Saferworld has worked in partnership with the Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF) since its founding in 2008. The partnership aims to strengthen the participation and influence of civil society in policy and decision-making processes in Somaliland concerning peace, security and development. Saferworld and SONSAF are grateful for the participation of over 50 Somaliland civil society organisations in the consultation process which resulted in this briefing.

Building a peaceful, just and inclusive Somaliland: SDG16+ priorities for action

INSIDE
- Why is SDG16+ relevant for Somaliland?
- Saferworld, Somaliland and SDG16+
- SDG16+ priorities for action 2018–20
- SDG16+ priorities for action 2020–30
- How can Somaliland achieve these SDG16+ priorities?
Why is SDG16+ relevant for Somaliland?

What is the 2030 Agenda, what are the SDGs, and what is SDG16+?

The 2030 Agenda, endorsed by all heads of state at the UN General Assembly in September 2015, presents a comprehensive vision for building sustainable peace and development worldwide.

This follow-on framework from the Millennium Development Goals includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) covering issues from health and education, to climate action and gender equality. It also includes a new goal (SDG 16) on peace, justice and strong institutions. Many targets under other SDGs, for instance those on inequality and gender, are also crucial for realising the goal of peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Therefore the term ‘SDG16+’ is increasingly used to describe these interconnected commitments across the 2030 Agenda.

SDG 16+ provides a framework to strengthen and link up action on a range of peace-related issues, but it will not drive change on its own. It depends on change makers and reformers, both within and outside government, to identify, and take action on key obstacles to peace, justice and inclusion in their own contexts, as well as to integrate the global agenda into national plans and processes.
In August 2017, Somaliland launched a new National Development Plan (NDPII). Despite not being an official signatory to the SDGs, Somaliland has taken the approach of integrating SDG targets within its new development plan. This includes many targets relevant to SDG16+.

In the NDPII, governance is affirmed as one of the five core pillars of development, and SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16, and 17 are identified as key elements. The NDPII includes specific targets on:

- Reducing violence
- Improving the rule of law
- Eliminating organised crime
- Reducing corruption and bribery
- Developing effective, accountable, and transparent institutions
- Enhancing public participation in decision-making
- Reducing the harmful practise of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Improving human rights mechanisms
- Eliminating all forms of terrorism and piracy

The incorporation of SDG targets within the NDPII reflects Somaliland’s commitment to the 2030 Agenda, and it puts it ahead of most others when it comes to incorporating the SDGs in national planning processes. However, given the multitude of targets included in the NDPII, and the current budget shortfall of over US$2 billion, it is essential that Somaliland determines its priorities for action. To inform this, Saferworld and the SONSAF undertook a six-month consultation process to help Somaliland civil society identify their priorities for action and to support their engagement with the Somaliland authorities regarding SDG16+. 
Why SDG16+ and why civil society consultations?

Integrating the 2030 Agenda into the NDPII is an important step towards SDG implementation, but prioritisation of SDG targets is necessary to translate the promise of the 2030 Agenda into reality. Evidence shows that consultative processes to produce national development priorities create a sense of shared ownership, encourage collaborative action, and help to catalyse action.

For these reasons, Saferworld and SONSAF collaborated in convening a series of consultations across Somaliland to discuss and identify civil society priorities for action on peace, justice, security, gender equality, inclusion and good governance – the main elements of SDG16+.

Consultation methodology (where and who)

Saferworld and SONSAF organised four consultations over six months beginning in August 2017. Three were held in Hargeisa and one in Berbera. Consultations featured participants from every region of Somaliland – with people from Togdher, Sool, and Sanaag attending the Berbera consultation in February 2018, and participants from Awdal and Marodijeh attending the final Hargeisa consultation in February 2018.

In total, representatives of 55 Somaliland civil society organisations and institutions took part in the consultations (see back page of this briefing for full list of participating organisations). Participants represented a range of different groups including women’s groups, youth groups, minority rights, and disability rights groups. Efforts were made to ensure each consultation was gender balanced. Senior Somaliland government representatives opened three of the four consultation sessions – and these consultations are part of wider ongoing interaction between the Somaliland government and civil society.

