



BALLOT BOX NEWSLETTER

The Monthly Newsletter of the National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (NIEBC)

► Issue #1 | Sunday, 1 June 2025



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A Message from the NIEBC Chairperson

Warm Greetings,

It is a privilege and an honour, as Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (NIEBC), to welcome you to the Ballot Box, our new monthly newsletter. Like the ballot box itself embodies transparency and the right to participate, this publication will be your trusted source for updates on Somalia's progress toward universal suffrage, highlighting recent achievements and outlining the road ahead.

Since the Commission's inauguration in December 2024, we have acted with urgency and purpose to lay strong institutional foundations. After parliamentary approval in late November and the President's formal appointments on 1 December, the full Commission convened and elected its leadership the very next day. Between 20 January and 14 May 2025, we registered and certified 43 political associations - an essential milestone in reviving the multiparty political system in Somalia.

In a significant step, the NIEBC launched first voter-registration exercise in more than fifty-six years in Mogadishu on 15 April 2025. By unifying the former electoral and boundaries authorities, introducing

updated regulations, deploying specially trained staff, and utilising state-of-the-art biometric kits, we enrolled staggering number of citizens, proving that democratic renewal is achievable with commitment and dedication, even when time and resources are limited.

In the weeks ahead, voter registration will extend to several Federal Member States, ensuring that every eligible Somali - whether in urban centres or remote rural communities - can help shape our nation's future. This progress depends not only on institutional readiness but also on the active participation of Somali men and women at every level of society.

I invite you to explore this inaugural edition of the Ballot Box Newsletter, to register as a voter, and to encourage your family, friends and network to do the same. Your participation transforms democratic aspirations into reality and reinforces the stability on which our collective progress depends.

Thank you for your attention, your support, and your commitment to this historic endeavour. Together, let us build a democratic Somalia governed by the will of its people.

Abdikarim Ahmed Hassan

Chairperson of the NIEBC

NIEBC's First Six Months: Rapid Progress, Promising Future

After the Federal Parliament approved the nominees to the National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (NIEBC) on 26 November 2024 and the President signed their appointments the following day, few observers expected the new institution to advance so swiftly. In less than six months, the Commission has begun reviving an electoral architecture that had lain dormant for nearly sixty years – offering Somalis their first credible glimpse of “one person, one vote.”

The Commissioners first attended to their internal matters. On 2 December, they elected a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, then embarked on a four-week working retreat. There they drafted a unified organisational chart, established five specialist sub-committees, scrutinised Somalia's patchwork electoral statutes, and produced both draft regulations and a comprehensive code of conduct binding all commissioners, staff, and affiliated partners to strict neutrality. The retreat, the Chairperson notes, forged a team “pulling in the same direction.”

From 4–6 February, all Commissioners attended an intensive induction course run by UNDP-UNTMS's Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG). The workshop provided a grounding in global best practice for election administration and helped Commissioners anticipate the responsibilities and challenges of operationalising a new Electoral Management Body.

Consultations with elders, women, youth, and political actors shaped key decisions of NIEBC, while Commissioner-led field visits verified prospective registration sites across the Federal Member States and the Banadir Region. To broaden political participation, the Commission interpreted restrictive clauses in the Political Parties Law to separate provisional from final registration phases; as of today, 43 political associations had secured registration status. The Commission also conducted by-elections to fill four vacant seats in the House of the People of the Federal Parliament.

With governance structures in place, the Commission approved a phased preparation plan for the 2025 local-council elections and secured initial funding from the Federal Government to procure IT systems, biometric voter registration kits, logistical services, and other essential supplies. Training has cascaded from master trainers to vetted temporary staff, while a nationwide outreach campaign – broadcasted on radio, television, and social media – continues to inform and encourage citizens to register. Complementing these efforts, the NIEBC has established a voter-information call centre, accessible via a toll-free short code, to answer registration queries in real time.

A defining milestone came on 15 April 2025, when the NIEBC launched Mogadishu's first biometric voter-registration drive in close to six decades. There are now over sixty static voter registration centres operating across all districts of Mogadishu, supplemented by an additional 20 mobile registration teams, each staffed by NIEBC-trained technicians and observed by party agents and accredited journalists. Turnout has been robust, signalling the public's determination to reclaim its franchise.

Throughout this period, the Commission has maintained close coordination with the Federal Government, the Federal Member States, and civil society organisations, while actively engaging international partners – including the United Nations, European Union, Turkey, and others – to lay the groundwork for enhanced technical cooperation.

The path ahead is ambitious. The NIEBC plans to roll out voter registration in the Federal Member States on 10 June 2025 and will publish its final operational plan, budget, and election calendar shortly thereafter. If this momentum is sustained, Somalis could cast ballots in their first truly universal local elections within the year – transforming the Commission's promising start into a lasting legacy of democratic renewal.



NIEBC Launches Biometric Voter Registration in Mogadishu

On 15 April 2025, the National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (NIEBC) opened Mogadishu's first biometric voter-registration centre at Sharif Qulatain Primary and Secondary School in Shangani District - one of the capital's oldest and most culturally diverse neighbourhoods. Within hours, thousands of Somalis eager to participate in elections - many for the first time - formed long queues. Women and men, young people, the elderly, and persons with disabilities all took part, illustrating broad public enthusiasm.

Mayor Mohamed Ahmed Amiir became the first citizen to complete enrolment and receive a

provisional voter certificate, followed swiftly by cabinet ministers and members of Parliament. The next day, Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre visited at the same centre, describing the turnout as "a victory for Somalia" and proof of the nation's progress toward inclusive governance.

The operation has since expanded to every one of Mogadishu's sixteen districts. In Mogadishu, more than sixty fully equipped voter registration centres are operational, alongside 20 mobile teams, staffed with NIEBC-trained personnel, protected by the Somali Police Force, and strengthened by an extensive voter-education and outreach campaign.



NIEBC Kicks Off Nationwide Election Awareness Drive

The National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has launched a nationwide campaign to sensitize the Somali public on voter registration and the path to the 2025 elections. The campaign aims to deliver clear messages about citizens' rights, eligibility criteria, where and how to register, and other key information.

NIEBC's team is using multiple channels - private TVs, radio spots, and its own social-media feeds - while partnering with top influencers to capture the youth audience. The goal: a fully informed electorate ready to shape Somalia's democratic future.



Numbers and Notices

(As of 31 May 2025)

Key Metrics on Outreach Activities

	Banners and Billboards Installed	275
	Unique Social Media Posters Published	110
	Brochures Circulated	4,000
	Unique Audio-Visual Messages Aired <small>(Broadcasted in both Maxaa-tiri and Maay dialects)</small>	53+53

Key Figures on Equipment and Staffing

	Number of operational voter registration centers across all districts of Mogadishu	61
	Total NIEBC officials and supervisors deployed at VRCs	61
	Total temporary staff deployed at VRCs	520
	Total Kits deployed	343
	Registered and Certified Political Associations	43



Changes in key dates:

New extended voter-registration deadline for Mogadishu:

30 June 2025.



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