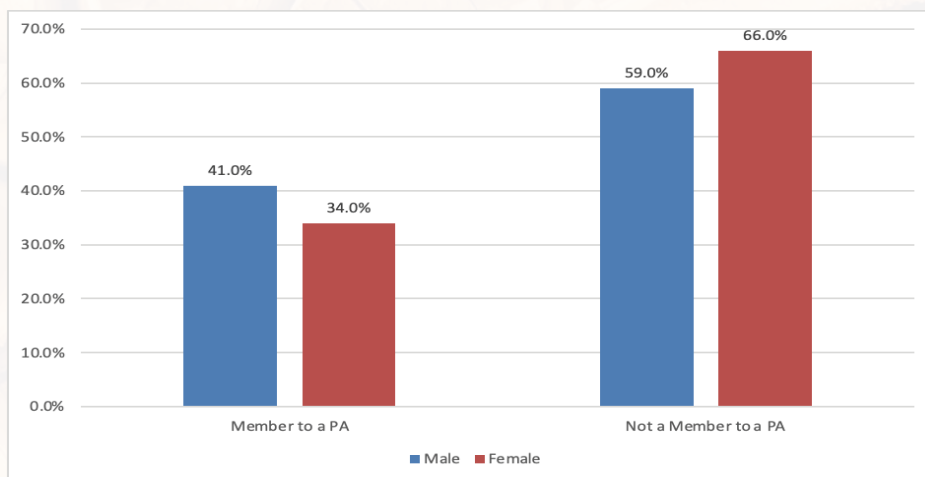


Figure 19: Membership to Political Associations by Gender

### 3.4.4 MEMBERSHIP TO POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS BY AGE

The majority of the citizens aged 18-25 (70.7%) did not subscribe to any political association in Puntland. Most of the citizens who were affiliated with political associations were aged between 26-33 with 45.0% associated with a particular PA as shown in Table 12 below.

Age Group	Member to a PA	Percentage	Not a Member of the PA	Percentage	Total
18-25	61	29.3%	147	70.7%	208
26-33	86	45.0%	105	55.0%	191
34-41	48	37.8%	79	62.2%	127
41+	31	42.5%	42	57.5%	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>		<b>373</b>		<b>599</b>

Table 11: Membership to Political Associations by Age.



### 3.4.5 GENDER PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' REPRESENTATION OF CITIZENS' PRIORITIES

The majority 47.4% (150) of the male respondents concurred that the Political Associations they endorsed effectively represented their priorities. Similarly, the majority of the women agreed

44.9% (127). However, a significant number of respondents 35.7% (101) of women respondents and 31.3% (99) of male respondents expressed uncertainty regarding whether the Political Associations they backed truly reflected their priorities. 21.2% (133) of the male and 19.5% (55) of the female respondents disagreed with the notion that the PA they supported aligned with their priorities.

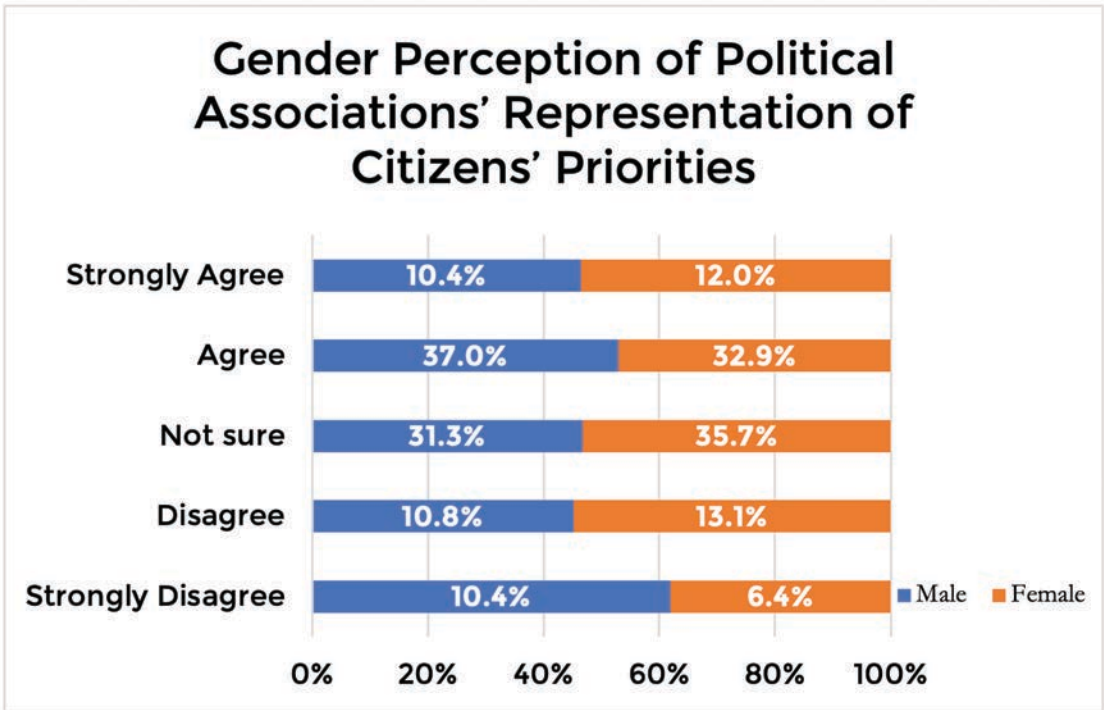


Figure 20: Gender Perception of Political Associations' Representation of Citizens' Priorities

### 3.4.6 FOLLOW-UP AND ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' ACTIVITIES BY GENDER

The majority of the male citizens 60.5% (192) often followed and engaged with political associations' activities compared to females

58.1% (164) who followed and engaged with Political association activities. 27.4% (87) of the males rarely followed PA's activities just like 21.6% (61) of the females. Across both genders, 15.9% (95) of the respondents did not follow or engage in PA's activities as shown in Table 13 below:

