FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Inclusive and Participatory Policy Engagement for Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia (2023 to 2026)

End of Project Evaluation for the Life & Peace Institute and Somali Public Agenda

Mogadishu, Baidoa, Dhusamareeb and Jowhar

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
ATMIS	African Union Transition Mission in Somalia
AUSSOM	African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia
CSO	Civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus group discussion
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member State
IDP	Internally displaced person
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
KII	Key informant interview
LPI	Life & Peace Institute
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOIFAR	Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation
NRF	National Reconciliation Framework
OCA	Organisational Capacity Assessment
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OH	Outcome Harvesting
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
SPA	Somali Public Agenda
ToC	Theory of change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

The Project and this Evaluation

The Life & Peace Institute (LPI) and Somali Public Agenda (SPA) implemented the EU funded project "Inclusive and Participatory Policy Engagement for Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia" between January 2023 and March 2026, in Mogadishu (Banadir), Baidoa (South West State), Dhusamareeb (Galmudug) and Jowhar (Hirshabelle). The project set out to strengthen cooperative civil society engagement with federal member state, federal government and international stakeholders, centring the voices of women, youth and marginalised groups (Outcome 1), and to support the development of a coordinated implementation plan for the National Reconciliation Framework (NRF) by state authorities together with CSOs (Outcome 2).

TIGAAL Consulting was commissioned to conduct the end of project evaluation, covering January 2023 to March 2026 and structured around the five OECD-DAC criteria, using contribution analysis rather than attribution. The evidence base comprised 118 completed CSO surveys, covering network members and CSOs engaged during the inception mapping, and the qualitative sample of 29 key informant interviews, 12 focus group discussions and 19 Organisational Capacity Assessments, together with outcome harvesting and a desk review. The 29 key informant interviews included five project level strategic interviews, with LPI, SPA, Somali Peace Line (SPL), Zamzam Foundation (ZZF), and Finn Church Aid (FCA) as the INGO peer, the last administered a tailored instrument asking about the sector as a whole.

Overall Assessment

The project achieved its first outcome. Civil society networks were established in all four locations and connected to federal and state ministries, and CSOs described a shift from occasional, individual contact with government to structured and regular engagement. The change was felt widely with 92% of survey respondents observing positive change in CSO and government engagement, and 87% reporting that trust and peaceful relations had improved over the previous twelve months, with no location below 82% on either measure. The network grew to 20 organisations with signed MoUs, five in each location, against a target of 12 (project monitoring records 22). Public forums were well attended, with the project's narrative reports documenting around 800 participants across 13 forums held in 2024 and 2025, and project monitoring records 985 in total against a target of 560.

On Outcome 2 the project delivered what lay within its control and laid strong groundwork for what remains. It mobilised civil society around the NRF and advocated for it in all four locations: at endline 93% of respondents correctly identified the framework's purpose, and participants described it in detail. The networks developed consultative action plans in all four locations, and six reconciliation actions were implemented. Project monitoring records 17 CSO-led consultations, and a five-year NRF strategic plan was drafted and presented to cabinet. The remaining steps, cabinet approval and official rollout, depended on government and did not take place within the project period, because a change of federal administration reopened the framework for review and ministerial turnover required repeated re-engagement. The partners took a sound decision to continue with the civil society track rather than wait, and as a result civil society in the four locations is informed and organised for implementation. Because the drafted plan awaits a decision rather than further work, Outcome 2 remains achievable.

Findings by Criterion

Relevance was the clearest strength, with high confidence: In all four locations, CSOs and government informants described reconciliation and peacebuilding as work they were already doing, which the project strengthened, structured and extended rather than displacing. Alignment with the NRF and with each state's political context was close. The main opportunity for a next phase is reach, as the project worked in four federal member states, and extending to further states and districts would build on a model that has proved well suited to local priorities.

Effectiveness was strong on Outcome 1 and partial on Outcome 2: Capacity gains in facilitation, communication, documentation and advocacy were reported in every location and, importantly, spread beyond those directly trained through a cascading model in which trained participants went on to train others. Dialogue platforms became functioning access points between CSOs and government, and multiple CSO informants described a change in their own standing, from community level work into political dialogue. Participation quality rose from level 2 at baseline to level 3 at endline. Most output targets were met or exceeded, as documented in the project's narrative reports and the evaluation's own survey (Annex I).

Efficiency showed through timeliness and coordination between the partners: All planned activities were completed within a three-year period extended by three months at no cost and formally approved by the EU, with SPA estimating that over 90% of the schedule was delivered on time and the extension used mainly for closure and reporting. Delays arose predominantly from the NRF review, ministerial turnover, insecurity and election related movement restrictions, and donor contracting timelines. Coordination between LPI and SPA was a clear strength, operating across three layers with joint planning and joint field teams, and was corroborated from outside the implementing partnership.

Impact showed the most consistent evidence in the evaluation: The quantitative results on CSO and government engagement and on trust were the highest scoring and most consistent items in the survey, and the qualitative evidence independently described the same shift, from fear and avoidance towards structured and regular dialogue. Respondents supplied place specific instances of conflicts addressed, including the Guriceel and Balanbale reconciliation, a ceasefire and peace agreement in Diinsoor, a water point arrangement in Hudur and repeated joint mediation of land and grazing disputes around Jowhar. The project contributed to these changes alongside traditional elders, religious leaders, administrations and other partners working in the same space, and the evidence of change is strongest for the organisations and communities it worked with directly.

Sustainability in different levels of the system: Individual and organisational capacity is likely to last. It rests on knowledge shared across staff, established legal and leadership structures, and reconciliation mandates that pre-date the project. The networks have a strong foundation to build on with most strategic partners, including LPI, SPA and ZZF, described networks that continue to operate, keep their officers and communication channels, and are approached directly by ministries. Keeping collective action going will depend on coordination funding, a condition almost every source raised, and government informants expected activity to slow once project-covered logistics ended. SPL noted that joint work had paused while relationships remained intact and could readily be reactivated.

Cross Cutting Findings

Voice and influence: Participants experienced project activities as open and safe: 86% had the opportunity to speak and 85% felt safe and respected. Two thirds (67%) agreed their views influenced discussions or decisions, a substantial result for a three-year project working on a national policy process, and there were clear instances of uptake, including the Federal Ministry of Interior's acceptance of a recommendation on women's inclusion. The Organisational Capacity Assessment showed that CSOs have strong relationships with government; the next step is to document consultations and report back to communities on what their input achieved, so that the influence taking place is visible.

Strong internal systems, with advocacy as the next area to build: Across the nineteen assessed organisations, governance, financial management and programme planning and monitoring scored strongly in every location, indicating well-run organisations with documented mandates and functioning leadership. External relations and advocacy, in particular policy analysis and documenting influence, offers the most room for growth in three of the four locations, while Jowhar recorded the strongest advocacy scores of the four.

Inclusion broadened, with room to reach further: Participation now extends beyond traditional elders to youth, women and religious leaders in every location, a meaningful change in who takes part in reconciliation processes. Interviews and focus groups across the four locations pointed to a clear opportunity to build on this by bringing more persons with disabilities and disability-focused organisations into project activities. Seven of the 118 survey respondents identified as persons with a disability, mainly in Dhusamareeb and Jowhar. Respondents also expressed strong interest in extending the work: in their own comments, nineteen asked for wider geographic coverage beyond the main towns, and nine suggested specific groups to include.

Growing CSO standing, with relationships to manage: As CSOs became more active and organised, some ministries initially found their formal role in policy review unfamiliar. SPA reported unease at federal level, and a CSO in Dhusamareeb described a period of strain with a government institution that later improved under new leadership. This reflects the project's success in raising the profile of civil society. It also sits within a wider national conversation on the relationship between government and civil society: the NGO bill has yet to be enacted, and the distinct role of civil society in public discourse is not yet widely understood. Continued dialogue and cooperation between government and civil society, including as issues arise, together with visible donor backing, will help these relationships continue to mature.

Recommendations

Key recommendations are set out in Section 7 of the report. The priorities are as follows:

For the EU

- Fund any successor project for longer than three years, ideally five to six, so it runs long enough to support the NRF through adoption and implementation.
- Budget directly for participation costs and for reaching communities beyond the main towns, which was respondents' most common request.
- Agree bridge funding for network coordination before the project closes, covering the meeting logistics and light secretariat costs that CSOs cannot meet themselves.

- Give visible high-level backing to any successor so that civil society's role with government is clearly supported, recognising that the relationship between government and civil society is still being defined nationally.

For LPI and SPA

- Design any next phase around the reconciliation priorities that CSOs and ministries already hold, the project's clearest strength.
- Plan in advance for delays in government timetables, setting out which activities proceed regardless and which depend on government action.
- Formalise the train-the-trainer model so that skills continue to spread after staff move on.
- Focus capacity support on advocacy, policy analysis and documenting influence, the lowest-scoring areas in the capacity assessment.
- Bring more persons with disabilities and disability-focused organisations into the networks.
- Check how each network is functioning today before deciding where further support is needed.

For the CSO networks

- Build visible feedback loops that record what was raised in each consultation, what was carried forward and what the response was, and return that record to the community. Start this now as a change in process that needs no new funding, building on the Mogadishu example, where written feedback raised participants' confidence in their influence.

For government partners

- Designate, from within existing staff and budgets, a focal point for civil society engagement in each ministry involved in NRF implementation. The role should serve civil society as a whole rather than individual projects, and should not depend on financial support from CSOs, projects or donors. This keeps civil society engagement impartial while giving it a regular point of contact with government.
- Respond in writing to the recommendations CSOs submit, as was done in Mogadishu, so participants can see what their input achieved.
- Give CSO networks a defined seat in the structures that plan and monitor NRF implementation, building on South West State's reconciliation committee and technical task force.
- Plan NRF implementation within ministries' own budgets, since the lack of a dedicated budget line was identified as a central gap.
- Hold regular dialogue with civil society, and additional dialogue as issues arise, on the distinct role each plays in reconciliation and in public policy. Some strain in the relationship reflects a wider national conversation rather than this project alone: the NGO bill has not yet been enacted, and the role of civil society in public discourse is not yet widely understood.

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Somalia's Peacebuilding Landscape: Three Decades of Fragility and Nascent Progress

Somalia's trajectory toward peace and stability remains one of the most complex and protracted state-building challenges. Following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, the country experienced over three decades of civil conflict, resulting in mass displacement, institutional collapse, and the erosion of inter-communal trust. Civil society organisations (CSOs) emerged during the 1990s and 2000s as critical drivers of peacebuilding in the absence of functioning central government, facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties, amplifying marginalised voices, and delivering essential social services. These early contributions established a foundational, if fragile, architecture for civic engagement in Somalia.[1] Despite measurable progress in rebuilding federal institutions and establishing a tiered governance structure, Somalia continues to grapple with persistent insecurity, inter- and intra-clan disputes, and a deeply fragmented political landscape. The security situation deteriorated in 2023 as the Federal Government pursued its offensive against Al-Shabaab while the African Union Transition Mission (ATMIS) proceeded with its planned drawdown, and the country's path to peace remains non-linear and subject to significant setbacks. The arrival of a new AU mission, AUSSOM,[2] deploying up to12,626 personnel in 2024, reflects both the enduring security challenge and continued international commitment to Somalia's stabilisation.[3] In South and Central Somalia, the geographic heartland of the LPI/SPA project, the security and governance environment presents particular complexity. The Federal Member States (FMS) of Hirshabelle, Galmudug, South West State, and Banadir/Mogadishu each carry distinct conflict histories, clan compositions, and levels of institutional maturity. The World Bank classifies these states among Somalia's most fragile, as measured by the Fragility Index and Maturity Model (FIMM).[4] Intra-communal conflict, land disputes, and the social legacies of displacement compound formal governance deficits, creating environments in which inclusive policy dialogue is simultaneously urgent and structurally difficult.

1.2 The National Reconciliation Framework: Architecture, Progress, and Implementation Challenges

The NRF represents the Federal Government of Somalia's (FGS) most significant institutional commitment to structured reconciliation since independence. Its origins lie in consultations launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR), which convened a National Consultative Conference on Reconciliation to establish a Somali-led, community-owned approach to healing and dialogue. These consultations were deliberately held in Somalia to signal national ownership and were informed by follow-up workshops initiated by the Peacemakers Network and FCA.[5] After five years of consultation with federal institutions, member states, civil society, and international partners, MOIFAR formally launched the NRF on 30 April 2024. Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre framed the framework as an expression of Somali cultural identity: "Sitting under a tree,

[1]Interpeace (2024). Somalia Programme Overview. Interpeace. https://www.interpeace.org/programme/somalia/
[2]United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (2024). PBF Investments in Somalia: Country Brief, June 2024. United Nations. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/country_brief_somalia_2024-06-10.pdf
[3]Interpeace (2024). Somalia Programme Overview. Interpeace. https://www.interpeace.org/programme/somalia/
[4]World Bank (2025). Strengthening Social Cohesion in Somalia: Project Appraisal Document. World Bank Group. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099031325033042825/pdf/P508408-e6df9152-c32e-4187-b959-c73f4524c167.pdf
[5]Peacemakers Network / Finn Church Aid (2020). Moving Forward: National Reconciliation Framework Approved by the Federal Government of Somalia. Peacemakers Network. https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/moving-forward-national-reconciliation-framework-approved-by-the-federal-government-of-somalia/

discussing our disputes, and coming up with peaceful solutions is symbolic of Somali culture. Dialogue means reconciliation."[6] Somalia simultaneously became the first country to anchor its national reconciliation framework in the Principles for Peace, a landmark step signalling government commitment to an inclusive, accountable, and locally driven process.[7] The NRF operates at federal, state, and district levels and comprises multiple thematic pillars, including trauma healing, mental health, community reconciliation, and the reintegration of communities previously under Al-Shabaab control. Its implementation strategy was developed[8] through a series of stakeholder workshops, including a five-day engagement in Nairobi in July 2024 co-organised with UNDP and the Berghof Foundation, and was accompanied by the establishment of an NRF Technical Advisory Board in December 2024.[9] Nonetheless, translating the NRF's ambitions into tangible outcomes remains formidable. Implementation has been constrained by limited institutional capacity at federal and sub-national levels, inadequate coordination among implementing partners, and insufficient engagement of civil society and marginalised communities.[10] UNDP's State Building and Reconciliation Support Programme (SRSP) has sought to address these gaps, facilitating over 25 locally led reconciliation processes, of which 12 were resolved in 2024 alone, while building the capacity of religious leaders, women's groups, youth, and CSOs to engage in conflict mapping and peacebuilding.[11] However, gaps in civil society coordination, policy analysis capacity, and sustained engagement with government institutions at the FMS level continue to constrain progress.

