

Annual Report



 2019
2020

WIMI | SOM
Women In | Media Initiative Somalia

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Abbreviations

PRECISE	Program on Enhanced Civil Society Engagement in Somalia.
CIPESA	The Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa.
MOWDAFA	Ministry of Women Development & Family Affairs, Puntland Somalia.
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation.
CSO	Civil Society Organization.
TOT	Training of Trainers.
GBV	Gender Based Violence.



FOREWORD

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am proud to present the first annual report (2019-2020) of Women in Media Initiative Somalia WIMISOM. This annual report sheds light on the many activities, initiatives and campaigns carried out by WIMISOM in the pursuit of empowering Somali women in media. These activities are in line with the broad vision of WIMISOM which is “Empowered women in journalism who can affect change in Somali women lives”.

On behalf of the founders; board of directors; staff and volunteers of WIMISOM, I extend gratitude and appreciation for the support and cooperation of our partners namely: ADRA Somalia; The Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) and National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Somali Gender Justice (SGJ) and Puntland Ministry of Women Development & Family Affairs (MOWDAFA). Somali women in media face many difficulties and hardships and work in difficult circumstances and unforgiving environment. I am honored to witness that through our work in different areas, we have empowered, enhanced the capacity, raised the awareness, or facilitated networking among hundreds of Somali female journalists.

I am also pleased that through our advocacy and awareness campaigns, we have contributed to raising awareness on human rights, GBV, the contribution of and challenges facing women in media and political participation of women. In conclusion, I thank the wonderful WIMISOM staff and volunteers

Nasro Abdirisak Ahmed
WIMISOM Executive Director

Executive Summary

This annual report highlights the key activities and achievements of WIMISOM in the period 2019-2020. Our Annual Report provides an overview of the work of WIMISOM detailing the key activities which were implemented. The activities which this report documents consist of some which are part of projects which WIMISOM implemented or is implementing with partners and other activities and initiatives which are the creation of WIMISOM in pursuit of its organizational goals and realization of its vision.

The report covers the work of WIMISOM in consultancy capacity with ADRA Somalia on the “Program on Enhanced Civil Society Engagement in Somalia (PRECISE) Project”. Through that project, WIMISOM have conducted four activities which comprised of one training, two interactive debates and development and dissemination of audio spot messages. The report also covers the activities of the project “Strengthening Digital Security Knowledge of Women Journalists and Women-Led Media Organizations in Somalia” which is funded under grant from The Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) under the context of Africa Digital Rights Fund (ADRF).

The report also highlights some of the activities which are part of the project “Enhancing the Capacity of Female Journalists” which is being implemented currently with support from National Endowment for Democracy NED. The activities are divided in to the four areas of work which WIMISOM operates which are: capacity building, advocacy, raising awareness and networking.

In this
**Annual
Report**



Background



Mission & vision



Goals



Activities



**Capacity
building**



Advocacy



**Raising
awareness**



Networking



Background

Women in Media Initiative Somalia (WIMISOM) was founded on June 2017 to give voice

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 to highlight the socio-economic challenges facing women, children and vulnerable groups through media and communication. WIMISOM is a non-profit and non-governmental which works to empower women in and through media. Using evidence-based research and employing media and communication, WIMISOM advocates and stands for social change through promotion of human rights, safety, security and capacity of women journalists, gender equality, good governance, women political participation and elimination of gender-based violence. WIMISOM conducts its work through collaboration with government, media houses, women organizations, relevant CSOs and international partners. WIMISOM implements its programs in professional manner that achieves sustainability in the results by employing useful tools. WIMISOM's main office is situated in Garowe, the administrative capital of Puntland State of Somalia.





Mission & vision

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.

Vision

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



Goals

Goals

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



Activities

Female journalists in Somalia are more vulnerable to online attack and harassment as they face a double-burden being attacked as journalists and as women.

