UN Somalia Joint Fund
Progress report
1 July 2018 to 30 September 2023

Project data

Title and Number	Joint Programme for Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery MPTF Gateway ID : 00111670
Participating UN entities	UNCDF; UNDP; UN Habitat; ILO; UNICEF
SJF Window	Community Recovery and Local Governance
Geographical coverage	Somaliland, Puntland, Federal Member States (FMS) -South West, Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle and Benadir Regional Administration / Municipality of Mogadishu.
Project duration	66 months from 1st July 2018 – 30th September 2023, including extension
Total approved budget	Projected 150 million US$, of which 79 million US$ was raised and implemented.
Implementing partners	Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR), Office of the Vice President (GS, JL, SL & PL) Office of the President (SWS), the Ministries of Interior (MoIs) of Somaliland (SL), Puntland (PL), Jubaland (JL), Galmudug (GS), Hirshabelle (HS), South West (SWS) States, including the federal capital of Mogadishu (Benadir Regional Administration. Other partners include the Local Government Institutes and the sector ministries of Finance, Health, Education, Public Works, Environment, and Water.
Project beneficiaries	42 districts directly and 17 in preparation[1]. Of these, 6 districts were fully implemented by the State Governments of Somaliland and Puntland. Populations receiving services from these local authorities
NDP pillar	Pillar 1, 2 & 3
UNCF Strategic Priority	**Priority 1:** Increase the provision of equitable, accessible, and affordable social services by creating a regulatory environment that promotes

[1] 16 districts in Somaliland, 11 districts in Puntland, 5 districts in Galmudug, 3 districts in Hirshabelle, 2 districts in Jubaland, 6 districts in South West and 16 districts in Mogadishu.

	decentralized delivery and priority key investments that extend and increase access to services. **Priority 2:** Support to establishment of local governance structures in newly recovered areas, linked to reconciliation **Priority 3:** Coordination of governance and delivery activities at the local level.
SDG	**SDG** 1,5,6,7,8,12,16,17
Gender Marker	**GEM** 2- Programme contributes significantly to gender issues,
Related UN projects within/outside the SJF portfolio	Durable Solutions, FMIS fund by WB, RCRF (phase 3)[2] SURP II[3] funded by WB; Berbera Urban Development Project[4] funded by EC; PREMIS[5] funded by DFID; SIEPMID[6,] EFGISP (Phase 2)[7] funded by AfDB, UNDP S2S, HABITAT land management, UNDP innovations
Focal person	Rob Duijs – Interim Coordinator, rob.duijs@undp.org

Report submitted by:

	PUNO	Report approved by:	Position/Title	Signature
1	UNCDF			
	ILO			

[2]https://mof.gov.so/the-ministry/programs/recurrent-cost-and-reform-financing project#:~:text=Thepercent20Recurrentpercent20Costpercent20andpercent20Reform,notpercent20includepercent20Somalilandpercent20forpercent20now.&text=RCRFpercent20continuespercent20topercent20providepercent20a,FGSpercent20civilpercent20servicepercent20wagepercent20bill.

3https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2019/12/09/world-bank-approves-112-million-to-strengthen-local-government-capacity-and-provide-urban-infrastructure-for-somalis

4 https://unhabitat.org/node/160910

5 https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-205065/summary

6https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/somalia-strengthening-institutions-economic-policy-management-and-infrastructure-development-project-siepmid

7 https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/somalia-economic-and-financial-governance-institutional-support-project-efgisp-phase-ii-appraisal-report-99651

2				
3	UNDP			
4	UNICEF			
5	UN Habitat			

Section 1: Executive summary

Brief introduction to the project

As the sphere of government closest to the people, functional local governments are key to transforming people's lives and livelihoods. They also contribute to the consolidation of peace, state legitimacy and stability. Effective local governance systems designed to be responsive to diverse needs, preferences, and aspirations of all citizens, and resilient to crises, play an important role in the quality of life of communities, help reduce inequalities, bolster local economic development and more importantly, help cement state-society relationships.

It is within this context that the Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG) was developed and implemented and became a household name in Somalia. The programme has aimed at creating an enabling environment for improved service delivery by strengthening local governance systems, enhancing the capacity of local authorities to deliver services, improving legal and policy frameworks, and fostering inclusion. As the third phase (2018-2023) of the programme has been concluded, we reflect on past achievements and challenges.

This report serves as a testament to the commitment of the UN and its partner organizations to promoting inclusive, participatory, and effective local governance practices. It highlights the impact of interventions, best practices, and lessons learned in supporting decentralized service delivery and decision-making processes, fostering accountability, and promoting sustainable development at the local level.

Furthermore, the report delves into the complexities and dynamics involved in the implementation of the programme, offering a detailed analysis of the contextual factors that influence local governance in Somalia. By examining both successes and setbacks, this document provides valuable insights and lessons for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders. Through this report, the participating UN agencies aim to stimulate discourse and catalyze collaborative efforts toward building more resilient and responsive local governance structures. The report presents the results achieved over the 3rd phase of the programme between 2018 and 2023, including an extension of the programme during its last year, that was deemed necessary following delays during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Context of the reporting period

The political developments in Somalia during JPLG III were characterized by protracted tensions resulting from delayed Presidential elections, which were eventually held in May 2022. These tensions, from the political elite to the rank and file, significantly affected the economy, service delivery, and development. This, coupled with the security risks posed by persisting attacks from Al-Shabaab militant groups slowed down the implementation of JPLG III programmatic activities. Even when mitigation factors were put in place, government attention was diverted towards political contestation issues.

Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic further disrupted economic activities, contributing to delays in the project implementation. Moreover, Somalia faced a severe drought in 2022 and 2023 and excessive floods towards the end of JPLG III, impacting the lives and livelihoods of millions, along with disruptions caused by the Russia-Ukraine war, which led to soaring prices of imported goods and reduced government revenues.

The frequent dissolution of district councils by state authorities and the proliferation of districts for political and clan-related reasons posed further challenges, leading to interference in program implementation. Furthermore, the formation of newly liberated areas in the Southern part of Somalia created opportunities and challenges for JPLG to foster their legitimacy and provide resources to make them functional.

Amidst these challenges, the approval of the HIPC8 Completion Point for Somalia and the subsequent debt relief pose significant opportunities. The debt relief will facilitate access to critical financial resources, improve service delivery, and promote job creation, ultimately contributing to strengthening of the economy.

Overall, the unpredictable and uncertain political economy made programming challenging, requiring a calibrated approach to suit the different contexts. The unique characteristics of each state in the South, including varying political economies, security situations, and vulnerability to climate change shocks, necessitated a tailored intervention approach.

Summary of key achievements

The Joint Programme for Local Governance uniting five UN agencies and active in 59 districts has benefited between 35 and 50 percent percent of the people in Somalia. JPLG has become a household name and is equated with building functioning governments at all levels in all Federal Member States, Puntland and Somaliland. The achievements of the programme during the period 2018 till 2023 have been noted and appreciated both downstream, district levels by the population and local elected officials, and on upstream Federal Member States and Federal levels in Ministries and State Presidencies.

At District levels, the decentralization policies have enabled health, education, and household water services to become available to large parts of the population. These include the required infrastructures, the capacity to manage and maintain, infrastructures assets, as well as establishing rules, regulations, and legislation to support decentralization. The Local Government Laws, produced through JPLG support, have been pivotal in district council formation as well as defining intergovernmental relations and articulating the roles and responsibilities of the district executives and citizens.

Several district administrations have received training on how to govern the districts and have now been enabled to create district-specific development frameworks[9]. Participation and representation of all people in the district administration has shown that, albeit slowly, more equitable representation of women, is now emerging due to introduced guidelines. The Local Governments Gender Advocacy Strategy is being utilized to ensure inclusive and accountable governance.

Districts also have slowly started to generate investment funds through improving fiscal decentralization legislation and policies and promoting transparent tax collection and management. The government has been successfully supported to create transfer mechanisms to resource allocation to districts. Automation of revenue collections, digitalization of basic social services and streamlined financial reporting are just examples of efforts to boost own-

[8] HIPC = Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2023/Debt-relief-under-the-heavily-indebted-poor-countries-initiative-HIPC#:~:text=The percent20IMF percent20and percent20World percent20Bank,faces percent20an percent20unmanageable percent20debt percent20burden.

[9] The District Development Framework (DDF) is a 5-year development plan for districts.

source revenue generation. The creation of an enabling environment for business has contributed to increasing local revenues, with established public private dialogue forums facilitating partnerships on service delivery.

As Somalia is facing rapid urbanization, the program focused on strengthening the institutional capacity for urban planning, local public finance management systems, and the implementation of urban infrastructure projects. JPLG III has provided support to the development of necessary urban policies, urban land management laws, regulatory frameworks, and bylaws to support coordinated and guided city extension plans. City visioning exercises were supported in Mogadishu and Hargeisa to bring representatives of the various segments of the community to envision the future of their cities. The program supported translating the city visioning to some examples such as the creation of public parks in Mogadishu and Hargeisa, being the first of their kind in Somalia.

JPLG also rendered support upstream to both Federal Member States and the Federal Government by facilitating the creation of several major Federal and State legislations and regulations. These legislations and regulations helped serving the increasing Somalia owned investments in local infrastructures.

Section 3: Implementation progress by outcome

Progress towards outcomes

OUTCOME 1: POLICY, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE FINALIZED

Introduction

Under this outcome, significant progress was registered on decentralization of governance policies, legislation, and dialogue procedures. Significant achievements were registered in Somaliland and Puntland, and some modest achievements recorded in the new Federal Member States. Sectors where this was achieved were mainly in urban and land administration; health, education, and water sector management; roads and transport infrastructure management; fiscal and public finance management; and district and municipal governance policies and legislation, including the necessary knowledge and research capabilities.

OUTPUT 1.1: POLICIES, LAWS, AND STRATEGIES FOR DECENTRALIZATION ARE DRAFTED TO CLARIFY THE DIVISION OF FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG CENTRAL/FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

A. Urbanization and land administration

Roadmap on national urban policy and land policy

To address the challenges associated with urbanization and land administration, JPLG worked with the Federal Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Reconstruction to standardize urban planning processes in Somalia through the creation of governing policies and regulations. In addition, the **urbanization and land administration roadmap** was endorsed in BRA, laying the groundwork for a full-fledged policy. The roadmap also created the guiding framework for a wide range of instruments, strategies, and tools pertinent to urban planning processes and land administration at the state and district levels.

Urban land management laws and policies

Land issues are a matter of national importance with significant implications for security and the economy in a post-conflict and fragile environment, and Somalia is no exception. JPLG collaborated with the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport to establish a policy instrument aimed at improving land administration. Through a bottom-up, multi-round consultative and consensus-based approach involving all relevant stakeholders, including local communities, district authorities, the private sector, and other ministries, Puntland's first Urban Land Management Law was drafted. The law was then approved by the Council of Ministers and ultimately promulgated by the State President in January 2020.

Figure 1: Puntland President introducing the Land Conference, Garowe

This law delineates clear guidelines for the governance and management of urban lands in Puntland, and positively impacts spatial growth, stability, and equitable resource distribution. It promotes orderly urban development, access to public spaces, housing, and improved land rights and tenure, while also safeguarding forests, natural features, and agricultural areas. In addition, the law regulates that of any land to be developed 30% must be allocated for public space, such as educational and health facilities, markets, and commercial centers.

In June 2021, JPLG supported a land conference in Puntland, to gain support for an improved urban land management system. Following the conference an extensive outreach to the main districts of Puntland was designed to bring awareness about the law and oriented local government leaders and municipal staff to implement on local levels.

B. Health, Education and Household Water

Adoption of the Sectoral Decentralization Policy and Sectoral Strategic Plans in Health, Education and Water

JPLG III has made significant strides in consolidating policies, laws, and strategies for health, education and water decentralization, enabling local governments to anticipate the timing and amount of fund transfers for the first time in over 30 years. The commitment to decentralization at higher policy making levels has been further advanced, fostering partnerships and collaboration between different tiers of government.

Figure 2: Education decentralization forum, Hargeisa

The decentralization policy reviews in Somaliland and Puntland involved all government and JPLG stakeholders. These reviews encompassed examining achievements and challenges of the concluded decentralization *policies*,

deliberating on policy directions, and strategizing future milestones. Revised decentralization policies have, for the first time, institutionalized the decentralization of basic services to local governments in Somaliland and Puntland.

In line with these policy deliberations, JPLG supported the review of **education** and **health sector decentralization** *strategic plans* in Somaliland and Puntland, facilitating the operationalization and acceleration of decentralization reform processes. An important achievement was the official transfer of the management and development of primary education to local governments in Somaliland, starting with Hargeisa, Berbera, and Gebiley. Additionally, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance agreed to directly transfer the primary education budget to districts while retaining overall policy, technical guidance, and quality assurance responsibilities, ensuring the efficient and sustainable allocation based on local needs.

The Puntland Water Policy was revised to align with the Puntland Decentralization Policy and pave the way for comprehensive water sector decentralization in the future. An operational manual for guiding the Social Delivery Mechanisms (SDM) implementation in Somaliland and Puntland was also developed to ensure uniform implementation of decentralized service delivery models across all districts. In the new FMS, JPLG facilitated district-level sector decentralization dialogue forums, marking a crucial step towards devolved basic services. These forums generated awareness and demand for sectoral decentralization reform processes, deliberated obstacles hindering decentralization, and help clarified the roles and responsibilities of national, sub-national, and local authorities in the decentralization process.

C. Road sector

The roads sector decentralization strategy

In Somaliland and Puntland, the road sector decentralization strategy was launched that included representatives from districts, the private sector, and the government. The road sector decentralization strategy now includes the roles and responsibilities of the state and local government, the roads classification, the institutional set-up and functions of various institutions, and the policies and regulations governing decentralized functions. In addition, road maintenance is also decentralized, and districts are required to allocate funds for this purpose from the revenues collected. Bigger districts in Puntland such as Bosaso, Garowe, Galkayo, and Qardho now allocate around 10-15 percent of their annual budget for road maintenance. In Somaliland on the other hand, the districts are required to allocate 5 percent of their budgets to road maintenance, including the districts that received the LDF financing.

Contractor Registration Act

With the assistance of JPLG, the ministry of Public Works, Housing and Transport in Puntland developed the **contractor registration act,** to standardize contractor registration, standards, and regulations. Its purpose also is to protect citizens, enterprises and public institutions against unskilled contractors and regulate safety standards.

D. Fiscal decentralization

JPLG supported the fiscal decentralization in Somaliland, Puntland, and FMS. The **Law No. 23/2019 on Local Government for Regions and Districts Administration** in Somaliland was revised through JPLG's facilitation**.** The revised Law No. 23, and in particular Articles 88 and 89, now regulates fiscal decentralization and the establishment of a transfer mechanism. This regulation instated by the law also directs and instructs the government of Somaliland to transfer funds from the state budget to local governments.

JPLG supported the Puntland government to develop **the Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfer regulations**, which, when active, will introduce a transparent and predictable transfer mechanism, and a formula-based resource distribution process. With the financial and technical assistance of JPLG, Somaliland and Puntland have also

developed **Fiscal Decentralization Strategy documents and Fiscal Decentralization Action Plans**. In 2022, JPLG provided financial and technical assistance to develop the fiscal decentralization options paper for FMS's. This Options paper sets the principles of fiscal decentralization and policy options to **strengthen Somalia's fiscal federal system** and, thus, its overall system of governance.

E. Local Government Decentralization

Decentralization Policies

The programme facilitated the following essential policy documents. These were the Somaliland and Puntland **decentralization policies and roadmaps for 2023 till 2030** for guiding efficiently decentralized service delivery, fiscal transfer and interaction between different levels of government. The **Federal / National Decentralization Strategy and Decentralization option papers** for the 4 new Federal Member States (FMS) were developed and are helping to shape the decentralization landscape including revenue allocation and resource mobilization as well as promote local economic development and participatory planning and service delivery.

Local Government Laws

Local Government Laws have been developed and reviewed for 6 states (Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Puntland, Somaliland, and Southwest). These laws have been instrumental in facilitating local elections, defining roles and responsibilities of councils, intergovernmental relations, decentralized service delivery, fiscal allocations, increasing accountability and contributing to peacebuilding. At the Federal Government level, the Wadajir Framework, the first national strategy on district council formation (DCF) was developed and adopted and has led to a greater coherence on District Council Formation, and greater accountability. The Wadajir Framework at the time of this report has been under review.

Local Government Institutes

JPLG supported the development of the Local Government Institute (LGI) Act for the Federal Government of Somalia (FGoS) and this act now guide the operationalization of LGI's at the Federal and member states levels.

Local Governments Systems and Tools - Training Modules

Innovative systems and tools have been developed and adopted to enable local governments to perform their functions in an effective, efficient, transparent and accountable manner. **Over 50 training modules have been developed** and used to train local government staff to improve service delivery.

Champions of Local Governance and Decentralization: Inter-ministerial Committees on Local Governance

To ensure coherence, complementarity, and non-duplication of efforts, JPLG invested heavily in **coordination mechanisms** that brought together stakeholders on a regular basis, to review the needs, opportunities and threats, interventions, and areas of synergies. These mechanisms helped to ensure the efficient use of scarce resources. One of the coordination mechanisms that has influenced the decentralization discourse was the creation of the Champions' Offices at the President's and / or Vice President's offices. The champions of local governance and decentralization advanced the local governance and decentralization agenda through regularizing dialogue forums and inter-ministerial meetings that enhanced collaboration, knowledge sharing and understanding of roles and responsibilities of each level of government in the decentralization agenda. The champion offices have also been instrumental in spearheading the government led expansion strategy to areas that were only accessible to the government.

Inaccessible districts, in Puntland and Somaliland have eventually benefited from JPLG developed systems and technical assistance, further increasing the programme's reach and impact. In addition, **joint monitoring missions** have fostered a participatory approach that has allowed citizens to be part of the decision-making process through regular community meetings, in selection of community projects, and in setting up of monitoring by communities. The coordination mechanisms have contributed to building trust and strengthening collaboration among the different levels of government.

