



2016 Elections in Somalia: The Rise of Somali Women's New Political Movements

Sahro Ahmed Koshin
October 2016



Research Report



SIDRA
Somali Institute for Development and Research Analysis



The Somali Institute for Development and Research Analysis (SIDRA)
Garowe, Puntland State of Somalia
Cell Phone: +252-907-794730

Email:
info@sidrainstitute.org

Website:
<http://www.sidrainstitute.org>

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A note of Appreciation

Many Somali women freely provided their time to take part in the surveys, focus group discussions and interviews for this study and thereby helping us collect quality data that allowed us to make sound scientific analysis. Without their contributions, this study would not have reached its findings. This study was self funded by SIDRA and would not have materialized without the sacrifice of keeping aside other cost to allocate resources for this study. Finally, this study would not have come to be without the tireless efforts of SIDRA staff through the direction of Sahro Koshin, SIDRA Head of Programmes and leadership of Guled Salah, SIDRA's Executive Director. Many other people supported this study in different ways and made it a success. SIDRA whole heartedly appreciates all these people.

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Executive Summary

This study was carried out between September 2015 and April 2016 and looked at how Somali women and Somali women political movements are organizing themselves in anticipation of the political transformations taking place in Somalia including the 2016 Somali elections. The study investigated in details Somali women's political activism in and out of Somalia including emerging organizations and networks such as online social networks by looking at three study areas and 10 research questions. It engaged Somali women aged 18 and above at six sites (Garowe, Baidoa, Mogadishu, Galkayo, Kismayo and Nairobi) and through interviews and surveys organized with Somali women in the Diaspora therefore allowing Somali women from across the globe to participate in the study. In total, 221 surveys were completed, 200 women engaged in focus group discussions and 5 key informants interviewed.

The key results of the study are summarized below:

- i. There is a gradual growth in the participation of Somali women in politics both in cabinet and parliamentary seats. The study found out that women's participation in politics is crucial for improved governance and will produced a more equitable Somali with a stronger and more representative democracy.
- ii. Until recently, very few Somali women's movements existed but now, Somali women are actively engaged in politics and several female Presidential candidates have announced their candidature and are organizing their own campaigns for the 2016 elections.
- iii. The 6th Clan Somali women's political movement has inspired other Somali women to seek their rights and greater participation in formal gatherings, decision making and political representation. The study found out that Somali women are organizing meetings both inside and outside the country and encouraging each other to meaningfully take part in Somali political discourse. Somali women are utilizing new technology such as ICT and social media for their lobby and advocacy activities.
- iv. Through lobby and advocacy efforts, a 30% quota allocation in the constitution of the Federal Government of Somalia has been achieved and there is a greater gendered political awareness among Somali women, partially due to input, encouragement, and support from Somali women in the Diaspora. Somali women have also formed umbrella or united groups that cut across regional and clan lines.
- v. The study identify some key defining factors about Somali women: (a) they are expected to exert political influence indirectly through their husbands and their kinsmen, (b) they have played important roles in their communities, (c) they don't want beyond what Islam allows, (d) they can benefit significantly from "one man one vote" and quota principles, (e) they want to be heard because they are tired of the war, (f) growth of women's movements has led to an increase in the number of women involved in political participation, (g) enhancement in educational opportunities for girls and women in Somalia has influenced the participation of women in politics, and (h) policies alone cannot change the long held social

structures that discriminate against women and girls and there is need to involve men and youth.

- vi. The study also highlighted some key lessons: (a) lack of coordination of Somali women's efforts and movements limits their potential to succeed, (b) Somali women have important roles and make tangible and significant contributions to Somali society, (c) there are big difference between women in different social and economic classes, and (d) there is a lack of continuity in the women movements with periods of activity and others of lack of activity.

For these results, the study made several recommendations to different stakeholders. The full list of recommendations by the study is presented in Chapter 5. A few of these are highlighted here.

Recommendation to the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal State Members:

- i. Since female representation in Somalia is low (much lower than the set quota), the federal government should appointing 40% women to it Cabinet of Ministers and administrative positions. Further, the administration should give opportunities to women at all levels of administration as positions become available. In general, women should constitute at least 40% of all elected, appointed and middle and high level management positions across the three branches of the regional administration and in independent commissions.
- ii. Membership of the electoral colleges at the federal and member states should have 50-50 gender parity, taking in to account youth, persons with disabilities, minorities, Diaspora and other vulnerable groups.
- iii. The 30% seats reserved for women in the upper and lower houses should be filled first before the other seats are contested.

Recommendations to Research Institutions:

- iv. Undertake systematic and regular research on Somali women's political movements to fill knowledge gaps with the aim of enhancing policy makers' understanding of Somali women's political participation.
- v. Provide thorough documentation and inventory of women's political movement in Somalia and prepare policy briefs to guide policy makers and policy practitioners in the field of gender, women, activism and empowerment.

Recommendations to Somali Women's Political movements:

- vi. Push forward a number of the opportunities identified in this research, including advocating for the Somali government's adoption of the electoral quota, with a mandatory percentage for Somali women candidates for public elections, as a means to empower Somali women's political participation in Somalia.
- vii. Advocate for the adoption of administrative tools such as the strategies, policies, legislation, awareness raising and directives related to women's inclusion in decision making arenas.

- viii. In collaboration with NGOs, the media and traditional leaders, raise awareness on the rights of women and girls through appropriate messages that would have the effect of accelerating changes in attitudes and practices that currently negatively affect their advancement in society. This recommendation should mainly focus on rural Somalia where most women are located and most of these women are generally not aware of the laws that boost their legal status. The capacity building is crucial in driving the rural women to partake in politics. Rural women still lack basic understanding of political systems and the role of governments.

Recommendations to Local and International NGOs:

- ix. Organize discussion forum, groups and meetings with MOWDAFA Regional coordinators, women activities, women NGOs and outgoing women district councilors to promote women participation in politics.
- x. Prepare a complete list of potential women candidates for the local election. Engagement, role and conduct of the members of the international community and agencies in the 2016 electoral process must be in compliance with the universally established norms and standards set out by the relevant regional and international treaties, conventions, protocols and non-treaty instruments.
- xi. In collaboration with the Government and Civil Society Organizations, embark upon powerful capacity building and enhancement programs for prospective Somali women candidates. This should go hand in hand with plans towards the establishment of a partnership or around a critical mass of competent women in politics. Civil society organizations in Somalia continue to play a vital role in advancing women's participation in politics and elections. Much of the work focusing on attaching a sense of harmony among women to conquer the impediments they come across has been conducted by national women's groups in partnership and with technical assistance from international actors.

Recommendations to the Media:

- xii. Avoid portraying stereotypical sensational images of women which can lead to gender based discrimination. From the report, it has been noted that there is need for a lot of work to be done for women politicians to be reported on more often and in a positive manner.
- xiii. Be an informer, educator and transformer of the Somali society. Women in politics play a vital role in ensuring the democratic governance of this country and therefore their contribution to this processes need to be analyzed in the appropriate context by the media. This reflects the great role of media in politics, amongst other factors. Political advertising has demonstrated to be an important element of contemporary elections. Political advertising influences voters in support of one candidate or another.
- xiv. Ensure that every candidate has access to the media, in particular radio and television regardless of the political party. This is important since most voters gain their knowledge about politics through the media.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This chapter presents study background information and the research study problem, objectives and research questions. It also presents the relevance of the study and its scope in the context of current Somali political development.

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT SOMALIA

Somalia, situated in the Horn of Africa, lies along the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. It is bounded by Djibouti in the North-West, Ethiopia in the West, and Kenya in the South-West. Generally arid and barren, Somalia has two main rivers, the Shebelle and the Juba.



Figure 1: Location of Somalia in the horn of Africa

In 1969, General Mohamed Siad Barre took control in a coup and formed a socialist state backed by the Soviet Union. Armed opposition groups overthrew Barre's regime in 1991, and Somalia descended into civil war and anarchy. A UN peacekeeping mission failed to bring stability in 1993. In 2006, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took control of much of Central and Southern Somalia, imposing a strict interpretation of Sharia Law over the areas it ruled. The embattled TFG was relegated to control over only a small part of Mogadishu, the capital. Ethiopian troops intervened later that year to fight ICU forces. In 2011, a severe drought exacerbated by ongoing civil strife caused thousands to flee to neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya, and pushed many Somalis to the brink of starvation.

Somalia's economy relies largely on agriculture; staples include bananas, rice, sorghum, and livestock. With its 3,000 km of coastline, longer than any other African country, fishing is a major source of livelihood. Remittances sent from Somalis living abroad also comprise a substantial portion of Somalia's GDP. In recent years, piracy has also become big business: Somali pirates have attacked hundreds of boats in the Indian Sea, and demanded ransoms for kidnapped sailors. Somalia is reported to have large, untapped reserves of many natural

resources, including iron ore, uranium, and tin. Many also suspect Somalia is sitting on top of oil and natural gas reserves.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research study was launched on 19th September 2015 at SIDRA offices in Garowe, Puntland. Thereafter the research team travelled to Nairobi, Mogadishu, Baidoa and Kismayo in order to conduct the research study through questionnaires, Key informant interviews and focus group discussions. A wide selection of literature was reviewed on Somali women's political participation, general theories on political movements and women's organization and their representation in an African context. This research hence aims at studying the dynamics and the challenges faced by Somali women's socio-political movements in order to better understand Somali women's political participation.

An extensive collection reports and research studies on women in leadership positions in Africa emphasize the significant benefits of having women in leadership roles. The lack of women in leadership roles represents a failure to exploit the available talent pool. The participation of individuals in the decision-making and political powers of the state is of paramount importance to every citizen of every state. Political participation is defined as the active engagement by individuals and groups with the governmental processes that affect their lives. This encompasses both involvements in decision-making and acts of active engagement such as voting, standing for office, campaigning for political party, signing a petition or attending a peaceful demonstration. Political participation is therefore the voluntary actions through which citizens seek to influence the making of public policy. Political participation matters in the life of every individual human being, both men and women. In recognition of the essence of political participation for every individual human being, gender diversity, particularly in leadership, has become a priority internationally and globally.

Diversity promotes a better understanding of a diverse market place. The realization of the effective participation of both women and men in political and decision-making processes in an equal manner is the obligation of the state. According to UN publications (UN 2010), the right to participation is the right of individuals, groups and peoples to seek decisions collectively and to choose their own representative organizations, and have freedom of democratic action, free from interference. It is a core element of a democratic system based on consent of the people, and more importantly it enables individuals to fulfill their obligations towards their society in holding discussions and engaging in an exchange of opinions to determine the responsiveness of the development process to the needs and particularly interests of all segments of the society (Abdi, 2007). The importance of the right of participation as a means for the individual to be involved in the political affairs and decision-making processes of his/her society is recognized and protected in article 25 of the international convention on civil and political rights (ICCPR).

Globally, there is an active demand for an end to gender injustice and a challenge to patriarchal power in all domains of social, economic, political and cultural life. In response to this demand there has also been significant progress in naming and taking action to challenge the imbalance in power and opportunities and to respond to and prevent violations of women's and girls' rights. More and more social movements are being organized and led by women. Social movements are defined in this research as a mixture of informal networks and organizations that make clear demands for fundamental changes in political, economic or social systems. In Africa, social movements led by women activists have been pivotal in envisioning, instigating, making and bringing about changes on the continent. When it comes to making an impact on transforming gender power relations, social movements matter.

1.3 SHORT HISTORICAL SURVEY OF SOMALI WOMEN'S ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

Even though political activities are now considered to be the special domain of men in Somalia, women have played significant roles throughout history to be heard and represented in politics. Since Somalia gained independence, many Somali women have been appointed to senior managerial positions in politics and in other sectors of society. Somali women's political movements have been few and these have neither been well researched nor well documented. In fact, the topic of Somali women's movements remains under-researched.

Somali women's active involvement in the movement for independence and the different parties participating in it deserve mention. Somali women have played a pivotal and active role in the struggle for Somalia's independence and the nationalist movement. Over the years and throughout Somali history, Somali women have participated in, and contributed substantially to the development and sustainability of Somali society. Women were instrumental in the struggles that led to Somalia's independence, as active participants in freedom fighters' movements of the 1940s and 50s such as the Somali Youth League (SYL). To elaborate, women mobilized and recruited new members for these movements, promoted and raised awareness, collected funds and membership fees, and secured housing for movement members. Many were imprisoned, tortured and killed, as they fought for the Somali independence. It is ironic that, even though Somali women sacrificed a lot for the Somali state, and have continued to be the backbone of Somali society in the aftermath of the total collapse of all state institutions in 1991, they continue to be absent from their country's political leadership and public decision-making processes, and lack access to formal justice mechanisms.

According to the UNDP, the inequalities suffered by Somali women and girls, who make up more than 50% of the population, are "key factors contributing to Somalia's extremely poor human development index. As documented by El Bushra (2004), Somali women have also led the way in mobilizing civil society engagement in peace work, although few of their initiatives for peace have been documented. Many women peace activists have found the

struggle for peace inextricably linked to that for women's rights (Jama, 2010). When mobilized, women have played an influential part in local peace processes, especially if they have wealth, are related to clan elders or come from a respected family.

