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OBJECTIVE 1 ASSESSMENT

STRENGTHENING SOMALI GOVERNANCE

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS

AMISON	African Union Mission in Somalia
ASOW	Activity Scope of Work
AU	African Union
AWEPA	Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa
CDI	Conflict Dynamics International, Inc
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department For International Development
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
HIPS	Heritage Institute for Policy Studies
HoP	House of People (Lower House of Federal Parliament)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IGAD	Inter Governmental Authority on Development
IJA	Interim Juba Administration
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
IRI	International Republican Institute
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
PMP	Project Monitoring Plan
PSG	Peace and Security Goal (in the Somalia Compact)
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SNA	Somalia National Army
SOW	Scope of Work
SW3	Three region South West State
SSG	Strengthening Somali Governance Project
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strengthening Somali Governance (SSG) Project is designed to support the development of more effective and accountable Somali government institutions, by supporting both the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) as well as state and local administrations in their efforts to meet the New Deal Framework and their commitments to develop sound government institutions. SSG activities will include support for developing the capacity of governance institutions (primarily their respective parliaments and civil society institutions) in Puntland, as well as other entities that emerge as legitimate government structures that are ready for, and in need of, assistance. The activities will be designed to improve the reach of government; systematize opportunities for representation and inclusion of citizen interests in the political process; increase the legitimacy of government institutions and representative bodies; and support women's empowerment and leadership. SSG focuses on three overarching objectives, which are designed to:

- 1) improve the legislative, representative, and oversight functions of Somalia's federal and state (including Somaliland and Puntland) deliberative bodies;
- 2) improve the ability of targeted government institutions to carry out essential functions; and
- 3) increase citizen awareness of and engagement in government decision-making.

Objective One Assessment

This assessment report focuses on Objective 1 of SSG, relating to strengthening the federal and state deliberative bodies. Assessments for Objectives 2 and 3 of SSG will be conducted soon. At the same time, because the three Objectives of SSG are designed to be interrelated and complementary to one another, this assessment report also considers cross-objective opportunities for engagement.

Structure and Purpose of the Report

The Methodology and Introduction and Background sections of this report outline how the assessment was conducted and provide information on the operating context in Somalia. Sections III and IV provide a general overview of the parliaments in each region, including their current operating context and priorities, an overview of parliamentary capacity across the institution, and more detailed information on the parliamentary committees. The sections then provide a mapping of support being provided by other donor-funded organizations, and conclude with proposed activities that could be supported by SSG.

SECTION I. METHODOLOGY

The SSG Objective 1 assessment was carried out in October 2014 to provide a rapid analysis of the situation in Somalia and identify key priorities for assistance to the Parliament. The assessment team, comprising governance experts Erik Landemalm, Nikhil Narayan and Kelly Cronen, with remote assistance from David Womble, conducted a desk review of relevant Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) documents and other donors' and implementing partners' work plans. Information from the desk study was then complemented by on-the-ground meetings and phone calls, and e-mail correspondence between October 10, 2014 and October 21, 2014 with key government counterparts and project stakeholders in Nairobi and Mogadishu. A bibliography of documents consulted for this assessment can be found in Annex A and the list of in-person meetings conducted can be found in Annex B.

The assessment process was designed to identify current needs and priorities of the Federal Parliament, donor assistance being provided to address these needs, and gaps in donor assistance as potential entryways for SSG. To identify these areas, the assessment team incorporated the following principles into its process:

- *Light Touch*: to build partnerships and responsive interventions, the assessment sought to identify existing donor-funded parliamentary support projects and locally-led civil society activities that could be leveraged to enhance support for federal and state parliaments.
- *Local ownership*: to be responsive to stakeholder priorities and build local capacity, the majority of in-person interviews were conducted with members of parliament, with a focus on committee chairs and committee members. The assessment team also spoke with parliamentary staff to learn more about their current functions and capacity building needs.
- *Strategic focus*: to add value and maximize impact, suggested activities that come out of the Objective 1 assessment focus on priority needs that are not being addressed by other donors and that work to maximize the legitimacy of the new governance structures in the short and long term.
- *Do no harm*: to promote a truly inclusive government which does not perpetuate existing monopolies or existing inequalities, the assessment aimed to gather information from a diverse group of project stakeholders to get a more complete understanding of current capacity and future needs.
- *Gender equity and women's empowerment*: to promote greater gender equity within the Somali government and to support the government in protecting and promoting women's rights, the assessment process incorporated questions on women, as well as other marginalized groups including youth and persons with disabilities. The process focused on the role of women and other marginalized groups both as participants in the governance process as well as citizen beneficiaries of a stronger government. An abbreviated Gender and Social Inclusion assessment can be found in Annex C.
- *More than training*: to maximize the capacity building support provided, the assessment encouraged key informants to think creatively about the types of short-, mid-, and long-term technical assistance that would be most useful to strengthen the function of their

respective legislative bodies, including development of governance systems that could increase the institutional capacity. It could also include building capacity by selective provision of equipment to help the legislative bodies conduct their jobs in a more efficient way.

This assessment report will not discuss the USAID development objective; the USAID development hypothesis, and SSG's project objective. These will be discussed in the Objective 1 ASOW.

Prior to starting on-the-ground meetings in Somalia, the assessment team met with the USAID COR for SSG, Leslie Schafer, to confirm the assessment team's methodological approach, timetable and other logistical matters, and to gain a preliminary overview of USAID's intended goals for the assessment report. During the field work portion of the assessment, the Mogadishu team participated in an introductory meeting with the Speaker of the House of the People (HoP) of the Parliament, Mohamed Omar Jawari, and its Secretary General (the head of the Parliamentary staff), Abdikarim Buh, who provided guidance on the Federal Parliament's upcoming legislative agenda, and identified priority committees for the assessment team to interview. During the course of the Mogadishu-based fieldwork, the assessment team interviewed eight of the 15 standing parliamentary committees, one ad hoc committee, and representatives from the women's caucus. The assessment team also met with three civil society groups and representatives from two donor organizations. The full list of persons interviewed can be found in Annex B.

This assessment is meant to serve as a rapid snapshot of the current conditions facing the Federal Parliament in Somalia, but is not necessarily exhaustive of all activities currently underway. The Mogadishu-based assessment team had six working days on the ground to meet with parliamentary members and other stakeholders. This short time frame was further restricted by a security incident (a car bomb) on Wednesday, October 15, 2014, which forced SSG to cancel all external movements the following day, Thursday, October 16, 2014. Additionally, the current legislative session, the 5th session, was scheduled to commence on Monday, October 20, 2014. During the field work most of the parliamentary committee members were out of town and scheduled to return just in advance of the session, or were conducting internal meetings (some in consultation with UNDP) to finalize their respective committee work plans for the upcoming session.

During the assessment process, the team contacted known donor-funded project implementing partners that are providing similar parliamentary support to the different legislative bodies, including UNDP, AWEPA, Max Planck Foundation, NDI and Interpeace. The range of responses from other donor-funded actors on the ground does not allow for a full review of all existing interventions being provided, but to the extent possible the assessment team worked with implementing partners, members of parliament, staff members, and civil society groups to triangulate information about the current situation.

SECTION II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Project Scope and Objective 1 Assessment

The Strengthening Somali Governance (SSG) Project is designed to support the development of more effective and accountable Somali government institutions, by supporting both the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) as well as state and local administrations in their efforts to meet the New Deal Framework and their commitments to develop sound government institutions. SSG activities will also include support for developing the capacity of governance institutions in Somaliland and Puntland, as well as other entities that emerge as legitimate government structures that are ready and in need of assistance. The activities will be designed to improve the reach of government; systematize opportunities for representation and inclusion of citizen interests in the political process; increase the legitimacy of government institutions and representative bodies; and support women's empowerment and leadership. SSG focuses on three overarching objectives, which are designed to:

- 1) improve the legislative, representative, and oversight functions of the deliberative bodies;
- 2) improve the ability of targeted government institutions to carry out essential functions; and
- 3) increase citizen awareness of and engagement in government decision-making

For the first time since the collapse of the state in 1991, Somalia has a sovereign federal government in place in Mogadishu with a leadership committed to inclusive governance, reconciliation, and peace based on a provisional constitution. Many have hailed the transition as a genuine break with the past, and the best opportunity for stability that the fragmented country has had in the last two decades. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somalia National Army (SNA) forces have gradually reclaimed significant territories in south-central Somalia, including all regional capitals except that of Middle Juba, and pro-Federal Government forces and administrations are in place in these newly recovered areas. However, insecurity still exists, with frequent attacks on AMISOM and SNA armed forces and on civil servants throughout the country, including Mogadishu. Furthermore, political infighting, which has included the replacement of the initial Prime Minister and Cabinet have stymied the new Federal Government's progress at times within one year of the end of the transition from previous transitional governments to today's recognized Federal Government of Somalia, which is considered more legitimate and representative than previous institutions.

The last 20 years have seen numerous failed attempts to establish peace and undertake national reconciliation – prospects for the new dispensation are promising but depend on a sensitive process of political negotiation. State building has always been a problematic conceptual framework for Somalia and has in the past resulted in the establishment of non-inclusive and Mogadishu-centric politics and institutions. Consensus on a national vision that incorporates settlements relating to political representation, power- and wealth-sharing, has not yet been reached. In the coming years, as it finalizes a permanent constitution and prepares for national elections in 2016, Somalia is likely

to face continued instability as new stresses emerge, mainly resulting from the process of political negotiation between federal authorities in Mogadishu and emerging state administrations such as the Interim Juba Administration, the South West State 3, and most recently a very contested emerging Central State.