OUTPUT 1.2 NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL MECHANISMS ARE ESTABLISHED AND STRENGTHENED THAT LEAD DIALOGUE ON POLICIES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK RELATED TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization Technical Working Group Forums for Health, Education and Water

The establishment of Technical Working Group (TWG) Forums on decentralization and local governance became an institutionalized practice in Somaliland and Puntland, thus ensuring their continuity. In JPLG III, these TWG's were initiated in the new Federal Member States (FMS) including Galmudug, Southwest, and Jubaland. They advance the aim of JPLG III to clarify roles and responsibilities among key actors and, at the same time, instill regular communication, and long-term collaboration to devolve functions. TWG members included the mayors, sector ministries' director generals, Vice Presidents' Offices in Somaliland and Puntland, and other technical teams from line ministries and target districts.

The TWG in Somaliland and Puntland played a pivotal role in reviewing the decentralization policies and subsequently adopting the health and education sector decentralization strategies. Furthermore, with the TWG support, Somaliland's Ministry of Education achieved full decentralization, while Puntland's Ministries of Education and Health handed over the management of 31 schools and 20 health centers to districts (Garowe, Bosaso, Qardho, and Galkayo). This was another important milestone towards the realization of fully functioning local governments and decentralized service delivery in Somaliland and Puntland, enabling successful scale-up and institutionalization of decentralized Service Delivery Mechanisms (SDM) as well as a gradual exit from mature districts.

The outcomes in Somaliland and Puntland allow to draw lessons learned for decentralization in the new FMSs. In JPLG III, FMS officials benefited from Puntland experience through learning and exchange visits facilitated by JPLG which contributed to successful rollout of the decentralized Service Delivery Mechanisms to the FMS specifically Southwest and BRA.

Figure 3: Health facility rehabilitation in Berbera, monitored by TWG

OUTCOME 2: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DELIVER EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES, PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE.

Introduction

Under this outcome, five outputs reflect the results achieved during phase III. In Puntland and Somaliland districts reached a stage of organizational maturity and were increasingly generating sufficient funds and their need for external support was reducing. In the FMS's the selected districts presented an erratic state, and only limited funds were raised. Some did progress more than others. Also under this outcome progress was recorded on the inclusion of women and the voices of children. Large investments were made to institutionalize policies, regulations, strategies, and legislations. Progress was also recorded in urban development support, local governance knowledge support and strengthening the fiscal basis for local governance.

The quantitative data presented here are originating from data collected and reported to the State Ministries and JPLG UN agencies and have been reported also in annual agency reports.

OUTPUT 2.1 STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS FOR GOOD LOCAL GOVERNANCE, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING ARE FUNCTIONAL.

District Participatory Planning (District Development Frameworks)

While JPLG I and II concentrated on institutionalizing local governments, JPLG III broadened its focus to promote responsive and inclusive local governance to enhance the quality of governance. JPLG III supported the development process of 32 District Development Frameworks (DDF) which outline community development priorities for the next five years (2023-2027). The DDF is an important mechanism to ensure local development is informed by the priorities and needs of their citizens.

In the process, community and children's consultations have informed 32 District Development Frameworks (DDF) across Somalia (6 districts in the new FMS, 11 districts in Puntland and 15 districts in Somaliland) for the period 2023-2027. These are the second round of DDFs for most districts in Puntland and Somaliland and the first one for the new FMSs. This constitutes a milestone of participatory work planning and budgeting. Empowering communities through participation fosters ownership, as citizens identify priorities and build a stronger sense of community. The DDFs are the districts blueprint for development for the next five years and multiple stakeholders in various sectors use them to fund development projects.

In the lead up to the community consultation process, JPLG trained 315 district-level facilitators, 63 percent female, (236 in Somaliland, 54 in Puntland and 25 in the new FMS) to facilitate broad-based community consultations across the 32 districts. The trained facilitators will provide the skills beyond the DDF process and can be used as a pool of facilitators for participatory planning in various districts in the future, thereby ensuring a lasting impact.

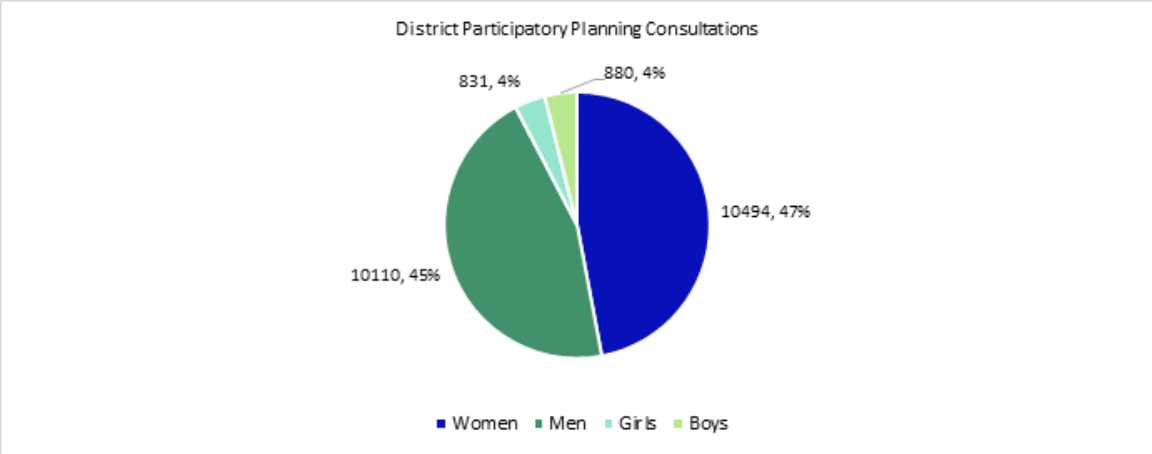


Table 1: DDF community consultation participants disaggregated in Gender and Age across Somalia

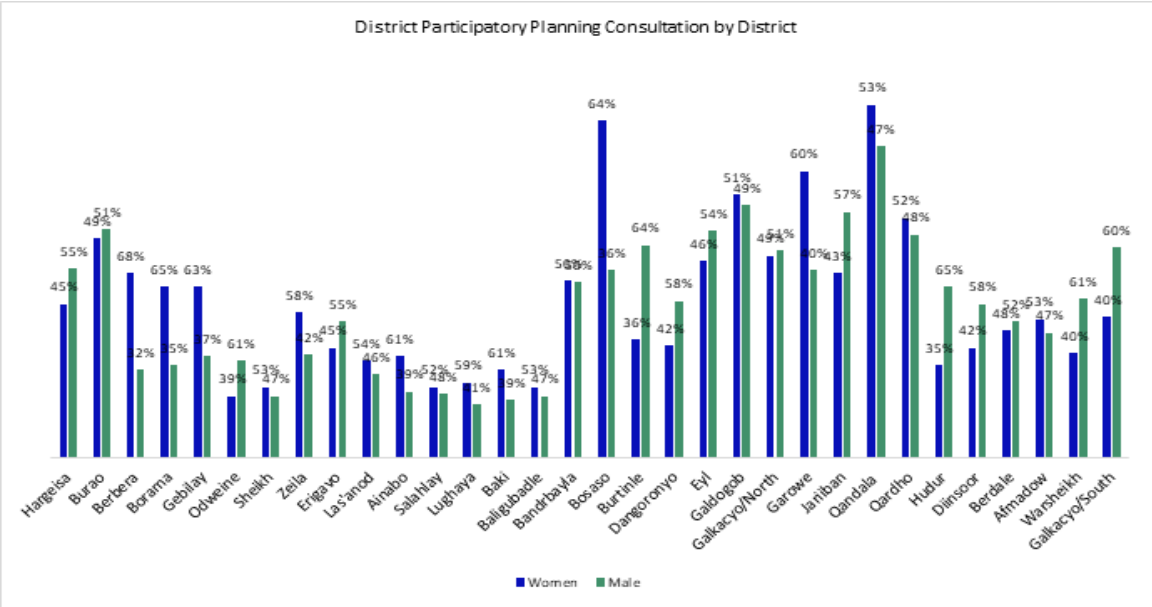


Table 2: DDF community consultation participants per District, gender-disaggregated

Achieving tangible results in addressing gender and social inclusion has been a challenge for JPLG for several reasons, including deeply entrenched social norms, often beyond the control of JPLG. Despite these challenges, JPLG recognized the DDF as an opportunity to mainstream gender and social inclusion. In 2021 and 2022, JPLG collaborated with MoIFAR and MOIs in Somaliland and Puntland, and LGIs to conduct a Training of Trainers (TOT) on "Inclusive Local Governance", focusing on integrating child rights, and gender-integrative and child-sensitive consultation tools to ensure more inclusive community consultations. Emphasis was placed on increasing the number of female trainers to ensure meaningful participation of women in consultations. Additionally, gender and inclusion checklists were developed and utilized by JPLG agencies as a tool to mainstream gender and inclusion in the DDF process. Following its positive assessment, the checklist now can be expanded to other local governance processes as an accountability tool for gender mainstreaming. As another small step forward, in collaboration with the youth NGO "Daami Youth Development Organization (DYDO)", JPLG III organized a series of consultation with minority groups in seven districts in Somaliland.

Figure 4: Community in Diinsor discussing district priorities (left), and children presenting their vision for Diinsor district

As a result of deliberate efforts, the number of women, youth and minority groups participating in community consultation have significantly increased, although with significant variations across states and districts. In the end, it is vital that needs and priorities of all segments of society find their way in annual plans and, perhaps even more important, in budgets. Recognizing that social and gender inclusion is intertwined with persistent structural barriers to social inclusion and gender representation, including evolving social norms, underscores the importance of sustained efforts over time.

Children's Inclusion in the District Development Planning

A milestone in JPLG III was the first-ever consultation of children, underscoring the importance of their involvement in the local governance process to tailor policies and projects to their needs. In Somaliland, Puntland, BRA and the new FMS; 1,711 children (939 in Somaliland, 582 in Puntland, and 190 in the new FMS) in all districts were reached and engaged in dedicated sessions for children utilizing interactive and participative child-friendly tools. Across member states and districts, 51 percent of children were girls, and 99 children from a vulnerable background (IDP, out-of-school children, minority groups, children with disabilities). Special attention was given to security and ethical considerations like safe transportation, secure venues and obtaining guardians' consent before the consultations. Engaging with children fosters a commitment to inclusive and participatory local governance in upcoming generations and leaders.

"We are happy to be consulted about our future, how we view our city and what we want to reach in the next five years. This inspires me, and it is the first time I can participate in a consultation (...)."

Amina, 15, during a consultation in Galkayo

Review of Feasibility Study Tools/Guidelines

In Puntland, Somaliland and Mogadishu Municipality, the programme supported the review and updating of the feasibility study guidelines and tools. The objective being updating the tools in line with best practices regarding technical, social, economic and environmental assessment aspects.

Review of Business Registration Processes & Frameworks

Business registration processes have been established in selected districts in Somaliland thus promoting an enabling environment for businesses. In April 2020, 4 districts, Berbera, Borama, Gabiley and Hargeisa assessed the registration processes, established guidelines and the related license billing process which support revenue collection.

In Puntland, a business registration framework for application, approval, conditions, enforcement, tariffs, and falsifications were developed. This has facilitated the implementation of reforms and building of the regulatory environment for business registration and classification. It has reduced complexity of business registration and provided common principles to which all districts may refer while devising their governance structure. In addition, the business registration guidelines were revised for alignment with the reforms on revenue collection in districts. Review of business registration procedures to enhance and harmonize the business registration processes in Galdogob and Burtinle districts under the government lead expansion programme was supported.

Modernizing Systems and Structures of Federal Member States on Infrastructure development

JPLG supported an institutional assessment of the state ministry and district of public works units in South West, Hirashabelle, Galmudug and Jubaland that led to updated competency frameworks and terms of reference after a review of the existing structure and system. This has resulted in increased provision of equitable, accessible, and affordable infrastructure services. It also supported the establishment of local governance structures in the newly recovered districts.

The established structures now provide guidance on recruitment and capacity building within the public works units and have been established in 15 districts of the Federal Member States. The districts public works units' functions, organograms and competency frameworks also were made: in South West State 6 districts (Hudur, Dinsor, Bardale, Wajid, Barawe Baidoa) Galmudug State 3 districts (Addado, Galkacyo and Dhusamareb), HiraShabelle State 3 districts (Warsheikh, Beletweyn, Jowhar) and Jubaland State 2 districts (Kismanyo and Afmadow).

Local Government Procurement Federal Member States

Procurement is a core function in the delivery of services and uses public resources in a transparent and accountable manner and seeks value for money of public funds. Local government procurement guidelines have been developed for Federal Member States of South West, Galmudug, Jubaland and Hirshabelle. The guidelines developed are aligned to national procurement laws. Also the guidelines, structures and competency frameworks for local government procurement were made. This resulted in the procurement of 27 projects for 15 districts in a transparent

and accountable process in South West, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Galmudug and Mogadishu Municipality and annual procurement plans were established.

In Puntland, to ensure compliance in procurement processes, bid opening supervision was conducted. This is aimed at ensuring adherence as well as identifying challenges and capacity gaps in the process. The team was comprised of officials from the ministry of interior, Puntland tender board and the auditor general's office. The bid opening ceremony was attended by representatives from bidding companies, district executive secretary, all members of district procurement committee, officers, and technical advisors. In Puntland the local government procurement and Business Registration guidelines were translated to Somali.

Impact of Local Government Procurement Systems

Local government procurement is an important aspect of good governance and service delivery. Procurement not only enhances transparency and accountability in the use of public resources but also supports efficiency and mitigates risks such as corruption.

The local governments have adopted and applied the established procurement guidelines for all the internal and external resources received beyond the programme. This has ensured efficiency, improved service delivery and increased community confidence in the local government.

- ✓ *Garowe District funds from the World Bank Somali urban resilience project for construction of 4.5 million Galbool bridge and Gambool road. Additional for the construction of the 1.3 KM Necsom road and rehabilitation of 1.8 KM of the 30th street funded by government and community respectively.*
- ✓ *Addado District funds from the NIS foundation for construction of primary school and courthouse*
- ✓ *South Galkacyo District funds from the Stabilisation Fund for construction of 100 houses and 9 km gravel road link Oshaco airport supported by NIS Foundation*
- ✓ *Dhusamareb District funds from NIS Foundation construction of a commercial market and rehabilitation of 2.5km gravel road supported by NIS foundation.*
- ✓ *Mogadishu Municipality procurement of a cold chain funds funded by UNICEF*

With the improved transparency in the local government procurement, women owned businesses are now bidding for local government tenders in the new federal member states. ***In Southwest state since the start of the local development fund, 8 women contractors bid for related tenders. In Somaliland and Puntland, 2 women contractors have successfully bid and won local development fund tenders.***

5: Impact of Local Government Procurement System

Institutionalization of Procurement Audits

The programme has supported the institutionalizing of procurement audits. The delivery of public goods and services by local government depends largely on the transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency of the procurement function. The capacities on procurement compliance audits for internal audit staff in Garowe, Galkacayo, Gardo, Bosaso, Jarriban, Eyl and Badar-bayla districts in have been strengthened in Puntland and Burao, Berbera, Sheikh, Odweine, Hargeisa, Gebiley, Zaylac and Borama districts in Somaliland.

In Somaliland procurement audit assessments were conducted in Burao, Berbera, Sheikh, Odweine, Hargeisa, Gebiley, Zaylac and Borama. This was conducted by officials from the ministry of interior and the accountant general office. The assessments evaluated the district procurement office on compliance regarding established

structure and processes as per procurement guidelines. The assessments enforced compliance and enhanced accountability and transparency in the procurement.

Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender in Infrastructure Investments

The programme has supported the development of guidelines for mainstreaming gender, age and disability in infrastructure investments. These provide a step-by-step guide to the process of mainstreaming gender, age and disability in the design and implementation of infrastructure investments projects.

Introduction of e-business registration and e-procurement

An assessment identified options for the development and the implementation of an e-procurement system: to develop an e-procurement platform for local government, under the Ministry of Interior or to develop a national or state level e-procurement platform, hosted by the Ministry of Finance or Public Procurement Authority or any other public entity with hosting capacity.

The assessment of the business registration and licensing in Somaliland, Puntland Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South West and Jubbaland States of Somalia was conducted and the following options for the development and implementation of e-business registration system were identified:

Option 1: Use a private sector entity to provide registration services, upgraded to a web-based system.

Option 2: Use the Ministry of Trade systems, with an interface for LGs to access information on businesses located in their areas.

Option 3: Develop a separate platform for LGs, hosted by the Ministry of Interior or any other public entity with hosting capacity.

Review/Validation of Building Control Standards & Construction Permits

The programme supported the development of the first building control standards in Somaliland and Puntland. The building control regulations are a comprehensive set of building control standards and principles applied to all new building and construction projects. These are important in regulating and governing the building and construction industry.

National Experts and Young Graduates (YG)

The programme deployed hundreds of local consultants and young graduates to support districts and ministries in fulfilling their mandates. A number of these consultants and young graduates have been absorbed in the civil service at all levels of government thereby, enhancing capacity retention by government.

OUTPUT 2.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTES (LGIS) ARE DELIVERING STANDARDIZED CURRICULUM ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE.

Capacity building through continuous training

Continuous training for elected leaders is crucial element for an effective performance in local governance. JPLG III has introduced concepts and practices of management, policymaking, decision-making, financing, negotiation,

conflict resolution, institution-building, enabling, communication and facilitation as well gender mainstreaming in all local government functions to elected representatives.

A training impact assessment by the ministries of interior of Somaliland and Puntland found the training courses delivered by JPLG extremely useful, relevant, and fit for purpose. The assessment covered 50 council and district members and recognized the importance of the training materials along with several specific recommendations. It was also recommended to empower institutions as Local Government Institutes to use and sustain trainings as listed above. Local trainers delivered training after every election cycle with periodic reviews in Somaliland, BRA, FMS and Puntland, and a total 718 (566 m, 152 f) trainers were trained.

