

Analysis report

Somalia's contested legitimacy online.

*Key Narratives and Harmful Content Related to Somalia's Online
Electoral and Democratic Dialogue*

July 2026

BUILD UP A



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About this Report

This material has been funded by the UK International Development from the UK government; however, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

This analysis forms part of a wider FCDO-supported programme on digital harms in conflict that connected work across several contexts. In Somalia, this social media analysis was conducted as part of a broader effort to scope and initiate dialogue on digital harms in the region in the context of ongoing challenges to the democratisation process. Other activities included a co-design workshop in Nairobi, a national digital harms assessment ([available here](#)), and a roundtable discussion in Mogadishu with key stakeholders.

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of Build Up’s social media monitoring and qualitative analysis of Somalia’s online electoral and democratic dialogue, conducted between 01 September 2025 and 31 March 2026. Drawing on data from Facebook, TikTok, X, and mainstream media, it provides an integrated account of the dominant political narratives circulating online, the reception of those narratives in the comment sections of the most-engaged posts, and the harmful content and behaviours that accompanied them.

Somalia’s 2026 electoral moment unfolds within a contested federal settlement that remains unsettled in both principle and practice. The review period sits within a renewed phase of that contest, encompassing the constitutional amendment and signing of March 2026, the December 2025 Benadir local elections, the dispute over the South West State, and competing claims over the legitimacy of the government’s mandate beyond 15 May 2026. In this context, social media has become a central arena in which citizens, the diaspora, political actors and regional administrations interpret events, contest legitimacy, mobilise support and advance competing visions of the country’s democratic future.

Across approximately 156,000 pieces of content collected during the period (1 September 2025 to 31 March 2026), of which 29,550 posts were classified into topic areas, the analysis tracked nine narratives spanning the election model, government-opposition dialogue, the constitutional amendment, the FGS mandate, and public land evictions. For each narrative, the team read a sample of the most-engaged comment sections in Somali to assess public reception and to identify and categorise harmful content. The data show that digital harms were not isolated incidents but recurring features of online political discourse, concentrated on the highest-engagement posts and around offline flashpoints. Notably, Facebook and TikTok carried the overwhelming majority of the harmful content observed.

The key findings and recommendations that follow are intended as a practical resource for civil society, media actors, electoral and governing institutions, political actors and international partners working to safeguard civic space, information integrity and a peaceful electoral process in Somalia.

Key Findings

Key Finding 1: The model of election was the most-discussed topic in the dataset, and online opinion split into two opposed narratives, a high-volume, celebratory case for direct elections / qof iyo cod (1.35k posts) and a smaller, more combative case that the vote was a one-party, militarised “qof iyo qori” exercise (276 posts). Harmful content was comparatively limited, surfacing mainly as clan-based smears against opponents of the direct vote.

Key Finding 2: The dialogue process was widely framed as stalled or performative, and international partners were cast in two opposing lights, legitimate mediators versus illegitimate “meddlers”, with the most-engaged comments attacking Somali leaders for appealing to foreign envoys. The harmful fringe was small but severe, including antisemitic conspiracy and an explicit call for Iran to strike Somali cities.

Key Finding 3: The constitutional amendment was the most polarising topic in the dataset, dividing cleanly into pro and anti-amendment camps. The allocation of upper-house (Senate)

seats was the main channel for clan-identity hostility, alongside foreign-conspiracy and antisemitic smears, a distinctive pro-amendment framing of critics as “Al-Shabaab-minded”, and viral disinformation that each lawmaker was paid a US\$400,000 bribe.

Key Finding 4: The FGS mandate debate produced the sharpest incitement observed in the dataset. A pro-government strand called for critics to be jailed or even killed, while an anti-government strand mobilised for 15 May confrontation (“ready with stones”, “take up arms”); the pro-mandate side also used racialised clan-hierarchy hate speech to delegitimise opponents.

Key Finding 5: Evictions were the highest-volume single topic and the most hostile comment environment in the dataset, directed mainly at the President and federal leadership. Clan-based hostility was the largest category of harmful content, markedly more visible in the comments than in the posts themselves, and included direct incitement to seize or burn installations and demands that leaders “be killed”.

Key Finding 6: Because harmful authorship is so diffuse, the most frequent accounts are named illustratively rather than as evidence of orchestration: no small group drives the harmful content, which instead surfaces across a very large number of one-off contributors. The value of listing them is precisely to show that even the ‘top’ harmful accounts contributed only a handful of comments each, a markedly different pattern from the cross-topic connectors above, and one reason the harm is better understood as a broad cultural register than as a coordinated campaign.

Recommendations

The findings of this report point to the need for practical, coordinated solutions ahead of Somalia's 2026 democratic and electoral milestones. Authorities should protect peaceful dissent, respond lawfully, and communicate transparently on the constitutional, electoral and mandate processes. Electoral institutions should embed monitoring of hate speech, incitement and disinformation into integrity planning, while platforms, especially Facebook and TikTok, strengthen Somali-language moderation and prioritise viral content during sensitive periods.

Civil society and media should counter pervasive clan-identity hostility through de-escalation, rapid verification and victim support, while political actors disavow incitement and clan-baiting. International partners should sustain independent monitoring, fund media literacy, and encourage dialogue while staying alert to anti-foreigner narratives. Build Up, SPA and PDRC call for a long-term commitment from all actors, and for expanded regional analysis to reduce Mogadishu overrepresentation, to build a resilient, rights-respecting information environment.

A full analysis of the 1.6million comments collected could only be done if an automated labelling using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques in Somali could be used. However, currently we have no model that has been trained to identify harmful content in the categories used for this analysis, in Somali language. This is a limitation that Build Up is actively addressing through its programming.

1. Background and Context

Somalia's political system has, since the collapse of the central state in 1991, been rebuilt around a federal settlement that remains contested in both principle and practice. The 2004 Transitional Federal Charter and the 2012 Provisional Federal Constitution established a federal model and a power-sharing arrangement widely known as the 4.5 formula, under which the four major clan families share political representation equally, while a coalition of minority groups receives a half-share (Menkhaus, 2014; Mosley, 2015). This arrangement was intended as a temporary measure to manage clan competition, but it has become entrenched, shaping the negotiation of power, resources, and legitimacy between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (Hassan and Barnes, 2021).

Successive electoral cycles have been conducted indirectly, with clan elders and delegates selecting members of parliament, who in turn elect the president (International Crisis Group, 2021). The long-standing ambition to move towards universal suffrage, one-person-one-vote (OPOV), has repeatedly been deferred amid disputes over the electoral model, security conditions, and the relationship between the centre and the regions (Mosley, 2015; Felbab-Brown, 2022). These tensions intensified during the 2021-2022 electoral impasse, when delays and disagreements between the FGS and opposition figures triggered armed standoffs in Mogadishu and exposed the fragility of the federal bargain (International Crisis Group, 2022). The period covered by this report sits within a renewed phase of this contest, encompassing the constitutional amendment process, the December 2025 Benadir local elections, and competing claims over the legitimacy of the government's mandate beyond May 2026.

Against this backdrop, social media has become a central arena for Somalia's political life. Mobile penetration and the country's large, globally distributed diaspora have made platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and X important channels for news, mobilisation, and political debate, often filling gaps left by a fragmented and frequently restricted traditional media sector (Stremlau and Osman, 2015; Skjærseth, 2023). For many Somalis at home and abroad, these platforms are the primary spaces in which national questions, the model of elections to hold, the constitution, and the conduct of federal and state leaders are discussed, contested, and given meaning.

On the one hand, social media has widened participation, allowing citizens, civil society, and political actors to scrutinise leaders, organise around electoral demands, and rapidly circulate information across a dispersed population (Stremlau and Osman, 2015). On the other hand, the same platforms have amplified clan-based mobilisation, hate speech and coordinated disinformation campaigns, which can deepen polarisation and undermine trust in electoral processes (Hassan and Barnes, 2021; Skjærseth, 2023). Political actors on competing sides have increasingly used online narratives to claim legitimacy, discredit opponents, and frame contested events, ranging from the constitutional amendments to public land evictions in Mogadishu, in ways favourable to their position. In a context where formal democratic institutions remain weak and electoral arrangements are still being negotiated, the online information environment is therefore not a peripheral concern but a key terrain on which Somalia's democratic trajectory is being shaped (Felbab-Brown, 2022). Yet, despite this centrality, the Somali online information space has been the subject of little systematic, independent analysis. This report is intended to help address that gap, offering an evidence-based reading of the narratives and harms that shaped the 2026 electoral conversation online.

2. Methodology

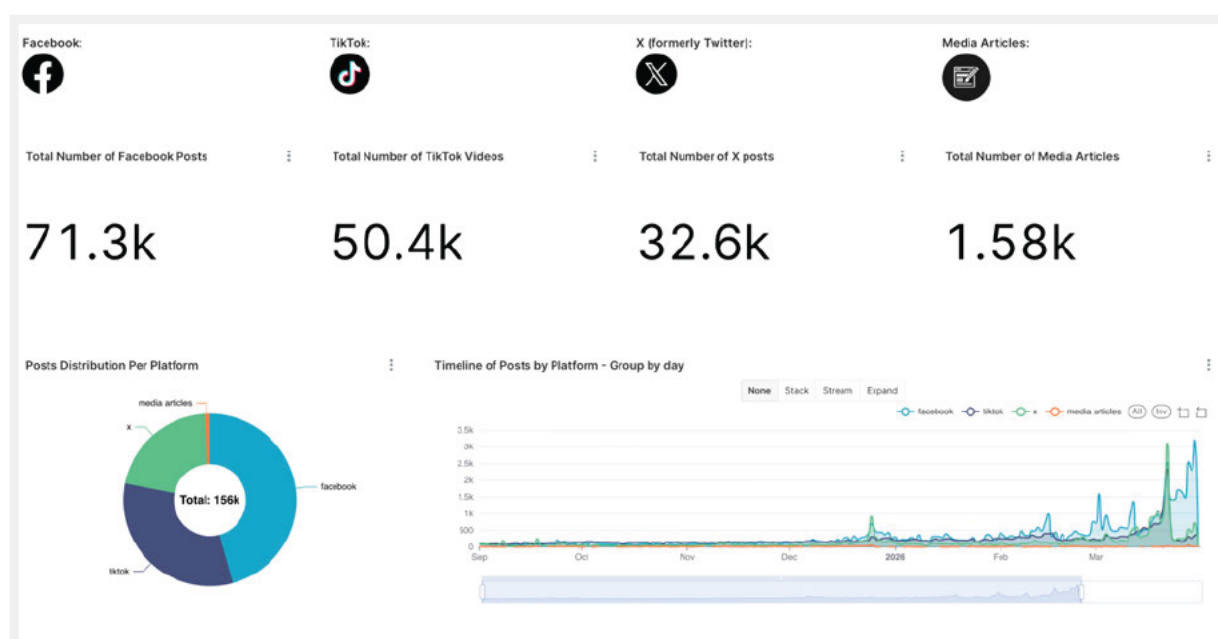
This analysis uses social media listening and mainstream media monitoring tools to scan emerging trends and narratives in Somalia's information environment. The report focuses on content published primarily in English, Somali and Swahili between 01 September 2025 and 31 March 2026.

Data Collection

The analysis team used [Phoenix](#), Build Up's social media monitoring tool, to track and map mentions of specific keywords and individuals across various social media platforms. It provides access to data feeds from Facebook, TikTok and X. Media Data was collected using [CivicSignal](#) and uploaded to Phoenix for consolidated analysis.

The analysis used specific Boolean search terms (combinations of keywords joined by operators such as AND, OR and NOT) to gather relevant data for monitoring and analysis. These search terms were carefully selected to capture relevant content related to the topic of interest. The full list of keywords used for the data collection can be found at this [link](#).