Capacity building



Digital security training for women journalists and women-led media organizations

Female journalists in Somalia are more vulnerable to online attack and harassment as they face a double-burden being attacked as journalists and as women. To address that problem and increase the digital knowledge and skills of female journalists, WIMISOM with support from CIPESA conducted three-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on Digital Security for 15 women journalists in Garowe from November 30, 2020 to December 2, 2020. The trainees were journalists who work in print, electronic and online news outlets based in the states of Somalia including: Puntland (Garowe, Bosaso) Galmudug (Dhusamareb) Southwest (Baidao) Jubbaland (Kismayo) Hirshabele (Jowhar) Benadir (Mogadishu). The training imparted in the trainees with knowledge and skills in setting up security and privacy features of android mobiles and windows computers, the tools and tactics used to defend their devices and data from malware and phishing activities, the best practices on how to safely protect emails and use internet, how cookies work, how to remove internet browsing history, what is incognito browsing, what is anonymity network, hiding information with VeraCrypt and creating strong passwords. In a survey conducted by WIMISOM in May 2020, we found that more 76% of women journalists in Somalia experienced sustained harassment and threats in the online platforms and less than 18% had received digital safety training or somehow aware of tools that could protect them in the digital space. For this reason, these journalists were trained to be trainers and when they go back to their respective locations, each of them will be required to conduct at least one training and to transfer what they have learnt from the training to other women journalists, reaching up to 150 women journalists across Somalia. WIMISOM, in coordination with CIPESA will provide guidance and facilitate for the journalists to conduct the trainings. After the initial TOT training, the beneficiaries of the training each organized training for colleagues in media houses and women led media organizations. WIMISOM supported the organizers in facilitating the training. So far, the trainers have conducted individual specific trainings in Bosaso and Kismayo. This is done to disseminate knowledge and to improve the understanding and digital security knowledge of Somali female journalists.





Training on child protection and reporting on human rights

WIMISOM endeavors to provide capacity building opportunities for Somali women in media to increase their competency, output and contribution in the protection and promotion of human rights to contribute to that end, WIMISOM with the support of ADRA Somalia and with funding from the EUROPEAN UNION have organized and conducted in Garowe from 22nd to 25th of June 2019 a four-day training for media practitioners from Galmudug and Puntland on child protection and reporting. The training was part of precise project activities which is an EU funded project that is implemented by ADRA in Puntland and Galmudug states of Somalia. The training was conducted in a very smooth and conducive environment, the trainers were very well prepared and had conducted the training in the best way possible employing worthy content, skillful and effective pedagogical methods. The participants were very eager and interested in the programs and topics. General objective of the training was to impart participants with basic understanding and knowledge of child rights and practical child protection skills that will lead to robust and effective reporting of the issues affecting children in Puntland and Galmudug States.





Advocacy opportunities for female journalists

Advocating for the provision of scholarship opportunities for female journalists

It is part in our mission is to increase the knowledge and enhance the capacity of women in the media to ensure Somali women’s voices are heard and their rights are protected. WIMISOM endeavors to provide capacity building and learning opportunities for journalists in general and especially female journalists. In Oct 2019, we have secured scholarships for 3 young female journalists in Diploma of Social Work at Puntland State University. These scholarships are funded by UNICEF and facilitated by Puntland Ministry of Women Development and Family affairs (MOWDAFA). Through such efforts, we are striving to increase the participation, influence, capacity, and output of women in the media in Somalia. The students are in the middle of their studies and they will contribute back to the society



WIMISOM participation in “Caddaalad Doon/Justice Uprising” movement

In our effort to raise the voice of Somali women and to fight sexual violence and discrimination against women, we in collaboration with women and youth organizations have participated in a movement which organized a silent marching protest against the rising sexual violence in Puntland committed against girls/women. “Justice Uprising” movement which has inaugurated in April 2019 and it was particularly a response to the horrific rape and murder case of Aisha Ilyas. “Caddaalad Doon” was a women and youth led movement advocating for the protection and promotion of human rights and voicing strong condemnation of rape and sexual violence against Somali women and girls. The program had started with walking silent protest we have participated in and we have employed other methods such as advocacy, writing articles, visits and lobbying of key ministries and related agencies. We have taken a good role in the movement and have contributed our expertise in, girl’s rights promotion, media usage and advocacy for marginalized members in the community.





