

Closing Somalia's Trust Gap

Why Civil Society Must Anchor the Next Phase of State-Building

POLICY ARTICLE | AUGUST 2026

Kenadid Institute for Policy and Development (KIPD)

Executive Summary

Somalia's institutions are being rebuilt faster than the trust between those institutions and the citizens they serve. This article argues that civil society, understood broadly enough to include customary and religious authority alongside registered organisations, is one of the principal ways to close that trust gap. Its role is to thicken the channels connecting government to citizens, not to replace government itself.

This edition grounds the argument in the academic literature on state-building and Somali governance, including the 'mediated state' and 'hybrid political order' scholarship that complicates any simple transplant of liberal state-building models onto Somalia. It also names the institutions already doing this work in Somalia today, among them Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA), the Puntland Non-State Actors Association (PUNSAA) and the Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF), and sets out honestly where the argument runs into difficulty: clan alignment within civil society, donor dependency, and a civil-society voice that is still more coordinated on paper than in practice.

A NOTE ON APPROACH

This is a desk-based policy synthesis rather than an original empirical study. It draws on programme and policy documentation, the peer-reviewed literature on Somali governance and state-building, and recent public reporting on Somalia's civil-society sector. Two kinds of examples appear in the sections below, labelled accordingly: illustrative composite scenarios, built for heuristic purposes and not documented cases, and documented examples, drawn from named organisations and dated events.

Introduction

Somalia's state-building process has entered a decisive phase. Over the past decade, enormous energy has gone into rebuilding public institutions, strengthening federal and state structures, improving public financial management, expanding service delivery, and advancing political and constitutional processes. The National Transformation Plan (NTP) 2025–2029 places transformational governance at the heart of this agenda, envisioning a Somalia anchored in the rule of law, with stable and inclusive institutions (Federal Government of Somalia 2025).

Institutions alone do not make a state, however. A ministry can exist on paper, a policy can be signed, a budget can be allocated. None of that will hold unless citizens believe these institutions are theirs: legitimate, accessible and accountable. That belief is harder to build than any single facility or programme, and it is where much of Somalia's remaining state-building work now lies.

Civil society belongs at the centre of that work, not as a side project running parallel to government but as one of the principal bridges connecting citizens to the state. The theoretical discussion below sets out how to define that role precisely, and the sections that follow ground it in institutions already doing this work inside Somalia.

Theoretical Framing: State-Building, the Social Contract and the Limits of Imported Models

Two terms used throughout this article are worth defining before proceeding, since both are contested in the Somali context specifically. ‘State-building’ follows the OECD Development Assistance Committee’s own framing: strengthening the relationship between state and society is not a secondary benefit of institution-building but one of its central objectives (OECD DAC 2007). ‘Civil society’ is used here in the broad sense increasingly recognised within Somalia itself: not only registered NGOs and professional associations, but community-based organisations, women’s and youth networks, media, and, where relevant, traditional and religious authority (Osman 2018). Narrowing the term to donor-registered organisations alone would misdescribe how accountability and mediation functions are actually distributed in Puntland and elsewhere in Somalia.

The claim that legitimate statehood depends on the relationship between institutions and citizens draws on a long lineage of social-contract theory, and more recently on North, Wallis and Weingast’s (2009) distinction between ‘limited access orders,’ in which elite coalitions control access to organisations and resources in order to contain violence, and ‘open access orders,’ in which citizenship confers broadly equal rights to organise, compete and hold power accountable. Much of the international state-building agenda, including Somalia’s own National Transformation Plan, implicitly aims at moving fragile, limited-access settings toward more open, accountable governance. Robert Putnam’s (1993) study of civic traditions offers the standard case for why civil society matters to that transition: dense networks of civic association build the interpersonal trust and reciprocity, or ‘social capital,’ that make representative institutions work.

