

# ANNUAL REPORT | 2025

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# Table of Content

Forward from the Executive Director .....	02
Abbreviations .....	03
Executive Summary .....	04
Background .....	05, 06

## Theme 1: Media Enhancement

WIMISOM Awards.....	07, 08
KAABE Fellowship .....	09, 10
Pre-screening event for media outputs..	11

## Theme 2: promotion of human rights

Traninig for journalists on strorytelling and program production on FGM and GBV....	12
---	----

Journalists' support on stories and program production on FGM .....	13, 14
---	--------

Induction meeting and workshop for women change makers to conduct awareness raising campaign against FGM in Jillab 1 community, Garowe, .....	15
---	----

Conclusion .....	16
Gallery .....	17, 18
Partners .....	19
Contacts .....	20



## Foreword from the Executive Director

I am honored to present WIMISOM's annual report for 2025. In continuation of the great work we have done in the past, this year was transformative, productive, and full of lessons and achievements that we are very proud of. The work we did this year has contributed toward our vision, consolidated our previous efforts, expanded our reach, and inspired us to do more in the future. In continuing with our outstanding Awards program, and through targeted skill-building workshops, we continued to foster a culture of excellence and professionalism in the media industry.

This year, we have continued the pioneering KAABE Fellowship program we launched last year, which is an empowering and very promising venture, under which we provide financial and technical support to journalists to conduct original and consequential reporting on issues of public concern, including governance, women's political participation, democratic transition, civil society strengthening, and grass roots community efforts for good governance, accountability and decentralization in the delivery of public services. This year, we also launched a journalists' support initiative to produce accurate, ethical, and compelling media content on FGM. The initiative seeks to equip journalists with the skills and resources necessary to raise public awareness and deepen community understanding of the harmful effects of FGM.

We also mobilized the community and selected 10 women change-makers from the Jillab 1 community in Garowe, Puntland, Somalia, for an awareness-raising and advocacy efforts to end FGM.

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

We are, as ever, committed to our vision, and we are optimistic about the impact we are having in our community and country. It is in that spirit that I give you WIMISOM's 2025 Annual Report.

**Nasro Abdirisak Ahmed**  
**Executive Director, WIMISOM**

## Abbreviations

<b>BOD</b>	Board of Directors
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>UNSOM</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
<b>NED</b>	National Endowment for Democracy
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
<b>PEC</b>	Puntland Elections Commission
<b>LGEs</b>	Local Government Elections
<b>IWD</b>	International Women's Day
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced People

## Executive Summary

This report highlights WIMISOM's work for the year 2025, including projects, activities, and initiatives undertaken inline with our vision and strategic direction.

The report covers our work under the project “Enhancing the Capacity of Women in Media,” which is being implemented currently with support from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). This extensive work includes the pioneering WIMISOM Awards and the KAABE fellowship program for journalists to engage in original and consequential reporting for community sensitization and awareness raising on issues that are critical to democracy, including inclusive participation, electoral processes, public accountability, and civic engagement.

The report also covers the impactful work carried out through the project “Empowering community to End FGM through mobilization and awareness raising,” currently implemented with support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ. These interventions include training journalists on storytelling and program production on FGM, GBV, and other harmful practices, community mobilization, and the production of media content to strengthen awareness-raising and advocacy initiatives to end FGM.

The report is structured around two thematic areas: Media Enhancement and Promotion of Human Rights

## Background

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

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

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

## Vision

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

## Mission

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

## Goals

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

## Values

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

# Theme 1: Media Enhancement

## WIMISOM Awards



With the purpose of recognizing and celebrating the work of journalists, we have continued this year by organizing the annual WIMISOM Awards.

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

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

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





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

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

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

## KAABE FELLOWSHIP

To support Puntland's democratic transition, WIMISOM launched the KAABE Fellowship 2024 to promote original, in-depth reporting on issues central to democracy, including inclusive participation, electoral processes, public accountability, justice, and access to essential services. The fellowship provides journalists with technical mentorship and financial support to produce high-quality, impactful media content that strengthens public discourse and civic engagement.

This year, we continue to support the second and third cohort fellows in producing a series of outstanding television programs addressing pressing public issues.