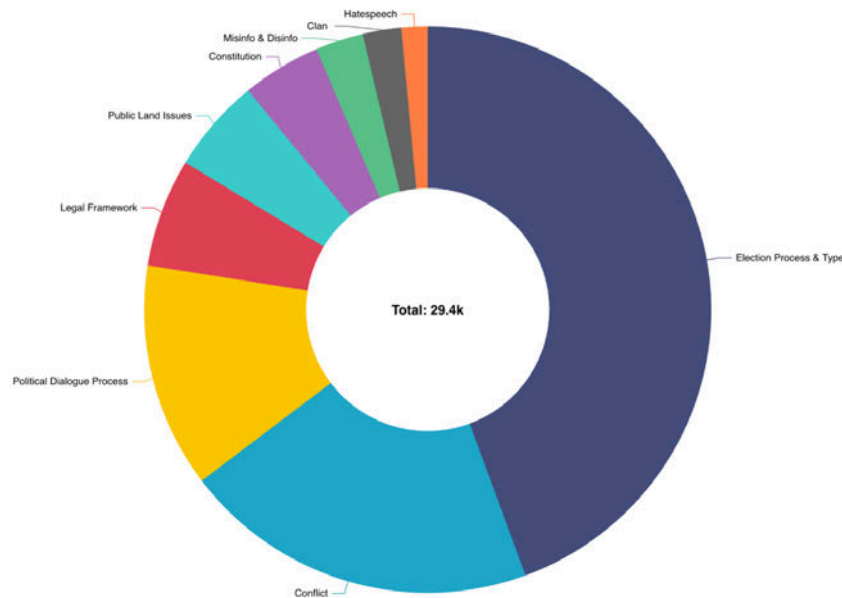
In total, the keyword queries gathered approximately 156k items across Facebook, TikTok, X and media articles. The figure below shows the project's monitoring dashboard in Phoenix, Build Up's social-listening tool. It aggregates the content collected across X, Facebook, TikTok and media articles over the review period and allows the team to track volume over time, break it down by platform and topic, and surface the most-engaged posts and accounts. The peaks in the timeline correspond to key offline events, e.g. the December 2025 Benadir local elections, the March 2026 constitutional amendment signing, and the build-up to the 15 May mandate deadline, around which online activity concentrated. The dashboard is the entry point for the topic classification and narrative analysis set out in the sections that follow.



Dashboard for the Somalia elections monitoring project (Source: Phoenix/ Build Up)

Classification of Data

From the 156k pieces of content collected, 29,550 posts were classified into the topic areas described below, and 1.67 million comments were collected from the classified posts. The topic definitions themselves form part of the classification method, whereas the volumes and engagement each topic attracted are reported as findings. The following key topics were used to classify the social media posts and answer specific research questions.



As mentioned, of the 156k pieces of content collected during the review period (as reported in Section 4), 29,550 posts were successfully classified into the topic areas below. The classification was guided by a curated set of keywords and phrases. The classes included:

- ***Election Process & Model (13,076 posts)***: The largest class, capturing debate on the kind of elections Somalia should hold, including the divide between direct and indirect voting and the feasibility of one-person-one-vote, the mechanics of voting such as ballots, polling stations and voter and biometric registration, and the actors and standards involved, including candidates, political parties, the electoral model and the conduct of free, fair and credible elections.
- ***Conflict (5,968 posts)***: The second-largest class, covering insecurity, electoral malpractice, and political confrontation. It spanned violence and unrest, intimidation and boycotts, electoral-integrity concerns such as rigging, fraud, vote buying, and disputed results, and broader sources of political tension, including foreign interference and security threats.
- ***Political Dialogue Process (3,779 posts)***: Content on efforts, obstacles, and perceptions of dialogue between the government, opposition, and other parties, covering political agreements and disagreements, the forums and meetings convened (including the National Consultative Council), and the stakeholders and coalitions involved.
- ***Legal Framework (1,820 posts)***: Discussion of the laws, rules, and procedures governing the electoral and political system, covering electoral legislation, questions of constitutional legality, term-extension framing, and parliamentary procedure such as quorum, motions, and votes of no confidence.

- **Public Land Issues (1,691 posts):** Content on land clearance, evictions, and disputes over publicly owned land, particularly in Mogadishu, covering the eviction and displacement of poorer residents, alleged land grabbing and sale of government and public-interest land, the demolition of housing, and specific affected sites and neighbourhoods.
- **Constitution (1,322 posts):** Posts on the constitutional amendment process, its legitimacy, and its implications for Somalia’s political settlement, identified through direct references to the constitution.
- **Misinfo & Disinfo (807 posts):** Content involving misleading or fabricated information, covering fake news and false claims, propaganda and information operations, and deliberate attempts to mislead audiences.
- **Clan (648 posts):** Content framed around clan identity and politics, identified through references to clan and clannism.
- **Hatespeech (439 posts):** The smallest classified set, capturing demeaning, exclusionary or dehumanising language, including status-based slurs used to mock or exclude, exclusionary othering, and moral-religious denunciation.

A further set of contextual classes, used to identify the actors and institutions referenced across the dataset, was also applied during keyword development. These included Government Institutions, Traditional & Social Actors, International Actors, Opposition Actors, Federal Member States, and Pro-FGS Actors. As shown in the distribution of classified posts, electoral and conflict-related content dominated the conversation, together accounting for roughly two-thirds of all classified posts, while hatespeech and clan-specific content, though smaller in volume, are examined in detail in the harmful narratives section, given their potential to drive polarisation.

In addition, a total of 1.67M comments were collected from posts that were classified above. The team carried out a qualitative analysis of the comment sections to understand how each narrative was received by the public and to identify harmful content. For each of the nine narratives identified, posts were ranked by comment volume and a proportional, stratified sample of comments was drawn from the most-engaged posts, with a fixed random seed for reproducibility. This yielded roughly 900-1,000 comments per narrative (around 480 for the smallest).

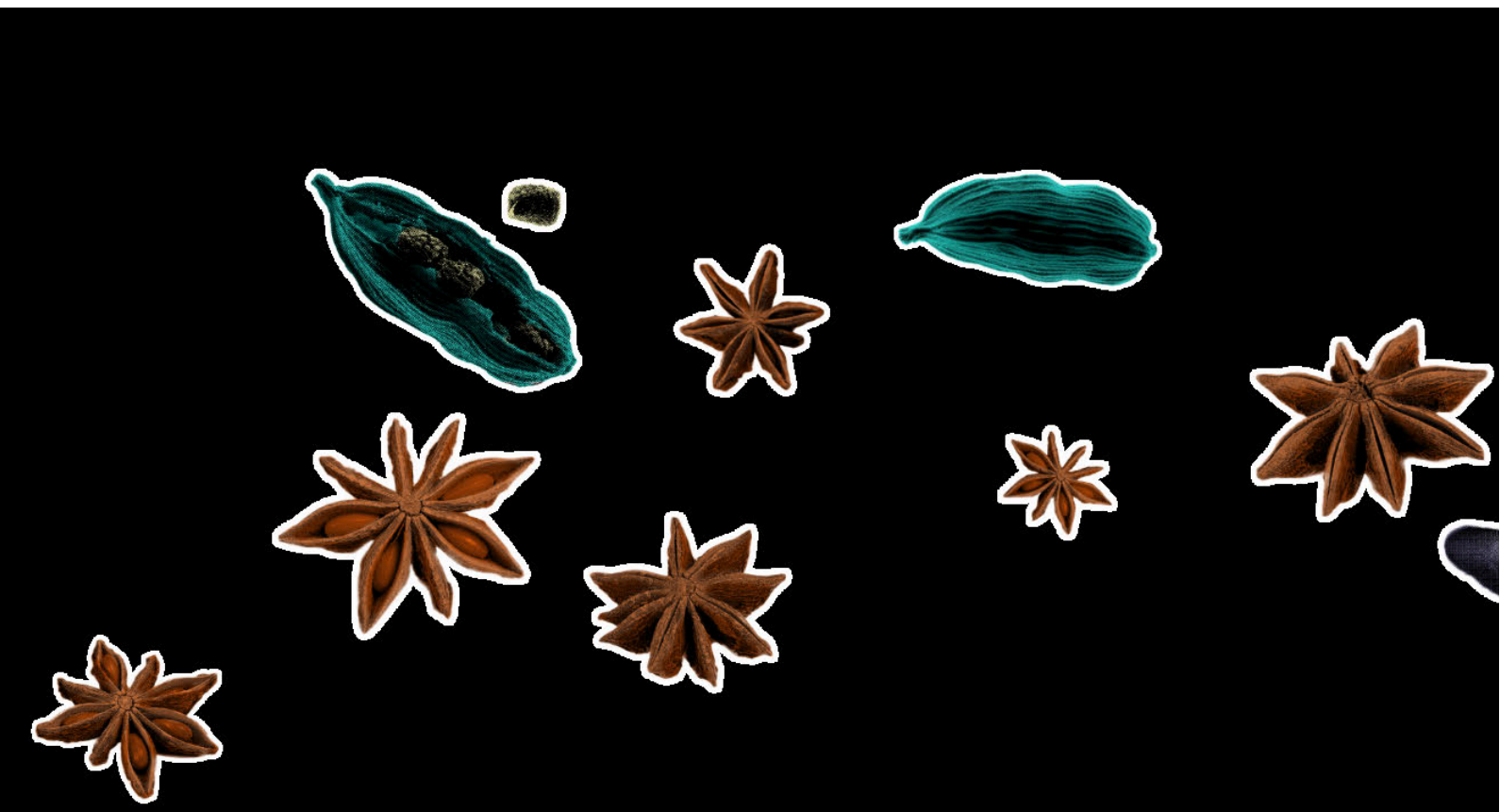
Each sampled comment was reviewed for harm. Comments assessed as harmful were labelled by harm type: hatespeech, incitement, threat, harassment, or mis/disinformation, and tied back to the originating post for context. To map behaviour as well as content, the team also conducted an author cross-posting analysis, identifying accounts active across multiple posts and narratives, and exported the results for network visualisation.

In this report, **“harmful content”** denotes comments falling into one of five categories: hatespeech, incitement to violence, threats, harassment, and mis/disinformation. References to **“high-risk”** or **“dangerous”** content denote the subset judged most likely to translate into offline harm, for example explicit calls to kill, clan-eliminationist (“wipe-out”) rhetoric, or mobilisation to violence, rather than a formal probability of action.

Methodological Limitations

It is important to note that the data gathered for this analysis may have certain limitations. The main limitations of this approach are as follows:

- The general query is used only for an initial search. Based on the results, it is then customised to conduct more specific searches.
- Although we aim to capture a broad range of relevant content, there is always the possibility of missing posts that do not explicitly match the selected search terms.
- The effectiveness of the Boolean search terms may be influenced by factors such as variations in language use, slang, or evolving terminology.
- The reliance on publicly available information on social media platforms.
- The possibility of missing data from private accounts or restricted platforms.
- The inaccuracy of certain information, even if shown on profiles such as location, gender, or identity in general.
- The comment-level harm assessment is based on a sample of the most-engaged posts in each narrative, rather than the full comment corpus; harmful content in lower-engagement posts may be underrepresented.
- Somali-language interpretation, including slang, transliteration and dialect, carries a risk of misclassification.
- The data have an overrepresentation of Mogadishu-based media and individuals due to disparities in internet access in remote regions of Somalia.



3. Key Findings

The narratives below are presented in order of engagement and grouped by the political questions they address, including Somalia's election model, dialogue between the government and its rivals, the constitutional amendment, the legitimacy of the FGS mandate, and public land evictions in Mogadishu. For each, we summarise the dominant messaging patterns, the reception in the comments, and the harmful content identified, illustrated with representative examples.

post_class	Number of Posts	Number of Likes	Number of Comments	Number of Shares
Narrative: Public Land Evictions in Mogadishu	2.27k	40M	10.5M	2.53M
Narrative: Direct elections are legitimate, achievable, and historic	1.38k	217M	75M	11.6M
Narrative: Government and opposition dialogue	922	80.6M	15.5M	3.77M
Narrative: International partners pushing for dialogue	916	26.7M	5.46M	1.77M
Narrative: Anti-constitution narratives	831	235M	59.7M	16.3M
Narrative: Pro-constitution narratives	645	56.2M	6.27M	2.61M
Narrative: Opposition challenge to FGS mandate	485	223M	21M	86M
Narrative: Direct elections are flawed, premature, or politically manipulated	276	37.7M	11.7M	1.06M
Narrative: FGS legitimacy and mandate	83	11.6M	1.11M	894k

Below are the key narratives amplified by these networks:

3.1. Narratives on Somalia's Election Model

Key Finding 1: The model of election was the most-discussed topic in the dataset, and online opinion split into two opposed narratives, a high-volume, celebratory case for direct elections / qof iyo cod (1.35k posts) and a smaller, more combative case that the vote was a one-party, militarised “qof iyo qori” exercise (276 posts). Harmful content was comparatively limited, surfacing mainly as clan-based smears against opponents of the direct vote.