1.4 THE SIXTH CLAN MOVEMENT

In the year 2000, Somali women's social and humanitarian organizations had developed small local structures that supported regional and national networks advocating for the requirements of the communities they served and actively promoted. The success of these humanitarian and peace efforts paved the way for the Somali National Peace Conference in Arta, the fourteenth attempt at brokering peace among the five major clans (as the conflicting parties came to be defined in the wake of the large-scale violence of the civil war) in Somalia. In Arta, Djibouti, for the first time, women- 100 of them- were among the 2,000 to 3,000 Somalis selected to serve as representatives of their clans. As noted, Somali women's groups had begun cooperating across clan and kinship lines at the start of the conflict in order to obtain basic necessities, and they had continued this work as they moved into advocacy, mediation, and peace building.

Thus, the Somali women selected to participate in the conference were well versed in working with one another and had many hopes for bringing women's issues and abilities to the table. The leaders of the five clans intended to advocate for a peace accord that distributed power based on clan identities, but the women realized that a peace based strictly on the traditional clan structure would permanently leave women's voices out of decision-making structures. On May 2nd, 2000, a group of 92 Somali women delegates gathered outside a large military tent in Arta and agreed to break out of their clan-based allegiances to vote as a single bloc. When the conference opened, the women lobbied successfully to be recognized as a 'Sixth Clan,' transcending clan identity. The Sixth Clan Coalition focused on its efforts to not only encourage male delegates to work towards peace, but also to include the women's agenda in the discussions and draft language of any agreement.

The Sixth Clan used a number of techniques to obtain their objective. Asha Hagi Elmi, a coalition leader, described the women's use of poetry, a Somali tradition and one of the most powerful and effective techniques. The Sixth Clan Coalition campaigned for 10 percent representation for women, or 25 seats (with each of the five main clans allotted five seats within the women's delegation). During the conference, 70 percent of the women in the coalition voted as a bloc and were able to bring about the creation of a national charter that reserved 25 of the seats in the 245 member Transitional National Assembly (TNA) for women. The charter that the women helped to negotiate also guaranteed the human rights of children, women, and minorities. Asha asserts that the charter ranks among the top in the region and the best in the Muslim world.

1.5 GENDER AND THE 2016 SOMALIA ELECTORAL MODEL AND PROCESS

There has been a lot of talk lately in the form of conferences, meetings with like-minded CSOs, forums, debates and communiqués about the need to engender Somalia’s constitutional review process as well the electoral, political, policy formulation and legislative processes; including the weighty issues of **child protection; gender based violence, migration, youth radicalization, and women’s political participation**, especially with regard to 2016 elections model and process. The following shortcomings have been noted in the Somali Electoral Model;

- The absence of a legislative framework for the electoral process.
- The proposed electoral model contained in the Communiqué¹ dated April 9, 2016 is flawed and does not pass constitutional test.
- The electoral model sidelines the constitutionally mandated National Independent Electoral Commission that was approved by parliament.
- The National Leaders’ Forum itself is not recognized by the Constitution.
- The process is being rushed without genuine, meaningful and effective consultations with and participation of the broad spectrum of Somali peoples.
- The model correctly reserves 30% of seats of both houses for women but robs them of their voting right by diabolically proposing that women comprise only 30% of the Electoral College-hence turning affirmative action on its head.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.6.1 General objectives of the study

The general objective of this research study is to investigate Somali women’s political movements that have risen in order to participate in the anticipated Somali elections in 2016. The study focuses on movements that are currently active. To this end, three specific objectives have been developed which will help explore the accomplishments and malfunctions of the movements and thus to strengthen the capacity of Somali women’s political participation through research and policy recommendations.

1.6.2 Specific objectives of the study

To realize the overall objective of the study, three specific objectives were formulated and a number of research questions drawn for each specific objective. The specific objectives and related questions are summarized below.

Specific Objective	Research Questions
a) Understanding / gaining in-depth knowledge about current Somali women’s political movements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. How are Somali women organizing themselves for the 2016 elections? ii. What kind of political movements (history, evolution, leadership, role, etc.) are Somali women involved in, leading, part of? iii. How are Somali women’s political movements

¹<http://www.villasomalia.gov.so/the-national-leaders-forum-communicue/>

	mobilizing support?
b) Explore achievements and challenges these Somali women's political movements face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. What achievements have Somali women's political movements made? v. What medium of communication are they using for information dissemination? vi. What challenges and bottlenecks are Somali women political movements facing?
c) Investigate the enabling factors and the various avenues for opportunities for Somali women's movements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vii. What are some of the enabling factors and opportunities that have aided Somali women's political movements to achieve more political representation for women in 2016? viii. How are Somali women utilizing lessons learned to make a breakthrough? ix. What are potential avenues for opportunities for Somali women to be more engaged in politics?

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Geographically, the study was undertaken in the major towns in Somalia namely, Garowe, Baidoa, Mogadishu, Galkayo and Kismayo. Additionally because a very large group of Somalis live in Kenya and also because several leaders of the Somali women's movements in the study reside in and have their base in Kenya, the study also conducted a FGD in Nairobi. These cities of study were chosen for this research because they are the main cities where Somali women's political organizations and movements are actively operating and also because of accessibility. This accessibility facilitated the collection of the necessary information concerning the subject under investigation. Because the research was a Somalia-wide research, the study was conducted in Puntland, Jubbaland and South-central Somalia. The target group was Somali women above the age of 18 and who are socially and politically engaged. The research considered both Somali women in Somalia and outside, hence interviews with Somali women in the Diaspora were also organized. The study was conducted between September 2015 and April 2016.

1.8 RELEVANCE

Exploring where the current state of Somali women's political movements is and the achievements they have made will lead the research to fundamental policy strategies for Somalia. Examining the unique ways in which institutional support and activism influence Somali women's movements to mobilize for action and eventually achieve goals will help in the reinforcement of outcomes of future women's empowerment interventions in Somalia. The importance of considering these factors will also extend to deeper understanding of all social movements by Somali women. Further, Somali women's movements area at most innovative time and it is therefore important to the factors that have contributed to innovation among these movements. SIDRA has through interviews with individuals and focus-group discussions gathered a wealth of knowledge about the similarities and differences as well as the dynamics and synergies of Somali women's movements. This study's examination of the literature on African women's socio-political movements has

contributed to a more complex analysis of Somali women's movements. This research study will yield both quantitative and qualitative data that can be put in various categories of urgency and significance. To begin with, through this study more knowledge will be gained about the different kinds of challenges Somali women and Somali women's movements face in accessing political space in Somalia.

1.9 BRIEF PROFILE OF SIDRA INSTITUTE

The Somali Institute for Development and Research Analysis (SIDRA) is a knowledge-policy interface established to fill the strategic gaps of shaping and dialoguing a whole range of policy agendas and in generating and communicating relevant research findings to policy actors in Somalia. Through a preliminary assessment conducted by the institution it was realized that SIDRA could come up with potential solutions to better address issues affecting the people of Somalia such as the increasing poverty, insecurity, injustice, lack of adequate information for decision making and research/studies on socio-economic planning and livelihood reforms for restructuring both rural and urban communities. We provide knowledge-based services to a spectrum of institutions and clients.

The work SIDRA does is founded on rigorous understanding and analysis of the context, dynamics and environment. SIDRA studies trends, captures and organizes this data and extracts requisite insights for action. Our basic but key premise is our commitment to making positive difference. We shall address societal issues because it is our responsibility. We shall offer knowledge and skills to other organizations to help others make a difference. We employ our capability to connect, convene and influence the center of masses. SIDRA has developed a 3-year Strategic Research Plan and in the next three years the institute will focus on the following thematic areas in order to contribute to ongoing development transformations in Somalia:

- Governance and Democracy (G&D)
- Security and The Rule of Law
- Peace through Business Development
- Sustainable Environment and Natural Resources Management
- Educational Management and Institutional Capacity Enhancement
- Gender and Women's Empowerment

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents a description of the research design, the target population, sampling procedure, methods of data collection and analysis as well as ethical considerations that guided this study. We discuss the current state of Somali women's political movements and look at the characteristics of these movements, the patterns unique to each and the scope and the scale on which they are working.

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN, TARGET POPULATION AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The study utilized a cross-sectional descriptive research design. It described the extent to which women in Somalia are politically represented and their ambitions in the upcoming 2016 elections. The target population was women of between 18-65 years of age who are interested or are in active politics. Women's movements leaders were selected for interview because they are the ones gearing up for Somalia politics in 2016 elections and are therefore well positioned to provide the required information to answer the questions posed in this research. The study gathered both qualitative and quantitative data. Structured questionnaires supplemented by Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and secondary data sources were used to increase the credibility of the research findings. The unit of analysis was the individual woman engaged in active politics. The questions used for the various interviews can be found in the Annexes. These questions centered on Somali women's movements, their constitutional awareness, their goal of achieving equal political participation for women in politics and plans for collective lobbying in Somalia. Interviews were also conducted with key Informants throughout Somalia. The women leaders behind the movements were also interviewed. Furthermore, the researchers attended several national and international gatherings such as the Somali Gender Review workshop funded by the European Union as well as the International Women's Day Celebrations on March 8th 2016 both of which were held in Mogadishu.

2.2 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sample size for this study was 221 persons for the public questionnaires and 200 for the FGDs. The respondent ages varied from 18 to 65 years old. Convenient sampling procedure was adopted to select respondents for the questionnaires based on accessibility of the respondent by the researcher. 5 purposively sampled key informants were interviewed in this study.

2.3 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

This research was a Somali-wide research study. It collected information from Somali women's movements all over Somalia and beyond. The research used various research methods to collect qualitative data. Specifically, the research study used the following methods:

- Desk review of relevant literature and documents,
- Collection and archiving of information, resources and knowledge related to the research topic,

- Individual interviews with relevant women leaders,
- Interviews with Key Informants / Policymakers,
- Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs) held in Nairobi, Garowe, Mogadishu and Baidoa, Kismayo and Galkayo (Galmudug), and
- Online survey through SurveyMonkey.

Qualitative and quantitative secondary data was also used in this study including government and non-government publications, reports, policy documents and relevant statements.

2.4 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

At the end of each interview, the filled questionnaires were cross checked for completeness and any missing entries. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were then entered, cleaned and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages were used to present quantitative findings using tables and charts. Qualitative data from secondary sources were subjected to content and thematic analysis where the responses were transcribed and themes developed. The themes were presented together with verbatim. Emerging patterns and themes were compared against the survey data and the study objectives used to complete and supplement quantitative data.

2.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For SIDRA to conduct this research, Ethical approval was sought from the commission of higher education in Somalia as well as the relevant government agencies. The researcher upheld all the ethical principles pertaining to the study as a whole. To uphold utmost research ethics during and after the study, the researcher ensured that:

- i. A proper introduction and explanation about the research was made to the participants at the start of any engagement and data collection only proceeded after the respondents gave their informed consent,
- ii. The information from the data collected was also used for this research's purpose only and the thereafter treated with utmost confidentiality, including the filled questionnaires, and
- iii. Respondents were given assurance that the information collected was to be kept and treated with strict confidence.



Photo 1: Participants of the Garowe FGD participants pose for a group picture. In the middle (in pink) is the Vice-Minister of Health Mrs Amina Mahamed Abdullahi and next to her the Former Minister of the Constitution, Democracy and Federal Affairs Mrs Zahra Said Nur.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a review of the development of empirical and theoretical literature relevant to this study and the theory adopted in explaining the relationships in the study variables. The literature reviewed was drawn from many sources including books, journal articles, reports and internet sources.

3.1 WHAT ARE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS?

In order to best understand Somali women’s socio-political movements we need to first of all understand what social movements are. According to literature, socio-political movements do not always conform to one model and a multi-dimensional approach to studying them encompasses more activities. Most emerging social movements have a local scope. They are focused on local or regional objectives, such as protecting a specific natural area, lobbying for the lowering of tolls in a certain motorway, or preserving a building about to be demolished and for women’s rights. Furthermore, socio-political movements are not eternal, they have a life cycle. For example they are created and they grow, they achieve successes or failures and eventually, they dissolve and cease to exist. Figure 2 below demonstrates the evolution of social movements and the impact of group versus individual-led pressure groups (*source: socialmovements.org*). Group movements tend to have a more reformative and revolutionary as well as a radical impact on society than individual because of their group pressure and collective force.

