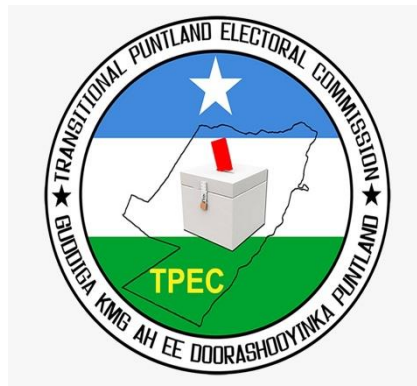




**TRANSITIONAL PUNTLAND ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
PUNTLAND STATE OF SOMALIA**



**TPEC  
2020 Annual Report**

**January, 2020**

*“Your Vote, Your Right, Your Future”*



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## ABOUT TPEC

The Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) III was formally approved by the Parliament of Puntland on the 16th of November 2019 and it held a formal opening launch at its headquarters in December 2019 where it presented its 2020-2021 Strategic Plan and the Road Map for the Local Government Elections. This was in line with one of the major development priorities of Puntland Government which is to enable Political Decentralization & Democratization in Puntland.

Given full legitimate rights and authority, the Commission put into effect its obligations that include the preparation, organization and supervision of free and fair local elections in Puntland and subsequently reporting factual and unbiased electoral results to the electorate. The commission is dedicated to performing its mandated duties within the guidance of democratic principles such as; independence, impartiality, inclusivity, transparency and accountability.

TPEC comprises of nine commissioners under the leadership of the chairperson and the deputy chairperson, with the responsibility for policy direction and strategic oversight. They approve policies, regulations, codes of conduct and directives to the secretariat. The day-to-day operation of the commission is the responsibility of the secretariat which is headed by the secretary general.

The Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) was established with a mandate to oversee the following processes:

- (i) Management and conduct of local government election (LGE)
- (ii) Registration of political associations and eligible citizens to vote
- (iii) Registration of the first three political parties following the LGE



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



2020 was a year of ups and downs not only for TPEC but also for organizations across the globe due to the Covid-19 pandemic. On behalf of the Commission, I want to start by sending my condolences to all those who lost loved ones and send my prayers to those who are sick or nursing loved ones for speedy recovery.

It is however with great delight that I commend the entire commission, secretariat, and the different teams that endured during this challenging year to successfully carry out the different activities in line with our strategic plan for the year. Despite the challenges that came with Covid-19, TPEC was able to prepare and launch its 2019-2021 Strategic Plan (SP) in 16 districts including; Garowe, Burtinle, Galkacyo, Galdogob, Dangorayo, Qardho, Dhahar, Badhan, Bosaso, Bargaal Carmo, Waaciye, Eyl, Boocame and Uffeyn. TPEC successfully opened its offices at Qardho, Eyl and Uffeyn Districts to enable effective decentralization of TPEC activities to the regions.

TPEC finalized the recruitment of key staff at headquarters and early election district offices, which includes departmental directors, heads of section, and chairpersons and secretaries of early election districts.

Furthermore, TPEC was able to assess, regulate, vet, certify and train political associations that will partake in the forthcoming local government elections. To supplement that, TPEC kicked off its citizen education and engagement drives on local government elections, sharing details about the election process during visits to regions and districts across Puntland. TPEC has also established 5 levels of coordination mechanisms that will be used to ensure effective participation of all stakeholders in Puntland's democratic process, as well as coordinating met with donors in Nairobi who were encouraged by the efforts of the Puntland government and TPEC to hold the first one person one vote local government elections and presented the commission's key achievements, goals and planned activities. The Commissioners held consultative meetings with local residents and district administrators on the suitability of the early elections in 2020. The year 2019 has ended with TPEC procuring the services of a firm to develop a Biometric Voter Registration System.

It is with those different pieces falling in place, that I announce that the commission is satisfied with the progress being made in regards to the Strategic Plan and the Electoral Map and we are fully ready to proceed with the local elections in 2021. I want to take this opportunity therefore to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Puntland and its relevant MDAs and their figureheads whose political will has facilitated the efforts by TPEC to prepare the 2021 LGEs. I want to recognize all the political associations that participated in all the stages of assessment, regulation, verification, certification, and training and wish them the best of luck in the elections. The role played by the civil society organizations and the media cannot go unacknowledged, they have been able to amplify our message of democracy across the State. I want to recognize the donor community who have supported our operations across the state so as to be able to prepare effectively for the forthcoming elections. To the public at large, I want to thank them for the continued support and enthusiasm they have shown towards the democratization process.

In the year 2021 as we gear up to the LGEs and in accordance with the electoral map and strategic plan, TPEC will among other key activities; finalize the demarcation of electoral boundaries, conduct statewide voter registration, continue citizen engagement and voter education, hold the early elections in the selected districts, prepare for the general local elections and organize, oversee and report results of the local government elections.