3.1.1. Narrative 1: Direct elections are legitimate, achievable, and historic

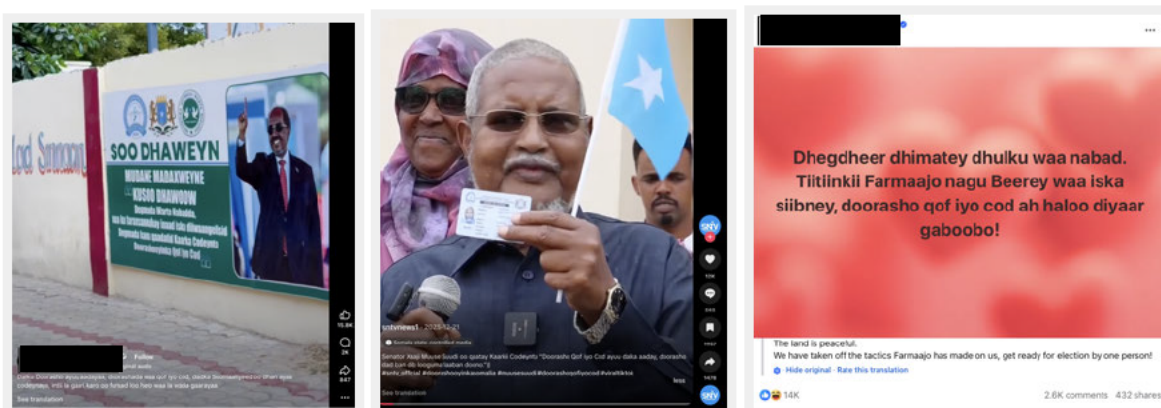
Within the data gathered for the review period, a total of 1.38k posts, which received over 217 million likes, 75 million comments, and over 11.6 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, highlighted a narrative that argued direct elections (qof iyo cod - OPOV) are legitimate, achievable, and mark a historic turning point, especially after decades without such voting in Mogadishu/Benadir. This narrative most often spoke to and about “shacabka Soomaaliyeed”, the Somali public, with frequent emphasis on residents of Mogadishu/ Benadir Region and, later, on communities in South-West State (SWS) and other federal member states. The immediate trigger is not explicitly clear, but many posts cluster around the 25 December 2025 Mogadishu local council election and the subsequent debates over whether Somalia should continue with direct elections or revert to indirect ones.

A large share of the messaging celebrates the direct-vote process as “xor iyo xalaal - free and fair/credible (used interchangeably),” “fursad dahabi ah - a golden opportunity,” and a “bog cusub - a new chapter” in Mogadishu’s political history, urging citizens to register, take voting cards, and

participate so their “cod” (vote) becomes the basis of leadership selection. Several users frame this as the long-awaited restoration of constitutional and civic rights, and as proof that the country can run a mass election. These posts often pair the election narrative with broader state-building themes: security improvements, institutional strengthening, and moving away from clan-based or personalised politics toward party competition and accountable governance.

Alongside celebration, another prominent pattern is the combative delegitimisation of opponents of direct elections. Opponents are repeatedly described as a small group of whiners, “madasha calaacalka,” “ma gudbayaal - a slang for non-progressiveness,” or actors who want to “afduub - kidnap” or block the people’s vote, with claims that returning to indirect elections would be unacceptable or impossible. This creates an “us vs them” framing: supporters cast themselves as defenders of the public’s political rights and national progress, while portraying critics as anti-democratic, self-interested, or intent on chaos. Some posts go further, alleging that the refusal of direct elections is rooted in fear of losing power, corruption, or anti-state agendas, thereby intensifying hostility toward political rivals.

A third pattern centres on the feasibility and expansion of “qof iyo cod” beyond Mogadishu, turning the historic framing into a roadmap: accelerating direct elections in federal member states and rejecting “doorasho dadban” (indirect elections) as outdated. In the later months, the narrative becomes tightly linked to political confrontation around South-West State/Baidoa, where posts debate whether Baidoa will determine the country’s direction toward direct or indirect elections. In this period, some messages warn of escalation and blame one side or the other for potential conflict, while other posts insist that the government will not compromise and that “dib looma noqonayo, meaning No Going Back,” reinforcing the idea that direct elections are both inevitable and the only legitimate endpoint.



Sample posts supportive of one man one vote/ direct elections ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#)) (Source: TikTok, Facebook)

The comment sections of these posts were dominated primarily by people celebrating the local vote and praising the President, “congratulations”, “long may you lead”, “you freed the country”- framing the day as a historic milestone and a security win for the capital. Against them stands a vocal minority who call the vote a one-sided sham: “one person and coercion” rather than “one person, one vote.” A large part of the thread is personal mockery rather than argument on either side: a prominent opposition figure is ridiculed for “just crying/whining”, a regional president is told to “go run things in Baidoa”, the prime minister is mocked as a “corpse” casting a vote, and the former president is taunted at length. Clan identity surfaces far less than in other discussions, appearing mostly as jabs that a

commenter is “speaking for his clan, not the youth” and occasional claims that the government is really a single clan's project.

Harmful content is a smaller share here than elsewhere and leans toward dehumanising abuse and conspiratorial smears rather than clan hatred. On the threads debating the Mogadishu vote itself, a prominent election critic is likened to a dog, and there is outright incitement, including a “kill or get killed” line aimed at the President and his circle.



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

On the post celebrating the vote as a “100% security” win, commenters reduce the entire government to a single clan and claim it secretly works with Al-Shabaab and stages the bombings itself.



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

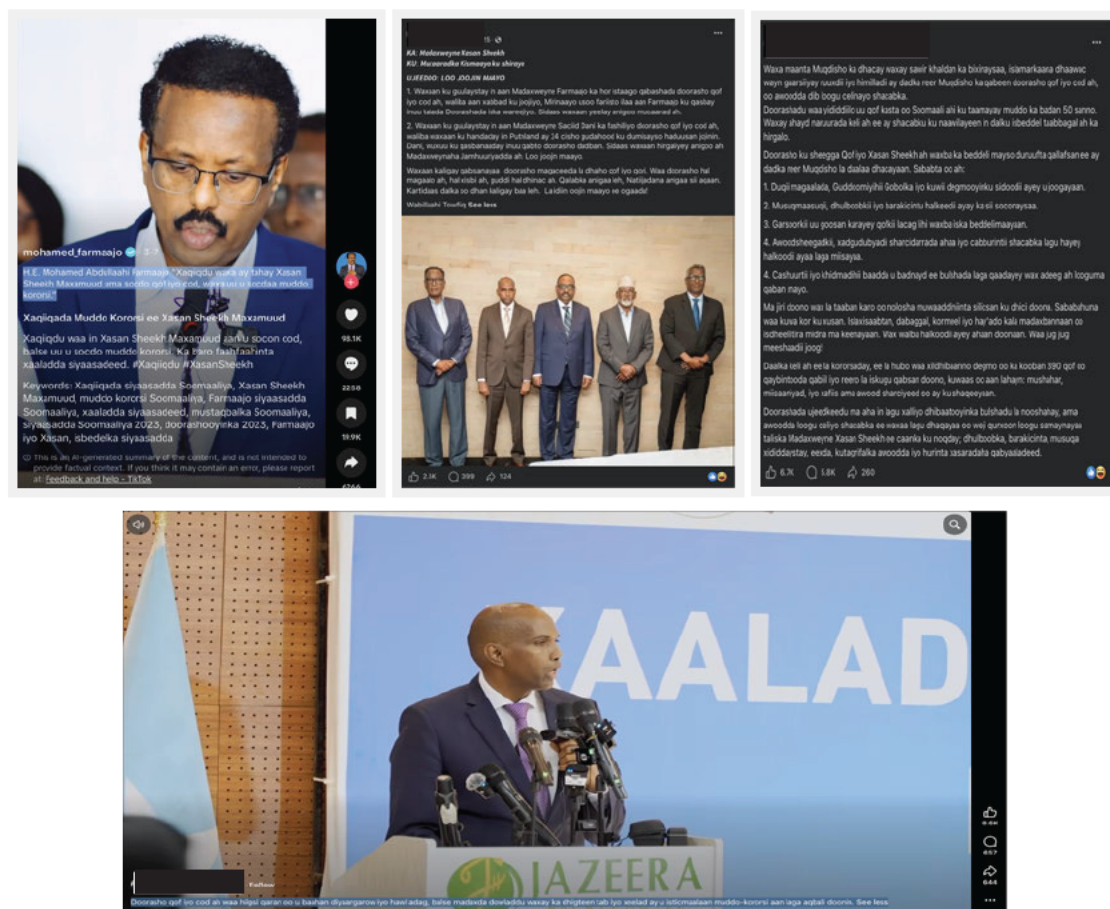
3.1.2. Narrative 2: Direct elections are flawed, premature, or politically manipulated

Within the data gathered for the review period, this narrative produced 276 posts that received over 37.7 million likes, 11.7 million comments, and over 1.06 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X. It primarily portrayed “direct elections” as not genuinely direct at all, but instead as a manipulated, one-party process controlled by the ruling side through a biased committee, predetermined results, and the use of coercion or security force pressure. This narrative primarily targeted the federal leadership around President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud and his party, the Justice and Solidarity Party (abbreviated as JSP), as well as election bodies described as partisan. What may have triggered the narrative is not explicitly clear from the dataset, but many posts directly link their complaints to the Mogadishu local council election process, election committees, and disputes over election procedures and constitutional changes.

A repeated messaging pattern describes the election as “hal dhinac - one-sided,” “hal xisbi - one party,” and driven by a committee seen as captured by the same side competing in the vote. Posters argue that when the same actor controls the campaign, the tools, the commission, and even the announcement of results, the process cannot be described as free or credible. Some posts explicitly frame it as wasted money during a time of hardship, implying that the election is being used as political theatre rather than public service.

Another prominent pattern presents the “direct election” as effectively militarised, summed up by the framing of “qof iyo qori - one person one gun/a person and a gun”, where elections are associated with intimidation, forced takeovers of public facilities, and a security-first approach rather than civic participation. One post highlights alleged attempts to take control of schools and universities for election purposes, portraying this as trampling on children’s rights and public institutions. In this version of the narrative, the “direct election” becomes a symbol of coercion and state overreach instead of democratic progress.

Finally, the narrative ties the “one-sided election” narrative to broader fears of a legitimacy crisis, extensions, and parallel governments. Posts warn that unilateral elections and unilateral constitutional changes risk producing contested legitimacy, two competing administrations, or prolonged political stalemate. Some messaging also claims international actors oppose “one-sided” moves, reinforcing the idea that the process lacks broad acceptance. Throughout the conversation, the overall effect is to present direct elections not as a neutral reform but as a politically engineered tool to lock in power while maintaining the appearance of democracy.



Sample post calling out term extension and direct elections ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#), [Link 4](#)) (Source: TikTok, Facebook)

As expected, the comments were more confrontational and more anti-government than in the previous narrative. It centres on the opposition coalition (the Somali Salvation Forum and the Kismaayo bloc/Somali Future Council), the standoff over the South West State leadership, and the slogan that the only real choice left is “one person, one gun”. Voices split sharply: a large bloc derides the federal government and its supporters as illegitimate thieves, foreign spies, and warmongers, and cheers the opposition, while another defends the government, dismisses the opposition's complaints as “just crying”. A distinct and more dangerous strand runs through the threads about the Baidoa/South West military confrontation between the SWS forces and FGS forces, supported with opposition to the SWS regime due to the withdrawal of SWS from the FGS’s direct election project, rejecting the amended constitution and declaring to hold an indirect election. The fighting is narrated in clan terms, Hawiye against the South West communities, “Rahanweyn must defend themselves,” and a number of commenters openly anticipate, welcome, or call for armed conflict.

Harmful content is a modest share but skews more toward incitement and clan framing than the election discussion did. The most serious items are explicit calls to arms tied to the “qof iyo qori” (one person, one gun) framing, “I’ve readied my carbine”, and, on the threads about the Baydhabo / South West confrontation, clan-war rhetoric that casts one clan as attacking another to “drink its blood” and equates it with Al-Shabaab, calls to “repel the thugs mobilised from Mogadishu”, and a claim that the leaders “agreed to bomb the people” branded as “khawaarij”.

Most relevant ▼

 Qof iyo Qori in ay dhici doonta ma qof Moogan ayaa jira Aniga koley kaarbiinkeeyga waan diyaar saday

26w Like Reply See translation Edited

Most relevant ▼

 Haleyska celiyo mooryaanta xamar laga so abaabulay

11w Like Reply See translation

 Hawiyuhu sidaa ay dadka reer koonfur galbeed hal mar ugu wada duuleen, oo ay doonayaan in ay dhigooda xalaashadan, may hal mar ugu wada duulaan oo ay dhiigooda cabaan AS oo ay sitoosa uga hor yimaadaan, Halkaa su'aal baa taala, **Cali Yare Cali** aw???????????