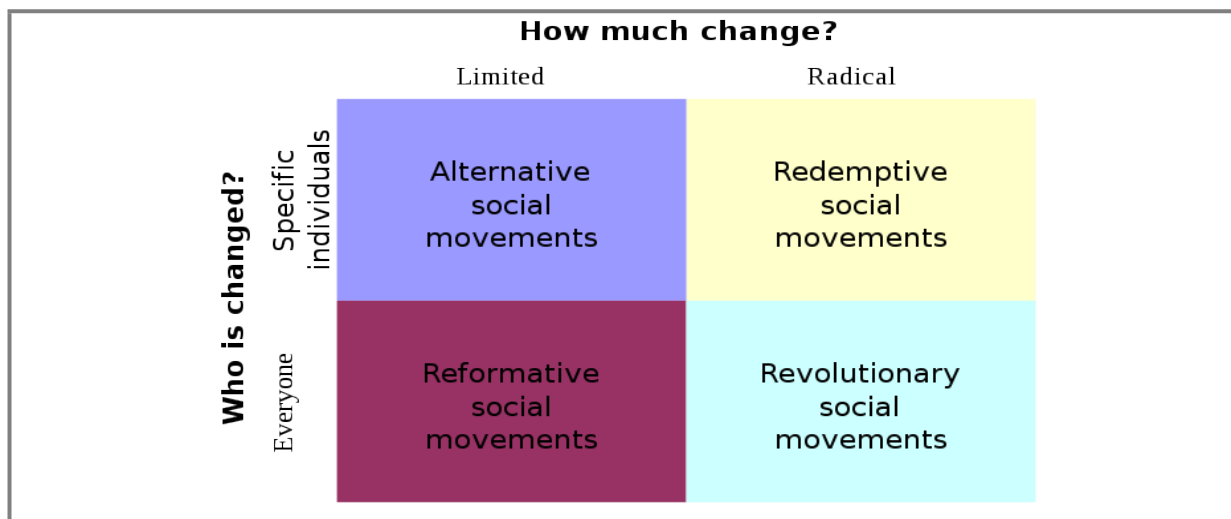


Figure 2: Evolution of social movements and impact of group versus individual-led pressure groups.

3.2 WHY IS STUDYING WOMEN’S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS RELEVANT?

The theories of collective behavior refer to social movements as a spontaneous set of actions that challenge the social order and social norms of behavior in a given society. Studying the phenomenon of Somali women’s political movements, against the backdrop of this theoretical framework, will help researchers as well as stakeholders better understand the dynamics of these women’s movements as well as delve into why they emerged in the first place. Researching Somali women’s political movements will enhance our own

understanding of these movements. Because research on this topic is scarce, the study will generate recommendations which can be used as potential guiding tools in order to transform and further strengthen the impact of Somali women's own activism and institutions. The recommendations that this research study will produce will benefit policy makers and policy practitioners in the fields of gender and Somali women's activism and empowerment. This research study is part of SIDRA's Strategic Framework as well as its thematic focus area as it falls under the Gender and Women's Empowerment component, which is one of the 6 Thematic Focus Areas of SIDRA. Somali women's political participation in Somalia has been typically defined as weak and fragile. This research challenges this by exploring what the strategies are that Somali women employ to access the public sphere in the context of a patriarchal socio-political system.

Research shows that the interests of women, children and families are better taken into account by women. In Somalia, socio-political movements led by women and gender activists have been pivotal in envisioning, instigating, making and sustaining social changes. In the past year alone, Somali women have formed movements as forms of collective action in response to the detrimental situation of inequality, oppression and unmet social, political, economic and cultural needs of Somalis in Somalia. Somali women have organized themselves to pursue a common political agenda of change through collective action. In Somalia, socio-political movements are beginning to play an important role, now more than ever, as women struggle for equality and political and social transformation.²

3.3 HOW AND WHY DO SOCIAL MOVEMENTS EMERGE AND GROW?

Social movements are forms of collective actions that emerge in response to situations of inequality, oppression and/or unmet social, political, economic or cultural demands. Social movements, including those integrating or focusing on gender power relations, have existed across history. Social movements like those for peace, antimilitarism or the environment, or those against racial and ethnic discrimination also began to emerge or expand in the 20th century. According to Mekonnen (2013), this happened against a backdrop of political and economic crises, increasing urbanization and international travel, the rise of mass media, rapid scientific changes and technological shifts, nuclear production and the expansion of accessible communication technologies, to name but a few.

In understanding social movements it is vital to remember that they are dynamic, historical phenomena and as such are shaped by circumstance; they are contingent things, which grow or shrink in response to factors that enable or constrain them. This includes conflicts within them and with significant changes in the external environment with impacts for social movement politics, membership and strategies. Hence, while generalizations can be made, it is also vital to consider movements in their specific historical context in order to fully understand their politics, choice of strategies, and the meaning and impact of their presence

² Strengthening Women's Rights and Political Participation. Retrieved may 13, 2016, from <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/addressing-gender-programming/strengthening-womens>

and actions. As will be the case in Somalia, put differently, 'social movements must be understood in their own terms. Time is a critical factor in understanding social movements. In Somalia, women are carefully gearing themselves up for the upcoming 2016 elections.

Movements may envisage their change and commitment as taking place over a lifetime, or over generations, until the desired changes happen. Movement participation itself can develop over generations, as the children of movement activists and young people born into activist communities often go on to be active themselves in the same movements or in building new movements. In their politics and practices women's movements create various forms of counter-culture and alternative power relations. Movements are largely framed as examples of the breakdown of social control, with movement theory exploring both the psychology of movement participation, particularly in mass public protest, and how movements emerge as responses to shifts in social structures. The effectiveness of movements themselves is also assessed on the basis of their ability to generate resources (for example, financial, social networks, knowledge, legitimacy) and in turn use these to affect change. It is therefore important to consider the influence of shifting political contexts and the ways in which these create opportunities and affect the focus of social mobilization. The question of why movements form in the first place is an area of continued debate in social theory, and also a relevant consideration for movement building and strengthening initiatives that seek to stimulate social movement action.

3.4 BRIEF HISTORY OF SOMALI WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SOMALIA

Historically women's roles in society have been defined by the sometimes opposing value systems of Somali clan structure, customary law (or *xeer*), and Islamic Sharia. None of these systems promote women's engagement in politics. In contrast to many conservative Islamic countries, however, Somali women always enjoyed a substantial degree of societal freedom and independence.

This was certainly the case before the rise of Salafi militancy in the wake of state collapse (see Lewis, 1962). Women played a role in the struggle for independence – in the 1970s the government unveiled a statue of Hawa Osman Taako, a Somali woman killed by the Italians during an anti-colonial demonstration in 1948 (Aidid, 2010). Acknowledging Somali women's role in independence and the 'October Revolution' of 1969 that brought him to power, on International Women's Day, 8 March 1972, President Mohamed Siad Barre publicly declared that women "should attain full emancipation in all aspects of life," and that the "Revolution guarantees such rights and decrees laws to this effect." While banning opposition parties and social organizations, Barre actively encouraged the establishment of a government sanctioned women's organization. Even though understanding and studying the historical participation of women in Somalia is important; studying the current status of women in political participation in Somalia is equally imperative.

3.5 THE CURRENT STATUS OF SOMALI WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SOMALIA

The study is in possession and reviewed the Somali Provisional Constitutions of the existing Regional Administrations, and found the following information. In terms of numbers and quotas, the existing constitutions have the following quotas:

- Puntland is in yet to begin a process of constitutional review and to include a quota for women in the constitution,
- Galmudug has allocated 30% quota for women
- South West has reserved 20% quota for women
- Jubbaland has reserved 15% seats for women

The various Somali women’s political movements analyzed and put forward in chapter 4 are trying very hard to communicate with all the existing administrations in the regions mentioned above to send them some information about the new movements but also request from them to increase the quota for women in the constitution if it is not specified. For example the SGEM movement has been sending official letters to the Ministry of women and communicating by telephone.

In Figure 3 below one can see the political engagement of women in Somali between 2005 and 2016 in both cabinet and parliament (*Source: Somali Open Data*). One can see that the number has been growing gradually.

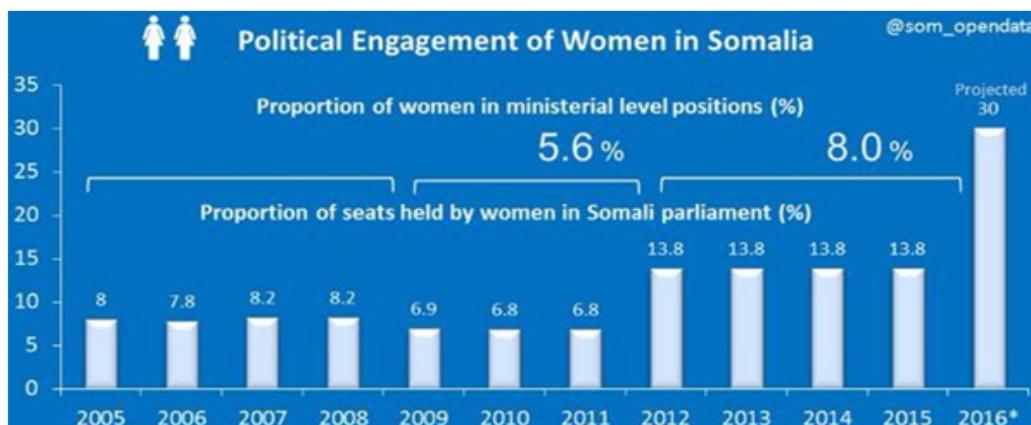


Figure 3: Somali Women’s Political Engagement from 2005 to 2016 in Somalia

Table 1: Overview of number of women in political leadership in Somalia as of August 2016

Federal and State Government	Parliament	No. of Females in Parliament	Cabinet Minister	No. of Females Ministers
Federal Republic Of Somalia	275	40 (14%)	66	3 (8%)
Somaliland	82	2 (2%)	52	4 (8%)
Puntland State	66	2 (3%)	46	4 (9%)
Jubaland Administration	75	3 (4%)	12	1 (8%)
Galmudug Regional Administration	89	8 (9%)	51	3 (6%)
Interim South West Reg Admin	149	32 (21%)	65	4 (6%)

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter SIDRA discusses the findings of the research against the backdrop of the specific objectives of the study. SIDRA will discuss, compare and contrast the varying feedback from respondents to the survey as well as the Focus Group Discussions as sources of information and how these findings fit with other research studies on the area.

4.1 RESPONDENT AGE DISTRIBUTION AND OCCUPATION

A total of 321 people took part in this research study with 211 of these completing the study survey. Various methods and techniques were used to collect and analyze data. Five FGDs were conducted in Garowe, Mogadishu, Baidoa, Kismayo and Nairobi with each FGD bring together between 30 and 50 knowledgeable men and women as participants.

The age distribution of the 211 respondents that participated in the survey ranged from 18 to 64 years as shown in Figure 4. The majority of the respondents (71%) were within the middle age groups, that is between 25 and 44 years of age with the other age groups below and above these ages accounting for only 29% of the respondent. The younger of the middle age group (25-34 years) had nearly half of the respondent with a 48% representation while the older of the middle age group (35 – 44 years) had almost a quarter of the respondents with a 23% representation. Majority of the responses provided to this study was therefore from middle aged participants.

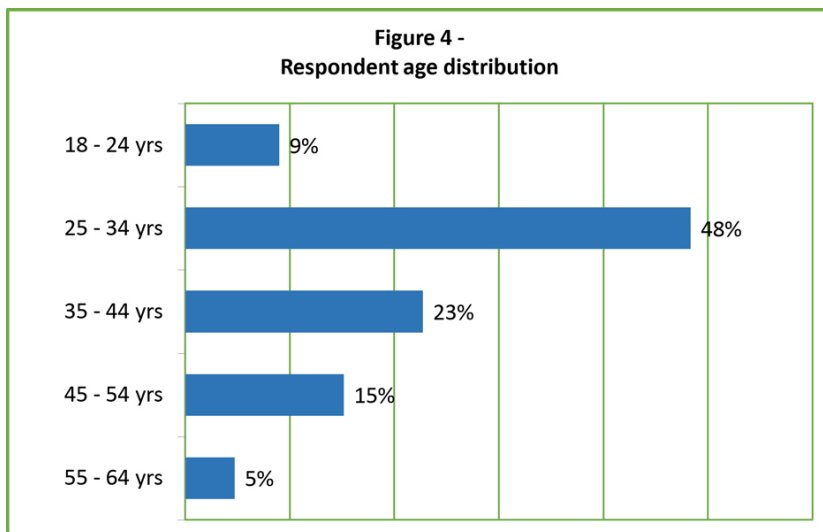


Figure 4: Distribution of study survey respondents by age group

A total of 221 respondents took part in the surveys and their ages ranged between 25 and 44 years. The majority of respondents who took this survey were between the ages of 25 and 34 years old and this amounted to a total of 69 people. 53 people fell between the ages 55 and 64 years of age. A third group of respondents were between 18 and 24 years of age, while 32 people were between 45 and 54 years of age.

Of the 211 respondents who took the survey, nearly half (47%) of them were in management occupations while a third (31%) of them were in community service, education

and training. 17% of the respondents were working in the health sector while 5% of the respondents did not indicate their occupation. The occupation of the respondents involved in the survey is summarized on Figure 5 below.