Subsequently, JPLG III trained 5,397 members (33 percent female) representing local government and sector officials and civil society and grassroots community committees for education, health, and water, thereby reinforcing their understanding, knowledge, and skills in several topics ranging from inclusive and participatory district planning, civic education and engagement in local governance, women, and youth participation in local government to decentralized service delivery and social accountability mechanisms.

Mentorship and coaching which were delivered in partnership with Local Government Institute in Somaliland, and Ministries of Interior experts in Puntland and the FMS immensely contributed to the professionalization of local government and sector officials.

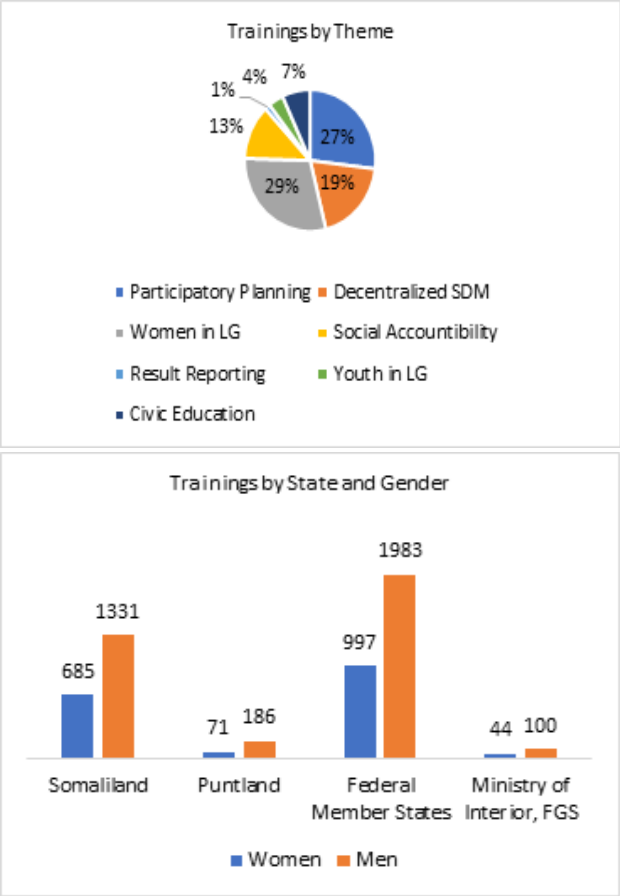


Figure 6: Capacity Development Trainings by Theme (left), and by participants, disaggregated by state and gender (right)

The training that was followed by the elected officials and civil servants ultimately contributed to the District Development Frameworks for 32 districts, and the successfully implemented 734 SDM interventions in 19 districts and expanding civic education reach to 101,313 persons. Exchanges between the FMS officials and Puntland officials were encouraging.

Local government association and Somalia Mayors Forum – a vehicle for representative and accountable local governance

The term local governance goes beyond local governments as institutions: it includes civil society, private sector, the media, and professional associations. To deepen this understanding and operationalize such associations, JPLG supported the reviving of local government associations in Somaliland and Puntland. The Association of Local Government Authorities of Somaliland known as ALGASL existed since 2006 only in name, but through JPLG it became active again. Also the Puntland Association of Local Government Authorities, ALGAPL, came into existence. JPLG supported their institutionalization, developing long to short-term strategic objectives, constitutions, standing order procedures, fund raising mechanisms and community engagement and outreach policies.

The local government associations in Somaliland now raises funds amounting to USD 100,000 per annum from member districts to perform its functions - advocacy, lobbying, friendly legislation, knowledge management, capacity building and promoting effective local governance. This makes the association self-sufficient and capable of delivering its mandated tasks.

In Puntland, the association is now assuming an increasing role on all local governance related functions from policy legislation to elections and representations. It has also made serious efforts in raising sufficient subscription fees internally. While much progress has been made, serious buy-in from stakeholders still needs to be ironed out. However, both associations play pivotal role in furthering local governance, decentralizing services and ensuring local governments voices are heard.

Figure 7: Mayors Forum in Mogadishu

For the Federal Member States, JPLG collaborated with the Federal Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation in establishing a mayors' forum to serve as a platform for ideas and discussions for city leaders. The first ever mayor's forum for Somalia, with the support of JPLG was held in Kigali, Rwanda in February 2022. Fourty (40) mayors, Director Generals, and other high-ranking government officials from the FMSs, Puntland, and BRA attended the Kigali Mayors' Forum to witness experiences, sharing and study tours

As a follow up the programme organized a second Mayors' Forum in Mogadishu in May 2023. This forum brought 67 representatives (58 male and 9 female) from various federal government entities and regions, including 19 mayors and district commissionaires, the gathering discussed critical topics in local and urban governance. This

event marked a significant milestone in Somali local governance history, with the largest gathering of mayors ever happening inside the country.

Procurement competencies and contract management

Local government procurement competencies have been enhanced for 89 staff in SouthWest, Jubaland, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle, resulting in improved transparency and accountability in 15 districts. Somaliland conducted a workshop to improve procurement knowledge for 30 participants, covering procurement needs, planning, audit, methods, and ethical codes. The Municipality of Mogadishu provided contract management training for 17 staff to ensure quality, timely project delivery. Business registration processes were streamlined in Baidoa, Adado, Kismayo, Jowhar, and Mogadishu, emphasizing transparency for an enabling business environment.

Technical skills for managing public infrastructure were enhanced in 35 districts across 6 federal states, including road network planning, contract management, tender documents, feasibility studies, materials testing, and labor-based technologies. In Puntland, 30 graduates were trained to support infrastructure service delivery. A workshop in Somaliland focused on enhancing capacities in building control regulations for local government staff and contractors.

OUTPUT 2.3 FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE STRENGTHENED AND EXPANDED FOR SERVICE DELIVERY AND LOCAL INVESTMENT.

Public infrastructure investment through LDFs contributes to the fiscal basis

Local Governments learned to plan, budget, procure, and contract while implementing infrastructure projects. Almost US$ 19 million was invested through the Local Development Funds to create 200 infrastructure projects between 2018 and 2023. This followed a protocol of systematic and meticulous planning, budgeting, procurement, and contracting. Two examples illustrate the types of investments that were financed through the LDF's. The revenue offices in Mogadishu (below- left picture) enable now the efficient collection of revenues. The Gubadley Community Market (below right picture) enables traders to earn an income and contribute to the revenues of the Banadir region.

Building Capacity for Revenue Mobilization and management: TADAT

During the review period (2018-2022), JPLG invested significant amounts in building the capacity to mobilize revenues and strengthen administration. The following were two examples:

- **TADAT:** In 2022, JPLG supported Local Governments efforts in building capacity around efficient revenue administration. Using the IMF TADAT[10] methodology and leveraging on the IMF technical assistance, over 200 local government officials were trained on TADAT focusing on efficient revenue management and mobilization.

- **Asset Management:** Capacity was also built to improve asset management. JPLG has supported the investment of many public assets such as buildings, infrastructure, roads and bridges. For instance, the Local Development Funds supported 200 projects between 2018 and 2023. However, care and maintenance have remained substantially poor. In September 2022, JPLG, in partnership with UNDESA, trained 69 Somaliland government officials on Asset Management.

Property Tax mobilization

A GIS-based property survey was implemented to strengthen and sustain the local government property tax administration. A property valuation was examined to make local taxation fairer by revisiting tariffs. This resulted in the introduction of banding system as part of a reform process that does not only consider broadening the tax base, but also administering it within the principles of fairness and equality.

Using GIS-based technology, with spatial considerations, over 22,000 properties are now mapped, geo-referenced and interfaced in Garowe with a mobile money payment platform. Provision of property plate numbering has also been part of the property registration to lay foundations for future addressing system. With this new property registration system, property tax collection is simplified, and it offers both the district and taxpayers a real-time tax payment tracking process. This work has also helped the municipality's system for managing title deeds for new properties and tracking property sales to new owners, thereby significantly reducing land disputes as well. A similar intervention was carried out in many other districts, most recently in Baidoa in Southwest state and Gabiley in Somaliland. In Baidoa, for instance, where no property tax is collected since the fall of the former regime in early 1990's, about USD 400,000 per annum is projected to be collected from properties tax alone, a sum that is essential for maintaining peace and order and providing social services.

Automating and standardization of the financial management tools

JPLG and the World Bank supported the establishment of the Financial Management Information System. with the vision of having a unified and standardized financial management tool at all levels. This is particularly the case of Puntland and Somaliland, where the World Bank brought the software and JPLG rendered the requisite IT infrastructure and training. The financial management system contributed to accountability and transparency of the financial management processes.

Digitalizing tax collection and e-governance – digital service delivery and taxation system as an effective tax administration and service delivery mechanism

[10] Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool TADAT

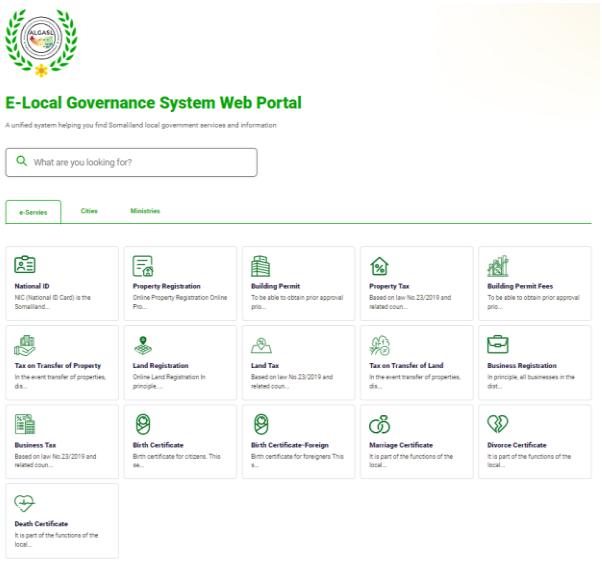


Figure 8: E-governance portal

Digitizing some of the local government functions was seen as a step forward to streamline processes, eliminate institutional dysfunction, enhance operational efficiency while strengthening accountability and transparency at subnational level. This is a new initiative that leverages technology to better administer local taxation. On the taxation front, JPLG working closely with relevant government counterparts introduced a mobile tax payment system where citizens can easily fulfil their tax obligations. Also new taxes and municipal services were digitized in Somaliland. In partnership with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MoICT), JPLG, developed and launched an innovative e-governance platform- a mobile application and web portal where locals can access and pay for local government services, taxes, fees, and charges.

This user-friendly smartphone application, available for both Android and iOS users, now serves as a hub for citizens to access and receive a wide range of municipal services, that range from applying for a National ID card to registering a property, a piece of land, and applying for a business permit, among other services. Alongside the mobile app, a comprehensive web portal offers further accessibility to these services, catering to a broader spectrum of users. To enhance the experience, each of the five districts in Somaliland, Hargeisa, Borama, Berbera, Burao, and Gabiley has been granted a dedicated website to cater to its specific needs, ensuring that residents receive customized and efficient assistance, news etc.

Local government financial management manual

Prior to 2018, the local governments of Somalia did not have proper procedures in place to manage their financial resources and demonstrate their fiscal responsibility and transparency. In conjunction with Hirshabelle, Galmudug, Jubaland, Southwest State, and Benadir Regional Administration, the programme assisted to remedy this deficiency. Local government financial management manuals were developed, translated, and validated following extensive deliberations with all stakeholders including districts, ministries of interior and finance, and other stakeholders.

"We had never received such crucial training before, and we were genuinely taught the rules and regulations governing the financial system for the local governments in the state,"

Falhado Abdalla, a participant from Kismayo Department of Finance.

In the FMS, districts with councils were empowered to establish district budgets, adopt the various forms and criteria outlined in the manual, and manage their financial operations in accordance with the terms of the policy. This is one of the first steps toward accountable district government that the programme has been pushing to establish.

Guide to local taxations.

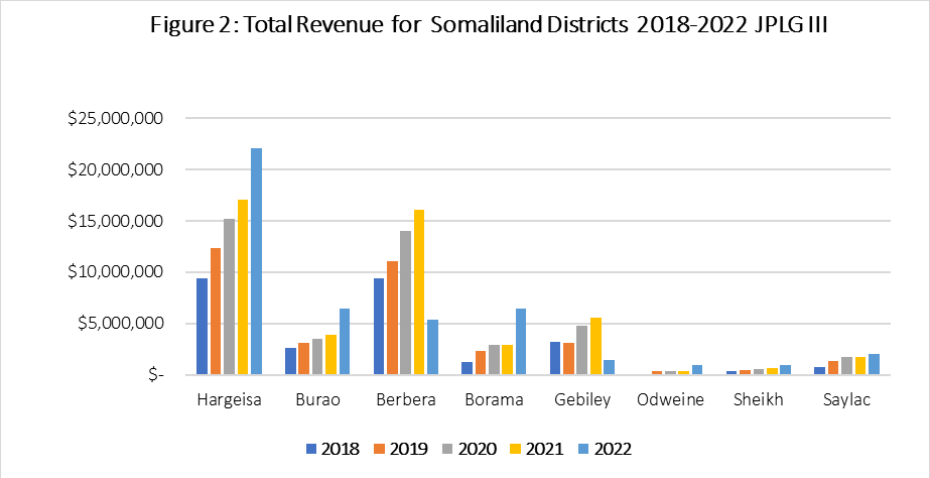
JPLG supported districts, mainly in the new federal member states in creating basic guidelines on local taxation. A training of trainers workshop was convened to build a cadre of trainers based at the State Ministries of Interior, as part of the knowledge management strategy to localize technical capacity Between 2021 to 2022, a guide to local taxation trainings was held in Jowhar, Dhusamareb, Kismayo, Baidoa, South Galkayo, Adadow, Afmadow, Hudur, Diinsoor, Wajid and Bardaale, Baraawe, Jahawar and Warsheikh with 164 participants (M: 128; F:36).

"The training equipped us with the necessary tools and skills to understand how our city can generate revenue and the types of taxes, licenses, charges and fees we can tap to improve service delivery to our citizens, "

Nimco Ali Abdi, Afmadow Tax collection office.

"The Guide to local taxation training raised the awareness and knowledge of the local tax administers on the local tax policies and frameworks and the best way to generate and improve revenue. During the training, we familiarized the guide to local taxation, and we plan to adopt and integrate into our work,"

Abdinsir Sheikh Abdirahman, a tax collector from Berdaale



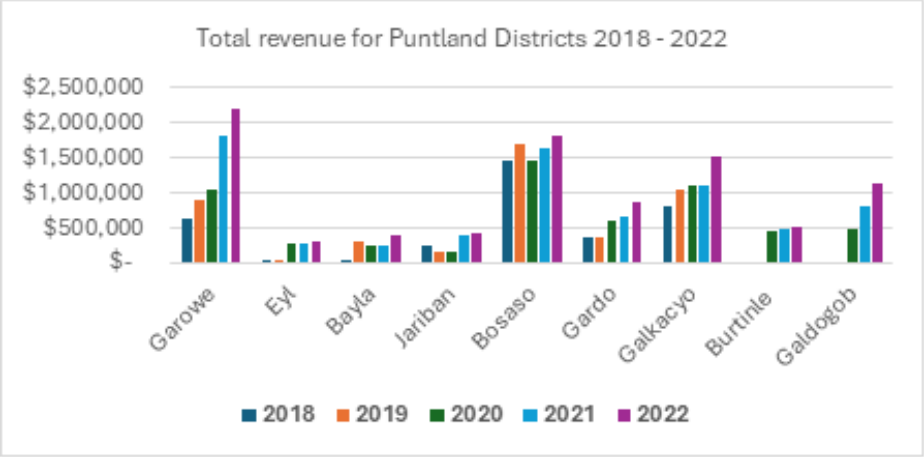


Table 3: Revenue for Puntland and Somaliland districts (FMIS)

Strengthening revenue generation capacity

Results from long-term investments in municipal finance in Puntland and Somaliland have been successful. According to a report on local government budgets, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Democratization noted that Puntland has experienced a significant increase in recorded revenue. For instance, the budget for Garowe district in 2009 was USD 95,871, but in 2019, it rose to USD 1,711,390, marking an average yearly increase of 168.5 percent. Moreover, property taxes generated only USD 10,123 in 2009, but in 2019, the district managed to collect USD 215,091, a 202 percent annual increase. This increase in revenues allowed Garowe to expand its services significantly.

Revenues raised in districts in Somaliland were raised impressively: while between 2013 to 2017, the municipal budget in Somaliland was over US$ 108 million, this same budget increased between 2017 to 2022 till US$ 199 million. Also, in Puntland revenues increased from 17 million US$ (2013–2017) till 30,5 million US$ (2018 – 2022).

This solid increase in locally raised revenues has translated in improved services delivered by the districts. As implementation of decentralization policy is ongoing in Somaliland and Puntland, and districts are piloting devolved functions, the interest and willingness of districts to take up additional responsibilities is clearly documented.

Strengthening internal audit and standardizing reporting formats

JPLG working with the ministries of interior of Somaliland and Puntland, supported the development of Internal Audit Charters, which clarifies functions, roles and responsibilities and auditing techniques of internal audit units. Internal audit units are now functional in Hargeisa, Buroa, Borama, Berbera, and Gabiley in Somaliland and Gardo, Garowe, Bosasso, Burtinle, and Galkayo in Puntland and Mogadishu.

The design and implementation of infrastructure investments

The programme has supported the design and implementation of the prioritized infrastructure investments funded with local development funds in Somaliland, Puntland, Mogadishu, and the Federal Member States. Technical assistance has been provided to the state and district public works during the project cycle (feasibility studies,

design, procurement, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation). The technical assistance regarding quality assurance was provided by the respective ministries of public works. This has ensured that the infrastructure rehabilitated or developed is up to the required technical standards. The successful implementation demonstrates the enhanced competencies of the technical staff providing support oversight and quality assurance.