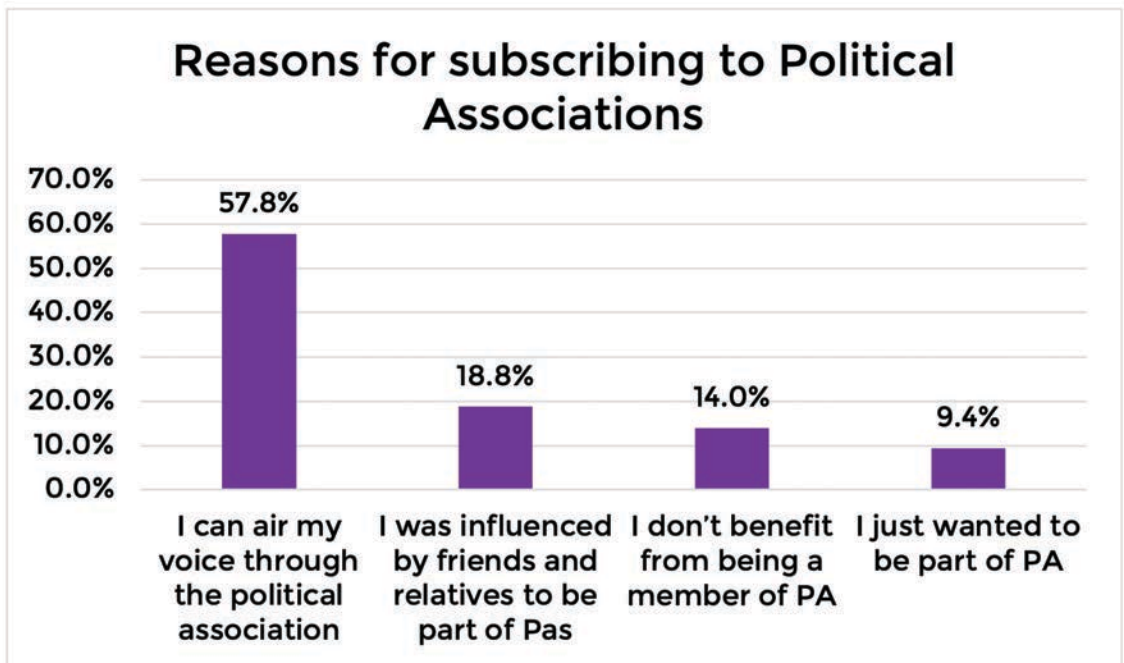
Gender	I don't follow PPA Activities	%	Rarely	%	Often	%	Very Often	%	Total
Male	38	12.0%	87	27.4%	131	41.3%	61	19.2%	317
Female	57	20.2%	61	21.6%	118	41.8%	46	16.3%	282
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>		<b>148</b>		<b>249</b>		<b>107</b>		<b>599</b>

*Table 12: Follow-up and Engagement with Political Associations' Activities by Gender.*

### 3.4.7 REASONS FOR SUBSCRIPTION TO A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION

57.8% of the respondents believed they could raise their voices through political associations, 18.8% were influenced by friends or relatives

to be members of a political association, 14.0% revealed that they benefited nothing from being a member of a political association, and 9.4% just wanted to be part of a specific political association.



*Figure 21: Reasons for subscription to a Political Association.*

### 3.4.8 WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND OTHERS TO JOIN A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION TO WHICH ONE SUBSCRIBES.

The majority of the respondents (96%) were willing to recommend others to join their respective political parties, only 4% were not willing as shown in Table 14 below.

Would you recommend other members of the public to join the political association to which you subscribe?	Number	Percentage
Yes	575	96.0%
No	24	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 13: Willingness to recommend others to join a Political Association to which they subscribe.

### 3.4.9 KNOWLEDGE OF THE POLITICAL AGENDA OF ONE'S PREFERRED POLITICAL ASSOCIATION

62% of the respondents were aware of the political agenda of their political associations, 30% had some knowledge about their political associations' agenda, and only 8% were completely ignorant of the political agendas of their preferred political associations.

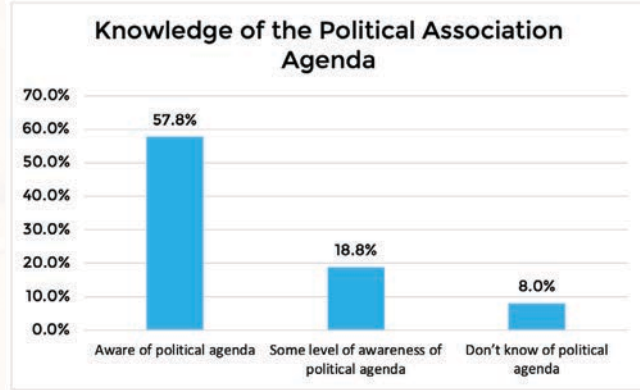


Figure 22: Knowledge of the Political Agenda of One's Preferred Political Association

### 3.4.10 REPRESENTATION OF CITIZENS' PRIORITIES BY POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS

46.3% of the respondents agreed that there were political associations that represented priorities in their communities, 20.1% disagreed, 33.4% were completely not sure whether there was a political association that represents their community priorities, and only 0.3% declined to respond

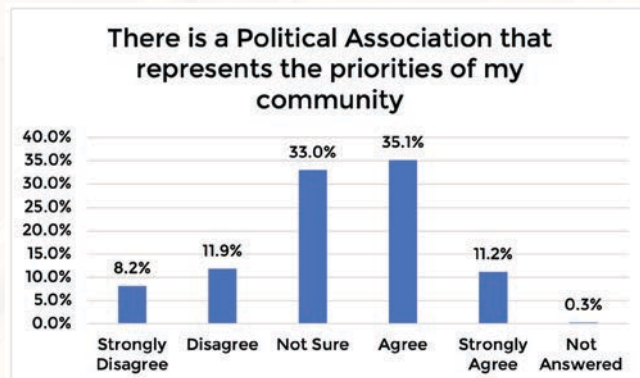


Figure 23: Representation of Citizen's Priorities by Political Association



### 3.4.11 CITIZENS' AWARENESS OF THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE AND THE LEADERS OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

From Table 17, 62.3% (372) were aware of the leadership structures and leaders of political associations within their communities, and 37.7% did not know the political associations' leadership structures and representation in their communities.