South-Central has been an area of prolonged crisis. The mandate of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) ended in August 2012 and a new Lower House of Parliament, known as the House of the People, to comprise 275 members, was established. The members were selected by clan elders, with His Excellency Professor Jawari Mohamed Osman elected by the members as Speaker of the new House of the People. Despite verbal pledges to adhere to a 30% quota for women's membership, only 39 of the members, or 13.7%, are female. The Provisional Constitution also calls for an Upper House with 54 members, comprising representatives from federal member states, but this chamber has not yet been formed.

An initial Cabinet of ten Ministers was formed by the new post-transitional Government's Prime Minister in January 2013, but has since been replaced with an enlarged Cabinet of 25 Ministers (two female) plus five State Ministers and two Deputy Ministers by the current Prime Minister, Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed. Security in Mogadishu has improved markedly since 2011 after AMISOM and SNA troops pushed Al-Shabaab insurgents out of the capital. Despite this improvement, a number of MPs have been assassinated over the last two years.

From its first days, the FGS embarked on a broad-ranging program of reconstruction and reform with support from its development partners. Under President Hassan Sheikh, the Government's Six Pillar Policy provided an initial framework for reforms and deliverables in the areas of security, economic recovery, justice, basic services and infrastructure, and governance and rule of law. The Somali Compact, based on the Busan New Deal principles initiated in December 2012, translates the Six Pillar Policy into political, security, and development priorities through five peace building and state building Goals (PSGs):

PSG1: Inclusive Politics: Achieve a stable and peaceful Somalia through inclusive political processes.

PSG2: Security: Establish unified, capable, accountable and rights based Somali Federal security institutions providing basic safety and security for its citizens.

PSG3: Justice: Establish independent, accountable and efficient justice institutions capable of addressing the justice needs of the people of Somalia by delivering justice for all.

PSG4: Economic Foundations: Revitalize and expand the Somali economy with a focus on livelihood enhancement, employment generation, and broad-based inclusive growth.

PSG5: Revenue and Services: Increase the delivery of equitable, affordable, and sustainable services that promote national peace and reconciliation amongst regions and citizens and enhance transparent and accountable revenue generation and equitable distribution and sharing of public resources.

SECTION III. FEDERAL PARLIAMENT

This section summarizes the current capacity and needs of the Federal Parliament of the Republic of Somalia (hereinafter, Federal Parliament), located in Mogadishu. Specifically, this section focuses on the House of the People (the lower house), which is currently the only chamber that is constituted and operational. During the time of SSG, the upper house will most likely also become a reality, and after this occurs SSG will decide what kind of support to give. For now, the assessment team anticipates it will likely be technical support for both MPs and secretariat. The section begins with a general overview of the Federal Parliament and the assessment team's process in conducting this component of the assessment. The section then analyzes in greater detail the capacity and needs of the Federal Parliament, breaking down the sub-section by each respective parliamentary oversight committee whose members the assessment team interviewed. The section next provides a gap analysis, mapping existing donor-funded projects supporting the Federal Parliament and identifying gaps in key areas of continued need on which SSG could engage. Finally, the section will provide a summary of proposed Objective 1 activities for SSG, addressing the identified target areas and categorized according to priority – short-term or urgent/immediate versus long-term.

Throughout this section, as with the other sections, due consideration is given to gender-related issues and issues affecting other marginalized populations, as a mainstreamed component in all proposed focus areas and activities. Similarly, the proposed focus areas and activities are guided by the overall goals and objectives of Objective 1 of the SSG SOW, and in line with the strategic objectives of PSG 1 of the Somali Compact.

A. GENERAL OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

The Strategic Plan for the People's House of Somalia, 2012-2016 ("Strategic Plan") sets forth a four-year plan for development of the Federal Parliament.¹ Three broad objectives are set out by the Federal Parliament in the Strategic Plan:

1. Parliamentary Business – to enact quality legislation, review the constitution and oversight of the other branches of government.
2. Members Leadership, Representation and Accountability – to empower members to represent and remain accountable to the Somali people and to provide leadership in a way that promotes national unity.
3. Parliamentary Institution – to establish the House of the People as an effective institution, with a functioning administration and infrastructure.

Please note that the following paragraphs represent the plans set out by the Federal Parliament and not necessarily SSG. In particular SSG will not support establishments of constituency offices.

Within Strategic Objective 1, the following benchmarks have been identified by the Federal Parliament:

¹ See Bibliography, Annex B, *infra*.

- Establishment of Effective Rules of Procedure
- Establishment of Effective Parliamentary Committees
- Oversight of Government Institutions
- Budget Management, Accounting, Audit and Oversight
- Developing a Legislative Program
- Reviewing the Constitution

Within Strategic Objective 2, the following benchmarks have been identified by the Federal Parliament:

- Establishing Constituency Offices
- Establishing Outreach and Public Information Programmes
- Promote National Unity and Peace

Within Strategic Objective 3, the following benchmarks have been identified by the Federal Parliament:

- Establishing the Office of the Speaker and Parliamentary Leadership
- Development of Physical Infrastructure
- Establishment of Legal Research Unit and Library
- Organization Structure, Staffing and Skills Development
- Develop ICT Facilities
- Improve Security of Parliament and Members of Parliament

Additionally, the Federal Parliament prioritizes these above objectives and benchmarks in the Strategic Plan:

1. Rules of Procedure
2. Program of Legislation
3. Capacitating of the Speaker's Office
4. Review of the Constitution
5. Organizational structure and human resourcing of the parliamentary support service
6. Outreach, Public Information and Education
7. Constituency Offices
8. Infrastructure and Facilities
9. Legal Research Unit
10. ICT and Information Management

Upon arrival in Mogadishu, the assessment team met with Speaker Jawari and Secretary General Buh, to brief them on SSG and initiate discussion on potential areas of need and assistance by SSG. The Speaker outlined the bills in the draft legislative agenda for the current session:

- Closing accounts for 2013
- 2015 Budget Bill
- Boundaries and Federalization Bill, to establish the boundaries commission, which will be responsible for delineating the regional and district-wise sub-divisions of the country under the new proposed federal arrangement
- National Election Commission Bill

- Anti-Terror Bill
- Human Rights Commission Bill
- Political Parties Bill, establishing an office for the registration of political parties
- Constitutional Court Bill
- Foreign Investment Bill
- Control of Firearms Bill
- Media and Telecommunications Bill
- Audit law (Magistrate of Accounts)
- Civil Aviation Bill
- Procurement Bill
- Private Education Bill
- Anti-Corruption Law
- Ratification of the UNCRC Optional Protocol on Children in Armed Conflict

Of this larger legislative agenda, the federalism and constitutional issues appear to be of particular priority for the Parliament this session and for coming sessions, with the appointment of the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission and the Boundaries and Federalism Commission high on the agenda, according to the Speaker and others interviewed. According to the Speaker, MPs are currently engaged in regional consultations and reconciliation efforts towards promoting state formation. The Speaker noted that although the Federal Government is to set up Interim Regional Administrations that join two or more regions, some existing regions are unwilling to join with others to form interim regional administrations or are declaring themselves to be federal states. There is a general fear among citizens and communities/clans of the “cantonization” (fragmentation into numerous, district-sized or smaller, individual clan-based semi-autonomous sub-national states) of the country, due to a lack of understanding of the concept of federalism and what it would mean for the governance of the country and administration of the regions.

The other priority bills from the larger legislative agenda are:

- Budget Bill
- National Election Commission Bill
- Human Rights Commission Bill
- Constitutional Court Bill
- Foreign Investment Bill
- Civil Aviation Bill
- Procurement Bill
- Private Education Bill

The Speaker was enthusiastic about SSG’s support in these areas, and directed the Secretary General to provide the assessment team with all necessary assistance to facilitate meetings and to obtain necessary and relevant documentation during the assessment team’s mission.

B. CAPACITY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Plan provides a useful monitoring framework for its objectives and the Strategic Plan's monitoring tables indicate that very few of the proposed activities have been implemented, or even initiated. Rules of Procedure have been formalized, and fifteen parliamentary standing committees, and two ad hoc committees have been formed. Parliamentary staff have been hired and assigned to administrative departments and parliamentary committees. As noted above, the Speaker's office has organized an ambitious legislative agenda for the coming session. The constitutional review process has been initiated, with the approval of the implementing legislation for the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission.

Of the ambitious legislative agenda, some interviewees pointed out that the current legislative agenda, or at least a substantial portion of it, has been on the table for the past three parliamentary sessions due to the fragility of the Somali government. From June to December 2013, for instance, no parliamentary work was conducted because the government faced a no-confidence vote and awaited a new government to be formed along with a cabinet reshuffle. In January 2014, the newly formed government pulled back all of the draft bills that were pending in the parliament under the existing legislative agenda, to be reviewed and revised. The members of the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission have been appointed but not formally approved, and the Commission is not yet operational. The administrative staff still lacks the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their day-to-day administrative duties. While some physical improvements have been made, the legal research and library/database resource capability is still undeveloped. And parliamentarians and the existing donor-driven international assistance initiatives have largely not conducted any systematic outreach or constituency/civic engagement initiatives.