The programme commenced implementation in the new Federal Member States and delivered 27 projects valued USD 2,6 M between 2019-2023. An important aspect of the infrastructure delivery was the rehabilitation of ten district council offices (Karan, Abdiaziz, Beletweyne, Warshikh, Kismanyo, Afmadow, Hudur, Dinsor, Bardale, Baidoa). This created an enabling environment for service delivery in the newly established districts.

Impact of Infrastructure Investments – Job Creation for Women

Infrastructure investments implemented have created jobs for women. This has provided access to incomes for these women who now contribute to their families' basic needs and apply the skills acquired from their different trainings. A total of 118 women have accessed jobs through the implementation of infrastructure investments the federal member states.

Figure 9: Women working in construction

OUTPUT 2.4 TARGET DISTRICTS HAVE WELL DEFINED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, PLANS AND SYSTEMS TO ACCOMMODATE RAPID URBAN GROWTH.

Citizen engagement in urban planning/visioning

JPLG supported the finalization of the **Mogadishu five-year development plan** in 2020 following a series of local consultations with communities including children living in the capital Mogadishu and consultation meetings during the finalization stage with different stakeholders (the BRA executive committee, departmental directors, district commissioners, civil society, and private sector). The plan articulates the socio-economic and infrastructure development needs of Mogadishu City and is also meant to guide the management of social and infrastructural development interventions carried out by The Banadir Regional Administration (BRA). Furthermore, the development plan has been presented to the relevant federal ministries to ensure alignment between sectoral plans and the Mogadishu City Development Plan.

Implementation of selected components of the Urban Regulator Framework (URF)

The **Urban Regulatory Framework (URF)** is the main technical guide for governing urban land and urban planning functions in Somaliland and Puntland, developed under JPLG II to promote equitable land distribution and management. Given the fragility and land administration sensitivity, JPLG and state counterparts agreed to

implement the URF in stages. The state authorities have prioritized land use planning to provide the groundwork for strategic and informed urban development. Garowe is an example in adopting standardized land use planning. The city council enforced land use planning standards and guidelines pursuant to Puntland's Urban Management Law. This law stipulates that 30 percent of any newly planned areas must be set aside for public use.

In the meantime, the program continued to provide hands-on training to five engineers from Garowe municipality and the Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Transport on land adjustment processes. Land adjustment allowed the Garowe municipality to secure 104 hectares of public land as of September 2022. Also, US$ 80,900 revenues were generated from landowners' in lieu of public land. These measures were also essential for social service provision, as these lands and revenues are now available for the construction of public schools, health facilities, police stations, neighborhood markets and public spaces. In the federal member states, where capacities to manage urban planning processes have remained marginal, JPLG and State Ministries of Public Works agreed upon the need to have a simplified version of the Urban Regulatory Framework. Consequently, an abridged version, and context-specific, regulatory framework will be developed to serve the immediate needs of the districts in FMS. A roadmap for such a fit-for purpose framework is being negotiated and finalized with the expectation of it being launched during the next phase of the programme.

Building permits

Traditionally, district authorities in Somalia have had an inconsistent practice to approve building permits. In consultation with the Urban Land Management Laws and Urban Regulatory Frameworks of Somaliland and Puntland, a building permit procedure was developed and endorsed by both the Ministry of Public Works and the district administrations. This was followed by a practical training on best practices of issuing building permits was organized for district engineers in 17 districts.

Figure 10: Puntland Ministry of Public Works receiving testing equipment.

Extension plans: Supporting guided and controlled urban growth.

Within the spirit of making cities more livable, resilient, and sustainable, in collaboration with Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Transport, JPLG supported city extension plans in eight districts in Puntland: Garowe, Gardo, Bosasso, Banderbayla, Eyl, Jarriban, Galdogob and Burtintle. The district councils played a central role in the development and implementation of the plans.

Using Urban Regulatory Framework as the main guiding document, about 228 kilometers of roads were surveyed, cleared, and opened as part of the Garowe city extension plan, promoting economic opportunities and addressing urbanization challenges. On-the-job training was provided to municipal staff and university students to localize technical knowledge for sustainability and infrastructure projects in Garowe and Bosaso. Grassroot consultations

were conducted, including engaging with village committees and traditional leaders, to gain their support. In Bosaso, spatial plan analysis, drainage assessment, and simulation exercise were carried out, along with the completion of sidewalks and tree plantations to promote non-motorized transportation. The Ministry of Public Works implemented similar city extension plans in other areas using capacities injected by JPLG, mainly financed by the government.

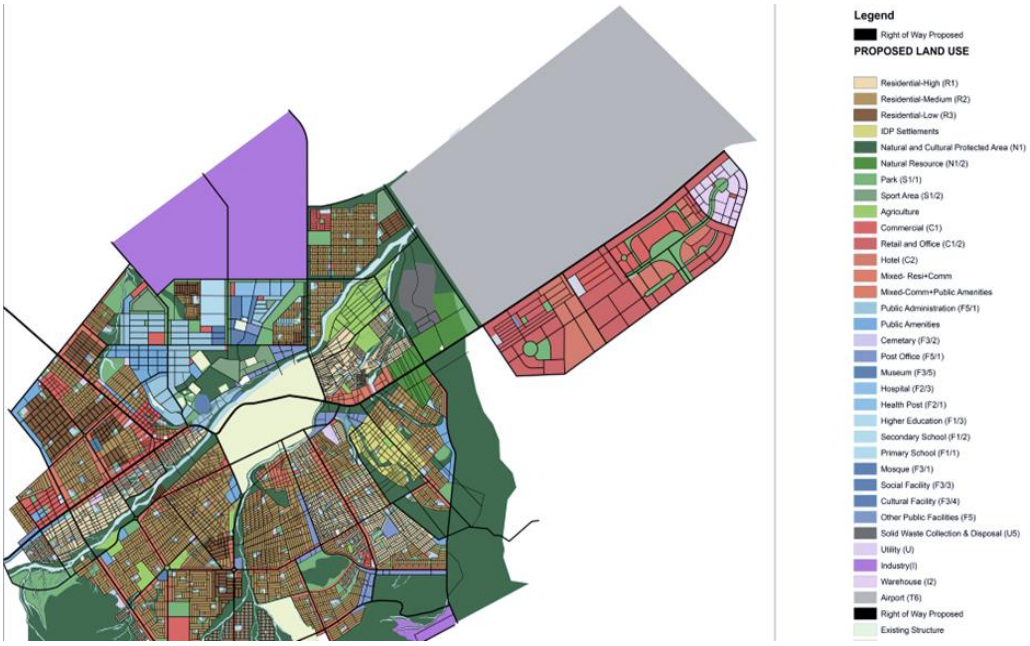


Figure 11: Bosaso City Extension planning

City visioning and Somalia's new era of public spaces.

Absence of a shared understanding and strategies for development has hindered accommodating rapid urban growth and unlocking development opportunities. JPLG supported the Hargeisa Municipality and the Benadir Regional Administration (BRA) to work on a city-wide visioning exercise involving all walks of life. In Hargeisa a vision was agreed for a "*creative, caring, child-friendly, clean, connected, climate resilient and cooperative city"* in 2040. Mogadishu in a similar fashion agreed to *"making together Mogadishu a safer, cleaner and resilient city"*. In both cities public facilities were created to illustrate this common desire.

Figure 12: Mogadishu Public Park

Efforts were also made to support Hargeisa and the Mogadishu Municipality to improve the cleanliness and sanitation of the cities. This followed an earlier intervention where municipal waste management bylaws were produced, translated into Somali and municipal staff were trained on the bylaws. In Hargeisa 150 garbage collection facilities were placed in carefully selected locations along the main roads, with the aim to enhance the municipality's capabilities to maintain clean streets and create a healthier and more aesthetically pleasing environment for residents.

Support to flood risk prone districts in Puntland.

In response to a request from Garowe municipality, JPLG, supported an exercise to **map risk-prone and hazard susceptible areas** in town. The result informed decisions to prepare the city to withstand and remain resilient to flood risks. The exercise included the opening and clearance of 2.9 km of drainage channels to protect and safeguard lives and properties. Furthermore, two natural drainage valleys located on the southern side of the town have also been demarcated as a foundation for future drainage network infrastructure in these southern neighborhoods. A flood simulation map for Garowe city was also developed with municipal engineers in a learning by doing approach to localize knowledge and sustain services. The map shows the areas of the town that are prone to flooding and illustrates the speed and flow of flood water.

Strengthening urban planning capacity at district level through peer-to-peer learning and exposures

Inter and intrastate peer to peer learning is also crucial for Somalia's infant **urban planning functions**. With this vision, JPLG supported an important peer-to-peer learning trips between the Ministries of Public Works in Puntland and the Southwest State of Somalia in 2021. The focus was on sharing information regarding urban planning initiatives being implemented in Bosaso and Garowe. This included the enactment of the Urban Land Management Law and city extension plans. This mission, consequently, inspired the Southwest Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Reconstruction to draft the current Urban Land Management Law. Additionally, 10 staff members from Jubbaland and SWS were selected to attend a training program on the principles of urban planning at the Ethiopian Management Institute. They also visited urban planning projects in Addis Ababa as part of the training, with the overarching objective of strengthening the ministries of public works of both states and learning how urban planning interventions can improve cities.

OUTPUT 2.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DELIVER IMPROVED SERVICES IN COLLABORATION WITH CENTRAL, FEDERAL, STATE GOVERNMENTS AND NON-STATE ACTORS

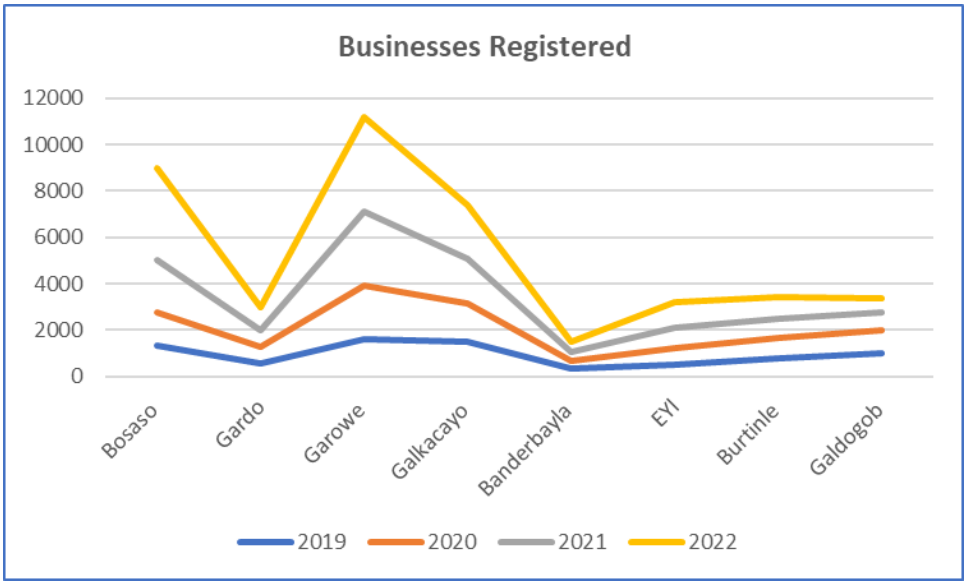
Public Private Dialogue structure and framework, and dialogues

The programme supported the development and establishment of a structure and framework for effective public private dialogue. The Sub-national PPD Structure was presented and approved by the inter-ministerial committee of Federal Member States and followed by Public Private Dialogues Forums being established in Somalia, Puntland, and the Federal Member States in the south. The forums brought together the members of the business communities and the local government to discuss the operating and regulatory environment of businesses. In 2021, the first round of Public Public-Private Dialogues in 8 Districts in federal member states and Mogadishu Municipality was done. A total of 12 dialogues forums (2022: 3 in South Galkayo, Baidoa and Beletweyn; 2021; 4 in Dhusamareb, Hudur, Jowhar and Kismanyo; 5 in Baidoa, Adado, Afmadow, Warsheikh and Mogadishu were conducted. A total of 490 business owners have participated of which 203 were women. These provided a platform to discuss business challenges, how local government can create an enabling environment for the business and revenues for better services delivery.

In Puntland public private dialogue forums provided a platform for businesses and local government to engage The dialogue forums were conducted in Burtinle, Galdogob, Galkayo, Jariban, Eyl, Bandar-bayla, Gardo, Bosaso and Garowe districts.

Promoting engagement of Small Business in Procurement

Puntland and Mogadishu Municipality conducted awareness campaigns on local government procurement opportunities for small businesses via electronic media. The objective was to encourage and educate the local small, medium enterprises on how to bid for local government tenders thus enhancing inclusivity. There has been an increase in the number of small and medium enterprises bidding for micro value contracts which districts advertise. This has been attributed to awareness campaigns. There has however been noted a need to further provide support on the procurement tendering processes.



13: Business Registration in Puntland

In Puntland, there is a consistent increase in the number of women-owned businesses that are registered, thus demonstrating the confidence in the local governments' registration process and service delivery.

District	2019	2020	2021	2022
Bosaso	1331	1412	2265	3976
Female owners	399	424	680	1193
Male owners	932	988	1586	2783
Gardo	590	678	706	1029
Female owners	100	115	120	175
Male owners	490	563	586	854
Garowe	1603	2115	2314	2725
Female owners	497	656	717	845
Male owners	1106	1459	1597	1880
Galkacayo	1474	1680	1905	2345
Female owners	501	571	648	797
Male owners	943	1075	1219	1501
Banderbayla	325	361	383	445
Female owners	150	166	176	205
Male owners	176	195	207	240
EYl	342	401	540	613
Female owners	89	104	140	159
Male owners	253	297	400	454
Jariiban	290	315	345	390
Female owners	67	72	79	90
Male owners	223	243	266	300

Table 4: Number of new businesses registered.

Mogadishu Municipality also developed a communication action plan for business licensing and registration. Hargeisa municipality has approved the duration between application and approval for a business license to a maximum of 6 working days. This has encouraged formalization of businesses especially for women. The Somaliland Chambers of Commerce confirmed 10 percent of its business membership now are women. Regular awareness campaigns on the importance of business registration for districts business operators have been conducted.

Support the districts to issue by-laws on business licensing.

In Puntland, by-laws on business licensing have been adopted. These have promoted an enabling environment for businesses and the by-laws ensure the compliance with business registration. They comprise of 15 articles covering the key functions of business registration and have been published and distributed to ensure compliance.

In Somaliland the programme has supported districts to develop by laws for business registration. It is within the remit of local government to regulate businesses operating within their localities. The by- laws define the process of granting licenses and regulating businesses in the districts and ensure harmonization of the same across all districts. These have been finalized and validated by the mayors.

In Puntland, a business registration framework was developed. This has facilitated implementation of reforms and building of the regulatory environment for business registration and classification. It has also reduced the complexity of business registration and provided common principles to which all districts may refer while devising their governance structure. In addition, the business registration guidelines were revised for alignment with the recent reforms on revenue collection in districts. In Mogadishu, the business registration manual was revised and updated in line with revenue collection procedures and translated to Somali.

To inform the economic profiles of the district development frameworks the programme conducted local economic assessments in Puntland, Somaliland, and the Federal Member States in the south. In Puntland, the local economic assessments were conducted in 11 districts, 14 districts in Somaliland and 7 districts (Addado,South Galkacyo, Afmadow, Warsheikh, Hudur, Dinsor, Berdale) in the south. These are part of district development plans and guide on selection and prioritization of local economic development interventions that provide service delivery.

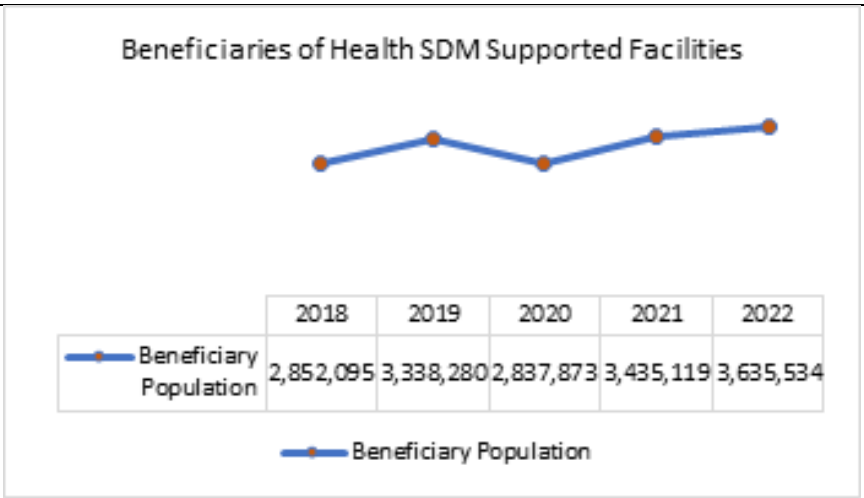
Local Government-led Decentralized Service Delivery

JPLG focused on adopting sector decentralization strategies and operational guidelines to advance the transfer of basic service delivery to local governments. In this regard, Somaliland and Puntland developed sector decentralization strategies in education, water, and health in line with decentralization policies and operational procedures. These strategies guide the implementation of devolved functions to local governments in a phased approach towards decentralization of basic services. The process considers the districts' financial and technical capacities to ensure smooth and gradual transfer of all functions to local governments. The transfer goes hand in hand with the capacity-building, local revenue enhancement and improving inter-government fiscal transfers, thereby sustaining the delivery of decentralized services and the overall decentralization reforms. Currently, the devolved functions include routine public school, health, and water facility maintenance, periodic construction, rehabilitation and extension of schools and health facilities, payment of operational costs and salary top-ups, promotion of social awareness and mobilization, establishment of public-private partnerships in water and monitoring of basic service delivery to the communities.