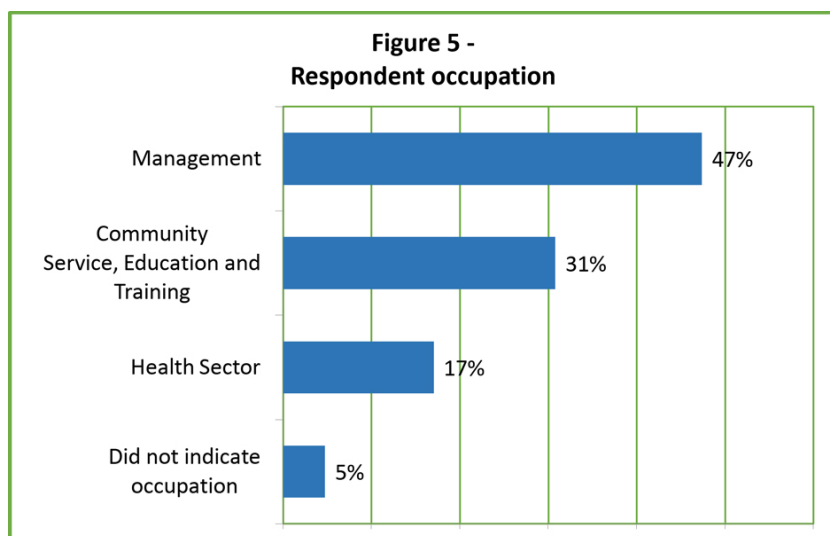


Figure 5: Respondents occupation

Further analysis of occupation by age group showed that the groups of respondents who fall in the management occupation category actually came from all age groups with the majority of them coming from the 25 to 34 years age group followed by the 18 to 24 years age group. Most of the respondents aged 55 and above worked in the teaching and health sectors. The study showed a strong correlation between youth and Somali women in politics. This is mainly because the younger population is highly educated and in most case holds management positions.

4.2 PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SOMALI WOMEN’S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

4.2.1 Are Somali people aware of women political movements?

This research study analyzed the ways in which Somali women activists and politicians have been transforming politics in Somalia. With a particular focus on the last few years, this research collected data illuminating Somali women-led movements across the regions in Somalia and beyond. The research addressed how through the systematic study of Somali women’s political movements can make a significant contribution to our understanding of emerging Somali politics, Somali women in politics and the role of socio-political movements in Somalia.

The respondents were asked about their knowledge of Somali women’s political participation and movements. Figure 6 shows respondent awareness of Somali women movement. The majority of the respondents (58%) responded that aware of political movements led by Somali women. Respondents frequently mentioned Talowadaag, SOMGEM, Vision 2016, Faduma Dayib and Anab Dahir. However, a quarter of those interviewed (25%) did not know or have any knowledge of the existence of any Somali

women’s political movements. 17% of the respondents were either not sure, did not reply to the question or chose the category ‘other’.

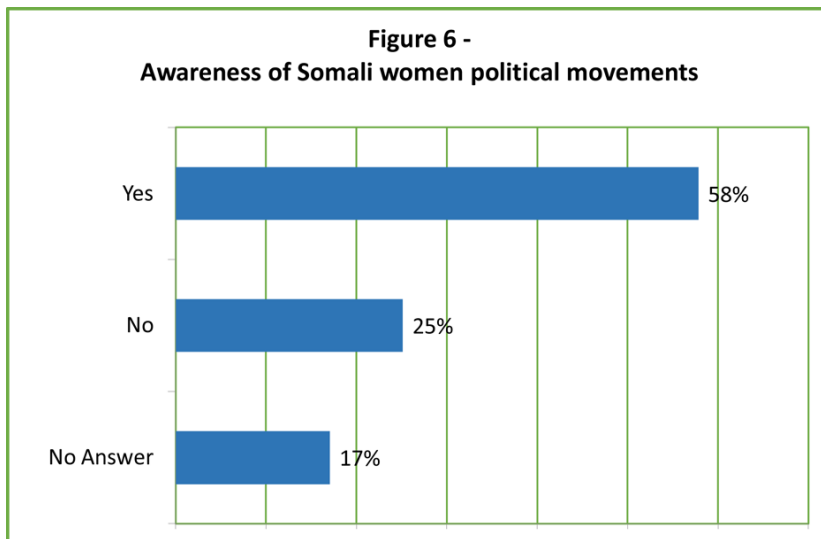


Figure 6: Awareness of region, national or global Somali women political movement

4.2.2 Are Somali women now more politically active?

When asked if Somali women are now more politically active than in the past, almost two thirds (63%) of the respondent responded that Somali women are now more than ever before politically engaged and active while nearly one quarter (24%) of the respondent did not think so (Figure 8).

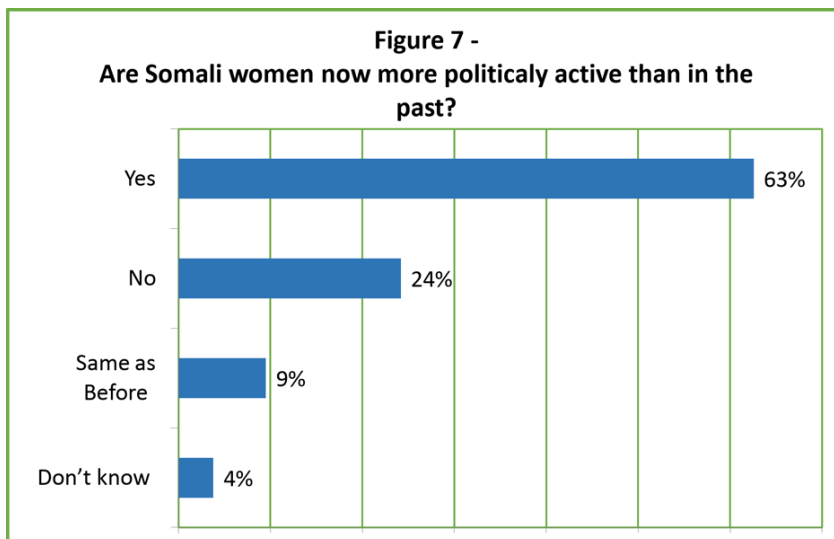


Figure 7: Somali women political engagement compared to the past

Participants who felt that Somali women were more active in politics than in the past were asked to give their reasons. The reasons provided included the fact that today there are more women in government positions in Somalia than ever before. Other respondents felt

that more and more Somali women were taking the lead at grassroots-level lobbying and advocating for the inclusion of women and young girls in politics.

Other respondents felt that the fact that more presidential candidates are coming up is actually a sign that more Somali women are politically oriented, because this is a phenomenon that was not there before in the history of Somalia. Some of the respondents mentioned organized activism taking places were women's organizations such as Fursad-Somali women graduates, Samofal, We are Women Activists (WAWA), Somali Women Concern, etc. Still, others urged that there are more Somali women appearing in local and international media. Here, various interviews by various local and international media outlets with Somali women presidential candidates were mentioned as examples. Another group of respondents felt that Somali women have organized themselves very well on social media and are using various platforms to organize, plan and express themselves.

Various Facebook pages, Google Groups and Paltalk groups were mentioned here such as Vision 2016 for Somali Women, the group called Somali Women with Political Interest, the Somali Gender Equality Movement and Young Somali Women in Political Leadership. In the focus group discussions, respondents echoed that women want to be heard; "Because women are tired of the war. They are tired of the chaos and the violence. They are tired of the corruption and the patriarchal demeanor of Somali politics which favor men over women. They are tired of exclusion of and not having a voice in the clan rule of Somalia."

4.2.3 How are Somali women organizing themselves?

The interviews and FGDs revealed that Somali women are organizing themselves in networks, collaborations across geographic and political divides, and communications in forums. They are also organizing themselves in NGOs and political and social movements throughout Somalia. In the FGDs participants concluded that when women are in positions of authority, it has a huge impact on how crimes against women and young girls are reported and investigated. With women involvement, it is not just a question of ensuring security forces and police are involved. Even in government and politics, there is a link between women's inequality and sexual and gender-based violence. Participants argued that in order to eradicate gender inequality, you need to have women at the table. This study has presented the profiles of the Somali women's political movements and those of the women leading the movements.

4.3 THE EMERGENCE OF SOMALI WOMEN'S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND THEIR DEFINING FEATURES

This research study focused on three specific objectives in an attempt to explore how Somali women are organizing themselves in the form of movements for the 2016 elections. The first specific objective centered on understanding current Somali women's political movements by addressing the following research questions;

- How many Somali women's political movements are active today? Who are leading these movements and what are their defining features? (Profile, history, evolution, leadership, plan, etc.)

- How are these Somali women's political movements mobilizing support in organizing themselves? How much authority do women in politics have today in Somalia?
- What do Somali women movements have in common and how do they differ from one another?

4.3.1 Somali Women for Vision 2016

Somalia is gearing up for its first democratic election in more than 20 years, which will take place in 2016. Vision 2016: a framework for action has three tracks: (a) The review of the constitution, (b) The formation of a boundaries and federation commission which will determine the boundaries of the regional states, and (c) The democratization of the electoral system, followed by other legislation like the Political Party Law, the Electoral Management System and other laws.

Already the laws establishing the commissions have been passed by parliament, the cabinet has selected commissioners, now it is up to parliament to endorse the commissioners. In a recent interview with the media section of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the president of Somalia mentioned the following as major challenges to implementing Vision 2016; (a) Insufficient resources, (b) Finalizing the legal environment, (c) Mobilizing society and making them understand what's coming next, (d) Providing a secure environment, (e) Support for technical knowhow, funding and security, and (f) Management of the forces and improving command and control and relationships in the sectors. These all affect the realization of vision 2016. Vision 2016 however has the potential to offer Somalia new ways of involving women in Somali affairs.

There are numerous ways and possibilities in which women can take more active roles. Vision 2016 has the potential to breathe a wave of fresh new air into engendering Somali politics. It attracts many Somali women to engage as its various components have so far made it possible for Somali women to take up active roles. In early 2014 and using the hashtag #SOMWomenFor2016, Somali women from all over the world came together online to voice their concerns about the lack of a united political voice of Somali women. Somali women worried about the future of Somalia came together on various Social platforms using the internet and especially Social media such as Facebook and Twitter. A Group called 'Somali Women for Vision 2016' and over 8630 Somali women came together online to plan ahead. Women from every corner of the globe joined the movement and introduced themselves as well as delved into discussion and brainstorm sessions about the future of Somali women in politics in Somalia. Somali women were connected regardless of their geographic location, age and or education. They showed solidarity with one another and carried the discussion to twitter.

The members we interviewed supported each other in various ways. They helped to educate one other on the major challenges and bottlenecks that Somali women living in Somalia face. Women living in Somalia informed women living outside of Somalia. They discussed the framework set up for the new federal government, which guaranteed that 30

percent of parliament seats would go to Somali women - but this was not included in the constitution, and women ultimately came to make up around some 14 percent. The rise of Somali Women for 2016 gave rise to the creation of the Somali Gender Equity Movement-SOMGEM. A full overview of the tweets of this campaign can be found on the link.

This group has existed since 2015 and its members increase by the day. According to the members of the large online forum whom we interviewed, this forum forms a fundamental part of the women's social lives. Some of the members of the group who were coincidentally living in the same area or towns tried to arrange get together meetings in order to meet and share concerns or do activities together on a regular basis. Get together meetings were arranged and each group that did meet would post online pictures and a short report of the meeting on the online forum. Some of the women shared concerns on how they were viewed or spoken to by men. The group did not get any external formal sources of funding and so the members paid for their own travels and other costs.

The members in the group interact, engage and identify with each other, often at regular or pre-determined times and places. The group members shared beliefs, principles, and standards about areas of common interest and they come together to work on common tasks for agreed purposes and outcomes in Somalia. The members we spoke with were all aware that they were part of an online activism group.

4.3.2 Somali Gender Equity Movement- SOMGEM

The Somali Gender Equity Movement (SOMGEM)³ is a global movement that started organically in social media after Zainab M. Hassan, the founder, initiated a Facebook dialogue on Vision 2016 for Somali Women. This timely idea was a much-needed response to the glaring absence of Somali women's voices from the critical debates surrounding the Vision 2016 framework for Somalia. SOMGEM is a socio-political movement that galvanized the support of 9,000 plus diverse Somali women in a span of less than three months through social media. The mission of SOMGEM is to sustain Somali women's movement domestically and internationally dedicated to promote social and political equity in the public decision making arena in 2016 and beyond.