In some cases, this can be attributed to the continuing insecure environment. In addition to preventing Somali officials themselves from carrying out activities freely and effectively, it has also limited activities and engagement of donor-driven international assistance, as international implementers have largely stayed out of the country or are restricted to the Mogadishu International Airport compound (MIA). Nevertheless, the overall technical capacity of the parliament – a practical understanding of roles and responsibilities, technical expertise of committee members and administrative staff, and practical ability to carry out day to day office administrative functions – remains to be further developed and SSG is well- placed to address this gap.

Overall Capacity of Parliamentary Committees

It is a notable achievement that, in keeping with its Strategic Objectives, 15 parliamentary committees (14 departmental committees and one standing committee) and two ad hoc committees have been formed, staffed and are operational with 18-20 members each. At the same time, it was uniformly indicated by counterparts during the course of the assessment that overall substantive knowledge and skills capacity of parliamentary committee members is very low. Committee members lack sufficient members with substantive knowledge and background

relevant for their respective sectoral mandate – in most committees, only one or two members have the requisite educational or professional background in the sector, and the leadership of the committees is appointed mainly based on status rather than educational/professional background or skill level.

While committee members are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in terms of governmental oversight from a theoretical or general conceptual perspective, they lack a practical understanding of methodologies and mechanisms for carrying out their duties. Likewise, committees lack the requisite practical skill-sets for navigating the legislative process – namely, legal or statutory analysis, legislative drafting, research and writing, etc.

Parliamentary Administrative Staff Capacity

As an in-house parliamentary staff assessment conducted in June 2014 indicates, more than 70% of the civil service has been hired in the last two years alone.² The civil service is approximately 30% women, and most of them have some form of university education.³ At the same time, while they have received basic theoretical knowledge and understanding of administrative functions, the civil service requires considerable practical training, both in administrative functions as well as in substantive knowledge.

Similarly, it was uniformly indicated by counterparts that the committees' ability to carry out their day-to-day functions is severely debilitated by the lack of administrative support and low capacity among the administrative support staff. In particular, key areas of shortcomings identified were day-to-day internal coordination, communication, organizing and convening meetings, and a severe lack of infrastructure – record-keeping, computers, etc. This was corroborated by the assessment team's own visits to the parliamentary committee offices in what is known as Villa Hargeisa and to the administrative secretariat at the Parliament building. A key need in terms of infrastructure is a database – electronic or physical – for legislation.

Another key need identified with respect to the staff is substantive skill building in research – research methodology and, in particular, legal research and writing as well as legislative drafting and analysis – in order to carry out its support function to committee members when scrutinizing and commenting on specific draft bills before the committee.

A legal research unit in the parliament, with a roster of experts, was suggested by counterparts as an area of need. Such a unit, initially supported by international experts, might be able to build up the research capacity of a unit of the professional staff to carry on the legislative and legal research work.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Executive-Legislative Relations

It was regularly noted by counterparts that inter-branch communication, coordination and cooperation could be improved. Proposed legislation is normally initiated by the relevant line ministries, with the parliamentary committees playing a somewhat passive role in reviewing it.

² See Bibliography, Annex B, *infra*.

³ See *id*.

If the parliament returns a draft bill to the government for further consideration or redrafting, with or without specific comments and recommended amendments, the process remains exclusively within the walls of the ministry until it is ready to re-submit the bill, with no communication, coordination or collaboration in the drafting process between the ministry and parliament. While this is in keeping with the basic rules of procedure, in practical effect the parliament has a limited role in the legislative process and tends to defer to the government.

It was apparent that while some of this lack of cooperation is due to executive branch resistance to perceived “interference” by the legislative branch, further training on the oversight function of the parliament and practical mechanisms to strengthen communication between the two branches might help them function in a more cooperative and complementary manner.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach & Civic Engagement

Parliament is not adequately pursuing engagement with citizens or civil society organizations. Heritage Institute for Peace Studies (HIPS), a Mogadishu-based civil society organization, organizes and facilitates a monthly “Forum for Ideas” event at which key government or parliamentary officials present and discuss with civil society on specific public policy topics. The PSGs delineated under the New Deal have established working groups under each PSG that are intended to include representatives from government, the international community, and civil society. Under the PSG 1 (inclusive politics/governance) working group, for instance, HIPS indicated there are three sub-committees consisting of six representatives each, equally represented across the three institutional sectors. HIPS also indicated they are part of, the federalism and constitutional review sub-committee of the PSG 1 working group. The assessment team has not been able to confirm whether this is correct or not, after having received information from USAID that HIPS has not been seen in these meetings. HIPS told the assessment team that there is a dissatisfaction among CSOs being part of the group in the level of real participation and inclusion, this could however be their own complaint rather than CSOs in general. Apart from these two initiatives, there does not appear to be any formal parliamentary consultative process of engaging with civil society.

The more active domestic civil society organizations that are able to engage the parliament do so through informal channels with the relevant ministerial or parliamentary counterparts. The engagement is usually initiated and facilitated by the civil society organization rather than by the parliament, and is heavily reliant on the personal contacts and connections of the individual leadership of the institutions.

It was noted consistently by counterparts that a key area of need is bridging the gap between parliament and civil society, through systematic and mandated public hearings, and a more formal consultative process with experts and academics – a “culture” of public dialogue and transparent or consultative decision-making is required.

It was noted by counterparts in the context of the upcoming scheduled 2016 elections that parliamentarians need to be encouraged to open and staff local constituency offices in order to better engage with their constituencies, this will however not be supported by SSG. Though the current security situation poses challenges to access certain constituencies, it was noted that this is not necessarily the case for many other constituencies. The financial resource constraint is also a significant issue. Nevertheless, it was pointed out to the assessment team that a local

staffer serving as a phone bank or point of contact could significantly improve the level of accessibility of parliamentarians with their respective constituencies, without necessarily having to go to the constituency themselves each week or month.

Informational Infrastructure – Legal Research, ICT, Record-Keeping, Library/Database

As alluded to above, a severe debilitating factor in the capacity of the administrative staff to carry out its functions is the lack of information management skills and infrastructure. There is no legal research capacity in the parliament – in addition to lack of skills, on-line or physical library and research access and materials are non-existent. Electronic or physical record-keeping facilities are also missing. Staffers during meetings noted that they have no place to file the meeting minutes or other written records that they are tasked to maintain. Similarly, the meeting minutes they do maintain are by hand only, as there is a shortage of computers. Even a physical or on-line database for maintenance and dissemination of enacted legislation is lacking.

While these infrastructure initiatives have been docketed in the Strategic Plan and in other donor-driven work plans, they are not a priority, with donors focusing more on large-scale infrastructure such as building a new parliament and administrative office building. Therefore, the smaller-scale “information infrastructure” is as yet undeveloped.

Committee Considerations

The assessment team was able to meet with most of the key sectorial parliamentary committees. Due to various logistical and security constraints, two key committees that the team were unable to meet with during the one-week assessment mission were the Internal Affairs and Security Committee and the Justice Committee. As these two committees are heavily engaged on the constitutional/federal issues and the constitutional court bill, respectively, they will be suitable for SSG to engage with in due course.

However, the overall assessments of capacity and needs of parliament described above are generally applicable to all of the key committees and administrative departments that the assessment team was able to meet with and, probably, the key committees the team was not able to meet with. Nevertheless, the team deemed it useful and necessary to include below a further breakdown by committee and administrative department to identify specific needs of each.

What follows, therefore, is a committee-wise breakdown of the specific capacities and needs of each of the parliamentary committees that the assessment team was able to interview.

1. *Committee on Budget, Finance, Planning, International Cooperation and Financial Oversight of Public Institutions (“Budget Committee”)*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The budget committee consists of 17 members and has three staffers. There are currently no female members on the budget committee, but it has one female staff member.

The Budget Committee is responsible for three of the priority bills on this session's legislative agenda: (1) the 2013 budget review and closeout, (2) the 2015 budget bill, and (3) the procurement bill. The committee expects the PFM (public finance management) bill to be pushed to the next parliamentary session.

Committee Members

As evidenced by the Budget Committee's title, it has an important and highly technical mandate and responsibility. However, committee members lack the technical financial or legal expertise to handle the subject matter.

Members interviewed noted the need for advisory support in the form of a financial and legal expert who can provide expertise on macroeconomics, policy-making, drafting, and financial and legislative analysis.

In terms of technical assistance needed, the committee outlined their priorities as:

- STTA to draft and review bills, including the following experts: finance lawyer, budget analyst, constitutional lawyer
- Trainings on procurement policy so that the committee members can properly review the procurement bill
- Seminar on how to hold public hearings – particularly related to the budget
- Training on how to draft legislation
- Issue-specific training before each meeting to help members understand, evaluate and debate pieces of legislation – including procurement, auditing, budgeting and finance.

To date, the training provided to MPs has not been issue-specific but rather focused on overall governance or how to set the legislative agenda. What would be useful for the committee would be technical support that goes beyond the conceptual and theoretical and focuses on how to apply substantive knowledge to the task of legislative review, drafting and financial/budgetary oversight.