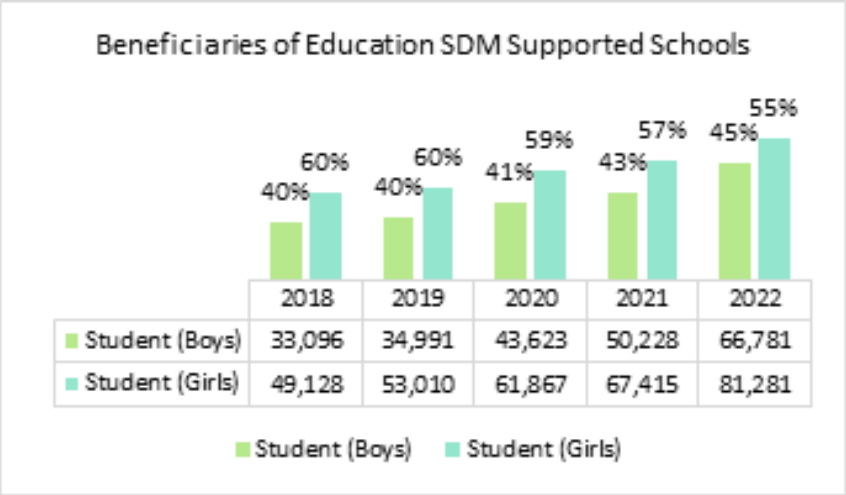
Figure 14: Extension of Terage Health Post delivery room, Galkayo.

JPLG II introduced the Service Delivery Model (SDM) in Somaliland and Puntland as a co-funding mechanism to support local governments to carry out basic devolved functions. It also contributes to improving the access, quality, and consistency of basic services available to local constituents. The subsequent scale-up, and roll out the SDM to the FMS in JPLG III was a much-needed catalyst, substantially contributing to strengthening local government capacities, specifically the Social Affairs Departments allowed local governments to take full ownership of the planning, design and delivery of the devolved functions through a multisectoral approach, including identification, procurement, implementation and monitoring of SDM involving all actors notably communities, district councils and sector ministries.

In JPLG III, significant strides have been made in expanding communities' access to basic service delivery through the SDM in 19 districts across Somalia (8 in Somaliland, 9 in Puntland, 1 in Southwest and 1 in BRA). Overall, JPLG supported the rehabilitation and extension of 443 education facilities in 18 districts, benefitting 541,420 students (58 percent girls), 281 health facilities in 16 districts with a catchment area of 3,2 million people and 10 water points in 5 districts with a catchment population of 58 thousand people.

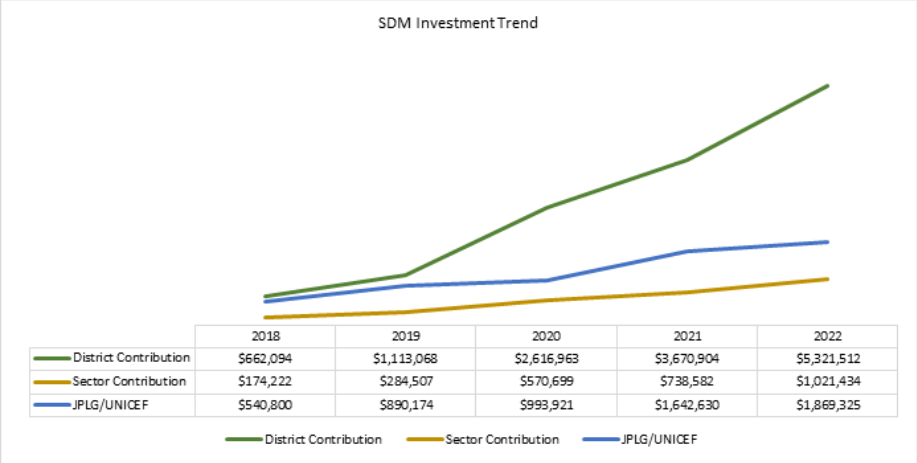


15:Beneficiaries (Catchment Area) of Health SDM-Supported Facilities



16: Beneficiaries of Education Facilities Extended or Rehabilitated through SDM projects

Governments at state and local level demonstrated increased ownership of social delivery model interventions. Throughout JPLG III, the contribution of sectors and districts has increased from $174,222 and $662'094 (61 percent of total investment) in 2018 to $ 1,021,434 and $5,321,512 (77 percent of total investments) in 2022 respectively. This is a positive signal for the sustainability of SDM's impact leading towards graduation, leveraging more resources from the government and the district's revenues. The following graph shows contribution to SDM investments (in US dollars) across districts over JPLG III, disaggregated in district, sector, and JPLG contribution.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
District Contribution	$662,094	$1,113,068	$2,616,963	$3,670,904	$5,321,512
Sector Contribution	$174,222	$284,507	$570,699	$738,582	$1,021,434
JPLG/UNICEF	$540,800	$890,174	$993,921	$1,642,630	$1,869,325

17: Financial Contribution to SDM projects, disaggregated in JPLG, district, and state level

The increase of government contribution to the SDM was not everywhere at the same pace across all states. Somaliland was the most successful in SDM financing followed by Puntland. Somaliland's district contribution steadily increased from $662,094 (48 percent of total investment) in 2018 to $5,212,262 (75 percent of total investment) in 2022 while JPLGs contribution decreased from 39 percent ($540,800 of $1,377,116) in 2018 to 13 percent ($922,734 of $6,995,055) in 2022. This is a clear indication of a demonstrated commitment from Somaliland authorities to invest in service delivery at the local level.

> *Mayor of Gebilay Local Government Mr. Mohamed Amin said "we have exceeded the expectations of the JPLG program, a few years back we did not have any role in service delivery, now we build health centers, primary schools with taxes collected locally, we provide all necessary equipment's needed in health centers and schools, in addition to paying the salaries of health workers, teachers and subordinate staff through the local government payroll, with little support from JPLG and from the central government" He added "I am very confident that Gabiley district can sustain delivering these services in the long run and hopefully other districts will be able to do the same".*

In Puntland, district contributions gradually increased from $28,802 (6 percent of total investment) in 2019 to $97,050 (11 percent of total investment) in 2022 while JPLG contribution decreased from 94 percent ($478,974 of $511,291) in 2019 to 75 percent ($786,591 of $1,043,016) in 2022, demonstrating increased demand for domestic revenue mobilization to accelerate graduation and enable sustainability in the long-term. In addition to their significant financial investment, districts in Somaliland and Puntland have shown increased buy-in to address service delivery bottlenecks as demonstrated through their active engagement in the district-level sector coordination platforms and willingness to take more service delivery responsibilities beyond the current devolved functions.

In the FMS's, the SDM implementation was largely impeded by the absence of local councils in most of the target districts, weak municipal structures and insufficient or nonexistent local revenues. The inadequate policy and legal frameworks in relation to decentralization and clarification of roles and responsibilities between local governments and sector institutions in the FMS further contributed to delays. Nonetheless, JPLG supported SDM pilots in South West and BRA, using the experiences from Somaliland and Puntland, with pilots in Baidoa of the Southwest State

and Abdiaziz in BRA. These districts contributed financially 3 percent and 10 percent of the SDM investment respectively with a commitment to increasing their contribution to 15 percent moving forward.

JPLG also provided tailored trainings to 1,038 officials (34 percent female) representing the 19 SDM target districts to underpin their understanding and capacity in spearheading the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the decentralized service delivery model. JPLG also supported the development of training modules and operational frameworks for the SDM implementation. With the increase in district contribution to the SDM and ongoing local revenue enhancement, this signifies a promising prospect for the sustainability of the SDM beyond graduation.

However, JPLG learnt that future sustainability of the SDM would largely depend on political commitment from state and local authorities, increased local revenue collection, prioritization of service delivery in district and state budget allocations, improved transparency and accountability and continued empowerment of citizen to make their voices heard and be able to hold their local leaders accountable to them.

OUTCOME 3. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DEMONSTRATE IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Introduction

Women remain underrepresented across all sectors, including the political realm. As a novelty in its third phase, JPLG took on a dual strategy by combining integrated and targeted approaches to increase the visibility, representation, and inclusion of women in local governance processes. Under output 3.1, on average, there was an increase in women's representation in local councils during the programme phase. JPLG III contributed with targeted trainings for candidates and advocacy for revising Local Government Laws that include a quota,

In output 3.2, local government-led civic education and engagement activities create inclusive public avenues for citizen-state dialogue, facilitating public budget hearings and promotion of inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in local government through public outreach and sensitization forums, Overall, 101,313 citizens (41 percent women, 36 percent men, 10 percent boys, 13 percent girls) were reached during JPLG III.

The quantitative data presented here are originating from data collected and reported to the State Ministries and JPLG UN agencies, and have been reported also in annual agency reports.

Output 3.1 Representation of women in local government institutions (councils and administrations) increased.

As part of targeted approaches to strengthen gender mainstreaming in local governance processes, JPLG III aimed to increase the inclusion of women in local councils. For example, several Local Government Laws have included a quota for women in elections. At the same time, the Local Government Gender Advocacy Strategy, including action plans, were implemented, identifying tactics and entry points by local governments, communities, civil society, media, and other relevant stakeholders to improve women's participation and gender equality in governance institutions and processes.

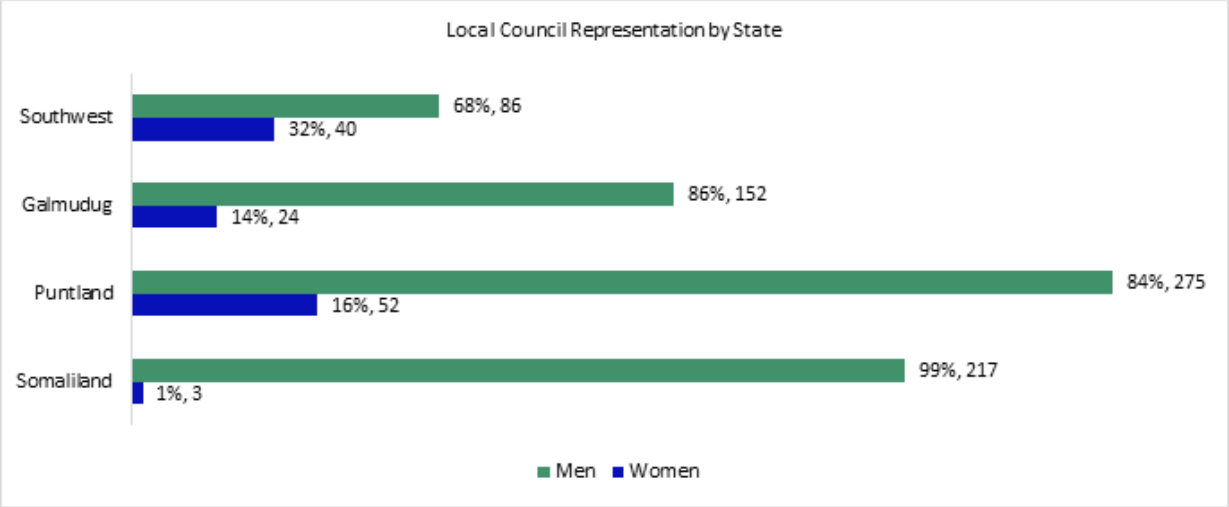
The desired quota of 30 percent seats held by women in local district councils could only be reached in five districts. Nonetheless, on average across JPLG districts, there was an increase in women's representation in local councils in JPLG III. Targeted activities in JPLG III potentially had a positive impact on this development. Through JPLGs training for aspiring women candidates, 77 aspiring candidates received training on electoral campaigns, public speaking, and electoral systems. Additionally, JPLG included awareness raising on the importance of representative

district councils and women's participation in civic awareness exercises across Somalia. A community-based approach is important to dismantle structural barriers and underlying social norms disfavoring female candidates.

"We learned how to manage an election campaign, public communication, and outreach strategies, and most importantly, how we can support each other in the elections, especially among women. It gave us the confidence and strength to be successful."

Female Local Councilor in Eyl, Amina Hassan Egal.

In Puntland, for the very first time, one-person one-vote elections for local councils took place during JPLG III. This presented an opportunity to advocate for more female representation in district councils. JPLG has conducted trainings for 40 female candidates and conducted advocacy. Overall, district-level elections led to an increase of 10 seats (19 percent) held by women, from 42 to 52 female councilors out of 327 councilors in JPLG districts. Despite the increase, women representation remains 14 percent under the targeted 30 percent quota. Local councils were renewed in two tranches. In 2021, women secured 25 percent of the elected local council seats in the three first districts (Gardho 27 percent; Eyl, 22 percent; Uffeyn 24 percent). In districts part of the second tranche, women only hold 14 percent of seats on average (Burtinle, Galdogob, Bosaso, Alula, Galkayo, Jariban, Eyl, Banderbeyla, Iskushuban).



18: Composition of District Councils disaggregated by state and gender

Explaining why there were fewer seats won by women than expected, the Puntland Transitional Electoral Commission stated that as the list of candidates were open, unlike the previous early elections in Gardo, Eyl, and Uffeyn where closed lists model was adopted, some clan leaders convinced the political associations to nominate their preferred male candidates as first runners in exchange of the clan leaders' support, pointing to structural barriers for women to gain more access.

19: Women casting her vote in Puntlands first one person one vote elections

In Galmudug, women hold 26 seats out of 197 council positions. Thereby, female representation remains 16 percent below the standard 30 percent women quota. All district councils are newly established with no historical data to measure/calculate the change. Overall, JPLG has coached 10 aspiring candidates in Galmudug.

In Southwest, 4 out of 6 districts have reached the envisaged quota of 30 percent. Across all districts, women hold 86 seats (32 percent) out of 126. JPLG has provided training to 25 aspiring female council candidates.

In Jubaland, JPLG has coached 4 female candidates in Afmadow district. The current council is composed of 2 women (10 percent) in an institution comprising 21 seats. In Hirshabelle, in Warsheik district, 4 seats held by women and 17 held by men in the newly formed council. The deviation to the 30 percent quota is –11 percent.

The representation of women in local councils in Somaliland remains extremely low with 1.3 percent (3 female councilors among 220). Previously, 10 women (2 percent) were holding seats in local councils in Somaliland. However, the last local election dates to 2012, and therefore, JPLG III could not have direct influence. Interestingly, despite low rates of female candidates, women have consistently shown high rates of participation as voters. Evidence from past elections has indicated, that women did not necessarily support women candidates.

Political underrepresentation hinges on gender-responsive electoral laws, political commitment, and innovative social change strategies. For example, the difference in Puntland between the 2021 and 2023 direct elections highlights the influence of long-held cultural practices and the prevailing intent of clan leaders to discount women amid democratic processes. At the same time, JPLG's impact on gender equality is difficult to measure due to many factors outside control of JPLG. Nonetheless, JPLG aims to explore innovative social behavior change strategies to engage with traditional elders and other actors thereby ensuring favorable conditions for greater women representation in future local elections.

JPLG needs to strengthen its efforts for sustained dismantling of structural barriers for women's access to the political realm, through continued support for aspiring and elected local councilors and innovative social change and awareness raising strategies and through systematic partnerships with CSOs.

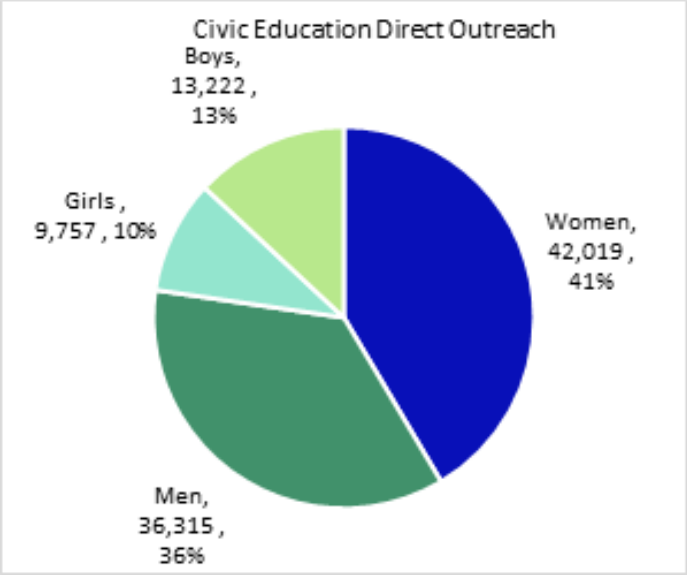
OUTPUT 3.2 COMMUNITIES (PARTICULARLY WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS) ENGAGE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS

Civic education and engagement in local government

JPLG III has placed special emphasis on bringing good governance principles of transparency, accountability, and participation to the forefront of local government processes, policies, and procedures. In doing so, the programme pursued conscious strategies and coherent approaches in strengthening public understanding of their civic rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis local government, creating inclusive public avenues for citizen-state dialogue, facilitating public budget hearings and promotion of inclusion of women, youth and marginalized groups in local government through public outreach and sensitization forums, moderated dialogue with local leaders and traditional elders and capacity-building for community leaders, civil society actors and community-based committees.

Figure 20: Berbera townhall meeting on annual plans and budgets.

Through local government-led civic education and engagement activities, 101,313 citizens (41 percent women, 36 percent men, 10 percent boys, 13 percent girls) directly engaged in civic education activities, for example through dialogue forums, community meetings, school events, and child rights clubs held across Somalia and over duration of JPLG III. Additionally, 4,5 million citizens (predominantly in Somaliland) have been indirectly reached through various media outlets, including radio broadcasting, TV and social media, and drama displays.



21: Citizens reached through Civic Education Direct Outreach

These civic education activities brought together representatives from local councils, district administrations, civil society, community leaders, women, youth and religious groups, businesspeople and academia to deliberate issues of local interest and importance including but not limited to district annual plans and budgets, local peace and security, community participation and monitoring of local government activities as well as discussion meant to promote inclusion of women, youth and marginalized groups in local government processes and decision-making.

The immediate results of these civic engagement were felt during the DDF consultations in held in the 32 districts where 22,154 community members (51 percent female, 29 percent marginalized groups, 8 percent children), mostly self-mobilized, partook the grassroots community consultations and meaningfully contributed to identifying their development needs and priorities in the next five year which was later articulated in the District Development Frameworks adopted by local councils.

In Somaliland where democratic elections are held in the past two decades and where local governance reforms are more advanced, the community participation was more systematic and widespread with local councils in Hargeisa, Buroa, Berbera, Borama and Gebiley continuously engaging local public in all district planning and budgeting processes through public forums and public budget hearings that attached thousands of participants.