1.3 The Wadajir Framework and Decentralised Governance as a Reconciliation Enabler

The NRF does not operate in isolation – it sits within a broader ecosystem of policy frameworks for peace and governance. Central among these is the Wadajir National Framework for Local Governance, launched in March 2016, which seeks to support reconciliation, civic dialogue, and the establishment of local governance structures in areas recovered from Al-Shabaab. The Wadajir Framework harmonises stabilisation programmes through a community-driven district council formation (DCF) process built on power-sharing agreements between clans.[12] As documented in evaluations of its implementation, the DCF process is inherently political, resurfacing historical tensions and requiring sustained conflict resolution and social healing efforts as foundational prerequisites for governance.[13] MOIFAR's Policy Framework for Participatory Federalism and Decentralisation identifies three interlocking policy pillars of Somalia's peace-governance nexus: the National Stabilization Strategy (NSS); the NRF; and the Wadajir Framework. Together, these instruments are designed to create pathways for expanding state presence, strengthening the social contract, and ensuring that local governance structures are grounded in reconciliation rather than imposed administrative arrangements.[14] For civil society, this tripartite architecture creates both opportunities and

[6]UNDP Somalia (2024). Explainer: What is the National Reconciliation Framework of Somalia? United Nations Development Programme. https://www.undp.org/somalia/blog/explainer-what-national-reconciliation-framework-somalia
[7]Principles for Peace Foundation (2025). Purpose and Milestones of the P4P Programme in Somalia. Principles for Peace. https://principlesforpeace.org/somalia/
[8]UNDP Somalia (2024). Explainer: What is the National Reconciliation Framework of Somalia? [Medium]. United Nations Development Programme. https://undpsom.medium.com/explainer-what-is-national-reconciliation-framework-of-somalia-a919d8c57ccf
[9]Principles for Peace Foundation (2025). Somalia: Presentation of the NRF Implementation Strategy and Establishment of the Technical Advisory Board. Principles for Peace. https://principlesforpeace.org/somalia-presentation-of-the-nrf-implementation-strategy-and-establishment-of-the-technical-advisory-board/
[10]United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (2024). PBF Investments in Somalia: Country Brief, June 2024. United Nations. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/country_brief_somalia_2024-06-10.pdf
[11]UNDP Somalia (2024). State Building and Reconciliation Support Program (SRSP). United Nations Development Programme. https://www.undp.org/somalia/projects/srsp
[12]Reliefweb (2016). Somali Government and Partners Agree on Improving Coordination of Stabilisation Programmes. Reliefweb. https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somali-government-and-partners-agree-improving-coordination-stabilisation-programmes
[13]Finn Church Aid / Kirkon Ulkomaanapu (2021). Promoting Inclusive Local Governance in Somalia: Looking Back, Looking Ahead. Finn Church Aid. https://www.kirkonulkomaanapu.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Somalia_LG_www.pdf
[14]Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) (2022). Policy Framework for Participatory Federalism and Decentralization in Somalia. Federal Government of Somalia / World Bank. https://moifar.gov.so/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/POLICY-FRAMEWORK-FOR-PARTICIPATORY-FEDERALISM-AND-DECENTRALIZATION-IN-SOMALIA.pdf

obligations, organisations that can navigate and link across these frameworks are uniquely positioned to advance meaningful policy engagement.

1.4 Civil Society in Somalia: Potential, Constraints, and the Participation Gap

Civil society in Somalia plays a constitutive role in peacebuilding that is not merely supplementary to government efforts but, in many contexts, foundational to them. CSOs across Somalia have facilitated intercommunal dialogue, supported the reintegration of displaced persons, and provided psychosocial support to conflict survivors, with community-based initiatives in Puntland and Galmudug alone having positively impacted over 200,000 people. Yet despite these contributions, Somali civil society operates under conditions of chronic institutional fragility and constrained civic space.[15] The EU-funded Enabling Environment Snapshot for Somalia (2025) presents a sobering assessment of the regulatory context. Registration requirements remain burdensome for grassroots organisations, and the draft Non-Governmental Organisations Act of 2019 has yet to be operationalised, leaving CSOs navigating overlapping mandates between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Planning. This legal vacuum undermines legal certainty, weakens protections from state interference, and limits the development of sustainable organisational structures. Furthermore, while Somalia enacted its first Data Protection Act in 2023, enforcement remains weak, and civil society actors, particularly in rural and peri-urban settings, face digital surveillance risks that constrain their operational independence.[16] The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) Country Briefing (November 2024) highlights structural barriers to CSO policy influence: large EU grants are typically accessible only to INGOs, leaving local CSOs, those with the most contextual knowledge and community relationships, excluded from the resourcing needed to scale their engagement.[17] Across the peacebuilding sector, donor-funded activities remain siloed, failing to generate the cross-project learning and coordination needed for sustained policy impact. CSOs frequently lack the institutional capacity for rigorous policy analysis, systematic documentation of community voices, or sustained engagement with government institutions, factors that directly limit their ability to influence NRF implementation. SPA's own assessment corroborates this: while civic freedoms are generally respected in Mogadishu, civic space in Somalia remains limited, with many CSOs lacking the independence or analytical capacity to serve as genuine counterweights to government institutions.[18] For marginalised groups (including women, youth, and minority clans), these barriers are further compounded. While UNDP reports engaging over 192,000 women, youth, persons with disabilities, and internally displaced persons, in political processes across Somalia in 2023, this aggregate figure masks deep variation in the depth and sustainability of that participation. Tokenistic inclusion, where community members attend consultations without meaningfully shaping outcomes, remains a pervasive challenge across the sector and represents one of the central problems the LPI/SPA project sought to address.[19]

[15]International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (2025). Peacebuilding in Somalia: Local Realities, Federal Aspirations, and the Shifting Role of External Support. RSIS International. https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/peacebuilding-in-somalia-local-realities-federal-aspirations-and-the-shifting-role-of-external-support/
[16]Hivos / EU Enabling Environment for Civil Society (2025). Enabling Environment Snapshot: Somalia, June 2025. Hivos / European Union. https://eusee.hivos.org/assets/2025/07/Somalia-EE-baseline-snapshot-1.pdf
[17]European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) (2024). Gathering Civil Society Perspectives: Somalia Country Briefing Paper, November 2024. EPLO. https://eplo.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Somalia-Country-Briefing-FINAL-1.pdf
[18]Somali Public Agenda / CIVICUS (2024). 'Civil Society is Playing Key Roles in the Ongoing Constitutional Process': Interview with SPA. CIVICUS. https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/interviews/6979-somalia-civil-society-is-playing-key-roles-in-the-ongoing-constitutional-process
[19]UNDP Somalia (2024). Towards a Peaceful and Resilient Somalia. United Nations Development Programme. https://www.undp.org/somalia/stories/towards-peaceful-resilient-somalia

1.5 The LPI–SPA Partnership: Rationale and Programmatic Logic

It is within this landscape of institutional urgency and structural constraint that LPI and SPA designed the EU-funded "Inclusive and Participatory Policy Engagement for Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia" (2023–2026). LPI brings three decades of Somalia-specific experience in nonviolent conflict transformation, dialogue facilitation, and policy engagement, including its 2020–2023 Multi-Level Conflict Transformation programme in South and Central Somalia.[20] Prior to project design, LPI conducted Power Analysis workshops with communities across four regions. Reconciliation, and specifically the NRF process, emerged as the community-identified priority, directly shaping the project's intervention logic.[21] SPA brings complementary expertise as one of Somalia's leading independent public policy research and advocacy institution. Since its founding in 2018, SPA has built a substantial body of research reports, policy papers and governance briefs on governance, reconciliation and institutional accountability. It convenes public forums every year and has developed an evidence-based policy co-design methodology through its Policy Lab, the first of its kind in the country.[22] SPA's institutional independence, its position as a Somali-led and Somalia-based think tank, and its established relationships with both CSO networks and government institutions make it a key partner for a project centred on inclusive NRF engagement..

The project's two outcomes address complementary dimensions of the participation gap. Outcome 1 – strengthening cooperative civil society engagement with FMSs, the FGS, and international stakeholders, addresses the coordination and voice dimension, ensuring that community perspectives (particularly from women, youth, and marginalised groups) are systematically channelled into policy spaces. Outcome 2 – supporting the development of a coordinated NRF implementation plan, addresses the institutional dimension, building the connective tissue between civil society advocacy and government-led implementation. Together, these outcomes represent a theoretically coherent response to the barriers identified in the literature and validated through LPI's prior community engagement in the four target regions.

1.6 Significance of the Evaluation and Evaluation Objectives

This endline evaluation arrives at a pivotal moment. The NRF's implementation strategy and Technical Advisory Board were only consolidated in late 2024, within the project period, meaning that the project operated during the critical window between the Framework's formal launch and the establishment of its operational architecture. The evaluation must therefore assess not only whether project outputs were delivered, but whether the project contributed meaningfully to positioning civil society as a credible and coordinated actor in NRF implementation during this window of opportunity. The findings will also carry significance beyond LPI and SPA. The conclusion of EUTM Somalia's mandate in 2024 and the arrival of a new European Commission creates a strategic moment for reappraisal of EU engagement architecture in Somalia. Rigorous evidence on what has worked in CSO-led policy engagement for reconciliation, including honest reflection on sustainability and coordination gaps, will be directly relevant to how the EU, Sida, and other partners structure their next programming cycle. That learning ambition is central to the design of this evaluation.

Against this contextual backdrop, the purpose of this endline evaluation is a rigorous, learning-oriented assessment of the extent to which the project has strengthened civil society participation in

[20]Life & Peace Institute (2024). Our Work in Somalia. LPI. https://life-peace.org/our-work/somalia/
[21]Life & Peace Institute (2024). Our Work: Global — Inclusive Policy Engagement. LPI. https://life-peace.org/our-work/global/
[22]Somali Public Agenda (2025). 2024 Year in Review. SPA. https://somalipublicagenda.org/2024-somali-public-agendas-year-in-review/

governance and reconciliation processes across Hirshabelle, Galmudug, South West State, and Benadir over the period January 2023 to March 2026. Specifically, the evaluation will:

1. Assess the project's performance against its stated objectives and expected results: examining the degree to which Outcomes 1 and 2 were achieved, including the functionality of civil society networks and the quality of CSO engagement in NRF-related policy processes.
2. Examine the project across the five OECD DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (contribution), and sustainability, generating evidence-based findings and recommendations on each dimension.
3. Assess the project's contribution to inclusive policy engagement and dialogue processes: including the extent to which women, youth, and marginalised groups were meaningfully engaged, and whether their voices substantively influenced policy discussions at the FMS and Federal Government levels.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of capacity strengthening interventions: determining whether institutional capacities developed within CSOs are likely to be sustained beyond the project period, and whether coordination mechanisms established through the project remain functional.
5. Generate actionable learning and recommendations: identifying good practices, unintended effects, and lessons that can inform future LPI and SPA programming as well as broader peacebuilding policy engagement strategies in Somalia and comparable fragile contexts. The evaluation will complement the ongoing monitoring processes and prior assessments conducted during implementation, with an emphasis on synthesis, reflection, and forward-looking utility for LPI, SPA, the EU, and Sida.

3. Methodology

The evaluation used a mixed-methods, theory-based design anchored in the OECD-DAC criteria. The qualitative component combined key informant interviews, focus group discussions and outcome harvesting. It built on the outcomes LPI had already documented, added outcomes that emerged during the closing period, and followed the outcome harvesting protocol agreed at inception. The quantitative component was a descriptive CSO survey, complemented by an Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) of supported CSOs. Because the 2023 baseline surveyed a different population (56 CSO respondents) on a different sampling frame, the two surveys are not statistically comparable. The endline survey is therefore a standalone assessment, and any change is described as triangulated rather than statistically established.

The overarching logic was contribution analysis, which is appropriate where the project was one of several influences on change and a counterfactual design was neither ethical nor feasible. The evaluation tested the theory of change against the evidence, considered other contributing factors, and judged whether the project's contribution was significant and distinct.

3.1 Theory of Change

If Somali CSOs received network and individual capacity strengthening (Output 1.1) and community consultation processes generated credible, inclusive input that CSOs channelled into policy spaces (Output 1.2), **then** civil society acted cooperatively to engage FMS, FGS, and international

stakeholders with community voices, including those of women, youth, and marginalised groups (Outcome 1), **because** capacity and legitimacy were the two binding constraints on CSOs' ability to engage government collectively and credibly. **If** CSO-led consultations produced recognised community input (Output 2.1) and community awareness of reconciliation processes and NRF status increased (Output 2.2), **then** state authorities and CSOs developed a coordinated implementation plan for NRF and reconciliation processes (Outcome 2), **because** government uptake of civil society input depended on that input being credible and on sufficient public awareness to sustain political attention to the NRF. If both outcomes were achieved, civil society had a durable, institutionalised role in policy processes and implementation, advancing the overall objective, but this was one contributing pathway among several (national political dynamics, other donor programming, security conditions), which was why contribution analysis rather than attribution was the appropriate evaluative logic.

Table 1: Theory of change causal pathway

Causal link	Assumption(s)	Contextual conditions	Risks	Alternative explanations	Observable evidence	Method
A: Output 1.1 (CSO capacity/network strengthening) → Outcome 1	Capacity, not motivation, is the binding constraint on collective CSO action; network structures are valued enough to sustain collaboration	Political space open enough for CSOs to convene and approach government; clan/political fragmentation across the four locations doesn't override network cohesion	Elite capture of networks by better- resourced CSOs; capacity gains don't translate to action due to inter-CSO competition for funding; security constraints on convening	Collaborative engagement could stem from other donor-funded CSO-strengthening programmes operating in parallel	OH outcomes of CSOs proactively convening/ engaging government; OCA showing capacity change; KII on how capacity translated to action	Outcome Harvestin g, KII, OCA, document review
B: Output 1.2 (community input into NRF/public forums) → Outcome 1	Consultations genuinely aggregate community voice rather than token participation; CSOs effectively	Sufficient community trust in CSOs post-conflict; women/youth/ marginalised groups able to	Consultation s dominated by traditional elites, diluting inclusion; input	Community engagement could stem from other reconciliation initiatives (government town halls,	KII/FGD on what input was submitted and what happened to it; CSO Network	KII, FGD, CSO survey, document review
C: Output 2.1 (CSO-led community consultations) → Outcome 2	Consultation outputs carry enough legitimacy for government to incorporate them into formal planning; government willing to engage jointly	Federal-state relations stable enough for joint planning; NRF sufficiently prioritised by FGS/FMS leadership during the project period	Political transitions/e lections in FMS stall NRF planning regardless of project input; the pending- cabinet-approval status of the strategic plan may reflect bureaucratic delay unrelated to CSO input	Coordinated plan could emerge from other governance-strengthening programmes or FGS/FMS's own political calculus	OH outcomes tracing specific consultatio n input into plan drafts; KII with government officials; document review of NRF plan drafting process	Outcome Harvesting g, KII, document review
D: Output 2.2 (community awareness/knowle dge of reconciliation & NRF) → Outcome 2 / Impact	Increased knowledge translates into demand for/engagemen t with reconciliation processes, incentivising state-CSO coordination; awareness activities reach intended population, not just already- engaged elites	Communicatio n channels accessible across all four locations, including to marginalised groups; language/liter acy not a barrier	Awareness gains don't translate into behavioural/ institutional change; competing or conflicting political messaging undermines awareness campaigns	Awareness could rise from national media coverage or FGS's own public communicatio ns, independent of the project	CSO Member Network Survey (objectively scored knowledge items); FGD triangulatio n on awareness sources	CSO survey, FGD

3.2 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation was structured around the five OECD DAC criteria; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (contribution), and sustainability. For each criterion, the evaluation questions were broken down into specific lines of inquiry, matched to data sources, and assigned collection methods, including Outcome Harvesting and the CSO survey alongside KIIs, FGDs, and the OCA. The table below set out this framework at criterion level.

Table 2: Evaluation framework using DAC criterion

DAC criterion	Key evaluation questions	Primary data sources	Methods
Relevance	Alignment with needs of CSOs and communities incl. women, youth, marginalised groups Alignment with Somalia Development Plan, NRF, and Wadajir frameworks; relevance to the political and governance context Extent to which the project addressed key barriers to CSO participation To what extent, and how, did the project adapt its design and implementation in response to changing political, governance, security, and NRF implementation dynamics? What signals or evidence informed adaptation decisions, which programme choices were altered or retained, who was included in those decisions, and with what consequences?	KIIs: LPI, SPA, CSO leaders, government officials; project design documents; baseline survey Conflict/power analysis updates (if produced during implementation), workplan revision documents, management/steering committee decision records, alongside the existing KIIs and project design documents	KIIs, document review, ToC review Adaptive-management document review alongside KIIs and ToC review.
Effectiveness	Extent to which outputs and outcomes were achieved; effectiveness of capacity strengthening; whether civil society networks became functional coordination platforms; extent to which dialogue platforms facilitated CSO- government engagement	KIIs: CSO beneficiaries, government stakeholders; FGDs: women, youth, marginalised groups; existing Outcome Harvesting database and newly harvested outcomes; CSO survey; monitoring/logframe data	KIIs, FGDs, Outcome Harvesting review and substantiation, survey, output tracking
Efficiency	Whether resources were utilised efficiently and cost-effectively; whether activities were implemented within the planned timeframe; effectiveness of coordination between LPI and SPA	KIIs: LPI, SPA programme staff; financial reports and workplans; progress/donor reports	Document review, KIIs
Impact (Contribution)	Observable changes in CSO capacity to engage in policy dialogue; whether the project contributed to improved CSO- government relationships; broader effects on reconciliation and governance discussions; unintended positive and negative effects	KIIs: government officials, donors, INGOs; FGDs: CSO members, community leaders; substantiated Outcome Harvesting evidence; reconstructed theory of change	Contribution analysis, Outcome Harvesting substantiation, KIIs, FGDs
Sustainability	Whether institutional capacities developed within CSOs are likely to be sustained; whether the civil society network is likely to continue functioning; what factors support or hinder sustainability	KIIs: CSO leaders, LPI/SPA staff; FGDs: community and CSO participants; Organisational Capacity Assessment	KIIs, FGDs, OCA

Note: See Annex H for more detailed evaluation matrix

3.3 Data Collection and Sampling

Evidence came from five sources. A systematic desk review covered the project documents shared by the implementing partners, each assessed before use against provenance, completeness, timeliness, consistency of definitions across reporting periods, missingness, representativeness, verification status and risk of reporting bias (See Annex G). 29 semi structured key informant interviews (KIIs) were held with the strategic partners, with government officials at federal and location level, with CSO leaders and network coordinators in all four locations, and with an international peer organisation, each lasting 45 to 60 minutes and conducted in Somali or English with informed consent (See Annex B). Among LPI's partners, the strategic partner interviews covered Somali Peace Line (SPL) and Zamzam Foundation (ZZF), LPI's long-term partners with a presence in the project's four locations. LPI's other partners, such as SWSO, do not work in the project's geographic scope, which is why SPL and ZZF appear more often in the report. A light touch OCA was administered to nineteen CSOs alongside their interviews, covering governance and leadership, financial management, programme planning and monitoring, external relations and advocacy, and organisational sustainability (See Annex D). 12 focus group discussions (FGDs) were held, one women only, one youth only and one mixed group in each location, with six to eight participants in each (See Annex C). The CSO survey was administered to thirty respondents per location, 118 valid responses in all, selected at random from a sampling frame that combined members of the project's CSO networks and CSOs engaged during the project's inception mapping. Outcome harvesting (OH) followed the implementing partner's own practice: outcomes already recorded were reviewed against the logframe, further outcomes were formulated from the interviews and discussions, and a purposive sample was put to independent third parties.

