



Contracting authority: European Commission

Increased opportunities for Somali citizens' scrutiny of fiscal and financial governance

Annex A.1 – Grant application form - Concept note

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Reference:

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Deadline for submission¹ of concept notes:

10/04/2023 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)²)

[Number & title of lot]	EuropeAid/177248/DD/ACT/SO Increased opportunities for Somali citizens' scrutiny of fiscal and financial governance
Title of the action:	Strengthening Community Oversight for Government Financial Transparency and Accountability in Somalia
Name of the lead applicant	
Nationality of the lead applicant ³	

Dossier No

(for official use only)

¹ Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open from Monday to Friday 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except during European Commission public holidays in Belgium as published in the Official Journal).

² An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

³ An organisation's statutes must show that it was established under the national law of the country concerned and that the head office is located in an eligible country. Any organisation established in a different country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation. See the footnotes to the guidelines for the call.

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The controller of call for proposals is the head of legal affairs unit of DG International Partnerships

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⁴ Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC, OJ L 205 of 21.11.2018, p. 39.

⁵ This link will lead you to the "EuropeAid privacy statement" published in the Practical Guide General Annexes (see Annex A13).

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1. CONCEPT NOTE

1.1. Summary of the action

1.1.1. Fill in the table below:

Objectives of the action	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To enhance the role of Civil Society in providing external scrutiny of Somali public finances and demanding greater transparency and accountability from governmental authorities.2. To empower Somali citizens to take an active role in monitoring and evaluating the use of public resources.
Target group(s)	The target groups of this proposed project are Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media outlets, grassroots organizations, government policymakers, students and government administrative and political leadership including all involved in the government financial transparency and accountability sector. These are already literate, educated and informed citizens, committed to promoting transparency and accountability in the management of public finances and are passionate to improve the situation.
Final beneficiaries	The final beneficiaries of this project are community members in Somalia, including women, youth, and general rural populations.
Expected outputs	<p>The activities will support the growth of a more empowered and vibrant civil society through a programme designed to monitor progress, evaluate results/impact and generate evidence for learning in the delivery of seven individual projects.</p> <p>Specific Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Monitoring and critical analysis of FGS and/or FMS annual budgets; of FGS and/or FMS quarterly budget execution reports; of the annual Financial Governance Reports (issued by the Financial Governance Committee); and of audit reports issued by the OAGS and state-level auditors.2. Analysis and/or dissemination to the Somali citizenry of relevant legislation issued in the areas of fiscal management and financial governance, such as laws and regulations in the spheres of expenditure management, inland and external tax policy and administration, public procurement, anti-corruption etc.3. A central theme of the project is promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
Main activities	<p>The main activities of this project include targeted training, advocacy, capacity building, awareness raising, research, and monitoring.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Monitor and analyse FGS/FMS annual budgets, quarterly budget execution reports, Financial Governance Reports, and audit reports to enhance financial accountability.2. Analyse and disseminate relevant fiscal management and financial governance legislation to increase public awareness of regulations and laws.

3. Conduct civic education initiatives to enhance citizens' understanding of government financial transparency and accountability.
4. Train citizens to participate in policy and budget processes by providing feedback and comments on proposed policies and budgets.
5. Establish and strengthen networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to support community oversight of government finances and promote collaboration and knowledge sharing.
6. Organize virtual sessions with civil society to discuss the community's oversight role in financial and accountability oversight.
7. Provide technical and organizational skills training to enhance CSO members' ability to monitor and analyse government reports related to financial accountability.
8. Create social media platforms to disseminate information on citizens' oversight roles in financial accountability.
9. Conduct monitoring and evaluation to inform project implementation and future learnings.
10. Prepare narrative and financial reports to inform stakeholders of project progress.

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1.2. Description of the action: cover all the 7 points in the instructions: (max 2 pages)

1. Background

According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2020 (Transparency International, 2021), Somalia's ranking as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, further undermines the government's ability to provide basic services and attract foreign investment and support from international donors. This situation is one of the key challenges we intend to correct.