Consultations approach

The consultation workshops provided participants with an explanation of and background information on the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs, and SDG16+. Participants were then given the opportunity to discuss which SDG16+ issues and targets are most relevant and important for Somaliland, before recommending priority SDG16+ targets in Somaliland. A variety of different exercises and approaches were used to gather recommendations. These included:

- Working groups
- Written submissions
- Live sourced questions via social media
- Online polling through menti.com

It was clear from consultations that almost every SDG16+ target was deemed important by Somaliland civil society, but a number of specific priorities emerged for action in the short-term and long-term, as described below.
Somaliland civil society identified three short-term priorities for action. These address urgent problems in Somaliland, while also having the potential to catalyse change on other SDG16+ issues. In each case, we first reference the relevant SDG target, then the corresponding NDPII outcome and indicator.

SDG16+ priorities for action 2018–20

1. **SDG 5.5: Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life**  
   *(Inclusive Societies)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG 5.5:</th>
<th><strong>NDPII OUTCOME</strong></th>
<th>By 2021, increase and promote the number of female workers in leadership positions in the public sector to 20 per cent.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NDPII indicator</strong></td>
<td>2.1. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments.*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Context:** There is currently only one female MP among the 82 members of Somaliland’s House of Representatives (lower house), and none among the 82 members of the Guurti (upper house). Only 3 out of 32 cabinet members are female. In the NDPII the government has committed to increasing the proportion of seats held by women in the national parliamentary to 20 per cent. The upcoming March 2019 House of Representatives election offers an opportunity for the government to deliver on this objective. However, experience shows that this is unlikely unless specific legislation is drafted to introduce a quota for women’s representation. Somaliland civil society have been working to advance this issue for a number of years and have led the way pushing for an election quota for women’s representation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTIONS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Government</strong></th>
<th><strong>Civil society</strong></th>
<th><strong>International partners</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include a specific quota in the new House of Representatives Election Law mandating that 20 per cent of seats in the lower house (16 out of 82) must be occupied by women.</td>
<td>Empower and encourage women’s political participation through training for political parties who have nominated female candidates.</td>
<td>Develop new flexible funding mechanisms to support Somaliland civil society groups contributing to achieving SDG 5.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore opportunities to pass new legislation enforcing gender quotas within all state institutions.</td>
<td>Develop a campaign targeting voters to raise public awareness on the importance of women’s participation in decision-making processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that women’s representation in managerial positions in public institutions reaches 30 per cent by 2021.</td>
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</table>
Context: Somaliland has one of the world’s highest rates of FGM, with UNICEF estimating that 98 per cent of women aged 15 to 49 have undergone some form of the procedure. Legislation to ban FGM is being debated, following a religious fatwa in February 2018 that partially prohibited FGM. A new law would be a starting point in ending the practice, but significant resources are needed to educate Somaliland’s population and strengthen mechanisms to enforce the legislation. Many Somaliland civil society organisations are actively advocating for eradicating FGM in Somaliland, with a number of influential campaigns.

**SDG 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation (Peaceful Societies)**

**NDPII OUTCOME** Reduce the harmful practices of female genital mutilation by 10 per cent (addressing issues of gender-based violence).

**NDPII Indicator** Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting – FGM 89.1 per cent as target.

**Priority Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Civil society</th>
<th>International partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft and pass into law legislation that bans all forms of FGM.</td>
<td>Input into a national anti-FGM policy that addresses the shortcomings of the fatwa and details a coherent implementation strategy.</td>
<td>Allocate resources to provide training and education to Somaliland’s population on the risks posed by FGM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 100 days, devise and release a new plan to eradicate all new cases of FGM in Somaliland.</td>
<td>Form a new national campaign to raise awareness of the need to eradicate all forms of FGM across Somaliland.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass a national anti-FGM policy that addresses the shortcomings of the fatwa and details a coherent implementation strategy.</td>
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### 3.

**SDG 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all**

*(Just Societies)*

**Context:** Access to justice is improving in Somaliland’s urban areas but is still lacking in harder-to-reach rural areas. The introduction of mobile courts that travel to each region and district has expanded access to formal justice and made the process of trying cases more efficient. However, there remain serious challenges in aligning formal justice systems with Sharia and customary law. The establishment of the Law Reform Commission in August 2009 led to an ongoing process to improve outdated laws, but progress has been slow. There have, however, been positive developments in strengthening the diversity of the judiciary. In 2000, there was only one female lawyer in Somaliland; after concerted efforts to train and hire women in the legal sector, now almost half of all national prosecutors are women.

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#### NDPII OUTCOME

**By 2021, increase effectiveness and efficiency of rule of law at the national level and ensure equal access to justice for all by 70 per cent.**

#### NDPII indicators

- Proportion of victims reporting to have experienced violence to the authorities in the past 12 months.
- Proportion of un-sentenced detainees as overall prisoners.
- Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services.