³<https://twitter.com/search?q=Somali%20Gender%20Equity%20Movement%20&src=typd>



Photo 2: Founders and members of Somali Gender Equity Movement (SOMGEM) pose for a picture during the launch of the movement

SOMGEM vision is to achieve equitable power sharing and gender mainstreaming. SOMGEM is a nonpartisan socio-political movement that will endeavor to ensure women's equitable representation in Somalia's political leadership and in the public arena. SGEM will critically analyze and judiciously respond to the Somali Federal Government's Vision 2016 framework, review the draft provisional constitution and other regional Constitutions and policies to apply gender lens, with the aim to pave the way for a minimum of 40% female representation in the public appointive and elective offices. SOMGEM is committed to continuously support and build Somali women's capacity building on existing initiatives and best practices on the ground. SOMGEM is striving to bring about positive societal change through advocacy for human rights in general, and women's rights in particularly in every aspect of social and political life. Somali women are an integral part of Somalia's nation building agenda.

Currently, SOMGEM is in the process of sending letters to all the Regional Administration leaders to urge them to establish gender sensitive planning and to increase women representation in the public appointive and elective offices. In the Strategic Plan of SOMGEM for 2016, their goal is to conduct trainings for Somali women in power to exercise their power even more. The trainings vary from communications skills to lobby and advocacy. SOMGEM is a non-partisan global movement that comprises of 9,000 Somali women of different backgrounds inside the country and in the diaspora, who have united to advocate for gender equity in Somalia. The Mission of SOMGEM is to sustain the movement domestically and internationally, and to promote social and political equity in the public decision making arena in 2016 and beyond.

SOMGEM particularly analyzed and responded to the Somali Federal Government's Vision 2016 framework document, the Provisional Constitution, and other Regional Constitutions and policies and applied a gender lens, with the aim to paving the way for a minimum of 40% female representation in the public appointive and elective offices. Over the years, SOMGEM acknowledges the fact the Somali women have played active roles in the struggle for independence, saving their families and rebuilding the country. Despite these critical roles, women's voices and participation are too often undervalued, excluded, and ignored. Consequently, we have contacted most of the exiting Regional Administrations which are currently in different stages. SOMGEM regularly distributes letters applicable to the specific situations of women and addresses them to leaders with specified requests.

4.3.3 Talowadaag Somali Women's Political Movement Puntland

Although the Talowadaag Somali Women's Movement actually existed informally prior to 2013, it was only in November of 2013 that the movement was officially created at Puntland Development and Research Centre (PDRC) in Garowe. The movement had begun with a roundtable discussion with the president of Puntland H. E. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali immediately after he won the election discussing with him ways to increase the female members in his cabinet and the result of this meeting was that women in Puntland got two female ministers for the first time in the history of Puntland. Since their establishment, the women have met various influential political figures such as H.E. Said Hassan Shire, the speaker of Puntland parliament and his two deputies. They also met with H. E. Hassan Sheikh, the president of Federal Government and discussed Somali women's participation in politics, federalism and unity of Somalia.



Photo 3 – Members of Talowadaag Women's Political movement pose for a photo after a meeting outside PDRC, Garowe. With them is the Former State Minister for Good Governance Mr. Mohamed Faarah Ise.

The main focus area of Talowadaag movement is to provide networking opportunities to women and young girls so as to exchange ideas and promote collaboration. Secondly the group aims for the advocacy for, and promotion of democratic values and human rights and

for the participation of women in achieving them; advocating for women to participate in decision making at all levels and contribute to the development of the country; capacity building to deepen women activists knowledge of what democracy means, and practical skills training for conflict resolution and the non-violent promotion of democracy

Members of the movement have met with H.E. Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, the former Prime Minister of Somalia, and discussed the importance of increasing the number of Somali women in federal cabinet. They subsequently met with H. E. Mohamed Sheikh Jawari, the speaker of federal parliament and also discussed with him the 30% quota of the women in parliament as defined by the Federal Provisional constitution. In 2013 and 2014, they attended the world women's conference in New York, funded by UNFPA and UNDP, which facilitated and supported the women in attending the International conference.

In 2013, UNWOMEN also supported Talowadaag in attending an important meeting in Mogadishu. At the launching ceremony, over a 100 women from all over Puntland and beyond came together for their voices to be heard in political circles. Since their establishment, Talowadaag has made an impact and blazed an important trail. Their influence is heard, seen and felt in various government meetings held by various stakeholders. Since it was established, the group has publicly approved and disapproved of certain social and political issues⁴. The Talowadaag Somali Women's Political Movement was founded by five Somali women who all hail from Puntland. They urged Puntland female Ministers and Members of Parliament to promote gender equity by advocating for an increase of women representation in politics. They lobbied for opportunities for women as they arise in the parliament, cabinet of ministers and other administrative positions. They also lobbied to promote legislation and policies that were gender sensitive.

“We want to see drastic changes in Somalia and those changes can only come if we fight drastically for them. We want more women to be in politics all over Somalia. We want more female speakers in Parliament. We want more Ministers and Vice-Ministers, more members in the local council and Local governance” – Statement by one of the Founders of the Talowadaag Somali Movement, Garowe, Puntland

The Talowadaag Somali women's political movement's motto is “we are part of the solution, not part of the problem” and their vision is to “visualize Somali women's equal access to decision making and political participation”. Some of their major aims are to organize women-leader programs which will bring a select group of proven leaders together for a roundtable discussions about issues related to their future. Talowadaag aims to empower Somali women in political knowledge so that they aim for greater participation in formal institutions. They advocate for the completion of the democratization process. They aim to promote women employment through practical enterprise skills development and to

⁴<http://puntlandmirror.com/?p=4375>

advocate for political representation of Somali women in government so that they become Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Director Generals, and also function in top management levels.

The one of the major primary mandates of this group is to aim to serve as a platform for women activists to address the importance of promoting political participation in democratic process for information sharing, ideas, and action oriented solidarity movement. There is continuous disseminations of information within the movement and outside its headquarters (regions and districts of Puntland State) on how to build strong relationship with one and other and deepen their knowledge of key issues and to develop practical skills such as participation in government offices and efforts to strengthen democracy and to bolster pro-democracy groups in Somalia. The movement provides the young generations with the opportunity to participate in the process of democratic transition through trainings and encouragement workshops.

The movement also plans to widen its activities to the other parts of Somalia. The members are doctors, consultants and managers, business women, and activists of many associations from all over the regions of Somalia. They have also met with traditional elders, religious leaders and the youth between March and June of 2016 as evident in the Somali media.

4.3.4 Presidential Candidate Fadumo Dayib Qasim- Moving Somalia Forward -

In September 2014, Fadumo announced her intention to run for the Presidency of Somalia in the country’s first democratically-held election since 1967. While she calls herself a dreamer, history has shown that important political and social change often begins with a dream and a vision for change. The path she has chosen has always been wrought with risk and danger. But her survival as a woman who, like many others in Somalia, endured displacement, genital mutilation and poverty - gave her the confidence to soldier on in pursuit of her vision for a peaceful and prosperous Somalia.



Photo 4: Somalia Presidential Candidate Mrs. Fadumo Dayib Qasim speaking to an audience in America

Fadumo has been instigating social change and cultivating the skills to turn her vision for Somalia into action for decades. She has pioneered human rights activism in Africa with over 12 years experience as a healthcare practitioner focused on public health and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) in Somalia, Kenya, Liberia, Fiji and Finland.

Further, her development experience within the UN and the Finnish public sector is extensive on issues of democracy, reproductive health, women’s and girls’ rights, inclusion and empowerment in all spheres of society. Fadumo Dayib has a campaign plan in which she outlines what she will do differently. On her website, one can find some of the ideas she has in store for moving Somalia forward. She tackles the issues of displacement, unemployment and education. In various interviews she highlights the strategy she will employ to tackle the issue of insecurity and conflict.

4.3.5 Presidential Candidate Anab M. Dahir – Xisbiga Bulshadda Campaign

Anab Dahir is the second Somali Presidential candidate for the 2016 elections. A medical interpreter and 42-year-old mother of six living in St. Cloud, Minnesota, came to the United States from Somalia in 1997, seeking asylum in the Chicago airport. Now an American citizen, she is active in the rapidly growing Somali community in her Midwestern state. She decided to run for presidential office in 2015. Dahir is running to become the first female president of Somalia. Often citing “Men have led Somalia for 25 years and they’ve not done anything”, she has played an important role in setting out the practices and policies for housing and neighborhood programs as a member of the St. Cloud Housing & Redevelopment Authority board of commissioners. A women’s advocate, Dahir is the founder of Central Minnesota Somali Women and Youth Support. Started in 2012, the organization is dedicated to assisting female immigrants and youth by providing the resources to help them become self-sufficient.



Photo 5 – Mrs Anab M. Dahir from Minnesota, USA, one of two Somali women who are running for the Presidential Seat of 2016.

In her presidential campaign plan, Dahir's first priority would be to address security and stabilize the country. Almost half of Somalia's population is under 18, and 67 percent of youth are unemployed. Dahir agrees with the studies that say unemployment creates an environment ripe for young people to commit crimes, to act out violently or to be seduced by fundamentalist groups like al-Shabaab. More information about Anab's presidential campaign can be found on her website: <http://www.xisbigashacabka.com/>

In an interview with the researcher of this study, Anab said that, if she is elected, she will prioritize security and health, foster unity, and restore the relationship among Somali people that has been broken for more than 25 years. She will encourage genuine reconciliation by using the Somali traditional peace building effort that is based on forgiveness. She will build a society that sees eye-to-eye with all its people. She will campaign for justice and equality for all people regardless of their clan, gender, region and class. And she will promote women's rights and crusade for better education for children and focus much of her work on offering kids from the poorest families a chance to go to school free of charge.

4.3.7 The Sixth Clan Movement: A catalyst that paved the way

The Sixth Clan Somali women's political movement, led by Asha Hagi Elmi and others, was actually the first ever organized movement that was funded and led by Somali women. After 2000, this movement actually paved the way for Somali women to seek greater participation and representation in Somali issues, especially in politics. This movement created massive awareness of the urgent need and importance of including Somali women in formal gatherings, decision-making forums, and in political organizations and institutions. Somali women achieved a 30% quota.



Photo 6: Lead Researcher Sahro Ahmed Koshin standing with Mrs Hagi Elimi in her home in Nairobi

4.3.9 *The Less recognized, informal women's movements*

During the implementation of the research a number of less well-known, less recognized and informal networks were discovered. This research therefore also examined Somali women's informal movements and networks and approached the topic using a cultural lens in order to also consider the cultural domain which Somali women occupy and use to their benefit. Somali women use culture to also express themselves and voice their opinions. Several Somali women's informal women's networks are in existence in Somalia and they are campaigning for women's rights poetry and songs. But how exactly are Somali women using culture to politically express themselves and even become the political voice for women. Oral literature plays a very important role in Somali culture and has done so for thousands of years. Poetry, proverbs, riddles, and other genres are used as acts of communication and as a form of education (elders to the young). They play a significant role in traditional courts and in tribal and political affairs. Somali classical poetry—the type of poetry best suited to address issues of serious interest—is divided into four main styles: Gabay, Geeraar, Jiifto, and Buraanbur.

The Gabay, Geeraar, and Jiifto are seen as male genres while Buraanbur is considered the female style. Poetry by Somali women concerning matters of political interest, such as clan politics, women's struggle, modern government politics, is not well documented and the main medium of publicizing and disseminating poetry is oral memorization and recitation. Various women activists recite their meaningful political poetry at meetings, on radio, television programs even in print. People like Asha Gelle, Hawa Adan, Asha Haji Elmi and Hawa Abdi have published their own books in which they vivid speak about their personal lives, the challenges they faced as leaders and Somali women's political participation. Poets such as Amina Haji, Faduma Diriye (Qoysato) perform their poems in informal gatherings criticizing or praising certain political leaders or political developments. The group meets very often in Garowe and has networks throughout Puntland and Somalia.

4.4 ACHIEVEMENTS MADE BY SOMALI WOMEN'S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

The second specific objective of this research study explored the achievements of Somali women's political movements. It also explored the challenges that they face. A set of detailed questions addressed this specific objective;

- What achievements have Somali women's political movements made?
- What medium of communication are they using for information dissemination?
- What challenges are they facing?

For one to understand the political status of Somali women or their movements for that matter, one would have to review the social status of Somali women in the realm of culture. The innate tendency that Somali women have for nurturing and taking care of their own render them loyal citizens of their various communities in Somalia. As a result, Somali women readily contribute towards the development of their communities and are willing to go the extra mile in order to sustain the societies they belong to. To begin with, Somali

women have made great contributions to the society at large which also needs to be considered beyond the political lens.

Firstly, the 6th Clan Somali women’s political movement inspired other Somali women to seek their rights and to seek greater participation in formal gatherings, decision making tables and in political representation. Secondly, Somali women have, through lobby and advocacy efforts, finally achieved a 30% quota allocation in the Constitution of the Federal Government of Somalia.

According to the respondents who took the survey, more and more Somali women are organizing meetings both inside and outside the country and encouraging each other to meaningfully take part in Somali political discourse. Even though some respondents were critical and questioned the impact that Somali women could make labeling them “unorganized and dependent on the International Community to speak for them”, many respondents witnessed the creation of several groups and movements by educated women especially in the past few months and mainly in the context of the upcoming elections. Many Somali women have formed umbrella or united groups that work across regional and clan lines. Figure 6 shows the perception of the respondents on the achievements that Somali women’s movements have made so far.