The framework travels less comfortably to the Somali context than its confident use in donor literature often suggests. Ken Menkhaus’s (2006/2007) analysis argues that, in the absence of a functioning central government since 1991, an array of local, customary and religious authorities has provided real, if imperfect, governance across much of Somalia, what he terms a ‘mediated state,’ in which a weak centre negotiates authority through existing local structures rather than displacing them. Boege et al. (2008) generalise the insight: many so-called ‘fragile states’ are better understood as hybrid political orders, where state institutions, customary authority and religious or armed actors co-exist and compete for legitimacy, rather than as deficient copies of a Western liberal state. Hoehne’s (2007) research on traditional authorities in northern Somalia, directly relevant to Puntland, documents how customary elders have continuously adapted to retain political relevance precisely because they, not imported civic structures, have long performed many of the accountability and mediation functions this article assigns to ‘civil society.’

This matters for how the argument that follows should be read. The article does not claim that Somalia lacks a social contract. It claims that the channels linking citizens to the formal, statutory institutions the NTP is building remain thin, and that civil society, defined broadly enough to include rather than

compete with customary and religious authority, is one of the more promising ways to thicken them. State-building strategies that ignore Somalia's existing hybrid order tend to fail (Menkhaus 2006/2007; Boege et al. 2008). Strategies that work with it, as the Bulsho programme's local social-contract approach attempts to do, have a better track record (World Bank 2025–2026).

Civil Society's Existing Institutional Home in Somalia

Civil society's bridging role is not a hypothetical proposal for Somalia. It already has an institutional home, and naming it matters, because the case for strengthening civil society is stronger when it points at real organisations rather than an abstract sector.

At the national level, Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA), known until 2023 as the Somalia South-Central Non-State Actors network (SOSCENSA), brings together NGOs, professional associations, women's and youth networks and community groups to speak with a single voice in policy dialogue with the Federal Government. Chaired by Osman Muxyadiin Moallim, SONSA's recent work runs across most of the functions this article describes: pressing the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation to finalise the long-delayed NGO Bill and negotiating a Framework Cooperation Agreement with the Ministry; sitting on the Election Implementation Committee for Somalia's National Independent Human Rights Commission; and monitoring Federal Parliament's constitutional review sessions through its own GoleKaab initiative (ICNL 2026; SONSA 2026).

At the Puntland level, the Puntland Non-State Actors Association (PUNSAA) performs a similar function regionally. Established in 2008 and now drawing on more than 120 member networks, umbrellas and consortiums, PUNSAA has been a recognised election stakeholder in Puntland since its founding. It regularly convenes district-level consultation forums, recent examples include Dhahar, Bargaal and Dangorayo, alongside national budget consultations and a standing MP Accountability Forum in Garowe (PUNSAA n.d.). Its Somaliland counterpart, the Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF), also established in 2008, coordinates 67 member organisations around peacebuilding, democratisation, election integrity and human rights (SONSAF n.d.).

Together, these three platforms show that this article's argument is not aspirational. Somali non-state actors have already organised themselves into structured, multi-sectoral bodies of roughly the kind Sections 1 through 4 call for. The outstanding task, taken up in Section 7, has less to do with building this infrastructure from nothing and more to do with making it more representative, less donor-dependent, and harder for any single clan or political interest to capture.

1. Bridging the Gap Between Citizens and Public Institutions

Perhaps civil society's single most important state-building function is the simplest one: creating working channels through which citizens and institutions can actually talk to each other.

For many Somalis, particularly those in rural areas, in settlements shaped by displacement, or in communities with limited access to government offices, contact with the formal state is irregular at best. Civil-society organisations often hold day-to-day relationships with these same communities instead. Used well, that proximity does not compete with government; it extends government's reach, echoing the mediated-state logic discussed above (Menkhaus 2006/2007).

In practice, this can mean organising community consultations before a district development plan is drafted, running citizen–government forums, conducting perception surveys, translating policy into language people actually use, or collecting structured feedback on services. PUNSAA's own district consultation forums, and its national budget consultations, follow this logic in Puntland today rather than as a theoretical model (PUNSAA n.d.).

