

WIMI SOM

Women In Media Initiative Somalia

ANNUAL REPORT | 2024

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Foreword from the Executive Director

I am honored to present the annual report of WIMISOM for the year 2024. In continuation of the great work we have done in the past, this year was transformative, productive and full of lessons and achievements that we are very proud of. The work we did this year has contributed toward our vision, consolidated our previous efforts, expanded our reach and inspired us to do more in the future.

In continuing with our outstanding Awards program, and through targeted skill building workshops, we continued to foster a culture of excellence and professionalism in the media industry. Cognizant of the work environment of journalists in our country, we made a worthwhile endeavor to improve the situational awareness, self-defense and first aid skills of journalists, so that they are able to do their work in an increasing challenging situation.

This year, we have launched the pioneering KAABE Fellowship program, which is an empowering and a very promising venture, under which we provide financial and technical support to journalists to conduct original and consequential reporting on issues of public concern including governance, women's political participation, democratic transition, civil society strengthening, and grass roots community efforts for good governance, accountability and decentralization in the delivery of public services.

All this great work would not have been possible without the unified purpose and great commitment of our dedicated staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors. I am very proud of their work and continued excellence. As always, we are grateful also for the support and cooperation of our partners namely: National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). We are also thankful for the collaboration of Puntland line ministries, civil society organizations, women's organizations, and all those who have contributed to our work in any way.

We are as ever committed to our vision, and we are optimistic of the impact we are having in our community and country, it is in that spirit that I give you WIMISOM's 2024 Annual report.

Nasro Abdirisak Ahmed
Executive Director, WIMISOM

Abbreviations

BOD	Board of Directors
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
CSO	Civil Society Organization
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
HEFAT	Hostile Environment and First Aid Training
PEC	Puntland Elections Commission
LGEs	Local Government Elections
IWD	International Women's Day
IDPs	Internally Displaced People

Executive Summary

This report highlights our work during the year 2024 including project activities and initiatives. Our Annual Report provides an overview of our work describing the key activities which were implemented and the achievements of the organization during that period.

The report covers our work under the project “Enhancing the Capacity of Women in Media” which is being implemented currently with support from the National Endowment for Democracy NED. This extensive work includes the pioneering WIMISOM Awards, a comprehensive personal security and safety training for journalists, and training for female journalist on social media utilization.

The report also highlights our work toward civic engagement and citizen empowerment including public forums on decentralization, and the KAABE fellowship program for journalists to engage in original and consequential reporting for community sensitization and awareness raising on issues which are critical to democracy including inclusive participation, electoral processes, public accountability, and civic engagement.

The report is organized under three themes which are Media Enhancement, Women Empowerment, and Civic Engagement.

Background

Women in Media Initiative Somalia (WIMISOM) was founded on June 2017 to give voice, provide networking and capacity-building opportunities for Somali women in media, and highlight the socio-economic challenges facing women, children, and vulnerable groups through media and communication. We are a non-profit and non-governmental organization that works to empower women in and through media.

Using evidence-based research and employing media and communication, we advocate and stand for social change through the promotion of human rights capacity building of women journalists, gender equality, good governance, women's political participation, and elimination of gender-based violence.

WIMISOM is legally registered with relevant authorities including MoPEDIC as a non-profit, non-political, non-religious non-governmental organization (NGO).

Vision

Empowered women in journalism who can affect change in Somali women's lives

Mission

To enhance the impact of women journalists; ensure women's voices are heard and their human rights are being protected using media, research, advocacy, awareness-raising campaigns, capacity-building, mentorship, and coaching

Goals

- Increasing the participation, role, capacity, output, and impact of Somali women in media.
- Raising awareness for social, economic, and political challenges and achievements of women
- Promotion of human rights and fighting all types of violence against women, girls, and children through media
- Creating media workplaces and newsrooms which promote gender equality at each level of decision making

Values

- Transparency and accountability: we strive to operate in an environment of openness in relation to our partners, benefactors, and beneficiaries.
- Creativity: innovative ideas and progress toward perfection are the core part of ensuring the success of our organization.
- Objectivity and independence: we endeavor in all our programs to be objective and independent. We hold to ourselves the highest of standards, we are free from any intervention from other parties.
- Do no harm: we endeavor to make sure that all our programs, activities, and initiatives do not cause any harm to our employees, beneficiaries, communities, and partners
- Sustainability: we strive to ensure the changes made through our work will have a positive and long-lasting impact.

Theme 1: Media Enhancement

WIMISOM Awards



With the purpose to recognize and celebrate the work of journalists, we have continued this year with organizing the annual WIMISOM Awards.