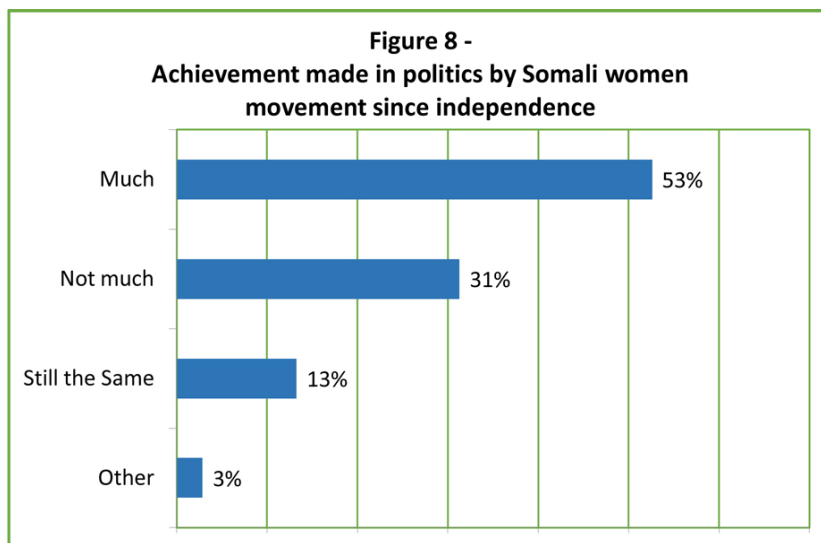


Figure 8: Achievements made by Somali women movements in politics since independence.

Thirdly, there is a greater gendered political awareness among Somali women, partially due to input, encouragement, and support from Somali women in the Diaspora. According to the respondents who took the survey more and more Somali women are organizing meetings both inside and outside the country and encouraging each other to meaningfully take part in Somali political discourse. Even though some respondents were critical and questioned the impact that Somali women could make labeling them “unorganized” and “dependent on the International Community to speak for them”, many respondents are optimistic about the achievements of Somali women’s political movements. Access to technology, which was

mentioned by an overwhelming number of respondents (175), has allowed women to actually witness several Somali groups and movements being created by educated Somali women especially in the past few months and mainly to make their voices heard in the upcoming Somali elections in 2016.

More and more Somali women are using ICT for their lobby and advocacy activities, especially social media. Some movements such as the Diaspora Somali Gender Equality Movement (SOMGEM) first started as an online Facebook group to challenge the status quo and later moved on to establish themselves in Somalia. Also more and more women are using Information and Education (IEC) Materials. For example, Fadumo Dayib's campaigns consisted largely of IEC materials which her fans and supporters used to hang up on their car window screens, shops and even house doors. For two decades Somali women have been advocating for, and building the capacity of other women in political participation and decision-making.

Additionally, Somali women have formed umbrella organizations such as COGWO in Mogadishu and WAWA in Puntland which unite women and women's groups to work together across geographic and clan lines. According to the FGDs, Somali women are working harder than before to be seen and heard. When asked how much difference Somali women's political movements have made in the last years, respondents identified among other achievements access to quality education and a strong presence in civil society.

4.5 CHALLENGES INHIBITING SOMALI WOMEN'S POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

The study found out that there are major barriers to Somali women's participation in politics in spite of the widely held opinion their participation is a very important as it enhances the welfare of Somali society and contributes positively to the democratization process. Numerous challenges and bottlenecks were mentioned by all who took part in this research study (See Figure 7 below). In all the FGDs, individual interviews and survey, barriers on all levels of society were mentioned. It is hard to ascertain from when or where the stigma against Somali women leaders stems. According to the expert interviews, however, there seem to be many reasons why people think Somali women should not take active part in leadership and governance.

The argument about the "biological clock" seems to be the most popular case against Somali women. In many African societies this is also the same and it is believed that, as a result of a woman's productive capacity and motherhood, that is to say the duty of bearing and bringing up children, she has little time for anything other than the upkeep of her household. Although it is valid that the maintenance of a household and upbringing of children is time consuming, it seems that the proponents of this argument forgot that the mothers of male leaders everywhere had the time and competence to raise these leaders. Somali women too have the capacity to create a positive influence in the lives of their families and communities. But Somali women leaders are even more adept at being leaders

themselves than their male counterparts as they spend a great part of their lives being unofficial leaders.

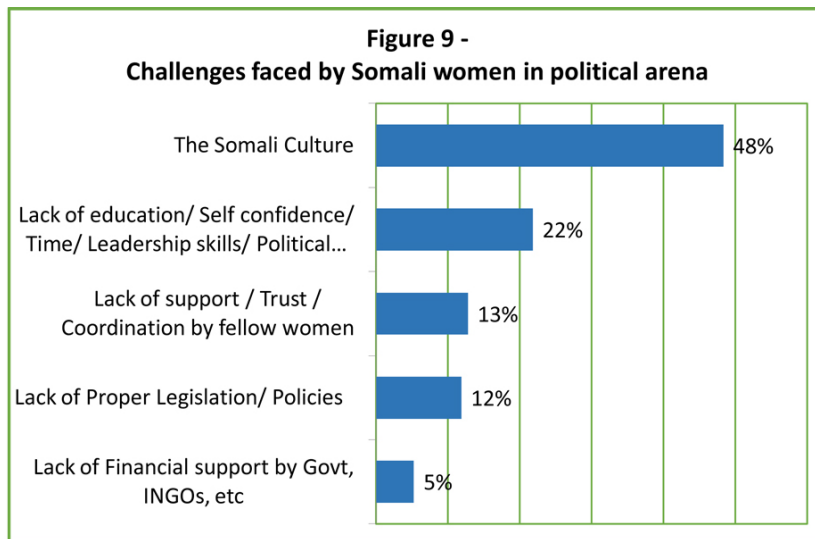


Figure 9: Challenges faced by Somali women involved in politics in Somalia

According to Figure 9, the Somali culture is the biggest challenge Somali women face in accessing formal politics with 48% of the respondents citing regressive cultural norms and traditions as the main cause. But many were keen to stress that Islam is not to blame. "It's in the roots of culture to keep women away from power, but I don't believe it's religious," said one respondent. Additionally, there is no recognition of Somali women's contributions. During the civil war, Somali women played a big role to sustain their families and develop the country. They worked in local NGOs to develop communities. So even if people cannot see it, Somali women are already playing a key role in developing this country. Thirdly, discrimination of Somali women in power was a challenge according to the women in political positions who shared with us their sentiments in this research study. An often-mentioned but spurious rationale is that women are usually very sensitive and emotional and as such they would not be able to perform to the best of their ability in stressful situations. True, women are often very emotional but that does not necessarily have to be a bad thing? The empathy that women feel for people and situations makes them more able to understand the people they are leading and this motivates them to work even harder to achieve the goals of the community. Moreover, are men never "emotional" in this sense?

Fourthly, another challenge was that Somali men do not seriously consider women's contributions in decision-making because traditionally women were not allowed to attend meetings with men. Somali women were traditionally not accepted as formal clan representatives' in general political matters. Women in the decision-making positions feel isolated and for this reason women can't assert themselves and thereby lose self-confidence. Fifthly, many Somali women are economically still dependent on others. Although the educated Somali women have access to ICT, many women don't have access

to ICT technology and media as a communication medium. Additionally, Somali women's themselves are often an obstacle to each other, as was cited by the women.



Photo 7: Participants of the Focus Group Discussion held in Nairobi pose for a group photo

Time and again it has been mentioned that Somali women don't support each other. They are said to be often jealous of another's progress and, according to the respondents, do things that will break the other woman campaigner so that she doesn't succeed. In elections, Somali women support male politicians from their own clans for the campaigns and they don't get their chance on involvement of decision-making. Somali Women themselves have no political will and that is why their participation in politics becomes very poor. On a different note, once they are in power and have authority, they don't remember the co-workers with whom they worked nor the promises they made to the women supporters who worked with them. Moreover, the fragmentation of Somali's women's efforts was highlighted. There is a pressing need for unifying Somali women and their efforts in the face of opposition against their participation in politics. Somali women's organizations fail time and again to politically empower and to build up linkages among their women members.

In the FGD in Nairobi, for example, the discussion on challenges faced by Somali women with political ambitions concluded that Somali women who hold political positions lack political experience and skills of leadership. Since Somali women have no majority in the seats of the councils, women's voices are unheard. Some Somali women in politics lack basic communications skills and access to information in decision-making processes. The only means in which women can overcome their political challenges is to pursue different forms of political empowerment such as leadership trainings and seek financial and capacity strengthening support. On the other hand, some Somali women have faced negative criticism and harassment by family members in the public arena, as well as gender-based

violence in the streets by fellow protesters and state actors. Furthermore, from experience, women noted that over time the movements may cease or stop.

Movements generally go through stages of growth and change. In some cases movements grow systematically in strength and impact over time and in others they fluctuate in response to internal dynamics and external pressures. Somali women's movements need to educate themselves about the lifecycles and dynamics of movements because they can cease to exist; most commonly when a movement's central goal has been addressed. Other reasons for movements to cease include systematic suppression by external forces that dissipate movement actors and make movement actions impossible. This can include targeted harassments and killing of key movement activists, and campaigns to discredit visible movement leaders.

Movements also collapse due to internal conflict. Theoretical analyses of society and social change argue that social movements of the past have often emerged from the marginalization of people in societies and growing class consciousness and mobilization among the working class to change this. They have explored how oppressed classes were mobilized and helped transform economic power and bring political decision-making under the control of the majority. Barriers around the recognition of gender equality and women's active participation are also often key issues within movements. Often women themselves don't want to work together to increase their efforts and visibility. Moreover, there have not always been enough, able and willing to fill leadership positions. This appears to be true for Somalia, where a 30% quota is allocated for women in politics, but where there seem not to be enough women to fill up the 30% quota.

4.6 ENABLING FACTORS AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT ENCOURAGE WOMAN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Specific objective three aimed at exploring the various enabling factors and avenues and opportunities for strengthening the capacity of Somali women's political movements through research and policy recommendations. The specific questions which came under this chapter were the following:

- What are some of the enabling factors and opportunities that have aided Somali women's political movements to achieve more political representation for women in 2016?
- How are Somali women utilizing lessons learned to make breakthrough?
- What are the potential avenues for opportunities for Somali women to be more engaged in politics?

There is no single factor that can be accredited for the contemporary positive trends in Somali women's political participation. A number of factors have worked together in raising women's participation in politics in Somalia. This study focused on factors such as; the increase in women's movements, quota systems, multi-party systems, increase in educational opportunities, funding from international institutions and global and national

agreements, conventions and commitments amongst others (Figure 10). According to the focus group discussions, there are many opportunities awaiting Somali women’s political movements that would enhance or facilitate their political representation in 2016.

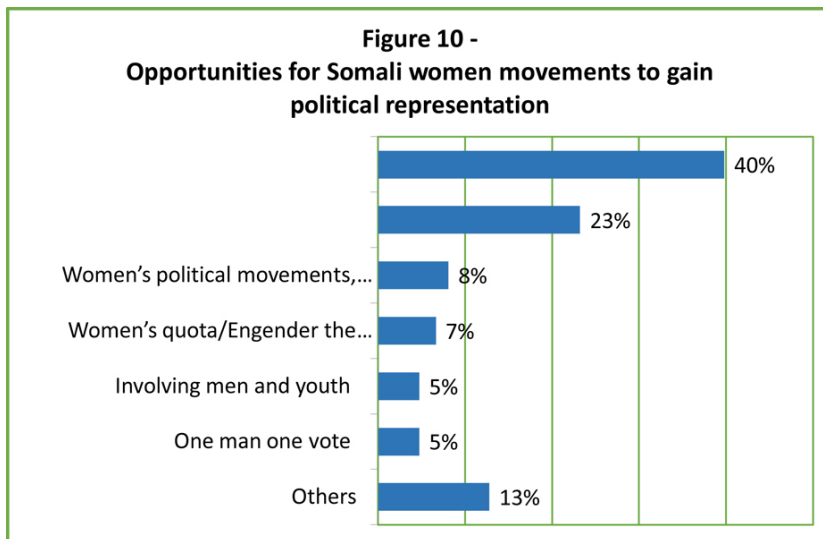


Figure 10: Opportunities for Somali women movement to gain political representation

4.6.1 Somali women’s transformative agency and legacy

Somali women have played important roles in their communities since the beginning of time. Historically, however, Somali women are known, accepted, and expected to exert political influence indirectly through their husbands and their kinsmen. The legends and folk-tales mentioned include that of Araweello, which warns of the dangers of women assuming political leadership. Some respondents mentioned the wives of the warrior sultan Wiil-Waal and explained that in cases where Somali women have been denied direct participation in the political process, they always exerted political power through their husbands. According to some of the experts the research interviewed, the First Ladies or the wives of Somali Presidents and Vice Presidents/Prime Ministers since independence also seem to have wielded political influence and power.