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE — District planning, done differently

In a representative case, a district administration preparing its annual development plan invites a civil-society partner to run consultations in advance, rather than presenting a finished plan for comment. Women's groups flag a well site the men's committee had not raised. Youth representatives push back on a proposed vocational programme, arguing that market linkages matter more than training alone.

The final plan looks different, and because residents recognise their own input in it, implementation faces less resistance and fewer disputes over priorities. The shift in sequencing, consultation before design rather than after, is what turns participation into an institution rather than an event.

Composite scenario, not a documented case.

DOCUMENTED EXAMPLE — Civil society backing a government programme

Not every example of civil society's bridging role involves scrutinising government from the outside; some of the clearest are direct collaborations. On 7 November 2025, SONSA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) to lead public awareness, advocacy and community engagement for Somalia's National ID System. Rather than watching the rollout from a distance, SONSA took on a role government agencies often cannot perform alone: explaining a new state system to communities in terms they trust, and reaching people through networks NIRA's own headquarters staff cannot access directly.

NIRA's Director General, Abdiwali Ali Abdulle, and SONSA's chairman, Osman Muxyadiin Moallim, signed the agreement in Mogadishu, and both described it as a way to extend the identification system's reach into communities that government messaging alone struggles to cover. It is a modest example, but it is the same logic argued for throughout this article: civil society extending, rather than competing with, the reach of a state institution.

Source: NIRA (2025).

Done consistently, this kind of work gradually shifts the relationship between citizens and government from one built mainly around complaints and unmet expectations to one built around participation, dialogue and shared responsibility. The right measure of civil society's contribution here is not the number of workshops held or beneficiaries counted; it is whether the engagement produces something that outlasts the project, a durable channel through which citizens can influence decisions long after the implementing partner has moved on.

2. Strengthening Accountability and Transparency

Accountability sits close to the core of state legitimacy. Where citizens cannot see how decisions are made, how resources are allocated, or why one community receives a service while its neighbour does

not, mistrust tends to grow, even where the underlying programme is well designed and well intentioned.

Civil society can supply a layer of social accountability that government structures often struggle to generate on their own: monitoring the delivery of local development plans, running community scorecards, tracking commitments made in public consultations, analysing budgets, and creating structured feedback loops between authorities and communities. PUNSAA's own MP Accountability Forum in Garowe is one such platform already operating, bringing elected representatives into direct, public dialogue with the constituents they represent (PUNSAA n.d.).

Independent feedback of this kind is, in practical terms, one of the more useful tools a government institution can have. It surfaces implementation problems early, helps correct course, and gives officials something concrete to point to when demonstrating results. Recent World Bank-supported consultations in Somalia have deliberately brought government, local authorities, civil society, women, youth, displaced populations and host communities into the same room (World Bank Group n.d.), a small but telling sign that this kind of broader participation is increasingly treated as good practice rather than an inconvenience.

The obligation runs in both directions, a point developed further in Section 7. Somali civil-society organisations asking government for transparency need to hold themselves to the same standard: transparent governance, responsible financial management, credible evidence, and real accountability to the communities they claim to represent.

3. Making Citizen Participation More Inclusive

Participation only means something if it reaches beyond the people already positioned to be heard. Women, young people, internally displaced persons, people with disabilities, minority communities, and residents of geographically marginalised areas typically face real barriers to formal decision-making, barriers that a general invitation to 'attend the consultation' does little to remove.

Civil society can help close that gap deliberately: women's policy forums, youth consultations, disability-inclusive public hearings, dialogues held inside displacement settlements, civic education delivered in local languages, and targeted research documenting, specifically, what is keeping particular groups out of the room.

