



UNSOM/UNDP Integrated Electoral Support Group

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Newsletter 2 : September - October 2015

Highlights

- On 9 and 10 September, the 'Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goal of Inclusive Politics' (PSG1) held Sub-Working Group meetings and a Working Group meeting in Mogadishu, in which the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the UNSOM/UNDP Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) participated and presented electoral updates.
- On 10 September, a Programme Board meeting was held with the Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs (MOIFA), the NIEC, donor partners, UNDP and the IESG. The Board endorsed a twin-track approach, focusing both on the 2016 process as well as long-term electoral capacity development assistance.
- From 19 to 21 September, federal and regional leaders convened for a high-level meeting in Mogadishu and launched a consultative process aimed at identifying the most appropriate electoral model for the conduct of the 2016 electoral process.
- From 29 September to 2 October, the NIEC held a four-day team building and strategic planning workshop, followed by the presentation of its Vision and Mission statements and Action Plan to donors and partners.
- On 8 October, facilitated by UNSOM, the IESG organized a communications and strategy development training workshop for the Commissioners of the NIEC.
- On 19 and 20 October, the first plenary session of the National Consultative Forum (NCF) took place in Mogadishu, with technical and logistical support from the IESG. The NCF endorsed a Facilitation Guide setting out four alternative approaches to the electoral process in 2016 and agreed on the conduct of a number of consultations throughout Somalia.
- From 21 to 28 October, the Commissioners of the NIEC participated in a study tour to Tanzania, including Zanzibar, to experience first-hand the conduct of a national election.

Upcoming

- On 1 November, the NIEC Commissioners have been invited by the Government of Turkey on an Elections Study Tour to visit the country's General Elections.
- On 5 November, the PSG1 Working Group is meeting in Mogadishu.
- In Mid-November, the regional consultations for the 2016 process are expected to take place for the existing and emerging federal states.

1. Partnership Meetings

PSG1 Working Group meeting

On 9 and 10 September, the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) participated in the Sub-Working Group and Working Group meetings of the 'Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goal of Inclusive Politics' (PSG1). The Group discussed the decision taken by the High-Level Partnership Forum on 30 July in Mogadishu to start a Consultative Process amongst Somali representatives across the country in order to identify



Photo 1: NIEC Chair Halima Ismail Ibrahim presenting to partners electoral updates and issues to partners (photo credit: UNSOM – 2015)

the most appropriate electoral model for the conduct of the 2016 process upon the expiry of the constitutional mandate of the Federal Parliament.

Programme Board meeting

On 10 September, a Programme Board meeting was held with the Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs (MOIFA), the NIEC, donor partners, UNDP and the IESG. The IESG updated donors on programme progress and achievements while the NIEC provided updates on electoral developments. The Board endorsed the expansion of the scope of the UN Electoral Support Programme by adopting a twin-track approach; covering support to the consultative process for 2016 and subsequent implementation of the agreed option, while still providing longer term capacity development assistance for the conduct of universal elections and referendum in the foreseeable future.

2. National Consultative Forum

The National Consultative Forum (NCF) comprises federal and regional leaders and civil society. Following a number of public consultations throughout Somalia's existing and emerging federal member states and with Somalis in the diaspora, it will take decisions regarding the most appropriate and feasible electoral process for 2016. The IESG has been closely involved in

supporting the consultative process, including support to the Task Force and the Technical Support Team that assist the NCF.

Launch of the consultative process (19-21 September)

During the launch of the consultative process from 19 to 21 September, high-level delegates from the Federal Republic, Puntland, the Interim South-West Administration, Jubaland, and Galmuduug agreed on the terms of reference of the National Consultative Forum, a ministerial-level Task Force, and a Technical Support Team. The Task Force and Technical Support Team subsequently prepared the first plenary session of the National Consultative Forum, at which a Facilitation Guide was presented and endorsed. The Facilitation Guide outlines four alternative approaches to the electoral process, which will be discussed further in the coming weeks. For the launch of the NCF, the IESG supported travel of the delegates from the Galmaduug Interim Administration to Mogadishu to attend the meeting.

First plenary session (19-20 October)

The first plenary session of the NCF was held in Mogadishu on 19 and 20 October. High-level



Photo 2: First plenary session of the National Consultative Forum in Mogadishu, 19-20 October. (Photo credit: UNSOM – 2015)

delegates of the Federal Republic, Puntland, Jubaland, the South-West Administration (ISWA), and Galmuduug as well as representatives of Benadir, Hiraan and Middle Shabelle, women, youth and civil society organizations and international partners attended the meeting. Delegates endorsed the Facilitation Guide, which outlines options for the conduct of the electoral

process in 2016, and a methodology for public consultations on these options in each of Somalia's regions with a wider cross-section of the Somali society. In December, the NCF will reconvene to review the conclusions of the public consultations, to consider recommendations, and to take decisions as appropriate.