According to the World Bank's Somalia Economic Update (2019), political instability, conflict, and economic challenges have hindered the ability of the Somali government to provide basic services to its citizens. Weak institutions and a lack of accountability and transparency have contributed to ongoing conflict and instability, as noted by the International Crisis Group's report on building a functional Somali state (2021).

2. Objectives:

Our response to these challenges is the "Strengthening Community Oversight for Government Financial Transparency and Accountability in Somalia" project. This seeks to enhance the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in providing external scrutiny of Somali public finances whilst demanding greater transparency and accountability from governmental authorities.

The project's main objective is to increase opportunities for Somali citizens to help them scrutinize the fiscal and financial affairs of public interest, particularly regarding financial oversight and wider advocacy around good economic and fiscal accountability. To achieve this general objective, the project outlines four specific actions.

- a. Increase citizens' understanding of government financial transparency and accountability, and their ability to participate in community oversight, through targeted civic education initiatives.
- b. Establish and strengthen networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to support community oversight of government finances and accountability, by promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among CSOs.
- c. Improve the organizational and technical capacity of CSOs engaged in community oversight, by providing training, mentoring, and technical assistance to enhance their ability to support community oversight of government finances and accountability.
- d. One further outcome aims to incentivize greater government transparency and accountability towards Somali citizens by supporting scaled-up participation of CSOs in policy and budget processes, in Somalia.

3. Stakeholder Groups:

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media outlets, donors, grassroots organizations, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS) identify as key accountability key stakeholders in Somalia. The beneficiary groups are the marginalized sectors of society including women, rural populations, low-income households, and young people.

4. Indicators and Targets:

The project and its actions will be monitored and measured, to guide successful implementation.

S/N	Indicators	Targets
1.	Percentage of key stakeholders engaged in the inception workshops over the three - year project timescale.	100% of identified key stakeholders attend the workshops.
2.	Percentage of citizens participating in training on an oversight role for government financial transparency and accountability.	At least 80% of the target population participates in the training.
3.	Level of citizens' understanding of the government's financial transparency and accountability.	At least a 30% increase in citizens' understanding compared to the baseline levels, as measured by pre-and post-training assessments.
4.	Percentage of citizens providing public	At least 50% of the citizens who received training

	feedback and comments on proposed policies and budgets.	provide public feedback and comments.
5.	The number of CSOs strengthened.	At least 50 CSOs strengthened in the project area.
6.	The number of CSO members trained in technical and in technical and organisation skills.	At least 200 members are trained per year in technical and organisational skills.
7.	The number of followers and level of engagement on social media platforms.	At least 5,500 followers and a high level of engagement on social media platforms.
8.	Level of awareness and engagement on finance and accountability issues.	Considering the target group will be educated and sincere attendees, we expect to achieve a high-level of engagement from these activities.

Mitigating Risk

The proposed project will include a risk management plan to identify and mitigate potential risks and challenges to project implementation. These risks include security concerns in Somalia, potential delays in project implementation due to bureaucratic procedures, control of expenditures and challenges in assessing key stakeholders or data.

The risk management plan includes strategies to mitigate these risks, such as security proposals to guarantee the safety of project staff and partners, strategies to build strong relationships with government officials and stakeholders, strict controls on expenditures through authorisation levels and committee oversight, built-in flexibility in project timelines and contingency resources to help counter unexpected challenges.

5. Activity Type

The following project activities are considered highly relevant in increasing citizens' participation and oversight in government financial transparency and accountability.

