



Final Analysis Report

Listening to Voices: Minority Inclusion in Somalia

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This study is commissioned by SDC and is part of the commitment to civic engagement, ensuring that development and humanitarian programs are inclusive and accessible to all.

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List of Acronyms

AV	Africa's Voices
BRA	Benadir Regional Administration
CEA-TF	Community Engagement and Accountability Task Force
CSAP	Common Social Accountability Platform
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member States
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
KST	Kulmis Support Team
M2A	Messages to the Audiences
MI	MediaInk
MRG	Minority Rights Group International
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PLWD	Persons Living with Disabilities
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SMS	Short Message Service
UNHCR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WASH	Water and Sanitation Hygiene

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

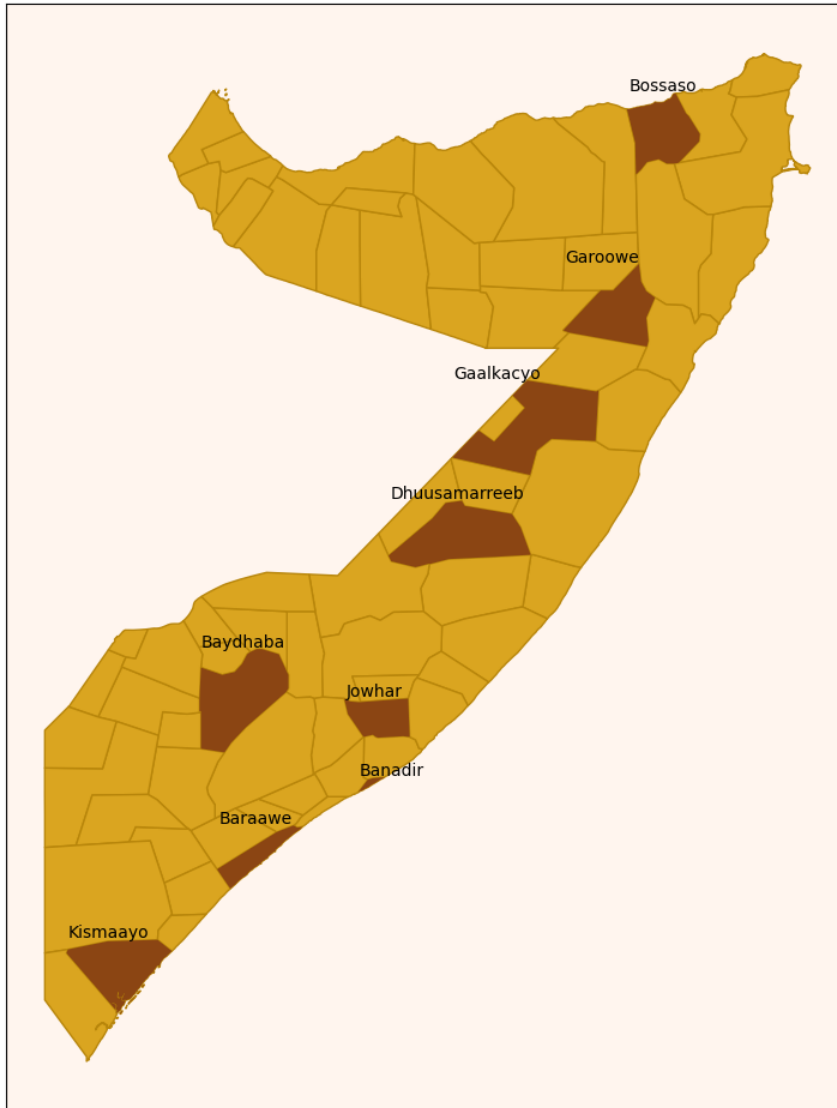
Somalia is a culturally and linguistically diverse country with a wide range of clans and ethnic groups. The country's clan structure is predominantly composed of four "majority" clans—Darood, Hawye, Dir, and Digil/Mirifle/Rahanwen, alongside a complex set of ethnic and linguistic communities outside the majority clans, including Bravenese, Bajuni, and Bantu groups. These communities are commonly referred to as minority or '0.5' groups. The term originates from Somalia's 4.5 power-sharing system, which allocates an equal number of parliamentary seats to each of the four majority clans, while minority groups collectively receive half that number, but it has come to apply to broader disenfranchisement of ".5" communities, in terms of employment and basic services, judiciary outcomes, and access to aid distribution mechanisms. In light of its "Leave No One Behind" principle, and its emphasis on social diversity and inclusion outlined in the 2022-2025 Horn of Africa Cooperation Programme, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has a vested interest in understanding the condition of minority groups in Somalia, as well as gaps in aid data and distribution that may stem from their exclusion. Consequently, this report analyses the perspectives of individuals across Somalia, to offer insight into how the study's participants view the treatment of minority communities, and the solutions they propose to promote minority inclusion in political representation and local leadership, humanitarian access, cultural preservation, and income generation.

The Project

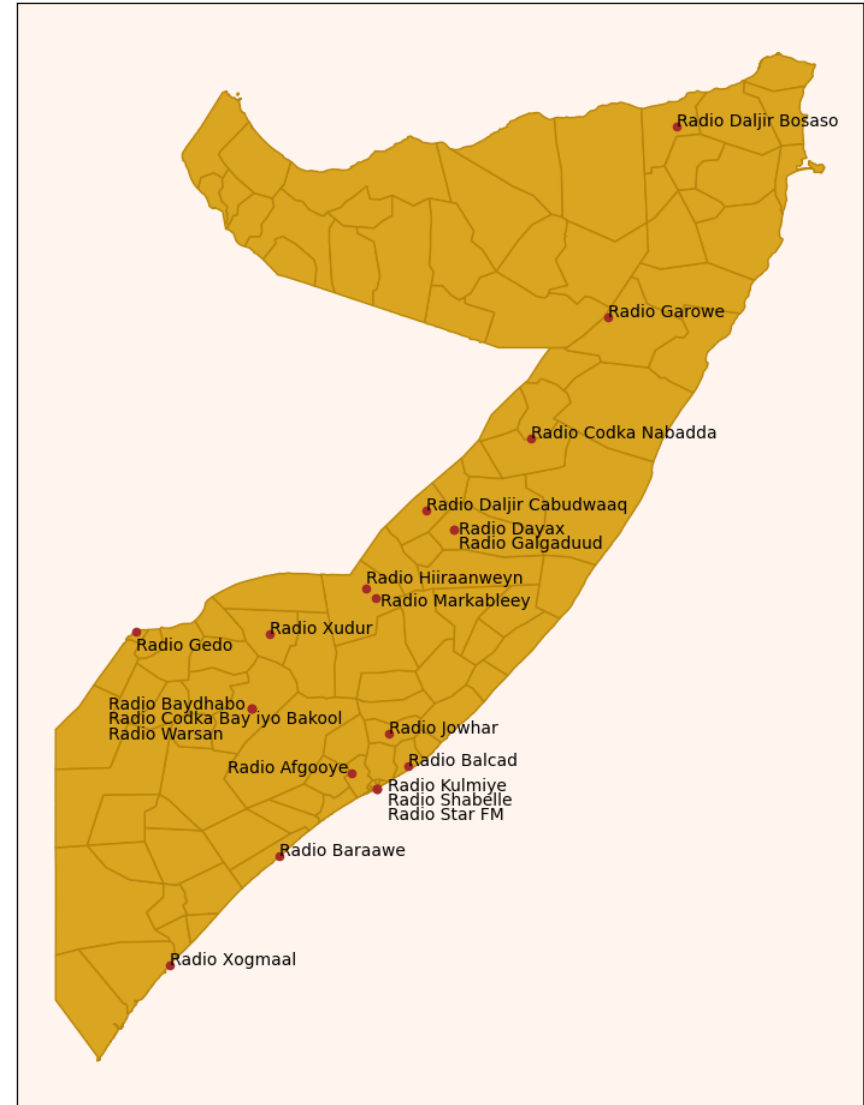
From October 2024 to January 2025, Africa's Voices (AV), commissioned by SDC, implemented *"Listening to Voices: Minority Inclusion in Somalia."* The project created a safe, inclusive space for minority communities and the broader public to engage in dialogue on exclusion, discrimination, and access to services, topics often absent from national discourse and media. Using AV interactive radio and voice methodology, six radio programs were produced in MaaxaTri, Maay, Bajuni, and Barawani in partnership with Somalia-based partner MediaInk, enabling minority groups to participate in familiar languages. Given sensitivities around minority identity in Somalia, AV used language as a proxy to engage and identify minority communities members safely, respecting privacy while ensuring meaningful participation. Episodes featured minority expert guests, a situational drama, and interactive questions promoted via daily radio promos, with listener feedback collected through a toll-free IVR shortcode. Furthermore, weekly listening groups were organised in nine districts, ensuring gender-balanced, diverse participation. Insights from these sessions, shared through the shortcode. Complementary social media campaigns with *Messages to the Audiences (M2A)* amplified reach, especially among Somalia's youth (70% of the population), promoting weekly discussion questions and IVR feedback channel. This initiative generated powerful citizen-driven insights to inform interventions SDC, Somali authorities, development partners and AV's continued community engagement.