Somalia's constitutional review offers one example of what this looks like at scale. UNDP's support to the process has emphasised Somali-owned, Somali-led dialogue, with deliberate space for a wide range of societal groups (UNDP Somalia n.d.-b). SONSA's own seat on the Election Implementation Committee for the National Independent Human Rights Commission is a smaller but more concrete example of the same principle in practice: a civil-society network embedded in the machinery overseeing a sensitive appointment process, not simply consulted after the fact (SONSA 2026).

Participation needs to move from being an event to being an institution. Somalia does not need more consultations for their own sake; it needs predictable mechanisms, known in advance, through which citizens understand when, where and how they can influence a decision, and through which authorities are expected to report back on what happened to the views they collected.

4. Civil Society as an Engine of Local Peace and Social Cohesion

Somalia's state-building challenge cannot be separated from its peacebuilding challenge. Local disputes over land, political representation, natural resources, displacement or access to services steadily erode trust, both between communities and between citizens and the institutions meant to serve them.

Civil-society actors, understood in the broad sense set out above, frequently have room to operate in spaces where formal political engagement is difficult or premature. Community organisations, women's groups, youth networks, researchers, traditional leaders and peacebuilding practitioners are often the first to notice a tension building, and are well placed to support dialogue and feed locally grounded information back to authorities before a dispute hardens.

DOCUMENTED EXAMPLE — Civil society and the 2026 political deadlock

In mid-2026, a constitutional crisis left Somalia's electoral process at an impasse, as Puntland, Jubaland and South-West State all suspended recognition of the Federal Government following disputed constitutional amendments. Rather than stand on the sidelines, SONSA convened consultations with community leaders and reviewed the competing electoral models put forward by opposition coalitions, including the Somali Future Council.

In late July 2026, SONSA proposed its own compromise: a Transitional Constituency-Based Multiparty Electoral Model, under which members of the House of the People would be directly elected from agreed constituencies. Whether or not the proposal is ultimately adopted, it is a concrete illustration of the function this article assigns to civil society in this section: not replacing the federal government or the opposition coalitions at the negotiating table, but generating a locally credible compromise that neither side had produced on its own, and putting it into public circulation.

Source: Hiiraan Online (2026).

The aim is not to build a parallel peace infrastructure that operates outside government. It is to make sure locally generated knowledge and community dialogue reach formal reconciliation, governance and development systems, consistent with the hybrid political order literature's caution against treating formal and customary authority as competitors rather than complements (Boege et al. 2008). Peace strengthens institutions, institutions strengthen trust, and trust strengthens the social contract that holds a state together. Civil society, broadly defined, is one of the few actors positioned to work on all three at once.

5. From Project Implementers to Knowledge and Policy Partners

Somalia's civil-society sector is also due its own transition. For years, many local organisations have been engaged by international partners chiefly as project implementers, a role that remains genuinely important, particularly where organisations understand local realities well enough to reach communities efficiently. But implementation should not be the ceiling of what Somali civil society is asked, or resourced, to do.

Somalia needs independent institutions capable of conducting policy research, analysing public expenditure, evaluating programmes, generating local data, identifying emerging risks, and turning

community experience into recommendations decision-makers can actually use. SONSA's GoleKaab initiative, through which civil-society observers systematically monitor Federal Parliament sessions rather than reacting to outcomes after the fact, is one working example of this shift already underway (SONSA 2026). National and local policy institutions, think tanks among them, can become a structural part of Somalia's state-building architecture, offering government and development partners a source of credible, independent analysis that neither can easily generate on its own.

This matters more as Somalia moves into implementation of the NTP 2025–2029 (Federal Government of Somalia 2025). The plan's emphasis on transformational governance is an opening for civil society, universities, think tanks, professional associations and research institutions to contribute evidence to how the plan is implemented and monitored, rather than watching that process from the outside.

A mature relationship between government and civil society holds two things at once: cooperation where interests align, and enough independence to identify gaps, question assumptions, and recommend alternatives when the evidence calls for it.