The project's networks comprised 20 CSOs, five in each location, which signed memoranda of understanding with the project between September and November 2023 (Table 3).

Table 3: National Reconciliation Framework network member CSOs by location[23]

Mogadishu (Banadir)	Baidoa (South West State)	Dhusamareeb (Galmudug)	Jowhar (Hirshabelle)
Access Development and Relief Organisation (ADRO)	Bay Women Association Network	Damqasho Organisation	INTERSOM Relief and Development Organisation
	Isha Human Rights Organisation (IHRO)	Fahan Youth Leaders – Galmudug	Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC)
Life Line Organisation	Somali Community Action Group (SCAG)	Galmudug Youth Peace Agents	Somali Community Concern
Somali Women Education Center (SWEC)	Somali Girls Rights Organisation	Gargaar Organisation	Rural Women and Youth Development Organisation (RUWEYDO)

[23] The interim reports consistently record 20 network members, five per location. The July–December 2023 report is the only one that names the members, including Elman Peace, and records that all 20 signed MoUs; later reports refer to five members per location without names. However, the selected for NRF networks document shared with us indicates that Elman Peace was later dropped. Please note we have not included the 5th CSO for Mogadishu, as we are unsure if Elman Peace was kept or dropped.

Somali Youth Development Network (SOYDEN)	Somali Youth Volunteers Association (SOYVA)	Women Development Organisation	Youth Volunteer Community Development (Jowhar One Dollar)

Data collection ran simultaneously in Mogadishu, Baidoa, Dhusamareeb and Jowhar. Interviews and discussions were conducted in Somali and the Somali record was retained as the primary record, with translation following a bilingual codebook agreed before fieldwork and a ten per cent back translation check. Informants were purposively selected to span role, seniority and location, and included less engaged or former network actors where feasible, so that the evidence did not rest only on sources selected by the implementing partners. Survey respondents were drawn by simple random selection within each location, with a reserve list for those not contactable. Staff of the implementing partners were not present at interviews or discussions, did not choose which individuals were approached beyond providing contact lists, and had no access to raw or identifiable data. Participants were told that their responses were confidential, were not shared in identifiable form and did not affect their relationship with the project. The planned and achieved sample for each instrument, and the organisations consulted, are at Annex A.

4. Data Analysis Plan

Analysis followed a structured triangulation framework, systematically cross-referencing evidence from KIIs, FGDs, OH, the CSO survey, and the OCA against each evaluation question. Every finding presented in the evaluation report was grounded in at least one primary source and, wherever possible, corroborated through an independent second source. This approach was particularly important given the complexity of assessing contribution within a multi-stakeholder governance programme. CSO self-reports of strengthened capacity, government perspectives on improved engagement, and community perceptions of inclusion each provided valuable but partial evidence, with different strengths and potential sources of bias. The analysis therefore sought convergence across these perspectives while also identifying and reporting areas of divergence. Where evidence was inconsistent, these differences were presented as findings in their own right rather than reconciled by favouring a single account.

Qualitative material was transcribed within 48 hours and coded against a codebook derived from the evaluation matrix and the theory of change, with inductive codes added for emergent themes. A fifth of transcripts were double coded by two team members, and accounts that contradicted the emerging pattern were sought out and reported alongside the majority view rather than treated as noise. Quotations are attributed by descriptor unless the speaker consented to attribution. Survey analysis produced frequencies and proportions for each item, using the number of valid responses to that item as the denominator, with don't know and non response reported as their own category and flagged where they exceeded a tenth of responses. Pooled cross location estimates were unweighted simple pooling across the 118 valid responses; per site network membership counts were not available, so no membership weighting was applied, and the achieved sample was close to proportionate at 30, 30, 28 and 30. Disaggregation was by location and then by gender; a subgroup of fewer than ten was reported as a raw count without a percentage, two way cross tabulations were not reported, and no claim of statistical significance or of generalisation beyond the CSOs surveyed was made.

The OCA was a one time, largely self reported measure, so it was read as the current level for each domain rather than as evidence of change, with perceived change, institutionalisation and attribution treated separately and drawn from the paired interview. Harvested outcomes were classified by project result, social actor, type and direction of change, location, significance and substantiation status, following the protocol at Annex F, and the substantiation step recorded whether an independent source agreed with the outcome, its contribution claim and its significance rating. Contribution analysis followed Mayne: the causal claim was set out, the evidence for and against each link in the theory of change was compiled, rival explanations were assessed, including the parallel reconciliation work of other actors, and a conclusion was drawn for each link. Each recommendation was tested for usefulness, feasibility, priority, responsible actor and timeframe. Quality assurance ran throughout rather than as a single end check: instruments and their Somali translations were pre tested, completeness and range checks and end of day debriefs were held during fieldwork, transcripts were reviewed within 48 hours, a structured data quality audit preceded analysis, and preliminary findings were presented to the implementing partners to verify factual accuracy. Only data necessary to answer the evaluation questions were collected, and contact details were held separately from responses under participant codes.

4.1 Limitations

Nine limitations apply to this evaluation. The qualitative sample targets were met in full, namely 29 KIIs, 12 FGDs and 19 OCAs, and the survey achieved 118 of 120.

i. The 2023 baseline surveyed a distinct population of 56 CSO respondents using a different sampling frame from the endline survey, and the two datasets were not statistically comparable.

ii. Contribution analysis was selected because the project operated as one among many contributing factors and a counterfactual design was neither ethical nor feasible.

iii. Survey findings described the perceptions and characteristics of CSO representatives surveyed, drawn from the networks and the inception mapping, not the wider community or non-respondents, and no claims of statistical significance or generalisation to the wider community were made.

iv. A design-based margin of error would only be reported where selection within a location was probabilistic from a complete and current sampling frame, and this condition was not met, so all findings were reported as descriptive counts and percentages.

v. Two way cross-tabulations such as location by gender were not reported. Where a subgroup cell falls below ten, as with the female subgroup of seven in Baidoa, the finding was reported as a raw count only.

vi. Compressed fieldwork timeline. The evaluation was delivered over an intensive four-week window. This drove the assessment of information power rather than formal saturation, a practical rather than formal instrument pre-test folded into field team training, and substantiation conducted primarily by email and telephone.

vii. Impact level lag. Translation of outcomes into actual reconciliation progress might lag beyond the evaluation's timeframe, and broader Somalia political developments including elections and security dynamics might dominate any observed impact level change.

viii. No community survey: The survey covered CSO representatives rather than the general community, so the indicators specified at community level (Impact 2, 1.2.2, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2) are reported from CSO respondents or from qualitative evidence, as stated in Annex I.

5. Findings

This section presents the findings of the evaluation. It opens with the profile of the survey sample and the pooled survey results, then addresses each of the five OECD-DAC criteria in turn, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, followed by inclusion and reach as a cross-cutting theme.

5.1 Profile of the survey respondents

The CSO survey achieved 118 completed responses against a planned 120 (98%): 30 each in Mogadishu, Baidoa and Jowhar, and 28 in Dhusamareeb, where one sampled respondent declined and one was unavailable. Results are reported as site-level and pooled descriptive frequencies.

Respondents were 65% male (77) and 35% female (41), with the share of women ranging from 23% in Baidoa to 43% in Jowhar (Figure 1). Most were of working age: 58% were aged 25 to 34, 25% aged 35 to 49, 11% aged 18 to 24 and 6% aged 50 or above. Because older respondents were few, the evidence that participation broadened beyond elders to youth, women and religious leaders rests mainly on the interviews and focus groups. Seven respondents (6%) identified as persons with a disability, five in Dhusamareeb and two in Jowhar, and 115 of the 118 were host community members. These figures describe the CSOs surveyed rather than who the project reached and are discussed alongside the qualitative evidence in Section 5.8.

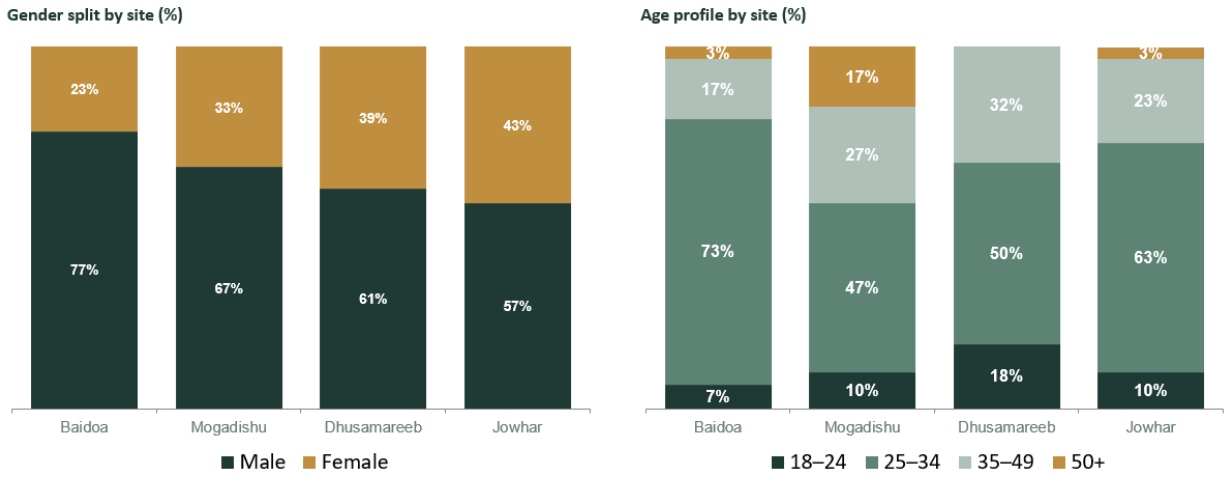


Figure 1: Age and gender distribution

The age profile was concentrated. Respondents aged 25 to 34 accounted for 58% of the sample Engagement with the project was deep: 92% (109 of 118) took part in activities more than once. Sixty-nine respondents took part in NRF public dialogue forums only, 40 in both forums and community consultations, and nine in consultations only.

Depth of engagement shaped the participation experience. Eight of the nine respondents who attended only once were in Dhusamareeb. Among the 20 Dhusamareeb respondents who attended more than once, agreement on the six participation measures ranged from 65% to 85%, in line with the other three locations; among the eight who attended once it ranged from 12% to 62%. Dhusamareeb's lower position on several participation measures (Sections 5.2 and 5.4.3) was therefore concentrated among those with the least exposure to the project, which is consistent with focus group accounts of trust being built gradually through sustained engagement.

5.2 Survey findings across all four locations

Table 3 set out the principal survey results pooled across the four locations, with the site range shown to indicate the spread. Pooled figures were presented because they were informative about the participant population as a whole, but they should not be read as representative of CSOs nationally.

Table 3: Principal survey findings pooled across four locations

Survey measure	Pooled result (n=118)	Site range
Aware of the NRF before the project (Q5)	58%	43% Dhusamareeb to 73% Mogadishu
Rate current understanding of the NRF as good or very good (Q6)	75%	54% Dhusamareeb to 90% Baidoa
Correctly identified the NRF's purpose (Q6a)	93%	87% Mogadishu to 100% Baidoa
First learned of the NRF through project activities (Q7)	42%	33% Mogadishu to 60% Jowhar
Felt safe and respected in activities (Q9a)	85%	61% Dhusamareeb to 100% Baidoa
Had the opportunity to speak and share views (Q9b)	86%	77% Jowhar to 97% Mogadishu
Felt well represented in discussions (Q9c)	78%	61% Dhusamareeb to 97% Mogadishu
Felt their views influenced discussions or decisions (Q9d)	67%	57% Jowhar to 80% Baidoa
Received feedback on the input they provided (Q9e)	81%	68% Dhusamareeb to 93% Mogadishu
Confident about participating again (Q9f)	76%	50% Dhusamareeb to 100% Mogadishu
Observed positive change in CSO and government engagement (Q8)	92%	87% Mogadishu to 100% Jowhar
Trust and peaceful relations improved over twelve months (Q10)	87%	82% Dhusamareeb to 97% Baidoa

At endline, 75% of respondents rated their own understanding of the framework as good or very good and 93% correctly identified its purpose when asked. These results were consistent with the qualitative accounts in every location of a framework that was poorly understood before the project and was now described in procedural detail by participants.

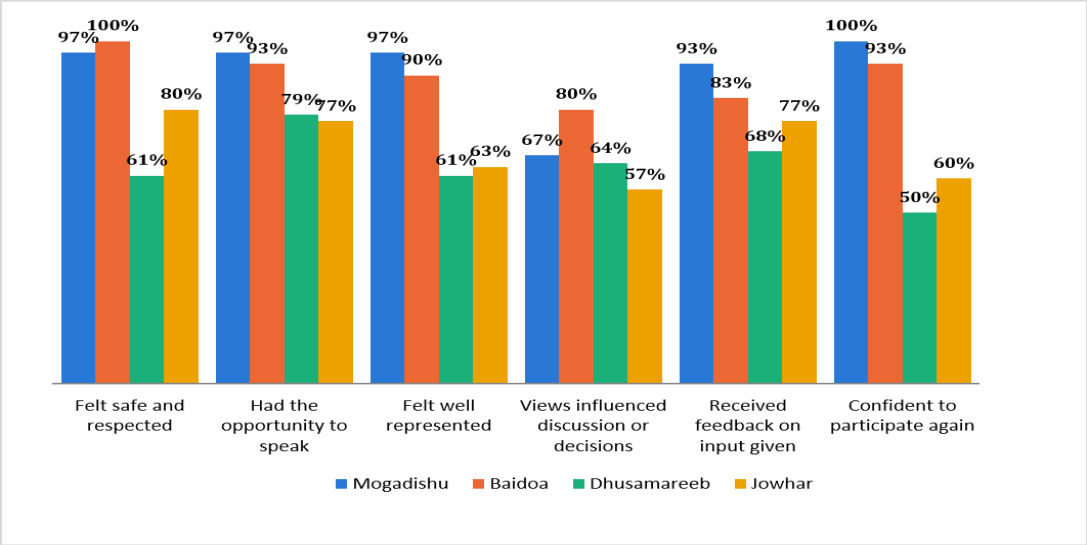


Figure 2: Pooled agreement with statements on the quality of participation in project activities (Q9a to Q9f, n=118)

The two measures of change, namely Q8 on CSO and government engagement and Q10 on trust and peaceful relations, were the highest scoring and the most consistent items in the survey. Second, the measures of participation quality were high but not uniform, and the lowest result of the six was Q9d on whether respondents' views influenced discussions or decisions, which was discussed as a cross cutting theme below. Third, Dhusamareeb sat at the bottom of the range on five of the six participation quality measures and on self-rated NRF understanding, while returning results in line with the other sites on observed change, which was a divergence the location analysis attributed to an initial deficit of community trust that required sustained engagement to overcome and to the concentration of activities in main towns.