Are you aware of the leadership structure and the leaders of political associations in your community?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	372	62.3%
No	226	37.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 14: Citizens' Awareness of PAs leadership structure.*

### 3.4.8 HOW CITIZENS ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

38.4% (230) of the respondents acquired knowledge of political associations' leadership structures in their communities through social media, 14.7% through workshops or forums, 28.0% through televisions, 7.4% through friends, 6.8% through radios, and 4.7% through other means.

How did you get to know about PPA's leadership structure and leaders?	Number	Percentage
Social Media	230	38.4%
Workshop/Forum	88	14.7%
TV	168	28.0%
Friends	44	7.4%
Radio	41	6.8%
Other Means	28	4.7%
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Table 15: How citizens acquired knowledge of political associations' leadership structures*

### 3.4.9 RATE AT WHICH CITIZENS FOLLOW THE ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENTS OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

From Table 19 below, overall, 59.5% of the respondents often follow the activities and engagements of Political Associations in their communities, 24.7% rarely follow them, and 15.9% don't follow PPA activities.

How often do you follow the activities and engagements of Political Associations in your community?	Number	Percentage
I don't follow PPA activities	95	15.8%
Often	249	41.6%
Rarely	148	24.7%
Very Often	107	17.9%
<b>Total Number of Respondents</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Table 16: Rate at which citizens follow the activities and engagements of PAs.*

### 3.4.10 PUBLIC WILLINGNESS TO FREELY CAMPAIGN FOR OR TALK ABOUT A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION

From Table 18 below, 60.9% (365) of the respondents were willing to publicly campaign for or talk about a political association. Only 39.1% were not willing to publicly campaign for or talk about a political association.

Would you publicly and freely campaign for a Political Association or talk about it?	Number	Percentage
Yes	365	60.9%
No	234	39.1%
<b>Total Number of Respondents</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 17: Public Willingness to freely campaign for or Talk about a Political Association*

### 3.4.11 QUALITIES OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES CONSIDERED BY VOTERS

From figure 23 below, 46.6% (279) of the voters considered a candidate who would represent their community priorities/needs, 31.7% (190) considered a candidate's level of education, 13.7% (82) of the voters were interested in candidates who would provide financial incentives, 8.0% (48) didn't answer.

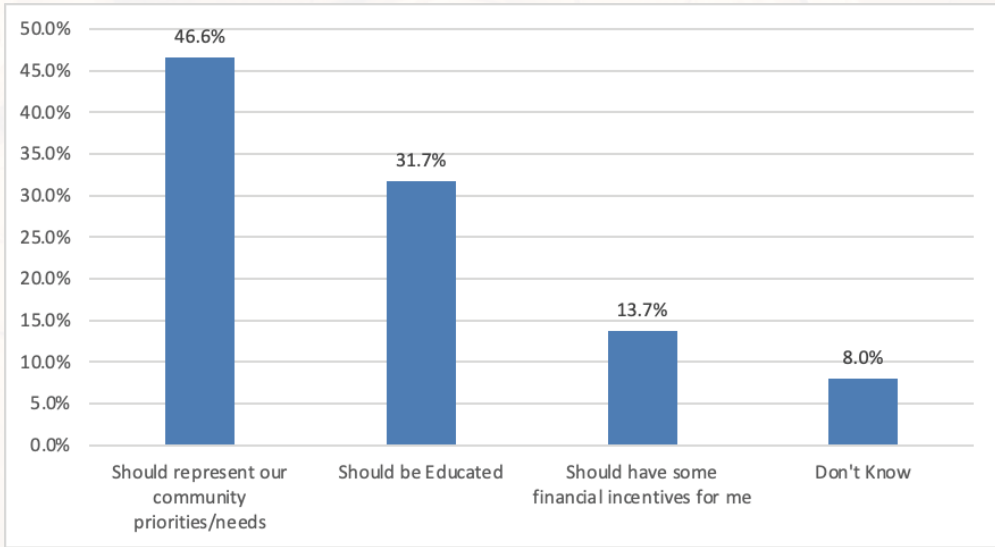


Figure 24: Qualities of Suitable Candidates Considered by Voters

### 3.4.12 FACTORS THAT COULD LIMIT CITIZENS FROM VOTING FOR A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION OR VOTING IN GENERAL

From Table 21 below, the majority of the voters 46.9% (281) nothing could stop them from voting for a Political Association or voting in general, 23.2% (139) were limited by the long distances to polling stations, 16.4% (98) didn't vote since they were not aware of the PA to vote for and 13.5% (81) had other reasons that limited their participation in voting.

These findings were contrary to those of FGDs. FGD respondents lamented that they eagerly wanted to vote but they were limited by long distances.

“ In some of the villages, the occupants were evacuated, and the new settlements are as distant as 50 km from the polling stations. Transport charges are high, and security is another concern. ~ FGD Baran

Lack of understanding of the election process.” ~ FGD Garowe



What factors could limit you and your friends from voting for a PA or voting in general?	Numbers	Percentage
Nothing can stop me	281	46.9%
Long distance to polling stations	139	23.2%
Not knowing which PA to vote for	98	16.4%
Other factors	81	13.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 18: Factors that could limit the citizens' participation in voting

### 3.4.13 WHETHER VOTERS WERE ATTRACTED TO VOTE FOR COUNCILORS, POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, OR BOTH

From figure 25 below, 53% (316) of the respondents voted for councilors without basing on the political associations the councilors were affiliated to. 20% (122) voted for councilors depending on the political associations the councilors were affiliated to and 27% (161) voted for councilors while considering the political associations they were affiliated to.