In the second cohort, a prominent journalist, Mohamud Nadif, focused on access and management of public utilities such as water and electricity in Puntland. Journalist Fadumo Deggan addressed how the popular elections contributed to women's participation in the politics of Puntland, while Abdirashid Gambol delved deep into whether the IDPs in Puntland have access to fair justice and equality before the law.

In the third cohort, Journalist Fatima Ladan assessed access to basic health services in Puntland, including the reliability and affordability of private healthcare for local communities. Journalist Anas Mohamed focused on the accessibility of government and other service provider institutions for persons with disabilities in Puntland, while journalist Mohamed Dacar explored the participation of marginalized communities in Puntland local elections, exploring barriers to inclusion and the reasons behind their underrepresentation.

Across both cohorts, the KAABE Fellowship has filled a critical gap in long-form, public interest journalism. The positive feedback from the public and media sector underscores the need for continued investment in in-depth reporting that supports accountability, inclusion, and democratic progress in Puntland.



## Pre-screening event



To further public engagement under the KAABE Fellowship, we convened a pre-screening event in Garowe to showcase and review the content produced by fellows in the third cohort. The event was designed as a platform to present high-quality public interest stories while fostering constructive dialogue between journalists and key stakeholders.



The event brought together diverse participants, including members of the Puntland parliament, representatives of Garowe local council, journalists, civil society organizations, academia, and other distinguished guests. The pre-screening event aimed at presenting in-depth stories addressing pressing social issues in Puntland, amplifying critical messages to relevant policymakers and stakeholders, and providing KAABE Fellows with direct, practical feedback to strengthen the quality, accuracy, and impact of their reporting.



## Theme 2: Promotion of Human Rights

### JOURNALIST TRAINING ON STORYTELLING AND PROGRAM PRODUCTION ON FGM AND GBV

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and harmful traditional practices remain among the most pressing human rights challenges affecting women and girls in Somalia. Across many communities, deeply rooted social norms and cultural practices continue to expose women and girls to various forms of violence and discrimination that undermine their health, safety, dignity, and social participation. Among these harmful practices, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) remains one of the most widespread and persistent violations of the rights of girls and women in the country.

Somalia has one of the highest rates of FGM in the world, with an estimated 99% of women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49 having undergone the procedure, the majority of whom were cut between the ages of five and nine, according to the 2020 Somali Health and Demographic Survey. Despite United Nations resolutions calling for the elimination of FGM, the practice remains near universal in Somalia, with a 99% prevalence rate. Recent estimates indicate that more than 2.1 million girls in Somalia are at risk of FGM between 2015 and 2030.

FGM in Somalia is perpetuated by a combination of historical, cultural, and social factors. It is often seen as a way to control female sexuality, maintain family honor, and ensure social acceptance.

The persistence of FGM and GBV highlights the urgent need for sustained community engagement, awareness raising, and multi-sectoral interventions that involve civil society, media, religious leaders, and community actors. Strengthening public understanding of the harmful consequences of these practices, while promoting dialogue and community-led change, remains essential to advancing the protection, dignity, and rights of women and girls in Somalia.

Reflecting on the prevalence of FGM, GBV, and other harmful practices in Somalia, WIMISOM conducted a two-day intensive training for 20 journalists from 6 different cities in Puntland on storytelling and program production on FGM, GBV, and other harmful practices.

Training was aimed at strengthening journalists' capacity in storytelling, program production, and sensitive ethical reporting on these harmful practices. It also equipped the journalists with practical tools, innovative digital techniques, and multimedia storytelling approaches that enable them to produce high-quality, audience-centered content capable of reaching a wider community and fostering social and behavioral change.

# JOURNALISTS' SUPPORT TO PRODUCE STORIES AND PROGRAMS ON FGM

RWIMISOM launched this initiative to support journalists in producing impactful, evidence-based stories and programs on FGM. This initiative, which reflects WIMISOM's commitment to strengthening the role of media in advancing social change, was implemented under the project "Empowering community to End FGM through mobilization and awareness raising." Through this initiative, we seek to equip journalists with the skills and resources necessary to raise public awareness and deepen community understanding of the harmful effects of FGM.

The initiative is designed to enhance the capacity of journalists in producing accurate and ethical content on FGM, and it places strong emphasis on responsible reporting that shows the social, health, and psychological consequences of this harmful practice, while respecting the dignity and safety of survivors. The initiative supports advocacy efforts by fostering high-quality storytelling based on facts and community realities, aimed at challenging harmful norms and encouraging public informed dialogue.