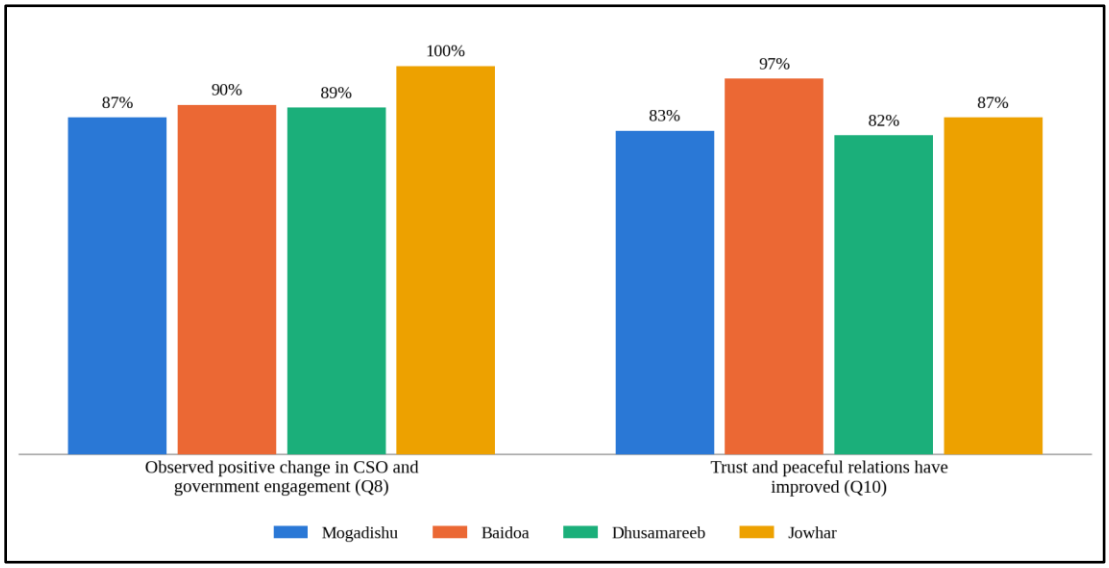


Figure 3: Observed change in CSO and government engagement and in trust and peaceful relations, by location (Q8 and Q10).

5.3 Relevance

Relevance was the criterion on which the evidence was most uniform. In all four locations, CSO and government informants described reconciliation and peacebuilding as work they were already doing, which the project strengthened, structured and extended rather than displaced. No dissenting account appeared anywhere in the qualitative record, and this was the only criterion on which that was true.

The CSO accounts converged on the same formulation across the four sites. In Mogadishu, SOYDEN described reconciliation, the reconciliation framework and peacebuilding as its main areas of work, and the project as having supported and strengthened areas already central to the organisation rather than introducing a different one. In Dhusamareeb, Gargaar described the project as enabling it to build on peace campaigns it was already running and on training it had previously delivered. In Jowhar, Safan Society described the project as matching its priorities in peace and community engagement, with training applied directly within activities already under way. In Baidoa, SOYVA described peacebuilding, youth participation and community dialogue as established organisational priorities directly connected to its work.

> "The project was highly relevant to our organisation because reconciliation, the reconciliation framework and peacebuilding are the main areas we work on... Our organisation was already working on reconciliation and peacebuilding before this project. The project therefore did not introduce a completely different area of work, but supported and strengthened areas that were already central to our organisation."
>
> **KII, SOYDEN, Mogadishu**
>
> "Since we were already conducting peace campaigns, it enabled us to build on those efforts. We were able to train youth and traditional elders, which built upon the training we had previously conducted."
>
> **KII, Gargaar, Dhusamareeb**

Government informants framed relevance institutionally, and in two locations went further than the CSOs did. The South West State Ministry of Interior described the state as having mapped its own reconciliation needs onto the NRF and organised its priorities around the framework's pillars, which was a claim about alignment of the state's own planning rather than about the project's fit with existing CSO work. In Dhusamareeb, the Ministry of Education located the project within its priority of keeping young people out of conflict through education and constructive engagement. In Mogadishu, the Federal Ministry of Interior described the project as supporting and extending ongoing government work, including outreach in the Banadir region.

> "For us as the Ministry of Interior, the NRF creates opportunities to align South West State's specific needs with the national framework. It aligned very closely."
>
> **KII, Ministry of Interior, Baidoa**
>
> "Aside from combating illiteracy, the main priority of the Ministry of Education is to protect Somali youth and the upcoming generation from getting drawn into conflicts, replacing guns with pens so they can build a better future and stay away from violence."
>
> **KII, Ministry of Education, Dhusamareeb**

Relevance also held at the level of specific conflict dynamics rather than only at the level of general peacebuilding intent. In Jowhar, focus group participants tied the project's relevance to farmer and pastoralist disputes and recurring land conflicts in surrounding communities, which indicated that activities responded to locally identified needs rather than to a generic reconciliation agenda. Two secondary benefits recurred in the Baidoa interviews and were consistent with accounts elsewhere: a specific increase in understanding of Somalia's national reconciliation process, and new connections between organisations in one location and counterparts in other regions.

The main scope for extending relevance was geographic rather than thematic. The project supported a nationally framed policy process in four federal member states, with Puntland and Jubbaland outside its scope at design stage for budget reasons, and activity concentrated in the main towns. In Baidoa, a CSO key informant and a youth focus group respondent both expressed a wish to see the approach extended to other conflict-affected districts beyond Baidoa town. This reflects demand for the model rather than any limit on its fit: the project was well aligned with the priorities of those it worked with, and there is appetite to make it available more widely.

5.4 Effectiveness

Effectiveness was assessed against the project's two intended outcomes, the capacity gains that were meant to deliver them, and the quality of the participation those gains produced. The four subsections below took those in turn. The headline judgement was that the project succeeded on its first outcome and delivered what lay within its control on the second.

5.4.1 The project intended outcomes

The project was designed around two outcomes, the first concerning civil society engagement with federal member state, federal government and international stakeholders, and the second concerning a coordinated NRF implementation plan developed by state authorities together with CSOs. The evidence indicated that these two outcomes performed differently.

> "Of the two goals, one went off track, while the other exceeded expectations. The civil society target exceeded expectations, whereas the government target went off track."
>
> **KII, LPI, Mogadishu**

On the first outcome, networks were established in all four locations, the network organisations were prepared and connected to the Federal Ministry of Interior, and 92% of survey respondents across all sites observed positive change in CSO and government engagement, with the qualitative evidence describing a shift from fearful or absent interaction towards structured and regular engagement. ZZF characterised the change in a way that was specific about its mechanism, describing engagement that was previously individual and ad hoc, organised around particular project activities, and was now collective and organised around the framework itself. The project's narrative reports pointed the same way. They document 20 network member organisations with signed MoUs against a target of 12 (project monitoring records 22), and more than ten dated actions in 2024 and 2025 in which the networks engaged state and federal government, meeting the target of at least 10 collaborative actions (Outcome indicator 1.1; Annex I).

> "Previously, CSOs were engaged on an individual or ad-hoc basis, strictly around specific project activities. Now, through the NRF framework, we can address coordination and engage as a collective group."

KII, Zamzam Foundation, Mogadishu

To establish what the evaluation's own evidence could support, the seventeen harvested outcomes presented in Table 4 were screened against the definition of Outcome Indicator 1.1. An action qualified where it was taken jointly by CSOs, engaged a federal member state, the federal government or international stakeholders, carried community input, could be placed by date, location and actors, and plausibly drew on project support. Recurring mechanisms were counted once. Community-level changes, government actions and collaboration among CSOs alone were not counted.

Five candidate actions met the substantive criteria: the recommendation on women's inclusion put forward by CSOs and communities and accepted by the Federal Ministry of Interior (Outcome 3); monthly CSO and government coordination meetings in Jowhar (Outcome 9); the Diinsoor ceasefire, brokered by the network with elders and the South West State Ministry of Interior (Outcome 14); written CSO recommendations submitted to the South West State Ministry of Interior (Outcome 16); and CSO recommendations on checkpoints and closed roads in Mogadishu, to which the government partly responded (Section 5.4.3). Each rested on a single source in the evaluation evidence and could not be dated from it, so they are not counted on their own. The project's narrative reports, however, document more than ten dated actions of this kind, which meets the target (Annex I). Engagement with international stakeholders was mostly through LPI rather than the networks. The one documented case with network participation is the South West State Conflict Navigator workshop in Baidoa (July 2024), organised with UNDP.

Where these actions occurred, informants attributed them to what the project provided: the convening of CSOs into networks, training in communication and advocacy, and direct access to the Ministries of Interior at federal and state level. Other actors were working in the same space throughout the project period, so contribution rather than attribution is claimed. The narrative reports corroborate this with dated accounts of network engagement with state and federal ministries in all four locations.

The second outcome made substantial preparatory and consultative progress, with the final steps depending on a government decision. The logframe recorded, as of January 2026, that the MOIFAR drafted a five year NRF strategic plan covering 2025 to 2029, presented it to the cabinet and was awaiting approval. Because the outcome required a plan developed and agreed by state authorities together with CSOs, the evaluation assessed its position at the 31 March 2026 cut-off in separate stages. Drafting was evidenced, by the January 2026 logframe and the strategic partner interviews. Joint state and CSO input was evidenced at state level, where CSOs took part in the South West State consultations associated with the state reconciliation committee and technical task force, but CSO input into the national draft was not documented in the evaluation evidence. Agreement between state authorities and CSOs on the plan, cabinet approval and rollout were not evidenced, and no dated draft or cabinet submission record was available for review. The project's narrative reports document consultative action plans developed by the networks in all four locations, against a target of three, and six reconciliation actions were implemented across the four areas (Annex I). Project monitoring also recorded seventeen CSO-led community consultations against a target of sixteen, involving 283 community members against a target of 240. The qualitative evidence added state level tailored plans presented at consultations in South West State, a state level reconciliation committee and technical task force reported by the South West State Ministry of Interior, and quarterly government and CSO consultation mechanisms. The most accurate formulation was therefore that the second outcome was partially achieved: the plan was drafted and consultative

structures were in place at state level, while the agreement, government decision and rollout that would have converted it into an adopted implementation plan did not occur within the project period.

Despite the delays on the government side, the project succeeded in mobilising civil society around the NRF and spreading awareness of it, and this was a real strength of its delivery under Outcome 2. At endline, 93% of survey respondents correctly identified the framework's purpose and 75% rated their own understanding as good or very good. Participants in every location described the NRF in procedural detail, and awareness travelled beyond those directly reached: 42% of respondents first learned of the framework through project activities and a further 31% through other CSOs or community members. In Baidoa, five organisations moved from separate operation to jointly implementing NRF mobilisation, awareness raising and cultural activities. Project monitoring also records 17 CSO-led community consultations and 985 participants in NRF public forums, of whom around 800 are documented event by event in the project's narrative reports. This groundwork means that when the government decision comes, civil society in the four locations is informed and organised to take part.

The position of each logframe indicator at endline, against its baseline and target, was set out in the endline results matrix at Annex I.

Project monitoring recorded output values at or above target on every indicator with a recorded current value. Most of these are supported by the project's narrative reports; where an exact monitoring figure could not be confirmed, Annex I shows it alongside the documented value. The shortfall was concentrated at the point where delivery depended on a government decision rather than on project activity.

ZZF, interviewed as a strategic partner, identified two elements that remained to be completed. The first was moving the framework beyond the originating ministry so that a wider range of civil society organisations could learn and implement it. The second was institutionalising the framework through the compliance channels of the Ministry of Interior, which was the enforcement step that would give an adopted plan effect.

> "What remains incomplete is enforcing or institutionalising the NRF policy through the compliance channels of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; that remains unfinished."
>
> **KII, Zamzam Foundation, Mogadishu**

The same informant noted that the project's reach had so far centred on ministries, organisations and member states, and saw extending it further into communities as the natural next step. Focus group participants in all four locations made the same point, which indicates a shared appetite to build on what the project started.

> "It remained largely confined to the ministry level, extending to organisations and regional member states. While it reached some parts of the community, it was not at the desired level, it was merely an initial step."
>
> **KII, Zamzam Foundation, Mogadishu**

5.4.2 Capacity gains spread beyond those directly trained

A cascading or train the trainer pattern was reported independently in all four locations. Directly trained CSO members went on to train other community members, and organisations described treating trained participants, particularly young people, as peer trainers rather than as end recipients.

> "When one member gains new knowledge or skills, they practise and share it with other members, so the capacity is spread within the organisation rather than remaining with an individual."
>
> **KII, SOYDEN, Mogadishu**
>
> "One weakness was that trainings were mostly held in the main towns. They should also reach places where conflicts happen, and people in those areas should be trained so they can later train and teach each other."
>
> **FGD-Women, Dhusamareeb**

The survey provided indirect corroboration. 42% of respondents first learned of the NRF through project activities, while 31% first learned of it through other CSOs or community members, and in Mogadishu the CSO and community route (43%) exceeded the project activity route (33%). Information travelling through peers and community networks rather than directly from the project was what a cascading model would produce, and the location analysis read the Mogadishu figure in that light.

Two points would strengthen the model in a next phase. Because the cascade relied on trained individuals, the Baidoa evidence noted that reach could dip when trained people moved on, so a more structured cascade would help it withstand staff turnover. And while diffusion was well supported, estimates of its scale were self-reported, including one CSO director's estimate that each group of five trained participants had trained roughly 50 more, so light tracking of onward training would allow that reach to be confirmed.

5.4.3 Voice and influence

Participants across all four locations reported that project activities were safe, open and genuinely participatory. The measure with the most room for further gain was the step beyond being heard, namely seeing where contributions went and what followed from them.

What participants meant by influence

When respondents spoke about influence, they were rarely referring to the content of the NRF itself. Their expectation was broader and rooted in how decisions are made in their communities: to have a say in decisions that affect them, whether taken by district and state administrations, ministries or traditional structures, and to see those decisions reflect what they raised. Reconciliation and community decision making had largely been the preserve of elders (Section 5.8), so being invited to speak alongside government was itself a change. The expectation that followed was to be consulted before decisions are made and to be told what became of the input given.

Youth participants in Mogadishu expressed this directly, wanting "a role where my decision can be taken and considered", and a mixed CSO group in Baidoa described contributions that were included in decisions without participants seeing the result. Influence in this sense combines being heard, being consulted at the right moment and receiving feedback. The findings below measure the project against that general expectation of a meaningful voice in public decision making, not against whether CSOs changed the text of national policy.

Across all 118 respondents, 86% agreed that they had the opportunity to speak and share their views and 85% that they felt safe and respected, both strong results with little variation between locations. Two thirds, 67%, also agreed that their views influenced discussions or decisions, which

was a substantial result for a three-year project working on a national policy process, and it was the measure on which agreement was lowest of the six. Pooled across the four locations Q9d was the lowest scoring of the six participation measures, and it was the lowest individually in Mogadishu (67%), Baidoa (80%) and Jowhar (57%). Dhusamareeb was the exception: Q9d stood at 64% there, ahead of confidence about participating again (50%) and of feeling safe and respected and feeling well represented (61% each), which reflected that location's more evenly moderate ratings across all six measures rather than a single lower point. Against the four quality dimensions in the outcome harvesting protocol, the evaluation rated endline participation quality at level 3 of 5, against a baseline of 2 and a target of 4 (Section 5.9.1). Q9d was also the measure on which respondents were most likely to reserve judgement. A fifth of respondents (20%) gave a neutral rating, the joint highest of the six measures, and 14 respondents (12%) either did not agree or did not know, with one further respondent for whom the item was not applicable. On the other five measures the combined share who did not agree or did not know stayed below 4%. The pattern was therefore less one of dissatisfaction than of respondents not being in a position to judge what their contribution achieved.