Administrative Staff

Staff are responsible to keep minutes and provide overall support to the Budget Committee but there are no personal computers available for their use. All notes are hand-written and there are not enough shelves to store the minutes. The staff could also benefit from substantive training on technical aspects of the committee's subject matter, to make them more effective in providing support services beyond the basic office functions. There has been a large turnover of staff (or a lot of short-term staff such as interns), so there is a need to focus investments on long-term staff – especially given the highly technical nature of the committee's work, institutional knowledge among the long-term civil service staff would benefit the functionality of the committee.⁴

⁴ UNDP has indicated that they have undertaken a program to train the staff on day to day management and operational processes such as meeting minutes, organizing meetings, filing, recordkeeping, etc. See *infra*.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Executive-Legislative Relations

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation are the principal executive branch counterparts for the Budget Committee, but there is very little consultation between parliament and these ministries during the legislative process. Committee members described it as a very non-consultative process – the ministry drafts a bill and sends it to parliament, which then refers the bill to the appropriate committee for review. The committee then reviews and returns the bill to plenary session with recommendations for adoption or rejection. While this is technically in keeping with the formalities outlined in the Rules of Procedure for the Parliament, the committee did not indicate that they are or have the capacity to provide substantive comments for reform or amendment of such bills, or that there are formal consultative processes between the executive counterparts and the committee. As such, the parliamentary legislative process is severely limited.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

Parliament is not currently holding public hearings although committee members interviewed say they would like to organize these activities. The main obstacles to holding public hearings, according to those interviewed, include the time constraints involved in organizing, logistics of coordinating (i.e., venue, whom to invite, etc.), and the cost.

2. *Ad Hoc Committee on the Policy Options and Draft Law Establishing the Independent Electoral Commission (“Electoral Committee”)*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The Electoral Committee is an ad hoc, temporary body set up to oversee the electoral commission bill and the election law that will govern the election process. The committee consists of 15 members, two of whom are female MPs, and has two staff members, of whom one is female. The national electoral commission bill is a priority bill on the legislative agenda for this session. The committee has already submitted the draft bill for consideration and approval by the plenary session. The drafting process for the electoral commission bill took four months, required 22 committee meetings, and involved the committee members, two representatives of the prime minister’s office, and representatives from the Ministry of Interior and Justice and Constitutional Affairs. While this is an example of legislative and executive coordination, there was no public input in this legislative process. One donor-driven drafting retreat was conducted in Djibouti. The bill was submitted to the plenary on October 11, a week prior to the assessment team’s meeting with the committee and has been tabled for debate for the current session.

The next bill the committee will have to deal with is the election bill itself, regulating the conduct of the elections, though this has yet to be formally added to the committee’s agenda and the committee has not commenced work on it as yet.

Committee Members

The committee noted that technical expertise and legislative drafting training for committee

members was needed. UNDP's expert consultant had provided a day of consultative assistance on one occasion, and NDI conducted a four-day knowledge building workshop for the entire parliament, focusing on parliamentary procedure, generally. The committee mentioned that Interpeace had provided a two-day legislative drafting seminar on one occasion.

The committee members expressed the opinion that more consistent and targeted, substantive training and expert consultative assistance are needed on legal matters and legislative drafting.

Administrative Staff

UNDP had conducted a one-week seminar in November 2013 for the entire parliamentary secretariat on internal administrative procedures. Again, however, it was indicated by committee members that more sustained and practical capacity building, as opposed to more general conceptual training, would be useful.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

There were no citizen outreach activities conducted with respect to the electoral commission bill, though the committee expressed desire to conduct such public outreach after the bill is returned by the parliament in final draft form (or passage and enactment). If Parliament passes the bill this session without amendment, there will be no public outreach prior to its enactment. There was also no consultation with civil society organizations.

3. *Human Rights, Women and Humanitarian Affairs Committee ("Human Rights Committee")*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The human rights committee is tasked with overseeing the general treatment of employees, provision of salaries, and participation of women throughout the executive branch of the federal government. The committee works particularly closely, but not exclusively, with the Ministry for Women, Gender, and Human Rights. The committee is also mandated to help promote the work of civil society. There are 18 members on the committee, and it has three staff members. There are eight female committee members (the highest ratio among the parliamentary committees), including the chairperson, and one female staffer who is also the head plenary minutes keeper for the parliament. The chairperson has been in her present position for only three months. The other members interviewed have been in their positions for two years, while the chief administrative secretary has been in her position since 2010.

Committee Members

The committee indicated that in the past two years, they had conducted three public hearings and three oversight visits – all within Mogadishu, however. Among these were two prison visits, in March and August 2013, to investigate a cholera outbreak and a hunger strike, respectively. The committee also observed in the trial of an accused rapist in which the victim, the accused soldier, and the journalist reporting the story all were imprisoned and charged with crimes. The

committee was able to successfully advise the Ministry of Justice to release the victim so that she could take care of her infant baby, as well as the journalist. The committee has also been engaged on the resettlement of IDPs, with the Ministry of Defense.

Despite these activities, it appears that the committee members generally lack the requisite educational or professional skills and background in human rights or investigative research to carry out their oversight mandate effectively. The committee primarily operates as a “grievance-receiving” mechanism or an ombudsman’s office, receiving and responding to numerous complaints from IDPs and other affected individuals, rather than as a systematic or formal oversight body. Also, due to lack of resources, committee members noted, they are unable to conduct any activities or outreach outside of Mogadishu. Although the committee’s staff members have received some training on internal administrative process from AWEPA (its Uganda study tour) and UNDP (in November 2013), they remain in need of more technical capacity building with the requisite substantive skills and knowledge for the subject matter of the committee. This committee, too, expressed its need for subject matter experts. The committee felt it was mandated to deal with clan dispute resolution, but under-resourced and under-trained to do so.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Executive-Legislative Relations

Despite some of these highlighted oversight activities, the committee indicated that the executive branch is generally reluctant to cooperate or even respond to committee requests for information or meetings, and that the level of cooperation by the relevant ministries is low – less than 50% of the time, according to members interviewed.

In addition to these oversight activities and roles, the legislative agenda for the current session includes the draft bill for the establishment of the independent human rights commission, which falls within the committee’s purview. At present, the draft bill is still with the Ministry of Gender and Human Rights and is expected to be re-submitted to parliament during this session. There has been no cooperation or consultation or communication between the ministry and the parliament on the drafting process to date, so the committee had no idea when the draft bill will be ready. The committee noted that it hopes to conduct public outreach activities after it receives the draft bill for review.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

The committee conducted a public hearing with 300 persons from across civil society to raise awareness on women’s circumcision (FGM), rape and maternal health. The committee expressed its desire to do more public outreach, particularly with respect to the human rights commission bill, but also on these above issues outside of Mogadishu, where human rights and humanitarian issues are still more acute.

In addition to the resource and security constraints in conducting these outreach activities, the committee requires practical training on methodologies and mechanisms for conducting public outreach and engaging civil society in a more systematic manner than it does at present.

4. *Oversight Committee for Review and Implementation of the Provisional Constitution (“Constitutional Oversight Committee”)*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

There are 23 committee members, of whom six are female. The chairperson of the committee is a woman, Hon. Maryam Asif Khasim. The committee has been engaged in drafting the parliamentary rules of procedure and the bill for the establishment of the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission, which has been submitted to and approved by the cabinet and is expected to be formed soon (the five commission members have apparently already been nominated and are due to be appointed). The committee is also involved in the ongoing task of reviewing the articles of the provisional constitution with a view toward revising them and adopting a permanent constitution. The committee has been divided into two sub-committees – one focused on drafting the constitution, in consultation with the independent commission once it is operational, and one focused on public outreach on the constitutional process and federalism.

Committee Members

The committee members interviewed indicated that the Max Planck Foundation has been providing support from two Somali legal advisors who are embedded with the Parliament, as well as international advisors based in Europe, in the review of select chapters of the constitution and providing a report with recommendations to the committee and parliament. The Max Planck Foundation has not, however, been assisting the committee with public outreach.

UNDP provided a one-off consultative meeting with their expert, who provided a presentation on the various forms of federalism. Committee members expressed the view, however, that the information was very general, not specific enough and not sustained. They expressed the view that what was needed was a full-time resource person available for a week or a month, rather than a few hours. The committee wanted internal knowledge-building expertise and training. The committee members themselves have limited internal capacity in the area of constitutional law, parliamentary procedures, or governance.

Administrative Staff

Committee members expressed the desire for staff development training on legal research and writing, as well as basic administrative management skills.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

There has been no real movement as yet on the public outreach component; of the committee’s work nor have any of the donor-funded programs engaged on this component, according to the committee.

5. *Women's Caucus*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The women's caucus was formally constituted in June 2014, and meets once per month. It was noted that the 30% quota of female representation is a verbal commitment, and not something set by law and mandated for future governments. So those interviewed expressed concern that this needs to be entrenched.

In the government, out of a total of 20 ministries at the federal level, there are currently two female ministers – the ministry of gender and human rights, and the ministry of general services; and two female deputy ministers – at the ministry of gender and human rights, and at the ministry of finance. The caucus members expressed the view that a similar quota was needed for government institutions as well.

In the parliament there are three female heads of committees (Chairs) – Human Rights, Constitutional Oversight, and Interior Affairs - two female deputy chairs – the transport committee and one other; and one female director in the secretariat – in the finance department. The committee noted that of the 45 UNDP interns hired for the parliament staff, only five are women because there was a lack of female applicants.