Developing and disseminating video messages on political participation of women; and gender-based violence

WIMISOM with the intention to sensitize the public on the relevance and need for full political participation of Somali women and especially in the upcoming election of Somalia, produced and disseminated awareness message. The video which features women with political ambition, social activists, clan elders, and women organization leaders is disseminated through local TV stations and social media sites. These public service announcements are an activity in the Enhancing the Capacity of Female Journalists project which is implemented with support from National Endowment for Democracy NED. The rest of the project activities which include trainings will be implemented through the upcoming year of 2021. This video message is expected to raise the awareness of the Somali society on the rationale and need for political participation of women who are underrepresented in the political and decision-making process of Somalia in national, state and local levels. WIMISOM also developed second video message on gender-based violence which is intended to raise the awareness of the public on the horrendous consequences of acts of sexual violence which occur increasingly in Somalia recently. The video messages featured representatives of MOWDAFA, female lawyers, clergyman and representative from Office of Human Rights Defender, Puntland. The message is focused on the horrendous nature of gender-based violence and urges all relevant stakeholders and the wider public on their role in eradicating gender-based violence and protection of the sanctity of life and right of girls and women. The message also urges victims of GBV to come forward and seek justice. This video message is intended to sensitize the people on the reality of increased sexual violence in Somalia and the need for cooperation in the efforts of eradicating sexual violence against girls and women.

Disseminating video message on the work conditions and challenges of somali women in media

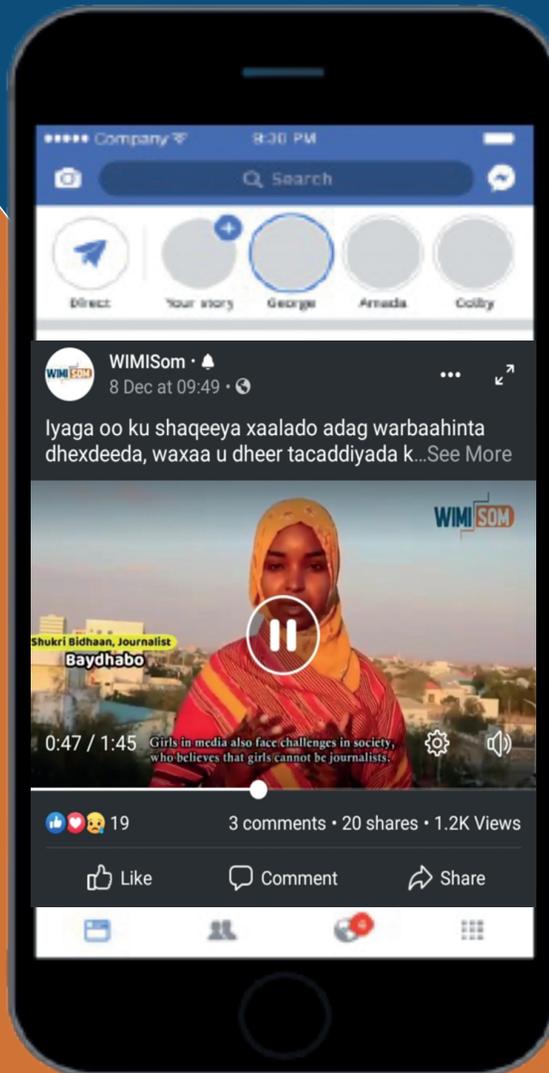
WIMISOM observed the need to sensitize relevant stakeholders and the public on the work conditions and challenges faced by Somali female journalist and has developed and disseminated a video message on the challenges of Somali women in media face and the actions needed to bring out change. The video featured female journalists from many regions of Somalia who have articulated their insights and observations on the challenges they and their colleagues face in the course of their work and careers in the media industry. This awareness campaign was an initiative of WIMISOM in the context of this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. This was relevant because of the vision of WIMISOM which is to empower women in media so that they can affect positive change in Somali women's lives. The journalists highlight through the video the problems which female journalists face which include discrimination, harassment, humiliation, low pay, lack of maternity leave and lack of opportunities for promotion and poor participation in decision making at the media establishment. The journalists urged all involved to adopt supportive policies in media establishments and for female journalists to be provided opportunities for promotion and participation in decision making.



Disseminating video message
on the work conditions and
challenges of somali women
in media



WE USE
SOCIAL MEDIA
TO CONVEY
OUR MESSAGE!



