A logo with a pink and gold design

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**Universal Periodic Review: Stakeholder Report**

**Submitted by** **Global Freedom Group (GFG)**

**Country in Review- Somalia**

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The Global Freedom Group is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to amplifying the voices of women & girls in public decision-making processes. The organization aims to inspire women & girls worldwide to assume leadership roles across various public spheres. In addition to its advocacy efforts, the Global Freedom Group offers educational & mentoring programs, such as the Global Freedom Exchange. This initiative provides dynamic opportunities for emerging & established women leaders who are actively engaged in combating human trafficking. The Global Freedom Group strives to bridge the gap between women, girls, & policymakers, working towards enhanced human security & social justice.

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**Women’s Restorative Justice,**

**Executive Summary**

Somalia has made important commitments under the UPR to enhance women’s restorative justice, including supporting recommendations, comprehensive Sexual Offences Bill (SOB), and legal reforms. Sustained legal, institutional, and socio-cultural reforms are essential to ensure Somalia fulfills its UPR commitments.

Somalia hovers at 45.3% of (CEFM) women. Moreover, women of reproductive age (15-49 years) often face barriers with respect to their sexual and reproductive health and rights: despite progress, in 2018, 2.1% of women had their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods

*Focus Area A: Sexual Violence*

**Methodology**: The research gathered for this report was compiled using prior reports from UN Women, Uniform Dispute-Resolution Policy (UDRP), and Somalia Women’s Charter.

**A1: Overview:**

There have been many progressive steps that the Somalia Women’s Charter has addressed as it has reinforced a zero-tolerance policy towards Sexual Based Violence (SBV). From Female Genital Mutilation to Child Marriage, the Somali women have been victimized by a culture of pervasive misogyny.

**A2: Context**

The conditions of Sexual Violence in Somalia have gotten very severe. According to data cited in reports and analyses from 2025, the prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in Somalia remains virtually universal among women and girls. The most recent national survey data available is from the 2020 Somalia Health and Demographic Survey (SHDS).

As of 2018, the Federal Parliament introduced the comprehensive Sexual Offences Bill (SOB), which, if approved during the 11th Parliament, would offer greater protection for the victims of sexual violence and would represent a significant step toward ending the culture of impunity as it relates to sexual violence in Somalia. The Somali Sexual Offences Bill (SOB) of 2018 was passed by the Council of Ministers but was never approved by the Federal Parliament.

***A3: Persistent Challenges:***

**A3-1**: The Somalia Health and Demographic Survey (SHDS) shows that Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) in women aged 15–49 is quite rampant, and hovers at 99.2 which has both short-term and long-term physiological, sexual and psychological repercussions.

**A3-2**: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) is one of the most prevalent human rights violations faced by people, particularly women, all around the globe. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, women and girls have faced an even greater risk of SGBV.

**A3-3**: The Attorney General’s Office pledged to prioritize survivors’ dignity by streamlining GBV case management and dedicating courtroom space for confidentiality.

**A4: Recommendations:**

**A4-1: Legal reform acceleration:** Fast tracking the ‘Rape and Indecency Bill' and establishing specialized gender-based violence (GBV) units in courts.

**A4-2: Survivor-centered justice**: Guaranteeing gender sensitive investigations, legal aid, and trauma-informed prosecution.

**A4-3: Advance Legal Reforms**: Expedite adoption of rights-protective legislation (e.g. Sexual Offences Bill) and remove discriminatory provisions and add language for a safe reporting mechanism.

**A4-4: Enhance Monitoring & Reporting**: Systematically track implementation of UPR recommendations using gender-disaggregated data to strengthen accountability and measure progress on women’s rights.

**A4-5: Enhance Safety Measures**: Creating safeguards and legal framework for violations of sexual abuse. Developing punitive measures to enforce the laws created to protect women and girls.

**B: Reproductive Justice**

**B1: Improving Access to Services:**

* The UNFPA works to provide access to sexual and reproductive health services, aiming to end unmet needs for family planning and reduce preventable maternal deaths.

**B2: Combating Harmful Practices:**

* Efforts are focused on ending harmful practices like FGM and child marriage, which significantly impact women's health and rights.

**B3: Policy and Legal Frameworks:**

* UN Women supports the design and implementation of laws and policies that ensure gender equality standards are met, including work on draft national gender policies and legal frameworks for sexual offenses.

**B4: Economic Empowerment:**

* UN Women's LEAP program promotes women's economic empowerment and addresses inequitable attitudes, behaviors, and harmful practices that limit women's rights to education, health, and work.