The qualitative evidence gave the same picture and helped explain it. Participants at every site could point to concrete instances where input received a response: in Mogadishu, recommendations were returned in writing with an account of which had been adopted, and the reopening of some closed roads and a reduction in checkpoints followed CSO recommendations, while the Federal Ministry of Interior formally accepted a recommendation on women's participation. These were real instances of uptake, and they indicated that the pathway from consultation to decision was working. At the same time, when asked about their place in broader peace and reconciliation decision making, participants described an appetite for a fuller role. That appetite was itself a marker of the project's effect, since it came from people who now expected to be at the table.

> "I want to have a role where my decision can be taken and considered."
>
> **FGD-Youth, Mogadishu**

> "CSO-government relationships exist, but CSOs do not yet have the level of influence and accountability expected of civil society organisations."
>
> **FGD-Youth, Mogadishu**

> "Our voice is not considered and it does not reach anywhere."
>
> **FGD-Youth, Baidoa, reporting what young people say in discussions**

One mixed CSO discussion identified the practical mechanism most directly. Contributions were taken up, and what participants did not consistently see was the result.

> "Many decisions were included, but we have not seen their results."
>
> **FGD-Mixed CSO, Baidoa**

The OCA pointed to the same place from a different instrument. Assessed CSOs scored at or near the maximum on having established relationships with government counterparts, which was a clear organisational strength and a direct project gain. External Relations and Advocacy was the domain with the most development potential in three of the four locations, and within it the items that held the score down were not those measuring access to government but those measuring the documentation of consultation and the ability to evidence influence. In Mogadishu, all four assessed

CSOs scored 4 on established relationships with government counterparts, while the item on pointing to a concrete, evidenced instance of visible influence on a government decision averaged 1.75, as did the item on a documented process for consulting community members. Those two items, together with having a communications or advocacy strategy for policy audiences, were also the lowest scoring items in Jowhar.

5.4.4 Strong internal systems, with advocacy as the next area to build

Nineteen OCAs were completed, paired with a key informant interview for each sampled CSO. Figure 4 set out the domain averages by location. For Jowhar a second figure was also shown, which excluded the assessment scored at a uniform maximum across all items.

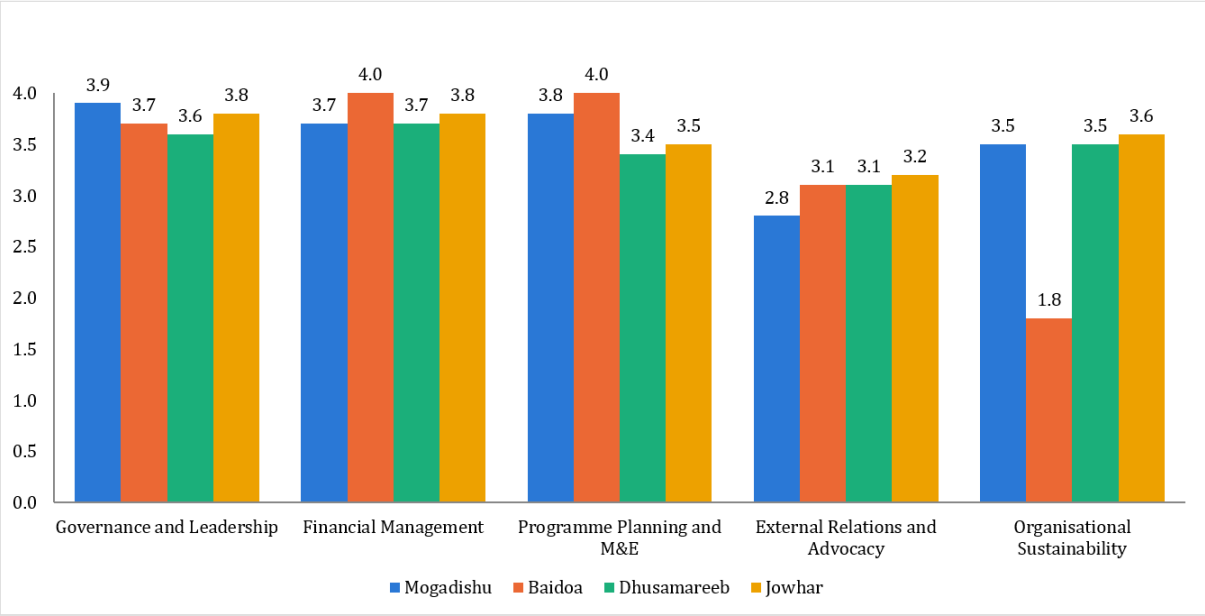


Figure 4:Organisational Capacity Assessment domain averages by location.

In Mogadishu, every item score in the three internal systems domains was either 3 or 4, with no item scored below "mostly in place" anywhere. In External Relations and Advocacy, by contrast, 12 of 36 item scores fell at 1 or 2, including eight scored "not in place". In Jowhar, one organisation's uniform maximum scoring contributed nine of the 20 scores of 4 in that location's advocacy domain.

Generally, Internal systems were strong everywhere. Governance and Leadership, Financial Management, and Programme Planning and M&E scored between 3.3 and 4.0 in every location, indicating documented mandates, functioning leadership structures, financial procedures and reporting practice. External Relations and Advocacy recorded the lowest score of the five domains in three of the four locations, at between 2.8 and 3.1, and the second lowest in the fourth. As set out above, the items driving this were those concerning documented community consultation, systematic policy analysis, and evidence of visible influence, rather than those concerning access to government, which scored highly throughout.

5.5 Efficiency

5.5.1 Timeliness and delivery

The project delivered its planned activities within its three-year period plus a three-month no-cost extension, formally approved by the EU, closing in March 2026. SPA estimated that more than 90% of the planned schedule was delivered on time, with the extension used mainly for closure and reporting and one small communications training outstanding when the original period ended. Both partners reported that all planned targets were ultimately achieved, with no major deviation from the approved plan. SPL, as a strategic parner, was not aware of any major implementation failures, and ZZF described delivery as timely and cost efficient, supported by practical measures such as coordinating regional tasks by email and messaging groups rather than through travel. Delays were therefore of sequencing rather than of delivery.

> "Regarding timeliness, to a large extent it was achieved, except for a small three-month extension added to the project, which was mainly for wrap up and closing activities… Regarding the set schedule, over 90% was delivered on time."
>
> **KII, SPA, Mogadishu**

5.5.2 Causes of delay

The most consequential cause of delay was the NRF's own review. The project was designed to run alongside government implementation of an approved framework, but following the change of federal administration the NRF was reopened for review, passed to Parliament and then to Cabinet, and substantially modified. Ministerial and director turnover meant each new office holder needed fresh engagement, and the South West State Ministry of Interior reported the same pattern at state level, with NRF meetings paused during a leadership transition.

> "When we initially planned and designed this project, it was based on an existing policy that was ready for implementation. However, the incoming new government stepped in, requiring a review to make adjustments. This caused a slight delay in our activities and our plan, which was designed for direct implementation. That was the single biggest challenge."
>
> **KII, LPI, Mogadishu**

Three further causes were identified. Insecurity, elections and federal–state disputes forced postponements, notably in Baidoa, and access to Jowhar depended on flights, so a single activity could take two weeks. Donor contracting and the approval of the no-cost extension took time, and there was an initial delay at inception while the partners agreed their approach. Participating organisations also ran other activities in the same regions, so meetings sometimes had to be rescheduled.

The partners adapted well. Faced with a stalled government rollout, they decided not to wait and proceeded with the civil society track, positioning CSOs for the roles the NRF envisages. LPI described the civil society target as having exceeded expectations and the network organisations as ready for implementation. Activities were re-sequenced to coincide with government reviews rather than redesigned. SPA adjusted how English-language NRF terms such as "marginalised people" and "minority groups" were rendered in Somali so that they were conflict sensitive, and SPL reported that gender sensitivity was built into activities from the outset.

5.5.3 Adaptive management

The principal adaptation was a decision on sequencing. Faced with a stalled government rollout, the partners took a joint decision that the project's own work could not wait indefinitely on the government's timetable, and proceeded with the civil society preparation track while continuing to

position CSOs for the implementation roles the NRF envisaged. LPI was explicit about the consequence, describing one of the project's two tracks as having gone off course while the other exceeded expectations, with the network organisations prepared and connected to the Federal Ministry of Interior even though the official government rollout did not take place. That asymmetry was the single most important efficiency and effectiveness finding in the strategic partner evidence and was carried forward into the cross-cutting analysis.

> "Of the two goals, one went off track, while the other exceeded expectations. The civil society target exceeded expectations, whereas the government target went off track. The government aspect dropped off, but the preparation we did while waiting for the government means that today, those groups are ready."
>
> **KII, LPI, Mogadishu**

A second adaptation was continuous re-sequencing rather than redesign. Activities were postponed to coincide with government reviews and validations and to await decisions, which the partners characterised as deliberate timing choices rather than as slippage. A third was linguistic and conflict sensitivity in the framework's translation. SPA reported that terms carried over from the English language NRF, including "indigenous people", "marginalised people" and "minority groups", did not translate into Somali in a conflict sensitive way, which required attention during implementation. Somali Peace Line reported that gender sensitivity was designed into activities from the outset and that no review altered that approach.

Two lessons for future design were volunteered by the partners themselves. LPI considered three years too short for a project of this scale, suggesting five to six years would be appropriate, and attributed the constraint to short donor funding cycles. SPA argued that project legitimacy needed stronger high-level donor backing, so that implementing staff were not left to absorb ministry pushback alone.

5.5.4 Cost efficiency and resource use

The mid-term ROM review, an independent monitoring mission commissioned by the EU which conducted fieldwork in May 2024, provided the only budget execution data available to this evaluation. It found expenditure on budget and requiring no corrective action, while noting that spending ran behind physical progress: budget expenses stood at 38% against 43% of the period elapsed at the time of the mission, and budget execution at 23% of the budget consumed as at December 2023. Its conclusion was that the budget did not require adjustment but that the partners should increase the pace of execution. The same review found no major delay at that point, assessing progress at 40% of planned activities against 43% of the period elapsed, a difference of about one month which it judged immaterial. It also recorded that no updated expenditure report was submitted despite several reminders during the mission, and found no budget line for communication and visibility.

All four strategic partners asked about the project assessed resource use positively. LPI stated that available resources were managed to complete all planned activities across the three years with no major deviation from the project plan. SPL, as a strategic partner with visibility of delivery but not of budgets, reported no misuse of time or funds and considered that target groups benefited appropriately from the schedules, materials and training provided. SPA was the most carefully qualified, expressing confidence but explicitly deferring the cost efficiency question to colleagues in finance.

> "From our perspective as participants in the implementation, efficiency was solid. There was no misuse of time or funds. The selected target groups benefited well from the schedules, materials and training provided."
>
> **KII, Somali Peace Line, Mogadishu**

Two features of the financing arrangement bore on value for money. First, the EU did not fund the project in full. LPI reported that EU funding covered approximately 75% of costs, with the remaining 25% met from LPI's own internal resources in order to achieve the intended objectives. This represented substantial co-financing and affected how the project's cost per result should be read. Second, the project's geographic and network scope was set by budget rather than by need, and the partners were candid about the tradeoff involved.

> "Limiting it to five organisations was due to the financial constraints at the time, operating on the principle of starting small before expanding. The value of a larger network is clear. A network of twenty member organisations carries more weight than one with five when advocating and capturing the attention of government ministries."
>
> **KII, LPI, Mogadishu**

LPI further reported that Puntland and Jubbaland, both within the NRF's national remit, were excluded because the budget released could not cover the reach required, and that Khatumo State (currently North East State of Somalia) did not exist at design stage. LPI's own assessment was that a nationally framed policy was in practice supported in only some states, and that with a larger budget full state coverage would have been preferable. It also observed, with hindsight, that the two excluded states were those with the most difficult relations with the federal government at the time, so that their exclusion may have avoided an additional obstacle.

5.5.5 Coordination between LPI and SPA

Coordination between the partners was a clear strength, confirmed from outside the partnership. LPI described three layers of coordination: joint design and implementation by the two project leads, joint field teams, and active involvement of the local CSO networks, so that it was rare for either organisation to work in isolation. SPA attributed the ease of coordination to long-standing relationships at staff and organisational level, with activities delivered jointly or split by region rather than duplicated. ZZF and SPL independently described coordination as very good and continuous. This stands out against the wider sector, where FCA described coordination among peacebuilding organisations as weak, with overlap and duplication.

> "Coordination operated across three distinct layers: the two project leads co-designing and implementing tasks in the field together, alongside the active involvement of local network teams. It was rare for any single organisation to execute tasks in isolation."
>
> **KII, LPI, Mogadishu**

5.5.6 Summary judgement on efficiency

On the evidence available, the project was implemented in a substantially timely manner, delivering its planned activities within a three year period extended by three months at no additional cost, with delays attributable predominantly to factors outside the partners' control, principally the reopening of the NRF for review after a change of federal administration, ministerial and directorate turnover, insecurity and election related restrictions on movement, and donor contracting timelines. The

partners responded to those delays by re-sequencing activities and by proceeding with the civil society track rather than waiting on the government rollout, which was a defensible adaptive decision and one that preserved delivery, though at the cost of leaving one of the project's two intended tracks unrealised. Coordination between LPI and SPA was a clear strength, resting on joint planning, joint field teams and pre-existing institutional relationships, and was corroborated from outside the implementing partnership.

Cost efficiency could be assessed at mid-term and not at closure. The independent ROM review found expenditure on budget and requiring no adjustment, with spending running behind physical progress rather than ahead of it, and with no major delay at that point. That was a satisfactory mid-term position. LPI reported that approximately one quarter of costs were met from its own resources alongside the EU contribution. Until that was done, the efficiency judgement was firm on timeliness and on coordination between the partners, sound at mid-term on cost, and open at closure.

5.6 Impact

5.6.1 Observed change in engagement and trust across the four locations

The two survey measures of change were the highest scoring and most uniform items in the instrument: across all 118 respondents, 92% observed positive change in CSO and government engagement and 87% reported that trust and peaceful relations had improved over the previous twelve months, with no location falling below 82% on either measure. Jowhar recorded universal agreement on engagement change, at 30 of 30, and Baidoa the strongest trust result at 97%. The pattern by location was set out at Figure 3.

The qualitative evidence described the same shift independently and characterised it consistently, as a move from fear and avoidance towards structured and regular dialogue. In Baidoa, ISHA Human Rights Organisation described the previous gap between government and civil society as no longer existing, and government now inviting CSOs to meetings and to the development of national and local plans. In Jowhar, SSWC described trust built between organisations and government from district through regional to federal level. In Mogadishu, the Federal Ministry of Interior described federal and FMS ministries as directly connected and organised to carry out awareness activities and peace missions jointly. In Dhusamareeb, respondents described attitudinal change of a different order, including business owners who had previously funded clan weaponry stating in meetings that they were ready to redirect those funds towards peacebuilding.

> "I observed that the previous gap between the government and civil society organizations no longer exists. Civil society organisations have become more confident in meeting with the government and telling them what needs to be addressed. I have seen accountability and dialogue."
>
> **KII, ISHA Human Rights Organisation, Baidoa**
>
> "The project helped to build trust between the organisations and the government, from the district level, regional level, up to the ministry at federal level."
>
> **KII, SSWC, Jowhar**

Respondents also supplied place specific instances of conflicts addressed. These included the Guriceel and Balanbal reconciliation in Galmudug, which one respondent described through a family able to reconnect after a journey previously impossible; a ceasefire and peace agreement ending a

prolonged revenge conflict in Diinsoor, brokered by the NRF network, traditional leaders and Ministry of Interior representatives travelling from Baidoa; a water point arrangement in Hudur; the recurring Eelay and Hariin land dispute; and repeated joint mediation of land and grazing disputes around Jowhar involving government, elders, religious leaders, CSOs, women and youth together. Each was recorded in the outcome table at section 5.9 and substantiated at Annex F.

Two changes in how conflict was handled recurred across locations and were more significant than any single episode. The first was a shift in the route disputes took. Baidoa focus groups described communities resolving family, neighbourhood and clan disputes themselves through dialogue rather than routing them to the courts or leaving them to relatives of the parties, while Mogadishu focus groups described a slightly different movement, towards greater use of courts and formal legal processes rather than clan based resolution, alongside greater confidence in security forces and greater willingness to pay taxes. These were not in tension: in both cases disputes moved towards a more deliberate and less automatic route than the one previously used. The second was an attitudinal change reported in Baidoa by both the women's and mixed discussions, that reconciliation was now understood as a shared community responsibility rather than the government's alone, and that youth, elders and women were willing to come to dialogue.