The caucus was of the view that women's participation was active and respected once they were on the inside; but it was getting appointed or considered for appointment that was the challenge. The caucus also pointed out the fact that many clan elders did not submit names of women candidates for the parliament, despite the government commitment to do so.

The caucus mentioned that NDI had conducted a meeting in Djibouti in October on civil society engagement, women's participation, and security.

6. *Committee for Economy, Trade and Industry ("Economic Affairs Committee")*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The mandate of the committee covers business, trade, industry, and "everything besides public finance," according to the committee members interviewed. It was the view of the committee that the scope of its mandate was too broad and it is therefore difficult for the committee to cope with its tasks.

The committee's current session agenda includes the foreign investment bill, which has been on their docket for over a year. The first draft they received was very bad, and therefore they wish to study the law more and develop amendments or an alternative updated draft in the committee. For this, they require technical expertise and capacity building assistance, according to the members interviewed.

Apart from the foreign investment bill, the committee will review the intellectual property law and commercial licenses law.

Committee Members

Like others, this committee expressed the view that the capacity of the committee, in terms of background or specialization in the subject matter, could be strengthened. Apart from the chairman, there are few or no members with a background in economics or business.

The committee expressed the need for substantive knowledge building expertise, capacity building, and facilitation of public forums/outreach. They also expressed the desire for research capacity building for the staff as well as development of an adequate library.

7. *Committee for Roads, Ports, Airports, Energy and Transport (“Transport Committee”)*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

As the committee responsible for some of the most important revenue-generating sectors (ports, customs, e.g.), the committee is interested in working on legislation to regulate public-private sector contractual relationships. In this regard, the civil aviation bill on the current legislative agenda is within their portfolio, and they are seeking to restructure the contract with the private contractor managing the MIA so that it can be more profitable for the government.

The committee consists of fifteen members, two of whom are female, and three staffers (all male). Most of the members have little or no background in the sectors/industries within their portfolio.

They are also looking at an insurance regulation act, a traffic law (updating the 1962 act), a marine transport regulatory act, and a workers compensation law, all for future legislative sessions.

Committee Members

The committee members expressed the need for technical assistance in legal drafting, as well as sector-by-sector industry knowledge or expertise, and comparative state practice guidance on best practices. They also requested legal advice/training on what their role is or should be, which agreements and issues they should be involved in, what areas are exclusively within the government’s portfolio and outside of their oversight mandate, and how to go about conducting their oversight and legislative review/drafting functions. Basically, the committee sought comprehensive technical expertise on their roles and how to carry them out. The chairman expressed the sentiment that the trainings or assistance to date have been general and conceptual, and not specific or substantive. Likewise, they have not been sustained or long-term, but rather one-off workshops or training.

Administrative Staff

In terms of staff development, this committee also requested legal research and substantive

knowledge-building training for the staff. The staff members interviewed noted that they had participated in the general parliamentary process study tour in Uganda, but nothing on a consistent or sustained long-term basis.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Executive-Legislative Relations

The committee noted that they face a particularly acute situation with the government because the ministries enter into agreements with private contractors without consulting the parliamentary committee, and are resistant to cooperate or share information with the committee when it seeks information regarding the agreements. They conduct their oversight role by writing letters seeking information, and seeking consultative meetings with the ministry, to see if they have stuck to the terms of the agreements and/or have utilized the budget correctly. They also deal with complaints received from ports or ministry workers, through informal means only, and usually pertaining to workers compensation or other labor/employment related matters. The committee members interviewed suggested that a factor in governmental resistance to parliamentary oversight is the ministries do not fully recognize the committee's oversight role in entering into these agreements.

8. *Social Services Development Committee ("Social Services Committee")*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The social services committee deals with education, health, labor and employment, and sports and youth. The committee is divided up into sub-groups dealing with each of these four sub-topics. The committee consists of 14 members, four of whom are women, and four administrative staff. Most members have some academic background in the committee's sphere of competency.

Given its broad area of competency, the committee feels that it is overstretched in adequately carrying out its oversight function. The counterpart ministries, the committee members noted, are primarily engaged in service delivery, so the committee has a large task to oversee this process.

On the legislative agenda for this session, they noted that the priority is an education bill to regulate private education. The draft bill is still with the ministry of education, however, so they suggested that it might get pushed to the next legislative session.

The committee indicated that neither they nor the government have any sort of policy geared towards persons with disabilities.

Committee Members and Administrative Staff

The committee requested assistance in the form of capacity building, expertise, and knowledge building training for MPs, and skills building and administrative management training for staff.

9. *Committee for Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Marine Resources*
(“Agriculture Committee”)

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The committee consists of 18 MPs, one of whom is female. The main bottleneck to getting more women on the committee is the number of women with agriculture related backgrounds, according to those interviewed, though the assessment team noted this is apparently not a mandatory requirement for male members. Only some but not all committee members do have backgrounds and expertise in agriculture, environment, and livestock.

The committee is currently working on two bills related to fishing and marine research. Both bills have gone through the proper channels and are on the legislative agenda for this session. Currently there is very limited awareness at the local level about environmental protection issues and there are no laws in place to protect the environment.

Committee Members

The interviewees stated that most of the committee members have a limited knowledge about ocean issues and capacity building training is required to understand the basic issues related to the bills the committee is covering. The committee thinks the main assistance needed is related to implementation of the bills but not preparation of the bills.

In terms of technical issues, the MPs want to do a review of maritime laws to harmonize the various regional, national and international laws related to this issue. There is also a need for technical support related to agriculture and livestock. Priority legislation to be drafted include:

- Land reform bill
- Livestock bill
- Natural resource management and rural development plans.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

To date the committee has held four public meetings and has a work plan for more, but they need help organizing these meetings. Help is also needed to identify who would come to the meeting and how to conduct a public meeting. Outreach has been limited to Mogadishu so far due to security concerns. They have been trying to televise hearings and use radio programs to account for the security obstacles.

10. *Defense Committee*

Composition, Mandate and Work Plan

The committee consists of 13 members, eight of whom are active. There are no women on the committee. The committee’s mandate encompasses oversight of the military and disarmament

and reintegration of rebels and militias. The chairman noted that in liberated areas, the defense committee must deal with community/civil society engagement, IDPs and human rights issues.

Committee Members

It was expressed that the committee members largely lack background in these areas of responsibility, or need further capacity building on their roles and responsibilities.

Some areas of the legislative agenda that the committee noted they require technical expertise include:

- Arms control legislation
- Piracy legislation
- Border security
- Military courts

A National Defense Policy was supposed to have been developed already, which would incorporate international humanitarian law and military codes of conduct. This is yet to happen.

Administrative Staff

The defense committee particularly noted the need for translation capacity among the staff and administrative services, in addition to general staff development and capacity building.

Cross-Objective Functionality: Executive-Legislative Relations

Another challenge that the committee faces is that the military does not like to be interfered with or “overseen.”

Cross-Objective Functionality: Public Outreach and Civic Engagement

The committee facilitated a public hearing with the armed forces about four or five months ago that was broadcast on TV. It was initially resisted but ultimately very well received by the Speaker of the House as a means to facilitate transparent debate. However, the committee is only able to conduct this type of activity within Mogadishu due to funding limitations.

The committee receives numerous complaints from soldiers relating to salary and benefits issues, and from the general public relating to food, water, shelter, security, military abuse of power, etc., in the liberated areas. The complaints process is very informal and through personal channels.

Intra-Parliamentary Communication

The chairman noted that, given the overlap of the committee’s work with other committees, improvement in inter-committee communication and coordination is also required.

C. GAP ANALYSIS

This sub-section gives an overview of the key activities that other donor-funded projects supporting parliament are engaged on with relation to PSG 1-focused areas, and gaps remaining that could provide possible key focus areas on which SSG can engage.

UNDP

UNDP's 2014 work plan lays out a comprehensive plan to cover capacity building for the parliament targeting all major strategic objectives and proposed activities of the Strategic Plan, through legislative assistance and expertise, administrative capacity building for the civil service, and greater citizen accountability of the parliamentarians. However, UNDP's implementation of this work plan has largely stalled for the past year and a half due to various security incidents. Even at present, having returned to Mogadishu and being located at the MIA, the security situation and UN restrictions on movement have hampered UNDP's ability to implement its work plan.

A major target output of UNDP's work plan is to capacitate the administrative efficiency of the secretariat. To date, they have hired 43 to 45 young and recent graduates to work in the parliamentary secretariat as interns, of who five are women, with the hope and expectation that these interns will eventually be hired as permanent staff for the secretariat. In November 2013, UNDP conducted a weeklong training workshop for the support staff on basic administrative functions, focusing on internal administrative processes, and office management tasks.

Other key outputs of the UNDP plan are to strengthen the legislative program of the parliament as well as the committees' oversight functions. To this end, UNDP has brought in one expert consultant working with parliamentary committees to assist in developing their respective work plans for the session from October 2014 until late January 2015. It was noted by some committee members that the assistance provided by the expert is in the form of one-off consultative meetings with each committee focusing on internal committee processes and parliamentary procedures, as opposed to sustained substantive knowledge-building. The meetings are most often held at the UN compound at MIA due to the security risks.

UNDP noted during the assessment team's meeting that it plans to engage on the constitutional review process, further to its fourth target output, once the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission is operational.

UNDP has thus far not initiated any activities toward its target output of strengthening parliamentary responsiveness and accountability through public outreach.

