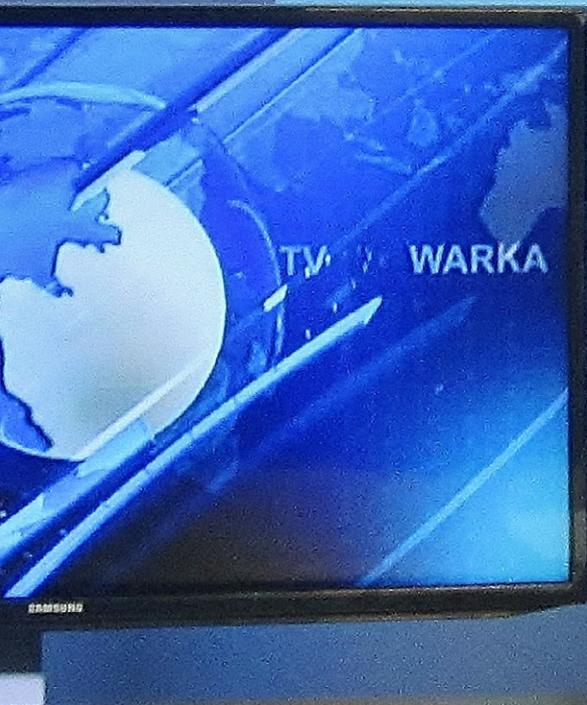


**\*vikes**

# Evaluation of media support in Somalia 2014-2017



# Table of contents

Executive summary.....	3
<b>1.0 Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.0 Methodology.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.0 Project objectives and outputs.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4.0 Operational environment.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5.0 Key findings.....</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 The project is relevant and aligns well with national priorities.....	10
5.2 The project has been effective beyond initial plans.....	10
5.3 Vikes added value.....	14
5.4 Project activities have been implemented efficiently.....	16
5.5 Long-term impact is possible, but too early to assess.....	17
5.6 Knowhow can't be taken away.....	17
5.7 Gender equality promoted across activities.....	18
5.8 International collaboration evolved.....	18
5.9 Monitoring needs a more systematic approach.....	19
5.10 Operating in a high-risk environment requires careful risk assessments.....	20
<b>6.0 Conclusions and recommendations.....</b>	<b>21</b>
6.1 General recommendations.....	22
6.2 Specific recommendations.....	23
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix I: Documents reviewed.....	24
Appendix II: List of interviewees.....	24
Appendix III: Project activities in 2014–2017.....	26

## Abbreviations

**IMS** = International Media Support (Denmark)

**MAP** = Media Association of Puntland

**NUSOJ** = National Union of Somali Journalists

**SMSG** = Somalia Media Support Group

**SNTV** = Somali National Television

**SOLJA** = Somaliland Journalists Association

**Unesco** = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**Vikes** = Viestintä ja kehitys -säätiö (Finnish Foundation for Media and Development)

**Yle** = Finnish Broadcasting Company

---

## Evaluation of media support in Somalia 2014–2017

The evaluation covers the first phase of Vikes media support project in Somalia from 2014 to 2017. Published online in February 2018.

### **AUTHOR**

Nora Stenius

### **PHOTOS**

Wali Hashi

Peik Johansson

Päivi Nikkilä



Finnish Foundation for  
Media and Development

Vikes media support project  
in Somalia is supported  
by the Ministry for  
Foreign Affairs of Finland,  
FCA Finland, Nose Day  
Foundation and Unesco.



Technical trainer Andreas Wirth showing how to adjust video camera settings at an in-house training on better news insert production at Somali National Television in May 2017.

## Executive summary

■ Vikes (Finnish Foundation for Media and Development) has been implementing a media support programme in Somalia since 2014 with financial support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project seeks to improve professionalism among Somali journalists and assist in the transformation of Somalia's state media towards public service broadcasting.

Among local partners and beneficiaries, the project is described as one of the few media support projects in Somalia, that has provided concrete and tangible results, tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries and reaching out to both government and private media outlets. In total, 26 trainings have been conducted across Somalia and Somaliland reaching 681 participants in 2014–2017.

The main partners of the project have been Somali National Television (SNTV), Somali Ministry of Information and Public Awareness, and the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ). After expanding the geographical coverage of the project in 2015, partnerships were also established with Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA) and Media Association of Puntland (MAP). Several women journalist associations have likewise participated in the project implementation.

This evaluation covers the first phase of the project (2014–2016), including observations from cost-extended first phase trainings arranged in May 2017. The aim of the evaluation is to provide sufficient information about the performance of the project, to identify possible obstacles hindering the expected outcomes, and to provide recommendations for future. Based on the key findings, the project has been relevant, highly effective and efficient.

The project has responded to a well-articulated need: the professional capacity of Somali journalists is still relatively low, as is their general understanding of media ethics. The project is *relevant* and aligns well with national priorities. The project activities have been carried out through collaboration of Finnish specialists and Somali stakeholders in such a way that the project ownership remains in Somalia.

The project has been highly *effective*. As a result of the project, the first multi-camera TV studio in Somalia was constructed with modern news production and editing system. The studio enabled first ever live broadcasting of news in Somalia. The quality of SNTV news production has also visibly improved. Video and sound quality is more professional, news inserts are shorter, more compact and cover a wider range of topics. More investigative programmes and children and youth programmes have also emerged. Close to 400 journalists from across Somalia and Somaliland have taken part in training courses on basic journalism skills and journalism ethics, by far exceeding the project's initial goal. Furthermore, around 120 representatives from the police, judiciary and key ministries have received training on freedom of expression and respect for media rights. The approach has been ground-breaking by bringing together journalists and security officials and improving their respect for one another.