See maps below for the distribution of listening groups and radio stations.

Somalia Districts where Listening Groups were facilitated.

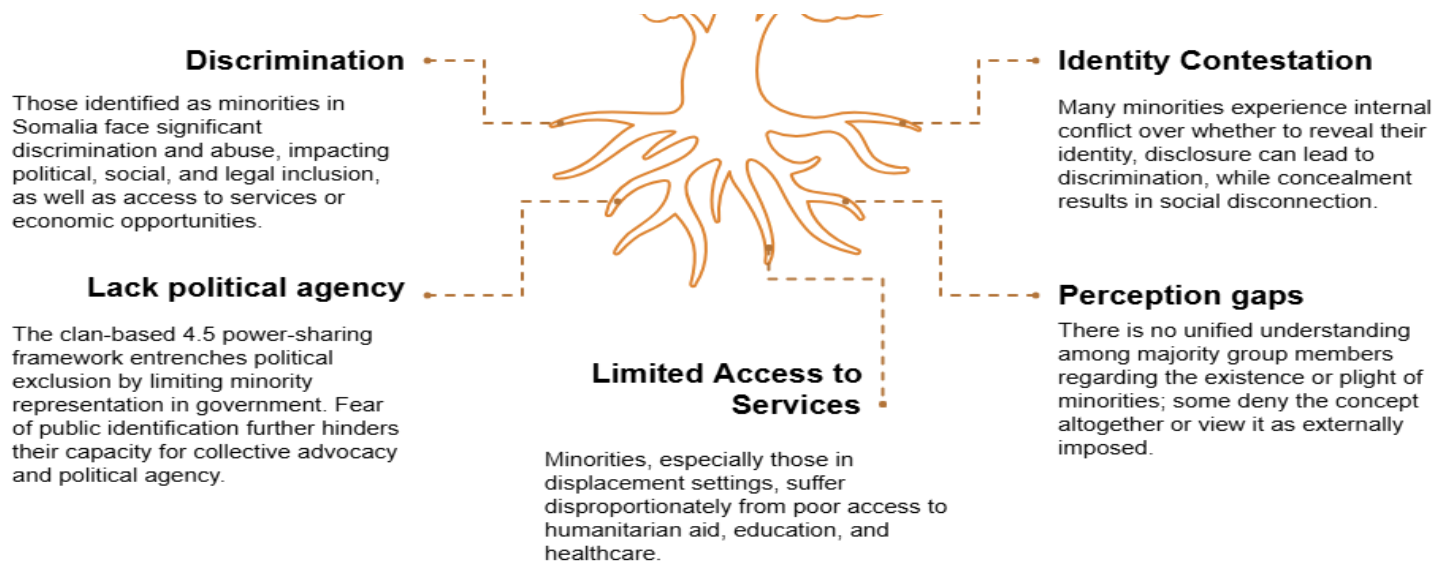


Radio Stations engaged in the Program



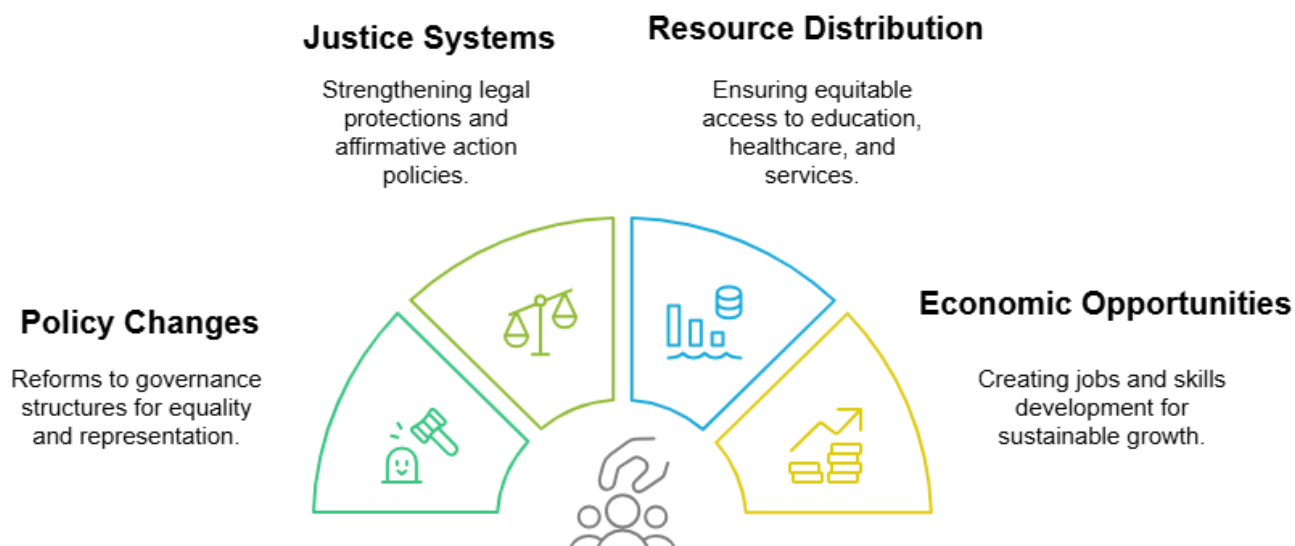
KEY FINDINGS

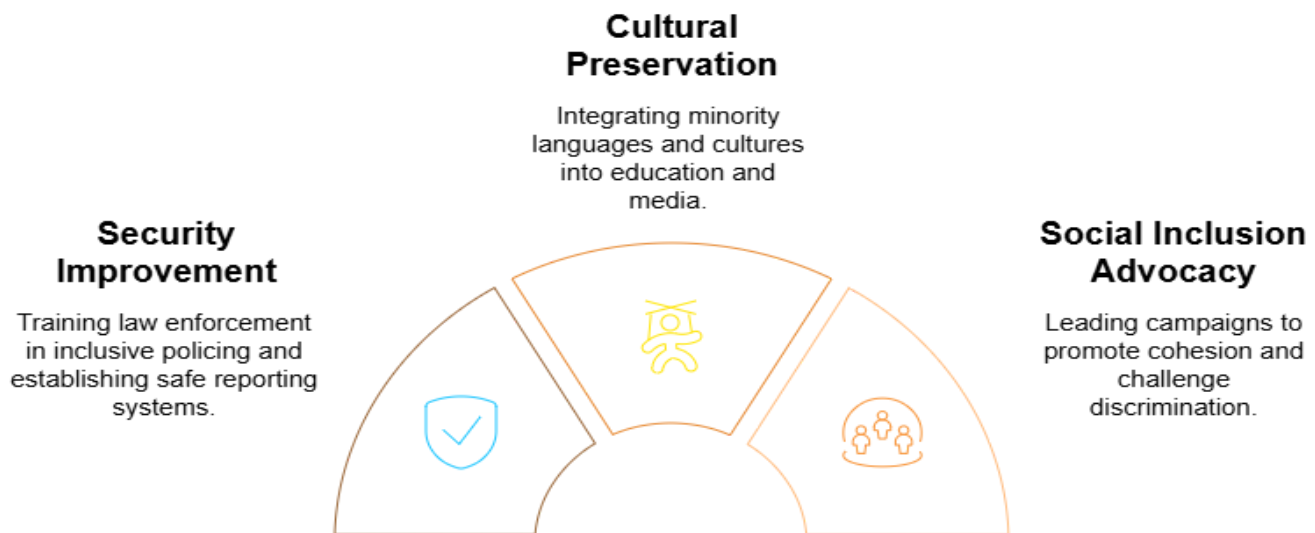
From the perspectives of series' participants, the following key findings emerged:



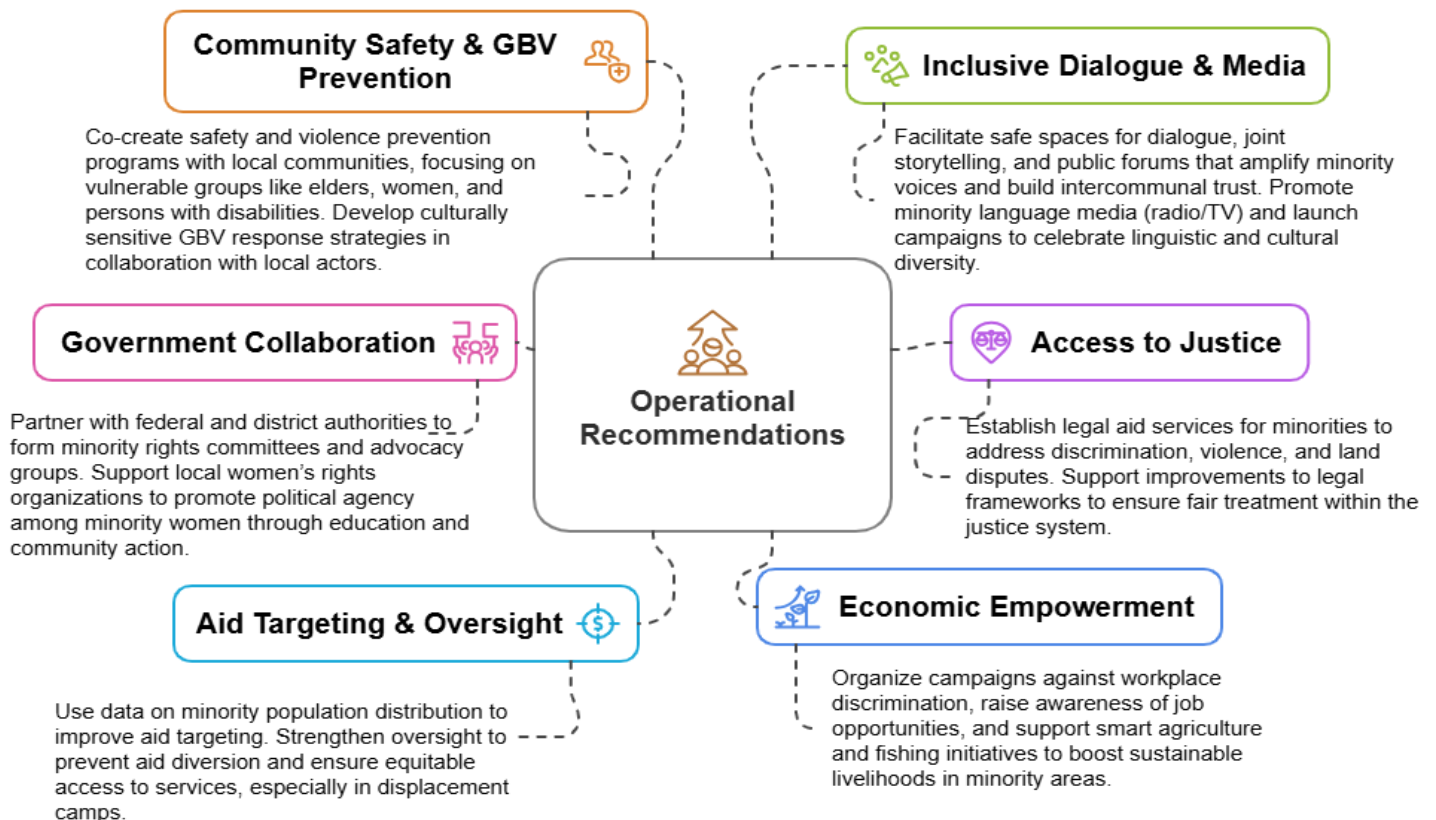
RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Policy and High-Level Recommendations** - provides actions for donors, government authorities, humanitarian agencies, and civil society to drive policy and systemic changes at a broader level.





2. **Operational Recommendations** - provides immediate and practical actions that SDC and its implementing partners can incorporate into their programs.



2. INTRODUCTION

2.1: Introduction

Somalia is home to diverse ethnicities and clans, with minorities like the Bantu, Bajuni, and Bravanese potentially comprising a third of the population, though reliable data is scarce.¹ Despite some progress, minority groups face ongoing challenges in political participation, justice, and human rights.² They are highly vulnerable to conflict and abuse, often fearing harassment from other clans. Many must choose between self-identifying and facing risks or hiding their identity, which weakens community cohesion.

Political marginalization, reinforced by the 4.5 power-sharing system, limits minority representation in governance and legal reforms. Additionally, while over 3.8 million Somalis are internally displaced, minorities face disproportionate barriers to aid, including diversion and retribution for using humanitarian feedback systems.³ To address these issues, AV proposed a data-driven approach using interactive radio, IVR, listening groups, and social media to assess public perceptions of minority inclusion, aiming to promote equitable governance, access to services, and human rights protections.

2.2: Summary of radio engagement

The six radio shows were designed to collect people-driven data, to understand their perspectives on inclusion and political and social reform. Participation was entirely voluntary, with some individuals choosing to share demographics, including language, state, age, gender, displacement, and disability status⁴. The radio engagements garnered feedback from a total of 8,975 unique participants with a total estimated reach⁵ of about 149,583 listeners across the six weeks.

2.2.1 Who participated in the dialogue?

The dialogue engaged 8,975 participants from across Somalia, as illustrated by the map provided, which depicts the prevalence of respondents by region. Banadir had the highest number of participants. The distribution of participants at the state level is covered in more detail in Section 2.2.3.

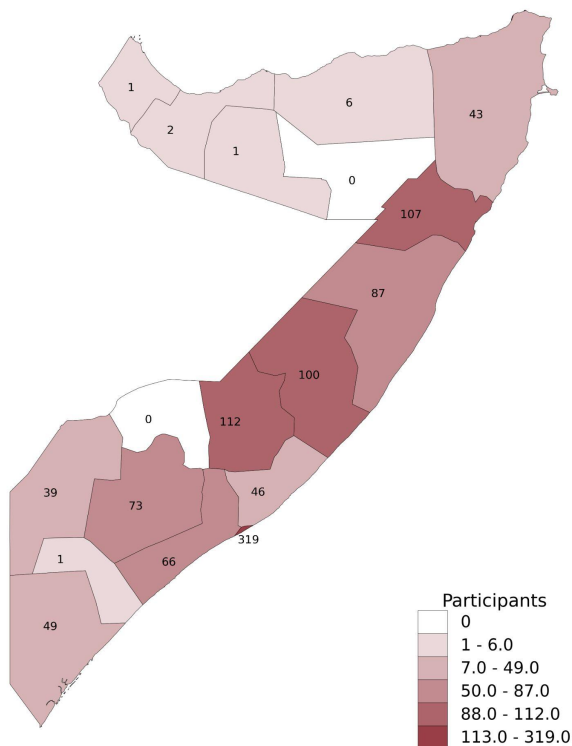
¹ *Working to secure the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples.* (2018). Minority Rights Group. <https://minorityrights.org/about-us/funders-and-annual-reports/>

² *Swiss Cooperation Programme, Horn of Africa 2022-2025.* (2021). Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

³ *Somalia.* (2024). Operational Data Portal, UNHCR.

⁴ Note that providing demographic information is voluntary and therefore some participants do not submit all, or in some instances any, demographic information. Therefore the total of participants who report their gender does not match with the total sample size of those who responded to the weekly question

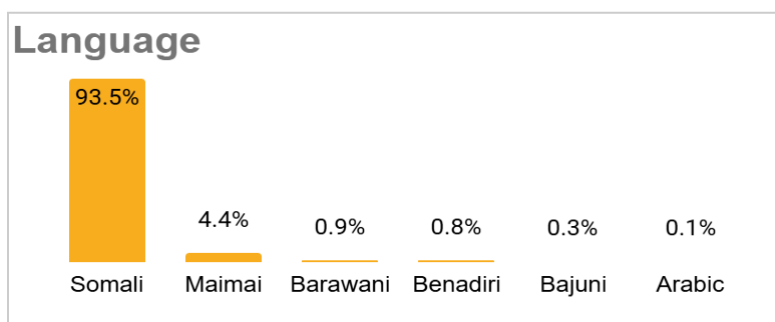
⁵ Listenership/reach is calculated as (Total SMS participants x 100) / 6, which was arrived at by a study conducted by AVF that showed its radio programs achieves a 6% ratio (6 people out of 100 listeners take the step to send an SMS).