In Puntland, JPLG leveraged the presence of prominent civil society organizations with a good track record of implementing civic education, local governance, social reconciliation, and democratization programmes during the last two decades. Through a partnership with the PDRC (Puntland Development Research Center), JPLG was able to implement a massive civic education and outreach programme in seven districts in Puntland which led to an increase of 10 seats (19 percent) held by women, or from 42 to 52 female councilors out of the 327 councilors in JPLG districts.

In the FMS's, where access to communities is largely impeded by the prevailing insecurity, JPLG through local civil society organizations reached 14,519 community members and local authority officials (49 percent female) and engaged them in massive civic dialogue and awareness-raising, community and local authorities sensitization on women, youth and marginalized groups inclusion in local government as well as public participation in local

planning and budgeting processes and overall decision-making at the local level. All target local governments adopted strategies to systematize public participation in annual plan and budget discussions as well as community oversight of local government implemented projects and programmes.

Through these forums, engaged debates were seen during the annual budget discussions held in local governments in Somaliland and Puntland. These revolved mostly around district allocations to the social sector and security as these two take the largest share of local government budgets, specifically in Puntland. The increase in the district contribution to the SDM, currently being at 61 percent of the total investment is largely attributed to the increased public demand for services.

Reinforcing social accountability in local governance

A citizen-driven accountability mechanism for assessing and evaluating local government service delivery performance was adopted, that enabled communities to work closely with local leaders and social sector officials in identifying and addressing key bottlenecks in local governance service delivery. JPLG strengthened the implementation of the Community Score Card (CSC) in five districts in Somaliland (Berbera, Burao, Hargeisa, Gebilay and Borama) where 850 community committee members (70 percent female) representing primary schools, health centers and village development committees were deployed to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. District mayors were also inducted on the CSC to enable them to follow up continuously on issues reported through the CSC, which uses mobile-based messaging connected to an online platform of RapidPro,[11] coordinated by the district CSC focal point and the district Social Affairs Director.

Public service facilities, schools, and health centers were mapped and registered and trained district level community communities were deployed to closely monitor service delivery at facility level and report any performance issues through the CSC, monthly. The raised issues concerned mainly the consistency and quality of service available in public facilities specifically in health centers, quality of teachers in public schools, hygiene and waste management issues in health centers and markets, overall staff performance in public facilities as well as accessibility and affordability of services to certain groups or communities.

The implementation of the CSC has been instrumental in stimulating citizen feedback and dialogue with local governments and more importantly fostering demand for greater accountability at the local level. As evidenced by the CSC reports, members of the community education and health committees now feel empowered to raise service delivery concerns directly with the district officials. Equally important, target districts in Somaliland have seen significant increases in tax revenues over the duration of the JPLGIII. The fact that citizens are now more willing to pay taxes is a strong indicator of their trust and confidence in their local governments and suggests that citizens have been able to make the connection between the tax payment and improvement in local service delivery. Moreover, massive public forums engaging more than 20,000 persons were conducted, predominantly in Somaliland, through which districts presented their annual work plans and budgets as well as their expenditure and revenue forecasts. Vivid public debates with the district mayor were seen during these forums on taxation issues, prioritization of projects and the transparency of local government expenditures and procurement.

While the CSC pilot implementation in Somaliland enforced social accountability, its roll-out to other target locations notably Puntland and the FMS could not be implemented during the programme time. The introduction of additional tools e.g., U-Report and Local Governance Performance Index were deemed necessary in streamlining downward and upward accountability while reinforcing social contract at the local government level.

[11] https://app.rapidpro.io

Number of beneficiaries and feedback

Select numbers :

- JPLG III supported the rehabilitation and extension of 443 education facilities in 18 districts, benefitting 541,420 students (58 percent girls), 281 health facilities in 16 districts with a catchment area of 3,219,780 people and 10 water points in 5 districts with a catchment population of 57,551 people.
- In JPLG III, 15,397 representatives (33 percent women) from sector ministries, district authorities, community committees and civil society partners were trained on inclusive governance, participatory planning, sectoral decentralization. As a result, capacity in terms of district planning and decentralization of the service delivery have been strengthened as demonstrated by the effective implementation of the DDF and SDM by districts themselves.
- In JPLG III, 32 districts embarked on massive grassroots consultations through which 22,154 community members (51 percent female, 29 percent marginalized groups, 8 percent children) were directly engaged to inform the formulation of District Development Frameworks. As a result, 23 districts developed annual plans and budgets that reflect community priorities.
- For the first time, children (46 percent girls) were also consulted and engaged in the DDF process. More than 1,312 children from various communities and different age groups participated in the DDF community consultation processes. 85 percent of the consulted children expressed satisfaction with their inclusion in the consultation process and saw it as an opportunity to express their issues. Amina, 15, a girl participant of the DDF consultation in Galkayo said "*We are happy to be consulted about our future, how we view our city and what we want to reach in the next five years. This inspires me, and it is the first time I can participate in a consultation* (…)."
- Across Somalia and over duration of JPLG III, 101,313 citizens (41 percent women, 36 percent men, 10 percent boys, 13 percent girls) directly engaged in civic education activities, for example through dialogue forums, community meetings, school events, and child rights clubs. Additionally, 4,530,490 citizens (predominantly in Somaliland) have been indirectly reached through various media outlets, including radio broadcasting, TV and social media, and drama displays.

Section 2: Progress Report Matrix

Results/goals	Performance Indicators	Baseline Info	Performance Benchmark and Targets	Implementation Progress in Reporting quarter
OUTCOME 1: POLICY, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE ARE FINALIZED. Outcome Indicators **1.** Number of local governments and government structures that qualify for JPLG intervention. **2.** Number of key national and subnational policies on local governance that are approved and implemented. **3.** Number of states that have sectoral strategies guiding decentralized service delivery				
Output 1.1: Policies, laws, and strategies for decentralization are drafted to clarify the division of functional responsibilities among central/federal state and local governments				
Policies, laws, and strategies for decentralization are drafted to clarify the division of functional responsibilities among central/federal state and local governments	**Output Indicator 1.1.1:** Number of governments / states that have adopted, costed, and are implementing policies / strategies / laws guiding decentralized service delivery (includes sectoral policies and management systems)	Assess existence and implementation of decentralization policies / strategies	**Target (2023) 4** Policies/strategies/laws adopted and costed and implemented	6 • 2 new 7-year (2023-2030) decentralization policies for SL and PL, 4 decentralization option papers for the 4 new FMS and 1 LG Law (JL) reviewed / revised. • Roadmaps for National Urban Policy (Somalia and Somaliland) and Land Policy • Public space strategy was introduced in Somaliland. • Three regulations and one guideline for e-governance services produced. ALGASL's strategic plan for 2023-2027. • Fiscal Decentralization Strategy for Local Service Delivery and Fiscal decentralization Action Plans for Puntland and Somaliland developed and a Fiscal decentralization Options document developed for FMS.
	Output Indicator 1.1.2: Number of districts that have developed the 5-year district development frameworks	Measure the capacity of districts to plan and implement	**Target (2023)** 24 DDF's developed and implementation of DDF'S initiated	32

	that are in line with good practices and linked to National Development Plans.	development plans according to clear and established criteria (quality of planning)	Core functions fully operational	6 districts in the new FMS (3 in SWS, 1 in HS, 1 in GS and 1 in JS), 15 districts in SL and 11 districts in PL.
	Output Indicator 1.1.3: Number / percentage of districts with annual workplans and budgets that reflect community priorities, including women, youth and marginalized groups.	Assess connection to local and national development plans and responsiveness to needs of at-risk populations	**Target (2023) 30** districts (disaggregated by state) / % of total districts.	26 15 districts in SL and 11 districts in PL.
	Output Indicator 1.1.4: Number of states that have adopted, costed and are implementing sectoral strategies and management systems guiding decentralized service delivery.	Assess existence and implementation of sectoral strategies (which create a more consistent and transparent system of governance between different levels of government).	**Target (2023)** 6 states adopted sectoral strategies, costed, and are fully implemented and management systems guiding decentralized service delivery	2 States and Mogadishu Municipality • Decentralization strategies in health, education and roads were developed and adopted in Somaliland and Puntland as well as operational manuals to guide the implementation of decentralized Service Delivery Model in Somaliland and Puntland. • Application and enforcement of Urban regulatory framework and urban land management legislation in Somaliland and Puntland. • Standardized and harmonized building permits are set in Puntland and to a lesser extent in Somaliland and BRA. • 113 district staff, mainly engineers and public works staff, have been trained with GPS, Urban planning and GIS, urban roads and transport standards and guidelines in Mogadishu, the NFMS, Puntland and Somaliland. City extension plans of 8 districts in Puntland and 5 in Somaliland have been supported.
Output 1.2: National and sub-national mechanisms that encourage dialogue on policies and legal framework related to local governance and decentralization				

National and sub-national mechanisms that encourage dialogue on policies and legal framework related to local governance and decentralization	Output Indicator 1.2.1: Number of fora leading to policy dialogue	Assess opportunities for interaction between local policy makers (council members, etc.) and population at large	Target (2023) 12 Number of fora (disaggregated by type/audience, level-LG/CG, state)	30 • Somali Mayors Forum • LG actors' coordination meetings in 6 states • High-level sector decentralization dialogue forums in Somaliland and Puntland
	Output Indicator 1.2.2: Number of local governments offering quality services (exclusive and joint responsibility with central government)	Determine the level of decentralization of responsibility to local governments and capacity of local governments to offer those services.	Target (2023) 8 local governments offering quality services (% of LG in each state) b. % of services usually offered by local governments (disaggregated by function and state) c. Quality services survey	19 8 in Somaliland, 9 in Puntland, 1 in Southwest and 1 in BRA
	Output Indicator 1.2.3: Number of districts with local development plans that clarify their responsibilities, a fiscal formula and a system of inter-governmental relations established.	The quality of development plans.	Target (2022) 8 districts (disaggregated by state) / % of districts to total districts.	32 districts with DDF • 13 districts in Somaliland receive formular driven allocations. • Formular driven allocation regulations drafted for all 11 districts in Puntland. • 13 districts Performance Assessments undertaken.
OUTCOME 2: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DELIVER EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES Outcome Indicators 1. Participants in LGI trainings with knowledge on local governance applying what they are learning.				

2. Number of districts receiving LGI trainings 3. % of trained local government employees who remain in government at least 12 months. 4. Local governments have the capacity to deliver equitable and sustainable services, promote economic development and peace				
Output 2.1: Structures and systems for good local governance, planning and programming are functional				
Structures and systems for good local governance, planning and programming are functional	**Output Indicator 2.1.1:** Number of districts with service standards developed and performance monitored.	Service Delivery: Benchmarking as key to raise expectations of citizens vis-à-vis quality of service and local governments.	**Target (2023)** 75% of districts to total districts Local governments can deliver equitable services that promote economic development	
	Output Indicator 2.1:2 Number of Districts carrying out procurement audits regularly consistently with operations manual	Districts carrying out procurement audits regularly consistently with operations manual	**Target (2023)** 100% of districts caring out audits consistently	17 9 districts in Puntland, 7 districts in Somaliland and 1 district in Mogadishu.
	Output Indicator 2.1:3 Number of Districts who compile statistics and data consistently with template requirements	Districts who compile statistics and data consistently with template requirements	**Target (2023)** 28 Districts compile statistics and data consistently with template requirements	
Output 2.2: Local Government Institutes are delivering standardized curriculum on local governance				
	Output Indicator 2.2.1: Number of districts with	capacity building for service	**Target (2023)** 30 districts train local	37

	local councilors and staff who have completed at least one LGI training module based on standardized curriculum.	delivery and quality of policies / legislations and decision making for service delivery	governments and staff on LGI based on the standardized curriculum	12 districts in Puntland (including Ufweyn), 10 districts in the FMS (5 in Galmudug, 3 in Hirshabelle, 1 in Jubaland and 1 in Southwest), 15 districts in Somaliland and Mogadishu Municipality.
Output 2.3: Fiscal Arrangements are strengthened and expended for service delivery and local investment				
	Output Indicator 2.3.1: Number of districts that have developed and are implementing own revenue generation/mobilization plans	Assess predictability of service delivery and reduction of arbitrary revenue collection if information is publicly available	Target (2023) Revenue generation plans are developed and implemented	14 1. . • Own source revenue boosted in Puntland and Somaliland through property registration and update. A total of 22,476, 7,562 and 846 properties have been registered in Garowe, Gebilay and Hargeisa respectively. • In preparation for a property registration exercise in Mogadishu to help the municipality unlock untapped revenue streams, data enumerators are trained, base maps produced, and technology modes agreed upon to gather spatial and attribute data of properties. • In Garowe, more than 7,000 plates have been installed and affixed to taxable properties as part of an effort to improve tax collection efficiency and optimize revenue collection. • In Puntland, 3 of the 5 targeted districts have successfully competed “Demonstration phase - DEMO” to test system functionality while 2 others are now set to proceed the “DEMO”. Once the demonstration is completed, they will start collecting taxes through mobile payments. Efficiency, transparency, and simplicity is maximized. • About 60 local government leaders in Jawhar, Warsheikh and Dinsor are oriented with the local government financial management policy and manual. • Similarly, BRA's internal audit units have been equipped and furnished to ensure that their working conditions are conducive for undertaking the audit functions.

				• In Mogadishu, mapping of public facilities has been carried out to inform BRA's decisions pertinent to service delivery. The mapped facilities included open spaces, public facilities like government offices, health, and education facilities. • 169 local government staff members from relevant departments and district executive committees in the NFMS have attended trainings on local government finance policy, local governance financial management manual and guide to local taxation. • Ahead of automating district finance systems in the FMS, basic ICT training have been provided to 67 staff members in the four NFMS and Puntland. • 12 districts have developed and operationalized revenue enhancement action plans.
	Output Indicator 2.3.2: Number of districts with increased revenue	Service Delivery: Assess flow of funds available to local governments	Target (2023) 10 districts increase revenue and sources	16 8 districts each in Somaliland and Puntland • In Somaliland the growth was 84% (from USD 108.4 million to USD 198.9 million) for 2018-2023. • In Puntland the growth was 81% percent (from USD 16.8 million to USD 30.5 million) for 2018-2023.
	Output Indicator 2.3.3: Number of districts that have ensured that a minimum 20% of all grants are refinanced	Assess the ability to allocate resources which strengthens government capacity.	**Target (2023)** Grants are awarded to district	35 districts (100%) refinanced. • Performance of districts has far exceeded expectations. • All JPLG supported districts in Puntland and Somaliland. underwent performance assessments. All performed above 80% in all financial performance areas to receive grant funding.

	Output Indicator 2.3.4: Number of businesses and properties registered	Assess the capacity of local governments to map potential revenue sources for service delivery.	Target (2023) Properties and type of businesses registered	600
Output 2.4: Target districts have well defined development strategies, plans and systems to accommodate rapid urban growth				
Target districts have well defined development strategies, plans and systems to accommodate rapid urban growth	**Output Indicator:** 2.4.1: Number of districts with urban development plans in line with the new urban agenda	Assess if improved spatial organization improves urban experience and reduces service dysfunction	**Target (2022) 33** districts with urban development plans in line with the new urban agenda	36 • Districts capacity in preparing district profiles has been scaled up. • A total of 36 district profiles have been produced across Somalia. • Markedly the first of its kind in Somalia, Borama integrated urban development is set to bring all development and humanitarian actors together towards shared vision, unified and coordinated planning and implementation approach. It complements both DDF and National Development Plan III. • Building e-governance or digital platform for the provision of municipal services is completed in Somaliland. It constitutes an online website and mobile application whereby people can access selected basic services and settle payments using their mobile phones. • To make cities more resistant to flash floods caused by climate shocks, flood simulation mapping has been produced to guide district urban planning and come up with ways to protect against flooding (Garowe and Qardho).
	Output Indicator: 2.4.2 Number of districts engaging citizens in urban development planning	Assessing inclusion and integration of diverse ideas	Target (2023) 2 districts engaging citizens in consultations/ urban	3 • In response to Mogadishu visioning exercise whereby citizens' priorities are defined, renovation of the historical "Arba-rukun" is completed and handed over to the BRA.

			development planning	• Construction of the Hargeisa's first child-friendly park was also completed and handed over to the local government. This has been one of the outcomes of Hargeisa visioning exercise. • The renovation of the "Barxadda" city square completed in Puntland.
Output 2.5: Local Governments deliver improved services in collaboration with central/federal and non-state actors				
Local Governments deliver improved services in collaboration with central/federal and non-state actors	**Output Indicator** 2.5.1: Number of districts that develop and implement emergency preparedness, resilience or social protection plans.	Assess government preparedness in the event of cataclysmic events (strengthens protection of at-risk populations)	**Target (2023) 3** districts develop preparedness plans/social protection plans	17 4 districts in Puntland, 12 in Somaliland and Mogadishu Municipality. • Disaster Risk Vulnerability Assessment and Community Adaptation Action Plans (2023-2030) • Endeavoring towards making cities clean and enabling them to respond effective in the event of emergencies, procured sanitation equipments to the vast growing cities in Somalia, chiefly, Hargeisa and Mogadishu. • 30 staff members from the social affairs departments in BRA and its subdistricts have been trained in waste management practices.
	Output Indicator 2.5.2: Number of collaborations established with non-state actors e.g., PPPs	Gauge capacity of local governments to provide services	**Target (2023)** collaborations established (disaggregated by district, state and sector)	10 collaborations with private sector on service delivery
	Output Indicator 2.5.3: Number of districts that implement service delivery models	Gauge capacity of local governments to provide services	**Target (2022)** 33 districts implement service delivery models	19 8 districts in Somaliland, 9 districts in Puntland, 1 district in Southwest and 1 in BRA • Rehabilitation and extension of 443 education facilities in 18 districts, benefiting 541'420 students (58 percent girls). • 281 health facilities in 16 districts with a catchment area of 3,219,780 people.