The Award program is dedicated to celebrating exceptional achievements in journalism and remarkable contributions to community service, and to recognizing and rewarding journalists who have reported and covered key event and issues relating to the socio-economic condition of society, human rights, social issues, innovation, and development.

This year's ceremony showcased the talent and dedication of both male and female journalists who competed across four distinct categories: Visual reporting, audio/radio reporting, journal articles, and photography.

This year's WIMISOM Awards were presented to two female journalists and one male journalist who were awarded in three categories: Visual reporting, audio reporting, and photography, whose production has had a positive impact or created change at a social level





The ceremony also featured the presentation of recognition certificates to those whose impactful efforts have significantly enriched their communities over the years. These certificates serve as a means to commend their efforts and inspire further acts of service among others.

The award event was a well-attended event which saw the participation of government officials, civil society organizations, academia, the press, women's organizations, and youth, more than just a celebration of professional achievements, it underscored the crucial role that media professionals play in shaping public discourse and fostering community engagement.

As WIMISOM continues to advance its mission of empowering women in media and promoting societal progress, the annual awards ceremony stands as a beacon of inspiration. It encourages continued dedication to excellence and service, motivating them to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and dedication to service, reaffirming the organization's commitment to fostering positive change through the power of media.

Security and Safety Training for Journalists

To enhance the safety and preparedness of journalists operating in high-risk environments, WIMISOM organized a comprehensive 5-day training on Hostile Environment and First Aid Training (HEFAT) for fifteen journalists from different media houses in Puntland. The training equipped the journalists with the essential skills and knowledge to navigate hostile environments and provide life-saving first aid in emergencies.

To enable journalists to operate safely in challenging environments, it was crucial to train and develop their skillset in risk assessment, situational awareness, conflict management, digital security, and medical emergencies.

The journalists were majority reporters who do regular field reporting, and the training provided valuable insights into understanding the dynamics of hostile environments and how journalists can mitigate risks while carrying out their reporting duties. Journalists learned about different types of threats, including armed conflict, civil unrest, and natural disasters.

Journalists engaged in hands-on practical exercises designed to simulate real-life scenarios they might encounter in the field. These exercises included mock hostile situations, role-playing exercises to practice de-escalation techniques, and drills on administering first aid under pressure. Through these simulations, journalists could apply their theoretical knowledge in a practical setting.

The training was a significant step toward ensuring the safety and preparedness of journalists in Puntland, enabling them to continue their crucial work of reporting the truth in some of the most challenging circumstances.



Security and Safety Training for Journalists



WIMISOM stands for realizing its vision of empowering women in journalism who can affect change in Somali women's lives. Capacity injection and improving the knowledge and skills of female journalists is one of our key areas. Pursuing to that, we organized a training on communication and social media utilization for mid-career female journalists. The training aimed to enhance the participant's ability to effectively communicate and engage with their audiences and leverage social media platforms to amplify their voices and reach a wider audience.



The workshop aimed at enhancing the skills and use of social media in terms of reporting, conducting debates and public forums, and developing their careers through competition for grants, fellowships and other opportunities.



Also realizing the increased dependence of journalists on digital technology and social media, the journalists were trained on detecting digital risks and online threats, digital journalism, writing for different media platforms, interviewing techniques, and social media engagement strategies. Participants also had the opportunity to learn from experienced journalists and media professionals, who shared their insights and expertise on navigating the ever-changing media landscape.

The use of social media has changed the way news is disseminated, and they have become essential tools for journalists, which can increase the influence of journalists

Theme 2: Women Empowerment

Reflection of Somali Women Economic Empowerment on 8 March IWD

As part of the International Women's Day commemoration, we organized two forums on Somali women's economic situation. We held the two forums in Garowe and Qardho.

The events brought together a diverse array of stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, activists, and women entrepreneurs, to spotlight the barriers hindering women's economic empowerment and devise strategies for inclusive growth.

The fora underscored the multi-faceted challenges confronting Somali women in accessing economic opportunities. High levels of unemployment, limited access to education and skills training, as well as systemic barriers to financial inclusion, were among the key issues highlighted. Participants emphasized the urgent need for concerted action to dismantle these barriers and create an enabling environment for women to thrive economically.

Throughout the discussions, participants shared inspiring success stories of women who have defied the odds and made significant contributions to their communities and the economy. From small-scale entrepreneurs to women leading initiatives in agriculture, technology, and trade, these stories served as a testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of Somali women.