6. Localization Must Include Decision-Making Power

The international development system has been talking about locally led development for years; the harder question is whether that talk is translating into actual decision-making power. OECD guidance published in 2026 pushes on this point directly, calling for local civil-society and community actors to be involved from the outset, in co-design, budgeting and monitoring, rather than brought in after priorities have already been set elsewhere (OECD 2026).

Somalia has some genuinely encouraging signs of movement here. The Somalia Humanitarian Fund reported that 77 per cent of its 2025 funding allocations went directly to local and national NGOs, a meaningful milestone for humanitarian localization and evidence that direct funding to Somali organisations is achievable at scale, not only an aspiration (OCHA 2026).

Direct funding is only one dimension of localization, though. The fuller version means increasing local influence over problem identification, programme design, funding priorities, implementation strategy, monitoring and evaluation, and decisions about what gets sustained and scaled (OECD 2024a; OECD 2024b).

It also means recognising something international partners sometimes underweight: strong local institutions are not built through a sequence of short-term project contracts. Somali civil-society organisations need predictable, longer-horizon investment in governance systems, research capacity, digital infrastructure, safeguarding, financial systems, and staff development. Localization should move from transferring activities to transferring agency.

7. Risks, Limitations and Counterarguments

Intellectual honesty requires stating the strongest objections to this article's argument, not only the evidence that supports it.

The most serious objection concerns what 'civil society' actually means in the Somali context. Osman's (2018) review for Saferworld, based on interviews with Somali CSO staff, researchers and

practitioners, found substantial disagreement among Somalis themselves about whether 'civil society' is a genuine indigenous category or a construct imported by donors, and documented that many organisations are, in practice, aligned with particular clans, financially dependent on external funding secured through those same clan or political networks, and lacking a unified voice across Somalia's federal member states. These are not minor implementation problems; they go to the heart of whether civil society can perform the neutral, bridging role this article assigns to it.

A second objection follows from the theoretical discussion earlier in this article: if much of Somalia's actual governance already runs through customary and religious authority rather than formally constituted CSOs (Menkhaus 2006/2007; Hoehne 2007), then building 'civil society' narrowly defined, meaning NGOs, professional associations and donor-registered organisations, risks creating a second, parallel layer of intermediaries competing with, rather than channelling, existing and often more locally legitimate authority.

A third concern is donor dependency. Much of Somalia's formal civil-society sector emerged during, and remains structured by, the humanitarian and development aid system (Osman 2018). Organisations whose funding, agenda and reporting lines run outward to donors rather than inward to constituents face an obvious incentive problem when asked to hold government, and implicitly their own funders' priorities, accountable.

The existence of SONSA, PUNSAA and SONSAF complicates this picture without resolving it. These platforms are real evidence that Somali non-state actors have built the coordinating infrastructure the fragmentation critique says is missing, but a platform's existence does not by itself guarantee that it speaks for its full membership, remains free of clan influence, or is financially independent of the donors who often fund its core operations. None of the sources consulted for this article claim otherwise, and none of the three platforms should be read as a rebuttal to Osman's (2018) findings; they are better read as unfinished work in progress.

These objections sharpen the argument rather than sink it. They suggest, first, that 'civil society' in the Somali context must be defined broadly enough to include customary and religious authority alongside donor-registered NGOs, consistent with how the term is actually used and contested inside Somalia (Osman 2018). They suggest, second, that the accountability agenda in Section 2 cannot only point outward at government; internal governance, transparent funding and constituency accountability within civil society itself are a precondition for the credibility this argument depends on, not an optional extra. And they suggest, third, that donors serious about localization (Section 6) need to fund Somali civil society's independence from donors themselves, through flexible, long-horizon, unrestricted support, rather than only its capacity to deliver donor-designed projects.

A Practical Agenda for Government, Civil Society and Development Partners

Somalia has an opportunity to make citizen participation a more deliberate component of its state-building architecture. What follows is a division of labour, informed by the objections raised in Section 7 as much as by the case made in Sections 1 through 6.

