



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Concept Note
**Capacity Building on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to the Ministry of
Women and Human Rights Development in Federal Republic of Somalia**

January 24-25 2023

1. BACKGROUND

Somalia has endured several challenging decades in recent history, including a civil war, conflict with non-State actors, humanitarian crises, natural disasters, and resulting mass displacement. In light of these challenges, since 2012, the Government of Somalia has worked to establish a stable, effective and democratic structure of government and has worked at the social, economic and political levels to address inequalities. In August 2022, Somalia swore in a new government, which now serves as an opportunity to work towards ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment at the *de jure* and *de facto* levels.

Somalia's Provisional Constitution of 2012 outlines the inclusion of women in government and national institutions as a founding principle (article 3). Furthermore, the Constitution elaborates on gender equality, the realization of social, economic and political rights, and confirms protection from gender-based violence. The Family Law of 1975 provides equal rights to women and men regarding marriage, divorce, and inheritance of property and restricted polygamy, while setting the age of marriage at 18 years; however, the law is rarely enforced. In 2018, a progressive, survivor-centered Sexual Offences Bill was approved by the Cabinet but failed to be ratified by the lower house of parliament; instead, a new bill permitting child and forced marriage was introduced resulting in a backlash. A Somalia Women's Charter was drafted in 2019, calling for equality, equity and non-discrimination in the public and private spheres, including 50 per cent participation in all sectors of public life. Since 2016, 24 per cent of parliamentary seats have been held by women.

Somalia has ratified a majority of the core United Nations human rights treaties but has yet to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). Somalia consistently ranks near the bottom of indices such as the Women, Peace and Security Index (159 out of 170 countries) and the Women, Business and the Law Index (101 out of 114 countries).

Considering these opportunities and challenges, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) aims to support the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development in Somalia to take more concrete steps towards addressing gender inequality and ensuring women's empowerment through policy development. As part of this support, ESCWA will hold a two-day capacity-building training for the Ministry of Women's



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Affairs and Human Rights Development on gender equality and women’s empowerment frameworks and standards.

2. OBJECTIVE

This training will engage staff from the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development, in addition to line ministers and representatives from other ministries on concepts, frameworks, standards and best practices related to mainstreaming and addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment, in order to enhance knowledge and ensure a more comprehensive approach within government. Presentations and discussions will be based on international standards and good practice along with examples from the Arab region.

3. AUDIENCE

The Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development will invite 30 Ministry staff in addition to line ministers and representatives from other ministries (e.g., Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs) to the in-person training.

4. TIME AND VENUE

The training will take place at the Palms Hotel on 24-25 January 2023 from 09:30 – 16:00 each day.

Presentations and facilitation will be provided in English and simultaneous English – Somali interpretation will be available.

5. DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1	
9:30 – 10:00	<i>Opening Remarks, Introductions and a Review of the Agenda</i>
10:00 – 12:00	<i>Session 1: Gender equality and women’s empowerment: Introduction and terminology</i> This session will examine the norms and concepts that encompass and define gender equality and women’s empowerment, serving as the foundation for a better understanding of the subsequent training sessions.
12:00 – 12:30	Break
12:30– 14:30	<i>Session 2: Gender equality and women’s empowerment: International legal frameworks</i>



	This session will examine the most relevant international frameworks and mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment. Examples from the Arab and African regions will be discussed
14:30 – 15:30	<i>Lunch</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Reflection on challenges, opportunities and emerging issues concerning mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in the work of ministries in Somalia.
Day 2	
9:30 – 9:45	<i>Review of previous day</i>
9:45 – 11:45	<p><i>Session 3: Women's status in Somalia</i></p> <p>This session will examine the status of women in Somalia, as well as provide an overview and assessment of the current legal and policy frameworks in place that help or hinder gender equality and women's empowerment and where are the entry points for comprehensive engagement.</p>
11:45 – 12:15	<i>Break</i>
12:15 – 14:15	<p><i>Session 4: Standards, mandates, and roles related to the work of national machineries (Beijing, CEDAW, SDGs, etc.)</i></p> <p>This session will examine the role national machineries can and should play in the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment, examining engagement with international norms and frameworks and ensuring a holistic and intersectional approach. This will also be an opportunity to discuss examples from the Arab and African regions.</p>
14:15 – 15:15	<i>Lunch</i>
15:15 – 15:45	Wrap-up and Evaluations