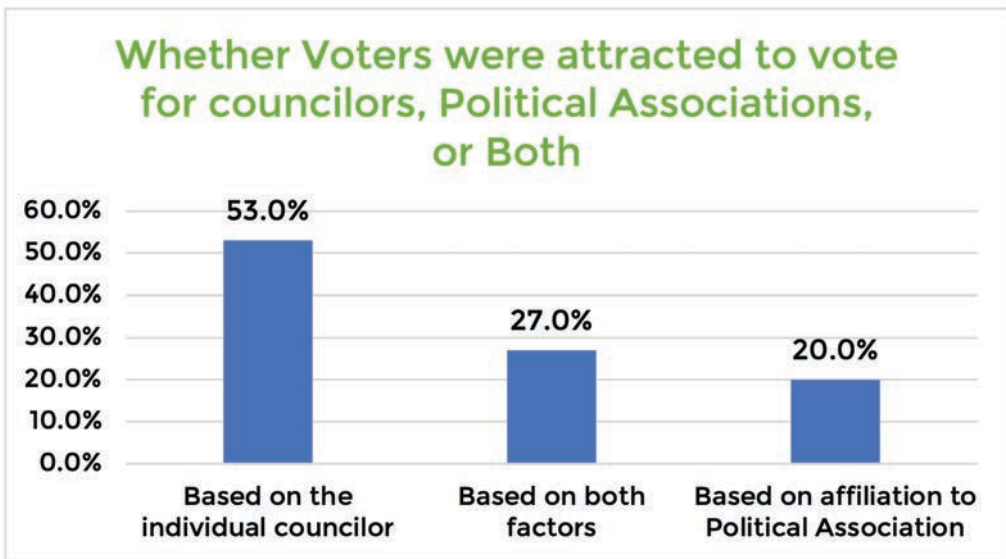


Figure 25: Whether Voters were attracted to vote for councilors, Political Associations, or Both

### 3.4.14 VOTERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' CANDIDATES

83.1% (498) of the voters knew the flag bearers of their political associations. Conversely, 16.9% (101) were not aware of the candidates affiliated with the political associations they support.

Do you know the name of your political association's candidate?	Number	Percentage
No	101	16.9%
Yes	498	83.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 19: Voters' Knowledge of their Political Associations' Candidates

### 3.4.15 VOTERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE NAMES OF THEIR POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS

From figure 26 below, 87% (523) of the voters were aware of the names of the political associations they support and 13% (76) didn't know the names of the political associations they support.

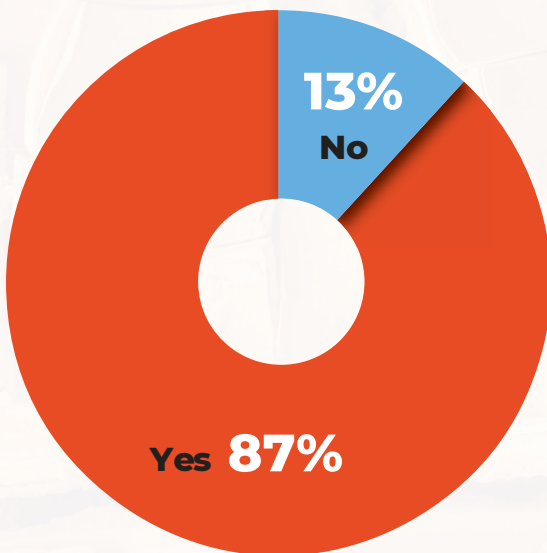


Figure 26: Voters' Knowledge of the Names of their Political Associations

### 3.4.16 ASSESSMENT OF VOTERS' KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' SYMBOLS

From Table 20 below, 83.0% (497) of the voters knew the symbols of political associations they support and 17.0% (102) were unknowledgeable about the symbols of the political associations they support.

Do you know the symbol of your political association?	Number	Percentage
No	102	17.0%
Yes	497	83.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 20: Assessment of Voters' Knowledge of Political Associations' Symbols

### 3.4.17 BASIS OF VOTERS' CHOICE FOR A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION

The majority of the voters primarily based on two factors for a choice of a PA familiarity with the PA leaders 34.1% (204) respondents or the Political Association's agenda/program 34.1% (204) respondents. Clan affiliation 12.2% (73) and financial incentives 2.0% (12) were less relied on for choice of a PA. However, there were other factors 17.5% (105) that voters based on for a choice a PA. 0.1% (1) respondent preferred not to answer.

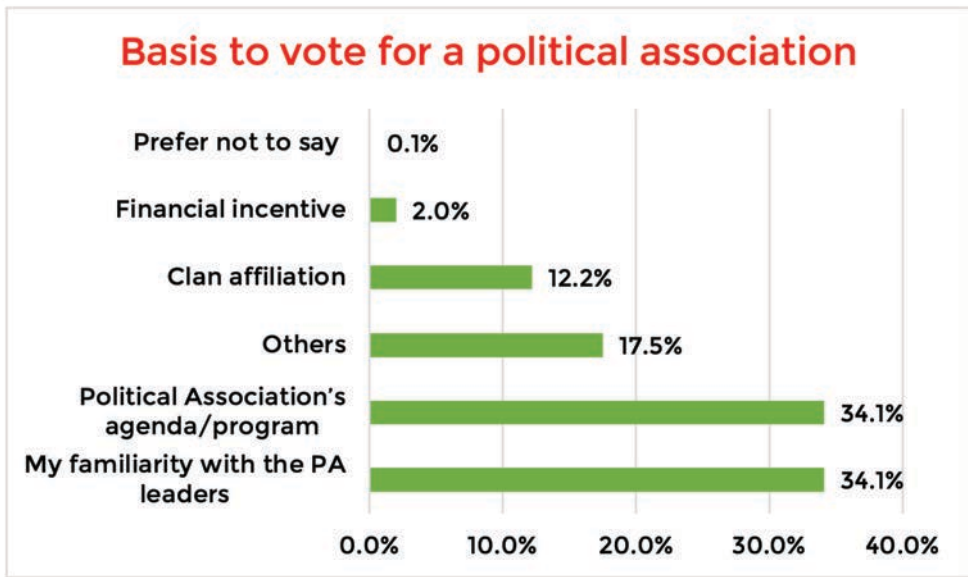


Figure 27: Basis of Voters' Choice for a Political Association

### 3.4.18 REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS' CANDIDATES

Citizens in Bari (89.7%) and Sanag (87.7%) knew their political associations' candidates compared to any other region. Despite having a large number of respondents who participated in the survey, the Nugal region had the lowest percentage of citizens who knew their political associations' candidates



(77.8%). Overall, 83.1% (498) of the citizens sampled knew their political associations' candidates as shown in Table 21 below.