				• 10 water points in 5 districts with a catchment population of 57’551 people.
OUTCOME 3: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DEMONSTRATE IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS Outcome Indicators *1.* % Increase in the number of women in local government occupying management and leadership positions (disaggregated by age) 2. Perception of women influence on local government decisions. 3. Perception of concern for children in local government decisions. 4. Local governments demonstrate improved engagement of citizens with an emphasis on women and marginalised groups.				
Output 3.1: Representation of women in local government institutions (councils and administrations) increased				
Representation of women in local government institutions (councils and administrations) increased	**Output Indicator: 3.1.1**: % Increase in the number of women in local government occupying management and leadership positions (disaggregated by age)	Assess participation of women in high level management and leadership positions in public administration	**Target (2023)** Increase in the number of women in local government occupying management and leadership positions	100% • 31 women in SWS (7/27 in Barawe, 2/21 in Berdale, 10/21 in Dinsoor, 5/27 in Hudur and 7/21 in Wajid) • 20 women in GS (4/23 in Guriel, 5/33 in Dhusamareb, 3/23 in Abudwak, 5/21 in Balanbale and 3/23 in Adado) • 23 women in Puntland (9/33 in Gardho, 6/27 in Eyl and 8/27 in Ufeyn). *Previously, Hudur had no women in the council and Berdale had 1.
	Output Indicator: 3.1.2: Number of partners raising awareness to eliminate discriminatory gender and social norms in local government.	Assess civil society and other partners role in monitoring government to responsiveness.	**Target (2023)** partners raising awareness to eliminate discriminatory gender and social norms in local government.	78 (Ministries, Districts (CSOs) • 727 women trained. • 5 Civil Society partners (1 in Puntland, 1 in Galmudug, 1 in Hirshabelle, 1 in Southwest and 1 in Jubaland) were engaged in the implementation of civic education programmes in 25 districts(including awareness to eliminate discriminatory gender and social norms in local government), directly reaching 101’313 citizens (41 percent women, 36 percent men, 10 percent boys, 13 percent girls).
Output 3.2: Communities (particularly women and marginalized groups) engage with local governments and hold them accountable for their actions				

Communities (particularly women and marginalized groups) engage with local governments and hold them accountable for their actions	**Output Indicator:** 3.2.1: Increase in number of people engaging in social accountability mechanisms that express satisfaction with local government responsiveness to their concerns	Assess participation in social accountability mechanisms that enhances voice especially for marginalized groups	**Target (2023)** Increase in people engaging in social accountability mechanisms that express satisfaction with local government responsiveness to their concerns	50% • Community Score Card (CSC) initiative was implemented in five districts in Somaliland (Berbera, Burao, Hargeisa, Gebilay and Borama) where 850 community committee members (70 per cent female) representing primary schools, health centers and village development committees were trained and deployed to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery in their respective districts. Notable that this approach has been greatly appreciated 100% by the mayors of the CSC target districts, and 50-65 per cent of the reported issues were resolved through the interface meetings.
	Output Indicator: 3.2.2: Number of districts engaging with women, youth and marginalised groups e.g., budget presentation	Assess inclusion and transparency	**Target (2023)** 100% of target districts.	32 • 32 districts directly engaged 22'154 community members (51% female, 29% marginalized groups, 8% children) in district planning processes as part of DDF community consultations. • 25 districts directly engaging 101'313 citizens (41 percent women, 36 percent men, 10 percent boys, 13 percent girls) grassroots civic education awareness and dialogue with local authorities.
OUTCOME 4: DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IMPROVE POLICY DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION TO FACILITATE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PROGRAMME RESULTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE Outcome Indicators 1. JPLG partner institutions and government (s) increase partnership and coordination for more effective programme delivery. 2. Interaction between FMS and District level authorities on matters of service delivery is increased.				
Output 4.1: Increased participation in joint forums, development and use of standardized management and M&E instruments				
Increased participation in joint forums, development and	**Output Indicator** 4.1.1: Number meetings held (Steering Committee, Review, Coordination)	Assess the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms	Target (2023) 3 meetings	

use of standardized management and M&E instruments				
	Output Indicator 4.1.2: Development and implementation of common workplans and M&E Systems	Assess the effectiveness of standardized instruments	**Target (2023)** Implementation of programme activities in line with workplans and M&E systems	
	Output Indicator 4.1.3: Improved contextualization, adaptation, understanding of political obstacles and innovative ideas for programme growth	Assess the effectiveness regular political economy assessments to increase the capacity of target interventions and adjust the programme	**Target (2023)** 5 assessments conducted with innovative ideas implemented	

Section 4: Project implementation

Key constraints and challenges and associated corrective actions.

Internal weaknesses

A countrywide program working with different government counterparts on several levels and with 5 UN agencies, and at times external contractors will encounter obstacles. The government on different levels for instance experienced changes which caused occasionally delays and the need for retraining, even though the government technical teams remained stable. Also, the coordination between individual UN agencies to organize joint implementation at times was delayed. In addition, differences between procurement and recruitment processes hampered rapid progress. Absence of dedicated monitoring, evaluation and learning staff as agencies relied on corporate support affected timely and quality reporting. Coordination between the government tiers remained a work in progress and sometimes was affected by the tense political situation, hence causing delay, and adversely impacting on the implementation of the work plan activities in time, within budget and agreed upon timeframes. Not to mention access and security issues that saw cost of doing business in Somalia dramatically inflated.

Corrective actions: Multi-stakeholder Technical Working Groups were operational to enhance collaboration, communication and coordination and help streamline work processes on federal and state levels.

Retention of trained local government staff – The programme invested substantially in building the capacities of technical staff in different tiers of government to support the implementation of the activities and institutionalization of systems established. However, various reasons – ranging from job security to options for promotion and other working conditions such as salaries – caused highly skilled staff to seek better opportunities elsewhere.

Corrective actions: it would be an error to consider the search of upward mobility of competent staff to be undesirable. After all, these competent staff members eventually will contribute to the society in other functions. While JPLG asked ministries and service departments to improve its professionality and provided training to this effort, the organizational development and institutional strengthening (ODIS) of especially higher-level government institutions goes beyond training and a salary hike. JPLG learned this lesson only quite late and collaborated with the newly instated LGI's and the associations of mayors to work on this.

External challenges

Security – Security particularly in the south part of Somalia continues to remain a challenge to implementation. Frequent attacks by the insurgent groups in the areas continued to limit access to large aereas. Attacks from Al-Shabaab militant groups became more frequent and widespread, with the Lower and Middle Shabelle, Banadir regions, and Southwest states experiencing a higher number of incidents. The civilian population (women and children in particular) continued to experience a disproportionate burden of the violent conflict in Somalia, with an increasing number joining the ranks of internally displaced persons. The security situation slowed the expansion and overall progress in JPLGIII implementation and, consequently, the release of grant funding for Local Development Funds.

Corrective actions: JPLG adopted and piloted a so-called "light touch approach" whereby teams of trainers and coaches were dispatched to districts that were deemed ready for a full roll out of JPLG. Also, some efforts were made to collaborate with other actors that mostly invested in local infrastructure investments, often for humanitarian

or so-called early recovery efforts. As the landscape of actors and stakeholders, and in consequence strategies and approaches was very diverse the "light touch approach" became an excellent pilot approach from which lessons could be drawn for future investment.

Hazards, risks, and disasters included the following:

COVID- 19 – The covid pandemic interrupted progamme delivery due to the restrictions regarding movements and interactions. Progamme delivery and monitoring were delayed before the restricts established were lifted.

The Waheen Market fire disaster not only affected loss of livelihoods/business but also reduced revenue collection for the Hargeisa Municipality. Project activities were slowed as the municipality sought to address the challenges experienced because of the disaster.

Drought and climate change: Somalia witnessed one of its harshest droughts in decades in 2022 while in 2023, the country experienced severe floods. The UN estimated that the drought affected 4.3 million Somalis, causing displacement of more than 270,000 people[12]. As food and water shortages spread to many regions, many rural dwellers moved to urban and peri-urban areas, further burdening an already limited urban infrastructure base. The newly elected President appointed a drought envoy (a first of its kind) to address drought-related issues.

Although an outright famine was averted, millions faced starvation and displacement, including thousands of children. The floods of 2023, coming right at the back of a severe drought, was equally disastrous. Over 2.8 million people were affected by the floods, and close to 1 million were displaced. For JPLG these events delayed some of the JPLG activities as the government was distracted and was mobilized to respond.

Corrective measures: While JPLG's focus was on building local governance, representation and local institutions, its resources were used to help manage the risks associated with these disasters. Information on local circumstances was requested during the pandemic, the drought and famine, and the floods. JPLG was poorly equipped but assisted in multiple external requests and collaborated with the responsible authorities within the government.

Political environment, the economy, the administration:

Global Economic Crisis – A contextual issue that impacted on JPLG was the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Russia-Ukraine conflict posed a significant geopolitical risk, with severe ramifications for the Somali socio-economic fabric. The conflict disrupted key supply value chains, causing prices of imported goods to soar, with oil, gas and food items being the most affected commodities. The conflict also caused the volumes of imports to decline, thus hitting import-driven revenue streams very hard. Puntland state, for example, generates 70 percent of its revenues from the Bossaso port, and the reduced import activity at Bosaso port meant that 70 percent of Puntland state revenues were at risk. Unsurprisingly, in 2022, the government of Puntland struggled to raise its contributions to the LDF account. The escalation of prices meant that the purchasing power of the grants was quickly eroded.

Political instability - The third phase of JPLG continued to face political tensions resulting mainly from delayed elections. The country had set a deadline of 25th February 2021 to conclude the House of the People elections and the Upper House of the Federal Parliament. Elections were delayed by over a year and eventually held in May 2022. Tensions from the top echelons of the political, elite and clan formations to the rank and file of their supporters characterized developments during JPLG III. Although these tensions never turned into outright conflict,

[12] Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Assessment, published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

the economy, service delivery, and development suffered immensely. On JPLG programmatic activities, the uncertainties associated with election contestation, at some point, shifted the government's attention to getting the elections done, and this caused significant delays in implementing some activities. As the elections ushered in a new presidency and cabinet, the post-election period also witnessed more changes in key positions in government, causing further delays in JPLGIII programmatic activities.

High level political decisions on Districts - Two high level involvements negatively affected JPLG's work in districts. One of the requirements of JPLG is to support elected districts. During JPLG III, some district councils were dissolved by state authorities and replaced by handpicked, unelected people. In such a situation, the JPLG's support was suspended until councils were reestablished following the existing legislation. being constituted correctly. The consequence however of such developments was delayed implementation of projects.

Also, During JPLG III, Puntland and Somaliland saw a proliferation of districts formed largely for political reasons or to balance clan dynamics. In the past five years, the Somaliland government increased its contingent of districts from 23 to 103. While this may be necessary to accommodate clans' and tribal needs, some of the newly created districts face severe viability challenges. They have small populations and minimal revenue bases or economic activity to function. Although the transfer mechanism is supposed to support such districts, it is still weak, small, or unpredictable. JPLG was constantly under pressure to accommodate new districts. With limited resources, this was impossible.

Newly liberated Areas: The Southern part of Somalia has a significant presence of Al Shabaab militants. The new government exerted considerable pressure on the insurgents and pushed many out of the villages and towns in the South. New districts that are being formed lack the essential resources to function. Forming new district councils was both a challenge and an opportunity for JPLG. It is a challenge because all governance and service delivery structures are fluid and complex to organize. It is an opportunity to go in and foster their legitimacy and provide resources to make them functional. JPLG-IV will venture into these areas and support recovery.

Corrective measures: The challenges listed above were largely outside the influence and scope of the programme. The continuing instable international economy and the limited progress on creating national unity on higher levels were outside the scope of the programme. The programme however was able to mitigate this to a certain degree by adopting a flexible and diverse management approach aimed as much as possible at State and District realities and local knowledge.

Risk Management

Type of risk	Description of risk	Mitigating measures
Political Risks	The political tensions in parts of the country- Garowe in Puntland, Laas Anood, Gardo in Jubaland State and Hiran region of Hirshabele State and Baraawe area in the Southwest State have not augured well for JPLG and general local economic development. Political	• Continue to support the deepening of the fiscal decentralization process. Credible fiscal decentralization has the potential to bring about equity in resource allocation, a key factor in building peace and tranquility. • Where access is limited due to pollical instability,

	instability also limits access to projects, thus rendering monitoring ineffective.	• virtual platforms are beneficial.
	Limited political commitment to fiscal decentralization by federal/state governments	• Engage stakeholders on a regular basis and bring to the attention of senior governments officials and politicians the benefits of fiscal decentralization. • Showcasing success stories will also help build trust on the government and influence people to shun radicalism.
Security Risks	The volatile security situation in Garowe or Mogadishu, impedes access to some areas of the country. The security situation limits the provision of services in some areas. It also limits access to projects, rendering monitoring of projects difficult.	• Regularly monitor security developments at local lever and prepare contingency plans for shifting resources more secure areas if required. • Showcasing success shorties will also help build trust on the government and influence people to shun radicalism . •
	Limited access to project implementation locations due to insecurity	Effect of risk on accountability will be mitigated by ensuring use of remote management and monitoring tools
	Low capacity among government counterparts- district and state government officials. Heavy reliance on the part of the government on JPLG consultants for day to-day activities that the government should ideally do and limited transferring of skills to government employees	• Continue to support the building of capacity of both state and local government personnel. In close cooperation with JPLG, support the building of requisite systems. • Review the consultancy model JPLG uses to minimize career consultants and shift towards delivery-based models that also allow skills transfer.
	State governments anticipate Local Governments are a source of financial support.	• Monitor the impacts. Generally, happens in districts which do not have councils (hence not JPLG targets) and with states with very low incomes. World Bank support is improving the states capacities.
	Weak operational/financial management capacities in the new Federal member states are likely to slow implementation	• The programme is actively strengthening the capacity of partners through trainings. Performance assessments i.e., HACT assessments are applied in capacity building and provision of financial support
The proliferation of new districts	New districts are being formed at a very rapid pace. Most newly formed districts are not viable: limited-service delivery and minimal economic activity, a recipe for	• Engage governments to approach district formation gradually and methodically- not for political reasons.

	disorder. Citizens may not see the value of local governance and, therefore, resort to anarchy.	• In the NFMs, newly liberated districts should be supported with small grants to foster legitimacy.

Section 5: Project management

Number of project board meetings held.	Project board meetings were held annually on Federal level, while 2 Steering Committees were organized in Somaliland and Puntland
Number of UN staff (international/national) funded by the project.	ILO – 2 International, 4 National; UNDP – 1 International, 8 national, UNICEF – 2 International and 5 National; UN Habitat 1 International, 8 National; UNCDF 2 International, 4 National
Number of government personnel funded by the project. What are their functions and where do they work?	ILO: 9; UNDP – 103 consultants and young graduates in districts, ministries, and VP offices; UNICEF 15 (3 in Somaliland, 6 in Puntland, 1 in MOIFAR FGS, 1 in BRA and 1 in each of Galmudug, Jubaland, Southwest and Hirshabelle State; UN Habitat: 12 Urban Planners and GIS Technicians. UNCDF 21 and 4 young graduates
How has the project ensured the visibility of SJF donors during the reporting period?	Joint missions, prominent use of logos of donors, mention during discussion with different tiers of government
Projected funding needs for next year	The JPLG IV programme has requested 75 million US$ over 5 years

The programme has adopted both print and electronic media to communicate the activities.

During the implementation of activities banners and billboard with the project and donor's logos are displayed. Social media platforms are also used to communicate projects activities and results.

English text versions of Publicity

1. Puntland (Qardho) - women's participation in local government: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia/
2. South West (Hudur) - women's participation in local government: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-2/
3. Somaliland (Hargeisa) - training local government staff: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-3/
4. Hirshabelle (Warsheikh) - office equipment: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-4/
5. Somaliland (Hargeisa) - training for tax collectors: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-6/

6. Galmudug (Adado) - roads, office equipment: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-5/
7. Jubaland - (Afmadow) - training: https://www.radiodalsan.com/special-bilan-media-series-on-the-united-nations-efforts-to-improve-local-governance-across-somalia-7/

TV versions

- Galmudug (Adado): https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=735502784351672&extid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing
- South West (Hudur): https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1137153020267000&extid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing
- Hirshabelle (Warsheikh): https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=977185509913009&extid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing
- Somaliland tax: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1156870311659704&extid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing
- Puntland (Qardho)
- https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=551592436916034&extid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing
- Somaliland training local government staff: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1300143210766858&extid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing

Section 6: Cross cutting issues

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Proportion of gender specific outputs in the project	Total number of project outputs	Total number of gender specific outputs
	9 (UNDP, ILO); 12 (UNICEF)	2 (UNDP, ILO); 3 (UNICEF)
Proportion of project staff with responsibility for gender issues	Total number of staff	Total number of staff with responsibility for gender issues
	8 (UNDP) 28 (ILO) 7 (UNICEF) 4 (UNCDF) X (UN Habitat)	8 (UNDP) 28 (ILO) 7 (UNICEF) X (UN Habitat) 4(UNCDF)

For local governance processes, gender equality considerations are fundamental to ensure women, men, girls, and boys have equal opportunity to participate in local decision/making bodies, and their needs and perspectives are considered in laws, policies, and the design of local infrastructures and provision of basic services. In JPLG III, there was a pivotal shift in prioritizing gender mainstreaming through a two-pronged approach. The approach involved the continued integration of gender and inclusion across the programme while, notably for the first time, supporting a dedicated outcome aimed at engaging citizens, particularly women, youth, and minority groups. The twin-track strategy of integrated and targeted action ensured that gender equality is focused on in all interventions.

As part of gender mainstreaming efforts, the good governance principle of transparency and accountability have been advanced through the establishment of open procurement for local government tenders. By doing so, JPLG has empowered women to bid for local government tenders as the open procurement processes are viewed as fair and transparent. This is evident in Somaliland (1), Puntland (1) and Southwest State (8) where women contractors have bid for government tenders. There has also been an increased engagement of women though employment in the construction projects from 12 in 2020 to 70 in 2022. Due to the nature of the tasks in construction projects, they are perceived to be more male oriented regarding employment. The willingness of women to seek employment in these demonstrates empowerment.