Sincerely,

**Gulled Salah Barre**  
**Chairman, Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission [TPEC]**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TPEC prepared and launched its 2019-2021 Strategic Plan (SP) on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019. It was later launched in all the visited districts (16) including; Garowe, Burtinle, Galkacyo, Galdogob, Dangorayo, Qardho, Dhahar, Badhan, Bosaso, Bargaal Carmo, Waaciye, Eyl, Boocame and Uffeyn. TPEC successfully opened its offices at Qardho, Eyl and Uffeyn Districts. TPEC finalized the recruitment of key staff at headquarter and early election districts. TPEC, in cooperation with Puntland Development Research Centre (PDRC) organized a 2-day induction workshop for the newly registered political associations. TPEC carried out a critical study and review of the existing electoral legal frameworks. TPEC also drafted the Voter Registration Bill. TPEC kicked off its citizen education drives and the citizen engagement exercise. TPEC established 5 levels of coordination mechanisms that will be used to ensure effective participation of all stakeholders. TPEC Chairman met with donors in Nairobi and presented the commission's key achievements, goals and planned activities. The commission briefed civil society members on the progress made on the election preparations and requested their support and contributions to awareness-raising and citizen engagement. The Commissioners held consultative meetings with local residents and district administrators on the suitability of the early elections in 2020. TPEC launched the tender for the biometric voter registration system and has to date been finalized, the selected company should deliver the system and equipment in 60 days starting from 1st December 2020.

The relocation of the central office to a new premises was not achieved due to delays in the preparation of the new premises for occupation. Procurement of office equipment and systems was only partially implemented for 3 early election districts but not all due to covid-19 and availability of limited funds. Coordination of study tours and exchange programmes were not implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic and travel restrictions that hindered the tours across the State. Procurement of ICT equipment, hardware software and internet connectivity for central regional district offices was not implemented due to lack of funding to carry out the exercise. Adopting the gender inclusivity policy was not done because there was shortage of funds to hire the consultants to carry out the review, development and implementation of the policy. TPEC is pursuing this as a priority in 2021 and is engaging with partners who can support on this issue. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic rendered most of TPEC activities difficult to carry out due to unprecedented challenges including travel restrictions, lock-downs, quarantines, social distancing and other preventative measures that forced us to many critical activities for weeks. The shortage of funding to finance some of the key TPEC operations and activities created some delays in some of TPEC's activities outlined in the SP and Electoral Map.

Despite these challenges, TPEC made significant progress in important areas. The key 2020 outcomes included among others; citizen engagement, citizen knowledge enhancement, public trust and confidence enhanced, women and youth inclusion promoted, improved multi-stakeholder coordination, various documents were produced, districts' capabilities assessed, finalization of demarcation of boundaries of early election districts and announcement and certification of political associations. Also various studies have been conducted including risk assessment, legal frameworks assessment and affordability assessment.

In line with its Strategic Plan and the Local Government Election Road Map, TPEC will implement



the following planned activities in the year 2021: continue citizen engagement and voter education, finalizethe demarcation of electoral district boundaries, approval of the voter registration bill and development of the electoral legal framework, commence and complete the voter registration exercise, finalization and conducting early elections in 3 districts, organize, oversee and report results of the local government elections and conducting local council elections.



## TPEC'S ELECTORAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In Puntland State of Somalia, the legal instruments that have relevance to voter registration and the local government elections include:

1. The Constitution of the Puntland State of Somalia;
2. Local Councils of Puntland State of Somalia (Regulations) Law;
3. Puntland Electoral Commission Law;
4. Local Councils Election Law of Puntland;
5. Political Parties & Political Association Law;
6. Voter Registration Law (Draft currently being assessed by cabinet)

In addition to these formal legal instruments, there are a number of internal guidelines and regulations that TPEC is preparing to aid the electoral process as we gear up to the upcoming Early Local Government Elections (ELGE) which include:

1. **Codes of Conduct:** TPEC will develop codes of conduct for the voter registration process and for the ELGE process, and there will be separate codes of conduct for political associations and for the media.
2. **Dispute Resolution Mechanism:** The dispute resolution mechanism will be informed by the legal framework and will be the system used by TPEC to handle all complaints that are submitted during voter registration and the election.
3. **Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines:** TPEC is committed to the equal opportunity and participation of women in the election process, and is therefore developing guidelines to encourage women's participation.
4. **Voter Education Guidelines:** Voter education is one of the most important tools to make sure that everyone can participate in the electoral process and everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.
5. **Election Observation Guidelines:** Local and international election observers monitor the process and help to ensure its credibility and legitimacy. Their reports and observations can also be an important conflict mitigation tool in the post-election period.
6. **Voter registration and ELGE procedures manuals:** Finally, the upcoming Voter Registration and ELGE processes will require the recruitment of hundreds of staff that must follow the same policies and procedures.
7. Other important policies will also be developed including the **ICT policy**.



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### 1.1. Development of TPEC Strategic Plan (2019 -2021)

TPEC is mandated to oversee: (i) Management and conduct of local government elections (LGE); (ii) Registration of political associations and eligible citizens to vote and (iii) Registration of the first three political parties following the LGE. To realize this mandate, TPEC prepared and launched its 2019-2021 Strategic Plan (SP) to guide it in developing a realistic roadmap that will serve as a practical guide in the management and administration of the LGEs in the transitional context of Puntland and contributing to the realization of universal suffrage elections in Puntland. The SP is a blueprint that was designed to: (i) Guide the management and administration of the LGEs in the transitional context of Puntland, (ii) Strengthen the commission's capacity as a credible institution and (iii) Contribute to the realization of universal suffrage elections in Puntland.