Region	Knowledge of PAs' Candidates	Percentage	No Knowledge of PAs' Candidates	Percentage	Total
Bari	78	89.7%	9	10.3%	87
Gardafu	19	86.4%	3	13.6%	22
Haylan	56	81.2%	13	18.8%	69
Mudug	119	82.1%	26	17.9%	145
Nugal	126	77.8%	36	22.2%	162
Sanag	100	87.7%	14	12.3%	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>498</b>		<b>101</b>		<b>599</b>

*Table 21: Regional Knowledge of Political Associations' Candidates*

### 3.4.19 BASIS FOR ELECTING DISTRICT COUNCILORS

The majority 30.2% (181) of the voters would elect district councilors based on whether their clans were represented in the elections, 29.1% (174) based on whether the councilor(s) represented the voters' political party they will subscribe to in future. 26.5% (159) would choose district councilors based on their individual preferences, 6.5% (39) would not consider any of the above to elect district councilors, 7.4% had other reasons that they didn't disclose and 0.3% (2) did not respond.

Basis for electing district councilors	Number	Percentage
My clan's political representation	181	30.2%
My future political party	174	29.1%
My individual preference	159	26.5%
None of the above	39	6.5%
Other reasons	44	7.4%
Prefer not to say	2	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Table 22: Basis for Electing District Councilors*

### 3.4.20 AGE GROUPS' BASIS FOR ELECTION OF COUNCILORS

The majority of the citizens aged 18-25 (31.4%) could vote for councilors based on their individual preferences. Those aged 26-33 and 41+ would vote for councilors based on their clan affiliation i.e. 31.6% and 31.5% respectively. Citizens (36.4%) aged 34-41 would mainly vote for councilors who belong to political associations that they (the voters) hope to join in the future as illustrated in Table 23 below:

Age Group	Clan Political Affiliation	%	Future Political Party	%	Individual Preference	%	None	%	Other reasons	%	Total
18-25	63	30.4%	51	24.6%	65	31.4%	13	6.3%	15	7.2%	207
26-33	60	31.6%	59	31.1%	51	26.8%	12	6.3%	8	4.2%	190
34-41	37	28.7%	47	36.4%	26	20.2%	5	3.9%	14	10.9%	129
41+	23	31.5%	17	23.3%	17	23.3%	9	12.3%	7	9.6%	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>		<b>174</b>		<b>159</b>		<b>39</b>		<b>44</b>		<b>599</b>

Table 23: Age Groups' Basis for Election of Councilors

### 3.5 MAJOR FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED VOTERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTION PROCESS

The majority of the voters 22.9% (137) were primarily influenced to participate in the election process because they wanted to garner support for their affiliated political associations. The secondary factor that influenced voters was the operation of current government leadership as reported by 22.7% (136) of the voters. 19.2% (115) of the voters were driven by their own political motives to participate in the election process, and 15.3% (92) were influenced by the internal representation of their clans in the election process. 11.2% (67) had other factors that influenced them, but they preferred not

to disclose them, 6.7% (40) of the voters were competing for power, 0.7% (4) targeted financial incentives from the contestants and 1.3% (8) didn't answer any of the questions.

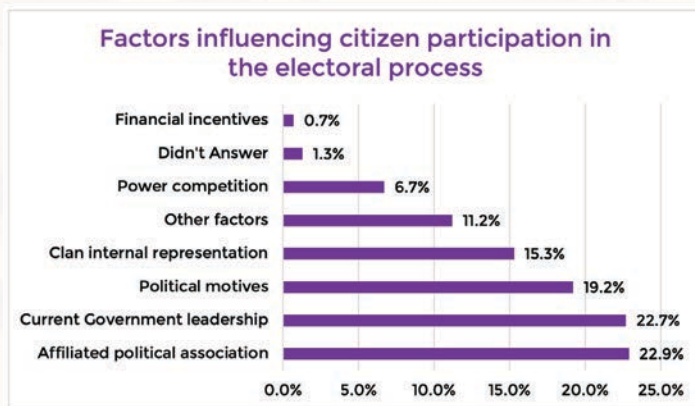


Figure 28: Major Factors that influenced Voters' Participation in the Election Process

### 3.6 ELECTION PLANNING BY TPEC

#### 3.6.1 HOW CITIZENS RATED THE LEVEL OF ELECTION PLANNING FOR 2023 PL LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS BY TPEC

The majority 58.9% (353) of the Citizens agreed that the election planning process was good. Conversely, 14.2% (85) lamented that the elections were poorly planned by TPEC, 26.7% (160) were fairly contented with the way elections were planned and only 0.2% (1) didn't respond.

This was similar to some of the findings from FGDs.

“ The TPEC staff working at the registration desk were very responsible and competent. They were very punctual, they used to come to work before 7:00 am, at 2:00 pm they were going to have a lunch break and to pray, and by 4:00 pm sharp they were already back at work ”  
**FGD Bosasso**

Other FGD findings cited elements of poor election planning.

“ I criticize TPEC for imposing orders and commands restricting vehicle movements on the election day ”  
**FGD Galkayo.**