Developing and disseminating video
messages on political participation
of women; and gender-based violence



Interactive debate on the challenges facing women in the media

It is of paramount importance to make the public aware of the immense challenges faced by Somali women in media, WIMISOM in coordination with ADRA Somalia has organized and held in Garowe on the 28th of Sep 2019 an interactive debate on the challenges facing Somali women in the media. The objective of the debate was to provide platform for discussing problems, consultation and experience sharing for female journalists. The panelist and participants discussed the problems, commented on the roles of different stakeholders, shared personal experience and brainstormed solutions and strategies for overcoming the challenges. The event was attended by mostly female journalists; media houses managers, women organizations leaders, and community activists. The panelists were of different backgrounds and have brought insights and ideas into the discussion. The panelists and participants discussed the role of policies in the workplace in ensuring better work environment for female journalists. They argued that supportive work environment can contribute to increased recruitment and retention of female journalists in the media. The activity has been done under the auspices of WIMISOM Stage, which is a platform created to give women, youth and marginalized people an inclusive platform through which they can reach out to the wider public and spread their creative ideas, expertise and participate in interactive debates on the pressing challenges and important questions of our time and age and generate new ideas and solutions

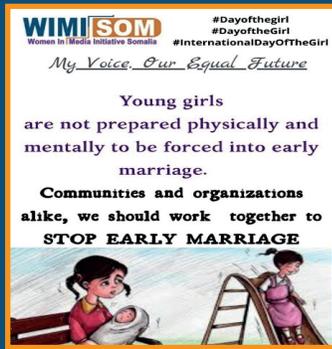




Interactive debate on the causes of increasing rape cases



With the intention to raise awareness on the increase of horrible cases of rape and GBV as a whole in Somalia, WIMISOM with the support of ADRA Somalia held an interactive debate discussing the causes of increasing rape cases. The debate facilitated a discussion of the possible causes of and contributing factors to the increase in rape, the different roles of each involved stakeholder in dealing with this problem, the challenges facing each stakeholder and the public in eradicating rape and GBV and proposing strategies and solutions for rape and gender-based violence in general. The event was attended by university students, members of youth organizations, women organizations leaders, intellectuals, community activists, and members of the diaspora. The debate was divided into two parts panel discussions and questions from the keen participants of the debate who were very engaged, informed and who were interested in the issue. During the debate, panelists and participants presented many suggestions and answers for each question and concept regarding the causes of increase in number of rape cases. The participant recognized the need to adhere to the Islamic ethics, teaching and laws and regard for human rights and the protection and promotions of women rights as daughters, sisters and wives. They have emphasized the importance of grass roots campaigning and awareness raising especially among the youth. They have highlighted, the effect of increasing drug usage and need for emphasized monitoring in checkpoint and town controls as well as surveillance of drugs entering the state and the role of the government in safeguarding and protection of girls' rights.



Awareness campaign on international day of the girl child 2020

WIMISOM uses many methods to raise the awareness of society about issues facing women in media, girls and Somali women in general. To that end, WIMISOM conducted an online awareness campaign on the International Day of the Girl Child on 11th of October 2020 as the world commemorates International Girl Child Day as a reminder for all to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world. This year's commemoration came at a time when Somali girls and women are facing many problems including rape, gang-rape, murder, FGM, lack of access to education and forced marriage. To fight and eradicate this horrendous act against Somali girls, WIMISOM understood the need to create community awareness and to engage all the sectors of the society including government, clergy, elders, youth and women. The messages disseminated emphasized the role of media especially women journalists in eradicating violence against women and girls. Through the messages we have conveyed the sense of responsibility of women in media in advocating for change and in raising the awareness of communities toward the plight of young girls and women in general. WIMISOM Executive Director Nasra Abdirisak in her message has highlighted the huge role which media can take in the fight against women and girls. She said "The media is a very powerful tool and can play a significant role in eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. I call on Somali media outlets and journalists especially women to take action in order to eradicate the dangerous practices against Somali women"



Raising Awareness



Developing and disseminating audio spot messages on rights of women, gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices, environmental protection and public health