Wax badan baad foosto riixday lkn maanta waxa ummada somaliyeed u cadaatay in bessha hawiye marna AS noqdaan marna dawalada noqdaan, oo waxooda kala qaataan.

11w Like Reply See translation

Most relevant ▼

 Labada dillaa ee ku heshiyay shacabka inay diyarad ku rusheyan Tarik gurgurte iyo midkan ordagan ee khawarijta waxba ma dhaman



11w Like Reply See translation Edited

Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

On the post arguing the vote is a one-sided sham, dehumanising abuse, spies, donkeys, “khawaarij”, and caste slurs are the most common categories. The incitement and clan-war items are the highest-risk material and warrant priority attention.

3.2. Narratives on Dialogue Between the Government and Other Parties

Key Finding 2: Online, the dialogue process was widely framed as stalled or performative, and international partners were cast in two opposing lights, legitimate mediators versus illegitimate “meddlers”, with the most-engaged comments attacking Somali leaders for appealing to foreign envoys. The harmful fringe was small but severe, including antisemitic conspiracy and an explicit call for Iran to strike Somali cities.

3.2.1. *Narrative 1: Online conversations related to the government-opposition dialogue meeting*

Over the period of review, a total of 922 posts received 80.6 million likes, 15.5 million comments, and over 3.77 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, highlighting a narrative that portrayed government-opposition dialogue as stalled, manipulated, or used to legitimise unilateral decisions. The narrative most consistently targeted the federal leadership around President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and “Villa Somalia,” often accusing it of forcing constitutional amendments and election planning without broad political agreement, or using security institutions to pressure rivals and critics. This was potentially triggered by repeated references to planned or ongoing talks between the government and the opposition platform (Golaha Mustaqbalka - Somali Future Council), disputes over where talks should be held (Villa Somalia vs. Halane, a fortified green zone compound near the Aden Adde International Airport where INGOs and foreign embassies stay), and escalating arguments over constitutional amendments and election timelines.

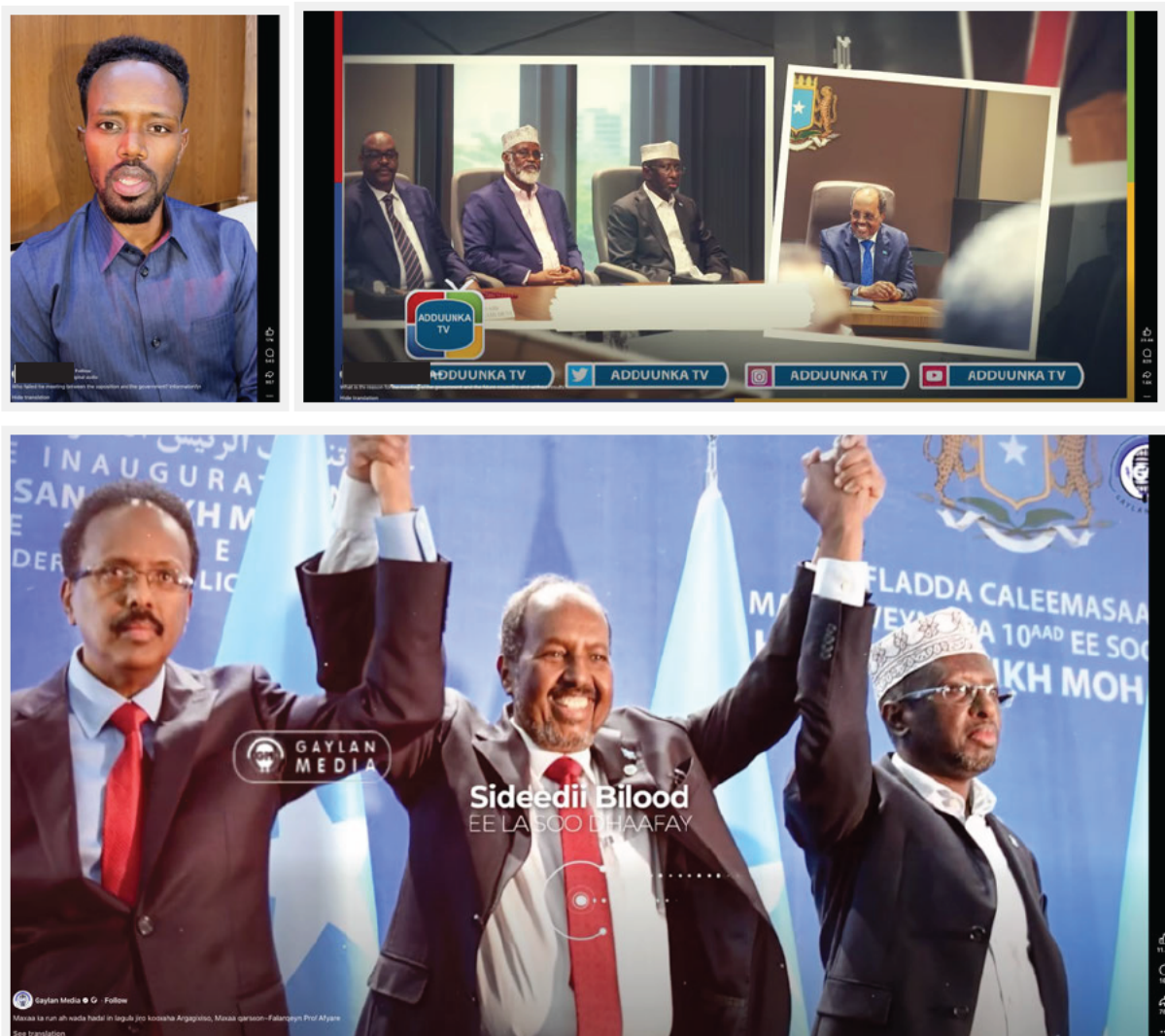
A large cluster of posts frames dialogue as undermined by unilateral constitutional change and by fears of term extension or a “constitutional vacuum.” Posts repeatedly argue that a constitution not built through inclusive consultation and a broad political deal cannot serve as a basis for national unity, and that election arrangements must be grounded in consensus and in trusted, independent mechanisms. In this strand, opposition-aligned voices emphasise that rushing constitutional amendments (including changes linked to terms and the political system) without agreement deepens distrust and could destabilise the country. Several posts highlight Puntland and Jubaland leaders’ insistence that constitutional changes without a political agreement will not be recognised, while others describe the government as trying to control the process by determining location, agenda, and security conditions for talks.

A second messaging pattern focuses on dialogue being replaced by coercion: arrests, intimidation, and the use of security forces for political ends. Examples include condemnation of the arrest of a young woman, Bajaaj driver protest organiser (Sacdiyo Macallin Cali), claims of political targeting and house arrest of senior security figures (e.g., General Mahad Shub), and broader allegations that national forces and aviation authorities are being used to advance personal political interests during disputes. The recurring moral claim here is that genuine dialogue cannot exist when civic space is restricted, dissent is punished, and these actions revive traumatic memories of earlier eras when political conflict was settled through abduction, intimidation, and force.

A third, distinct strand ties dialogue to regional federal-member-state disputes, especially Jubaland/Puntland relations with the federal government and the later escalation around South West State (Koonfur Galbeed) and former President Abdiiaziz Laftagareen. Posts describe talks being postponed, delegations allegedly blocked, and security restrictions used as leverage. Over time, the

content shifts toward Baidoa/Koonfur Galbeed tensions, alleging the militarisation of political conflict and calling for dialogue rather than force. In this strand, the “dialogue” narrative is used both as a warning (that conflict will worsen without talks) and as a political weapon (claiming that one side refuses talks or seeks them only after failing to impose its will).

A smaller but clearly separate set of posts adds inflammatory identity and hate-tinged framing around political dialogue, including religious slurs (“gaalowdeen,” - Infidel stooge/enabler “majuusiyyiinta,” - Zoroastrian “munaafiqiin” - Hypocrites) aimed at federal leadership, and clan-based framing (e.g., statements invoking “Daarood” and political exclusion). While many posts advocate dialogue and national unity, this subset escalates tension by portraying opponents as apostates, hypocrites, or as acting on behalf of hostile identity blocs, turning “dialogue” into a battlefield for dehumanising labels rather than compromise. This does not dominate the dataset, but it is distinct in tone and in the explicit use of derogatory identity language.

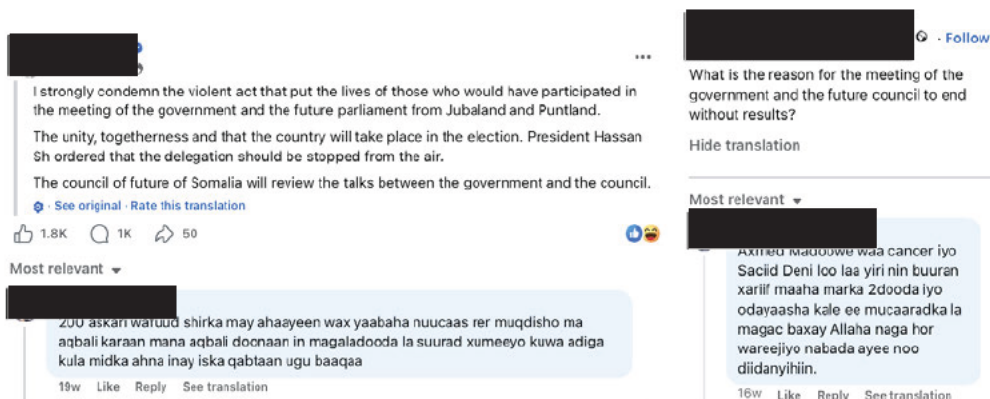


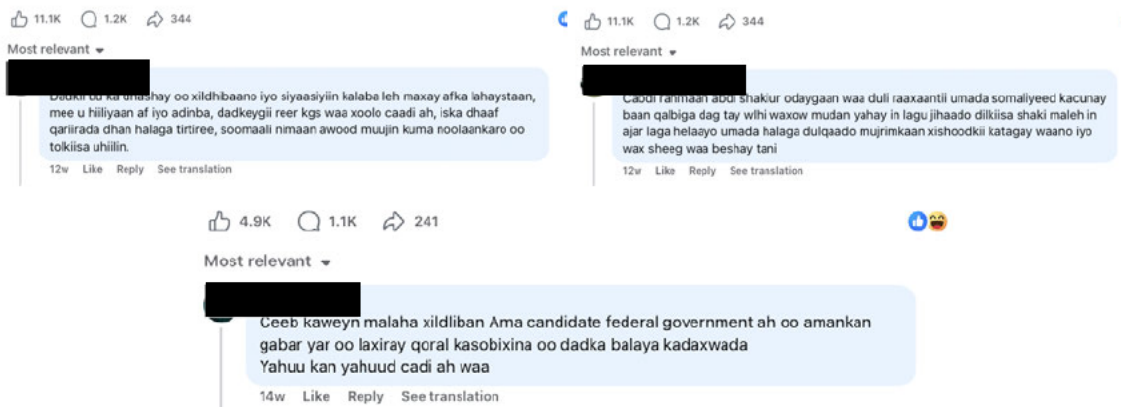


Sample post calling out term extension and direct elections ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#), [Link 4](#)) (Source: Facebook)

The comments react to a stalled, contentious dialogue process and a disputed constitution. Much of it frames the talks as theatre; the Jubaland-federal meeting is narrated like a football match (“2-2”, “offside”, “penalty”), and a large share is personal mockery of the opposition figure leading the criticism. Two camps dominate: one casts the government as coercive and illegitimate, pointing to constitutional change pushed without agreement, the arrest of protesters, armed delegations brought into the capital, and the house arrest of a senior general; the other defends the process as lawful and dismisses the opposition as “just condemning”. Clan and religious-identity framing recurs, with leaders cast as apostates, hypocrites, foreign agents, or one clan's project.

Harmful content is a small share and splits between clan/identity hostility and dehumanising abuse of public figures, with a thinner but serious incitement strand. On the threads condemning the arrests and the armed delegation, commenters call for those who “destabilise the capital” to be shot and for the armed delegation to be confronted. On the post about a general's removal, one comment frames killing the opposition figure as a reward for “jihad,” and another dehumanises a whole community as “livestock” to be wiped out. Identity attacks include an antisemitic smear branding a critic “a clear Jew,” and opposition leaders branded a “cancer”, alongside open encouragement of Al-Shabaab on the dialogue-with-Shabaab thread.





Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

3.2.2. Narrative 2: International partners urging the Somali sides to create a dialogue environment, external pressure framed as facilitation.

A total of 916 posts, which garnered 26.7 million likes, 5.46 million comments, and 1.77 million shares across Facebook and X, highlighted a narrative that international partners were urging Somali political leaders to move toward dialogue, compromise, or restraint during political crises. This included mentions of the Federal Government of Somalia, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, opposition groups, Puntland, Jubbaland, South West State, Somaliland, and, in some posts, clan-linked communities. The narrative appears to have been triggered by disputes over constitutional changes, the role of the Council for Somalia's Future, tensions between the Federal Government and federal member states, and, later, the escalating dispute between South West State and Baydhabo.

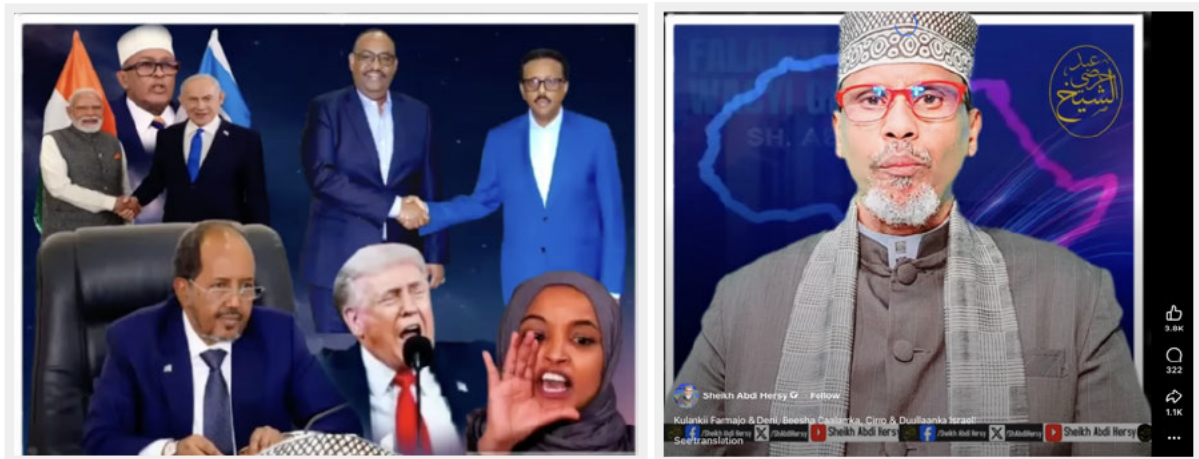
A major messaging pattern portrayed international partners as mediators intervening to prevent political breakdown. Posts repeatedly described meetings in Nairobi, Halane, Villa Somalia, and Mogadishu involving representatives of the UN, EU, UK, USA, Turkey, and other diplomatic actors. These posts framed international partners as urging dialogue during elections, constitutional amendments, and political disagreements between the Federal Government and opposition-aligned actors. Some messages were neutral or informational, but others portrayed international partners as applying pressure, issuing warnings, or forcing Somali leaders to compromise.

A second hostile pattern framed international partners as illegitimate or harmful outsiders. Some posts described them as controlling Halane or influencing Somali leaders, while one post directly called them "the devil's community." Other posts suggested that Somali politicians were humiliating themselves by appealing to foreign actors over local disputes. This line of messaging portrayed international partners as foreign meddlers and accused Somali politicians of relying on outsiders rather than resolving conflicts internally.

A third strand focused on the South West State and the risk of armed conflict. Several posts accused the Federal Government of using military force, weapons, aircraft, or internationally trained forces against the South West State and Laftagareen. These posts called on international partners to intervene, warned against armed confrontation, and framed the crisis as a threat to stability, unity, security, and humanitarian conditions. The target in these posts was often President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud or the Federal Government, portrayed as escalating the situation, while South West State actors were framed as victims needing international protection.

17





Sample posts related to international partners ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#), [Link 4](#))

The responses in the comments are dominated by hostility toward Somali politicians for appealing to foreign envoys and “the international community”. Posts about leaders meeting the UN/EU/UK/US, Turkey, and the Emirates in Nairobi, Mogadishu, or Halane draw a flood of comments calling the politicians “slaves” who humiliate themselves before “the infidels”, and casting the international partners as illegitimate meddlers with no business in Somali affairs. A smaller, more sympathetic set treats the partners as genuine mediators, and several posts plead for international protection against military escalation in the South West.

Harmful content is a modest share and skews heavily to hate speech, antisemitic conspiracy, anti-foreigner dehumanisation, and clan/identity slurs. Leaders are accused of working to “hand the country to the Jews and the Emirates” and dehumanised as livestock “following the filthy infidels”; the figures at the Nairobi gathering are branded “thieves”, and pro-Somaliland users were calling out the international community for meeting Somalia’s leaders.



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

Clan hostility recurs, Hawiye and Darood branded thieves and “Zoomalia,” and the most dangerous single item is an explicit call for Iran to fire missiles at Hargeysa, Berbera, and Burco.



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

3.3. Narratives on Legal Framework and Constitution

Key Finding 3: The constitutional amendment was the most polarising topic in the dataset, dividing cleanly into pro and anti-amendment camps. The allocation of upper-house (Senate) seats was the main channel for clan-identity hostility, alongside foreign-conspiracy and antisemitic smears, a distinctive pro-amendment framing of critics as “Al-Shabaab-minded”, and viral disinformation that each lawmaker was paid a US\$400,000 bribe.

3.3.1. Narrative 1: Anti-constitution amendment narratives

In the review period, a total of 6831 posts received about 235 million likes, 59.7 million comments, and 16.3 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, pushing a narrative that the recent constitutional changes, election plans, and mandate extensions lacked public consent, legal validity, and national agreement. The primary targets were President Hassan Sheik Mohamud, the Federal Government of Somalia, parliamentarians involved in constitutional changes, and political actors

accused of using elections or regional authority without proper legitimacy. This was triggered by disputes over the constitutional amendment and signing process in March 2026, the approaching end of federal mandates, and the escalating conflict over elections in South West State, especially Baidoa.

A major messaging pattern framed the 2012 constitutional settlement as the only accepted national framework and described later changes as imposed, rushed, or politically self-serving.

A major messaging pattern framed the 2012 constitutional settlement as the only accepted national framework and described later changes as imposed, rushed, or politically self-serving.

Several posts claimed the new constitutional process bypassed consultation, consensus, and lawful procedure, while others described it as a direct threat to federalism, unity, and power-sharing. The most engaged posts used strong language of legitimacy, arguing that a constitution changed under pressure, bribery, or exclusion could not serve as a national charter. This message was repeated by opposition figures, Puntland-linked accounts, South West State voices, and former officials, creating a broad pattern of resistance to the federal constitutional process.

Another distinct narrative focused on elections and expired mandates. Posts repeatedly argued that leaders whose terms had ended, or who were perceived to have extended themselves through political deals, had no authority to make constitutional or electoral decisions. This applied to both the federal leadership and regional leaders, such as those in South West State, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, and Jubbaland. The same language was used across opposing sides: one camp accused the federal government of engineering one-sided elections and using constitutional reform to extend its term, while another accused regional leaders, especially Laftagareen and Ahmed Madoobe, of self-selection or of staging elections without transparent procedures.

The South West State dispute became one of the most intense sub-narratives in late March 2026. Posts either defended the Baidoa process as restoring institutional authority or condemned it as a rushed and unlawful selection. The federal government's press releases described the Baidoa process as illegitimate and contrary to electoral rules, while opposition-aligned posts accused the federal government of preparing military pressure, destabilising South West State, and selectively invoking the language of legality. This created a polarised narrative in which both sides claimed to be defending the constitutional order; the FGS its amended constitution and agreement it had with SWS and the opposition the Somali Provisional Constitution of 2012, while portraying the other as resorting to force, manipulation, or false legality.

There were also hostile and identity-based messaging patterns within the dataset. Some posts used clan references to frame political decisions as favouring or harming particular Somali communities, including references to Hawiye, Mareexaan, Sheekhaal, Habargidir, Abgaal, and other groups. In several cases, political criticism shifted into insulting or demeaning language, portraying opponents as corrupt, traitorous, criminal, foreign-backed, or enemies of the people. A smaller but distinct pattern targeted foreigners, especially Indians and South Asians, in one post, portraying them as entering illegally, taking jobs, and marrying Somali women. These identity-based messages were less central

than the constitutional dispute, but they show how legal and political grievances were sometimes tied to clan suspicion, xenophobia, and social hostility.



Sample post highlighting xxx ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#), [Link 4](#)) (Source: X)

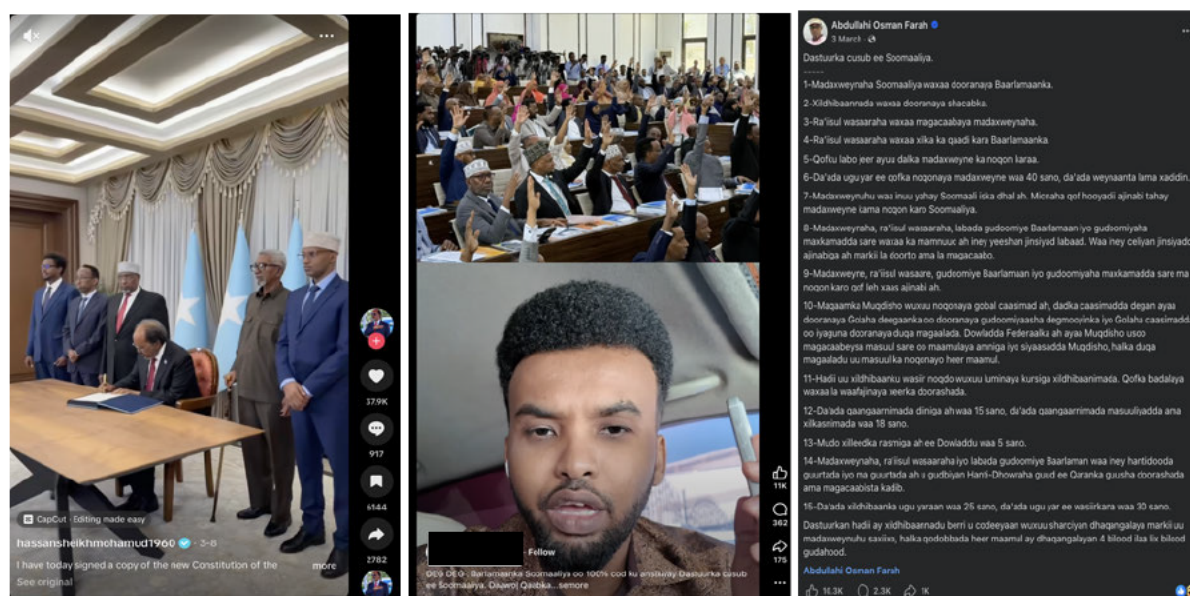
3.3.2. Narrative 2: Pro-constitution amendment narratives

On the other hand, pro-constitution narratives produced 645 posts that received 56.2 million likes, 6.27 million comments, and 2.61 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, highlighting a narrative that promoted the new Somali constitution as a historic step toward ending the transitional period, strengthening state institutions, enabling direct elections, and creating a clearer legal order. The likely target of the messaging was not a single protected identity group, but rather political opponents and regional administrations that rejected or questioned the process, especially Puntland, Jubbaland, parts of the Mogadishu opposition, and later figures linked to South West and Galmudug. The narrative appears to have been triggered mainly by the parliamentary approval of the new constitution on 4 March 2026 and President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's signing of it on 8 March 2026, with earlier posts building toward the same debate around elections, federalism, and constitutional change.

A major messaging block of users presented the constitution as a national achievement and a turning point after years of provisional governance. Posts from official or pro-government voices described the signing as the end of a long review process and the start of implementation. Other supportive posts praised parliamentarians, ministers, committees, security institutions, and the president for achieving what was framed as a historic state-building milestone. This side of the narrative linked the constitution to stronger institutions, protection of citizens' rights, democratic development, and the move toward one-person-one-vote elections.

A second pattern focused on explaining the contents of the new constitution and debating who benefits from it. Posts discussed presidential terms, the role of parliament, the powers of the prime minister, age and citizenship requirements for office, the status of Mogadishu, the distribution of Senate seats, and the rule that ministers and MPs should not hold both roles at the same time. These posts often turned legal provisions into political arguments, suggesting that the constitution would reshape the balance of power among the president, the prime minister, federal and regional authorities, and among different regions or communities.