4.6.2 Using Islam as a mean to achieve justice

Throughout the research Somali women have insisted and re-echoed that they don’t want beyond what Islam allows. As can be seen in the table above At least 49 respondents of the 221 and the Women were among some of the most valuable religious scholars for the early Muslims. But women’s increasing presence in governance institutions has generally not had much transformative impact on the subtle patriarchal culture and practice in Somalia. Progression in opening up spaces for women’s political participation in Somalia has not gone along with the diminishing of the patriarchal power structures. Due to the influence of patriarchy, men continue to be in authority of the state of affairs and make decisions almost exclusively, even when the issues border on women. The few Somali women who have

mustered up enough courage and strength to speak have received very scant attention and respect.

4.6.4 Increase of Somali women's movement groups and civil society

The emergence and spread of Somali women's movement groups in Somalia and beyond is one of the factors which have led to an increase in the number of women involved in political discussions. These groups have been of much importance as they have lobbied for women's political leadership. The groups have been fundamental as they are pushing for legislative and constitutional transformations throughout Somalia. Somali women are running for public office in growing numbers and this demonstrates that the various groups have led to the new trend which has led to an increase in women's political participation across Somalia.

Somali women's political participation has also been enhanced by the growing drive from the civil society in fostering women's participation in leadership. The Civil society has also played a key role in advancing the participation of women in politics. Civil society plays a vital role in furthering women's participation in politics and elections. This involves advocating for policies that will increase space for women's involvement, encouraging women to vote and serve as monitors in elections; supporting them to stand as candidates and run a campaign. In addition the civil society in Somalia has been instrumental in creating awareness of women's rights. Through the civil society, practices that violate women's rights have been challenged. As a result the activities of the civil society have assisted in building social acceptance of women's political participation. This support has given women the confidence as a group and also at individual level.⁵ The civil society organizations have played a key role in the emerging trends of women's political participation in politics.

4.6.5 The Quota system and the One Man One Vote electoral system

Although it is neither stated clearly in the Somali Constitution and neither in the Puntland Constitution nor in the constitutions of the regions in Somalia, a major opportunity from which Somali women can benefit from mentioned by the respondents (119) is the quota system and the One Man One Vote electoral system. In the Garowe One and Two Principles, a 30% quota, defined as a mandatory percentage of women candidates for public elections for women to enter politics, has been promised and this is an opportunity that Somali women could seek and fight for. The positive trends in women's political participation in Somalia have also been inspired by the increased number of countries in East Africa that have introduced quota systems for women's representation in parliament and in local government.

⁵ Women's Political Participation in Puntland: Prospects for Progress, SIDRA Institute, May 2015, Garowe. Available online <http://sidrainstitute.org/2-uncategorised/151-women-s-political-participation-in-puntland-prospects-for-progress>

A good example is Rwanda where women make up 44% of the Parliament, which is quoted to be the highest in the world.⁶ The Rwandan example illustrates the fact that the quota systems have played a critical role in enhancing new trends in women's participation in politics and signifies the role that quota systems have played in improving women's political participation in Africa. With that in mind, the quota system in Somalia has the potential to generate commitments to women's amplified representation in Somalia; this has been a critical factor in pressing forward women's political representation. Throughout the regions in Somalia some have established quotas for women's political representation at various levels of the government structures as a strategic tactic for improving women's political participation.

However, Even though the electoral quota can be an effective administrative tool, without addressing the structural constraints on Somali women's political exclusion, their inclusion through gender quota alone cannot lead to effective representation. Academics and scholars such as Abdi (2011:21) emphasize the same point by arguing that "while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public and political sphere, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy for empowering women." Women who lack civil and economic rights are unable to exercise their political rights fully. The gender quotas, therefore, need to be linked with efforts to achieve social and economic redistributive justice in the society.

One strategy for women would be to revise the Somali Federal constitution and make it more gender sensitive through the process of gender mainstreaming. The adoption of gender-sensitive administrative tools in Somalia can empower women's political participation and decision-making authority. These tools are among others the strategies, policies, legislation, awareness raising and directives relating to women's inclusion in the decision-making arena.

4.6.6 Educational Opportunities and economic empowerment

The enhancement in educational opportunities for girls and women in Somalia has influenced the participation of women in politics. An improvement in women's education in Somalia has led to the emergence of a larger group of talented Somali women who are in a position to compete with men for political power in various levels. All of the founders of the political movements the research studied are highly educated and the most highly educated was Ms Faduma Dayib Qassim a PhD Candidate at Harvard University. Education in this regard shows that it can be a powerful predictor of women's political participation in Somalia.

Education has empowered many women in Somalia to join movements and enabling them to participate in political activities. Evidence from research, has shown that education is one

⁶ Source:

of the most imperative paths for encouraging women to speak out. This has been made possible by the consequential acquisition of essential knowledge and improved communication skills useful for their political engagement. Education is crucial for unlocking other opportunities for women which are necessary for political participation. Education has been a foundation for women to access high-income jobs that provide the resources and contacts for political activity, and access to non-political associations such as charitable organizations or religious establishments that can be a recruitment ground for political activity. At least 48 respondents of individual interviews as well as the FGDs and interviews with Key Informants have all agreed that the fact there are more educated women seeking political power shows the importance of education as a major breakthrough for Somali women.

4.6.7 Engendering Vision 2016

The overarching enabling factor for Somali today is Vision 2016 itself. Somali women feel that they want to be heard because they are tired of the war. They are tired of the chaos and the violence. They are tired of the corruption and the patriarchal ethos of Somali politics, which favors men over women. According to the interviews with experts, apart from cultural patriarchy, the nature of politics in Somalia is another contributing factor in the exclusion of Somali women in politics. If one look at the nature of Somali politics, one can see that it is indeed a clan and tribalism based system. In the essence of this political culture, it is apparent that the system supports men's involvement in the political system and political sphere. According to the survey, men's domination of political all practices and decision-making processes can be attributed to the influence of tribalism, which is based on gender discrimination and prevents women from access to participation in political life and the conduct of public affairs. The most important enabling factor for Somali women's political movements would be to have more women representatives in the most senior positions. These women could function as an example and lead to more confidence and political awareness among Somali women. The women representatives could lobby for specific women's rights, such as fighting against the male-dominated tribal culture, promote better healthcare, and support progressive social change. But they can also demonstrate to the youth and men what women are capable of, and how women in power could be role models for other women. Unfortunately, a group of people still think that women do and should not have any influence and political opportunities.

4.6.8 Involving men and youth

The involvement of men is key to the success of the gender-equality movement in Somalia, but changing long-held social structures and convincing men of the importance of equal opportunities for women will not happen overnight, the women experts say. Policies alone can't do it - we need to start looking for ways to engage boys and men so that they start to see the value in equal opportunities for "if resources are scarce it is better to educate a boy instead of a girl" girls, The cost of not working with boys and young men is that programmes

and policies [working] with young women and girls will continue to come up against the barrier of male power and expectations, structures and beliefs that benefit men over women," the authors state.

"The price that will be paid is simple: the continuing disempowerment of girls and young women down the generations – and the restriction of boys and young men to traditional 'male' roles."

As a result of the women-centred approach of gender programmes over the years, men have largely been sidelined in the discussion and have often felt alienated by the sometimes confrontational approach taken by gender activism. As Presidential Candidate Fadumo Dayib says “ If a boy sees his father treating his sisters and mother with respect, he will pick up on it; if he sees his father beating his mother up, there's a much higher chance that he too will be abusive”.

Nearly all of the women we spoke with were critical of the international gender meetings because in those meetings the vast majority of participants are women and this means that work is being done on the surface in the name of gender equality but in actual sense the root causes - such as patriarchy - are not being tackled, which makes the struggle unfruitful. We should be preaching to and involving those who have the power to change things. At least 120 of the 221 recommended involving men in the policy-making, implementation and activism around gender equality issues in Somalia.

The challenges and enabling factors Somali women’s movements experience: The case of Fadumo Dayib Qassim

Some challenges are Institutional. Others are structural; women were my biggest opponents. Everyone is doing their own thing. I faced many challenges; I wasn't in civil society. We should support 6th clan movements. We should go back to 6th clan movement. We need to establish a more inclusive movement, free from clan. Lets us build on this foundation; someone should bring the window and someone the door.



It is a territorial issue, you will hear people saying 'I used to be in this area, in this domain' but I come from outside of that network. They said she is sijui, she is not even Somali. Others said she is without religion because

if she were she wouldn't be doing what she did. We all know the biggest funders of male political campaigns are women, they coordinate, they connect, they cheer, they are the major investments, yet there are always left out in everything because we are so scattered. What is our common interest as women? Women should look beyond the clan, the personal interest, as long as they see each other as enemies, women will not succeed. But in women themselves are their biggest enemy

They say 'If it won't be me then let them all die'. But for me, everywhere I go, Somalia goes with me. The Issue of identity needs also to be addressed accordingly. We are the future of the continent. We are highly educated. How do you provide space to this kind of group in Somali affairs? Why alienate them? We are the future of Somalia and the continent and the world. We are Transnationalist Hybrids. Who is a 'Somali'? When are you a Somali? Who is the authentic Somali?

What are the characteristics? If your father isn't born in Somalia, can you be Somali? My candidacy also challenges the mainstream thinking but also the new Somalis. Diversity isn't only about gender and clan, there are many other things as well such as looks. The current political actors have a certain look. They are light-skinned, old, grey haired, they have around for some time. They said to me you don't look like a politician; you are not white, fat and old. You don't look like the women we have known, they said. You are not suhalo-baruur, you are not. If you are under 40 you aren't allowed to think critically. How do I mobilize support? I have extensive base in social media. Young people are eager to meet me. When I came to Uganda, Kenya, Somalia. They told me we have followed your journey from 2014 onwards. You have been consistent throughout. I met them in restaurants, everywhere. Sometimes I go somewhere, everyone knows me. They know me from social media. I guess because the most extraordinary thing they told me is when they said to me 'you are humble. You took some time to see the community, you are meeting with us in person, you are honest and straight forward. How will you manage, survive Somalia?'

They see that I don't have a personal interest everyone is my friend. They sense compassion. Honesty. Our people are suffering, I used to cry every day. I visited Elman peace centre. I saw disabled children. I saw suffering. I felt for them. Some politicians say to me we would support you ...you can make a difference. Enabling factors? Women and youth count a lot, but they don't realize that themselves. They lack someone to connect them and give them guidance. If I don't go through I will invest in these two groups so that they form a huge movement. Youth should have quota too. I want to create an enabling environment for these groups. We don't want a clan leader; we will choose our own leader. The youth need support from everyone. They need international support to give funding, to conduct capacity building. Another opportunity lays in the National Legal frameworks. The neat way is to knock but some doors need to be broken down, eg. the 30 % quota without laws to implement it, nothing will happen. It is just tokenism just like in 2012 when the 14% quota for women was quickly filled and everyone, especially the men came after the 14% of women. This is a challenge.

Nationally, people are now ready to hear and accept that women should be given their rights and positions another enabling factor is that there is a change in atmosphere, there is a new breeze of air. There is more interest in youth and women than before; people are saying we have seen men now let's see women and youth. Another enabling factor is my own personal motivation. For 42 years we have not been able to vote, give our voice. Now is an opportunity to let myself be heard. I may not be your perfect candidate but I have not killed, I have not stolen. I love my country, her people. I am even ready to serve without pay. After having lived in Diaspora for 26 years, I understand the significance of having a sovereign and independent country. I lived with foreigners. Some can spit on you. I sleep thinking I can come home but I really can't. Even at the risk of losing my life. Because I believe I am better than most of the people there. Let them measure my work, my input, my plan for 26 years I have not been able to choose whom I want in office. Someone born in this setting, with no education, with no health, is a big disservice. But what can we do? Is to give a good legacy I could die here. I want to make it possible for my children and other people's children to come back home.

It is also argued that the gender gap in politics cannot be redressed simply by bringing more women in to the political system. This requires another supportive mechanism such as policy. The formulation of adequate policies and programs addressing negative customs and practices, which foster women's marginalization and political culture, is very essential. The framing and adaption of national gender policies to include and stress gender representation in the political system and all public spheres is also an administrative tool that can empower and enable women to develop their constituency (Abdi:2011). Advocacy,

lobbying and awareness initiatives are also some of the other effective tools that could lead to empowering and enabling women to influence political arenas.

Another enabling factor is that Somali women are receiving more public support from civilians and more organizations are supporting young women to see quality education abroad through scholarships or are funded to attend an international conference. An enabling factor that played a significant role and contributed to the advancement of Somali women is education. More and more Somali women and young girls now have more access to quality education and there is a strong correlation between education and women's empowerment. There are more and more educated women going into politics both at home and abroad. Finally, the role of the Diaspora cannot be forgotten as more and more support is coming from Somali women in Diaspora.