General findings on the cost-effectiveness and *efficiency* showcase that Vikes has been spending much less than other international media support organizations to provide quality trainings with noticeable results. Yet, as anticipated, the challenging operational environment has also hampered the project implementation. Some activities have been postponed either due to the volatile security situation or logistic delays. Lack of spare parts and technical equipment in Somalia has also hindered the maintenance of the news production studio and affected some of the in-house trainings.

The project's long-term objective has been to promote the peaceful development of Somali society and to enhance citizens' access to information. Somali media landscape is very fragmented, and to effectively assess the particular *impact* by Vikes interventions, a more thorough causality analysis would be required. Nonetheless, the project interventions have certainly improved individual journalists' skills, attitudes and ways of working. A more professional working culture has emerged, and a sense of pride and ownership is evident among the partners and trainees.

The *sustainability* of the transferred skills and knowledge can extend far beyond the project period. Some of the transferred equipment will however require updating in the near future.

The evaluation also pays attention to *Vikes added value*. Vikes is a unique actor in Somalia, and one of the key elements for its success has been the strong involvement of Finnish Somali diaspora throughout the project. By mixing a team of committed diaspora members and other Finnish professionals, Vikes has been able to manoeuvre through different cultural barriers and has gained valuable trust from local partners. In its work, Vikes has been able to build on the Finnish principles of neutrality and democracy, and the long history of freedom of expression and public service broadcasting in Finland.

There is an evident demand for Vikes media support activities in Somalia also in the future, especially when making use of Vikes approach of peer learning and expert-to-expert exchange, which has proved to be very successful.

It is recommended for Vikes to continue collaboration with the national and regional journalist associations also in future projects in order to enhance the professionalism of Somali journalists. Vikes is also recommended to carry on supporting Somalia's efforts towards public service broadcasting. Overall, it is recommended for Vikes to crystallize its niche in Somalia by narrowing down some of the work streams and focusing even more on key activities. Vikes is also recommended to disseminate some of its lessons learnt to the wider media support sector. Continuous efforts to assess and mitigate risks are also recommended in order to ensure safety and security.

# 1.0

## Introduction

■ Vikes (Finnish Foundation for Media and Development) has been implementing a media support programme in Somalia since 2014 with financial support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The project's long-term objective has been to promote the peaceful development of Somali society and to enhance citizens' access to information by improving the professionalism of Somali journalists and their operational capacity, and by assisting SNTV and Radio Mogadishu in the transformation towards public service broadcasting.

Key beneficiaries include journalists, technicians, politicians, government officials, police officers, and the general population. Main partners of the project have been Somali National Television (SNTV), Somali Ministry of Information and Public Awareness, and the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ). After expanding the geographical coverage of the project in 2015, partnerships were also established with Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA) and Media Association of Puntland (MAP). Several women journalist associations have likewise participated in the project implementation.

This evaluation covers the first phase of the project (2014–2016), including observations from cost-extended first phase trainings arranged in May 2017. The aim of the evaluation is to provide sufficient information about the performance of the project, to identify possible obstacles hindering the expected outcomes, and to provide recommendations for future.

The evaluation team was composed of three external consultants, Nora Stenius, Abdalla Dahir and Elisa Vepsäläinen. The evaluators would like to thank all those, who participated in the evaluation, and also thank Vikes project management team for its exceptional support regarding all travel logistics and the frank and open attitude towards the evaluation.

This report outlines the project logic, describes the operational environment, and summarizes the key findings under categories of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Separate chapters are devoted to further describe Vikes added value in the context, and findings related to promoting gender equality, increased stakeholder collaboration, and remaining challenges in project monitoring practises. Conclusions and recommendations are provided at the end of the report.

Project activities have been carried out through collaboration of Finnish specialists and Somali stakeholders in such a way that the project ownership remains in Somalia.

# 2.0

## Methodology

■ The aim of the evaluation is to provide Vikes, project partners, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, and the wider public with sufficient information about the performance of the project. The specific objectives of the evaluation were 1) to assess results and processes of the project with the dual purpose of accountability and learning, 2) to find out some of the obstacles and challenges, which might be hindering or limiting the expected outcomes and impacts, 3) to assess the capacity of Vikes and its partners in achieving project objectives, and 4) to identify lessons learnt and to provide concrete recommendations and possible adjustments to a potential follow-up project.

The evaluation follows the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating development projects and covers the *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact* and *sustainability* of the project. The evaluation methodology utilized Outcome Harvesting approach, developed by Ford Foundation. The approach is suitable for qualitative assessment of outcomes in complex environment, being participatory and narrative in nature, and applies well for personal and organizational change, engaging beneficiaries as change agents.

In total, 60 people were interviewed following a semi-structured method. Interviewees included stakeholders from different project partners, training participants, as well as randomly selected citizens (See Appendix II: List of interviewees). There are still some limitations in the evaluation regarding validity and reliability. Firstly, for many of the interviewees, it was the first time they took part in an evaluation and might have given biased and overly positive responses due to lack of familiarity towards the concept of evaluation. To mitigate this, the evaluator explained the concept and purpose of the evaluation before starting any of the interviews. Secondly, the data was analysed by a single evaluator, and thus the results and recommendations provided may be subject to personal bias. To mitigate this, the report has gone through a comprehensive round of comments.

The evaluation process was carried out in three phases:

- **Desk phase:** Reviewing key project documents and identifying key questions to be studied during the field phase (Oct–Dec 2016)
- **Field phase:** Interviews and observations in Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Borama (May 2017)
- **Synthesis phase:** Fact checking, analysis, writing, and round of comments (Aug 2017–Jan 2018)

The initial evaluation timetable was stretched due to elections in Somalia and related tensions affecting the security situation. The field phase was postponed from January 2017 until May 2017. This, however, provided a unique longitudinal evaluation setting, that allowed the evaluator to collect and compile data during one full year.



Local TV news reporters in Burao during a practical training session on interviewing techniques and camera framing.