### 1.2. Launch of Electoral Processes at Regions and Districts

In order to further extend TPEC's activities and intentions across the entire State, TPEC's Strategic Plan and Election Road Map was launched in all the visited districts (16) including; Garowe, Burtinle, Galkacyo, Galdogob, Dangorayo, Qardho, Dhahar, Badhan, Bosaso, Bargaal Carmo, Waaciye, Eyl, Boocame and Uffeyn. These launches gave the people of Puntland an opportunity to understand the goals, priorities, and the electoral calendar for Puntland Local Government Elections. The team distributed printed electoral calendars which clearly indicated what was going to be done, when it will be done and who should be involved through to Election Day.

### 1.3. Opening TPEC Offices at Early Election Districts

TPEC successfully opened its offices at Qardho, Eyl and Uffeyn Districts. The offices were opened to enable effective decentralisation on TPEC activities to the regions hence promoting the facilitation of TPEC operations at the district level and thus extend its services to the local communities. Some of the key services that TPEC wants to extend to the districts include; voter education, citizen engagement and distribution of electoral materials.

### 1.4. Recruitment of key staff

TPEC finalized the recruitment of key staff at headquarters and early election district offices. These include departmental directors, heads of section, and chairpersons and secretaries of early election districts. To further facilitate operations at the decentralised offices, TPEC recruited key staff that would lead TPEC activities and other LGE preparatory activities at the early election districts and also reinforced its headquarter staff with some key personnel to increase the performance and productivity of the headquarters operations.

### 1.5. Regulation of Political Associations

Deriving its powers from the Puntland Election Commission Law especially Article 8 (15, 16, 17, 18 and 19), TEPC regulates political associations and parties in Puntland. TPEC carried out an assessment to ensure that the legal framework allows all political parties, associations and candidates to compete in LGE on the basis of equality and fairness. Thus, candidates seeking office must be permitted to run as party/association candidates. Following its Strategic Plan and the Electoral Road Map, TPEC carried out a thorough registration exercise of willing Political



Associations that would participate in Puntland's forthcoming local elections. TPEC opened the registration exercise of political associations on the 14th March 2019. The first phase of this registration exercise successfully concluded on the 15th March 2020 where Seventeen (17) Political Associations successfully passed the initial phase of registration and were granted temporary registration status. The initial deadline was 15th March 2020, but due to the outbreak of COVID-19, this deadline was extended to the 22nd July 2020. The final list of vetted political associations that meet all the criteria was announced in the 1st Week of August 2020.

#### **1.6. Vetting of political associations**

From 1 – 15 July, TPEC visited all nine administrative regions of Puntland to inspect the newly opened offices of provisionally registered political associations. During that period, the commission inspected more than 80 offices, filled assessment forms, and signed them on the spot to promote openness and transparency. Following the inspection visits, from 2- 22 July, the Commission has called more 26,000 political association supporters from TPEC HQ to confirm with them that they had endorsed a given political association. These phone call verifications were due to Covid-19 which made it impossible to visit in person. These calls also ensured that supporters had not endorsed more than one political association, and confirmed ages and locations of political association supporters. As a final step, TPEC observed the General Meetings held by each provisionally registered political association, as required by Puntland law. The commission then combined all the findings and documents submitted by the political associations to confirm if they had fulfilled the legal requirements.

#### **1.7. Induction Training for Registered Political Associations**

On 18-19 August TPEC, in cooperation with Puntland Development Research Centre (PDRC) organized a 2-day induction workshop for the newly registered political associations. The workshop was attended by 50 participants from the executive of all political associations. The aim of the induction workshop was to allow the political associations to develop a greater understanding of how political parties work, and the legal frameworks that govern them. The different sessions (as listed below) generated a lot of discussion over the course of the two days.

There were several key presentations in the workshop, including:

1. History of Political Parties in Somalia in the 1960s - *Presented by Ahmed Abaas from PDRC*
2. Political Parties in a Federal Set-up - *Presented by Abdulkatir Yusuf from MAX Planck foundation*
3. Overview of the Legal Framework from a Puntland Perspective - *Presented by Abdirisak Ahmed from TPEC*
4. Electoral Cycle of Puntland Local Council Elections - *Presented by Hassan Isse Sharmarke from Interpeace*
5. Women's Participation for Local Council Elections - *Presented by Amina Mohamed from PDRC*

#### **1.8. Legal Frameworks**

TPEC carried out a critical study and review of the existing electoral legal framework. TPEC also drafted the Voter Registration Bill. The Bill was developed in consultation with all Puntland democratization process stakeholders including; registered political associations, civil society organizations and government organizations. The draft bill was forwarded to the Cabinet for approval before it can be passed by the Parliament into a law. The bill laid out a voter registration



methodology including the policies and procedures to follow during the voter registration exercise as well as comprehensive voter education and public outreach campaign requirements to ensure widespread voter understanding of the democratization process.