Of the 1,184 participants who reported their household language, 93.5% (n=1107) reported speaking Somali (*MaaxaTri*) language while the remaining 6.5% (n=77) spoke the minority languages such as Maimai, Barawani, Benadiri, Bajuni, and Arabic. Out of the 1158 participants who reported their age, youth under 35 years comprised 64.7% (n=749) of the participants. Women accounted for 54.6% (n=884) of the 1,620 participants who reported their gender, IDPs made up 52.5% (n=869) of the 1,654 participants who reported their displacement status, and Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWD) constituted (29.0%, n=489) of the 1,685 participants who disclosed their disability status.

2.2.2 Participants Split by Language (n= 1,184)

Figure 2: Participants Split by Language



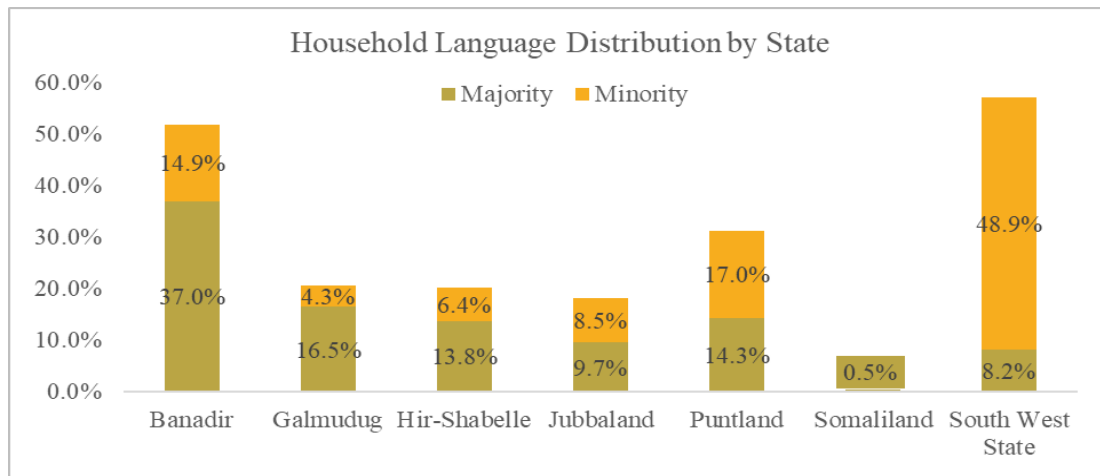
Twenty six different languages were reported by those who participated, including a small number of non-African languages. Figure 2 alongside shows the distribution of languages spoken by participants.

Estimating the percentage of minority groups within Somalia

remains challenging due to limited census data. Some sources suggest that minority groups constitute about one-third of the population, while others propose figures as low as 5%. Among the 1,184 who reported their household language, 6.5% (n=77) identified as speakers of minority languages, slightly exceeding the lowest proposed estimate of 5%. It was noted that many minorities were hesitant to self-identify, with most opting to report Somali as their household language.

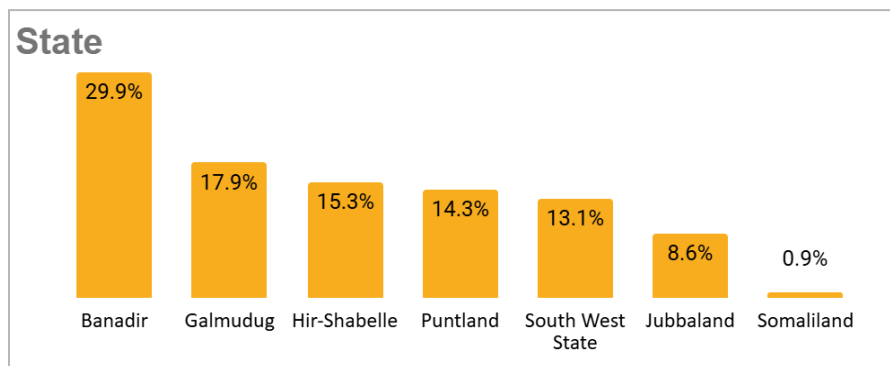
Upon further analysis as shown in Figure 2a below, and when considering participants who provided both their household language and state, data reveals that the majority 37.0% (n=222) of the majority group are from Banadir while the least (0.5%, n=3) were from Somaliland. On the contrary, most (48.9%, n=23) of the minority group hail from South West State with none coming from Somaliland.

Figure 2a: Household Language Split by State



2.2.3 Participants Split by State (n= 1,060)

Figure 3: Participants Split by State



The study found Banadir had the highest participants at 29.9% (n=317) with the least being Somaliland (0.9%). Banadir's high participation was due to its dense population and large number of IDPs engaged in discussions on

minority inclusion. Despite variations in representation, the study successfully gathered input from all states, ensuring broad minority representation.

2.2.4 Participants split by Age, Gender, Disability and Displacement Status

The table below provides participants demographic details in respect to age, gender, disability, and displacement status.

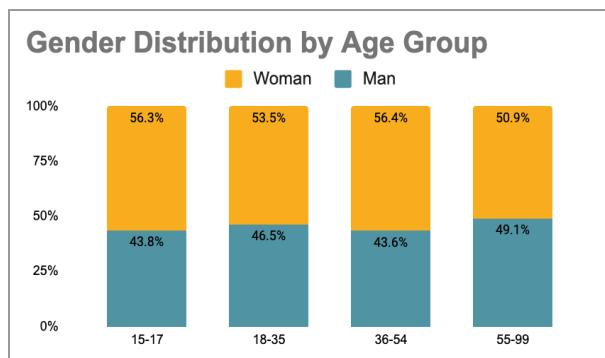
2.2.4.1. Age (n=1,158)

Youth accounted for 64.7% (n=749) of the 1,158 participants who provided their age details, including those aged below 35 years (64.7%, n=749) and those above 35 years (35.3%, n=409). The increased participation of those aged above 36 years compared to our previous studies suggests that they found the IVR method more accessible.

Item	Parameter	%	N
Age	<=35	64.7%	749
	>35	35.3%	409
	Total	100.0%	1158
Gender	Man	45.4%	736
	Woman	54.6%	884
	Total	100.0%	1620
Disability	Yes	29.0%	489
	No	71.0%	1196
	Total	100.0%	1685
Displaced	Yes	52.5%	869
	No	47.5%	785
	Total	100.0%	1654

2.2.4.2 Gender (n= 1620)

Figure 4: Gender Distribution by Age

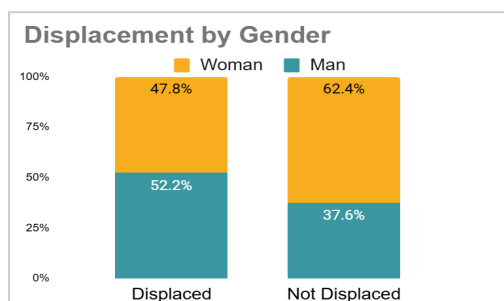


Of the 1,620 participants who disclosed their gender, women made up 54.6% (n=884) while men accounted for 45.4% (n=736). Across each age group, gender participation was relatively balanced, with a tilt towards women in each demographic. The issue of treatment and inclusion of minorities seemed to hold a balanced appeal between genders in each age group.

2.2.4.3 Displacement Status (n= 1,654)

Over half (52.5%, n=869) of the 1654 participants who provided their displacement information were displaced. Slightly over half of this report's displaced respondents were men.

Figure 6a: Displacement by Gender

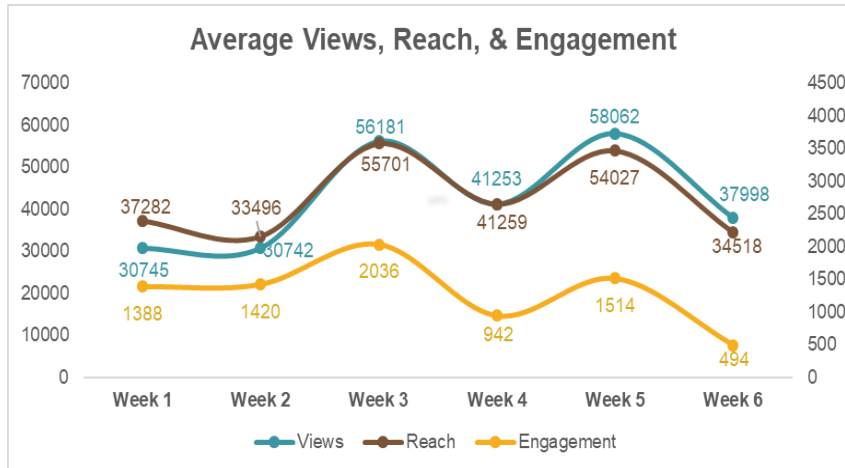


Of participants who disclosed displacement status and gender (30%, n=477 of total respondents disclosing age and displacement), the most-represented demographic was women who were not displaced.