The more hostile messaging block of users delegitimised critics of the constitution as people resisting national progress, protecting indirect elections, or acting out of regional or personal interest. Some posts specifically named Puntland, Jubbaland, Siciid Deni, Axmed Madoobe, Laftagareen, Qoor Qoor, opposition groups in Muqdisho, and the Golaha Mustaqbalka as actors opposing or bargaining over the process. While the conversation contains strong political attacks, mockery, and accusations, the dominant hostility is political and regional. However, some posts invoke clan and regional identities, including references to Daarood, Isaaq, Hawiye, Digil, and Mirifle, while others show how the constitutional debate was sometimes framed as identity-based competition over representation and power.





Sample post highlighting support for the constitution change ([link 1](#), [link 2](#), [link 3](#), [link 4](#)) (Source: TikTok and Facebook)

This conversation in the comments on both pro- and anti-constitutional posts also reflects the exact two-sided argument we see over the constitutional changes, the signing of the new charter, and the contested election plans. One camp condemns the process as an unlawful power grab by a leadership whose mandate is expiring: comments insist that the 2012 provisional constitution is the only agreed national framework, that the new text was rushed through without genuine consultation, is bribery-tainted, and is a threat to federalism and power-sharing. The opposing camp treats the same charter and the direct-vote local elections as a historic milestone, flooding the president and regional leaders with congratulations, framing the signing as the end of the transitional era, and casting the charter's opponents (Puntland, Jubbaland, Siciid Deni, Axmed Madoobe, and the Mogadishu opposition) as obstructionists protecting indirect elections or narrow regional interests.

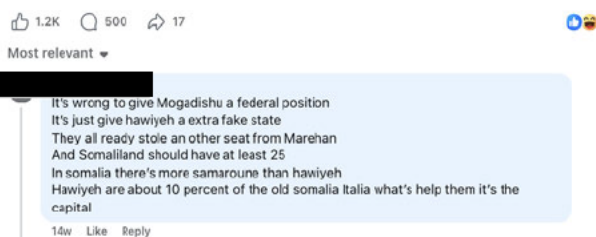
Cutting across both camps is a dense, often hostile argument over who the constitution actually serves: the allocation of upper-house (Senate) seats among regions and clans, the status of Mogadishu as a federal seat, and whether Somaliland is included at all. The Farmaajo-era rivalry is replayed throughout, and a heavy Somaliland-recognition sub-debate recurs, in which the foreign minister is mocked for “losing” the north. The seat-allocation thread in particular is where the discussion most often tips from political disagreement into clan grievance.

Across both sides, harmful content is a modest share and is dominated by harassment and clan-identity hostility, with a thinner but serious band of threats, a foreign-conspiracy seam, and, on the pro-charter side, a distinctive “critics-are-traitors” strand. The most dangerous items are explicit: a demand that the former president Farmajo be shot “as an example to anyone who glues himself to the chair, because he taught Hassan this behaviour” and another one calls to kill the president with an explosion due to some constitution changes.



Sample comments identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

The Senate-seat argument is the main vector for clan hostility, with commenters dismissing the capital as “a fake Hawiye state”, claiming Hawiye are “10 percent” and that a seat was stolen from another clan.



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

Mis/disinformation circulated claiming that each lawmaker took a 400,000-dollar bribe to pass the laws. While allegations and rumours of financial incentives or MPs were widespread during the constitutional amendment process, alleged bribery has long been a feature in Somali politics; no publicly available evidence has substantiated the specific claim that each lawmaker received \$400,000. Dissenters are branded enemies of the people with “an Al-Shabaab mindset” who must be gripped with an iron hand.



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

3.4. Narratives on the Mandate of the Federal Government of Somalia

Key Finding 4: The mandate debate produced the sharpest incitement observed in the dataset. A pro-government strand called for critics to be jailed or even killed, while an anti-government strand mobilised for 15 May confrontation (“ready with stones”, “take up arms”); the pro-mandate side also used racialised clan-hierarchy hate speech to delegitimise opponents.

3.4.1. Narrative 1: Opposition challenge to FGS mandate

A total of 485 posts, which received 223 million likes, more than 21 million comments, and 86 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, pushed a narrative mainly targeted at the Federal Government of Somalia, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, Villa Somalia, and political actors seen as aligned with the federal administration. The most visible trigger, based on the posts, appears to be the approaching end of the president's term, disputes over the election timetable, constitutional changes, and rising tensions between the federal government and federal member states, especially South West, Jubbaland, and Puntland.

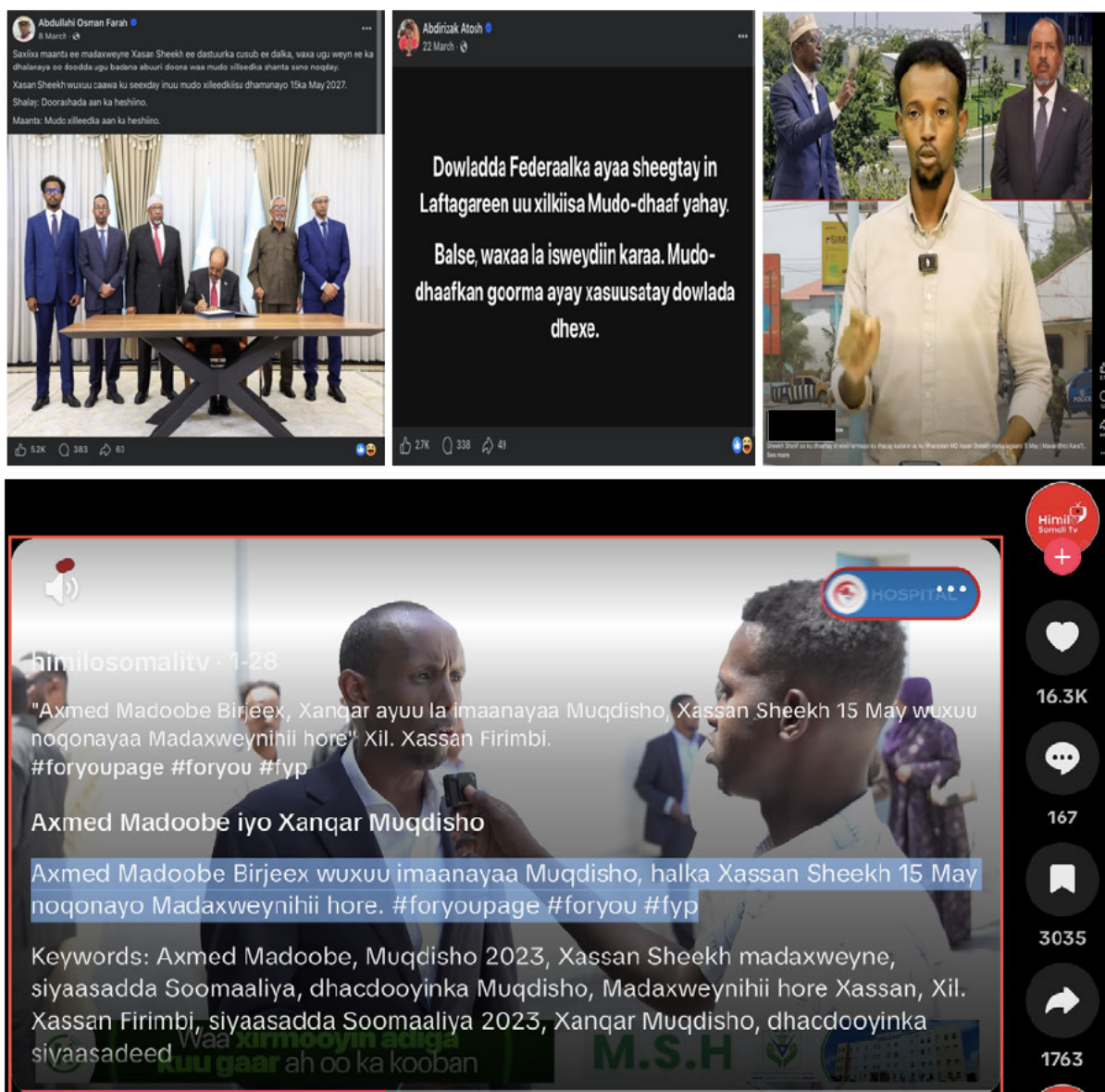
The central message across the conversation was that the president's mandate was expiring and that any attempt to remain in office without a broad political agreement would create a constitutional and political vacuum. Many posts framed the president as someone who would become a former leader after the deadline, unless he accepted an agreed-upon election process. This produced a strong legitimacy narrative: that power after the deadline would no longer be legal, and that the opposition, federal member states, or even security actors would be justified in resisting an extension.

Other users portrayed the federal government as coercive, corrupt, and abusive toward civilians and rival political actors. Several posts accused government forces or forces loyal to the president of shootings, intimidation, arrests, displacement, land grabbing, and threats against people raising election concerns. The hostile tone often personalised blame toward Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and used labels such as "failed regime," "militias," "thieves," or references to land and public property being taken. In some posts, this crossed into clan-coded hostility, where political disputes were described through clan identity, including claims that certain groups were being targeted, favoured, or used as political tools.

A third strand focused on federal fragmentation. Posts about South West, Jubbaland, Puntland, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle framed the federal system as at risk of collapse due to disagreements with Villa Somalia. Some posts described the federal government as selectively applying the rule of law: tolerating some expired mandates when leaders remained aligned with Villa Somalia, but challenging others when they resisted. Others argued that South West's break with the federal government showed that the president's political coalition was falling apart. Counter-messages in the conversation defended unity, rejected fragmentation, or argued that Somalia must avoid political breakdown through dialogue and agreed elections.

A hostile pattern appeared in political posts, marked by clan-coded insults and accusations, in which political opposition was framed as clan betrayal, clan favouritism, or collective blame. These hostile strands were distinct from ordinary criticism because they used group identity, not only political office, as the basis for blame or suspicion.

The dominant political message was that the federal government's authority was approaching a decisive test of legitimacy and that failure to reach an agreed election settlement could lead to unrest, parallel authority, or a constitutional vacuum. The most engaged posts, however, also show that unrelated or only loosely connected global narratives about Trump, Somalis in the United States, Iran, and Islamists were mixed into the dataset and amplified the broader atmosphere of distrust, fear, and political polarisation.



Sample post highlighting opposition change to mandate ([link 1](#), [link 2](#), [link 3](#), [link 4](#)) (Source: TikTok, Facebook)

3.4.2. Narrative 2: Support for FGS legitimacy and mandate

An opposing narrative to the above produced a total of 83 posts that received 11.6 million likes, 1.11 million comments, and 894k shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, supporting the FGS's claim to a legitimate new term following the constitutional amendment and framing the amendment as a lawful basis for continued governance. The trigger, based on the posts, was the March 2026 discussion and announcement that constitutional changes had taken effect, including claims that the current government's term would run until 15 May 2027 rather than 15 May 2026.

The narrative also defended the Federal Government's actions as constitutional, lawful, and part of a national reform agenda. These posts argued that President Hassan Sheikh was fulfilling an election promise to complete the constitution and that the new legal framework clarified the timeline for future elections. Supportive posts also compared the Federal Government's actions with constitutional changes made by regional leaders in Puntland and Jubbaland, suggesting that critics were applying a double standard by accepting changes by Said Deni and Ahmed Madoobe while rejecting similar

actions by Hassan Sheikh. In this framing, the target shifted from the Federal Government to opposition voices and regional leaders accused of hypocrisy.



Sample post highlighting legitimacy and mandates support ([link 1](#), [link 2](#), [link 3](#)) (Source: Facebook)

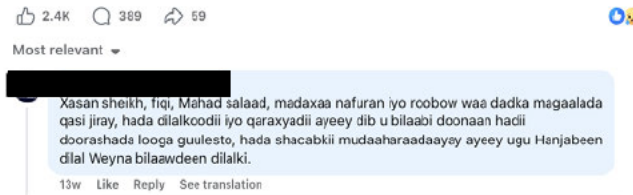
The comment section was also split into a two-sided argument over whether the president's mandate is ending or has been lawfully extended. One camp insists the term expires at the symbolic 15 May 2026 deadline and that clinging to office without an agreed election would be unlawful, casting the government as coercive, corrupt and abusive, pointing to the arrest of citizens who criticise the leadership and footage of security forces firing near children, and warning that resistance would be justified. The opposing camp defends the government's claim to a fresh term running to 2027 as the lawful product of the amended constitution, frames the changes as a national-reform promise kept, and accuses critics of a double standard, accepting constitutional changes by regional leaders Siciid Deni and Axmed Madoobe while rejecting the same from the president. Mockery runs both ways: of the member-state leader whose own mandate has lapsed, and of a governor's celebratory remarks.