### **1.9. Development of Electoral Dispute Resolution Guideline**

The development of dispute resolution guidelines has been initiated in consultation with government, political associations and civil society organizations. This is a key guideline for managing electoral complaints and disputes during and after elections in line with the election legal framework

### **1.10. Voter Education Drives**

TPEC kicked off its citizen education drives on local council elections during its visits to regions and districts across Puntland . The Commission held several meetings with different electoral stakeholders including the youth, women, clerics, traditional leaders and university students in which TPEC members shared electoral information and the procedures that will be taken towards reaching a free and fair local election. University students were urged and encouraged to become ambassadors of Puntland's democratization processes and educate other community members especially those in rural communities. The Commission held an open-air discussion with stakeholders where participants were welcomed to ask open questions, provide suggestions and express their ideas. These open discussions focused on major points regarding to the different electoral steps including the establishment of the constitutional court and demarcation of Puntland districts. TPEC was able to receive and note very important suggestions and ideas from the people that it will use to effectively implement its planned local elections in late 2021 as well as early elections in June 2021 as well. Women and youth were engaged specifically to increase their knowledge, participation, and inclusion in Puntland's one person one vote elections. Overall, TPEC was able to directly engage 25,000 residents from the 9 regions and indirectly engage more than 300,000 citizens through social media and prepared messages which were disseminated through various means.

### **1.11. Establishment of Stakeholder Coordination Mechanisms**

TPEC established 5 levels of coordination mechanisms that will be used to ensure effective participation of all stakeholders and share updates, consult on matters of democracy and transparency among others. These mechanisms ensure participatory equity, accountability and transparency, and partnerships and networks amongst different democratic stakeholders. The 5 levels include:

- (i) Monthly Coordination Meeting with Civil Society Organizations;
- (ii) Monthly Coordination Meeting with the Cabinet Task Force;
- (iii) Monthly Coordination Meeting with Political Associations;
- (iv) Quarterly Coordination meeting with Donors and
- (v) Quarterly Coordination meeting with all stakeholders.

The coordination mechanism has: (i) improved coordination between CSOs and TPEC which enhances community mobilization efforts related to behavior change through peer education,



democratic and rights-based enlightenment; (ii) strengthened coordination between Cabinet Task Force and TPEC increasing political will and support from Government; (iii) strengthen the relationship with all stakeholders which allows the body to obtain reliable information, promote transparency, enhance operational efficiency and provide feedback from all relevant stakeholders and (iv) improve resources mobilization from different democratic development donors.



**1.12. Donor engagements**

Between February – November 2020, the Commission met with donors (physically and via zoom) both in Garowe and Nairobi and presented TPEC’s key achievements, goals, and planned activities. Donors were encouraged by the efforts of the Puntland government and TPEC to hold the first one person one vote at local government elections. Meetings were attended by various donors including the European Union, Sweden, USA, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, SAHAN, Interpeace and Somali Stability Fund. The commission also held bilateral meetings with donors and all parties agreed to continue supporting the Puntland path to one person one vote elections in decades.

**1.13. Civil Society and Political Associations Monthly Meetings**

On 6 September TPEC held its first face to face monthly meeting with civil society in four months due to Covid-19. The Commission briefed civil society members on the progress made on the election preparations and requested their support and contributions to awareness-raising and citizen engagement. Civil society members, led by Puntland Non-State Actors (PUNSA), committed to awareness-raising through forums and sharing of key messages. Participants also agreed on the importance of developing the voter education guidelines and manual to ensure accurate information is provided to Puntland citizens. Finally, universities and research institutions also pledged their support to hold forums with university students to develop their understanding of the Puntland Local Government Election cycle. TPEC also held its first monthly meeting with political associations to discuss the way forward and hear their concerns and suggestions.

**1.14. Consultations on Early Elections**

The Commissioners held consultative meetings with local residents and district administrators on the suitability of the early elections in 2020. The rationale for holding these consultations was so that TPEC could identify criteria for selecting the 3 most suitable districts where early elections will be held. After the consultations, TPEC settled for the following criteria for selecting the early election districts where early elections would be conducted as shown in the table below;

**Table 1: Showing the criteria that were used to select the 3 early election districts**

Criteria
1. The district must have enough stability to allow for free assembly of masses to vote
2. The district must have ample boarder security to deny voter transplanting
3. The three districts must not be in the same region but from different regions
4. The three districts must have diverging political and environmental characteristics in order to provide an effective benchmark. For example, one district to be highly populated district, another from the coastal regions and the third one from a highly nomadic region.
5. The districts must have a high percentage of its residents willing to partake in the early elections

**1.15. Procurement of Biometric Voter Registration System**

On 6 October, TPEC launched the tender for the biometric voter registration system. The tender was open to all local and international companies. Interested firms submitted their proposals for the supply of hardware, equipment, and software in November 2020 following the details and



tender documents distributed by TPEC at <https://tpec.pl.so/jobs-and-announcements/> . The procurement of the BVR system supplier has been finalized, through an open and transparent procurement process in which opening and evaluation meetings were attended by donor observers and civil society. The selected company should deliver the system and equipment in 60 days starting from 1st December 2020.

### UNACHIEVED ACTIVITIES

Due to Covid-19, a number of activities were not possible to implement in 2020. These will be priorities in 2021 and TPEC is already working towards many of these.