Government

Federal, state and local institutions should build on the consultation channels that already exist rather than only creating new ones. SONSA's Framework Cooperation Agreement, currently under negotiation with the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, and PUNSAA's role as a recognised election stakeholder in Puntland since 2008, are both existing channels that public consultation guidelines and district citizen forums could formalise and extend rather than duplicate.

Government institutions should also make non-sensitive public data, policies, plans and budgets more accessible, so that universities, civil society and policy institutions can contribute meaningfully to monitoring and policy analysis.

Civil Society

Somali civil society must invest in its own credibility. Given the governance and clan-alignment challenges Osman (2018) documents, organisations should strengthen internal governance, financial transparency, safeguarding, research quality, monitoring systems and accountability to communities. Civil-society representation in policy processes should be based on constituencies, competence and evidence, not organisational visibility.

Greater collaboration is also needed among CSOs, universities, think tanks, professional associations, women's networks, youth groups, and traditional and religious authorities. Fragmentation reduces collective influence and invites duplication, which is precisely the gap SONSA, PUNSAA and SONSAF exist to close, and precisely why strengthening them matters more than founding new, competing platforms.

Development Partners

International partners can strengthen Somalia's state-building process by treating capable Somali institutions as strategic partners rather than primarily as delivery mechanisms. This requires greater use of direct and multi-year financing, equitable partnership arrangements, investment in institutional capacity, and meaningful involvement of local actors in programme design and strategic decision-making (OECD 2024a; OECD 2024b).

Donors should also finance functions that are essential to a healthy civic ecosystem but frequently underfunded: independent research, policy dialogue, civic education, social accountability, locally generated evidence, and, specifically, the unrestricted core funding that allows organisations to reduce the donor dependency described in Section 7.

Conclusion: Building the State by Strengthening the Social Contract

Somalia's state-building journey is, at bottom, about more than constructing institutions. It is about constructing a relationship between those institutions and the population they exist to serve.

Public institutions should remain at the centre of governance and service delivery. Civil society's role is not to replace government, or to build permanent structures that run parallel to it, but to connect communities to institutions, widen citizen participation, strengthen public accountability, contribute independent evidence, and support peacebuilding, so that national development reflects how people actually live and not only how policy imagines they live.

This argument is not uncontested. Somalia's own civil-society practitioners disagree about what 'civil society' even means (Osman 2018), and scholars of Somali governance rightly warn against assuming that liberal state-building templates transfer cleanly onto hybrid political orders (Menkhaus 2006/2007; Boege et al. 2008). But the direction of travel, toward institutions Somalis recognise as their own, remains the right one, provided civil society's role in it is defined precisely rather than assumed.

For government, that means treating civil society, broadly defined, as part of the governance ecosystem rather than a stakeholder to be managed. For civil society, it means earning that role through professionalism, independence, integrity and accountability. For development partners, it means moving localization beyond contracting Somali organisations to deliver externally designed projects, toward investing in Somali institutions as actors capable of shaping development themselves.

The National Transformation Plan gives Somalia an important framework for strengthening governance (Federal Government of Somalia 2025). But the real measure of whether this phase of state-building succeeds will not be the number of institutions created or policies signed. It will be whether Somali citizens increasingly believe that public institutions listen to them, represent them, respond to their priorities, and can be held to account for the decisions they make. That is the contribution civil society, from SONSA's negotiating table to PUNSA's district forums to SONSAF's advocacy in Somaliland, is best placed to make to Somalia's next chapter, and it is where the Kenadid Institute for Policy and Development intends to keep working.