WIMISOM strives to raise the level of awareness of the community in very critical and important issues such as: rights of women, gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices, environmental protection and public health, therefore in collaboration with ADRA Somalia WIMISOM conducted this activity of developing five creative audio spot messages to deal with specific issues on promotion of human rights, gender equality, and inclusive participation. This was part of PRECISE project activities which is an EU funded project that is implemented by ADRA in Puntland and Galmudug States of Somalia. The airing of these audio spot messages made tremendous positive impact and contributed to raised awareness in the community about the issues. It is expected also that the messages will create lively, engaging, informing and productive public discussion about the areas the messages cover. The messages were developed and broadcasted in Somali language, here is translation of the transcript of one of the audio messages on FGM: "More than 200 million women and girls are living with the horrifying effects of Female Genital Mutilation according to WHO. This practice is still done in 30 countries around the world. In Africa, Somalia this practice is still being done widely, because of it hundreds have died, and hundreds are suffering from it today. The huge pain and suffering these women feel is a tragedy they live with from the day they are circumcised, through puberty, marriage and labor. Therefore, dear mother, father and guardian please don't do this to your daughter."



Networking

Conducting many activities

Roundtable Discussion on the Challenges Facing Women Journalists and Their Role in Fighting GBV.

The broad vision of WIMISOM is empowered women in media who can affect positive change in Somali women's lives and to realize that vision, WIMISOM conducts many activities and undertakes many initiatives to build the capacity and facilitate networking among female journalists in Somalia. WIMISOM organized roundtable discussion on the challenges facing women in journalism and their role in fighting GBV. Women organizations' leaders, civil society members and female journalists from many regions of Somalia have participated in the roundtable discussion. and have contributed their insights and personal experiences on the challenges they have faced in the course of their careers. This activity was an initiative of WIMISOM in the context of this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. The participants of the discussion have reiterated the many challenges and problems which female journalists face which include discrimination, harassment, humiliation, low pay, lack of maternity leave and lack of opportunities for promotion. They have agreed on the fact that they share some of these challenges with journalists in general but that they face extra burden because of their gender. The participants also emphasized the necessity of empowering women in media and cooperation among them and how that will facilitate change in the community. Also, the participants have discussed among them the contribution of female journalists in the fight against gender-based violence in its different forms especially rape which has increased in rate nowadays in Somalia.

Panel discussion on the causes of poor influence of female journalists in media establishments

To create a sense of awareness and cooperation among female journalists, WIMISOM on 1st of January 2019 held a roundtable discussion titled "Why female journalists do not have Influence in media institutions". The panelists and the participants in the forum discussed the possible causes and underlying factors behind this phenomenon. The participants and the panelists alike have agreed upon the reality that although there are many female journalists in each media house, still their leadership roles and their influence in the decision-making process is very low due to many factors. The panelists proposed many solutions and strategies to tackle this problem; these solutions included continuous self-improvement for female journalists, capacity building and advocacy for the formulation and adoption of supportive policies and the sense of cooperation and networking among women in media.





Networking

Conducting
many activities

Roundtable discussion on the challenges facing Somali women journalists in Somalia with U.S. ambassador to Somalia

WIMISOM has the strategy to network and cooperate with local and international partners who are interested and engaged in the areas it works. To contribute consolidation of networking and acquiring of partners, in March 2019 during the commemoration of International Women's Day, WIMISOM representative has participated in an important round table discussion focused on Challenges facing Women Journalists in Somalia, with US Ambassador to Somalia Mr. Donald Yamamoto. The meeting was held at the US embassy in Mogadishu. Ambassador Yamamoto hosted that discussion with a distinguished group of women Somali journalists from different areas of Somalia. Nasra Abdirisak, Executive Director of WIMISOM has participated in the meeting representing female journalists in Puntland and contributed to the discussion key observations, the reality and challenges facing female journalists in Puntland and Somalia as a whole.



Conclusion

WIMISOM conducted the work documented in this report with great professionalism, attention to details and orientation toward sustainability of results through the long term and empowering of the beneficiaries. This work was conducted in collaboration with line ministries, local NGOs, women organizations, female media associations, female journalists, and international partners. Their input and support are highly valued, and they have contributed to the achievement of WIMISOM organizational goals and the strive toward realization of WIMISOM's vision. WIMISOM is planning to continue its work in empowering Somali women in media, promotion of human rights and advocacy for the rights of women, children, and vulnerable people in Somalia. The founders, board of directors, staff, and volunteers of WIMISOM are committed toward the work of the organization in its pursuit of the vision of empowered women in media who can affect change in Somali women's lives.

Our partners



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