- a. Inception workshops will bring key stakeholders together in solidarity, including community representatives, civil society representatives, and local government administrators, to kickstart the project.
- b. Community mobilization and civic education initiatives will help increase citizens' understanding and ability to participate in community oversight.
- c. Training citizens on their increased role in policy and budget processes will empower them to provide public feedback and comments on proposed policies and budgets.
- d. Establishing and strengthening networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) will further support community oversight and promote collaboration among CSOs.
- e. Virtual sessions with civil society, technical and organizational skills training for CSO members, and social media platforms for disseminating information will enhance citizens' ability to monitor and analyse government reports related to financial accountability.
- f. Monitoring and evaluation inform project implementation processes and future lessons, while the preparation and dissemination of relevant reports will increase awareness of finance and accountability issues.

6. Cross-cutting issues

The project activities listed, have the potential to mainstream several relevant cross-cutting elements in Somalia, including the promotion of human rights, promotion of an inclusive society, gender equality, democracy, good governance, support for youth, children's rights and indigenous peoples, sustainability, and combating HIV/AIDS.

- a. Inception workshops can also encourage open dialogue and constructive communication among stakeholders, promoting democracy and good governance.
- b. Community mobilization and civic education initiatives can increase awareness of human rights and gender equality issues among citizens. For example, these initiatives can educate the public about the rights of women and girls to participate in political processes, promoting gender equality.

- c. Training citizens on their increased role in policy and budget processes and having a say in decision-making processes that affect them, can promote good governance and democracy by ensuring that all citizens have a voice.
- d. Establishing and strengthening networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can promote collaboration among CSOs that work on human rights, gender equality, and other relevant issues. This can lead to a more unified and effective approach to addressing these issues.
- e. Virtual sessions can ensure that marginalized groups, including youth and indigenous peoples, have access to resources that can help them monitor and analyse government reports related to financial accountability. Social media platforms can also be used to disseminate information about these issues to a wider audience.
- f. Monitoring and evaluation can be used to assess the impact of the project on human rights, gender equality, and other relevant issues. Reports on project implementation can also be disseminated to increase awareness of these issues among the public, promoting environmental sustainability and combating HIV/AIDS.

A collaborative effort by key stakeholders including marginalized groups can achieve this goal by empowering citizens, establishing and strengthening networks of CSOs, and ensuring adherence to standards in community oversight of government finances and accountability.

7. Implementation Timeframe

- This is a long-term project, guided by the objectives outlined in the EU Roadmap for engagement with civil society in Somalia (2021-2025), with an overall timescale of between 24 months and 36 months.
- At this stage, a detailed breakdown of the activities by content and duration, has not been generated pending a decision on the grant application
- Our partner CSO, with a proven track record in accountability in Somalia, will regulate and maintain the implementation schedule.
- We also anticipate that the EU Delegation to Somalia will oversee the project and provide technical assistance.
- Courses will be planned to run in parallel and with repetitive frequency over the Project duration, offering continued placement options for voluntary attendance.
- Stakeholder participation will be ensured, and monitoring and evaluation will be conducted regularly.
- Progress reports will be prepared to an agreed schedule, circulated to interested parties and a sustainability plan developed.

1.3. Relevance of the action (max 3 pages)

1.3.1. Relevance to the objectives/sectors/themes/specific priorities of the call For proposals

The proposed project, titled "Strengthening Community Oversight for Government Financial Transparency and Accountability in Somalia," is a perfect fit for the call for proposals. The call's primary objective is to increase the opportunities for Somali citizens to scrutinize fiscal and financial governance, and the proposed project's objective is to promote government financial transparency and accountability while increasing citizens' ability to participate in community oversight.

The project's specific objectives are in line with the call for proposals' outcomes. The project aims to establish and strengthen networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to support community oversight of government finances and accountability, which will promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among CSOs. Moreover, the project aims to enhance the organizational and technical capacity of CSOs by providing training, mentoring, and technical assistance to support community oversight of government finances and accountability.