Harmful content accounts for a modest share and is split between the two camps. On the anti-mandate side, a strong repression strand calls for the government's critics to be jailed or even executed, that anyone who criticises the president “should be sentenced to death,” running alongside crude harassment of the president, dehumanised as a thug “who feeds on forbidden gains”.



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

Also, some mobilisation calls for a 15 May confrontation, stating that the youth are “ready with stones” and that “the people of Mogadishu should take up arms”. Mis/disinformation circulates that the FGS leadership will restart assassinations and bombings if they lose in the elections, indicating that they used to be the ones to destabilise the city..



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

On the pro-mandate side, the dominant harm is clan hostility used to delegitimize critics: a comment asserts a racial clan hierarchy casting one clan as “the whites” and another as “the Africans” of the Somalis claiming superiority over the the poor political culture, and another taunts that “Hawiye don’t own” the federal system and the capital city Clan but rather it belongs to Somalia and if “Hassan said it do belong to us” you’ll continue to eat filth”.



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

3.5. Narratives on Public Land Evictions in Mogadishu

Key Finding 5: Evictions were the highest-volume single topic and the most hostile comment environment in the dataset, directed mainly at the President and federal leadership. Clan-based hostility was the largest category of harmful content, markedly more visible in the comments than in the posts themselves, and included direct incitement to seize or burn installations and demands that leaders “be killed”.

Over the period of review, a total of 2.27k posts (the most in terms of content among all narratives, but less in engagement than some others, as it is mostly pushed by non-influential accounts.), which received 40 million likes, 10.5 million comments, and 2.53 million shares across Facebook, TikTok, and X, highlighted a narrative that repeatedly framed public-land management in Mogadishu as a cover for systematic land-grabbing, forced evictions, and demolition carried out with state power. This narrative primarily targeted the Federal Government leadership and security agencies tied to implementing evictions, while centring victims described as danyar (poor families), “hooyooyin” (mothers), “waayeel” (elderly), and residents of specific neighborhoods/markets (especially Suuqa Siinaay, Dayniile, and Tarabuunka). The posts repeatedly cluster around alleged eviction incidents, arrests of protesters/activists, and reports of violence in and around those locations.

A dominant messaging pattern portrays evictions as deliberate oppression rather than lawful urban planning: posts describe people being dragged, beaten, jailed, or shot while resisting demolition, and repeatedly use emotionally charged language to depict families left without shelter and livelihoods destroyed. Several posts amplify claims of killings and injuries during protests (including references to

shootings in Dayniile, Heliwaa, Buulo Maaxaay, and Yaaqshiid), and they frame the state as using police/army to protect private interests and businessmen rather than citizens. In this framing, the “cagaf” (caterpillar/bulldozer) becomes a symbol of governance itself: the leadership is characterised as ruling through demolition, intimidation, and forced displacement, with frequent calls to stop “dhul-boob” (land-grabbing) and “barakicin” (displacement) immediately.

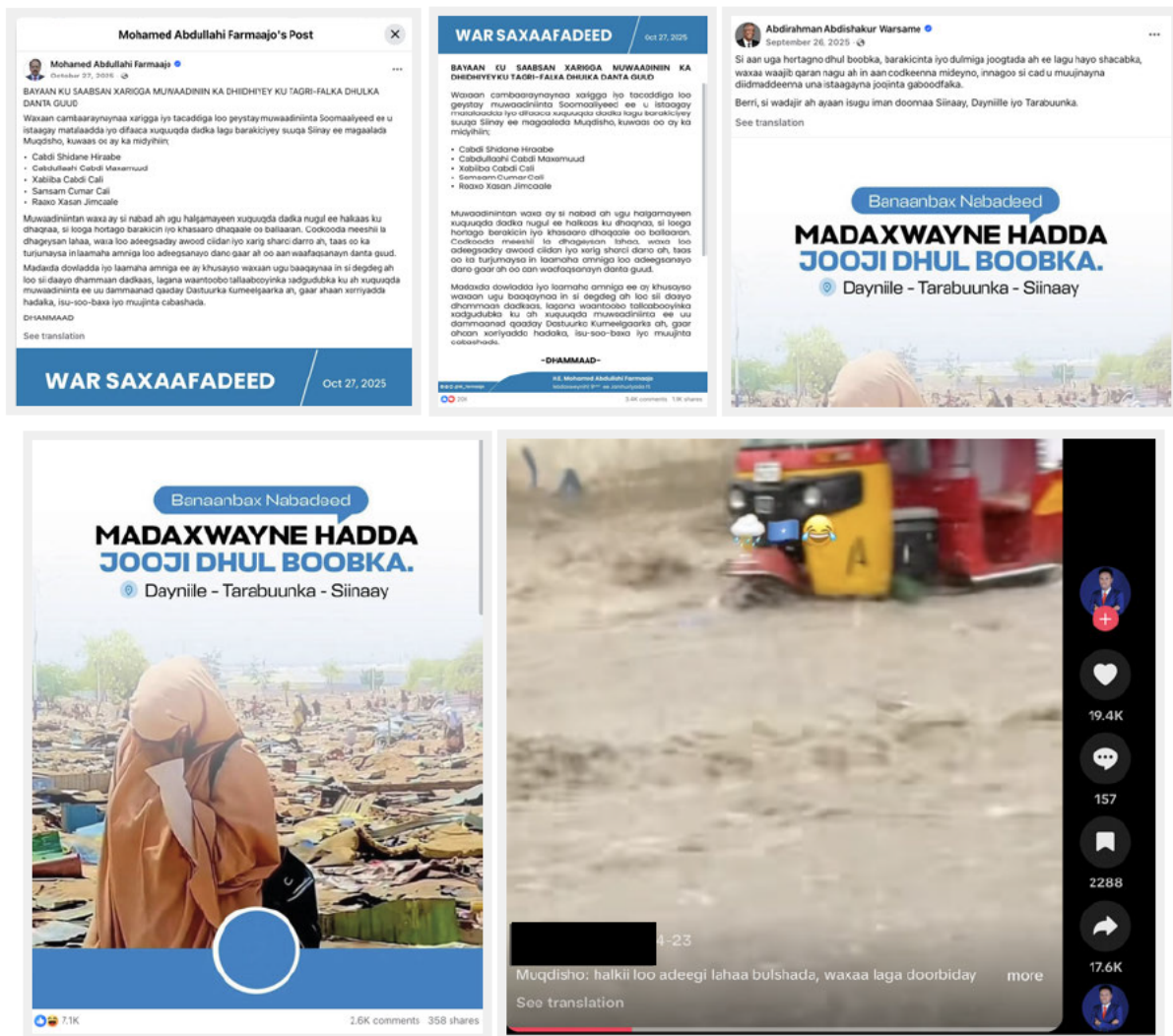
The abovementioned districts appear in posts because they were among the first where land disputes over publicly owned land became visible. They have significant public land, and many residents reportedly lack formal property documentation, making them more vulnerable to government reclamation. While these districts were prominent early on, later operations expanded elsewhere outside our data timeframe. The pattern may also reflect prioritising high-value land or revenue-generating areas, but public evidence is lacking to confirm the basis for selecting these areas.

A second pattern links the evictions to corruption and “xaraash” (auction/sale) of public assets. Many posts allege public land and state institutions (universities, police/army facilities, markets, hospitals, and even graveyards) are being sold off or allocated to connected individuals and businessmen, with proceeds framed as going into private pockets. This storyline often expands from “public land” to “even privately owned homes,” suggesting a progression from state land to citizens’ property once public holdings are exhausted. It also includes messaging that institutions meant to safeguard justice-courts, local administration, and oversight- are either complicit or powerless, reinforcing a broader claim that “the state” is hollowed out and captured by a small network.

A third pattern focuses on repression of dissent and the criminalisation of protest: posts repeatedly describe arrests of women, elders, activists, and journalists for speaking out about evictions and land-grabbing. Several messages insist that peaceful assembly is a constitutional right and portray detentions as “caburin/cabsigelin” (suppression/intimidation) meant to silence “codka bulshada”, the public voice. In parallel, the dataset contains mobilisation messaging for demonstrations, especially around 24-27 September 2025, with repeated calls to gather in Siinaay, Dayniile, and Tarabuunka. Some posts also warn of escalating instability, implying that continued evictions and violence could inflame broader conflict, while others argue that security narratives are being used to justify clearing “buushash/oobasiibo” (informal settlements) under claims they might shelter militants.

A fourth, distinct strand adds identity-based hostility by describing evicted communities using dehumanising or stigmatising labels and by framing the issue through clan-based representation and exclusion. The clearest example is the repeated labelling of a community as “Falastiiniyiinta Muqdisho [Habargidir] - the Palestine of Mogadishu” and contrasting them with groups said to have protection or representation. This language pattern doesn’t just criticise policy; it uses a disparaging collective label for an identifiable group within Mogadishu and frames them as weak/without defenders, intensifying social blame and grievance. Other posts show clan-coded blame or insinuations about who benefits from land allocations, which can amplify resentment and stereotyping, even when the main topic remains evictions.

A related strand extends the corruption framing from private enrichment to political financing: several opposition posts bundle land-grabbing with the constitutional amendment and the election as a single indictment, and one widely shared post alleges a parallel ‘Cagaf’ treasury operating beside the federal treasury to channel state-extracted revenue to the ruling party. An explicit claim that land-sale proceeds directly fund the election or the amendment appears occasionally rather than as a dominant narrative.

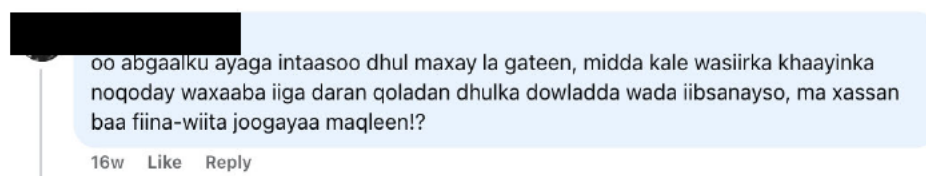


Sample posts on land grabbing and evictions ([Link 1](#), [Link 2](#), [Link 3](#)) (Source: Facebook and TikTok)

The conversation in the comments is overwhelmingly angry and adversarial, directed mainly at the President and the federal leadership, with a recurring undercurrent of grief. People are reacting to evictions, demolitions, and the loss of homes and public land, to the arrest of protesters and journalists, and to reported killings during unrest, and much of the language is bitter, sarcastic, and mocking. A strong partisan split runs through it; many commenters relitigate the record of the former president against the current one; and clan identity is never far from the surface, appearing both as a lens of blame and as a target of insult. Alongside the dominant voices condemning the authorities as corrupt, oppressive land-grabbers and demanding their removal, there is a persistent minority defending the government, arguing the clearances are lawful, insisting the capital is now peaceful, and dismissing the protests as opposition-driven trouble-making. Threads about people killed in the unrest fill with condolences, though even there, some object to the death being turned into a political weapon.

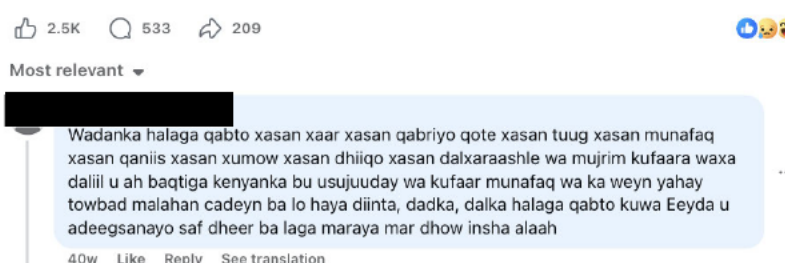
This clan-blame is far more visible in the comment threads than in the posts themselves: the posts largely describe the evictions in policy and grievance terms and rarely name a clan, whereas their comment sections carry heavy clan-coded blame of the beneficiaries, repeatedly naming the Abgaal

(the President's own) or hinting with "Hassan's Family", as those "governing" the demolitions and selling/buying up the cleared public land ([example](#)).