Likewise, UNDP has not undertaken any civil society strengthening/engagement, or inter-branch coordination efforts – two areas of cross-objective functionality identified by SSG. UNDP acknowledged this gap in communication and coordination across institutions was an area of need.

UNDP has not been involved to date on legislative drafting assistance, legal research or substantive sectoral capacity building with the parliament, though they have done so with the Ministry of Justice. According to UNDP, long-term subject-matter or sectoral expertise for each committee in the form of consultant experts is still needed.

Max Planck Foundation

The Max Planck Foundation is providing legal assistance to the parliament in the form of legal advice, legislative analysis and recommendations, on a few specific draft bills, the issue of federalism and the review of the provisional constitution. The Max Planck Foundation is not working with government institutions or with civil society, according to interviews.

AWEPA

AWEPA provided a three-day study tour to Uganda for the parliamentary secretariat in early 2014. The focus of this study tour, according to those interviewed, was conceptual parliamentary procedure and governance generally. Another study tour for the Chairpersons, Deputy Chairpersons, and Whips was organized in August 2014 by AWEPA, a five days workshop was then held in Kampala for a total number of 37 persons. These two workshops were part in a series of six workshops, but the assessment team has not received any further information regarding the remaining four workshops.

NDI

NDI conducted a workshop in Djibouti and one in Nairobi in 2013, but since then has not been operating in Mogadishu, according to those interviewed.

D. PROPOSED PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS AND OUTPUTS

This sub-section identifies select priority target areas and outputs for engagement by SSG. The proposed focus areas are derived from the gaps in other donor-driven assistance identified above, interviews with stakeholders and the assessment team's independent observations of areas of continued need. While other donor-driven programs have conducted technical training and capacity development, the emphasis of these initiatives has been general and conceptual and not sustained according to the interviewees.

Therefore, it is recommended that content of outputs and activities in each focus area should emphasize practical applications of the theoretical or general conceptual assistance that the parliament has received so far. Thus, the trainings and other capacity building assistance should be tied to concrete needs of the respective committees, and supplement general conceptual knowledge-building with assistance on its practical application through comparative state best

practices, as well as technical support on specific areas of parliamentary committees' respective session work plans.

Relatedly, the activities should emphasize long-term engagement; that is, an indication that a proposed activity is immediate or a priority refers to the timeframe for its initiation, and not to its proposed duration.

SSG has already been in contact with other donor organizations working with the Parliament and will continue to do so, as well as ensure the leadership of the Parliament about the planned work.

Priority Focus Areas

1. *Technical expert advisors on substantive topics of priority on the legislative agenda:*
 - Provide a roster of experts to assist on current session legislations or agenda items:
 - Federalism
 - Budget, Public Finance
 - Human Rights
 - Economics – Macro, Micro, FDI, Trade
 - Intellectual Property
 - Media/Telecommunications – privacy, freedom, regulation
2. *Capacity building training for committee members:*
 - Substantive Knowledge-Building Training on the above sectoral areas –
 - For instance, along the lines of a curriculum-style knowledge training course
 - Legal advice/training on what parliamentary committees' roles are or should be, which agreements and issues they should be involved in, what areas are exclusively within the government's portfolio and outside of their oversight mandate, and practical tools on how to go about conducting their oversight and legislative review/drafting functions
 - Capacity building for members, specific focus on giving assistance for the budget committee on budget
 - Capacity building training for committee members on legislative process:
 - Legislative drafting
 - Statutory analysis – how to analyze a bill
 - Practical methods of oversight
 - Interview/Investigation methodology
3. *Civil service capacity building:*
 - Legal research and writing
 - Substantive knowledge-building on committee sectors
 - Office administration:⁵

⁵ UNDP has indicated that they are or have done these activities; though it appears their last initiative in this regard was one year ago. It will be useful for SSG to determine whether UNDP intends to continue with these trainings in the foreseeable future.

- Typing
 - Record-keeping
 - Translation
 - Meeting scheduling
 - Interview/investigation methodology
4. *Cross-objective – executive-legislative relations:*
- Joint training/seminars on oversight functions of parliamentary committees, and best practice mechanisms
 - Development of formalized channels of communication and consultation
 - Facilitation of regular consultation meetings
5. *Cross-objective – Public outreach and civic engagement:*
- Training on best practice methodologies
 - Facilitated roundtable meetings and/or public hearings with civil society groups, especially organizations engaging with youth, the disabled, and women
 - Facilitation of systemized citizen access services, such as grievance/complaint receiving and responding mechanisms
6. *Information infrastructure:*
- Development of electronic and/or physical library/database for:
 - Legal research
 - Legislation/regulation management
 - Administrative record-keeping (meeting minutes, committee filing, etc.)

USAID/SSG Comparative Advantage

The target areas and outputs identified in this sub-section are specifically proposed with consideration to USAID’s and SSG’s unique position of comparative advantage in delivering these activities efficiently. SSG’s physical location in the city center of Mogadishu in very close proximity to its main institutional partners places it in a uniquely advantageous position to provide highly responsive and sustained assistance to the Somali government. Somali partners interviewed consistently identified the need for sustained, long-term and in-house or dedicated expert advisory support, for both short-term, immediate technical expertise as well as long-term sustainability and institutional capacity building.

USAID’s three-year commitment under SSG is also well-received by partners interviewed as facilitating the opportunity for long-term sustainable impact. The broad scope and flexibility and adaptability built into the SSG scope of work is another comparative advantage that places USAID’s initiative in a position of strength.

Whereas many other donor-driven initiatives are focused solely on governmental institutional capacity, USAID is also well positioned to address a serious but key gap, in the form of civil society engagement and capacity building. Likewise, USAID’s prioritization of cross-objective functionality between government and parliament presents an opportunity that can allow SSG to achieve significant democracy and good governance returns.

SECTION IV. OTHER STATE/REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS

In addition to the Parliaments noted above, emerging federal member states of Somalia will also establish state parliaments or regional assemblies.

Interim Juba Administration (Jubaland State)

Article 8 of the Agreement between the Interim Juba Administration and FGS, signed in August 2013, stipulates the creation of a Regional Assembly:

“The Regional Assembly should be an all-inclusive and representative body of all clans and constituencies and selected by the traditional elders with seats been distributed proportionally among the districts of the three regions in full consideration of inclusivity, balance and in reconciliatory manner. The rules and regulations governing this Interim Administration shall be consistent with the Provisional Constitution of the FRS and approved by the Federal Parliament.”

At the time of writing, the selection process for the Juba regional assembly had not yet started. Two committees - a Technical Selection Committee comprising 11 members and a Disputes Resolution Committee comprising 13 members – have been formed by the Interim Juba Administration and are supposed to work on the formation of a Jubaland Regional Assembly, but progress has been slow. The Federal Government should have oversight of both committees, and it appears there are still issues to be resolved as to their independence and composition. The to-be-formed Jubaland Regional Assembly will be comprised of 75 members. Clan elders will select 65 members, consisting of four members per district within Lower Juba, Middle Juba, and Gedo Regions (with a slightly higher number for Kismayo) – this is still being negotiated. Clan Elders will submit three candidates’ names to the Technical Selection Committee who will pick one to represent each district. The Disputes Resolution Committee exists to arbitrate in case there are disputes. It is expected that the IJA Leader Ahmed Madobe and the IJA Deputy Leader will be able to nominate another ten members, which will bring the regional assembly to 75 members. Under some draft guidelines prepared by the Interim Juba Administration, international observers will be invited to observe the process.

It appears that the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has planned to provide some capacity building for the Technical Selection Committee and the Disputes Resolution Committee, specifically in the role of nomination / selection committees, nomination / selection procedures, and nomination / selection monitoring and facilitation. IGAD issued a request for expressions of interest from capacity building institutions in May 2014, and the assessment team was told by an employee of IGAD that this training took place in Nairobi, though a report from the training has not been made available.

South West State

Following a prolonged contest between advocates for a three-region federal member state comprised of Bakool, Bay, and Lower Shabelle regions, and advocates for a larger six-region state that would also include the three regions of the Interim Juba Administration, the three-

region state option appears to have been chosen. The process of forming the three-region South West State (SW3) has gathered momentum, with elders currently submitting names for the 378 delegates (21 delegates for each of the 18 districts) to the conference that is to adopt the interim State Constitution and, possibly, designate the president (the option favored by SW3 camp leader and presidential aspirant Sharif Hassan).

The latter is not yet agreed, the other option being that the president should be elected by the to-be-formed parliament; this is the option favored by Speaker Jawari of the Federal Parliament. The elders and the Committee are hopeful that the conference may still be concluded by the end of October, but this appears unlikely, given both logistical challenges and possible remaining divisive issues, including the selection process for the president and sub-clan representation in the parliament). In recent meetings with members of the international community, members of the Technical Committee have appealed for more donor support for the process. The Somalia Stability Fund and the UN are providing some limited financial support.

Central Regions State

Most recently, overtures have been made to form a Central Regions State comprising Galgaduud and Mudug, with an agreement signed in July 2014 between the Somali Federal Government and stakeholder representatives from the regions. However, the agreement immediately resulted in Puntland cutting off relations with the SFG, as Puntland claimed a newly formed Central State would infringe on territory currently under Puntland's jurisdiction. In resolving this tension with Puntland, the SFG came to an agreement with the Puntland authorities. One of the key points of the agreement was to reassure Puntland that the nascent FGS-endorsed Central Regions State would not include any territory currently under Puntland's jurisdiction. This has in turn resulted in vocal disagreement from some leaders from the emerging Central Regions State, reacting to the agreement, mainly because it reinforces the division of the Mudug Region along clan lines.