Through this approach, the initiative is expected to strengthen media capacity for ethical and influential reporting on FGM, expanding public awareness and encouraging the active engagement of religious leaders, youth, and women activists in efforts to end this harmful practice. It also promotes collaboration between media professionals, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders, recognizing that sustainable change requires collective action and coordinated advocacy.

The reported content was disseminated through different Social media channels to ensure broader outreach and community engagement.

**The reported programs are: -**

1. The role of religious leaders and female youth activists in FGM awareness raising efforts, which examined how religious leaders and young female activists can influence the community attitudes towards FGM and promote the abandonment of the practice.
2. How education has transformed girls' understanding of FGM and its impacts on their health and future, which highlighted the power of education and awareness raising in reshaping the perceptions of the community and empowering girls to make informed decisions.
3. The effects of FGM on family breakdown, which explores the social and relational consequences of FGM within households and communities.

Through this initiative, WIMISOM continues to reinforce the critical role of media in advancing awareness, accountability, and collective action towards ending FGM.



## INDUCTION MEETING FOR WOMEN CHANGE MAKERS TO CONDUCT AWARENESS RAISING AGAINST FMG IN JILLAB 1 COMMUNITY

Violence against women and girls remains one of the most critical human rights challenges globally and within Somali society. Harmful practices, such as Female Genital Mutilation, Gender-Based Violence, and other traditional practices, continue to undermine women's physical health, psychological well-being, dignity, and social participation

In response, WMISOM, with the support of GIZ, under the project of "Empowering community to end FGM through mobilization and awareness raising", organized a one-day induction and workshop meeting for ten selected women champions from the Jillab 1 community in Garowe, Puntland. The workshop aimed to enhance participants' understanding of FGM, GBV, and other harmful practices, equipping them with knowledge, communication tools, and leadership skills necessary to raise awareness, lead effective anti-FGM campaigns, and promote responsible documentation and confidentiality in survivor support.

The workshop targeted ten female leaders selected from the community, reflecting intergenerational diversity, including emerging young female leaders and respected elder women, to strengthen the initiative's community legitimacy and outreach potential.

Following the training, the group will conduct regular awareness-raising sessions throughout the project period, including house visits, community outreach, and mobilization efforts. Working individually, in pairs, and in groups, they will share personal testimonies on the consequences of FGM, facilitate dialogue in community gatherings and meetings, and encourage collective reflection on this harmful practice.

To ensure sustained impact, we organized a series of monthly recurring and follow-up meetings as a platform to review progress, reflect on lessons learned, and collectively discuss challenges encountered during the awareness campaign. These meetings were designed to create a safe and inclusive space for open discussion on the challenges, progress, and lessons learned in mobilizing community members against FGM.

## Conclusion

While steadfastly committed to our vision, the past year has been marked by purposeful growth, deeper engagement, and a strengthened commitment to advancing media excellence and promoting human rights in Puntland, Somalia. Building on our longstanding work in capacity building, mentoring, and knowledge production, we further expanded our approach by combining fellowship support and community mobilization. Through the WIMISOM awards, KAABE Fellowship, and the journalists' support initiative addressing FGM, GBV, and other harmful practices, we have continued to reinforce the essential role of media and civic engagement in shaping inclusive governance and protecting human dignity.

Our efforts to promote long-form, public-interest journalism through the KAABE Fellowship and to strengthen ethical, impactful reporting on harmful practices reflect our belief that informed societies are the foundation of democratic progress. At the same time, by empowering women change-makers at the community level, we have sought to address deeply rooted social challenges with sensitivity, collaboration, and sustained commitment. Together, these interventions contribute meaningfully to advancing media excellence, women's empowerment, and the protection of human rights in Puntland, Somalia.

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

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

# Gallery





## Partners



**UNSOM**  
UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA

## **Contacts**

**Office address:** Jidka Soddonka Rd, Garowe Puntland  
Somalia

**Email:** [info@wimisom.org](mailto:info@wimisom.org), [wimisoom@gmail.com](mailto:wimisoom@gmail.com)

**Phone:** +252-90-6858888

**Website:** [www.wimisom.org](http://www.wimisom.org)

**Facebook:** [@Wimisomalia](#)

**X:** [@Wimisomalia](#)

**LinkedIn:** [wimi-somalia](#)