1. The relocation of the central office to a new premises was not achieved due to delays in the preparation of the new premises for occupation.
2. Procurement of office equipment and systems was only partially implemented for 3 early election districts but not all due to covid-19 and availability of limited funds.
3. Coordination of study tours and exchange programmes was not implemented due to covid-19 pandemic and travel restrictions that hindered the tours across the State.
4. Procurement of ICT equipment, hardware software and internet connectivity for central regional district offices was not fully implemented due to lack of funding to carry out the exercise.
5. Adopting the gender inclusivity policy was not done because there was shortage of funds to hire the consultants to carry out the review, development and implementation of the policy.
6. The periodic monitoring of key elements of LGE was not done as TPEC would have wanted due to the limited resources and essential M&E Capacity. It was also due to the same factors that the establishment and training of the national, regional and district monitoring teams to track the implementation of LGE was not achieved. Hence, M&E functions within TPEC have not been established as anticipated.
7. Early election on the selected 3 districts was postponed to 2021 due to covid-19 and shortage of funds.



## CHALLENGES

1. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic rendered most of TPEC's planned activities difficult to carry out due to unprecedented challenges including travel restrictions, lock-downs, quarantines, social distancing and other preventative measures that forced us to pause many critical activities for weeks. For example: (i) the finalization of the registration process of the Political Associations was affected by Covid-19 and the deadline was extended to allow more time for all interested associations to register on time.
2. The assessment of the socio-political context and public perceptions of the democratization process in Puntland's districts where local council elections would be held was hindered due to the travel restrictions to curb the spread of Covid-19 across different districts of Puntland. Other activities like; citizen engagement which required TPEC's commissioners to directly address citizens and allowing them to openly engage could not continue.
3. Furthermore, the stakeholder coordination meetings were also halted for some weeks as the stakeholders could not readily meet and hold the discussions due to the Covid-19 restrictions. These were switched to digital conferencing. But this also posed a challenge due to the fact that not all stakeholders can readily access or use such means.
4. Altogether, Covid-19 has disrupted a number of activities and tasks that TPEC had intended to accomplish within the year 2020. Among others, these include; ; developing the citizen education/voter education (CE/VE) programme integrating M&E; conducting targeted VE for PWD; identifying polling station centers and registration centers; developing a countrywide distribution and retrieval plan for election materials and equipment; recruiting, training and deploying of registration staff; conducting state wide voter registration and the preparation of an operational plan for the LGE; and conducting early election.
5. The shortage of funding to finance some of the key TPEC operations and activities created some delays in some of TPEC's activities outlined in the SP and Electoral Map. For example, due to limited budgetary allocations from the government and donor partners, TPEC was not able to fully operationalize election related operations.
6. The onset of the federal election created diversion and parallelism of Puntland's electoral process as much attention from both citizens and state officials was channelled to the Federal Government Elections. Interest was also diverted to the proceedings at the national level. This rendered some of the TPEC activities to be readjusted to give space for the national electioneering.



## KEY 2020 OUTCOMES

### 1. Citizen engagement

TPEC understands the crucial role played by citizens' political engagement in selecting and endorsing their leaders who will represent them and provide services for them. TPEC's political engagement included the commissioners directly addressing the citizens and allowing them to openly air out their grievances, thoughts and suggestions about the road TPEC is embarking on in kick starting Puntland's democratic process towards the 2021 local elections. Hence, from its regional and district visits, TPEC was able to directly engage 25,000 residents from the 16 districts. Consequently, TPEC was also able to indirectly engage more than 300,000 citizens through social media and prepared messages which were sent out to the citizens.

### 2. Voter knowledge enhanced

Citizens' knowledge on Puntland's electoral process and the local elections was enhanced. In its regional and districts visits, TPEC was able to provide Puntland citizens with basic information about their participation in the upcoming elections in a very neutral and non-partisan manner. TPEC carried out voter education in close scrutiny and collaboration with the stakeholders including CSOs, International Development Partners, Media and Government oversight bodies in order to strengthen democratic values and increase voter education. TPEC disseminated information, materials and programs designed to inform voters about the specifics and procedures of the electoral process for the local government's election. Furthermore TPEC conveyed knowledge of a Puntland's political system and context. The focus of the voter education was to educate the public on how to vote rather than who to vote for. TPEC provided citizens with knowledge on;

- (i) Who is eligible to vote
- (ii) What type of elections are being held
- (iii) Where and how they can register to vote
- (iv) How they will complete ballot papers
- (v) The electoral procedures

### 3. Public trust and confidence enhanced

From the engagement with the citizens and carrying out electoral education, TPEC was able to build trust in the citizens whose reception of the TPEC and its activities was good and who welcomed the election road maps provided. From this perspective therefore, TPEC gained further confidence in its preparations for the local government elections as all activities planned that were presented to the citizens got positive feedback. TPEC understands that a legitimate election is one in which the outcome will reflect the freely expressed choices of Puntlanders hence promoting credibility of the Commission and its coming elections is very key in realizing legitimate democracy in Puntland starting with the forthcoming elections. But most importantly, cultivating parameters for gaining confidence in the coming elections and the acceptance of its results is a good precursor to legitimate democracy in Puntland.