# 3.0

## Project objectives and outputs

■ The project's long-term objective has been to promote the peaceful development of Somali society and to enhance citizens' access to information by a) improving the professionalism of Somali journalists and their operational capacity, and by b) assisting SNTV and Radio Mogadishu in the transformation towards public service broadcasting. Key beneficiaries include journalists, technicians, politicians, government officials, police officers, and the general population.

The immediate objectives for the project were:

1. Improved production process and technical quality of SNTV programmes.
2. Improved journalistic quality of SNTV programmes.
3. Journalists at SNTV and Radio Mogadishu can produce journalism more independently from politicians and government officials.
4. Politicians, government officials, military and police have a better understanding of the importance of independent media in society.
5. Improved security situation of journalists in Somalia.
6. Improved confidence and professionalism among journalists in Somalia.
7. Investigative journalism will be introduced to journalism in Somalia.
8. Improvements in the conditions, professional skills and self-esteem of women journalists.

To achieve these objectives, three categories of key outputs were planned:

1. Transfer a studio released by Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) and other equipment for use by SNTV and Radio Mogadishu, and to train staff in their use and maintenance.
2. Provide training for the leadership of the Ministry of Information, radio and TV staff, as well as other key reference groups, such as politicians, police and military, on respecting the rights of journalists in the implementation of the new media law.
3. Provide training for Somali journalists on independent, critical and investigative journalism, and on paying timely attention to security risks.

The project seeks to improve professionalism among Somali journalists and assist in the transformation of Somalia's state media towards public service broadcasting.

# 4.0

## Operational environment

■ Somalia is one of the world's most dangerous countries for journalists and other media workers. Engulfed in conflict and volatility, and severely affected by the impact of two decades of civil strife, the country suffers from a lack of institutions, corruption, and severely limited infrastructure and resources. The rebel Islamist Al-Shabaab movement is persecuting journalists, and also government authorities attempt to control the media. Yet, the country has a vibrant but fragmented media culture. World Press Freedom Index 2013 by Reporters Without Borders ranked Somalia 175th out of 179 countries. In 2017, it had slightly progressed to 167th out of 180 countries.

Somali media has been utilized both as an instrument for reconciliation as well as a driver of conflict. Due to strong oral culture, radio broadcasting, first introduced to Somalia in 1945 by the British colonial administration in Hargeisa, has for generations been the most important mass media for sharing and receiving information. Between 1960 and 1969, there were two radio stations in the country, Radio Mogadishu and Radio Hargeisa, and two newspapers. After the 1969 military coup, Siad Barre regime controlled all domestic publications and broadcasting. After the collapse of the central government in the early 1990's and the following civil war, media became essentially unregulated, and since 1999, a boom of private media has taken place.

With the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia in 2012, a federal state media was also created. In recent years, increased efforts have taken place to coordinate international media support. A new media law was enacted in 2015. Furthermore, a Somali Federal Media Strategy 2016–2020 was designed as a framework to strengthen and guide the development of Somali media and the implementation of the media law.

The operational environment also differs much in different parts of the country, from areas such as Somaliland with relative peace and stability to other areas still under conflict or continued threats from Al-Shabaab. Somaliland also has in place its own media legislation.

Somalia is one of the world's most dangerous countries for journalists and other media workers. Yet, the country has a vibrant but fragmented media culture.

# 5.0

## Key findings

### 5.1 The project is relevant and aligns well with national priorities

Given the situation in Somalia, where communities and clans often live in isolation from one another, illiteracy is predominant and the country has no unified educational system, the underlying assumption that media, channelling information, can play a significant role in the country's peaceful development, is fitting.

Aligning well with the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States principle to strengthen the state core functions, Vikes has chosen to support both government media and national and regional journalist associations. Vikes approach has been consistent, and despite some reservations from other international media support groups, who tend to avoid direct cooperation with the government media, Vikes project has received interest and support from Somali nationals as well as from the project main donor, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project also complements the Somali Compact development strategy and the Somaliland National Vision 2030 by supporting democratic institutions.

The project has been unquestionably relevant by responding to a well-articulated need: the professional capacity of Somali journalists is still relatively low, as is their general understanding of media ethics. Though radio has for generations been the most important media in the country, television is becoming an important channel across the country and is for the large Somali diaspora the main source of information from their homeland of origin. Both radio and TV outlets lack proper equipment to carry out their work.

### 5.2 The project has been effective beyond initial plans

The initial project plans and targets were adjusted during implementation, and by the end of the project evaluation period, the number of the training participants had more than doubled from initial plans, and the amount of project activities had increased remarkably.

#### Number of participants in journalist trainings

Year	Target	Actual number of training participants	Female/Male	Trainings planned	Actual number of trainings
2014	90	186	51/135	4	5
2015	90	174	70/104	4	11
2016	90	105	33/72	4	5
2017		95	18/77	0	5
Total	270	560*	172/388	12	26

\* Total number of journalists trained is 396 by November 2017. This includes 123 female and 273 male journalists. The cumulative number of training participants is different, since some journalists have taken part in several trainings within the project.

SNTV news production studio, the first multi-camera TV studio in Somalia, was constructed and is fully functional. SNTV technicians have been trained in multi-camera news production and to maintain the studio facilities. Local technicians have also continued to train others.



Faizo Hussein Bashir and Fartun Nur Adan working on an assignment at a training on basic journalism skills in Kismayo in February 2017.

Altogether 396 journalists representing both private and government media outlets have been trained in basic journalism skills, professional ethics, news reporting, more investigative programme production, and children and youth programme production in trainings arranged in Mogadishu, Garowe, Kismayo, Hargeisa, Borama and Burao.

121 representatives from the police, judiciary and key ministries have received training on freedom of expression and respect for media rights. These trainings have been arranged in Mogadishu and Hargeisa.

Rather than strictly focusing on measuring the progress towards the predetermined objectives and indicators, evidence on what was changed due to the project interventions was collected and is summarized below.

