



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

UN Gender-Elections Task Team to advance gender equality in the 2020/21 elections

IN NOVEMBER, a UN Gender-Elections Task Team (GETT) was established to define a common UN approach to gender equality and women’s participation in the 2020/21 elections and adopt a strategy to make these topics a priority. GETT includes three UN entities with shared mandates – UNDP, UN Women and UNSOM (IESG, Gender, Political, Human Rights and Strategic Communications).

The indirect electoral model adopted by the Somali National Consultative Council in September 2020 guarantees 30 per cent quota for women in Parliament, but does not outline the tools, mechanisms or guidelines on how the quota is to be achieved. The UN is developing a two-pronged strategy to help translate the goal into a reality in the 2020/21 elections as well as for the anticipated 2024/25 one person one vote universal elections. This strategy is developed around five main areas of support as illustrated in the diagram and detailed below.



- Advocacy:** GETT will work on two levels; 1) advocacy at the decisionmakers levels and 2) supporting the advocacy campaigns carried out by civil society organizations and concerned women’s rights organizations.
- Provision of Technical Support:** This includes the provision of technical support, capacity enhancement and training to women civil society leaders and aspirants, as well as to the electoral committees to reach the goal of a minimum 30 per cent women’s seats in the parliament. GETT will also support the electoral committees in fulfilling their vital role to ensure compliance with processes that contribute to the achievement of the 30 per cent quota.
- Supporting Mobilization of Women:** GETT will support CSOs, women leaders and advocates to mobilize women at both federal and Federal Member States (FMSs) levels and ensure coordination with Women Affairs Ministries, MPs and women’s groups, organizations and networks working on women’s political rights and empowerment.
- Public and Target Group Outreach:** GETT will develop media products and materials as part of a comprehensive media campaign, to creat visibility of the work of the stakeholders involved in advocacy efforts to promote women’s 30 per cent agenda.
- Strengthening Strategic Partnerships:** Coordinating between the UN entities, donors and other international elections assistance providers, CSOs and other stakeholders.

HIGHLIGHTS

- UN Gender-Elections Task Team (GETT) to advance gender equality in the 2020/21 elections
- 2020/21 electoral security
- Technical and capacity development training sessions for NIEC staff
- NIEC M&E: Visualization of key activities and training
- Revised organogram for NIEC Public Outreach Department
- Returning to the office in Mogadishu

2020/21 Electoral Security

IN MID-OCTOBER, IESG organized an online meeting during which the National Electoral Security Task Force (NESTF) presented its draft national elections security plan and budget to the UN and the relevant international stakeholders. Following this meeting, IESG in collaboration with other UN agencies/sections provided a broad analysis of the plan and budget, which were shared with donors and partners for discussion. The UN and AMISOM have jointly offered technical feedback on the national plan for the NESTF Secretariat’s consideration. A key capability in the national plan, which is being supported by IESG, is a Joint



2020/21 Electoral Security Cont.

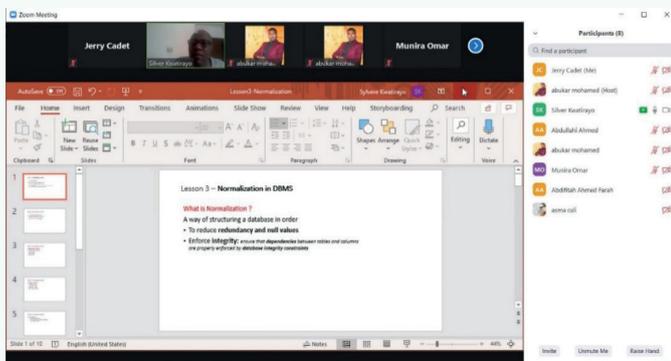
Operations Centre (JOC) in each of the constituencies where voting will take place. It is intended that a Women's Situation Desk will be established in each JOC. IESG will provide the equipment for the JOCs (furniture, computers and accessories, and tactical radios) and AMISOM will train the JOC staff. UNDP, on behalf of the IESG, is ordering the equipment and AMISOM has developed a training plan.

IESG is helping to mobilize resources to promote women's participation in the electoral process and advise the Somali security authorities on how to plan and coordinate gender sensitive security for elections. Specifically, IESG will be working with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) to support the establishment of Women's Situation Desks in the 12 JOCs that plan, coordinate and manage security operations for elections around the country. Women's Situation Desks will ensure that reports and complaints of electoral violence against women, including harassment and intimidation, are reported and addressed properly.

Technical and capacity development training sessions for NIEC staff

1. IT series of training sessions

IESG has initiated a weekly database training session for eight NIEC IT personnel, focused on industry standard tools and elections-related tasks. The virtual sessions started on 29 September and are expected to be completed by mid-December 2020. The trainees are provided with pre-recorded video lessons that they can watch independently to master the concepts discussed during the virtual live classes. Relevant exercises are also assigned on a weekly basis. Database design and implementation are vital skills for IT professionals, and they are one of the core electoral tasks.



2. Training on procurement & electoral materials supply chain

IESG organized four specialized training sessions in November for NIEC's Directorate of Administration and Finance. The training offered an opportunity for participants to share knowledge, experiences and good practices. Topics included: Procurement Unit responsibilities, principles of public procurement, different committees for procurement review, approval and evaluation, payment processing and vendor management. The training sessions strengthened NIEC's staff capacity through finetuning of relevant skills and applying professional standards in the implementation of their technical work. Another training session was held on 18 November and covered the topic of Electoral Materials Supply Chain Management for NIEC Logistics and Operations staff.