SECTION V. CONCLUSION

USAID/SSG has a number of comparative advantages that can help it succeed in implementing its program of activities effectively. Principal among these is SSG's physical location within Mogadishu, outside of the airport – something that most other donor-driven implementers have not done, which consequently has severely hampered their ability to implement their respective projects.

For the Federal Parliament in Mogadishu, SSG's proximity to the main institutional partners will enable it to provide highly responsive and sustained assistance to the Somali government. Likewise, the longevity of USAID/SSG's three-year program is also a well-received sign of the project's commitment to sustainable outcomes and impact. Given the highly fluid and dynamic political and security environment the flexibility built into SSG is also a positive.

USAID has also identified several structural gaps in other donor-driven initiatives that place SSG inherently at an advantage to address the existing needs that are not being filled by other donors and can reach a far greater number of beneficiaries as a result. Whereas many other donor-driven initiatives are focused solely on governmental institutional capacity in isolation, USAID/SSG has also prioritized civil society engagement and capacity building, as well as cross-objective functionality between government and parliament. This has been identified as a serious gap by stakeholders and other donors alike.

While the current capacity of the Federal Parliament is limited, the thirst for assistance and excitement about USAID/SSG's presence is high. Therefore, SSG can have a high degree of success and cooperation with an appropriately tailored activity plan addressing the specific needs of the Parliament. In particular, the specific contours of future activities under Objective 1 will be well served to focus on sustained, deep and substantive engagement with committee members and administrative staff, and providing legal and technical capacity building assistance that emphasizes practical application of conceptual notions of governance, administration, legislative process and oversight.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RESOURCES

Documents used to inform the Objective 1 assessment were collected during the desk review or given to the assessment team during the field work portion of the assessment. The majority of documents referenced in the bibliography are publically available and can be shared by the assessment team upon request.

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Parliamentary Committees Work Plan (Draft). September 2014.

Priority Laws for the Fifth Session of Parliament Agreed By the Executive and Legislative Branches and the President (Draft). October 2014.

ANNEX B. LIST OF MEETINGS CONDUCTED

Mogadishu ⁷			
Organization	Individuals	Contact Information	Meeting Date
Federal Parliament, House of People (Lower House)	Hon. Mohamed Omar Jawari, Speaker of the House of People; Abdikarim Buh, Secretary-General, House of People (Contact Person)	+252-616101444; abdikarimbuh@yahoo.com; info@parliament.gov.so	14 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Budget Committee	Hon. Mohamed Idle, Dpy. Chair; Hon. Sharif Mohamed, MP; Hon. Dr. Elmi Mohamoud Nur, MP; Hon. Osman Haji Ali, MP (Contact Person); Hon. Abdi Mohamed, MP; Omar Ali Abdullah, Secretariat; Maryam Mal'awie, Sec't; Mohamoud, Sec't	+252-615503087; salmanwbb@gmail.com; muaadosman@gmail.com	15 October 2014
HIPS - Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (Think Tank)	Abdi Aynte, Executive Director	+252-618538888; abdi.aynte@heritageinstitute.org	15 October 2014
EPHRC - Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre (CSO)	Ilwad Elman, Director of Programs & Development	+252-616254586; info@elmanpeace.org; ilwad@elmanpeace.org	16 October 2014
United Nations Development Programme, Somalia	Oskar Lehner, Chief Technical Advisor, Parliamentary and Constitutional Support Project, UNDP Somalia (Contact	Oskar: +252-617513111; oskar.lehner@undp.org; Charmaine: charmaine.rodrigues@undp.org;	17 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Ad hoc Electoral Committee	Hon. Dahir Hassan Abdi, MP (Contact Person); Mohamed Omar, Prime Minister's Office;	+252-616118425; dahirhabdi@gmail.com	18 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Human Rights Committee	Hon. Mariam Aweis Jama, Chair (Contact Person); Hon. Osman, MP; Hon. Halima, MP;	+252-618446274; mariam_on@hotmail.com	18 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Women's Caucus	Hon. Mariam Aweis Jama, MP (Chair, Human Rights Committee) (Contact Person); Hon. Halima, MP;	+252-618446274; mariam_on@hotmail.com	18 October 2014
New Horizon (CSO)	Mohamed Sheik Ali Ahmed (Diini)	+252-617051336; mdiini@newhorizon.so	18 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Economic Affairs Committee	Hon. Jama, Chair (Contact Person); Hon. Isaak, Vice-Chair; Hon. Aden Shego, MP;		19 October 2014

⁷ Parliamentary Committees have been referenced by their short-hand names; for the full committee titles and areas of sub-committee competencies, refer to the Rules of Procedure, December 2012. See Bibliography, Annex B

Federal Parliament, Transport Committee	Hon. Ali-Nur Ali, MP (Contact Person); Hon. Osman, Chair; Hon. Mustapha, MP; Mohamed Abdurahman, Sec't	+252-615779020; cali_nur@yahoo.com; alibodaye@gmail.com	19 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Social Services Committee	Hon. Dr. Osman Dufle, Chair; Hon. Mohamed Abdi, Dpy Chair; Hon. Abdullah, MP; Hon. Ibrahim Hussein Ali, MP; Hon. Ahmed, MP; Mohamed Ali, Sec't		19 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Agriculture Committee	Hon. Shurie Momen, Deputy Chair (Contact Person);	+252-616336824	19 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Defence Committee	Hussein Arab Issa, Chair		19 October 2014
Federal Parliament, Constitutional Oversight Committee	Hon. Mohamed Bure, MP; Hon. Dahir Hassan Abdi, MP (Contact Person)	+252-616118425; dahirhabdi@gmail.com	20 October 2014

ANNEX C. GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION RAPID ASSESSMENT

Importance of the Inclusive Development Approach

The first priority under the Peace and State building Goal in the Somalia Compact focuses on the importance of inclusive development in order to achieve a stable and peaceful federal Somalia. The Compact explicitly notes that the inclusion of “representatives from all segments of the communities in each region (women, youth, civil society organizations, traditional elders, religious leaders, diaspora, and business community) will have the opportunity to contribute to this process” of establishing functioning inclusive governance structures. SSG recognizes the importance of inclusive and broad based citizen participation in a building a peaceful and stable Somalia, and as such the Objective One Assessment included a rapid Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment. Through consultative meetings with on the ground stakeholders, the assessment process provided a preliminary identification of marginalized social groups who represent key segments of society that should participate in and benefit from the governance strengthening process.

This GESI assessment varies from a traditional Gender Assessment in two key ways. First, and most important, the GESI assessment process acknowledges that social group identities are shaped by a variety of factors such as sex, age, geographic location, socio-economic status, and other factors. As a result, different social groups such as women or youth, are not necessarily homogenous in their needs, interactions with, or experiences of the government. There are various sub-groups of women, such as female parliamentarians, female civil service staff, or female university students in Mogadishu, who face contrasting opportunities and constraints to participate in the new federal government and who have different priorities in the types of benefits they need from these new governance structures. This GESI provides a rapid snapshot of the key issues faced by different sub-groups of women, youth, and persons with disabilities to be included in the project’s planning process and subsequent activities.

The second important aspect of this GESI assessment is that it is intended to serve as a rapid snapshot highlighting areas for further attention. The data presented in the assessment is derived from qualitative in person interviews, which are inherently subjective in nature, and is supplemented by existing gender assessments on Somalia produced by USAID, the UNDP and the World Bank. As project activities are designed and implemented, it is recommended that the project create a Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan which can conduct a more thorough assessment of the various marginalized social groups. The action plan would also serve as an internal operational manual

Gender and Social Inclusion Definitions

Social group: an identifiable group of people who share a common characteristic so fundamental to their identity that members cannot or should not be expected to change.

Gender: the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female.

Marginalization: implicit or explicit exclusion of individuals due to their social group which impacts their ability to participate in various aspects of social life. This exclusion then creates a denial of entitlements to resources and services, and the right to participate on equitable terms in social relationships in economic, social, cultural or political arenas.

to help SSG ensure that project activities are designed to promote inclusive development and not perpetuate current inequalities.

Social Groups in the Strengthening Somali Governance GESI Assessment

Based on guidance from USAID/Somalia and validated by Government of Somalia documents and in-person interviews with stakeholders, there are three core marginalized social groups which the project will strive to address through its activity design: women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Within these groups, there are several sub-groups with distinct accessibility issues that impact the group’s ability to participate in and benefit from a stronger Somali government. The key constraints and opportunities for these sub-groups are presented below. Within Somali society there certainly are other social groups who must be considered for greater inclusion in the political process (such as clan groups or internally displaced persons), however they are not included in this stage of the GESI because pre-existing formal and informal structures, such as the so called “4.5 Formula,” have outlined mechanisms for their inclusion and because of the complexity of their inclusion processes.

Women

Based on the last available census data, women comprise 49.5% of the Somali population. Within the country, Somali women comprise a diverse group of individuals who have differing opportunities and constraints to participating in and benefiting from Somali governance structures. In the framework of the project, the assessment focused on female members of parliament, female civil service staff who support the parliament, and general women’s rights issues that affect the majority of women regardless of their other social group identities.