4.7 LESSONS LEARNED FROM PREVIOUS WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENTS IN SOMALIA

What the respondents have learned from the previous political engagements of women in Somalia is that Somali women are hard working (some say more than the men), they are accountable and not corrupted. The need for participation and political engagement is the first lesson to be learned from previous women's political engagements. The second lesson to be learned is that Somali women's roles in society have always included fighting for women's rights and working tirelessly in order to contribute in the reconstruction of Somali society and achieve results. A third lesson learned is the lack of coordination of Somali women's efforts and movements, which harms the potential for unity. If coordinated well, Somali women could function as role models giving necessary support to each other and especially to younger Somali women who may not yet have the needed confidence because younger women are often less confident.

The fourth lesson learned, which was cited a lot, is that Somali women have always been hard workers. In the important work they do in society, they represent the importance of women's rights and the respect that they deserve. What we can also learn from history is that Somali women have made tangible and significant contributions to society. Another significant lesson was the need for Somali women to come together and work closely together. Women need to stand together and work together towards their goals. If this is not the case, they will be overrun by the politicians and lose the trust they built up in the community. These great lessons were not shared by all the respondents. Some people claimed that there were no lessons to be learned and some others didn't know if there were any lessons to be learned. Historically age mattered and only certain groups were active in Somalia, it was difficult for younger Somali women to intervene. Furthermore, there was no continuity in the activism of the movements. For example Somali women's political movements like the Sixth Clan Movement has stopped work for some years although it is now coming back. Another lesson that can be learned has to do with the fact that there is a big gap between women in elite class and other, often younger women.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSION

This research study is carried out under SIDRA's Gender and Women's Empowerment Thematic Focus Area which is one of the six thematic focus areas that SIDRA works on. Under the Gender and Women's Empowerment Thematic Focus Area are 3 pillars namely Women's Political Participation; Women's Economic Empowerment and Women & Social Development. According to literature, Somali women's political participation in Somalia has been defined as weak and fragile and their civic education and political empowerment as significant for their participation in leadership and governance. Women can be empowered by the adoption of gender policies that address the customs and practices hindering them to participate fully in politics and decision-making processes at all levels.

The exclusion of Somali women in decision-making arenas and structures of power is gaining recognition among the international community as well. The UN has made a global commitment to address the gender imbalance in politics and it has adopted several instruments recognizing the right of women to equally participate in politics. The most notable expression of this was the universal declaration of human rights (UDHR), which in its Article 21 recognized the right of every one, including both women and men, to take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. To enforce these important rights, the UN adopted the convention on civil and political rights, which legally obliged the state parties to ensure the effectiveness of women's political participation and public affairs without discrimination. The UN also adopted a special Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which elaborates the nature of women's political rights and the steps required to promote greater equality between women and men in this area. United Nation Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1325) also recognizes Somali women's roles in peace building and conflict transformation in Somalia.

This research shows how Somali women are making use of these international instruments both at home and abroad as a fast track strategy to address the exclusion of Somali women from the formal arena of politics. Somali women are making an impact on transforming gender power relations in Somalia. They are actively involved in social movements and activism. They are seeking equality in all areas and are lobbying for gender equality to be used as part of Somali analyses and methodologies for change. Without this, interventions are unlikely to succeed in their goals of contributing to equality for all and a more holistic and complete social transformation. Integrating gender perspectives is not just about 'including' women but, rather, considering what a gendered politics provides to Somalia in terms of alternative ways of being, seeing and doing that in themselves serve to transform patriarchal power relations.

The report begins by redefining organized women's movements in Somalia, pointing out that multiple Somali women's movements have been initiated but that their impact is yet to be felt. It examines the role of Somali women's movements in Somalia. How have Somali women's movements contributed to the representation of women's interests and shaped Somali society and, as a result, the democratization process? What factors shape their mobilization, actions, and outcomes are some of the fundamental questions that SIDRA took on in this research. The research explores insights into these movements through a cultural lens in order to also consider the cultural domain Somali women use to express themselves and how, through culture, women are able to politically express themselves and become the political voice for other women, for example through poetry and song. Finally, this study provides sufficient information on the challenges Somali women and Somali women's movements face in political participation and leadership in Somalia. It will be a reference for policy makers, researchers, students, NGOs and others who have an interest in the subject matter.

Somali women's poetry plays a fundamental role in shaping society, educating children, conveying messages in political affairs, and raising consciousness. This opportunity for Somali women to express themselves must be further explored and researched. There is no doubt that progress has been made in increasing women's political participation in Africa. The new trends in the participation of women show a positive improvement in the participation of women in Africa.

This is a positive development given that increasing the number of women in politics is a tactical means of eradicating the structural foundations of inequality between men and women. The presence of women in the political offices will enable them to stand for their needs and interests on decisions that affect their lives. A combination of factors has led to these positive developments. Quotas have been the most effective short-term strategy for getting women into office. However, women have been limited to lower house in parliament and much work is yet to be done in the upper house in most African countries. The increase in the quantity of women in political participation in the lower house has not effusively resulted in much transformation in the African political institutions to become responsive to the needs of women. Even with quotas there has been slow progression in increasing the numbers of women involved in formal politics, and additional strategies are needed to address structural issues. It is clear that there is urgent need to revolutionize the patriarchal systems which characterize the political space thereby limiting the influence of women.

Across the world there is an energetic demand for an end to gendered injustice and a challenge to patriarchal power in all domains of social, economic, political and cultural lives. In response to this demand there has also been significant progress in articulating and taking action to challenge imbalances in power and opportunities to prevent violations of women's and girls' rights. Globally, more and more social movements are being organized

and led by women. Somali women also are taking the lead in organizing themselves for greater impact in social and political representation through individual and collective movements. 'Movements' in this study is defined as a mixture of informal networks and formal organizations. This research study assessed Somali women's political movements in light of the much anticipated and much contested 2016 Somali elections. It analyzed how Somalia women, even though awarded minimal roles in politics, are organizing themselves in various ways in anticipation of the upcoming elections in Somalia.

Organized individually and collectively led women's movements and activism are taking place all over the nation of Somalia and indeed beyond. Female presidential candidates for the 2016 elections are announcing their candidatures. Various Somali women's movements are formalizing and organizing themselves politically in various ways. The research has explored what these movements are, and how and why Somali women are now more actively engaged in political affairs than ever before. Throughout the survey it became clear that there is a trend towards more political awareness and participation of Somali women. This research outlined how Somali women are organizing through transcontinental meetings, use of social media and the spread of information. Over 211 respondents took part in this research. A further 125 took part in the FGDs and Key Informant interviews.

The study interviewed women leaders in charge of these movements and examined challenges and opportunities. According to the respondents, the biggest challenge facing women in increasing their political participation is the cultural influence of a male-dominated society. This leads to a lack of support from the community and in finances. When women are elected as representatives, they can be a role model to fight against this tribalism and for women's rights. What is clear from the responses is that it is vital that women start working together in Somalia and speak with one voice for the objectives of a Somali network of women's movements. They need a united front against the male dominance to ensure their rights. To begin with, one cannot ignore that politics, governance and decision-making are some of the key areas of focus in development. In this regard, for development to be effective and sustainable, it needs wider participation from all segments of the society.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The research explores insights in to these movements through a cultural lens in order to also consider the cultural domain Somali women use to express themselves. How are Somali women through culture able to politically express themselves and sometimes become the political voice for women? Finally, this study provides recommendations on Somali women's political participation and leadership in Somalia. It will be a reference for policy makers, researchers, students, NGOs and others who have a deep interest in the subject matter. The report makes policy recommendations at all levels (local, regional, national, and

international) about what might foster this development of a movement that is not hierarchical but connected like a tasbiix or a string of beads.

Recommendations to the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal State Members

1. Since female representation in Somalia is very low (lower than the quota that the administrations themselves made), the federal government should compensate for this by appointing 40% of their Cabinet of Ministers and administrative positions as women. The administration should give opportunities to women at all levels of its administration as positions become available. In general, women should constitute at least 40% of all elected, appointed and middle and high level management positions across the three branches of the Regional Administration and in Independent Commissions.
2. The current administrations or the federal government should ensure that the quota for women is increased to 40% in the new constitution during the review process.
3. The Puntland Parliament to introduce and adopt a 40% quota for women as an amendment to the constitution during the review process.
4. Somali leaders should stand united and work together in the ongoing struggle for women's rights nationwide. The original agreement in which regions were to have two options for the election seats should be restored. There should be minimum facilitative reforms to the Provisional Constitution through amendments in accordance with Articles 133 and 134 as read together with Schedule ONE.
5. There should be facilitative legislation under Article 139 on Continuation of the Laws and where appropriate legislation exists within the meaning of this constitutional provision, the same should be retrieved and enforced with necessary adaptation where circumstances dictate.
6. Membership of the electoral colleges at the federal and member states should have 50-50 gender parity, taking in to account youth, persons with disabilities, minorities, Diaspora and other vulnerable groups.
7. The 30% seats reserved for women in the upper and lower houses should be filled first before the other seats are contested.

Recommendations to research institutions

1. Undertake systematic and regular research on Somali women's political movements to fill knowledge gaps with the aim of enhancing policy makers' understanding of Somali women's political participation.
2. Provide thorough documentation and inventory of women's political movement in Somalia
3. Prepare policy briefs to guide policy makers and policy practitioners in the field of gender, women, activism and empowerment.

Recommendations to Somali women's political movements

1. Undertake advocacy within political parties to increase women members and women candidates for the election
2. Support the identification of potential women candidates for the upcoming local elections

3. Push forward the opportunities mentioned in this research, including advocating for the Somali government's adoption of the electoral quota, with a mandatory percentage for Somali women candidates for public elections, as a means to empower Somali women's political participation in Somalia.
4. Advocate for the adoption of administrative tools such as the strategies, policies, legislation, awareness raising and directives related to women's inclusion in decision making arenas.
5. Undertake active lobbying and awareness-raising to educate Somali women about their rights and educate the public about the misperceptions towards women's political participation.
6. Improve women's perception of themselves to build their confidence to challenge men, participate in decision-making structures, and vote for other women.
7. In collaboration with NGOs, the media, and traditional leaders, raise awareness on the rights of women and girls through appropriate messages that would have the effect of accelerating changes in attitudes and practices that currently negatively affect their advancement in society. This recommendation should mainly focus on rural Somalia where most women are located and most of these women are generally not aware of the laws that boost their legal status. The capacity building is crucial in driving the rural women to partake in politics. Rural women still lack basic understanding of political systems and the role of governments.

Recommendations to INGOS

1. Organize discussion groups and meetings with MOWDAFA Regional coordinators, women activities, women NGOs and outgoing women district councilors.
2. Prepare a complete list of potential women candidates for the local election. Engagement, role and conduct of the members of the international community and agencies in the 2016 electoral process must be in compliance with the universally established norms and standards set out by the relevant regional and international treaties, conventions, protocols and non-treaty instruments.
3. In collaboration with the Government, Civil Society Organizations and local NGOs, embark upon powerful capacity building and enhancement programs for prospective Somali women candidates. This should go hand in hand with plans towards the establishment of a partnership or around a critical mass of competent women in politics. Civil society organizations in Somalia continue to play a vital role in advancing women's participation in politics and elections. Much of the work focusing on attaching a sense of harmony among women to conquer the impediments they come across has been conducted by national women's groups in partnership and with technical assistance from international actors.

Recommendations to the media

1. Promote equal participation of men and women in elections through equal coverage of both women and men in politics.
2. Avoid portraying stereotypical sensational images of women which can lead to gender based discrimination. From the report, it has been noted that there is need

for a lot of work to be done for women politicians to be reported on more often and in a positive manner.

3. Provide more positive coverage of women in politics as media plays a great role in shaping the political environment of any country. Efforts should be made to ensure that media provides balanced coverage that empowers women. The media plays a significant role in determining how women in politics and decision-making are viewed and perceived by society in general. The media not only plays an important role in shaping the values of society but also reflects those values.
4. Be an informer, educator and transformer of the Somali society. Women in politics play a vital role in ensuring the democratic governance of this country and therefore their contribution to this processes need to be analyzed in the appropriate context by the media. This reflects the great role of media in politics, amongst other factors. Political advertising has demonstrated to be an important element of contemporary elections. Political advertising influences voters in support of one candidate or another.
5. Ensure that every candidate has access to the media, in particular radio and television regardless of the political party. This is important since most voters gain their knowledge about politics through the media.
6. Media should refrain from undermining the abilities of the few women politicians. Media should not portray a negative picture about women which are meant to undermine them. Mass media should recognize and accord value and dignity to men and women equally.

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Annexes

The following annexes to the study can be obtained from SIDRA office.

- Annex 1: Questions for the Focus Group Discussions
- Annex 2: Questions for individual experts
- Annex 3: Questions for the survey
- Annex 4: Vision 2016: Framework For Action, Mogadishu, Somalia February 2014
- Annex 5: Videos footage for FGD at Garowe, Mogadishu, Nairobi, Baidoa