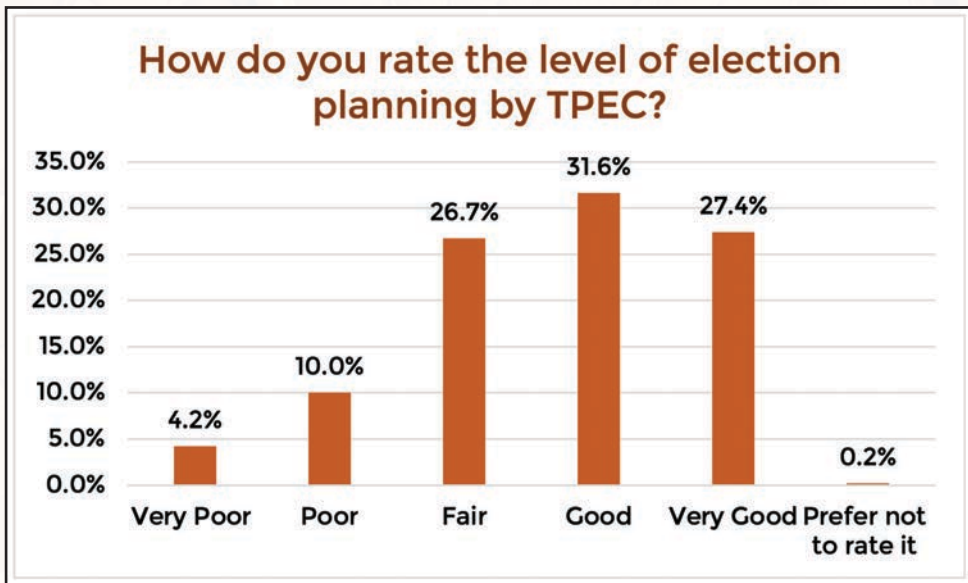


Figure 29: Ratings on the level of Election Planning

#### 3.6.2 RATING OF ELECTION PROCESS TRANSPARENCY BY REGION

Overall, 81.1% (486) of respondents across the regions sampled agreed that the elections would be transparent. 10.4% (62) of the respondents expected the elections not to be transparent. The citizens of Gardafu (19.5%) and Mudug regions (14.5%) had the largest fear of election non-transparency compared



to any other region. Generally, 8.5% (51) of the respondents across all regions couldn't predict whether the elections were to be transparent or not as illustrated in Table 27.

Region	Don't Know	%	Not Transparent	%	Trans-parent	%	Very Trans-parent	%	Total
Bari	3	3.3%	9	10.0%	45	50.0%	33	36.7%	90
Gardafu	10	24.4%	8	19.5%	10	24.4%	13	31.7%	41
Haylan	1	1.9%	5	9.6%	28	53.8%	18	34.6%	52
Mudug	10	9.1%	16	14.5%	53	48.2%	31	28.2%	110
Nugal	14	7.5%	17	9.1%	63	33.9%	92	49.5%	186
Sanag	13	10.8%	7	5.8%	81	67.5%	19	15.8%	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>62</b>		<b>280</b>		<b>206</b>		<b>599</b>

Table 24: Rating of Election Process Transparency by Region

FGD findings slightly provided a different perspective. Respondents anticipated that the elections would be transparent, but some irregularities were also identified.

“ *The election process will be 50% transparent and 50% corrupted.*  
**FGD Burtinle** ”

### 3.6.3 ELECTION PLANNING BY TPEC: REGIONAL RATING

Overall, 58.9% (353) of the respondents across all regions rated TPEC's election planning as good. Sanag region highly rated TPEC's election planning as good with 65.8% of the respondents agreeing with this. Nugal and Mudug regions with 62.1% and 60.6% respectively, most of

their citizens rated TPEC election planning as good, Bari region ranked TPEC planning as fair (50.6%) as shown in Figure 30.

However, FGD findings were contrary to those in Table 28 as respondents were not satisfied with TPEC's election planning process.

“ *There are sites where more than 600 people were registered but TPEC has not set up polling stations until now.*  
**FGD Burtinle** ”

“The public awareness of elections was not satisfactory. The programs were limited. The Government TVs and radios did not allocate enough time to public civic and voter education programs. Adequate time should have been spent on raising the awareness of the citizens on his/her constitutional basic rights and obligations, the constitutional articles relating to the citizens, democratic values, and election purposes”

**FGD -Bosasso Politicians**

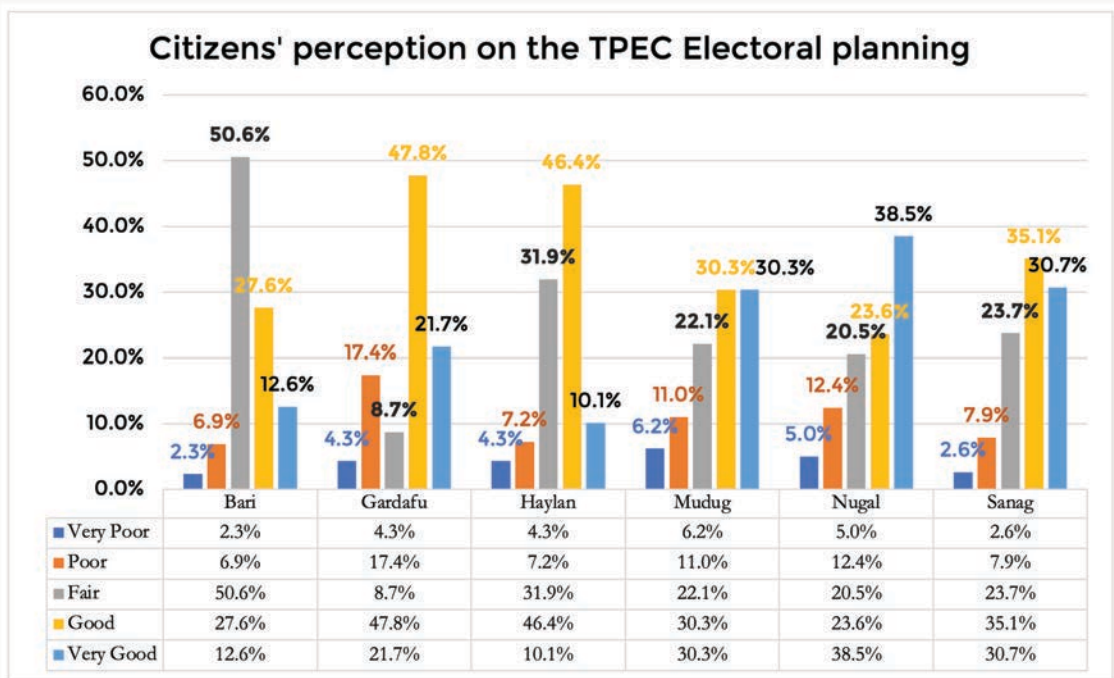


Figure 30: Election Planning by TPEC: Regional Rating

### 3.6.4 MAJOR ELECTION CONCERNS BY REGION

50% (3) of the regions were primarily concerned about the level of election fairness Gardafu had the highest level of apprehension, with 62.5% expressing fear regarding the possibility of lack of transparency in elections followed by Mudug (47.6%), and Sanag region (36.8%) which expressed similar concerns. The second prominent concern was election violence 50% (3) of the regions including Bari (56.3%) with the highest rate of fear of election violence followed by Nugal (44.7%) and Haylan (44.1%) which had similar concerns. Overall, all the regions were less worried about the undermined Council Minority Representation and had few other concerns regarding elections.