Female Members of Parliament. Although verbal pledges were made to uphold a 30% quota for female parliamentarians, the Federal Parliament in Somalia was not able to fulfill this pledge.

Suggested Activities for Women’s Inclusion **Female Members of Parliament:**

Support the Women’s Caucus’ public campaign to formalize the 30% quota.

Female Civil Service Staff: Support internal capacity building efforts to promote gender parity in all staffing levels.

Female Youth: Identify soft barriers to women’s entry into the workforce and participation in governance structures.

Overarching Women’s Issues: Ensure that draft legislation undergoes a gender analysis and support the passage of legislation related directly to women’s rights.

During the selection process for the current parliament, for instance, some clans did not submit any names of female candidates, despite the verbal pledge to do so. Somalia has the highest number of female parliamentarians with 39 female members of parliament (out of 275 total MPs, amounting to 14%).

The Federal Parliament in Somalia has a Women’s Caucus which was established on June 8, 2014. Within parliamentary committee meetings and plenary sessions, the women’s caucus indicated that their voices are given due consideration and space for participation, however their priority issue is to legally formalize the 30% quota for female participation in Parliament as Somali women struggle to be selected or nominated in the first instance – that is, to be considered during the formation of the new government. The caucus does have support for the

quota from select male members of parliament, however it appears there is still not broad-based support for the quota. For example, during the opening of the 2014 Plenary Session, a motion was made to replace slain parliamentarian Saado Ali Warsame with a new male MP. Members of the women’s caucus protested the nomination citing that it pushed them even further away from the verbally promised gender quota. The protests were overturned and female parliamentarians lost another seat at the table. To address the quota issue the Women’s Caucus has designed a campaign to bolster public support and acceptance for the issue, which targets leaders in the intellectual, religious, and traditional communities. With donor support, the caucus would also like to design a campaign for the general population which advocates for the role that women can and should play in the new government.

In addition to the quota, female members of parliament have requested several capacity building trainings which could help them be more effective in their position. These trainings include:

- Training on how to better fulfill their roles
- Working in groups and building coalitions
- How to best approach the regions and engage their constituents
- How to conduct a gender-sensitive policy analysis for proposed legislation

Female Civil Service Staff. The number of female staff employed in the civil service comes closer to respecting the 30% quota – as of June 2014 the Federal Parliament in Somalia had 133 civil service employees, out of which 92 (69%) were male and 41 (31%) were female.

Although the qualitative in person interviews did not highlight gendered differences in the skill levels or training needs of the civil service staff, the disaggregation of staff reveals a gender imbalance in the grade levels and positions of male and female staff.

Somalia Civil Service Staff Structure			
Grade	Male	Female	Total
A/AY	75	11	86
B/F	24	6	30
C/X	22	3	25
D/K-X	3	37	40
Total	92	41	185

Interviewees noted difficulty in getting female candidates to apply to staff vacancies and provided anecdotal information about lower skill levels of female staff. Given that intentional efforts to attract more women into the civil service have been successful to date, project support should continue to promote greater gender parity among parliamentary staff. Capacity building efforts should also promote an equitable division of trainings for staff at all levels in order to provide female staff, clustered at the lower staff grades, with the skills and on-the-job learning opportunities needed to advance to higher grades.

Female youth. Interviewees noted that female youth are highly active in education settings and at the university level, with anecdotal estimates that female enrollment in higher education is very high and about even with enrollment rates of male students. However, once young women finish their university career, their participation in the employment sector drops considerably. Some of the reasons noted relate to safety and security issues. Universities are presumed to be safer than office environments, especially government offices. There is also a perception from both sides that men are also resistant to women in the workforce, as the sentiment that politics and business

is a “man’s game” still persists, especially among the older generation. Given the presumed drop in female participation as women transition from university to the workforce, it is recommended that project activities continue to identify soft barriers for women’s participation to create greater gender parity in governance structures.

Overarching Women’s Issues. The USAID Gender Assessment for Somalia, as well as in person interviews, highlighted a variety of issues specific to women throughout Somalia including a greater need for the respect of human rights, a lack of equitable participation in decision making structures, gender-based violence, gender-based vulnerabilities in IDP camps, health issues such as female genital mutilation and poor maternal health conditions, and access to adequate livelihoods. The current legislative agenda includes a number of proposed bills which, with proper project support, could facilitate improvements in women’s lives. Line Ministries and parliamentary committees are also working on policies, reports, and memorandum that could help address issues specific to women in Somalia. This includes:

- Draft Constitution
- Draft Legislation for the Establishment of the Human Rights Commission
- Draft Legislation for the Establishment of Political Parties
- Draft map of all humanitarian action in Somalia, produced by the Ministry of Gender and Human Rights
- Renewal of the agreement between AMISOM and Somalia, with special attention paid to troop code of conduct (addressing gender based violence)

Youth

Youth, defined as persons under the age of 24 by the last available disaggregated census data, constitute 62.9% of the population. Based on conversations with government staff and civil society groups, there are three loose sub-groups of youth considered during the assessment: young members of parliament, youth as students and young professionals, female youth, and overarching issues facing youth.

Suggested Activities for Youth Inclusion
Youth Members of Parliament: work with young parliamentarians to prioritize areas of support
Students and Young Professionals: expand youth civic education campaigns

Youth Members of Parliament. Young parliamentarians in the Federal Parliament have formed a loose coalition to represent the group’s issues and needs. The assessment team was unable to schedule a time to meet with this group during the field work portion of the assessment. However, it is recommended that a follow up meeting be scheduled with this group to gather information on their needs.

Students and Young Professionals. For Mogadishu based youth, the top issues cited during the field work related to access to education, fairness in employment practices and access to political participation. The issue of education, particularly free versus private education, was an important theme raised by both government officials as well as youth leaders in civil society. Youth leaders also cited the perception that youth views are not taken seriously or considered in decision making positions. While there are some venues designed to connect government efforts with youth, such as the Forum for Ideas organized by the Heritage Institute or the Youth Parliament radio programs, organized by New Horizons, anecdotal reports suggest that students and young

professionals in Mogadishu have a limited understanding of what their government does. One interviewee noted that most young people interact with their government primarily only when the city is shut down for security purposes and need to navigate government check points. This process creates a distance between the public and politicians which deters younger people from approaching or engaging in the political process.

Overarching Youth Issues. Many interviewees noted that young people are highly disassociated from the political process, due to a variety of reasons. One of the top obstacles for youth to participate in the political process is related to concerns about personal security. There is no platform to raise issues – and youth expressed a fear of reprisal if citizens voice displeasure or criticism. Youth groups expressed the perception that youth lack of confidence in the government, due to corruption and nepotism. In particular, youth may be deterred from engaging in the political process due to fears of “ageism” and the traditional cultural hierarchy and family structure, in which youth must defer to the elders of the family or clan. As a result, there is a respect for the process and desire to engage, but a lack of faith or confidence in the government. As a case in point, it was indicated by a youth organization interviewed that most young people don’t expect the 2016 election to actually take place, but that young people have indicated through a variety of social media platforms that they will definitely vote if the election does occur. There are loose estimates that 20-30% of youth have expressed interest in joining government in some capacity, but are deterred due to the above-stated reasons. It was noted, however, that this particular government and parliament is viewed more positively than prior governments.

Another weak point in youth access and political participation, which feeds into the suspicion of government, is the lack of transparency among government and international community processes. Public outreach, media/PR communications strategies specifically targeting youth should include activities conducted at universities, as opposed to hotels or government offices or compounds, utilization of radio programming to access the widest possible audience – a platform for youth to engage with politicians and elders face to face, outside of government buildings and in a “neutral” or safe space.

Although it was outside the scope of the field work conducted for this assessment, many interviewees also stressed that youth in Mogadishu have a different understanding and experience of their government as opposed to their contemporaries in more rural areas. While there appeared to be less of a gender-divide in the needs and constraints of young people in Mogadishu, most noted that gender dynamics would most likely create a greater divide in terms of youth needs, opportunities and priorities in rural areas.

Currently, parliamentary committees are working on several pieces of legislation related to youth issues, including:

- Draft Legislation for Private Education
- Ratification of the Operational Protocol to the Convention on the UN Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- Draft Legislation to Fight Piracy

Persons with Disabilities

While no reliable statistics exist on the number of persons with disabilities in Somalia, anecdotal estimates assume that 20 years of civil conflict have greatly increased the number of persons living with a disability in Somalia. Several interviewees noted that during the previous regime, soldiers with disabilities were given special social assistance provisions by the government – constituting a small portion of persons with disabilities who received government support. However during the past 20 years of conflict, even this meager social assistance has stopped and persons with disabilities have become essentially invisible and voiceless. There are no opportunities or avenues of assistance or platform for persons with disability – as such, they are a completely excluded segment of the population without political voice or representation.

Suggested Activities for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Support a transparent and inclusive process to draft the National Disability Policy

While there currently are no legal provisions to provide care or access to persons with disabilities, the newly formed government is making initial steps to address the needs of this group including drafting a new National Disability Policy, under the authority of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which would outline how the government would provide assistance to persons with disabilities. Although the government has not yet held consultative meetings on the policy, assumptions are that the policy would focus first on providing subsistence level support to persons with the disabilities. In addition to the draft policy, the government has recently formed a National Disability Council, which held its first meeting in summer 2014.