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING INSTITUTIONALIZED**

**“When drafting the new media law and the national media strategy, Vikes gave us much valued guidance. Finnish Yle model has been our role model when designing the public broadcasting service.”**

Abdirahman Yusuf al-Adala

Director General at Somali Ministry of Information

During the project implementation period, the Somali government, by leadership from the Ministry of Information, took concrete steps towards establishing public service broadcasting.



Live news production with PC-based Vidigo live production system at Somali National Television in May 2016.

The new media law enacted in 2015 highlights Somalia's endeavours to provide independent public service broadcasting. Article 33 of the media law refers to an editorially independent Public Broadcasting Service and describes the protection of its legal framework. Vikes provided guidance and services for the drafting process, among other actors.

33.1 – This law shall ensure the legal protection enjoyed by the government media (Public Broadcasting Service) that is independent in its news editorial and journalistic profession.

33.2 – The Public Broadcasting Service shall be independent from the interests of government officials, political interference and commercial companies, while respecting the laws and press ethics.

33.3 – The Public Broadcasting Service programming must be objective and free from political bias, without promoting/exaggerating a political organization, governing bodies, commercial interests, or individual opinions.

## NEWS PRODUCTION AT SNTV IMPROVED

**“We now have a functioning studio and better news inserts and audio than ever before. Our journalists and technicians act more professionally and have improved their skills visibly.”**

Nasser Hussein

Director for administration and planning, Ministry of Information, former director of SNTV

As a result of the project, SNTV news production studio in Mogadishu, the first multi-camera TV studio in Somalia, was constructed and is fully functional. The studio enabled first ever live broadcasting of news in Somalia. SNTV technicians have been trained to use and maintain the studio, and they have continued to train others. Technicians' skills in handling studio equipment, audio systems, lighting and cables improved radically. Increased self-confidence,

proactivity and sense of responsibility created a more professional working culture, including improved coordination between members of the news production team operating the studio.

## **QUALITY OF JOURNALISM EVOLVED**

The quality of SNTV news inserts has improved. News inserts are shorter, more compact, they cover a wider range of topics, and are visually more professional. Trained news reporters have learnt to script their news inserts in a more narrative style. SNTV also started its first children and youth programmes and produced a number of TV documentaries.

A light-touch Audience Perception Survey revealed that 80 percent of randomly selected citizens in Mogadishu follow SNTV news regularly. All of the interviewed stated that the programme production has improved during the past two years – whereas previously the same content was aired multiple times, now the variety of programmes has increased and programmes are both technically and journalistically better than before.

All interviewed journalists, who have taken part in the training courses on basic journalism skills and journalism ethics, said that their everyday work benefitted from the increased understanding of professional ethics. The trainings on interviewing techniques was also repeatedly cited as one of the most important learnings.

## **DIALOGUE BETWEEN JOURNALISTS AND SECURITY OFFICIALS SLOWLY INCREASING**

**“I used to be afraid of the police, since they haven't been treating journalists well in the past. Vikes training with journalists and police officers was my first time really interacting with the police, and now when I see officers in the street, I don't automatically think that they are against us.”**

Participant of training on freedom of expression with Somaliland police, judiciary and media, Hargeisa, August 2016

Vikes project has also provided training for government officials, judiciary and police to improve their understanding of the importance of independent media in society. By bringing government officials, judiciary, police officers and journalists together for the first time, both in Mogadishu and in Somaliland, Vikes was able to initiate a dialogue and shared understanding between these traditionally competing actors. Particularly the personal experiences provided by a senior Finnish police officer were highly appreciated by the local police commanders in Somaliland and Somalia. The key messages about trust and presumption of innocence resonated well with the participants, who wished to have more such trainings in the future. As a matter of fact, in Somaliland, the local partner SOLJA has continued to arrange joint meetings with judiciary, police and media, inspired and encouraged by the experiences from Vikes training.

## **NEW INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS FORMED AND ATTITUDES CHANGED**

**“I have never before seen a white man work like this – dirt their hands – usually white men just talk in their fancy suits.”**

Fuad Mohiddin Khalif

Assistant technical director at SNTV

One of the most significant individual change was often described as the friendships that formed across cultural and geographical differences. Regarding changes on a more institutional level, several of the project partners also mentioned that they have received more collaboration requests from other international media support groups and believe that

this is partly due to the successful cooperation they have had with Vikes. Especially SNTV and NUSOJ appeared to have gained more respect within the Somali media community. Finland's reputation as a supporter of media training and freedom of expression in Somalia has also increased.

## **WOMEN'S ROLE IN MEDIA ENHANCED**

Interviewed women journalists wanted to thank Vikes for showing great respect towards women and thus setting an example for others to follow. Female journalists told that their self-confidence had increased and they were able to progress with their careers. At SNTV, women technicians were appointed for the first time and gained appreciation from their male colleagues.

## **5.3 Vikes added value**

### **FINNISH SOMALI DIASPORA**

Finnish Somali diaspora has played a significant role in the project. The project was initiated by a diaspora member in 2012, and initial planning of the project continued among Yle, Finnish Somali diaspora journalists and Vikes. The involvement of the diaspora has brought vast added value for the project. Understanding the sensitivities of the clan-based society, the cultural heritage and the modus operandi of Somali society has enabled Vikes to tailor their approach to the local context. By mixing a team of committed diaspora members and other Finnish professionals, Vikes has been able to manoeuvre through different cultures and has gained valuable trust from the local partners.