### 4. Women and youth inclusion promoted

TPEC specifically engaged women and youth to ensure their participation on the process. The voter education and consultative meetings held at the district level were very critical in enhancing women and youth's participation in the upcoming local government elections. This is very



important especially in a post-conflict country like Somalia in which women and youth have not been availed open opportunities to play an active role in the governance of their affairs hence TPEC fully comprehended the importance of involving youth and women in the voter and citizen education alongside the men. Some of the voter information conveyed was gender-sensitive and designed to be relevant to women in order to help enhance their participation in the forthcoming elections by portraying a positive image of women as voters, leaders, and participants in all aspects of the Puntland's democratic process.

#### **5. Improved multi stakeholder coordination**

By establishing the stakeholder coordination mechanisms, TPEC was able to improve the coordination between all democratic stakeholders in the State, thereby improving the effectiveness of the democratization process as follows:

- (i) CSOs and TPEC coordination was improved through regular meetings. CSOs facilitate communication between citizens and policymakers and allowing them space to conduct advocacy is beneficial for promoting democratic process. To ensure coordinated action and messaging, TPEC is holding monthly consultations with them to enhance community mobilization to promote a democratic culture through peer education, democratic and rights-based awareness raising.
- (ii) Cabinet Task Force and TPEC coordination was strengthened. Puntland was been constrained by funding gaps in its democratization efforts and therefore calls for committed multi-faceted support to strengthen its efforts to deliver local government elections. Effective coordination between TPEC and the Cabinet is essential in order to develop solutions to fast track Puntland's democracy.
- (iii) TPEC and all stakeholders' coordination was enhanced. In the case for TPEC, it allows the body to obtain reliable information, promote transparency, enhance operational efficiency and provide feedback and information to all relevant stakeholders. Hence, TPEC uses these quarterly meetings will all stakeholders to establish and build relationships with relevant stakeholders which enhances coordination and learning across partners avoiding duplication as well as monitoring and facilitating the implementation of TPEC's strategic plan objectives with input from all relevant stakeholders.

#### **6. Various documents were produced**

As a result of all its activities, TPEC was able to prepare the following documents;

- (i) Operational Plan for Early Elections: which shows details the procedures and guidelines that will be followed when planning, preparing and conducting the early elections in the three identified districts. The plan also describes the criteria that will be used to select those three early election districts where the early elections will take place.
- (ii) Voter Registration Options: this document describes the guidelines that the voters will follow when registering for three forthcoming elections. It provides information that the electorate may require in opting to register to participate in the local government elections in 2021.
- (iii) Budget for Early Elections: this is the budget that has been costed to facilitate the effective holding of the first free and fair direct elections in the three early election



districts in preparation for the 2021 local government elections.

#### **7. Districts' capabilities assessed**

TPEC was able to assess the socio-political context and public perceptions of democratization in each of the 16 districts visited which will help it in implementing transparent local council elections. During the assessment, there are several key challenges and achievements that were discovered that would help TPEC in preparing credible and trusted elections. In addition, some of the information gathered will be shared with other government institutions responsible for addressing the challenges discovered in these districts for example; security issues, conflict cases, inadequate service provision and accessibility in terms of transportation infrastructure. The lack of operational capacity in some of the districts will need to be addressed so that a conducive environment will be available for allowing the citizens to freely cast their ballots. Hence creating operational capacities was observed as a prerequisite for effective democratization of Puntland especially as it prepares for the first direct elections in Puntland.

#### **8. Finalization of demarcation of boundaries of early election districts**

Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization finalized the demarcation of boundaries of Qardho, Eyl and Uffeyn districts and submitted the report to TPEC. TPEC will finalize the assessment to select the electoral boundaries in January 2021. In line with its Strategic Goal 6: Electoral districts boundary determined in line with constitutional provisions, TPEC basing on Article 120 (3) of the Constitution that stresses that the demarcation of boundaries of the regions and districts of Puntland is the responsibility of the government, facilitated a consultative meeting with relevant ministries to develop guidelines to finalize the on-going review of the demarcation of the administrative districts in order to identify polling centres for the LGE.

#### **9. Announcement and Certification of Political Associations**

Following the vetting process, on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 TPEC announced that 10 political associations met the legal requirements to register. The 10 political associations were certified in a formal ceremony organised by the TPEC and held in Garowe on 15 August 2020. The ceremony was attended by the Vice President of Puntland, His Excellency Ahmed Elmi Osman, and two former Presidents of Puntland, President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali and President Abdirahman Mohamed Faroole. The ceremony was also attended by political association representatives, members of the House of the People, Cabinet, and civil society organisations. Following speeches by all of the political associations, the TPEC Chairman, Guled Salah Barre, awarded the certificates. The following political associations are now formally registered:

1. Truth and Justice Political Association (TJPA)
2. Labour Political Association (LPA)
3. Youth political Association (YPA)
4. Justice and Equality Political Association (JEPA)
5. Kaah Political Association (KPA)
6. Mideeye Political Association (MPA)
7. Mustaqbal Political Association (MQPA)
8. Himilo Political Association (HPA)
9. Horseed Political Association (HRPA)
10. Ifiye Political Association (IPA)



## 2021 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

### Planned Activities (January – December 2021)

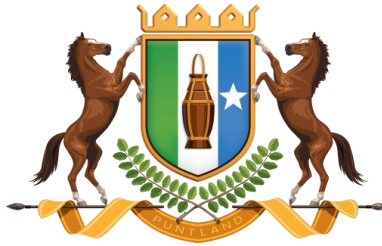
In line with its Strategic Plan and the Local Government Election Road Map, TPEC will implement the following planned activities in the year 2021:

<b>Major Electoral Activities</b>
1. Continue citizen engagement and voter education
2. Finalizing the demarcation of electoral district boundaries
3. Approval of the voter registration bill and development of the remaining electoral policies and guidelines
4. Conduct assessment on polling stations and voter registration centers
5. Finalize and launch voter education manual
6. Finalize procurement of election equipment and materials
7. Commence and complete the voter registration exercise
8. Finalization and conducting early elections in 3 districts
9. Operationalize all TPEC regional and districts offices
10. Train and develop capacity of main election stakeholders including CSOs, Political Associations, Media etc
11. Organize, oversee and report results of the local government elections
12. Conducting general local council elections



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## TPEC CONTRIBUTORS



Embassy of Switzerland



Puntland Development & Research Center



## TPEC COMMISSIONERS

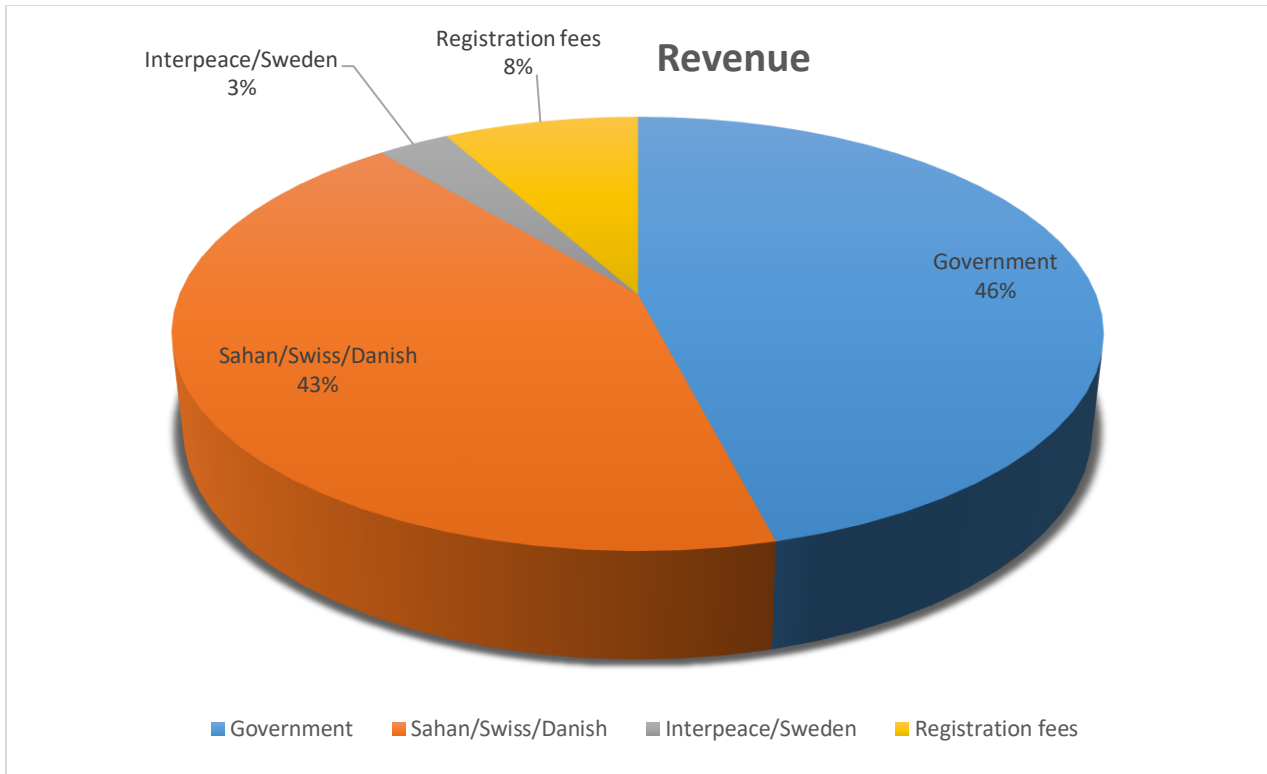
1	Gulled Salah Barre	Chairman
2	Jama Hersi Farah	Deputy Chairman
3	Ali Jama Farah	Commissioner
4	Abdullahi Farah Mire	Commissioner
5	Abdirizak Ahmed Said	Commissioner
6	Abdullahi Abdi Duale	Commissioner
7	Hafsa Salad Mohamed	Commissioner
8	Abdinur Mohamed Ishaq	Commissioner
9	Zahra Jama Salah	Commissioner



### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

#### 1. Revenue

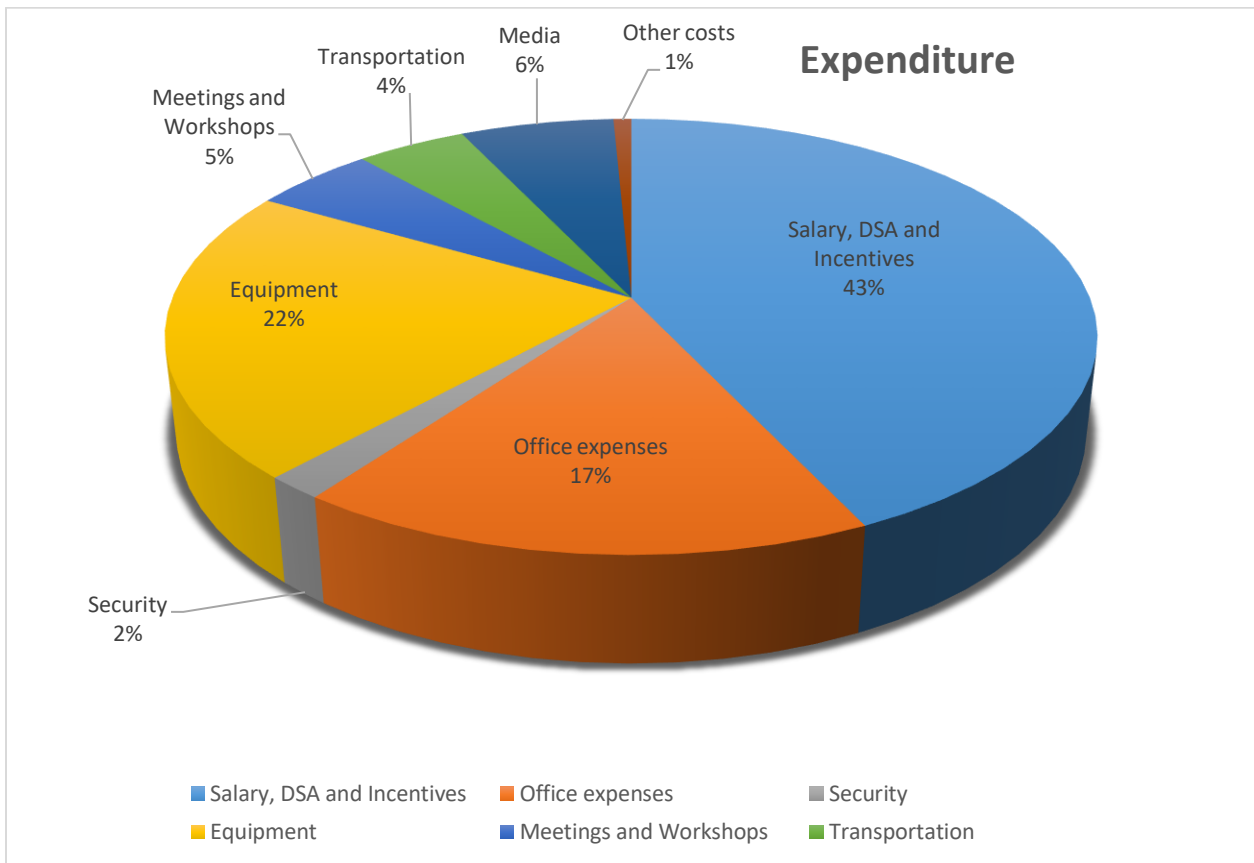
Sources	Amount (\$)
Government	\$254,877
Sahan/Swiss/Danish	\$238,000
Interpeace/Sweden	\$16,490
Registration fees	\$44,590
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$554,016.76</b>





## 2. Expenditure

Expenses	Amount (\$)
Salary, DSA and Incentives	\$238,184
Office expenses	\$94,372.24
Security	\$9,600
Equipment	\$119,676
Meetings and Workshops	\$27,875
Transportation	\$25,160
Media	\$35,080
Other costs	\$4,069
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$554,016.24</b>





### TPEC IN PICTURES



Image 1: TPEC Commissioner addresses the media



Image 2: TPEC Commissioners vetting political associations



Image 3: Political associations certified by TPEC



Image 4: Political associations certified by TPEC



Image 5: TPEC Chairman with Donor Representatives



Image 6: TPEC engages with a Muslim civil society



Image 7: A section of young women attend a TPEC engagement



Image 8: TPEC Chairman with some of the key stakeholders



**Image 9:** TPEC commissioners addressing a section of the public during their districts' visits



**Image 10:** Young women were especially encouraged to participate in the voter education drives



**Image 12:** A section of the public engaged in the consultative meetings on the criteria for selecting the 3 early election districts



**Image 11:** Women were targeted for the education drives in an effort to increase their participation in Puntland's democratic process

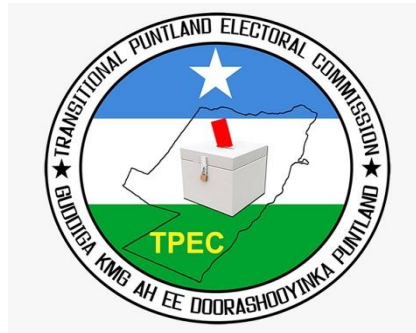


**Image 14:** Citizens engaged through the TPEC visits pay particular attention to voter information and material during a consultative meeting

**Image 13:** Inclusion of women and youth in TPEC's voter education drives was a high priority for TPEC



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### **Vision**

Promotion of accountable local governance through credible and transparent local government election (LGE)

### **Mission**

To conduct the LGE that promotes and safeguards the democratic aspirations of the citizens (or Puntland people)

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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**Twitter:** @TPECpuntland

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