**B5: Promoting Participation:**

* UNSOM (the [UN Assistance Mission in Somalia](https://www.google.com/search?q=UN+Assistance+Mission+in+Somalia&oq=un+women+reproductive+rights+somalia&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOdIBCjE2OTg2ajBqMTWoAgywAgHxBQTj2FpV5Ivq8QUE49haVeSL6g&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8&mstk=AUtExfA34JsYkRlqJ5vgAiDLG0oVd4-pxo5aXXMOjJMazjuEGFvZNShkdlr-sTfm9awY8zVxzqUPU85fhdhsqYSGIS9cLP2MNdt_-bJOBb_FVyYRuNlHApxz9Eq_7ecguIcSOFGscnYm-zFdQl118986R7rIm-VP0C8KzA4ICf2l7Pdjpbq7N0hUxkQ44oW-E2vI-9__Hm--sFJL3JSZ9VN-8-Z0M-AVejo1owObj-YQyT5bhDOf-Bumr3yoSeoIS7witkg0Yj_8iLDIxPjbEEf0ygxHn9ArNZsh9QelETMhN4mA-Q&csui=3&ved=2ahUKEwjTupnx4OePAxXslYkEHeFCEhQQgK4QegQIBBAJ)) champions the increased participation of Somali women in peace processes and decision-making roles.

***B6: Recent Initiatives***

* **B6-1: Roadmap for Reproductive Health:**
* In March 2025, stakeholders gathered to create a roadmap for transforming the reproductive health ecosystem in Somalia.
* **B6-2: Gender Equality Strategy:**
* The UN in Somalia has implemented an Equality Strategy (2021–2025) to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, aligning with the [Sustainable Development Goals](https://www.google.com/search?q=Sustainable+Development+Goals&oq=un+women+reproductive+rights+somalia&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOdIBCjE2OTg2ajBqMTWoAgywAgHxBQTj2FpV5Ivq8QUE49haVeSL6g&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8&mstk=AUtExfA34JsYkRlqJ5vgAiDLG0oVd4-pxo5aXXMOjJMazjuEGFvZNShkdlr-sTfm9awY8zVxzqUPU85fhdhsqYSGIS9cLP2MNdt_-bJOBb_FVyYRuNlHApxz9Eq_7ecguIcSOFGscnYm-zFdQl118986R7rIm-VP0C8KzA4ICf2l7Pdjpbq7N0hUxkQ44oW-E2vI-9__Hm--sFJL3JSZ9VN-8-Z0M-AVejo1owObj-YQyT5bhDOf-Bumr3yoSeoIS7witkg0Yj_8iLDIxPjbEEf0ygxHn9ArNZsh9QelETMhN4mA-Q&csui=3&ved=2ahUKEwjTupnx4OePAxXslYkEHeFCEhQQgK4QegQIBhAD).

***B3: Challenges***

**B3-1: High Maternal Mortality:** Somalia has one of the highest maternal mortality rates globally. **B3-2: Prevalence of FGM:** The practice of FGM is nearly universal among girls and women, leading to severe health consequences. **B3-3: Early and Forced Child Marriage:** A significant proportion of girls are married before the age of 18, with devastating impacts on their health and future **B3-4: Limited Access and Decision-Making:** Women face barriers to accessing information and services related to sexual and reproductive health, with male partners often, controlling decisions about contraceptive use.

***B4: Recommendations***

**B4-1: Legal reform acceleration:** Fast tracking the ‘Rape and Indecency Bill’ and establishing specialized gender-based violence (GBV) units in courts that encompass provisions for reproductive offenses.

**B4-2: Survivor-centered justice**: Guaranteeing gender sensitive investigations,legal aid, and trauma-informed prosecution.

**B4-3: Advance Legal Reforms**: Expedite adoption of rights-protective legislation (e.g. Sexual Offences Bill and remove discriminatory provisions and add language for a safe and confidential reporting mechanism.

**B4-4**: Drafting New Legislation around the Female Mutilation Bill, specifically banning the safety, reproductive practices

***C: Conclusion***

Somalia has taken progressive steps toward fulfilling it’s UPR pledges on women’s restorative justice. The Somali Women’s Charter, Sexual Violence Bill, Female Mutilation Bil and National Gender Policy represent landmark commitments. However, Somali women still face dangerous and harmful conditions in their daily lives. While the Female Mutilation Bill offers Somali women legislative protection, the needs for safeguards, protections from violence in their daily lives remain critical. With coordinated and collective action, Somalia can transform its commitments into action and foster a better environment for women’s safety and reproductive health and security.

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