### **ORGANISATIONAL AGILITY**

**“Vikes is the most fearless foreign organization that has ever arrived in Mogadishu and trained journalists themselves. Vikes has done a breakthrough. They came bravely, and now many of the organizations that used to be based in Nairobi are following their example.”**

Mohamed Ibrahim Bakistaan

New York Times correspondent, former Secretary General of the National Union of Somali Journalists

Vikes is a relatively small organization with low hierarchies and wide professional networks. Partly due to these characteristics, Vikes has been able to make quick and flexible decisions based on needs assessments and requests by local partners. An illustration of the flexibility Vikes enjoys, is their decision and freedom to function outside the Mogadishu Airport base secured by African Union troops. Only few international organizations operate on the ground in Mogadishu. Many others rather concentrate their activities in Somaliland and Puntland, or focus on policy level interventions administered from Nairobi, Kenya, where most of the organizations have a regional base.

### **CONCRETE AND TANGIBLE SUPPORT**

The assistance that Vikes provides was repeatedly described as one of the only concrete and tangible support that the beneficiaries have received in Somalia. Technical assistance related to the establishment of the news production studio at SNTV was particularly well designed in terms of context and continuation. In Somaliland, journalists highlighted how Vikes trainings were tailored in a way that was easy for them to comprehend and provided them with concrete skills.



TV producer Pasi Toivonen with SNTV news reporter Ahmed Ali Kahiye and cameraman Abbas Mohamed Farah at a joint seminar with the Somali Ministry of Information on public service broadcasting.

## STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND BROTHERHOOD

**“We cannot underestimate the importance of personal relationships that we were able to build over time with people in this project. Working closely with SNTV and including the people in every step of the way was vital for the success.”**

Qualitron Technical Report 2016 by technical expert Andreas Wirth

Vikes was able to establish strong partnerships with the local institutions. From the very beginning, the partner organizations have been seen equal in decision-making. Clear written partnership agreements outline objectives and responsibilities, and have helped in the follow-up. When Vikes team has been outside the country, they have communicated via social media channels and given ad hoc support to the partners. Due to the long-term commitment and continuation of the visits to Somalia despite the evident risks involved, Vikes has earned the trust of local partners and in turn received their commitment to the project goals.

## COMMITTED EXPERTS PROVIDING PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

**“It was the first time I met with foreign journalists in Borama. Other organizations use mainly local consultants, or stay in the capital.”**

Participant of training on basic journalism skills and professional ethics, Borama, Somaliland, November 2016

Vikes has a solid reputation as an expert organization. All trainers have been experts in their own field, whether journalists, technicians, documentary filmmakers, or police. The



Participants of a journalist training in Burao getting together for a group photo. The training was held in September 2017 jointly arranged with Somaliland Journalists Association.

coordination team includes members with a strong contextual knowledge. Vikes has been successful in finding individuals, who are willing to travel to Somalia despite the risks involved. The evaluation reveals that all of those interviewed share a joint understanding of the project goals and objectives, which is an accomplishment on its own.

## FINNISH LEGACY

Finland has a good reputation in Somalia. Many citizens have relatives or friends, who have moved to Finland, and thus feel close to the country. Vikes has been able to build on the Finnish principles of neutrality and democracy, and the long history of freedom of expression and public service broadcasting in Finland.

## 5.4 Project activities have been implemented efficiently

General findings on the cost-effectiveness and efficiency showcase that Vikes has been spending much less than other international media support organizations to provide quality trainings with noticeable results. No extra funds have been allocated for living expenses and office rent in Nairobi, or permanent stay in Somalia. Usually, several training events have been arranged during same training missions in order to minimize costs and time for coordination, logistics and security. The number of participants at training events has also been multiplied, while still using less costs in relation to original plans, or trainings arranged by other groups.

In 2015, the geographical reach of the project was broadened and trainings were arranged in Garowe (Puntland) and Hargeisa (Somaliland), also creating new partnerships with the local journalist associations MAP and SOLJA. This brought increased acceptance towards the project nationally and among Somali diaspora members originating from these regions, as well as enabled Vikes team to continue trainings in other locations, when the security situation did not allow the team to operate in Mogadishu. Extending activities to Somaliland also enhanced cost-effectiveness, since accommodation and logistics are much cheaper there compared to Mogadishu, due to a more relaxed security situation.

## 5.5 Long-term impact is possible, but too early to assess

This evaluation signals that Vikes interventions have positively contributed to the peaceful development of Somali society and citizens' access to information. Somali media landscape is very fragmented, and to effectively assess the particular impact by Vikes interventions, a more thorough causality analysis would be required. Nonetheless, the project interventions have certainly improved individual journalists' skills, attitudes and ways of working.

## 5.6 Knowhow can't be taken away

**“Implementing projects in fragile states is always risky. Enhancing local actors' capacity is exactly the right way to ensure sustainability.”**

Matti Karvanen

Former Somalia desk officer, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### MATERIAL SUSTAINABILITY

One of the initial purposes of the project was to transfer to Somalia a TV studio and other equipment released by Yle to be used by SNTV and Radio Mogadishu, and to train local staff in the use and maintenance of the new facilities and equipment. The initial plan was adjusted during the inception phase, and some used equipment were replaced by new ones. For example, the whole editing system and software were procured as new, instead of bringing old second-hand hardware. Vikes technical team has produced detailed reports from the preparation, installation and maintenance stages.

The selected equipment was sent to Somalia by sea cargo, which was the only viable option at the time. Despite the harsh weather conditions during the shipping, only few items got damaged thanks to careful packaging in Finland. Due to delays in the transportation, the electrical installation and procurement of generators were postponed to 2015, and by the end of that year, the multi-camera news production studio was handed over to SNTV. In May 2017, the studio was functioning well and had been in full use since November 2015, despite the fact that some of the second-hand studio cameras were out of order during the monitoring visit.

One of the key reasons for the material sustainability has been the sense of ownership adopted by the local technicians. To ensure that the team would not be depending on only few individuals, the trained technicians have continued to train new team members and pass on the knowledge. When Vikes team has been out of the country, WhatsApp has been actively used by Vikes trainers and Somali technicians to provide ad hoc support to the technicians' questions and concerns. At times, the local technicians have struggled to find fitting spare parts within the country and convince the Ministry of Information to support these purchases, sometimes ending up buying spare parts by using their own salaries.