> "Youth, elders and women are now ready, when something happens, to resolve it through dialogue."
>
> **FGD-Women, Baidoa**
>
> "The community now understands that every person has a responsibility towards NRF."
>
> **FGD-Women, Baidoa**

Contribution rather than attribution was claimed throughout. Traditional elders, religious leaders, state administrations, other donors and other international organisations were operating in the same space over the same period. Three positive effects outside the project's intended logic were also identifiable, all in Baidoa: a CSO whose visibility from posting NRF activities attracted international attention and approximately three further projects, the NRF's afterlife as training content that one organisation now used in unrelated peace trainings it delivered itself, and an individual level protection outcome where a focus group respondent used her training to intervene in a family case involving domestic violence.

5.6.2 Institutional discomfort as an unintended effect

A negative unintended effect appeared in two independent sources at two different levels of the system.

SPA reported that some ministries, accustomed to treating reconciliation as their own domain, became uneasy at the sight of active and networked CSOs holding a formal role in policy review, and in some cases came to perceive them as a threat. In Dhusamareeb, Galmudug Agents for Peace independently reported that a government institution perceived its expanding role as overlapping with its own responsibilities, that the relationship deteriorated for a period as a result, and that it subsequently improved following a change in institutional leadership.

> "On the negative side, there was a situation where some government institutions saw the organisation as a challenge to their work, or they felt that the project had entered into their activities. This caused the previous relationship to become worse."

KII, Galmudug Agents for Peace, Dhusamareeb

5.6.3 A Sector-level Perspective

These experiences reflect a wider national conversation on the relationship between government and civil society rather than something specific to this project. The NGO bill has yet to be enacted, and the distinct role of civil society in public discourse and policy review is not yet widely understood within government. The Dhusamareeb account shows that such strain can ease, and continued dialogue and cooperation between government and civil society, both regular and as issues arise, is the most effective way to manage it.

Asked whether civil society's engagement with government on reconciliation had changed over the last two to three years, FCA, the INGO peer among the strategic partners, answered that it had changed for the worse. The question was put to this informant alone, because its instrument was the only one that asked about the sector rather than about the project. Its account was that donor pressure on government to engage more with civil society produced a culture of tokenism rather than genuine engagement, in which hand-picked or state-created civil society groups were brought to the table for display while established organisations with real expertise were pushed out of the space, and in which some civil society actors had adjusted their stated positions to align with government in order to retain access.

> "It has changed, but unfortunately, it has changed for the worse. Instead of sitting down with genuine, established civil society, hand-picked or state-created civil society groups are brought to the table just for display. This has caused authentic civil society, those with real value, proper expertise, and genuine dedication, to be pushed out of the space."
>
> KII, INGO peer strategic partner, Mogadishu

This was a slightly different view from the one the survey and the location evidence described, where 92% of respondents across all four locations observed positive change in CSO and government engagement and no location fell below 87%. Two considerations bore on how the two should be read together.

First, they were not measuring the same thing. The survey asked network engaged CSO members about change they had observed, and its inference population was participants in this project. The INGO peer was asked about the national sector, including organisations with no connection to this project, and its answer concerned the quality of engagement rather than its quantity. Both could be true: a project could produce genuine engagement for the organisations it worked with while the wider sector trend ran the other way.

Second, the account points to the same next step the project's own evidence identifies. Tokenistic inclusion was one of the central problems the project set out to address, and within its network the project achieved real access and genuine participation: participants were included, heard and safe. What remains, at sector level as within the project, is making the influence of that participation visible and routine. The project's contribution to improved CSO and government engagement was well evidenced for the organisations and communities it worked with.

5.7 Sustainability

Sustainability was the criterion on which the evidence spoke differently at different levels of the system.

At CSO level, confidence was high and consistently reasoned. Organisations across all four locations attributed durability to the same three features: leadership and legal structures that did not depend on one or two individuals, knowledge distributed across staff rather than held by individuals, and reconciliation work that pre-dated the project and was expected to outlast it.

> "The organisation is not dependent on one or two individuals. It has leadership, legal structures and educated and trained members."
>
> **KII, Safan Society, Jowhar**

> "Our goal is not to end with this project; we will continue to operate just as we did before. This was a project only and did not affect the previous work and we continue."
>
> **KII, WDO, Dhusamareeb**

At the level of the network as a collective, confidence was lower, and almost every source that expressed confidence attached a funding condition to it. Gargaar in Dhusamareeb stated that nothing operated without funding. Damqasho expected skills to remain but could not say whether the project's resource support would continue. SOYVA in Baidoa conditioned continuation on a clear management structure, strengthened network leadership, regular meetings, an activity plan, record keeping and financial support. In Mogadishu, all four assessed CSOs identified continued funding or capacity support as the main factor that would help them sustain what they had built, and SOYDEN's own OCA scored 2 of 4 both on continuing without direct project support and on having plans to continue reconciliation work after the project ended, despite a confident interview narrative.

Government informants set out the same condition from the institutional side. The Ministry of Education key informant in Dhusamareeb predicted a slowdown once project covered logistics were withdrawn, on the grounds that community members had been able to gather without bearing the cost themselves. The South West State Ministry of Interior conditioned sustained capacity on its own institutional investment in equipping the office, securing qualified staff and building the responsible department, and raised the prospect of operations halting. The exception was that same ministry's confidence about the framework itself, which rested on formality rather than on resources, namely that the NRF was an official government document held on file by all relevant institutions.

At strategic partner level the assessments of the networks' present state varied. Three of the four strategic partners asked about the project considered the networks functional, and one assessed the position differently. LPI stated that the networks did not stop when the project ended, citing the South West network's continued joint peace appeals to government, visits to conflict zones and mediation between local administrations, and describing networks in Galmudug and South West State as now being approached directly by ministries when reconciliation matters arose. SPA agreed, describing networks that operated under their own name rather than their members' names, elected chairpersons and vice chairpersons, national and location level messaging groups still in use, and continued participation in ministry led activities. ZZF, a strategic partner that was neither implementer nor network secretariat, also considered them functional, and pointed to the platform itself as the durable artefact rather than to any particular activity.

> "They are functional. They have established a platform or forum focused on NRF reconciliation and its framework, enabling organisations to build working relationships and networks at both personal and organisational levels."
>
> **KII, Zamzam Foundation, Mogadishu**

SPL, a network member rather than an implementer, assessed the position quite differently.

> "Honestly, I would evaluate it as having reverted back to individual efforts. There isn't an active, ongoing system in place to keep them working collectively as intended. What is missing is sustainability. Once the initial project activities wrapped up, everyone returned to their individual roles."
>
> **KII, Somali Peace Line, Mogadishu**

> "While formal joint tasks have paused, personal communication and networks persist. With proper engagement, these built capacities can easily be reactivated."
>
> **KII, Somali Peace Line, Mogadishu**

The INGO peer interview supplied a precedent that was directly instructive for design. FCA described having acted as secretariat to the National Reconciliation Advisory Board, a government anchored coordination platform that brought together the Federal Ministry of Interior, FMS ministries, peacebuilding organisations and embassies. When FCA separately attempted to establish a Peace Community of Practice for implementing partners, the Ministry of Interior instructed it to stop on the grounds that the Advisory Board already provided coordination, and a secondary platform was unnecessary. When the donor funded project that carried the Advisory Board's secretariat came to an end, the Advisory Board itself faded away.

> "When the MIDEEYE project ended, the NRAB platform also faded away."
>
> **KII, INGO peer strategic partner, Mogadishu**

Taken together, the evidence shows that individual capacities and relationships have lasted, and that the networks keep a formal identity and continue to be recognised and approached by ministries. Collective activity has become more event-driven since project support ended, with the level of activity varying by location. ZZF considered the networks functional, and linked any question about their future to the availability of follow-on funding rather than to any weakness in the organisations, which points to coordination support as the key to sustaining what has been built.

> "To a very limited extent. It will persist somewhat, but resource constraints pose a major challenge. Without follow-up projects centred on the NRF and national peacebuilding, sustaining these gains long-term will be difficult."
>
> **KII, Zamzam Foundation, Mogadishu**

5.8 Inclusion

Every location reported genuine broadening of participation beyond traditional elders, with youth, women, religious leaders and, in several accounts, sports and youth groups now taking active roles in reconciliation processes that were previously the preserve of elders. This was a substantive change and was corroborated across FGD types and locations.

Participants in all four locations also saw scope to build on this progress, most often by bringing more persons with disabilities into project activities. The point was raised in all four locations, including by youth respondents in Baidoa, the youth and women's groups in Jowhar and the women's group in Dhusamareeb, and participants in several locations also asked that activities reach communities beyond the main towns.

> "People with disabilities were not sufficiently included. In a programme with around 30 or 40 participants, there might be only two or three people with disabilities."
>
> **FGD-Youth, Baidoa**
>
> "I think people with special needs and people living in camps have not been given enough role in peace activities. It would be good to give them a chance to participate."
>
> **FGD-Women, Dhusamareeb**

The mid-term ROM review noted that none of the 20 CSOs selected at design focused on persons with disabilities. Including a disability-focused organisation in each network would therefore be the most direct way to extend participation in a next phase.

Seven of the 118 survey respondents identified as persons with a disability, five in Dhusamareeb and two in Jowhar. In their own comments, respondents most often asked for the work to reach further: of the 102 who commented, 19 asked for wider geographic or community coverage, naming Lower Shabelle, Bay and Bakool, districts surrounding Bay region, rural areas and areas of active conflict, and nine suggested specific groups to include. Reach was the most common theme in respondents' comments, ahead of more frequent dialogues (17) and general positive feedback (11).

5.9 Outcome harvesting across the four locations

Seventeen outcomes were harvested across the four locations, following the format set out in the LPI Outcome Harvesting Guide. Table 4 sets them out together, with the level of the system at which the change occurred and the project's contribution as described by those reporting it.

A final column records which of the four participation quality dimensions in the outcome harvesting protocol (Annex F, Section 5) each outcome demonstrates, for the Impact indicator 1 rating in Section 5.9.1.

Table 4: Outcomes harvested across the four locations

#	Outcome	Location	Level of change	Project contribution	Quality dimension (Impact 1)
1	Formal government recognition of ADRO as a conflict resolution CSO, authorised to operate nationwide	Mogadishu	Organisational standing	High. Visibility gained through the project supported Banadir CSO network	Trust and access (national; single source)
2	Joint MolFAR and CSO peacebuilding forums across all six federal member states and Banadir, and a Presidency and opposition mediation document	Mogadishu	National political process	High. Training and access provided the credibility and relationships for inclusion in the mediation role	Not rated: post-project development (document dated 9 August 2026)
3	Federal Ministry of Interior formally accepted a recommendation that women be included in the peacebuilding process	Mogadishu	Policy	High. Direct uptake of input from CSOs and community members consulted through the project	Nature of engagement; evidence of influence (national; single source, government attested)

#	Outcome	Location	Level of change	Project contribution	Quality dimension (Impact 1)
4	Project trained youth independently training community members, with reconciliation skills applied in informal settings	Mogadishu	Community capacity	High. Direct project training combined with a peer trainer practice within participating CSOs	Not applicable (community level)
5	Formation of a unified five organisation reconciliation network with a formal secretariat	Dhusamareeb	Organisational	High. All five CSOs described the network as having brought previously separate organisations together for the first time	Breadth of representation (state; multiple sources)
6	Sports led reconciliation between Guriceel and Balanbal, reuniting long separated families	Dhusamareeb	Community	High. Project supported awareness and social integration efforts reaching both towns	Not applicable (community level)
7	Business owners redirecting funds from clan weaponry towards peacebuilding	Dhusamareeb	Community attitudes	Medium. Awareness and dialogue sessions convened through the project	Not applicable (community level)
8	SSWC facilitated reconciliation and social mixing structures between Raasamaal and Maandheere villages	Jowhar	Community	High. Relationships and facilitation skills built through the project, including improved standing with the district administration	Not applicable (community level)
9	Regular monthly CSO and government coordination meetings established	Jowhar	Institutional	High. Relationships and communication skills built through project training	Nature of engagement; trust and access (state; single source)
10	Repeated joint community, government and elder mediation of land and grazing conflicts across multiple villages	Jowhar	Community	High. Awareness, training and relationship building delivered through the project	Not applicable (community level)
11	Five Baidoa organisations selected and jointly implementing NRF activities	Baidoa	Organisational	High. Selection and convening through the project	Breadth of representation (state; two sources)
12	South West State reconciliation committee and technical task force established, aligned to the NRF	Baidoa	Institutional	High. The committee's design and its linkage to national NRF planning came from project facilitated consultations	Trust and access; nature of engagement (state; single source)
13	Hudur water point conflict resolved using NRF learning, 2025	Baidoa	Community	Medium. Convening capacity and the process used came from project training and learning	Not applicable (community level)
14	Diinsoor ceasefire and peace agreemen Trust and access (state; single source)t ending a prolonged revenge conflict	Baidoa	Community	High. The NRF network and relationships between CSOs, traditional leaders and the ministry built through the project	Not applicable (community level)
15	CSOs moved from community level work into political dialogue	Baidoa	Organisational standing	High. Standing, relationships and skills acquired through the	Nature of engagement (state; two sources)

#	Outcome	Location	Level of change	Project contribution	Quality dimension (Impact 1)
				project's dialogue platforms and training	
16	Written CSO recommendations accepted and integrated into documented policy decisions	Baidoa	Policy	High. CSO participation in project convened consultations and quarterly meetings	Nature of engagement; evidence of influence (state; single source)
17	Ministry of Interior focal point role created to bridge CSOs and the ministry	Baidoa	Institutional	High. The project's requirement for structured CSO engagement in NRF implementation	Nature of engagement; evidence of influence (state; single source)

The pattern across the seventeen was that the changes clustered at two levels. Ten were organisational or institutional, that is changes in who was recognised, who convened, and which structures existed, and seven were community level, that is specific conflicts addressed and shifts in how disputes were handled. The distribution was uneven by location, with Baidoa accounting for seven of the 17 and reaching furthest into formal government structures. Jowhar and Dhusamareeb concentrated more heavily at community level. Across all four locations the contribution described was consistently of the same kind, namely convening capacity, standing with government, and facilitation skills, which was the mechanism the project's theory of change anticipated.

5.9.1 Participation quality rating (Impact indicator 1)

Impact indicator 1 measures the degree and quality of participation of targeted civil society actors in national level policy processes and implementation, on a five-point scale, against a baseline of level 2 and a target of level 4. The protocol defines what limited (level 2) and significant (level 4) participation look like on four dimensions: nature of engagement, breadth of representation, level of trust and access, and evidence of influence. It does not define the intermediate levels. The evaluation therefore applied the following rule. A dimension was rated at level 3 where level 4 evidence was present but was confined to state level, rested on a single unsubstantiated source, or was not consistent across locations. It was rated at level 4 where the evidence met the protocol's significant description and was supported by at least two independent sources or by documents. Federal member state implementation of the NRF was treated as part of national level policy processes, consistent with Outcome 1.

Each dimension was rated from the outcomes in Table 4, triangulated with survey, OCA and interview evidence, and the overall rating is the median of the four dimension ratings. Seven outcomes were community level changes and did not bear on the rating, and outcome 2 was excluded as falling after the cut-off.

Nature of engagement was rated at level 3. CSOs were consulted before the Federal Ministry of Interior's decision on women's inclusion (outcome 3), and CSO and government engagement became regular at state level, through monthly coordination meetings in Jowhar (outcome 9), the South West State reconciliation structures (outcome 12) and written CSO recommendations in Baidoa (outcome 16). Most of this engagement was convened by the project or the ministry rather than initiated by CSOs, and the one national instance rested on a single government source.

Breadth of representation was rated at level 3. Multi-organisation networks formed and operated jointly at state level, supported by multiple independent sources (outcomes 5 and 11), and women and youth were described in all four locations as participating directly rather than through elders (Section 5.8). There was no evidence of this breadth in national level processes within the project period.