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#### PRIORITY ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Parliament approves the Legal Aid Bill.</td>
<td>- Advocate for Guurti approval of the Rape Bill and allocate resources to support victims’ legal costs.</td>
<td>- Support improved monitoring mechanisms for the Human Rights Commission, High Judiciary Commission, and Ministry of Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Executive Branch publicly advocate for Guurti approval of the Rape Bill and allocate resources to support victims’ legal costs.</td>
<td>- Promote awareness of legal rights and procedures among rural and minority communities.</td>
<td>- Invest in further capacity building and training of legal professionals, ensuring equal support to men and women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improve monitoring mechanisms for the Human Rights Commission, High Judiciary Commission, and Ministry of Justice.</td>
<td>- Develop a new national campaign to promote access to justice throughout Somaliland.</td>
<td>- Invest in formal and informal data collection mechanisms to identify shortcomings in people’s access to justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strengthen systems of and working relations between the Ministry of Justice and the Judiciary.</td>
<td>- Run new campaigns to raise awareness of citizens’ rights to legal aid.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Somaliland civil society identified three priorities for action in the longer-term. Each will require considerable political will, sustained and concerted action by government and non-government actors, and increased capacity of stakeholders to implement reforms or change the status quo. The timeline for these longer-term priorities is between two and ten years.

**SDG16+ priorities for action 2020–30**

1. **SDG 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**
   
   *(Just Societies)*

   **NDPII OUTCOME** By 2021, achieve zero tolerance of corruption and bribery.*

   **NDPII indicator** Number of officials prosecuted and sentenced for corruption. Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe in the past 12 months.

   **Context:** In Somaliland, the NDPII acknowledges that a ‘long way is ahead to achieve the intended impartial, accountable, and transparent justice in Somaliland; where police misconduct, poor investigation and proceeding, and corruption are yet to address in full scale.’ President Muse Abdi Bihi has recognised that ‘corruption in particular remains all too present within Somaliland’ and has vowed to use his time in office to ‘root it out and rebuild the state apparatus to work in the best interest of all citizens.’**

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By December 2019, President Bihi produces and publishes an anti-corruption strategy for his government.</td>
<td>Collate civil society perspectives to feed into a new anti-corruption law.</td>
<td>Invest in building the capacity of the judiciary to respond to all allegations of bribery and corruption.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enact an anti-corruption law.</td>
<td>Develop advocacy messaging to detail the human cost of corruption and bribery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create and ensure a transparent national budgetary process, including specific mechanisms to ensure civil society inclusion.</td>
<td>Set up representative civil society consultative mechanism to input into national budgetary process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconstitute the Good Governance Commission as the &quot;Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Commission&quot; and give this commission a legal mandate to investigate instances of corruption in state institutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduce an ombudsman function to review corruption in state institutions.</td>
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2. 

**SDG 16.10:** Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements (Inclusive Societies)

**NDPII OUTCOME** By 2021, develop national communication policies and strategies for promoting access to information and community engagement.  
**NDPII indicator** Number of policies and strategies developed and ratified.

**NDPII OUTCOME** By 2020, amend and develop media sector regulations and develop media quality Standards.  
**NDPII indicator** Number of regulations amended or developed and quality standards developed.

**PRIORITY ACTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
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<th>International partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommitment at the highest level to upholding international obligations to protect journalists.</td>
<td>Devise reform and capacity building programmes for the media sector.</td>
<td>Fund reform and capacity building programmes for the media sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and strengthen the media regulatory framework.</td>
<td>Facilitate dialogue between the Government and media representatives to agree on a legal framework to govern media space.</td>
<td>Fund the national media’s quality standards and certification programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the national media’s quality standards and certification programmes.</td>
<td>Raise awareness and run training sessions for journalists, aspiring journalists and general public on the responsible use of social media for all actors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish an independent national press commission.</td>
<td>Assist with developing a Right to Information Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and pass into law a Right to Information Act.</td>
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**Context:** Somaliland’s constitution enshrines the freedom of the press as an essential part of the country’s democracy. In 2017, Freedom House ranked Somaliland’s press as ‘partially free’ – with a higher score than many neighbouring countries, but still not ‘free.’ In recent years, on many occasions journalists have been arrested and media sites or newspapers shut down without due legal process. Legislation on relations between the state and the media needs updating, and all government ministries and sectors should follow legal procedures in dealing with the media. Conflict-sensitive media training should also be provided to relevant actors in Somaliland.
Context: Somaliland’s civil society highlighted the importance of developing a more effective, accountable and transparent police force. Currently the police are organised around a structure that is inherited from the military of the pre-1991 Somali Democratic Republic. Somaliland’s NDPII acknowledges that there is still a substantial amount of progress to be made in police accountability and conduct. The police law passed by The House of Representatives and endorsed by President Bihi in December 2017 offers an opportunity to act on this priority. The law calls for the establishment of a new independent police complaint commission, which aims to improve accountability through new mechanisms whereby citizens can directly submit complaints.

### SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

#### (Inclusive Societies)

**NDPII OUTCOME** | By 2021, develop effective, accountable and transparent public institutions at all levels

**NDPII indicator** | Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

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<tr>
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<th>Civil society</th>
<th>International partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present a roadmap by December 2019 detailing an implementation strategy for the new Police Act.</td>
<td>Set up new community-police partnership teams (CPPTs) in each region and sub-region to open space for community dialogue with local police.</td>
<td>Devise and capacitate a new mechanism to support and monitor Security Sector Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of a new independent mechanism to deal with complaints on police conduct.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide seed funding for new community-police partnership teams (CPPTs) in each region and sub-region to open space for community dialogue with local police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up new community-police partnership teams (CPPTs) in each region and sub-region to open space for community dialogue with local police.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a fully independent judiciary, an auditor general and a Somaliland National Human Rights Commission (SLNHRC).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconstitute the Good Governance Commission as the ‘Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Commission’ and give this commission a mandate to implement recommendations from newly-formed CPPTs.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How can Somaliland achieve these SDG16+ ambitions?

1. Map actions towards SDG16+ targets across the country

A range of governmental and civil society initiatives addressing different aspects of SDG16+ are underway across Somaliland, but there is no comprehensive record of who is doing what, and where the gaps are. It is unclear which government ministries are responsible for addressing specific targets, and there is no collation of relevant initiatives by civil society or INGOs. A comprehensive mapping of government and non-governmental actions to address SDG16+ across all six regions of Somaliland would provide valuable knowledge that could inform future programming and policies. It would also generate a baseline and help to identify gaps in implementation or duplication of efforts between government and non-governmental organisations.

2. Maximise the potential for NDPII implementation by aligning with civil society priorities

Implementation of the NDPII can be achieved more effectively if the government takes advantage of the alignment between civil society priorities on relevant SDG16+ targets and NDPII indicators. The notion of a partnership between governments and citizens is the very essence of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and it should also be the essence of the Somaliland NDPII. Based on the SDGs, the implementation of NDPII should be a joint endeavour between responsible government ministries, civil society and INGOs in Somaliland. Political commitment is needed from the government, as well as financial investment from donor governments and the private sector, in order to tackle the more entrenched obstacles to SDG16+ implementation.

3. Strengthen the capacities to implement SDG16+ commitments

The Government of Somaliland has made a series of commitments that directly relate to achieving SDG16+ targets through the NDPII. Despite these commitments, the government lacks the capacity to fully implement its plans, and so international support is needed to ensure that each sector and ministry is able to fulfil its commitments. International partners should consider following the Danish International Development Agency – DANIDA’s example of providing technical capacity to key government ministries. Due to the cross-cutting nature of issues included within SDG16+, government ministries should ensure implementation responsibility for NDPII and SDG16+ targets is clearly assigned to relevant departments and offices.

4. Strengthen monitoring and data capabilities

It is vital for government and civil society stakeholders to be able to gather reliable data to track progress towards SDG16+ targets. Current data-gathering and monitoring capabilities of the Somaliland ministries tasked with implementing and reporting on these priorities are comparatively low. Significant investment by donors is needed both to establish accurate baselines and to enable Somaliland to measure progress toward SDG16+ related NDPII targets. Progress should be measured according to the official indicators that have been globally agreed upon for each SDG target, as well with reference to additional complementary indicators. Somaliland stakeholders can utilise the ‘SDG16 Data Initiative’ to track commitments and hold the government to account. International partners should commit long-term resources to strengthen the capacities of the government accurately to assess SDG progress, as well as to build the data capacities of Somaliland civil society.