To extend the lifespan of the facilities and to secure the power supply at all times, Vikes technical team also provided air ventilation and cooling, and constructed a new electrical infrastructure for the studios and news rooms at SNTV and Radio Mogadishu. Somalia has so far no public power supply and relies fully on external power generators. Two new diesel generators were procured by the Vikes project to provide power to the news production facilities and replace a very old generator that was previously in place. In May 2017, power from the generators was also used by the Ministry of Information buildings in the same compound. Such overdo of the generators could cause short circuits risking the studio equipment and the news production.

The current estimation for some of the studio equipment to remain functional is two years, but to achieve this, spare parts and spare equipment will be needed in the near future and the generators should not be used to provide power elsewhere than for the studios that they were originally meant for.

## IMMATERIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The immaterial aspects of the project include the skills and knowledge transferred to the journalists, local partner organizations, SNTV technicians and management, and the Ministry of Information. The sustainability of the transferred knowhow can extend far beyond the project period. All interviewees said that they feel that the new skills they have acquired have changed their ways of working for good.

One of the main challenges for the sustainability of the project is related to the wellbeing of SNTV technicians and Vikes team. Vikes has a handful of devoted individuals involved in the project implementation, who have put an extensive number of working hours to the project. Since the project rests heavily on only few individuals' understanding and knowledge of the project, would these individuals suddenly quit, the sustainability of the project could be at risk

The change and rotation of key ministers and officials in Somalia could also have caused difficulties for the project implementation. Due to Vikes networks and reliable reputation, they have, however, been able to secure good working relations with all new decision-makers and other influential persons involved with the project.

## 5.7 Gender equality promoted across activities

**“I very much liked Vikes approach, where women and men work concretely together.”**

Päivi Nikkilä

Women Journalists in Finland, Vikes trainer in Somalia in 2015

Somalia is one of the hardest environments for journalists to work at. Both men and women professionals face multiple security threats, but in addition to that, women also encounter sexual and gender-based harassment. Women's career progress is often slower than among their male colleagues, and they are often preferred to be seen reporting entertainment shows, while men cover politics. Yet, media can play a big role in changing these stereotypes and in portraying women as equal members of the society.

Vikes Somalia project places special emphasis to ensure that women journalists would benefit from the trainings. Vikes has consistently promoted equal gender participation within their trainings. More than 120 women have participated in the journalist trainings, which is 31 percent of the total number of journalist training beneficiaries. With the existing gender imbalance in the Somali media sector, this percentage can be seen as a good result.

Vikes has also collaborated with several Somali women journalist associations. In 2015, a special training on journalism skills was arranged in Mogadishu with 25 Somali women journalists, facilitated jointly by Finnish and Somali female journalist trainers. The creation of such a safe space for discussion and exchange of experiences enabled both Somali and Finnish women journalists to share joys and difficulties they face in their everyday life, even on difficult themes such as sexual harassment.

## 5.8 International collaboration evolved

Somalia Media Support Group (SMSG) has been established to bring together and coordinate the efforts of donors, UN agencies and implementing partners active in the media development sector. The group is currently co-chaired by Unesco Regional Office for Eastern Africa and the programme director of a joint project by the Danish NGO, International Media Support (IMS) and Fojo Media Institute from Sweden. SMSG also maintains a list of ongoing and upcoming media development activities in Somalia. In April 2017, the list consisted of 40 such activities, including eight activities implemented by Vikes.



Somali camerawoman Hinda Jama teaches video camera skills at a training with women journalists in Mogadishu in May 2015.

During the project implementation period, Vikes has actively improved its collaboration with peer organizations and has established contacts with most of the media support actors operating in Somalia. Other media support actors currently involved in Somalia are Unesco, IMS, Fojo Media Institute, Free Press Unlimited, Bar Kulan Trust, World Bank, USAID, BBC Media Action and National Endowment for Democracy (NED). United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) also has a considerable media support unit.

In its early stages, Vikes project received doubts from some of the other international media support actors, who tend to avoid any direct cooperation with the government media and rather focus on support activities with the private media.

**“International community has previously labelled SNTV as the voice of the government – and to be honest, quite corrupted. Vikes interventions and SNTV’s commitment to public service broadcasting have changed the way I view SNTV.”**

Abukar Albadri

Somalia programme coordinator, International Media Support and Fojo Media Institute

## 5.9 Monitoring needs a more systematic approach

Vikes has along the way taken in new ways of assessing and measuring the achievements of the project and has succeeded in building up a large evidence base for successes and lessons learnt. The project has, for example, gained extensive media visibility – multiple documentaries, articles and social media updates confirm the results in a way that is easy to verify.

During the project implementation, local partner organizations have also increased their understanding about reporting and budget requirements that come along development funding.



Mohamed Ibrahim Moalimuu of the National Union of Somali Journalists addressing Mogadishu police district commanders at a training on freedom of expression with Somali Police Force in May 2017.

Yet, there are systematic weaknesses in conducting baseline research and post-training individual feedback assessments. Following each training, a summary report has been produced, capturing the agenda, participation data, training content and recommendations. The format has been open-ended, and thus the quality of the reports varies heavily and rests on the commitment and capacity of partners and individual trainers to produce polished reports.

### **5.10 Operating in a high-risk environment requires careful risk assessments**

Somalia is slowly recovering from more than two decades of instability and state fragility. It still remains one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. Numerous journalists have been killed in Somalia in recent years. During the first phase of project implementation in 2014–2017, the security situation did not improve as rapidly as expected.