2.3. Social Media Engagements

Each week, three posts were shared on Facebook, averaging 42,497 views, 42,714 reach, and 1,299 engagements over the six-week period.

Figure 8: Average Views, Reach, & Engagement

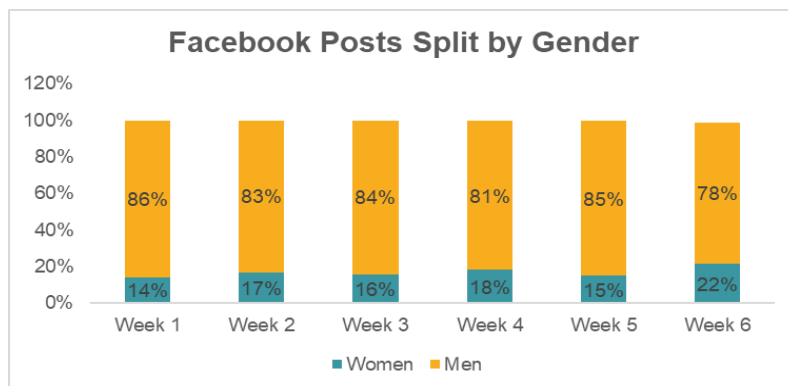


The line chart illustrates the average weekly engagement via Facebook, with the highest views, reach, and interactions recorded in weeks 3, which covered minority engagement in local leadership, and 4, which discussed the protection of minority languages and culture.

2.3.1 Facebook Posts Split by Gender

Women accounted for an average of 17% of participants over the six-week period, while men made up the remaining 83%. The highest female representation was recorded in week six at 22%, whereas the lowest was in week one at 14%.

Figure 10: Facebook Post Split by Gender



3. KEY FINDINGS: MAKING SENSE OF CONVERSATIONS AT SCALE

This section offers a mixed-methods analysis of responses to the research questions outlined in Section 2 above. It highlights ten themes, shown in the chart below, that emerged prominently over the discussion series. These themes comprise two groups: challenges faced by participants (Issues raised by participants) and potential solutions (Participants recommendations). Additionally, specific message examples are included as ‘thick descriptions’ to illustrate significant ideas and ensure demographic representation. For the full thick description of the themes discussed please see Annex 2.

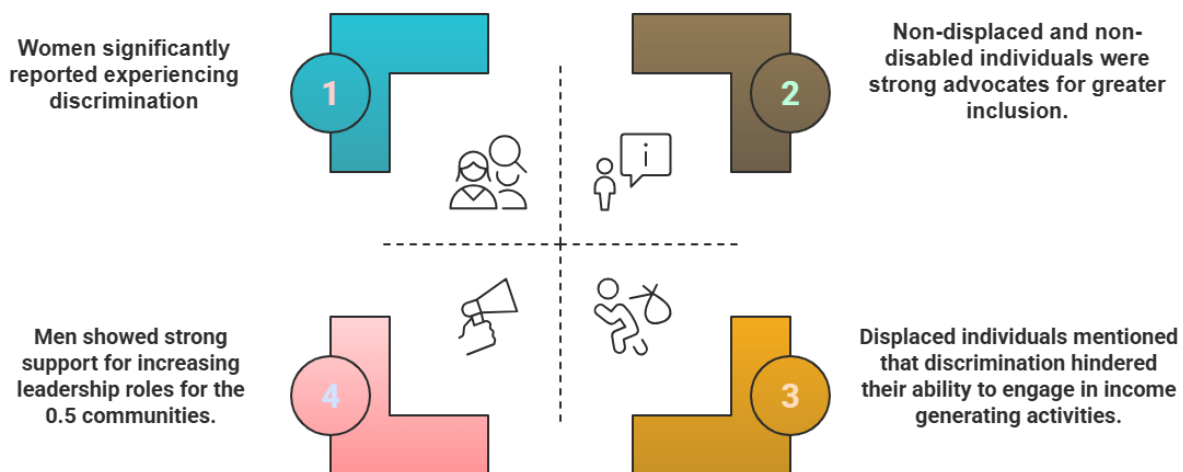
3.1. Issues Raised by Participants

3.1.1 Discrimination

Multiple studies on the situation of minority groups in Somalia have found that the majority of respondents from these groups have experienced some form of discrimination, particularly in employment and government or aid services.⁶

This theme was reported by 15.1% (n=343) of the participants and was a recurring theme throughout all six weeks of responses. While a lack of political agency garnered more responses overall, discrimination was the only issue consistently mentioned each week.

Below are the demographic-specific insights:



The 0.5 communities in Somalia face severe discrimination based on tribe, skin color, language, and race. Some respondents noted that years of marginalization have led members of the 0.5

⁶ *Id.* | Thomas, C., & Opiyo, G. O. (2021). *Minority Inclusion Learning Review of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland: Programmes in the Horn of Africa*. Minority Rights Group International, Centre for Consultancy Research and Development Enterprise.

community to internalize their oppression, believing they are inferior to other Somalis. Respondents identified two broad categories of discrimination: legal and structural discrimination, and social and emotional discrimination. The former includes the 4.5 power-sharing system, lack of political representation, barriers to education and employment, and an unfair justice system.

"The 4.5 system has let many people down For example, someone aspiring to become an minister may be told that they cannot compete for such a position because they are categorized as 4.5. This discourages individuals with high ambitions, leaving them disappointed. The 4.5 system poses significant challenges for such people." Woman, Garowe, Maxaa Tiri

"I face a lot of discrimination coming being among the 4.5, they throw stones at me and whenever I use a cup to drink water, they throw away the cup."

The second category of discrimination is more personal and social, encompassing mistreatment by employers, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse, and exclusion from social integration, including intermarriage. In extreme cases, this form of discrimination escalates to gender-based violence (GBV) and even murder.

Figure 13: Contributions Citing Discrimination Per Week

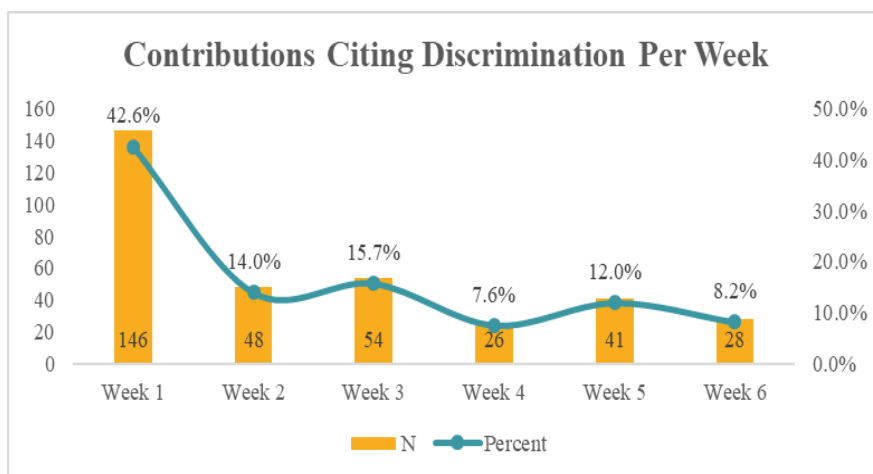


Figure 13 alongside illustrates the incidence of contributions citing discrimination in each week. The initial discussions focused on identifying the unique challenges faced by minority communities, while later discussions shifted toward proposed changes and specific

actions to improve minority inclusion.

Our quantitative analysis found a correlation between overall engagement in weekly discussions and mentions of discrimination, though many references to discrimination were unrelated to the specific topic. Further analysis of linguistic framing highlighted a perceived lack of agency, as participants described stopping discrimination as dependent on an external force. Discussions on language and cultural preservation emphasized inclusion, acceptance, and the need for safe spaces for minority language expression.

"It can be made possible by stopping the discrimination and marginalisation of the minority groups."