Level of trust and access was rated at level 3. CSOs gained access to state decision structures, including the South West State reconciliation committee and technical task force (outcome 12) and a ministry focal point (outcome 17), and ADRO received formal national recognition (outcome 1). In Mogadishu, all four assessed CSOs scored at the maximum on established relationships with government counterparts (Section 5.4.3). Each of these outcomes rested on a single source, and no closed-door national process within the project period was evidenced.

Evidence of influence was rated at level 2. The Federal Ministry of Interior reported accepting the recommendation that women be included in the peacebuilding process (outcome 3), and 67% of respondents agreed their views influenced discussions or decisions, the lowest of the six participation items. However, the one national instance was attested only by the ministry and was not independently substantiated, and the Baidoa account of recommendations integrated into policy (outcome 16) was likewise self-reported by government. CSOs and participants described consideration rather than visible uptake, and in Mogadishu the OCA item on evidencing influence averaged 1.75 of 4. The link between CSO input and decisions was therefore claimed but not discernible in the evidence available, which matches the protocol's level 2 description.

Endline participation quality was therefore rated at level 3 of 5, above the level 2 baseline and below the level 4 target. Three dimensions were rated at level 3 and evidence of influence at level 2; the median is level 3. Level 4 evidence was present on three dimensions: CSOs were consulted before decisions, women and youth participated directly, and CSOs gained access to state decision structures. At national level, however, this evidence rested on single, unsubstantiated sources, and no dimension was rated at level 4 on that basis alone. This is an evaluator rating against a stated rule, not a respondent measure. The rating could be described by location but not calculated by gender or age: Mogadishu supplied the national level instances, Baidoa showed the strongest access to state institutions, and Jowhar and Dhusamareeb were concentrated at community level. Documentary evidence for outcomes 3, 12 and 16, or completion of third-party substantiation, would be required before any dimension could be rated at level 4.

5.10 Summary of findings against the OECD-DAC criteria

Table 6: Summary of findings against the OECD-DAC criteria

DAC criterion	Key evaluation question	Finding	Confidence
Relevance	Was the project aligned with the needs and priorities of CSOs, communities and government, and with the NRF and wider frameworks?	Relevance was the clearest strength of the project and the finding on which the evidence was most consistent. In all four locations, CSOs and government informants described reconciliation and peacebuilding as work they were already doing, which the project strengthened, structured and extended rather than displaced. Alignment with the NRF and with each state's political context was close, and in South West State the ministry described actively mapping state needs onto the framework's pillars, which that informant numbered at five. The qualification was geographic rather than thematic: relevance was concentrated in Bay, Banadir, Galmudug and Hirshabelle, with Puntland and Jubbaland excluded at design stage on budget grounds despite the NRF's national remit.	High. Corroborated across CSO and government KIIs and FGDs in all four locations, with no dissenting account.
Effectiveness	Were the intended outputs and outcomes achieved, did networks become functional coordination platforms, and did dialogue platforms facilitate CSO and government engagement?	Effectiveness must be reported separately for the project's two outcomes. On the first, concerning civil society engagement, performance was strong and in LPI's own assessment exceeded expectations: networks were established in all four locations, capacity gains in facilitation, communication, documentation and advocacy spread beyond those directly trained, and dialogue platforms became functioning access points, with 92% of respondents observing positive change in CSO and government engagement. Most output targets were met or exceeded, as documented in the project's narrative reports and the evaluation's own survey (Annex I).. On the second outcome, concerning a coordinated NRF implementation plan developed by state authorities with CSOs, the position was partial achievement: a five year NRF strategic plan was drafted by MoIFAR and was pending cabinet approval, six reconciliation actions were implemented across the four areas, and preparatory structures existed including a state level reconciliation committee in South West State and quarterly consultation mechanisms, but the government decision and official rollout that would have converted the drafted plan into an adopted one did not occur within the project period. The next step on the first outcome is to make the influence of CSO participation visible through documentation and feedback.	Moderate to high on the first outcome, corroborated by survey, KII, FGD and OCA evidence across four locations. Moderate on the second, resting on project monitoring data supported in part by the project's narrative reports, together with strategic partner and government testimony..
Efficiency	Were resources used efficiently and cost effectively, were activities implemented within the planned timeframe, and how well did LPI and SPA coordinate?	Delivery was substantially timely. All planned activities were completed within a three-year period extended by three months at no cost, with SPA estimating over 90% of the schedule delivered on time and the extension used mainly for closure and reporting. Delays arose predominantly from factors outside the partners' control, namely the reopening of the NRF for review after a change of federal administration, ministerial and directorate turnover, insecurity and election related movement restrictions, and donor contracting timelines. Coordination between LPI and SPA was a clear strength, operating across three layers with joint planning and joint field teams, and was corroborated from outside the implementing partnership. Cost efficiency could not be assessed: no financial reports, workplans or donor reports were made available, and LPI's report that approximately 25% of costs were met from its own resources would materially affect any cost per result assessment if confirmed.	Moderate on timeliness and coordination, resting on four consistent strategic partner sources with location level corroboration. Low on cost efficiency, resting on informant opinion with no financial documentation.

DAC criterion	Key evaluation question	Finding	Confidence
Impact (contribution)	What observable changes occurred in CSO capacity to engage in policy dialogue and in CSO and government relationships, and what were the broader and unintended effects?	Impact showed the most consistent quantitative evidence in the evaluation. Across all four locations, 92% of respondents observed positive change in CSO and government engagement and 87% reported that trust and peaceful relations had improved over the previous twelve months, with no site below 82% on either measure. The qualitative evidence independently described the same shift, from fear and avoidance towards structured and regular dialogue, and supplied place specific instances of conflicts resolved, including the Guriceel and Balanbale reconciliation, the Diinsoor ceasefire, the Hudur water point arrangement and repeated joint mediation of land and grazing disputes around Jowhar. Contribution rather than attribution was claimed: other actors and processes were operating in the same space throughout. Unintended effects included institutional discomfort where ministries experienced strengthened CSOs as encroachment. The finding was bounded to the organisations and communities the project worked with. The INGO peer among the strategic partners, asked about the sector rather than the project, judged the national trend in CSO and government engagement over the same period to have worsened, describing a culture of tokenism in which state-selected groups displaced established civil society; that account was reported at section 5.6.3 and no claim of sector level change was made.	High on the direction and breadth of change within the project's own network, triangulated across survey, KII and FGD evidence in all four locations. Moderate on the project's specific contribution to named conflict outcomes, most of which rest on single sources pending substantiation. Not assessed at sector level.
Sustainability	Are the institutional capacities developed within CSOs likely to be sustained, is the CSO network likely to continue functioning, and what supports or hinders this?	Individual and organisational capacity is likely to last, resting on distributed knowledge, leadership and legal structures that do not depend on individuals, and reconciliation mandates that pre-date the project. The networks have a strong foundation: LPI, SPA and Zamzam Foundation describe networks that continue to operate and are approached by ministries, while Somali Peace Line describes joint work as paused with relationships intact and ready to be reactivated. Sustaining collective action will depend on coordination funding, a condition most sources raised.	Moderate on the durability of organisational capacity, corroborated across locations and instruments. Low to moderate on network continuation, where credible sources directly disagree and no post closure documentary evidence was available.

Overall, relevance, the civil society outcome and the improvement in CSO and government engagement were all well evidenced across multiple instruments and all four locations. The areas still in progress are those that depend on actors and resources beyond the project: the government's adoption and rollout of the NRF, the documentation of policy influence, and funding for network coordination after closure.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Overall conclusion

The project set out to do two things: to prepare and connect Somali civil society to engage federal member state, federal government and international stakeholders on reconciliation, with women, youth and marginalised voices at the centre; and to see a coordinated NRF implementation plan developed by state authorities together with CSOs. On the first it succeeded, and in the implementing partner's own assessment exceeded what was expected of it. On the second it went as far as the project itself could take it, because the government decision the outcome required did not come within the project period.

Part way through, the policy the project was designed to accompany was reopened for review by an incoming administration, passed to Parliament and then to Cabinet, and substantially modified. The partners decided not to wait and completed the civil society side of the design in full, exceeding targets for CSO led consultations, and participation, and a five-year NRF strategic plan was drafted and left pending cabinet approval. What was missing was the government decision that would convert a drafted plan into an adopted one. The result was a body of prepared, networked and government connected civil society organisations in four locations, and a drafted plan, both positioned for an implementation that had not yet begun. The second outcome therefore remained capable of being achieved after closure, which is why the recommendations address government implementation capacity directly rather than treating the outcome as lost.

Within that frame, the evidence supported four further conclusions.

Relevance was the project's clearest strength and it was structural rather than incidental. In all four locations CSOs and government informants described reconciliation and peacebuilding as work they were already doing, which the project strengthened, structured and extended, so no constituency had to be built for a new agenda. The evidence contained no dissenting account on this point. The qualification was geographic: four FMSs were covered, Puntland and Jubbaland were excluded at design stage on budget grounds, and within the four locations activity concentrated in the main towns.

The project produced real and diffused capacity and it changed the CSO and government relationship. 92% of survey respondents observed positive change in CSO and government engagement and 87% reported improved trust and peaceful relations, with no site below 82% on either measure and no site reporting meaningful deterioration. The qualitative evidence independently described the same shift, from fear and avoidance towards structured and regular engagement, and supplied place specific instances of conflicts addressed. Capacity gains in facilitation, communication, documentation and advocacy spread beyond those directly trained through a cascading model reported in every location.

Participation was achieved, and the next step is making its influence visible. Respondents were included, heard and safe, and intended to take part again, and there were clear instances of their input being taken up. They were less certain about what their input achieved overall. The OCA explains why: access to government scored at or near the maximum, while documented consultation and evidence of influence scored lower. The priority is documentation and feedback rather than access, which the project has already secured, and it is something a next phase can address directly.

Capacity is likely to persist, and the networks have a foundation to build on. Individual and organisational capacity rests on distributed knowledge, legal and leadership structures and mandates that pre-date the project. The networks continue to be recognised by ministries, and their collective activity will depend on coordination funding, a condition almost every source raised. Partners gave differing accounts of how active the networks are today, so establishing each network's current functioning is the first practical step for any next phase.

6.2 Contribution analysis

The evaluation claimed contribution rather than attribution. The claim was strongest where the mechanism was identifiable. The dialogue platforms and the training that accompanied them were how CSOs acquired both the standing and the skills to engage government directly, and independent CSO informants in different locations attributed their access to that mechanism specifically, describing a prior state of limited or fearful interaction.

The claim was weaker where other actors were working in the same space. Reconciliation activity in all four locations involved traditional elders, religious leaders, district and regional administrations, other donors and other international organisations, and Baidoa respondents named parallel initiatives including alternative dispute resolution work under the Ministry of Justice and nonviolent communication training supported by UNDP. The named conflict outcomes at Guriceel and Balanbale, Diinsoor, Hudur and around Jowhar were real and were attributed in part to project supported awareness, training and relationships, but the project was one input among several. It did not cause the NRF's parliamentary and cabinet review, the ministerial turnover, or the security and election conditions that delayed activities. The project delivered the contribution within its control; completing the intended result now rests on the government's decision on the drafted plan.

6.3 Lessons learned

Accompanying a government process brings a timetable the project does not control. Re-sequencing and continuing with the civil society track was the right response and preserved delivery. Building that contingency into the design from the start, by setting out what proceeds regardless if the government process slows, would make the approach even more resilient in a next phase.

Duration has to match ambition. LPI considered three years insufficient for a project of this scale and suggested five to six years, and ISHA in Baidoa independently made the same point from the recipient side, recommending that project lifetimes extend beyond two or three years and that the emphasis shift from dialogue towards longer term practical activity. Where the purpose was to position civil society for a policy implementation that had its own timetable, a shorter duration created a structural risk.

Political legitimacy was an operating requirement rather than a communications matter. Strengthening civil society's formal role in policy review generated institutional discomfort, reported

independently by SPA at federal level and by a CSO in Dhusamareeb at state level. Implementing staff should not be left to absorb that pushback alone, and visible high-level donor backing changed how local authorities responded.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations below are grouped by the actor best placed to lead each one; their numbering follows the consolidated matrix, which also states priority and timing.

The recommendations below follow from the findings and are grouped by the actor best placed to lead each one.

7.1 For the EU

Recommendation 1: Plan the duration of any successor intervention against the timetable of the process it is meant to accompany.

Both the lead implementing partners and participating CSOs judged three years too short for the project's ambition. LPI suggested five to six years, and ISHA in Baidoa independently recommended longer project lifetimes with more emphasis on practical activity. Where the purpose is to prepare civil society for a national policy implementation, a duration shorter than that implementation's own horizon risks the preparation being complete before the process it prepares for has begun.

Recommendation 2: Budget for participation costs and for reach beyond the main towns as a costed design choice.

Two barriers limited reach beyond the main towns, which respondents in every location asked to extend. At design level, budget determined that five organisations per region would take part and that Puntland and Jubbaland would be outside the project's scope. At participant level, transport cost was reported in Baidoa as an obstacle to attending. Reach was the most common theme in respondents' own comments, with 19 asking for wider geographic coverage. A successor design should cost participation directly, including transport and, where relevant, accessibility support, and should state which states and districts are in scope.

Recommendation 3: Agree a costed bridge funding plan for network coordination before project closure.

Organisational capacity appears durable, while the networks' collective functioning depends on continued support, a condition almost every source raised. Government informants expected activity to slow once project-covered logistics ended. CSOs identified coordination costs, meeting logistics and light secretariat functions, rather than programme delivery, as what they could not fund themselves. A modest arrangement covering coordination rather than activities, agreed before closure and tied to milestones such as a management structure, an activity plan and record keeping, would protect the project's principal asset at a small fraction of its cost.

Recommendation 4: Provide visible high level backing for the political legitimacy of any successor intervention.

Strengthening civil society's formal role in policy review generated some institutional discomfort, reported by SPA at federal level and by a CSO in Dhusamareeb at state level. This reflects a wider

national conversation on the relationship between government and civil society, in which the NGO bill has yet to be enacted and the distinct role of civil society is not yet widely understood. Visible donor backing changed how authorities responded, and implementing staff should not be left to manage this alone. A successor design should set out how, and at what level, the donor will engage when institutional resistance arises.

7.2 For LPI and SPA

Recommendation 5: Design any next phase around priorities that CSOs and government already hold.

Relevance was the project's clearest strength because it reinforced existing mandates rather than introducing a new agenda, and it was the one finding with no dissenting account. A successor should begin from the reconciliation and peacebuilding work that CSOs and state ministries already do, and identify where structure, capacity and connection are missing. The INGO peer reached the same conclusion, advising that programming link directly to existing government structures and community committees, that members be selected on demonstrated capacity and commitment, and that local government lead engagement with selected communities.

Recommendation 6: Build explicit contingency for government timetable slippage into any project anchored to a government process.

The second outcome was partially achieved because the NRF rollout did not proceed within the project period, and the partners' response, while defensible, was an improvised re-sequencing rather than a planned alternative. A successor should state in advance which activities proceed regardless, which are contingent on government action, and at what point a formal design revision is triggered. It should also engage the government's own implementation capacity, which the South West State Ministry of Interior and SPL both identified as the binding constraint.

Recommendation 7: Formalise the train the trainer model so that capacity survives staff turnover.

Cascading transfer of skills was reported in all four locations and was corroborated by the survey: 31% of respondents first learned of the NRF through other CSOs or community members rather than through project activities. The model operated as organisational practice rather than as a designed component, so its reach depended on individuals and gaps opened when trained people left. Formalising it, with shared materials, a defined cascade structure and light tracking of onward reach, would preserve the benefit and make its scale verifiable.

Recommendation 8: Focus capacity support on advocacy, policy analysis and documentation.

External Relations and Advocacy recorded the lowest capacity score in three of the four locations. The items holding it down were consistent: a communications or advocacy strategy for policy audiences, a systematic process for policy analysis, a documented process for consulting community members, and the ability to point to an evidenced instance of influence on a government decision. Relationships with government counterparts scored at or near the maximum. Capacity support should therefore target the documentation and analysis side of advocacy rather than convening or access, which the project has already achieved.

Recommendation 9: Build on broadened participation by bringing more persons with disabilities into the networks and activities, and track it.