5. Increase donor commitment and alignment with SDG16+

Somaliland offers an opportunity for donors to support a national development process that is explicitly aligned with the SDGs. At the same time, donors should ensure that their support reflects civil society priorities for action. Retrofitting the SDGs into existing development programmes could undermine the process, whereas using SDG16+ commitments to catalyse fresh, multi-sectoral analysis, programme development and partnerships will generate far-reaching benefits. SDG16+ provides a framework for a whole-of-government approach, which can help bridge disconnects between policies and programmes addressing security, governance, gender and development.
In total, representatives of 55 Somaliland civil society organisations or institutions took part in the consultations. These included:

- Academy for Peace and Development (APD)
- Adem Academy, Somaliland Women’s Law Association (SWLA)
- Africa Youth Development Association (AYODA)
- Alpha University
- Amoud University
- Barwaako Voluntary Organization (BVO)
- Berbera Marine
- Center for Consultancy and Research Development (CCORD)
- Committee of Concerned Somalis (CCS)
- Dalkaab
- East Africa Law Firm (EALF)
- Golis University
- Hargeisa University
- Hiigi Hogan
- Horn Aid
- Horn of Africa: Centre for Policy Analysis (CPA)
- Horn Youth Development Association (HYODA)
- Horseed
- Human Rights Centre (HRC)
- Kulmis
- Muslim College
- NAGAAD Network
- NUGAL University
- Protection Network Against FGM (NAFIS)
- Royal Institute, Chamber of Commerce
- Sahil Women Business Association
- Sanaag University
- SCRD
- Social Research and Development Institute (SORADI)
- Solidarity Youth Voluntary Organization (SOYVO)

Somaliland Cayn Association (SCA)
Somaliland Community Development Association (CDA)
Somaliland Diaspora Agency (SDA)
Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA)
Somaliland Medical Association (SMA)
Somaliland National Disability Forum (SNDF)
Somaliland National Youth Organisation (SONYO)
Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF)
Somaliland Women Entrepreneur Association (SWLEA)
Somaliland Youth Development and Voluntary Organization (SOYDAVO)
Somaliland Youth Development Association (SOYDA)
Somaliland Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER)
Somaliland Youth Society-Burao (SYS-Burao)
Somalis against Violent Extremism (SAVE)
SONDO
Sool United Non-Governmental Organization (SUNGO)
Taakulo Somaliland Community (TASCO)
The Girls Generation (TGG)
The Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SHAA Action)
United Together Association (UNITA)
YADVIO, General Assistance and volunteer Organization (GAVO)
Youth Volunteers for Development and Environmental Conservation (YOVENC)

About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. Saferworld looks at crises and threats from the perspectives of people in the worst-affected places. We promote action that is initiated by the communities themselves, and that effectively addresses the real causes of conflict-related crises and threats. We also aim to promote long-term peace through conducting analysis and setting up policy dialogue with governments, international organisations and civil society, on peace, terrorism and stability and responses to forced displacement. www.saferworld.org.uk

About SONSADF

Somaliland Non State Actors Forum (SONSAF) was founded in 2005 by business groups, traditional leaders, professional associations, religious leaders, and civil society organisations to enhance development progress through better coordination and networking among non-state actors in Somaliland. Officially registered in 2008, SONSADF aims to strengthen the voice of non-state actors in Somaliland and to enable them to engage in domestic and international policy dialogue activities. www.sonsaf.org

Notes

1. Somaliland self-declared independence from Somalia in 1991, and as such is not formally internationally recognised. Saferworld takes no position on the matter of international recognition. We have been working to promote peace, democratisation and good governance in Somalia and Somaliland since 2004.
3. Merti.com is an online polling programme that enables audience participation at seminars and workshops.
10. ‘No illusions about the challenges facing Somaliland,’ Muse Bihi, November 2017
11. https://www.fls.com/content/9746fa7a2-d453-11e7-4ea4-de6a05c85d9
16. A global indicator framework was adopted by the UN General Assembly in July 2017. In total there are 230 global indicators to cover the 169 targets. These global indicators will need to be supplemented with complementary national indicators that best suit the needs and capacity to collect and analyse data.
17. Global indicators are expected to be accompanied by complementary regional and national indicators. National Statistical Offices are meant to be the primary source of official SDG data. Therefore monitoring at the national level – with context-specific indicators – will be vital to inform future planning and implementation.
18. Launched in 2016 by a consortium of 14 organisations, including Saferworld, the SDG16 Data Initiative enables the open tracking of the commitments under SDG 16. It was created to respond to the gap in terms of comprehensive data on SDG16 issues and to help ensure that progress towards achieving SDG16 can be measured. Accountability actors at the national level can use this data to hold governments to account for their commitments to peaceful, just and inclusive societies.