In addition to highlighting challenges, the conversation also focused on practical solutions and policy interventions to address the gender gap in economic participation. Recommendations ranged from implementing targeted skills development programs and providing access to affordable credit to promoting gender-sensitive policies and fostering a supportive business ecosystem.

The event concluded with a call to action for all stakeholders to redouble their efforts in advancing the economic rights and opportunities of Somali women. Participants pledged to work collaboratively to implement the recommendations put forth during the discussion and to advocate for policies that prioritize gender equality and inclusive development.

Theme 3: Civic Engagement

Forum on the Decentralization of Puntland

Puntland is a federal members state in Somalia, and it has been grappling with issues of decentralization and governance for years. Decentralization is a crucial component of good governance, as it allows for the distribution of power and resources to local levels, which can lead to better decision-making and service delivery. However, Puntland has faced several challenges in implementing decentralization, including lack of capacity, political interference, and insufficient funding.

To address the challenges faced by Puntland in achieving effective decentralization, we held in Garowe a public forum on the challenges against effective decentralization in Puntland. The forum aimed to engage various stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organizations, and community members, to discuss the obstacles and potential solutions for better governance and development in the region. The event brought together key stakeholders from various sectors to discuss the challenges faced by Puntland in its decentralization process. The forum was divided into several sessions, with each focusing on a specific aspect of decentralization.

Some of the key topics covered during the event included: Legal and institutional frameworks for decentralization, capacity building and training for local government officials, allocation of resources and funding for decentralization, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Puntland. During the forum, several challenges were identified that hinder the effective implementation of decentralization in Puntland. Some of these challenges include: Lack of a clear legal and institutional framework for decentralization, inadequate capacity of local government officials to manage their responsibilities, insufficient funding and resources for decentralization programs, political interference in the decentralization process, and limited participation of women and youth in decision-making processes.

The public forum highlighted the importance of addressing the challenges faced by Puntland in its decentralization process. By bringing together key stakeholders and discussing the way forward, the forum provided a platform for sharing experiences and best practices and fostering collaborative efforts to improve governance and development in the region.

WIMISOM STAGE

**KULAN DADWEYNE:
CAQABADAHA MAAMUL-DADEJIN TAABBAGAL AH
OO KA HIRGASHA PUNTLAND**

**Public Forum on the Challenges Against
Effective Centralization in Puntland**





KAABE Fellowship Program

With the purpose to contribute to the democratic transition of Puntland, we launched this year the KAABE Fellowship program, under which we support the production of original and impactful reporting on issues critical to democracy including inclusive participation, electoral processes, public accountability, and civic engagement.

This fellowship program entails technical support and funds provided to journalists for producing original and impactful reporting issues, events and trends which are critical for democratic transition, especially by supporting journalists in creating high-quality, impactful reports and programs.

The first cohort of the fellowship producing outstanding TV programs focusing on very pertinent issues, the prominent journalist Mohamed Salah focused on The Participation of IDPs in the Puntland Democratic Elections, journalist Suweys addressed The Impact of Popular Local Government Election of Puntland Decentralization Process, while Shuceyb Daad delved deep into The State of Education Service Provision in Puntland taking as case study the historic town of Qandala.

This kind of in-depth reporting on public issues was missing in the current media environment which is more geared toward breaking news and current issues. The feedback from the media industry, and from the public is very encouraging and shows the huge need for more support for journalists to do such long form media content on public issues.

Conclusion

While steadfastly committed to our vision, the past year saw us venture into new schemes and take initiatives so that we face familiar issues with fresh perspectives. In the past we have done capacity building, mentoring, and production of knowledge sources for journalists, this year we added to that providing direct technical and financial support to journalist to do their work and be true to the noble profession of journalism. Through community forums, media programs and empowering free and independent media, we are confident we are having an impact on the state of human rights, women's empowerment, media freedom, and governance in Puntland State of Somalia.

Such impactful would not have been so without effective collaboration with Puntland government authorities, civil society organizations, local NGOs, women's organizations, journalists, activists and community leaders in the communities we work with. As we strove toward realizing our vision, we did our best to conduct our work with great professionalism, attention to detail, and orientation toward the sustainability of results in the long term. As we are aware of the challenges ahead, we will make sure to bring new insights and approaches to our work to achieve the meaningful impact we set for.

The whole family of WIMISOM from our esteemed Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers are in unison with our aim and will continue to deliver great work guided by our vision, and anchored by the guiding principles of our organization. We remain also committed to ensuring the growth and further development of our organization through capacitating our able staff, adhering to our guiding policies.

Gallery





Partners



UNNSOM

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA

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