In order to assist the Technical Support team, the IESG has engaged two senior advisors. The IESG further provides technical and logistical support to the various consultations. In coordination with the Technical Support Team, the IESG facilitated transportation for some 100 delegates from Garowe, Adado, Kismayo and Baidoa to Mogadishu. The IESG also provided accommodation

and vehicles. Together with other colleagues from UNSOM and UNDP, the IESG is currently assisting the Technical Support Team with the preparation of the Regional Consultations in November in Puntland, Galmaduug, Jubaland, ISWA, and Mogadishu (for Benadir, Somalilanders, and Hiraan and Middle Shabelle).

3. NIEC Strategic Planning



Photo 3: NIEC Commissioners and IESG team members at the teambuilding and strategic planning workshop, Nairobi, 30 September 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM/UNDP – 2015)

Supported by the IESG, the NIEC held from 29 September to 2 October a team building and strategic planning workshop in Nairobi. The goal of the workshop was to strengthen team integration amongst the newly appointed Commissioners, and to discuss the institutional mandate, strategy and priorities for the remainder of the year and for 2016. The workshop resulted

in the articulation of the NIEC's Vision, Mission and Core Values statements, and the development of an Action Plan (see Annex). Also present were a representative from MOIFA and a Parliamentary legal consultant, who gave input to the discussions.

The NIEC also stated a commitment to engage with the authorities responsible for developing the electoral legal framework, including the electoral law, citizenship law and political party law, and to encourage finalization of this legislation. Technical issues such as assessing methodologies for voter registration, developing electoral dispute mechanisms and developing political party registration procedures were also prioritized. The identification of a permanent location for the NIEC's future headquarters is also a priority for the longer-term. The NIEC concluded the workshop by presenting its plans to



Photo 4: The Somali Ambassador to Kenya, Hon. Gamal Hassan, commending the NIEC with their work and strategic planning, Nairobi, 30 September 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM/UNDP – 2015)

donor partners and international non-governmental organizations at a meeting also attended by the Somali Ambassador to Kenya, Hon. Gamal Hassan.

NIEC Strategic Framework

Vision Statement

“Our vision is to build trust and confidence of the Somali people in the electoral process by establishing an election administration framework conducive to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.”

Mission Statement

“The NIEC is an independent body that promotes and safeguards the aspirations of the Somali people to achieve sustainable peace, unity and democracy, by organizing and supervising all types of elections and referenda as mandated by the Constitution in an accountable and transparent manner.”

Guiding Principles (Core Values)

The NIEC is committed to electoral democracy and obtaining the trust of all stakeholders in the electoral process through consultation and are guided by the following principles:

- a) Impartiality;
- b) Integrity;
- c) Accountability;
- d) Transparency;
- e) Participation;
- f) Responsiveness;
- g) Respect;
- h) Inclusivity;
- i) Sustainability.

4. NIEC Tanzania Elections Study Tour

From 21 to 28 October, the IESG supported the NIEC to visit Tanzania to witness first-hand the



Photo 5: NIEC Commissioners presented with voter materials at the Tanzania Elections Study Tour, Dar es Salaam, 25 October 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM/UNDP – 2015)

conduct of a national election on 25 October. The NIEC was accredited with observer status by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to facilitate the conduct of its study tour. The NIEC split into two groups – one staying in Dar es Salaam and the other moving to Zanzibar to visit the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC). The NIEC was given the

opportunity to meet the Chairpersons of the NEC and ZEC, the director of the Information Technology department, and several electoral district officers. In addition, the NIEC had a meeting with members of the regional intergovernmental body, the East African Community (EAC). The UN Resident Coordinator in Tanzania and former UNDP Country Director of Somalia, Alvaro Rodrigues, encouraged the NIEC members with their important task to prepare for future elections in Somalia.



Photo 6: NIEC Commissioners inspecting ballot boxes during the Tanzania Elections Study Tour, Dar es Salaam, 25 October 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM/UNDP – 2015)

During their study visit, the NIEC focused on getting an awareness of the scale and scope of an operation that was conducted in 63,000 locations and which required over 200,000 people to operate. The NIEC gained a deeper understanding of the electoral operation and learnt insights into methods and systems. The Commissioners were given an overview of the voter

registration system, taken through the observation accreditation steps as well as polling, counting and tabulation procedures; and visited warehouses to observe the distribution of electoral materials.

While in Zanzibar, NIEC Chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim had the opportunity to meet former Nigerian President, Jonathan Goodluck, who attended the Tanzanian elections in his capacity as Chairman of the Commonwealth Election Observer Mission for the 2015 elections. Chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim provided updates of election-related developments in Somalia, including the establishment of the NIEC. Former President, Jonathan Goodluck encouraged the NIEC Commissioners to stay committed to the course of promoting sustainable peace through the ballot box.