In a joint effort, JPLG III participating agencies have decided to mainstream gender and social inclusion considerations at the example of the District Development Framework (DDF). Concretely, the DDF allowed local governments to ensure that priorities and issues raised by socially vulnerable sections of society are i) visible and engaged in the process; ii) mainstreamed throughout the DDF process; iii) finally reflected in the key outcome document; and iv) recognized in plans and budget by local governments. As a result of conscious efforts, 32 DDF frameworks have been made more gender responsive. In the planning phase, JPLG has actively created opportunities to advance gender mainstreaming, collaborating with key partners, including local government actors. In ToTs, facilitators were sensitized to gender equality considerations and more women were trained as facilitators, crucial for the meaningful participation of their peers. Furthermore, community engagement activities, such as consultations and focus groups used to gather data for DDF components, have been adapted to ensure the inclusion of sections of society that often remain invisible, including women. For the first time, the DDF documents include children's priorities and needs. In various components, including the LED and district profile, contain gender-disaggregated information and discuss how development aspects impact different groups.

Since agencies have adopted the DDF as a pilot for to strengthen gender mainstreaming approaches in local governance processes, important insights have been gleaned from the DDF process in JPLG III:

Enhance Gender Awareness and Capacity-Building: Improved awareness among all staff involved is essential to integrate gender considerations effectively and ensure that strategic development plans address, reflect, and discuss the needs of all segments of society. As a government-led process, it is especially crucial to build the knowledge and capacity of local governments. Combined with targeted efforts to improve capacity on data collection, it can also address the widespread lack of gender-disaggregated data. Special attention should be paid to districts that have limited gender capacity and provide targeted support while leveraging state-level expertise.

Systematic and Strategic Integration of Gender Considerations: Conscious efforts ensured all DDF components recognized gender differences and provided disaggregated information. However, to tackle gender inequality, a shift to a gender-responsive and transformative approach is needed, addressing structural barriers. Each DDF step should seize opportunities in local government and community interactions to promote gender equality and address sociocultural barriers.

Proactive Approach - Gender not as an After-Thought: The DDF exercise 2023-2027 has shown that the planning stage is crucial to ensure an integrated approach to gender and social inclusion. Obtaining commitments from key actors and mapping vulnerable groups at district level is key that gender mainstreaming is not an after-thought. This also entails those tools (gender checklist, surveys, questionnaires, templates) are revised and rendered gender-sensitive before the DDF commences, allowing actors to consider gender dimensions from the outset.

Coordination Among Agencies: Improved coordination among agencies can optimize harnessing various expertise and leverage synergies. For example, for data collection, agencies often have collaborations with

different ministries. Improved collaboration allows for exchange of this data. A proactive PMU can take a crucial role in coordinating and facilitating the exchange of information and lessons learned. For the next programme phasis, a knowledge management platform will be considered. Improved coordination also allows for enhanced sequencing of DDF steps and streamlining processes. Developing and agreeing upon specific gender targets and indicators, for example during field visits, enhances reporting and accountability.

Human-rights based approach

Has the programme included a protection risk assessment in its context analysis, including on gender issues, and taken measures to mitigate these risks to ensure they are not exacerbated, or new risks created?	Result
	All contracted studies and reviews have focused sections on gender and vulnerable groups
Number of programme outputs specifically designed to address specific protection concerns.	Result
	No
Number pf programme outputs designed to build capacity of duty bearers to fulfil their human rights obligations towards rights holders.	Result

Leave no one behind

The programme continued to promote inclusion of women and gender mainstreaming in all project-related activities. From recruitments to capacity building activities, the project supports the deployment of young graduates to district administrations and have à set target for inclusion of women at 30 percent.

Efforts have also been made to ensure that policies, regulations and frameworks also reflect gender equality e.g., the Local Government Laws of Jubbaland and Southwest states now stipulate a 30 percent quota for women in local governments.

The local governance systems established play an important role in addressing inequalities. The programme has entrenched the principle of 'leave no one behind', by adopting community consultation processes in the selection and prioritization of community projects. The consultation forums are inclusive for all community member in regardless of gender, age (children are involved) thus providing a platform for 'voice'. This had ensured equitable access to basic services. The selection of process of targeted beneficiaries included balance representation of the different groups.

The economic and employment opportunities become more balanced as was demonstrated by increased employment of women in the infrastructure investment projects.

Beyond gender, social inclusion is a key principle in JPLG, and impact has been made by ensuring trainings, workshop, and activities include socially marginalized segments of society, including IDPs, minority groups, and people with disabilities. For instance, in children's consultations, a valuable lesson has been learned on the importance of incorporating disability considerations into the preparatory phase, such as having braille materials readily available or a sign language interpreter on standby, is crucial to fostering an inclusive environment. One of

the challenges remains the lack of disaggregated data to assess to what extent efforts benefited meaningfully socially marginalized segments of society beyond participation.

Social contract and legitimacy

The programme advocates and practices participatory and inclusive approaches for all programme interventions from planning to monitoring and evaluation through community accountability mechanisms such as the open dialogue forums with mayors and citizens. The programme promotes decentralization of basic services, this contributes to improving the relationship between communities and local government. Local governments are drivers for sustaining peace, building state legitimacy and essential for stabilization. The provision and access of the services involves a consultation process which provides a platform for communities to engaged as well as voice their needs to the local authorities. Local authorities are then held responsible in ensuring services provided are responsive to the needs of the communities as agreed. This has facilitated social contract and accountability. The ability of the local governments to provide services further enhances their legitimacy.

The local government-led decentralized service delivery model (SDM) continues to significantly contribute to improving the delivery of equitable services to communities, and in doing so, it enhances the legitimacy of local governments which are seen as credible and reliable service providers in the eyes of the public. Continued engagement and consultation with communities primarily during the DDF also fosters strong linkages of trust and collaboration between local governments and their constituencies across the JPLG-supported districts. Established feedback looping mechanisms and facilitated dialogue between local authorities and local communities through JPLG-supported platforms substantially contributed to engaging in constructive and forward-looking discourse between local leaders and their communities which resulted in genuine improvements in local service delivery and public participation in local government affairs.

Environment and climate security

The programme has supported the development of climate change adaptation planning and disaster.

management guidelines with training modules to enable local governments, as first responders, to plan for, mitigate and deal with climate change risks and shocks.

JPLG prepared to launch the Local Climate Adaptive Living (LoCAL)13 Facility for Somalia in 2024. LoCAL serves as a mechanism to integrate climate change adaptation into local government's planning and budgeting systems, increase awareness of and response to climate change at the local level, and increase the amount of finance available to local governments for climate change adaptation.

Prevention of corruption

Audits, Spot-checks and programmatic visits were some steps undertaken to prevent corruption and improve accountability and transparency.

[13] https://www.uncdf.org/local/homepage

The UN agencies in JPLG also communicated the zero-tolerance policy against fraud and other corrupt practices, including sexual exploitation and abuse, that are inconsistent with the UN Standard of Conduct or involve a loss to JPLG funds. All agencies take all reports of alleged wrongdoing seriously.

For the first time in JPLG, the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) procedure was employed in partnerships with the government and CSOs for a number of interventions to ensure accountability and transparency. Yearly audits, spot-checks and programmatic visits as well as field monitoring missions were conducted and the findings from these assurance activities, majorly non-financial, were followed up and addressed in collaboration with the implementing partners.

Project Sustainability

The programme has adopted a 'leaning by doing' approach to ensure sustainability of the capacities and systems established. The local development fund which follows a project cycle methodology allows the beneficiary districts to demonstrate and put into practice the systems and capacities developed. This is in addition to applying good governance practices of inclusive participation, transparency, and accountability on use of public resources throughout the cycle and processes. The processes and systems include planning, budgeting, procurement, and technical competencies for the effective and efficient service delivery. This approach has also allowed the programme to identify any gaps regarding capacities and implement corrective measures further ensuring sustainability. The requirement of maintenance plans for the established infrastructure has ensured local governments allocate funds for the same.

The process of enhancing capacity building through technical assistance has facilitated sustainability. Technical assistance provided via state level ensured institutionalization of the systems and processes established and quality assurance. The oversight assistance ensured the use and application of the systems and processes in line with relevant guidelines and best practices. Corrective measures addressed any shortcomings identified. The programme advanced the use of the systems and processes beyond related project initiatives e.g. established procurement, planning, budgeting systems adopted for all local government service delivery projects. This has promoted sustainability of the same.

The service delivery model has allowed for the testing of the capacities of the selected districts in implementation and delivery of the decentralised functions in the health, education, and roads sector. The models have enhanced sustainability of the decentralised of functions as capacity gaps have been identified and addressed. This is in addition to facilitating review of legislative frameworks to avoid overlaps of state/districts responsibilities and advocacy for increased funding for delivery of decentralised functions. This has resulted in increased allocation of funding by the districts to ensure successful delivery of the decentralised functions for education and health.

The public private dialogue forums established have provided opportunities for districts to engage business communities in delivery of services. The revenues collected by the districts are not always sufficient for service delivery. The forums have facilitated contributions from the business to facilitate services delivery particularly rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure. This has supported sustainability of infrastructure established in addition to local economic development.

Humanitarian-development-peace nexus

The implementation of the local government-led SDM across Somaliland, Puntland, and the new FMS is a typical example and manifestation of the principles of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The intervention contributes to improving the access, quality, and consistency of basic services available to local constituents which in turn reinforces communities' resilience to withstand recurrent shocks and emergencies. The equitable distribution and provision of basic services through the SDM contribute to the consolidation of peace and aversion of communal conflicts and largely underpins social cohesion at the local level. The prevailing political buy-in from the part of participating government authorities in the decentralization reform and increased government spending in the decentralized service delivery model as well as improved public understanding and involvement in local government planning and decision-making is a much-needed recipe for long-term development and sustainability of the JPLG supported systems in the future.

Section 7: Looking ahead, focus on the future.

Outlook

The programme has successfully enhanced local governance in Somalia. Somaliland and Puntland share the larger success with the programme having implemented interventions that have enhanced local governance and services delivery in these locations for the last 15 years. An important aspect for the future is to enhance institutionalization and sustainability for the systems and capacities established. Social accountability aspects of gender and inclusion need to be scaled up in these locations.

In the Federal Member States in the south, capacities remain weak given the presence of insurgent groups which have limited access and delivery of interventions due to insecurity. The programme has however, implemented interventions to improve access to service delivery. In addition to enhancing capacities at the state and districts. A lot of work remains in scaling up these interventions thus the need to establish effective strategies for programme delivery.

Section 8: Human interest story: Voices from the field

Some statements by trainees

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produced capable councilors who could provide exemplary services. In addition, the program assisted local council in professionally and effectively carrying out their duties and meeting the needs of the communities they serve."

Mr. Salahi Abdi Omar, Deputy Mayor of Afamdow

"The training sessions had a significant positive impact on the councilors, effectively equipping them with the necessary tools to provide improved services to their citizens and promote sustainable development throughout the city. The training also played a pivotal role in establishing a cohesive and effective leadership structure throughout the district, thereby facilitating the delivery of high-quality services. Moreover, the training session provided valuable insights into the roles and responsibilities of councilors, thereby enhancing their understanding of their duties."

Mr. Omar Abdullahi Mohamoud, Mayor of Hudur

Allow me to extend my heartfelt gratitude to JPLG for their invaluable support in organizing the local leadership management training in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Democratization. I proudly represent the first elected councilors in Gardo, with a professional background in the health sector. For me, this local leadership management training has been akin to a knowledge infusion. The modules provided have significantly enhanced my understanding of the 11 essential leadership roles and skills, which I can now confidently apply in our day-to-day responsibilities."

JPLG III in Burtinle: Stimulating Local Investments and Reinstating the Social Contract

Burtinle district in the Puntland State of Somalia is located about 120 km to the west and east of Garowe and Galkayo towns. The district shares borders with the following districts: Garowe, Godobjiiraan, Xarfo, Lasanod, Jirriiban and Ethiopia in the West. The town's establishment dates back to the late 1950s as a water source for nomads in the surrounding areas. It was famous for livestock rearing due to its good vegetation and plant cover. In 1984, during the Siad Bare regime, it was officially given the status of a grade "B" district. Despite the war, Burtinle has been one of the fastest-growing districts in Puntland, with livestock farming dominating the economy. The town of Burtinle (the district has a similar name) has 30,000 inhabitants. In the past three years, population numbers have increased exponentially due to the influx of people displaced from rural areas due to drought or floods.

LDF Grant stimulates additional resources

Burtinle district began receiving the LDF investments in 2019. Before the LDF grants, the district had limited institutional capacity, with its infrastructure stock falling apart due to lack of maintenance. UNCDF and its JPLG partners-initiated programmes to build local government capacity, set up institutional structures for service delivery and introduced a five-year district development framework that captures community-driven priorities. Ultimately, the district was able to absorb a significant array of services decentralized by the Puntland government. One of the first physical projects to be implemented with the support of UNCDF was the Burtinle main tarmac road construction. UNCDF, the LDF allocated USD 59,630 LDF grant to construct a 300M long tarmac road. Besides constructing the road, the project aimed to have the districts get first-hand experience implementing and managing one of the decentralized service delivery functions.

An initial investment of USD 59,630 LDF grant for the 300M long tarmac road has stimulated districts and communities to mobilize additional funding of USD 250,000 to extend the same road. The additional resources have resulted in an extra 4KM road construction and new streetlights being erected. More importantly, the district also used the same bidding, procurement, and contracting procedures as developed by UNCDF grants. The ultimate objective of the LDF of building capacity and systems for effective delivery of decentralized services was achieved.

SDM reinstates social infrastructure

Besides, water shortages pose a serious challenge to the lives of communities In Burtinle. This is due to lack of underground water in the area, failed rainy seasons, poor and insufficient water infrastructure, and rapid urbanization. Women and children are worst affected due to their vulnerability to waterborne diseases compounded by the fact that they are also assuming difficult household chores including collection of water from distant water sources despite prevalent safety concerns. Responding to this, the Burtinle local government with the support of JPLG supported the extension of water supply in the town by providing water pumps, pipelines, solar panels, and power generator to one of the three water boreholes in the town which has been underutilized due to lack of these supply.

Mr. Abdikafi, manager of Burtinle Water Company, added that most of the town residents are low-income families who are struggling to regularly settle their water bills. Concluding his remarks Abdikafi also said *"now that we have solar panels and power generator, we shall be able to supply water 24/7 with reduced prices".*

Strides to Inclusive and Participatory Planning: DDF Development in Burao District

"Access to information was a major hindrance to the involvement of communities, especially women and children in previous DDF processes. District leaders previously used to engage with established structures, mostly male-dominated, while making local decisions. With the avert of the JPLG, it gave hope to women that they can be part of the local government decision-making process at the very least" said Fatima Abdullahi, a Community Leader, and the Chairwoman of Lixle Neighborhood in Burao district in Somaliland.

Fatima participated in both the 2017 and 2022 community consultation exercises as a facilitator of community conversations. "This consultation process is more inclusive than previous consultations since more women and vulnerable communities have access to participate in the discussions. I also felt increased interest and willingness in women to engage in this consultation," said Fatima. Speaking at the consultation meeting in her neighborhood, Fatima also uttered "sometimes as women, we see things differently from men hence our perspective is paramount to achieve collective action and development".

Inclusive local governance improves access to basic services and the engagement of citizens decision-making: JPLG impact in Eyl district, PL

Since 2014, JPLG has supported the local government in the transformation from a district with weak institutions and untapped productive sectors into a thriving environment restoring its physical and social infrastructure. The visitor from Garowe is guided to the local government's headquarters by recently installed solar-powered streetlights financed through JPLG's LDF mechanism. "JPLG means everything to us. The capacity of the local government has improved, and we have taken increasing leadership in local governance", explains Abdinasar Yasin Ali, Director of Planning of Eyl.

JPLG III supported the local government in re-establishing mechanisms to involve citizens in decision-making processes. In 2020 and 2021, JPLG with local partners supported a massive outreach campaign offering civic education on local governance. According to the director of planning, Abdinasar Yasin Ali, the impact was significant. "Our citizens are more aware of their rights and responsibilities. The increased knowledge led to more active participation in all components of local governance."

The civic education campaign also contributed to the large voter turnout during the 2021 elections, the first to be held with a "one-person-one-vote" electoral system. The directly elected local government has recently taken office. "We are elected by the people, and we feel the responsibility to perform for the people. We are held accountable", emphasizes Deputy Mayor Abdirisak Kilwe Yusuf. Leading up to the first direct elections in Eyl, JPLG III, in partnership with the Puntland Ministry of Women and PDRC, supported increased participation of women in local councilor positions through public mobilization, and advocacy among political associations and traditional leaders. These efforts contributed to a significant improvement in the representation of women in the local council, increasing from one to six seats out of 27 (from 3 percent to 22 percent). Five of the six elected councilors engaged in capacity-building training for female candidates organised by UNICEF in partnership with PDRC.

Improved access, especially of women, is a powerful catalyst to enhance representation in other areas. Mariam Abdishakuur Farah, local councilor, emphasized that she is advocating for women's rights daily, in addition to advocating for the needs of the entire community. "If we see specific needs for women, we try to bring it into the council or start a community project to collect funds." Abdinasar Yasin Ali, Director of Planning, highlights, "Our elected female councilors are a game-changer for mobilizing women to participate in local governance mechanisms."

With the support of JPLG, Eyl has taken important steps toward rebuilding social infrastructure, providing public goods, and empowering members of society to include in decision-making processes. In the words of Deputy Mayor Abdirisak Kilwe Yusuf, "We are building a great momentum between the community and local leadership." Ultimately, inclusive and accountable local governance is crucial for fostering a culture of trust and cooperation between local institutions and the community, a precondition for a functioning social contract and maintaining peace.