Policy Recommendations

1. Institutionalise citizen participation: establish permanent consultation and citizen-feedback mechanisms within federal, state and district governance systems.
2. Create local social-accountability platforms: expand community scorecards, citizen–government dialogues, participatory monitoring and public reporting on local development commitments.
3. Invest in Somali policy and research institutions: increase support for independent Somali research, policy analysis and locally generated evidence.
4. Make inclusion measurable: require governance programmes to demonstrate meaningful participation of women, youth, displaced populations, persons with disabilities and marginalised communities.
5. Strengthen civil-society accountability: support CSOs to improve governance, financial transparency, safeguarding and accountability to their constituencies.
6. Advance genuine localization: increase direct, flexible, multi-year and unrestricted financing while involving Somali organisations in programme design, budgeting, monitoring and strategic decision-making.
7. Connect peacebuilding and governance: ensure locally led reconciliation and conflict-prevention mechanisms are linked with formal government planning and institution-building.

8. Build on existing dialogue platforms: formalise and expand the tripartite dialogue channels that already connect government with SONSA nationally, PUNSAA in Puntland and SONSAF in Somaliland, and extend equivalent structures to federal member states that do not yet have them, rather than creating new platforms from scratch.
9. Define civil society inclusively: recognise customary, religious and community authorities alongside registered CSOs in participation frameworks, reflecting how the term is actually understood and contested within Somalia itself.

References

Academic and Peer-Reviewed Sources

- Boege, V., Brown, M. A., Clements, K., & Nolan, A. (2008). On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State Formation in the Context of 'Fragility.' Berghof Handbook Dialogue, No. 8. Berlin: Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.
- Hoehne, M. V. (2007). From Pastoral to State Politics: Traditional Authorities in Northern Somalia. In L. Buur & H. M. Kyed (Eds.), *State Recognition and Democratisation in Sub-Saharan Africa: A New Dawn for Traditional Authorities?* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Menkhaus, K. (2006/2007). Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping. *International Security*, 31(3), 74–106.
- North, D. C., Wallis, J. J., & Weingast, B. R. (2009). *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Osman, F. (2018, June 4). The Role of Civil Society in Somalia's Reconstruction: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities. Saferworld.
- Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Institutional and Policy Sources

- Federal Government of Somalia, Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development. (2025). *National Transformation Plan 2025–2029*. The NTP establishes Transformational Governance as one of four central pillars of Somalia's development strategy.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC). (2007). *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*. Paris: OECD.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2024a). *Pathways Towards Effective Locally Led Development Co-operation*.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2024b). *Valuing and Sharing Local Knowledge and Capacity*.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2026). *Practical Guidelines for Supporting Locally Led Development*. OECD Development Co-operation Directorate.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Somalia. (n.d.-a). *State-Building and Reconciliation Support Programme*. UNDP's programme supports locally led reconciliation and institutional capacity for reconciliation and state-building.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Somalia. (n.d.-b). *Support to Democratization and Achieving Social Contract Through Inclusive Constitutional Review Process in Somalia*.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (n.d.). Local Governance in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings.

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2026). Somalia Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2025.

World Bank. (2025–2026). Bulsho: Strengthening Community and Local Institutions for Social Cohesion, Inclusion, and Resilience. The programme focuses on community institutions, local social contracts, inclusion, transparency and accountability.

World Bank Group. (n.d.). Federal Republic of Somalia – Country Overview and Portfolio. The World Bank's Somalia portfolio includes programmes supporting governance, service delivery, fiscal federalism and state-building.

News, Organisational and Current Reporting Sources

Hiiraan Online. (2026, July 25). Somali civil society proposes interim electoral model to break political deadlock.

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). (2026, July 1). Somalia Civic Freedom Monitor.

National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA). (2025, November 7). NIRA Signs Memorandum of Understanding with the Somali Civil Society Network (SONSA).

Puntland Non-State Actors Association (PUNSAA). (n.d.). About PUNSAA / Who We Are.

Somalia Non-State Actors (SONSA). (2026, February). Somali Civil Society SONSA Monthly Bulletin – February 2026.

Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF). (n.d.). Who We Are.

ABOUT KIPD

The Kenadid Institute for Policy and Development (KIPD) is an independent, Somalia-wide policy research institution headquartered in Garowe, Puntland, working on governance, social cohesion, conflict dynamics and youth issues.

www.kenadid.org