The proposed project's alignment with the specific requirements in the guidelines for applicants is notable, especially the need to strengthen institutional checks and balances on executive power and the vertical accountability function of civil society in Somalia. The project aims to increase state institutions' accountability by enhancing the role of local civil society actors in providing greater oversight of the executive's use of public resources. This will contribute to Somalia's nascent democracy and aligns with the call for proposals' emphasis on improving public financial management practices at both the federal and state levels.

Finally, the proposed project's contribution to Outcome 1 of the EU Multi-Annual Indicative Programming (2021-27) for Somalia's "Economic Governance and Anti-Corruption Programme" (ACT 606-13) demonstrates its significance. The project's activities to strengthen community oversight of government finances and accountability will help accelerate reforms to strengthen financial governance in Somalia, including countering corruption, in line with the requirements of the HIPC initiative. The project's outcomes will also contribute to SDG 16 and 17, which promote peaceful and inclusive societies and a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development.

1.3.2. Relevance to the particular needs and constraints of the target country/countries, region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)

According to the World Bank (2020), Somalia faces significant challenges in the area of public financial management, with limited transparency and accountability in the use of public funds. The most recent Country Partnership Framework for Somalia identifies building transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public institutions as a key priority. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Somalia National Human Development Report 2020 emphasizes the importance of promoting good governance, accountability, and transparency, which aligns with the objectives of this proposed project.

The project aims to address the problems of limited government financial transparency and accountability, which are interrelated at all levels. Citizens' lack of understanding of government financial management and a weak civil society have contributed to the limited oversight of public finances. The project will promote civic education initiatives to address these problems to increase citizens' understanding of government financial transparency and accountability.

It will also establish and strengthen networks of civil society organizations to support community oversight of government finances and promote collaboration, and knowledge sharing among civil society organizations. Moreover, the project will improve the organizational and technical capacity of CSOs engaged in community oversight by providing training, mentoring, and technical assistance to enhance their ability to support community oversight of government finances and accountability.

The proposed project aligns with significant plans undertaken at the national, regional, and local levels in Somalia. The National Development Plan (NDP9) of Somalia aims to promote good governance,

transparency, and accountability, which aligns with the objectives of this proposed project (Federal Government of Somalia, 2017).

Additionally, the project is complementary to other initiatives supported by the EU and other donors in Somalia. For example, the EU's Comprehensive Approach to Security and Development in Somalia recognizes the importance of promoting governance and accountability in Somalia (European Union External Action Service, 2021). The project will avoid duplication by aligning its objectives with other development initiatives and coordinating its activities with other planned projects.

The proposed project 'Strengthening Community Oversight for Government Financial Transparency and Accountability in Somalia' is part of a larger program aimed at promoting governance, accountability, and transparency in Somalia. It will contribute to this program by providing civic education, establishing networks of civil society organizations, and improving the organizational and technical capacity of CSOs engaged in community oversight of government finances and accountability. The project has the potential to achieve synergies with other EU initiatives, particularly in the area of governance and accountability.

1.3.3. Describe and define the target groups and final beneficiaries, their needs and constraints, and state how the action will address these needs.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):

The target group of this proposed project includes CSOs that are engaged in promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability in Somalia. The project aims to improve the organizational and technical capacity of these CSOs by providing training, mentoring, and technical assistance. The selection criteria for these CSOs will be based on their track record in promoting civic education, community oversight, and transparency, as well as their willingness to collaborate and share knowledge with other CSOs.

Marginalized groups:

The final beneficiaries of this proposed project are marginalized groups in Somalia, including women, rural populations, poor households, and young people. These groups have limited access to information on public finance management and little opportunity to engage in community oversight of government finances. The project will promote civic education initiatives to increase the understanding of these groups on government financial transparency and accountability.

A central theme of the project is promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It is the community's commitment to protect and aid lives affected by failures in fiscal and financial governance, in particular where women and girls are disproportionately affected.

Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS):

The Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States are stakeholders in this proposed project. The project intends to improve the transparency and accountability of public financial management systems in Somalia, which aligns with the national development plan of Somalia. This will address the capacity constraints of these government entities in terms of public financial management and provide technical assistance to enhance their ability to ensure transparency and accountability.