Photo 7: NIEC Chair Halima Ismail Ibrahim meeting former Nigerian Jonathan Goodluck in his capacity as Chairman of the Commonwealth Election Observer Mission for the 2015 elections, Zanzibar, 25 October 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM/UNDP – 2015)

The Tanzania Elections Study Tour was preceded by a pre-mission briefing that the IESG had provided to the Commissioners on 15 October. This briefing focused on the political and electoral background in Tanzania, including the existence of two electoral management bodies, the NEC and ZEC, and gave an overview on the principles of elections observation. In addition, the IESG presented the NIEC with an introduction on electoral public outreach and various models of organizational structures for the NIEC Secretariat.

5. NIEC Communications Workshop

Communications is a critical element for electoral bodies, as it helps promote the institution's credibility, support transparency and public participation in the electoral process. In order to enhance the NIEC's communications skills set, on 8 October 2015, the Commissioners attended a one-day communications workshop. The workshop for the nine commissioners was conducted by UNSOM's Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Group, and took the commissioners

through key steps to achieving effective communication and implementing an effective communications strategy.



Photo 8: Gerald Mitchell, Director of the UN Integrated Electoral Support Group, congratulating NIEC Commissioner Mohamed Ahmed Nur with the completion of the Communications training course. Mogadishu, 8 October 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM – 2015)

Chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim said the training would enable the Commission to more effectively reach out to the Somali public.

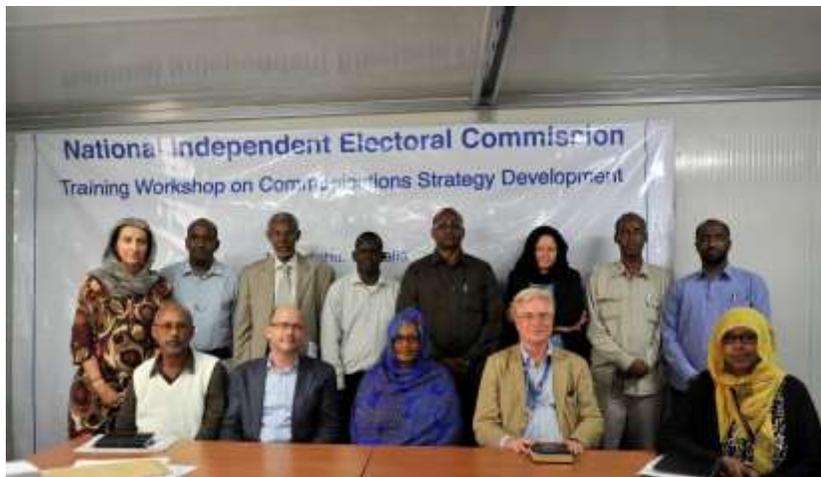


Photo 9: NIEC Commissioners, IESG team members and UNSOM facilitators at the Communications workshop, Mogadishu, 8 October 2015. (Photo credit: UNSOM – 2015)

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Annex: NIEC Action Plan

NIEC 1st Year Action Plan Task	2015			2016											
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Institutional Development															
Review existing work plan															
Develop multi-year strategic work plan leading to universal elections.															
Ongoing capacity building for the Commissioners															
Capacity building training plans & implementation - Secretariat - specific trainings for staff															
Develop IT strategy															
Implementation of IT Strategy															
Formalize the structure of the NIEC secretariat (organogram)															
NIEC Internal procedures (code of conduct, organizational hierarchy, etc.)															
Establishment of the Secretariat. (Priority recruitment, needs assessment of external expertise required.)															
Finalize TOR for Secretariat officials															

Finance														
Create Govt. budget for next 12 months - submission	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow											

Coordination														
Develop MoU's for key stakeholders (Ministries, Parliament, Security institutions, etc.)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green										
Develop & implement coordination mechanisms for electoral support	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green			Green			Green			Green	
Liaison with relevant institutions in charge of developing														
i. Electoral Law			Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue				
ii. Citizenship Law	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue				
iii. Political Party Law	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue				
iv. Media Law	Blue	Blue												
Liaise with other Commissions (ICRIC, BFC, etc.)	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

Physical Infrastructure development														
Identify suitable/safe accommodation for the Commissioners	Red	Red	Red											
Secure permanent headquarters for NIEC (site assessment, initial development)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green										

Technical Process Development															
Preparedness for implementation of the agreed electoral option for 2016. (capacity Dev., Recruitment, Logistics)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green									
Explore methodologies for voter registration	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	Green	Green	Green
Research and develop EDR (Election Dispute Resolution) modalities	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Research and develop Political Party registration modality	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	White	White	White

Stakeholder Liaison															
Develop plan for Public Outreach and External Relations including all key stakeholders (regional/national)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green											
i. Communications strategy	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green											
ii. Stakeholder engagement (civil society, regional authorities, political associations, Government agencies)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green											

Color codes



Planning

Implementation

Critical action required

Essential for the electoral process but beyond control of NIEC