According to the guideline report *Finland's development policy and development cooperation in fragile states* (2014), Finland recognizes that engagement with fragile states, such as Somalia, involves greater risks than engagement with other developing countries. For development cooperation projects funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a thorough risk assessment and management plan is required. Vikes has in 2014 provided a risk assessment as requested. To ensure continued safety and security of the staff, continuous efforts are required to assess and mitigate the risks.

# 6.0

## Conclusions and recommendations

■ Vikes is a unique actor among media support organizations operating in Somalia. The project is directly aligned to national and international policies, norms and instruments, including the priorities by the main donor, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, with exceptional local contextual fit. Among local partners, the project is described as one of the few media support projects in Somalia, that has provided concrete and tangible results tailored to the needs of beneficiaries. Partners also appreciate Vikes commitment to the project, shown by the fact that trainings have been conducted consistently in a high-risk environment.

The outcomes achieved by the project clearly follow the outcomes originally intended. In addition, the project has been continuously evolving, with more activities conducted than initially planned, at the same time also expanding the project's geographical scope.

Despite all odds, the project has proved to be sustainable both in material and immaterial terms. The news production studio at SNTV, the first multi-camera TV studio in Somalia, is operational, and local technicians have been trained to use and maintain it. Trainings conducted across Somalia and Somaliland have reached 681 participants, including journalists and other media workers, government officials, members of the judiciary, and police officers. Close to 400 journalists, representing both the private and government media, have received training that has changed their ways of working. Furthermore, around 120 representatives from the police, judiciary and key ministries have received training on freedom of expression and respect for media rights. The approach has been ground-breaking by bringing together journalists and security officials and improving their respect for one another.

Outputs have been appreciated by partners and beneficiaries, and represent a key contribution to Somalia's progressing media. Even though there are clear signals of positive long-term impact, this can only be assessed within a longer period of time and would require an in-depth causality assessment.

Yet, as anticipated, the challenging operational environment has also hampered the project implementation. Some activities have been postponed either due to the volatile security situation or logistic delays. Lack of spare parts and technical equipment in Somalia has also hindered the maintenance of the news production studio and affected some of the in-house trainings.

There is an evident demand for Vikes media support activities in Somalia also in the future, especially when making use of Vikes approach of peer learning and expert-to-expert exchange, which has proved to be very successful.

It is recommended for Vikes to continue collaboration with the national and regional journalist associations also in future projects. and also to carry on supporting Somalia's efforts towards public service broadcasting. Overall, it is recommended for Vikes to crystallize its niche in Somalia by narrowing down some of the work streams and focusing even more on key activities. Vikes is also recommended to disseminate some of its lessons learnt to the wider media support sector.

## Positive and negative factors affecting the current and possible future Vikes projects in Somalia

<p><b><u>STRENGTHS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concrete needs based support</li><li>• Long-term partnerships with both government and private media</li><li>• Trust and local ownership</li><li>• Finnish Somali diaspora actively involved</li><li>• Deep context knowledge and wide geographical coverage</li><li>• Organizational agility</li><li>• Team of committed experts</li><li>• Finnish long history of public service broadcasting</li><li>• Cost-effectiveness</li><li>• Lively media visibility</li><li>• Concrete outputs easy to verify</li></ul>	<p><b><u>WEAKNESSES</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multiple working streams across the country</li><li>• Dependability on few key individuals</li><li>• Budget constraints and narrow funding base</li><li>• Inadequate monitoring and evaluation standards</li><li>• Male-dominated core team</li><li>• Challenging operational environment, including lack of spare parts and technical equipment</li></ul>
<p><b><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Momentum around the new Somali media landscape and legislations</li><li>• Motivated beneficiaries and partners</li><li>• Public appetite for news</li><li>• Potential for synergies and collaboration</li></ul>	<p><b><u>THREATS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volatile security situation</li><li>• Corruption and possible reputational risks</li><li>• Change in political will</li><li>• Future of Finnish government development funding uncertain</li></ul>

### 6.1 General recommendations

- Crystallize Vikes niche in Somalia.
- Promote local ownership and continue collaboration with national and regional journalist associations.
- Continue supporting Somalia's efforts towards public service broadcasting.
- Ensure safety and security of the staff by continuous efforts to assess and mitigate risks.
- Standardize reporting formats to help individual rapporteurs to capture adequate data and enhance the monitoring of project outcomes.
- Produce handover notes and exit plans to ensure sustainability of the project.
- Recruit more female trainers.
- Continue upholding women's participation as criteria for the trainings.
- Enhance collaboration with other international media support organizations and share lessons learnt with the wider media support sector.
- Actively seek for alternative funding sources for the project.



Technical trainer Andreas Wirth and SNTV head technician Abdulkadir Mohiddin checking camera exposure for a discussion programme in April 2017.

## 6.2 Specific recommendations

- Support SNTV in finding additional partners to provide technical equipment in the future.
- Media trainings should continue to include both theory and practical exercises.
- Training materials could be published online to enhance learning and reach even wider number of journalists.
- In regional trainings, consider extension of training days with rotation of participants to allow everyone to participate without affecting the news production at local media outlets.
- Ensure that also media managers and owners understand the training content and the challenges and needs that journalists and technicians experience daily.
- Continue with police trainings and arrange joint trainings with media.
- In future technical media support projects in Somalia, Vikes could focus on radio or online platforms to reach a wider audience inside the country.
- Continue to work in Mogadishu and in the regional states, where there are relatively few other media support actors.
- Collaborate with universities and other journalism training institutions in Somalia and Finland to assist in preparation of study programme with certificates that are acknowledged also abroad.
- A set of specific safety recommendations has been shared with Vikes for internal use.