Donors: Donors providing support to Somalia are also a target group for this proposed project. The project aligns with donor priorities in promoting good governance, transparency, and accountability in Somalia. The project will allow donors to collaborate with the government and civil society organizations in Somalia in promoting these objectives.

Individuals involved in the accountability and accountability sector in Somalia:

These individuals include auditors, accountants, and other professionals involved in the oversight of public finances. The project will enhance their skills in promoting transparency and accountability in public financial management.

Participatory Process

The proposed project will prioritize the participation of its target groups and final beneficiaries through a collaborative and inclusive process. The project team will engage with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders to identify their needs and constraints. They will then design activities that specifically address these needs, ensuring that the project is tailored to the community's unique requirements.

Furthermore, the project will actively facilitate the participation of marginalized groups by establishing community-based oversight committees that include representatives from these groups. These committees

will be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the use of public funds in their communities, ensuring that the voice of marginalized groups is heard, and their concerns addressed.

This approach to community involvement will promote transparency and accountability while empowering marginalized groups. By ensuring that all members of the community have a voice in the project's development and implementation, the project can deliver impactful and sustainable results that truly address the needs of the community.

1.3.4. Particular added-value elements

The proposed project offers several unique and valuable components. Firstly, it aims to establish and reinforce networks of civil society organizations, enhancing their capacity and promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among stakeholders. Additionally, the project aims to develop innovative approaches to civic education and community oversight of government finances, furthering its impact.

These added-value elements are critical to the overall success of the project, as they will not only promote transparency and accountability but will also have a lasting impact on governance in Somalia. By implementing these elements, the project can contribute to creating a sustainable framework for promoting good governance, ultimately benefiting the Somali community as a whole.

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2 DECLARATIONS BY THE LEAD APPLICANT

The lead applicant, represented by the undersigned, being the authorised signatory of the lead applicant, and in the context of the present application, representing any co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) in the proposed action, hereby declares that:

- i. the lead applicant has the sources of financing and professional competence and qualifications specified in Section 2 of the guidelines for applicants;
- ii. the lead applicant undertakes to comply with the obligations foreseen in the affiliated entities' statement of the grant application form and with the principles of good partnership practice;
- iii. the lead applicant is directly responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), if any, and is not acting as an intermediary;
- iv. the lead applicant is able to provide proof of the consent of the co-applicants and affiliated entities to be included in the present application;
- v. if the requested amount is above EUR 15 000: [the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) and the affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of the situations excluding them from participating in contracts which are listed in Section 2.6.10.1. of the practical guide (available from the following Internet address: <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/2.+Basic+rules> ;
- vi. the lead applicant and each co-applicant and affiliated entity are in a position to deliver immediately, upon request, the supporting documents stipulated under Section 2.4 of the guidelines for applicants;
- vii. the lead applicant and each co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) (if any) are eligible in accordance with the criteria set out under Sections 2.1.1 of the guidelines for applicants;
- viii. if recommended to be awarded a grant, the lead applicant, the co-applicant(s) and the affiliated entity(ies) accept the contractual conditions as laid down in the standard grant contract annexed to the guidelines for applicants (Annex G) (or the Contribution Agreement where the lead applicant is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission);

We acknowledge that if we participate in spite of being in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide or if the declarations or information provided prove to be false we may be subject to rejection from this procedure and to administrative sanctions in the form of exclusion and financial penalties up to 10 % of the total estimated value of the grant being awarded and that this information may be published on the Commission website in accordance with the Financial Regulation in force. We are aware that, for the purposes of safeguarding the EU's financial interests, our personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the early detection and exclusion system, to the European Court of Auditors or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

Signed on behalf of the lead applicant.

Name:

Signature:

Position: Chairman

Date: 13th April 2023