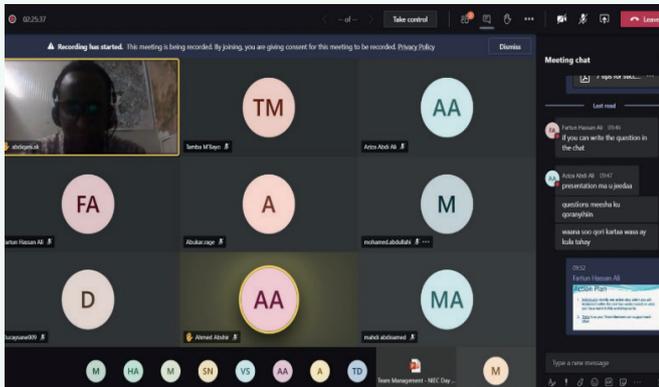
3. NIEC promotes teamwork through virtual platforms

NIEC staff have expanded their ability to utilize virtual platforms through training. From 9 to 12 November, 33 staff members participated in an MS Teams training on Concepts of Team Management, with IESG support and in collaboration with UNSOS Training Unit. This was part of a planned series of training sessions conducted on the MS Teams platform for NIEC.

NIEC staff participated in a teambuilding training during which they learnt about the various stages of team development within an organization and exchanged information about each other's work. The training covered the MS Teams features that guarantee privacy such as posting in the chat box a comment or question addressing one member or the whole group. This helped to overcome the language barrier and enabled the facilitators to address participants' questions.

Participants' feedback showed that they benefited from the training: "It was very important to help understand and appreciate the work of colleagues in various departments and share achievements as a team working to achieve the same goals." NIEC staff members are currently using the platform for communication as well as scheduling meetings and trainings.

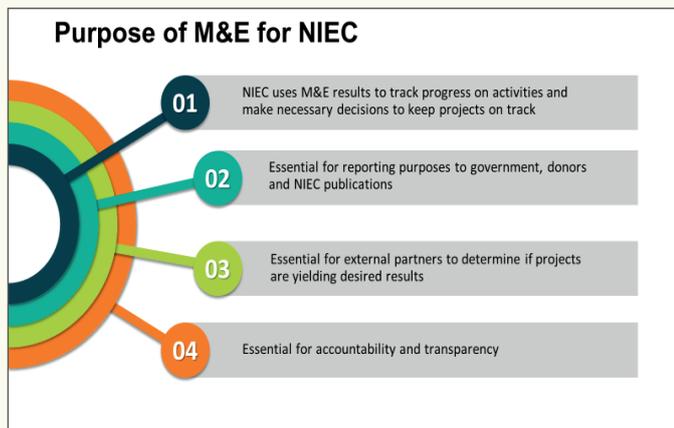
Technical and capacity development training sessions for NIEC staff Cont.



4. IESG Security conducted a briefing on personal safety and security for NIEC staff

The IESG security team in collaboration with NIEC security advisor drafted the NIEC Personal Safety and Security Guide and, on 25 October, conducted a comprehensive briefing for 86 NIEC staff. The guide was translated into Somali and circulated to all staff before the briefing. The guide provides advice for staff to increase their personal and situational awareness, details ways to prevent or mitigate potential threats to themselves and their colleagues, and addressed cyber security issues. This helps to create a culture of awareness so that all employees not only are aware of risks but also care about recognizing them.

NIEC M&E: Visualization of key activities and training



conducted meetings with all departments to help staff understand the importance of timely data submission and proper reporting to enhance the ability to make more informed, evidence-based decisions. IESG and the M&E team discussed the outline for an infographic highlighting key activities of the unit's workplan, which was approved by the senior management.

The staff are determined to continue holding consultations following the success of their outreach with colleagues, which has resulted in a better understanding of the role of M&E within the NIEC.

To further support the M&E functions, on 17 and 18 November IESG delivered a session on Report Writing to the NIEC M&E Unit.

WITH IESG SUPPORT, the NIEC M&E Unit developed a workplan to guide implementation of their activities, and

Revised organogram for NIEC Public Outreach Department

Following the announcement that the NIEC will not be involved in preparatory activities for the 2020/2021 indirect elections, the Public Outreach team commenced preparations to conduct one-person, one-vote elections in 2024/25. To this end, IESG advisors are providing technical support to NIEC Public Outreach staff by transferring knowledge and skills to assist managers to formulate policies and procedures enabling staff to fulfill their roles effectively. As a result of the mentoring sessions to support the Public Outreach Department, senior managers conducted a review of the staffing and management structures and prepared a long-term plan including a revised organogram to streamline these functions. The department's proposals will be shared with NIEC's Secretary General and the Board of Commissioners.

Returning to the office in Mogadishu

ON 17 NOVEMBER, IESG/UNDP national Project Officer returned to work as part of the UNDP Return-to-the-Office initiative in Mogadishu. Special arrangements have been made for UNDP national staff to return to work in a safe environment and adhere strictly to guidelines for safe interaction at the office, including social distancing and hand sanitizing. It is hoped that over the next months most national staff will return partially to the office.

CONTACT:

Mary Cummins, IESG Deputy Chief Electoral Advisor, mary.cummins@undp.org
Irfan Mahmood, IESG Elections Project Manager, irfan.mahmood@undp.org
UNSOM/UNDP Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG)