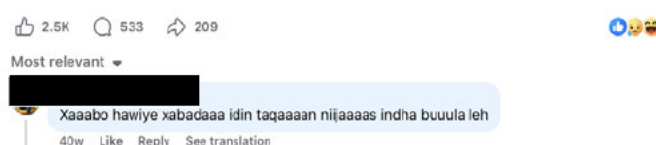
Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

A meaningful share of the comments crosses into harmful territory, and the largest part of it is clan-based hostility, closely followed by dehumanising abuse of public figures. Leaders and opponents are routinely called thieves, thugs ("mooryaan"), devils, donkeys, pigs, or extremists ("khawaarij"), and one comment stacks slurs on the President with a warning that "those who serve him will soon be dealt with."



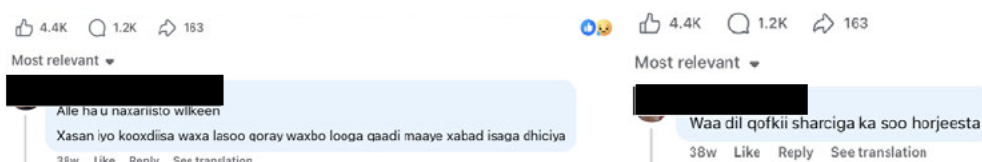
Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

The clan strand is the most serious: commenters tell a named clan to get out of the capital, brand whole communities "khawaarij" extremists, and pair clan slurs with threats such as "bullets know you, Hawiye".



Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

There is also direct incitement, calls to seize or burn installations, demands that the leadership be shot and that whoever opposes the authorities "be killed."

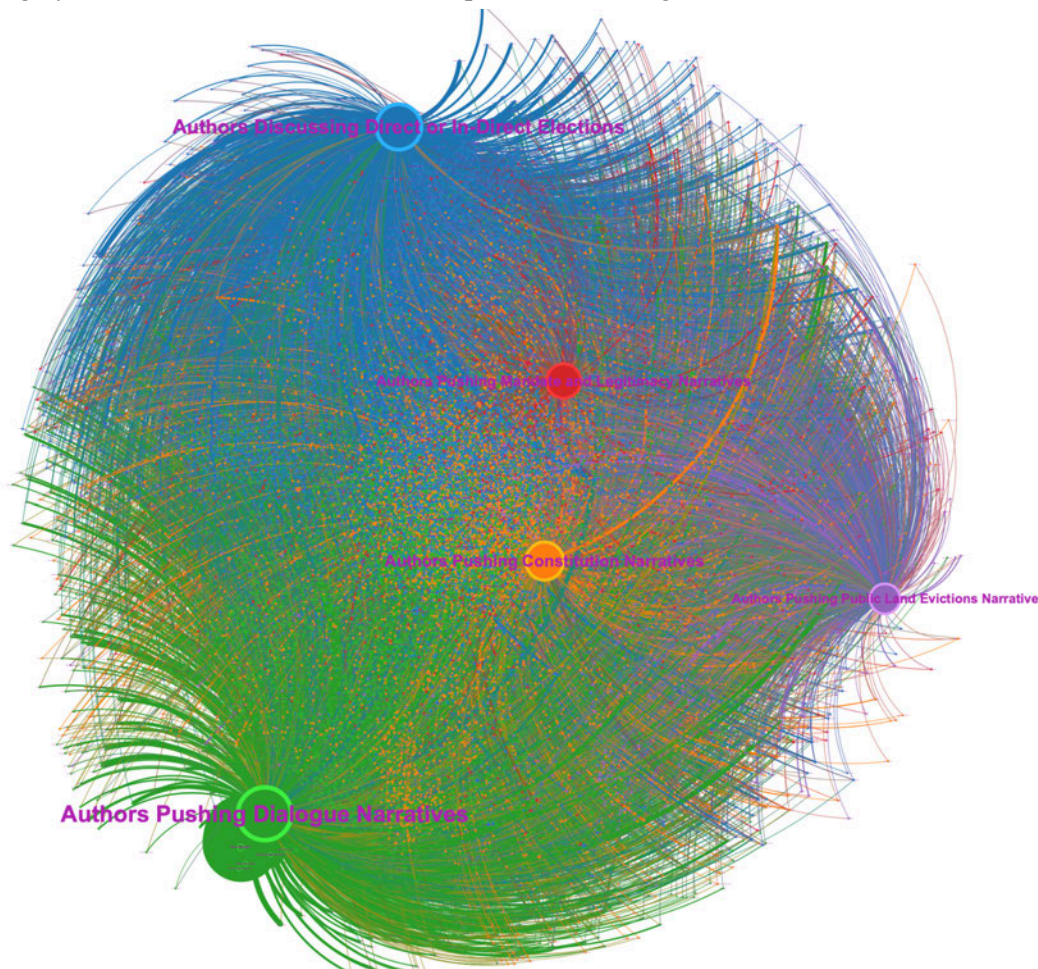


Sample comment identified as harmful (Source: Facebook)

The clan-dehumanisation and the direct threats are the highest-risk material and warrant priority attention.

4. Author Analysis

A recurring feature of these debates is that they are not sealed off from one another: a relatively small set of highly active accounts move between topics, commenting across several narratives at once.



Network analysis of the commenting network across the narratives (Source: Build Up/ Gephi)

The network graph above maps this interconnectedness, showing how authors cluster around and bridge the main narrative communities:

1. Authors Pushing Dialogue Narratives
2. Authors Pushing Constitution Narratives
3. Authors Pushing Public Land Evictions Narrative
4. Authors Pushing Mandate and Legitimacy Narratives
5. Authors Discussing Direct or Indirect Elections

The network graph above visualises how commenting accounts tie the five narrative communities together. Each large labelled node is a narrative community; the surrounding mass of small nodes is individual accounts, sized by the number of comments they posted and coloured by the community in which they are most active. Each edge links an account to a community it commented in, and its thickness reflects how many comments it contributed. The hubs are sized by volume: Dialogue (green) and Direct or Indirect Elections (blue) are the largest, followed by Constitution (orange) and Mandate and Legitimacy (red), with Public Land Evictions (purple) the smallest.

The defining feature of the graph is the dense, multi-coloured core between the hubs. These are not five sealed-off conversations: of roughly 84,000 accounts that commented across the narratives, about 20,600, close to one in four, were active in two or more communities, around 7,700 in three or more, and 758 in all five. The accounts whose edges fan out to several hubs at once are this shared audience, and they are what bind Somalia's electoral debates into a single, interconnected information space rather than separate silos.

The most important accounts are the cross-cutting connectors that appear in all five sets of narratives and hold the network together; the most prominent are [Jamal Ahmed Ali](#), [Ahmed Mahad Hassan](#), [Mohamed Lafole Baashi](#), [Crisaaq Osman Hassan](#) and [Nima Abdi](#), each commenting across dozens of posts spanning every narrative. That this same small set of names recurs at the top of multiple communities, and matches the connectors identified in the per-narrative analysis, indicates a persistent core of accounts shaping discussion across the whole environment.

Active authors of harmful comments

Key Finding 6: Because harmful authorship is so diffuse, the most frequent accounts are named illustratively rather than as evidence of orchestration: no small group drives the harmful content, which instead surfaces across a very large number of one-off contributors. The value of listing them is precisely to show that even the 'top' harmful accounts contributed only a handful of comments each, a markedly different pattern from the cross-topic connectors above, and one reason the harm is better understood as a broad cultural register than as a coordinated campaign. The figures in this sub-section are drawn only from the harmful comments identified in the qualitative sample, approximately 1,000 comments per narrative (*which is a total of approximately 8k comments, representing only 0.0004% of all comments collected*), taken from the most-engaged posts and not from the full comment corpus. They therefore under-count harmful activity and should be read as a floor, indicative of patterns rather than a complete tally.)

A full analysis of the 1.6million comments collected could only be done if an automated labelling using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques in Somali could be used. However, currently we have no model that has been trained to identify harmful content in the categories used for this analysis, in Somali language. This is a limitation that Build Up is actively addressing through its programming.

Within the sampled comments, harmful authorship was highly diffuse. The 478 comments assessed as harmful were posted by 455 different accounts, and 96% of those accounts appeared only once. Only 17 accounts contributed two or more harmful comments. This is the opposite of the post-engagement pattern above: harmful content in the sample was not driven by a concentrated core but spread thinly across a very large number of one-off contributors, which makes it harder to attribute to any single coordinated set of actors. The most active were Abdulmalik Ahmed (six harmful comments), followed by Dawladnimada Barasho Ayay Rabtaa and Mohamed Ali Mohamud (three each); the great majority of the rest appeared in the public-land-evictions conversation, the angriest comment environment in the dataset. A small number of accounts, for example Abuu Ayuub Ali and Mohamed Ali Mohamud, appear both here and among the high-frequency cross-narrative commenters, but in general the heaviest overall commenters are not the same accounts as the heaviest producers of harmful content.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Somalia's 2026 electoral moment is being contested as much online as offline. Across the period reviewed, the digital conversation was dominated by five interlocking debates, the election model, government–opposition dialogue, the constitution, the FGS mandate, and public land evictions, and in each a broad, largely one-off audience engaged while a small, persistent core of cross-topic accounts carried a disproportionate share of the tone. Harmful content was a modest but structural feature of every narrative, concentrated on the highest-engagement posts and spiking around offline flashpoints, with clan-identity hostility the most pervasive form and explicit incitement the highest-risk.

The picture is not uniformly bleak: harmful authorship was organic rather than coordinated and constructive and celebratory content coexisted with the hostile. But the recurring patterns, clan-based delegitimisation, foreign-conspiracy framing, and calls to violence around the mandate and the evictions, point to real risks to a peaceful electoral process, and to an online space that amplifies perceived instability. The recommendations that follow are intended to help the institutions, platforms and civil-society actors best placed to act translate these observations into concrete safeguards for Somalia's information environment.

Recommendations

The findings of this report point to a set of practical, interrelated actions for the actors who shape Somalia's information environment as the country moves through the constitutional, electoral and mandate milestones of 2026 and beyond. They are addressed to the institutions and communities best placed to act on each.

1. ***Federal and state authorities***: protect lawful dissent and communicate clearly. The sharpest harms clustered around the mandate debate and the eviction and arrest stories, where criticism of the leadership was met with calls for detention and where rumour-filled information gaps. Authorities should avoid criminalising peaceful criticism, ensure security responses are lawful and proportionate, and communicate transparently and promptly on the constitutional process, the electoral timetable and the mandate question, denying oxygen to speculation and incitement.
2. ***Electoral institutions***: integrate digital-harm monitoring into electoral integrity. The National Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and related bodies should fold systematic monitoring of hate speech, incitement and mis/disinformation into their electoral-integrity planning, with clear, public procedures for handling online complaints relating to candidates, clan incitement and false claims about the vote. The findings of monitoring reports such as this one should feed directly into those processes.
3. ***Social-media platforms***: strengthen Somali-language moderation. Facebook and TikTok carried the overwhelming majority of the harmful content observed, much of it on the highest-engagement posts. Platforms should enforce their own standards on clan and identity-based hate speech, threats and incitement more consistently in Somali, invest in Somali-language and dialect moderation capacity, and prioritise review of viral posts during politically sensitive periods such as the constitutional signing and the 15 May deadline, as well as sensitive social and cultural discourses that go under the radar during these periods.

4. ***Civil society and media***: counter clan and identity hate speech and verify rapidly. Clan-identity hostility was the most pervasive harm and the main route by which political disagreement escalated. Civil society and media actors should invest in counter-messaging that de-escalates clan framing, in rapid verification around flashpoints (the constitution, the mandate deadline, the South West standoff and evictions), and in support and reporting pathways for individuals targeted with threats or dehumanising abuse.
5. ***Political actors and influencers***: refrain from clan-coded delegitimisation and incitement. Much of the most dangerous content originated as political contestation that escalated into clan delegitimisation, “traitor” and “Al-Shabaab” labelling, and explicit threats. Political leaders, parties and high-visibility commentators on all sides should publicly disavow incitement and clan-baiting and model disagreement that contests policy rather than identity.
6. ***International partners and donors***: sustain monitoring, media literacy and dialogue. International partners should support sustained, independent monitoring of Somalia's information environment beyond any single electoral event, fund Somali-language media-literacy and digital-resilience efforts, and continue to encourage inclusive dialogue — while remaining alert to how their own involvement is reframed online through conspiratorial and anti-foreigner narratives.

The recurring and multi-faceted nature of the digital harms documented here calls for a concerted, long-term commitment from all of these actors to secure a more resilient, inclusive and rights-respecting information environment for Somalia's democratic future. We also call upon local actors to continue regional analysis to reduce the overrepresentation of Mogadishu-based media/individuals. Build Up, SPA and PDRC remain committed to supporting civil society, institutions and international partners in sustaining that effort beyond any single electoral cycle.



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