Participation already extends beyond elders to youth, women and religious leaders in every location. Participants' clearest suggestion for going further was to include more persons with disabilities, and the mid-term ROM review noted that no disability-focused CSO was among those selected at design. Including at least one disability-focused organisation in each network, setting simple participation targets by group and location, and reporting against them would extend the project's reach in the direction participants themselves identified.

Recommendation 10: Establish the current functioning of each network before deciding on further support.

LPI, SPA and ZZF described networks that continue to operate, keep their officers and communication channels, and are approached directly by ministries. SPL described joint work as paused, with relationships intact and ready to be reactivated. A short check of each network's current activity, leadership and communication would show where support is most needed, and would determine whether Recommendation 3 is urgent everywhere or only in some locations.

7.3 For the CSO networks

Recommendation 11: Build visible feedback loops so that participants can see what happened to the input they gave.

86% of respondents had the opportunity to speak, while 67% agreed their views influenced discussions or decisions, the lowest of the six participation measures in three of the four locations. Where participants received a specific response to their input, as with the written feedback on adopted recommendations in Mogadishu, confidence was higher. Each consultation should record what was raised, what was carried forward and what the response was, and return that record to the community that produced it. This needs a change in process rather than new funding, can start immediately with support from LPI and SPA, and would also build the documentation of influence identified in Recommendation 8.

7.4 For government partners

Recommendation 12: Designate, from within existing staff and budgets, a focal point for civil society engagement in each ministry involved in NRF implementation, and respond in writing to the recommendations CSOs submit.

Where a ministry had a structure to receive and respond to civil society input, influence was more visible. The South West State Ministry of Interior created a focal point to link CSOs with NRF implementation, and Baidoa respondents were the most likely of the four locations to say their views influenced decisions (80%). In Mogadishu, written feedback on which recommendations had been adopted gave participants a clear view of what their input achieved.

The focal point should be a ministry role serving civil society engagement as a whole, not individual CSO-led projects, and should not depend on financial support from CSOs, projects or donors. This respects donor requirements to keep funding for civil society and for government separate, protects the impartiality of civil society engagement, and still gives CSOs a regular point of contact with government. A short written response to each set of recommendations would complement Recommendation 11 from the government side. **Recommendation 13:** Give CSO networks a defined seat in the structures that plan and monitor NRF implementation at state and federal level.

The clearest institutional result of the project was in South West State, where the reconciliation committee and technical task force were designed through project-facilitated consultations and aligned to the NRF (Outcome 12). Elsewhere, CSOs took part in NRF events, but participants described not always seeing where their input went. Including network representatives in state reconciliation committees, and in consultations on the national implementation plan, on terms set by government, would turn occasional participation into a standing role and give the networks a clear route for community input.

Recommendation 14: Plan NRF implementation within ministries' own budgets, and hold regular dialogue with civil society on its role.

The South West State Ministry of Interior linked sustained capacity to equipping its office and staffing the responsible department, and SPL identified the absence of a dedicated budget line for the framework as a central gap. A budget line in each ministry's own plan would make its commitments to civil society sustainable without depending on project funding. Some ministries were initially uneasy with CSOs taking a formal role in policy review (Section 5.6.2). This reflects a wider national conversation on the relationship between government and civil society, in which the NGO bill has not yet been enacted. Regular dialogue between government and civil society, with additional dialogue as issues arise, would build shared understanding of each one's role and reduce the risk of similar strain in future.

Annexes

Annex I. Endline results matrix (log framework)

The matrix records, for every logframe indicator, the baseline, the target, the endline finding and how it was derived. Findings draw on the evaluation's own evidence and on the project's six interim narrative reports (2023–2025). Where the narrative reports document a result, it is reported. Where an exact monitoring figure could not be confirmed, the monitoring value is shown alongside the documented value. Where an indicator could not be established, the row gives the reason. The reporting cut-off was 31 March 2026.

Impact level

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
Impact 1. Degree and quality of participation of targeted civil society in national level policy processes (5 point scale)	Level 2, limited participation	Level 4	Level 3 (evaluator rating)	Scored against the four quality dimensions in the outcome harvesting protocol; Nature of engagement, breadth of representation and trust and access were rated at level 3; evidence of influence at level 2, because the one national instance was ministry-attested only and CSOs described not seeing results. The median is level 3. This is an evaluator rating against a stated rule, not a respondent measure.
Impact 2. Community perceptions of reconciliation	83.9% of the community not	At least 25% aware	Not established as a percentage, as the evaluation survey covered	Focus group and interview participants in every location describe the NRF in procedural

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
progress, awareness of NRF progress	aware of NRF progress		CSO representatives rather than community members. Qualitative evidence indicates that awareness of the NRF grew during the project. In every location, participants described a framework that was poorly understood before the project and that they could now describe in procedural detail. In Baidoa, five network organisations jointly carried out NRF mobilisation, awareness raising and cultural activities, and the Federal Ministry of Interior described federal and state ministries as organised to carry out awareness activities and peace missions. Community-level reconciliation outcomes, including the Guriceel and Balanbale reconciliation and joint mediation of land and grazing disputes around Jowhar, were attributed in part to awareness activities supported by the project.	detail. Among CSO survey respondents, 93% correctly identified the NRF's purpose, and awareness travelled beyond those directly reached, with 42% first learning of the framework through project activities and 31% through other CSOs or community members.

Outcome level

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
1.1 Verifiable collaborative actions of civil society to engage FMS, FGS and international stakeholders	2	At least 10	Achieved: more than 10 dated collaborative actions documented in the project's narrative reports)	The 2024 and 2025 interim narrative reports document more than ten dated actions in which the networks engaged state or federal government. These include the NRF relaunch with MoIFAR (Mogadishu, 30 April 2024); CSO and state coordination forums in Baidoa and Dhusamareeb (July 2024); the South West State Conflict Navigator workshop with the state ministry and UNDP (Baidoa, July 2024); network-led public policy dialogues in Baidoa, Jowhar and Dhusamareeb (September to December 2024); the federal-level convening with federal and state ministries (Baidoa, December 2024); the Baidoa dialogue at which the state ministry formally recognised the network as a peacebuilding working group (6 August 2025); the Jowhar dialogue with the Hirshabelle Ministry of Interior (4–6 September 2025); and the Dhusamareeb security dialogue with district and state authorities (12 October 2025). Harvested outcomes 3, 9, 14 and 16 corroborate this pattern. Engagement with international stakeholders was mostly through LPI, and

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
				the UNDP-supported workshop in Baidoa is the documented case with network participation.
1.2 Collaborative engagements initiated by Somali civil society	0	3	Achieved: at least five engagements initiated by the networks documented in the project's narrative reports (	The narrative reports credit the networks with organising and leading the Baidoa CSO and state coordination forum (July 2024); the Jowhar co-design and community engagement event (September 2024); the Banadir network's meetings with MoIFAR and SONSA (first half of 2025); the Jowhar public policy dialogue (September 2025); and the Dhusamareeb security dialogue (October 2025). Each was run with guidance from the project team. Interview accounts of CSOs initiating engagement with government are consistent with this.
2.1 Verifiable actions towards a coordinated NRF implementation plan	Development of a strategic plan	An agreed plan	Partially achieved: drafted and presented, not agreed	At the 31 March 2026 cut off, MoIFAR had drafted a five-year NRF strategic plan and presented it to cabinet, where it awaited approval. Drafting was evidenced by the January 2026 logframe and the strategic partner interviews; agreement, approval and rollout were not. This was corroborated by interviews with LPI and Zamzam Foundation. The interim narrative reports add that the plan was finalised at a MoIFAR stakeholder workshop in Nairobi in February 2025 and then presented to cabinet, and the July–December 2025 report notes that cabinet decisions on the NRF remained delayed.
2.2 CSO perceptions of the inclusivity of NRF planning and implementation	76.79% of CSOs not included	At least 45% included	Partially included (qualitative, from key informant interviews): CSOs were included in NRF advocacy and awareness raising in all four locations, and in state-level planning in South West State, but their input into the national implementation plan was not documented	The logframe specifies the final evaluation of key informant interviews as the source for this indicator. The CSOs interviewed consistently described their involvement in the NRF as advocacy and awareness within their communities. Inclusion in planning was reported at state level: CSOs took part in the South West State consultations linked to the state reconciliation committee and technical task force, and ISHA in Baidoa described government now inviting CSOs to the development of national and local plans. CSO input into the national five-year NRF strategic plan was not documented. The interviews do not support a percentage of CSOs included, so the finding is reported qualitatively.
2.3 Reconciliation action plans developed through a consultative process	0	3	Achieved: 6 consultative action plans developed by the networks in all four locations	The interim narrative reports document action points and plans developed through community co-design workshops in each location: Baidoa (earlier in 2024, with a further action plan from workshops in August to November 2025 involving over 80 participants), Dhusamareeb (17–19 August 2024), Jowhar (9–11 September 2024) and Mogadishu (November 2024). The networks presented their action plans at the federal

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
				level convenings in December 2024 and December 2025, and developed concept notes in 2025 (two each in Baidoa, Banadir and Jowhar). The January 2026 logframe also records that the networks in all four areas developed action plans through a consultative process and implemented six actions.

Output level

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
1.1.1 CSOs joining the peacebuilding, reconciliation and transitional justice network	0	12	20 with signed MoUs, documented in the project's narrative reports the January 2026 logframe records 22	The July–December 2023 interim report records that 20 CSOs, five per location, accepted the invitation to join the network and signed MoUs between September and November 2023, and names them (Table 3, Section 3.3). The mid-term ROM review (2024) and the 2025 narrative reports give the same figure. The January 2026 logframe records 22; the membership register would confirm whether two organisations joined after 2023.
1.1.2 CSO perceptions of the value of the network and collaborative action (5 point scale)	Level 4	Level 5	Level 4 (evaluator rating)	Level 5 requires evidence that collective action continues without project support. Scored from the CSO and strategic partner interviews. Value was consistently described in terms of access, joint working and standing with government. Accounts of present functioning diverged: LPI, SPA and Zamzam Foundation described networks that continued to operate, Somali Peace Line described collective work paused with relationships intact. That divergence was why the rating was not set at level 5. CSOs themselves mentioned that lack of funding can inhibit continuation.
1.1.3 CSO representatives with increased capacity in communications, advocacy, reconciliation and transitional justice	0	At least 65%	Increased capacity reported in all four locations (qualitative); a percentage by topic could not be calculated	Capacity gains in facilitation, communication, documentation and advocacy were reported in interviews and focus groups in every location and spread beyond those directly trained as trained participants went on to train others. The narrative reports record training in the NRF, policy advocacy, power and stakeholder analysis, transitional justice and reconciliation, with participants described as showing increased confidence and understanding. The organisational capacity assessment of 19 CSOs found governance, financial management and programme planning scoring between 3.3 and 4.0 out of 4 in every location, with external relations and advocacy the area with most room to grow. No pre- and post-training assessment was reported, so a percentage by topic could not be calculated.
1.2.1 Number and type of community inputs on NRF	0	16	Partially established: community inputs	109 of the 118 CSO survey respondents took part in NRF public dialogue forums (Q4), 86% had the opportunity to share

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
policy content and implementation			were made through CSO forums and public forums; a total count against the target of 16 could not be confirmed	their views (Q9b), and 81% agreed they received feedback on the input they provided (Q9e). Documented inputs include recommendations on reopening roads and reducing checkpoints in Mogadishu, returned in writing with a record of which were adopted; the recommendation on women's inclusion accepted by the Federal Ministry of Interior (Outcome 3); and written CSO recommendations integrated into policy decisions in Baidoa (Outcome 16). The narrative reports record recommendations and agreed action points from forums in all four locations in 2025. Inputs came through two of the three mechanisms the indicator specifies, CSO forums and public forums; no annual NRF progress report was reported, so the third mechanism was not in use. reviewed.
1.2.2 Community perception of inclusion in NRF implementation	Not set	Not set	Among the 118 CSO survey respondents: 86% had the opportunity to speak, 85% felt safe and respected, 78% felt well represented, and 67% felt their views influenced discussions or decisions	Taken from the six participation items in the survey (Q9a–Q9f), which also found that 81% received feedback on the input they provided and 76% were confident about participating again. The respondents were CSO representatives who took part in project activities, so the figures describe their experience rather than that of the wider community.
1.2.3 Community members participating in NRF public forums	0	560	Target exceeded: around 800 participants documented in the project's narrative reports; project monitoring records 985	The 2024 and 2025 narrative reports record attendance for 13 forums and dialogues, ranging from 35 to about 100 participants each, with a gender breakdown for most. Together these come to around 800 participants, which exceeds the target of 560. The January 2026 logframe records 985 by quarter; confirming the full figure would need the attendance sheets, which were not among the records reviewed. No age breakdown was reported. The 118 CSO survey respondents are a sample, not the attendance total.
2.1.1 CSO led community consultations on reconciliation	0	16	Project monitoring recorded 17 consultations in all four locations documented in the narrative reports	The narrative reports describe CSO-led community co-design consultations in all four locations in 2024, and again in 2025. Confirming the full count of 17, and that all fall before the 31 March 2026 cut-off, would need the consultation register, which was not among the records reviewed.
2.1.2 Community members participating in consultations	0	240	Project monitoring recorded 283; partly documented in	The narrative reports give participant counts for two consultations: 35 in Dhusamareeb (August 2024) and over 80 in Baidoa (August to November 2025, with women making up over 30%). Confirming the total and the required

Indicator	Baseline (2023)	Target	Endline finding	How the finding was derived, or why a value cannot be given
			the narrative reports	breakdown would need the attendance sheets, which were not among the records reviewed.
2.2.1 Targeted community members with knowledge and awareness of ongoing Somali reconciliation processes	71.4% not aware	At least 45% aware	88% of CSO survey respondents aware of the status of local reconciliation efforts	In Q6b, 88% (104 of 118) reported that a local reconciliation plan had been agreed or that discussions were under way. The respondents were CSO representatives rather than community members, and the figure reflects their own perception of local status, which was not checked against actual progress. The survey used a different sampling frame from the 2023 baseline, so the two are not statistically compared.
2.2.2 Targeted community members with knowledge and awareness of NRF status	78.6% not aware	At least 45% aware	93% of CSO survey respondents correctly identified the NRF's purpose and 75% rated their understanding as good or very good	Q6a (purpose of the NRF) and Q6 (self-rated understanding). A further 42% first learned of the NRF through project activities and 31% through other CSOs or community members. The questions measure knowledge of the framework rather than of its current status, and respondents were CSO representatives, so the figures are reported as the closest available measure. The survey used a different sampling frame from the 2023 baseline, so the two are not statistically compared.
2.2.3 Targeted actors, civil society and government, with knowledge and awareness of ongoing Somali reconciliation processes	71.4% not aware	At least 50% aware	Civil society: 88% of CSO survey respondents aware of the status of local reconciliation efforts. Government: qualitative evidence only	The civil society figure is from Q6b (104 of 118). Government actors were covered through five key informant interviews rather than the survey. They described ongoing reconciliation work, including the South West State reconciliation committee and technical task force and federal and state ministries organised to carry out awareness activities and peace missions. Five interviews cannot support a percentage. The post-event questionnaire specified in the logframe was not reported by the project.
2.2.4 Targeted actors, civil society and government, with knowledge and awareness of NRF status	71.4% not aware	At least 50% aware	Civil society: 93% of CSO survey respondents correctly identified the NRF's purpose and 75% rated their understanding as good or very good. Government: qualitative evidence only	The civil society figures are from Q6a and Q6. These measure knowledge of the framework rather than its status. Government informants, including MoIFAR, which drafted the five-year NRF strategic plan, were directly involved in the NRF process, but five interviews cannot support a percentage. The post-event questionnaire specified in the logframe was not reported by the project.

Of the 19 indicators, 18 carry an endline finding. Ten draw on the evaluation's own evidence (Impact 1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4), of which 1.1.3 and 2.2 are qualitative and 2.2.1 to 2.2.4 are measured among CSO representatives. Four are documented in the project's narrative reports (1.1, 1.2, 2.3 and 1.1.1). In four more, the narrative reports document the result in part and the monitoring figure is shown alongside (1.2.1, 1.2.3, 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). Impact 2,

community awareness of NRF progress, is reported through qualitative evidence only, as no community survey was conducted. Where a figure could not be confirmed, the gap is one of documentation or measurement, not evidence that the result was not achieved.