"By ending the discrimination and marginalisation real change can be achieved."
30, Baidoa, Maay

3.1.2: Conflict and Violence including Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Although only **1.3% (n=29)** of respondents mentioned these issues, they emphasized the urgent need to address crimes such as rape, sexual harassment, and targeted killings. People living with disabilities (PLWDs) were particularly vocal about being affected by conflict and violence, as their mobility limitations and reduced capacity for self-defense make them especially vulnerable during violent incidents.

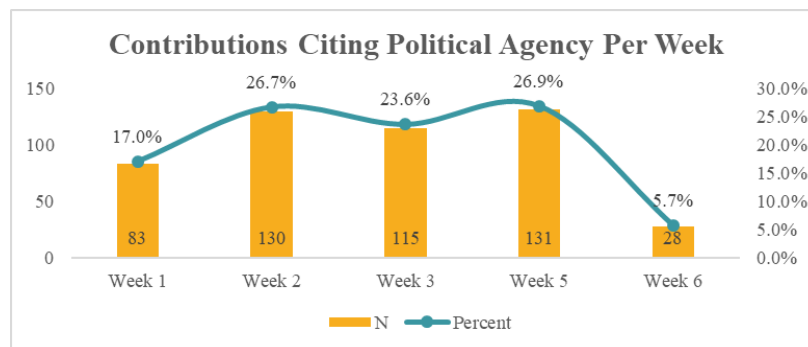
"They are facing a lot of challenges; their girls being raped, elders being killed. They are voiceless." Woman, Bardere, Maxaa Tiri, Maay Maay, English, Bajuni, displaced

Beyond murder and GBV, some participants highlighted conflict as a severe consequence of anti-minority sentiment. Clan-based identities have fueled intercommunal violence, political confrontations, and displacement, leading to loss of life and governmental instability. Additionally, the exclusion and mistreatment of minority groups have, at times, led to radicalization, as marginalized individuals feel powerless and unheard.

3.1.3: Lack of Political Agency

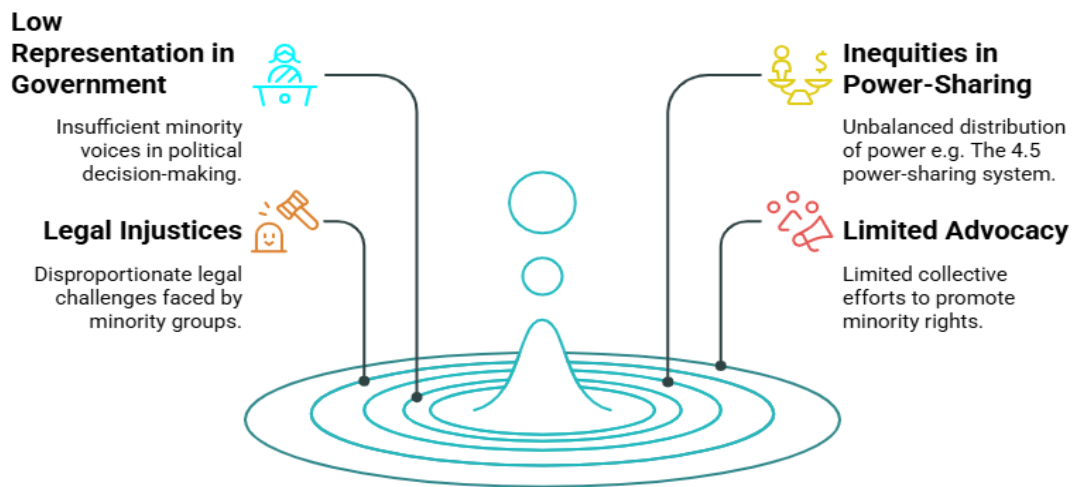
In 2022, minorities held about 20% of cabinet positions, but in bodies like the House of the People, majority clans had twice as many seats. This restricts minority groups' ability to push for reforms. Additionally, community-level discrimination discourages minorities from disclosing their clan identities, hindering support networks and collective advocacy.

Figure 14: Contributions Citing Political Agency Per Week



Participants highlighted lack of political agency as a significant issue, cited by 21.5% (n=487) and spanning five of the six weeks of engagement.

They characterised lack of agency as:



Younger respondents (18-35) frequently highlighted the lack of political agency among minority groups and the need for their inclusion in leadership. In contrast, individuals aged 36-55 focused on political representation as key to improving minority access to essential services. They called for stronger legal and statutory frameworks and reforms from both the government and NGOs to address systemic disadvantages.

"There are a lot of challenges 0.5 people face including lack of participation in the government bodies, lack of consideration, being despised, I would like those 0.5 people that are being discriminated against by Somalis to be stopped."
Woman, 23, Jowhar

Women were also significantly vocal about the lack of minority communities political agency. Inadequate government services, including water, education, and security, often affect women, as they often occupy the roles of caregivers and homemakers. Women aged 18-35 were the most vocal about the need for greater political agency. By strengthening their political agency it would empower them to better support their families and ensure that children have access to education and essential services. Additionally, individuals who were neither disabled nor displaced significantly supported minority representation in leadership, believing it would benefit 0.5 communities.

3.1.3: Lack of Access to Services

Decades of conflict and natural disasters have left many Somalis without access to basic services, with 70% living in absolute poverty.⁷ That being said, studies have found that minorities are more likely to face food insecurity, hold informal employment, and lack access to microcredit or vocational training resources.⁸ Discrimination has a direct impact on aid distribution, and that they are more likely to experience identity-based aid diversion.⁹ Unequal distribution of aid risks perpetuating

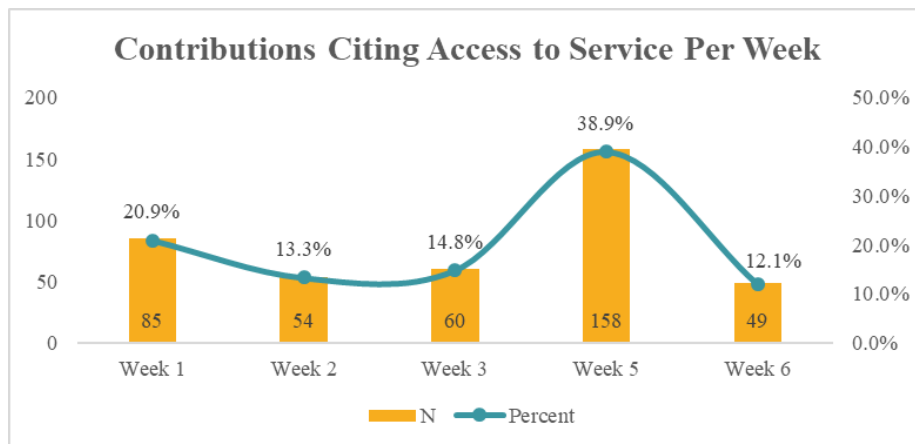
⁷ Swiss Cooperation Programme, *Horn of Africa 2022-2025*. (2021). Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

⁸ Thomas, C., & Opiyo, G. O. (2021). *Minority Inclusion Learning Review of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland: Programmes in the Horn of Africa*. Minority Rights Group International, Centre for Consultancy Research and Development Enterprise.

⁹ *Id.*

cycles of urgent humanitarian need and undermining long-term economic and political development for minority groups.

Figure 16: Contributions Citing Access to Services Per Week



Given the magnitude of Somalia's humanitarian crisis, access to services such as aid, education, emerged as a significant theme with 18% (n=406) of respondents mentioning it during most discussions.

"As minority communities, we are facing a lot of problems, including a lack of education for our children, no participation in decision making forums, capacity building training. We were marginalised and our children had no education opportunities. We are facing a lot of problems in this town and only God can help us" 27, Xamarweyne, Maxaa Tiri

"We are in the camps we have no support some people are disabled they don't have food, shelter and water. I could appreciate if you could assist me with even 2 dollars." 20, Hiran



Men

Better education and job opportunities.



Women

Emphasized great need to be able to access services and face gender-specific issues that are likely to amplify their needs.



People living with disabilities

Highlighted their lack of access to services in 5 out of a 6 weeks discussions. Urged the government to take greater responsibility in supporting them.



Many respondents

Highlighted the lack of access to essential services; some reported limited to no government support particularly for families, IDPs and PLWDs. Called for increased humanitarian assistance in rural areas and regions affected by natural disasters or conflict. Finally, urged the government to take responsibility of the minority.