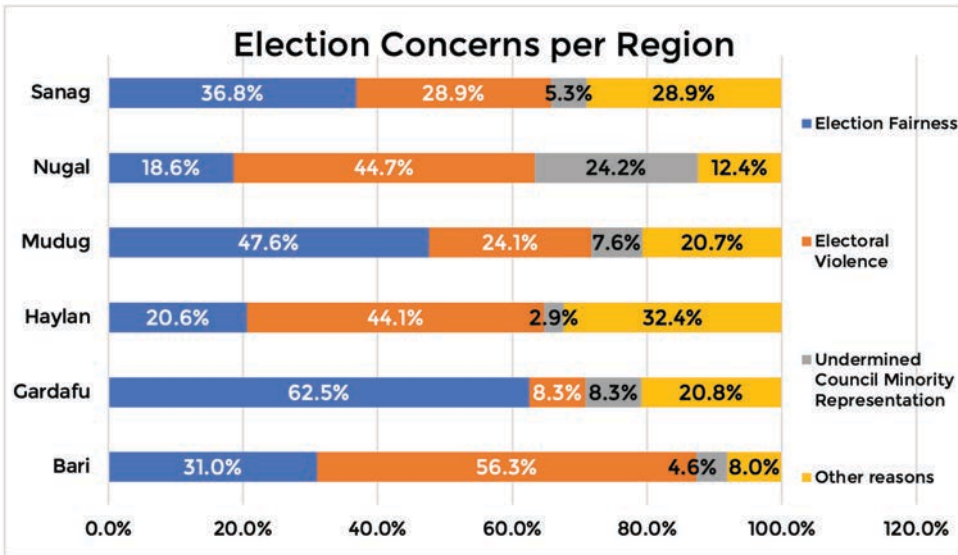


Figure 31: Major Election Concerns by Region

### 3.6.5 VOTERS' GREATEST CONCERNS REGARDING THE ELECTIONS

The majority of the voters (36.9%) predicted election violence, 32.9% of the voters were uncertain of the freeness and fairness of the elections, and 19.5% had other concerns they didn't disclose. 10.4% of the voters were worried about allocating very few slots to the minority group in the district council representation and 0.3% didn't respond to the survey questions.

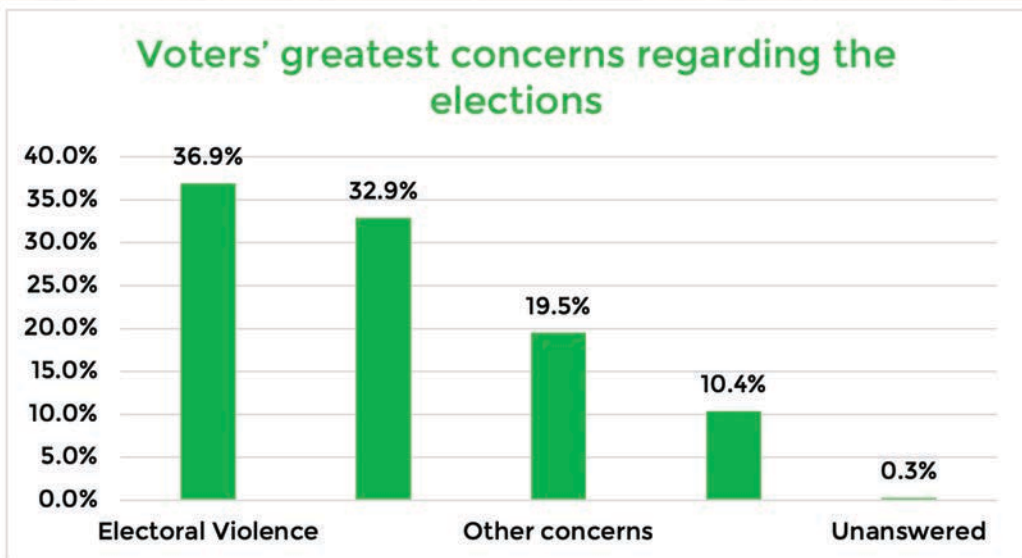


Figure 32: Voters' greatest concerns regarding the elections



### 3.6.6 MAJOR ELECTION CONCERNS BY AGE GROUP

Most of the citizens aged 18-25 (36.2%) were concerned about election violence that may result from the 2023 PL local council elections and were least concerned about the undermined representation of minorities on the councils. The majority of the citizens aged 26-33 (38.9%) were very concerned about election violence. Those aged 34-41 were very concerned about election fairness (37.2%). The majority of the citizens aged 41 and above were very concerned about election violence (32.9%) as shown in Table 30 below.

Age Group	Election fairness	%	Election violence	%	Undermined council minority representation	%	Others	%	Total
18-25	63	30.4%	75	36.2%	20	9.7%	49	23.7%	<b>207</b>
26-33	64	33.7%	74	38.9%	21	11.1%	31	16.3%	<b>190</b>
34-41	48	37.2%	42	32.6%	17	13.2%	22	17.1%	<b>129</b>
41+	24	32.9%	30	41.1%	4	5.5%	15	20.5%	<b>73</b>

Table 25: Major Election Concerns by Age Group



# 04

## CONCLUSIONS





To Understand Public Knowledge, Attitude, and Perception of the 2023 Local Government Elections in Puntland State, this KAP study examined different angles on the electoral process. From the analysis of voter registration, the individual's perception and knowledge of the electoral process, the roles, and performances of PAs in the LG election to outstanding efforts of the Puntland Transitional Commission (TPEC) towards handling the LGEs, the study revealed substantial findings that can be generalized in the gauge of its scope, number of individuals reached, and broader issues discussed.