3.1.4: Lack of Income Generation Opportunities

Widespread unemployment in Somalia disproportionately affects minority communities. Youth unemployment is estimated at up to 75%, and throughout the six-week dialogue series, 6.3% (n=142) of participants raised concerns about the lack of employment and income-generating opportunities, an issue discussed consistently across five weeks.

"I am from minorities, we don't do work. Even as We educated we don't get job."
37, Bosaso

Participants, especially from minority groups, voiced frustration over systemic barriers to formal employment, even for those with education. Two groups were particularly impacted: educated youth facing limited job prospects, and displaced individuals who lost livelihoods while fleeing conflict. Displaced respondents emphasized the lack of resources to rebuild agricultural businesses, while non-displaced individuals noted that education alone does not translate into job opportunities, highlighting the need for targeted employment interventions.

Notably, while non-displaced participants often linked economic exclusion to limited leadership representation, displaced individuals and persons living with disabilities (PLWDs) emphasized economic empowerment as essential for survival and independence. This contrast suggests that for some, economic stability is a stepping stone to civic participation, while for others, it is a critical lifeline in the face of systemic exclusion.

Providing tailored financial, material, and training support would enable both displaced and non-displaced minority groups to re-engage in income-generating activities and build more secure futures.

3.1.5: There Are No Minorities

In this context, the notion that "there are no minorities" reflects participants' views on promoting positive mindset shifts among minorities, discouraging self-perception as inferior. However, some responses denied the existence of minorities or their challenges, while others included harmful rhetoric, even advocating violence against minority groups.²

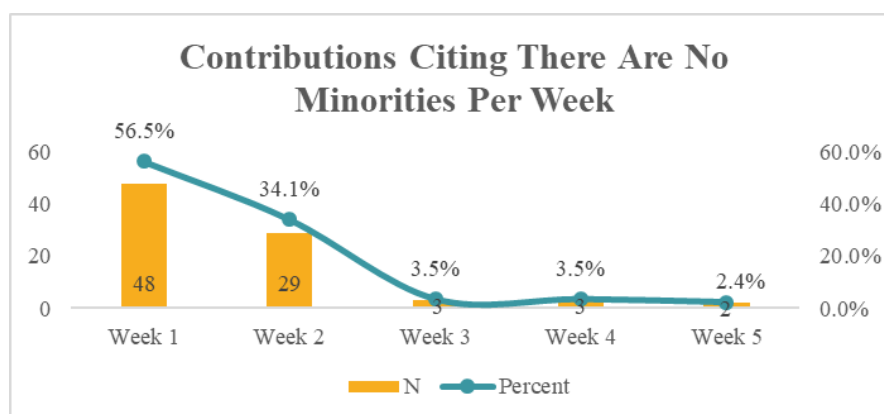


Figure 17: Contributions Citing There Are No Minorities Per Week

Across all 6 radio engagements a number of

participants dismissed the existence of discrimination against minorities, including several that accused the radio shows of fabricating the issue for foreign interests. Several respondents referred to them as “Africans, not Somalis.” Disturbingly, there were a small number of respondents who specifically advocated violence against minority groups. A different manifestation of the same issue are those contributions which deny the existence of minorities altogether.

While many negative comments were recorded, they primarily came from individuals over the age of 35, who often hold deep-seated resentment due to historical injustices. In contrast, younger participants (aged 18-35) largely contributed by advocating for a mindset shift, believing that minorities could overcome challenges by rejecting the notion of inferiority. However, extreme comments such as “kill them,” “burn them,” and “chase them” reflect radicalized thinking, though they were predominantly expressed by the older generation, highlighting the deeply rooted issue of cultural hatred. Sustained efforts to counter radicalization remain essential in preventing its spread, particularly among youth.

My answer is to chase away all the minorities from the country so that they are eradicated. All .5 have to be gathered in one place and burn them all. Thank you. 65, Banaadir

“There is no point five, but you are making it. Somalia is five and it is the five sides of the star inside the flag. No point, the separation you are doing is something you are working for foreigners, and you will get the consequences you deserve.” Woman, 34, Beledweyne, Somali

3.2: Participants’ Recommendations

Participants proposed strategies to strengthen minority inclusion, focusing on awareness, income generation, integration, and cohesion. These aim to expand economic opportunities, boost leadership representation, and raise rights awareness. The next sections explore these themes and key recommendations in detail.

3.2.1: Awareness Campaigns

Throughout weeks 2-5, 5.5% (n=156) participants emphasized the need for awareness campaigns as a critical step toward improving conditions for minority communities. The term “awareness” was used broadly, much like “discrimination,” to describe various challenges, needs, and solutions. The need for awareness was strongly emphasized across various demographics, highlighting its significance within the Somali community. It was particularly noted by youth aged 18-35, women, men, displaced and non-displaced individuals, as well as those without disabilities. Given its broad relevance, it is

“The community should be given awareness. The discrimination should be prohibited specially among the youth. The other thing is, the youth should interact together and avoid discrimination.” 30, Beydhabo

essential to design awareness campaigns that are tailored to address the specific interests and needs of each demographic group.

Additionally, analysis of participant responses revealed three key aspects of awareness campaigns: the need to recognize minority identity, understanding minority rights, and promoting social inclusion and cohesion. In Week 4, respondents called for awareness campaigns specifically for preserving and promoting minority languages and cultures. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on these elements when designing awareness campaigns, ensuring they effectively reach and engage diverse demographic groups.

3.2.2: Integration and Internal Cohesion

9.4% (n=266) of respondents highlighted the need for unity and a shared agenda to overcome divisions and promote inclusion. Integration was seen as essential for advancing minority participation, with calls for their active involvement in decision-making and public forums.

While external support was welcomed, some participants stressed that minority communities must take initiative to foster internal cohesion and advocate for their rights. Successful integration, they noted, requires mindset shifts from both majority and minority groups to build mutual respect and tolerance.

"Marginalised communities did not support each other and always against one another but other Somali communities, if one of them face challenges, others support. Like if one of the marginalised communities was jailed, nobody advocates unlike the other Somalia communities."
46, Maxaa Tiri

Respondents, particularly youth, emphasized social integration as a foundation for cultural preservation and future leadership. Intercultural understanding, increased intermarriage, and inclusion of minority traditions in education were proposed as pathways to greater cohesion. Youth and women, often underrepresented in formal structures, were especially vocal in linking integration to cultural sustainability, reflecting both their aspirations and the pressures of modernisation and marginalisation.

3.2.3: Political, Legal, and Institutional Reform

Another common theme was the importance of local and national-level reform in governance, the judiciary, and education and hiring processes. Participants insisted leaders should abolish the 4.5 system and implement the "one

"As a Banaadiri community, we need to be involved in District meetings and discussion for decision making. Since power sharing is based on 4.5, the majority communities have good representatives, and we need the same. If they have 10 representatives in decision making meetings, we need an equal number with them. We also need education for our children though change is not near, but we need equal sharing in education opportunities and full participation in decision making forums." 44, Waaberi District, Maxaa Tiri

person, one vote" policy. They also called for establishing a strong judiciary capable of fairly addressing injustices against minorities, including killings, displacement, and systemic oppression. Many believed that equal rights and opportunities in education, healthcare, employment, and leadership would better ensure fairness, transparency, and inclusivity in governance.

Some suggested Islamic teachings could help facilitate social and political reform, and that Islam provides a moral foundation for minority group advocacy. They highlighted Islam's emphasis on equality before Allah as a basis for more just institutional structures.

3.2.4: Cultural and Linguistic Preservation

Week 4 discussions highlighted strong community concern for the preservation of minority languages and traditions. Participants advocated for greater visibility of minority cultures in public life, particularly in school curricula, and for empowering elders to share cultural knowledge without fear or stigma.

While discrimination was noted as a barrier, some participants also raised intergenerational concerns, pointing to younger audiences' declining engagement with traditional practices. They stressed the need for elders and cultural custodians to adapt, including using youth-friendly platforms like social media to keep traditions alive.

"The minority language can develop by adding to the curriculum of the learning institution and their respective groups should be proud and participate in public gathering." 45, Afgoye, Maxaa Tiri

Notably, youth (18–35) emerged as active voices in championing cultural preservation, linking it to broader goals of integration and inclusion. Their support reflects both a sense of cultural responsibility and anxiety about the erosion of heritage amid modernisation and marginalisation. Beyond identity, participants also connected language preservation to practical outcomes, highlighting how language barriers can hinder access to health and humanitarian services. Strengthening minority languages was therefore seen not only as a cultural imperative, but also as a step toward more equitable service delivery.