Moreover, the study, through tailored individual interviews and group-based discussions, focused on exploring what factors shaped the practices and attitudes of eligible voters toward exercising their universal suffrage. According to the study's primary findings, the majority of respondents agreed that access to registration, the awareness raising by TPEC, PA's social media engagement, voter education received, the influence of friends/relatives, and individual's confidence and belief in OPOV system were the key influential factors that prodded the knowledge and perception of voters.

Furthermore, the findings support the fact that clan identity and affiliation did not have a major influence on people's preferences and choices in exercising their political rights. For instance, individuals choosing PAs on the base of their clan lineage were less than those performing through genuine belief in a multi-party system. Out of 599 study participants 137 (22.9%) conformed with this finding whereas 15.3% (92) expressed clan affiliation motivated their political motives to participate in the election process and vote for a particular candidate/PA.

Political associations in Puntland are still young and face challenges emanating from clan-based politics. The political associations still have a

long way in institutionalizing and creating a large membership base irrespective of the clan affiliations. The impact of political associations in Puntland cannot be underestimated. They can be instrumental in shaping the region's political trajectory and molding its governance system. By providing platforms for dialogue, negotiation, and representation, these associations can foster a sense of inclusivity and cooperation among various stakeholders. They can facilitate peaceful resolution of conflicts, promote social cohesion, and enhance democratic values within Puntland society. Additionally, these associations can effectively advocate the protection of human rights, the rule of law, and accountability, ensuring that the region's political leadership remains answerable to the people.

The role of the Transitional Puntland Election Commission (TPEC) in Puntland's democratization process is significant and crucial. As a transitional body responsible for overseeing the electoral process, the TPEC plays a vital role in ensuring a free, fair, and transparent election in Puntland, which ultimately contributes to the consolidation of democracy within the region. The study findings denoted citizens' trust in the electoral commission albeit the challenges in conducting OPOV electoral system. The study noted that TPEC was able to conduct effective voter education and registration campaigns. The Commission has ensured that all eligible citizens, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, or social class, have access to voting rights. It has also taken steps to promote women's participation in the electoral process by implementing affirmative action measures and encouraging their candidacies. By prioritizing inclusivity, the TPEC has strengthened the legitimacy of the elected representatives and ensured that the democratic process reflects the diverse perspectives and interests of the population.

These findings have implications for Puntland's



nascent democratic system adopted as part of the democratic transition from long-practiced tradition. First, Puntland state like the rest of Somalia still reaps the legacy from the past protracted conflict resulting in weak political institutions, an unstable political system, and turbulent transitions, particularly in election times. Despite these and more uncounted obstacles, Puntland's democratic transition took its grounding experiment for the first time after 25 years of existence. However, the social aspiration and public outcry to exercise their universal suffrage cast their votes, and elect their local representatives outweighed the procedural and electoral pitfalls. Secondly, the slow progress changes in the political arena have given a wider platform and new opportunities for the larger community to have a say in their future and publicly convey their concerns and expressions.



# RECOMMENDATIONS





The recommendations for this survey are placed in three target groups that play a critical role in shaping Puntland's democratization journey.

## **TO TRANSITIONAL PUNTLAND ELECTORAL COMMISSION (TPEC)**

- a. Citizens suggested separate election schedules in the Red Sea Coastal areas emphasizing a need to have them in cooler times. In hot seasons, citizens migrate up to the high interior cool lands. Others proposed elections to be conducted in March or October, which are the cool rainy seasons.
- b. TPEC should find a provision to allow illiterates to vote using thumb prints.
- c. TPEC should invest more resources in awareness raising and voter registration to increase the number of registered voters.
- d. TPEC should provide intensive training to voter registration staff to prevent errors in voter registration.
- e. TPEC should extend the voter registration days from 10-12 days to at least 2 months to increase the number of registered voters.
- f. TPEC should mobilize funds to invest extensively in mock elections as part of voter education strategies in liaison with CSOs and donors.
- g. TPEC should also sign memorandums of understanding with media houses to provide voter education and awareness raising at discounted prices.
- h. TPEC should ensure the display of voters' registers and correct errors much earlier before election days.
- i. The TPEC voter database should be easily accessible using technology such as on mobile phones or via the Internet.
- j. TPEC should have a voter feedback mechanism to respond to voters' complaints before elections.
- k. To ensure accountability, the election candidates, who are working in the civil service sector, should resign from their posts six months before the election schedule otherwise they will use government power and financial resources in their campaigns.
- l. TPEC should include minorities and special interest groups such as the blind and the deaf both in the voter eligibility criteria and representation on local councils.

## **TO POLITICAL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES/LEADERS**

- a. PAs in Puntland should strengthen their membership mobilization and recruitment strategies to increase membership.
- b. PAs should allocate more funds towards marketing and visibility for their political agendas through community outreach and establish offices right from the grassroots.
- c. PAs should remodel their campaign strategies and membership recruitment to include more youths between 18-25 as these constituted the smallest percentage of PA voters yet they are eligible voters.
- d. With the small percentage of female members within PAs (34.0%), they should reach out to women's associations or female umbrellas, engage veteran female politicians, and other initiatives to increase the number of female PA members.



- e. PAs should consider membership recruitment and representation for special interest groups such as those with physical handicaps for example the blind and the deaf.
- f. As PAs in the driving seat of the multi-party system, their leaders should develop some sense of process ownership by expressing sincere commitments and professional leadership. This institutional leadership alertness should be nourished a democratic norms and effective internal democracy.

## TO CSOS AND DONOR COMMUNITY

- a. CSOs and the donor community should increase budgetary allocations to voter education and awareness raising to increase voter registration.
- b. CSOs and donors should allocate more resources to support political associations' visibility, especially in remote areas to widen their membership by adopting a neutral approach to funding.
- c. CSOs and donors should allocate funds to mock elections as part of the wider voter education strategies in liaison with TPEC.



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