"By guarding cultural heritage and seeking more from elders in order to revive the traditional heritage and everybody's dialect....sharing them in the social media. such as TikTok, Youtube channels" 37

3.2.5: Practical Needs

Lastly, respondents viewed access to basic humanitarian services as essential to building a more stable and just Somali society. As previously mentioned, food and water insecurity, as well as barriers to education, employment, and healthcare, affect communities across Somalia, regardless of clan status. Participants called for increased access to basic services, education and employment opportunities, and financial and development assistance. In Week 6, participants were particularly vocal around the importance of aid in the agricultural and fishing sectors.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusions

The following are key conclusions on minority inclusion issues in Somalia.

1. **The minority identity is deeply contested in Somalia:** Those publicly identified as minorities face widespread discrimination based on ethnicity, race, and social status, limiting their access to employment opportunities, essential public services, fair legal processes, and participation in governance. Participants reported that minorities were disproportionately subject to verbal and physical attacks including murder and GBV.
2. **Identity contestation drives internal conflict around self-identification for many minorities:** Many minorities face a dilemma wherein if they identify themselves, they risk facing the discrimination and abuses listed above. However, if they hide their minority identity in favour of integration, they are barred from the social cohesion of group membership and its associated benefits, including social and community networks, resource sharing, and community protection or advocacy in response to injustice.
3. **Majorities are divided in their perception of minority communities:** While acknowledgement of the challenges minorities face was widespread, some participants claimed that minority groups and the 4.5 system do not exist in Somalia. This lack of consensus regarding the extent of the challenges minorities face, or even their existence, could pose challenges when attempting to address anti-minority injustices.
4. **Minorities lack political agency:** The existing 4.5 clan-based power-sharing system restricts minority representation in government. The system institutionalised exclusion, restricting minority participation in decision-making and contributing to social and legal inequality. Minorities also struggle to participate in collective advocacy, due in part to the risks of self-identification, further hindering their political agency.
5. **Limited access to essential humanitarian and economic services worsens hardship:** Many minorities live in displacement camps with poor access to food, clean water, healthcare, and education. Economic hardships and high unemployment rates exacerbate their vulnerability. Instances of aid diversion and exclusion from community feedback mechanisms compound humanitarian needs among minorities.¹⁰

4.2. Recommendations

Recommendations are divided into two sections. The first section outlines policy and high-level recommendations, focusing on actions for donors, government authorities, UN agencies, and civil society to drive policy and systemic changes. The second section provides operational recommendations, highlighting immediate and practical actions that SDC and its implementing partners can incorporate into their programs.

¹⁰ Thomas, C., & Eno, M. (2022). *Minority exclusion in Somalia: Shortcomings of aid agency feedback mechanisms*. Minority Rights Group International.

1. Policy and High-Level Recommendations

a. Promote Policy Changes for Equality and Representation:

- i. Strengthen legal structures that eliminate discrimination, tribalism, and injustices against minority groups. Expand civic engagement initiatives to encourage greater political involvement from these communities.
- ii. Abolish the 4.5 power-sharing system, which has long perpetuated inequality and limited minority representation in leadership.

b. Strengthen Justice Systems and Human Rights Protection:

- i. Implement affirmative action policies in education, employment, and governance to correct historical inequalities. Policies ensuring the fair distribution of resources must be enforced.
- ii. Undertake community-led reconciliation programs which are essential in helping minority groups heal from past injustices and integrate more effectively into society.

c. Ensure Fair Distribution of Resources and Access to Services:

- i. Expand access to education, healthcare, clean water, and food security programs in marginalized areas and ensure fair distribution of the resources to address the economic and social hardships faced by minority groups.
- ii. Reassess existing systems for resource allocation to ensure transparency and fairness. Additionally, prioritize improving living conditions in displacement camps and facilitating the safe resettlement and reintegration of displaced minorities.

d. Create Economic and Employment Opportunities:

- i. Develop long-term strategies to support sustainable economic independence through vocational training and financial assistance.
- ii. Implement inclusive hiring policies in both the government and private sectors to create employment opportunities for qualified individuals from marginalized backgrounds.
- iii. Invest in irrigation, climate -resilient farming techniques, provide grants and farming and fishing inputs, tools and equipment, and training to help minority groups reestablish their agricultural and fishing activities and improve food security.

e. Improve Security and Protection for Minority Groups:

- i. Implemented stronger security measures to protect the minority communities from violence, targeted attacks, and systemic discrimination.
- ii. Train law enforcement agencies on how to handle minority-related issues sensitively and fairly.

f. Preserve and Promote Minority Languages and Cultures:

- i. Implement policies that recognize and protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of minority communities.
- ii. Integrate minority languages and cultural studies into school curricula to promote their preservation. Encourage intergenerational learning by creating spaces where elders can pass down cultural knowledge and traditions.

g. Increasing Awareness and Advocacy for Social Inclusion:

- i. Increase awareness and advocacy for social inclusion to foster peaceful coexistence and eliminate discrimination, tribalism, and social exclusion.
- ii. Religious leaders and CSOs should play an active role in promoting social integration based on humanitarian and Islamic principles. National initiatives that emphasize equality and inclusivity must be developed, alongside strict enforcement of legal measures to penalize discriminatory practices.

2. Operational Recommendations

- a. In support of the government initiatives to promote policy changes for equality and representation, SDC should work with the federal or district governments to set up minority rights committees and advocacy groups within the government. Given the prevalence of women in calls for minority political agency, SDC could partner with local women's rights organisations to develop community education initiatives and collective action networks to promote women's political agency.
- b. On strengthening justice systems and human rights protection, SDC and its implementing partners should establish legal aid services specifically for minority communities that will enable them to seek justice when facing discrimination, violence, or land disputes.
- c. On ensuring fair distribution of resources and access to services, SDC could support aid interventions specifically targeted to locations known to have high concentrations of minorities, to offset existing inequalities in aid distribution. They should aim to improve compliance and oversight measures to mitigate the diversion of aid away from minority communities.
- d. On creating economic and employment opportunities, there will be a need to carry out seminars or awareness campaigns to combat mistreatment of or workplace discrimination against minorities who do have jobs. Push for expanding job opportunities to absorb educated minority individuals. Additionally, support smart agriculture and fishing initiatives across minority areas.
- e. On improving security and protection for minority groups;
 - i. SDC could partner with organisations and local communities to develop community-based safety, protection, and prevention and response to violence initiatives, with a focus on disadvantaged groups.
 - ii. SDC, in partnership with local women's rights organisations and minority communities, could develop strategies and networks to prevent, respond, treat and support victims of GBV, with a focus on disadvantaged groups.
 - iii. Regarding the prevalence of conflict and risk of radicalisation, SDC could work with community and religious leaders to implement deradicalisation networks and programmes for minorities.
- f. On increasing awareness and advocacy for social inclusion;
 - i. Support implementation of nationwide campaigns to raise awareness and promote unity between majority and minority groups.

- ii. AVF will partner with SDC and other implementers to foster awareness through uplifting the voices of minorities themselves, by providing platforms for them to share their stories and educate broader Somali society about the challenges they face, as well as potential solutions.
- g. On preserving and promoting minority languages and cultures, AVF will work closely with SDC to support radio and television programmes in minority languages to increase their visibility. Additionally, SDC could support public education campaigns to highlight the importance of linguistic, cultural diversity, and encourage appreciation and acceptance. Media outlets, public discussions, and cultural events can play a vital role in challenging discrimination against minority languages.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of radio stations

Table 1: List of radio stations

Banadir	Galmudug	Hir-shabelle	Jubaland	Puntland	South West
1. Radio Kulmiye	1. Radio Galgaduud	1. Radio Balcad	1. Radio Xogmaal	1. Radio Daljir Bosaso	1. Radio Xudur
2. Shabelle	2. Radio Daljir Cabudwaaq	2. Radio Jowhar	2. Radio Gedo	2. Radio Garowe	2. Radio Baydhabo
3. Radio Star FM	3. Radio Dayax	3. Radio Hiiraanweyn	3. Radio Markableey	3. Radio Codka Nabada	3. Radio Afgooye
					4. Radio Warsan
					5. Radio Codka Bay iyo Bakool
					6. Radio Baraawe

Annex 2: [Thick description](#)

Annex 3: [AV's interactive radio method](#)

Annex 4 : [Radio, Promo and Mini-drama Scripts](#)