# Appendices

## Appendix I: Documents reviewed

### PROJECT DOCUMENTS

Project description (2013)  
Implementation plan and budget 2014 & 2015  
Training schedule 2014-2016  
Partners' roles and mandates (2014)  
Risk assessment (2014)  
Partnership agreements with NUSOJ and Somali Ministry of Information  
Annual reports 2014, 2015 & 2016  
Meeting notes and memos 2014-2016  
Qualitron report on TV studio construction at SNTV (2016)  
Equipment list and Yle donations 2014-2016  
Narrative reports from trainings in 2014-2017 (23 reports)  
Feedback questionnaires from SNTV training May 2017  
Feedback questionnaires from Somali Police Force training May 2017  
Vikes Somalia project media coverage 2014  
Vikes Somalia project media coverage 2016

### OTHER DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

The Somali Compact (2013)  
Somaliland National Vision 2030 (2011)  
Draft Somaliland National Development Plan 2012-2016  
Somali Federal Media Strategy 2016-2020  
Somali Media Law Article 33  
Somali journalist draft code of conduct, March 2014  
SMSG Activities Mapping Matrix April 2017  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland: *Finland's Development Policy and Development Cooperation in Fragile States* (2014)  
USAID: *Aid Worker Security Report 2017*

## Appendix II: List of interviewees

Wali Hashi	Vikes
Peik Johansson	Vikes
Niklas Kaskeala	Vikes
Abdi Musse Mohamud	Vikes
Juha Rekola	Vikes
Ossi Laakso	Qualitron
Joonas Virtanen	Qualitron
Andreas Wirth	Qualitron
Kirsi Mattila	Women Journalists in Finland
Päivi Nikkilä	Women Journalists in Finland
Pasi Toivonen	Yle

Thomas Elfgrén	Police of Finland
Matti Karvanen	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Tessa Rintala	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Abukar Albadri	IMS and Fojo Media Institute
Yusuf Hassan	Media consultant
Mohamed Ibrahim Bakistaan	NUSOJ
Mohamed Ibrahim Moalimuu	NUSOJ
Abdirahim Isse Adow	Ministry of Information and Public Awareness, Somalia
Abdirahman Yusuf al-Adala	Ministry of Information and Public Awareness, Somalia
Nasser Hussein	Ministry of Information and Public Awareness, Somalia
Abdulkadir Mohiddin	SNTV
Ahmed Abdi Mohamed	SNTV
Ahmed Abdulkadir Qhais	SNTV
Ahmed Ali Kahiye	SNTV
Amina Hussein Mohamed	SNTV
Bisharo Abdirashid Ahmed	SNTV
Fuad Mohiddin Khalif	SNTV
Leyla Aded Isman	SNTV
Liban Abdi Ali	SNTV
Nimo Hirsi Jimale	SNTV
Hinda Jama	Somali Women's Free Press Association
Liban Abdi Hassan	SOLJA
Mohamud Abdi Jama	SOLJA
Yahye Mohamed	SOLJA
Abukar Hassan Ali	SLNTV
Warda Ahmed Roble	SLNTV
Muna Mohamud Abdi	Radio Hargeisa
Samatar Abdullahi Adan	Xorriyo News
Ibrahim Abdullahi	Bulsho TV
Nagib Abdullahi Olad	Bulsho TV
Nimo Omar Hussein	Bulsho TV
Zamzam Abdillahi Osman	Eryal TV
Hoori Ahmed Hoori	Horn Cable TV
Mohamed Abdullahi Hussein	Kalsan TV
Kawsar Jama Barkhadle	Rayo TV
Shukriya Abdi Abdillahi	Rayo TV
Samiha Mohamed Elmi	Star TV
Faisal Hiis Elmi	Somaliland Police

A light touch Audience Perception Survey gathered inputs from ten randomly selected citizens in Mogadishu. The survey was conducted by Abdalla Dahir. In addition to the above mentioned, the evaluator held several background discussions with people knowledgeable about Somali media and journalism.

## Appendix III: Project activities in 2014–2017

	Date	Project activities	Location	Partner
1	May 3–6, 2014	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Mogadishu	NUSOJ
2	May 8–28, 2014	In-house training on more investigative programme production	Mogadishu	SNTV
2	Aug 24–25, 2014	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Mogadishu	NUSOJ
4	Aug 26–Sept 24, 2014	In-house training on more investigative programme production	Mogadishu	Radio Mogadishu
5	Nov 1–3, 2014	Seminar on freedom of expression and its importance to societies	Mogadishu	NUSOJ
6	Feb 17–19, 2015	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Garowe, Puntland	NUSOJ MAP
7	May 3–5, 2015	Seminar on freedom of expression and state-building of Somalia	Mogadishu	NUSOJ
8	May 6–8, 2015	Training with women journalists on basic journalism and skills development	Mogadishu	NUSOJ
9	May 6–21, 2015	In-house training on more investigative programme production	Mogadishu	Radio Mogadishu Radio Kulmiye
10-13	May–Nov 2015	Technical trainings in multi-camera news production, including studio construction and maintenance	Mogadishu	SNTV
14	Aug 29–Sept 1, 2015	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Hargeisa, Somaliland	SOLJA
15	Sept 3–19, 2015	In-house training on more investigative programme production	Hargeisa, Somaliland	Somaliland National Television (SLNTV)
16	Nov 13–Dec 4, 2015	In-house training on children programme production	Mogadishu	SNTV
17	May 23–27, 2016	Training on news insert production	Mogadishu	SNTV
18	May 25, 2016	Seminar on public service broadcasting	Mogadishu	Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism
19	Aug 22–23, 2016	Training on freedom of expression with Somaliland police, judiciary and media	Hargeisa, Somaliland	SOLJA
20	Nov 26–28, 2016	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Borama, Somaliland	SOLJA
21	Nov 17–Dec 4, 2016	In-house training on children programme production	Mogadishu	SNTV
22	Feb 5–8, 2017	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Kismayo, Jubaland	Jubaland Ministry of Information
23	Apr 2–6, 2017	Technical training on discussion programme production	Mogadishu	SNTV
24	May 3–7, 2017	Training on news insert production (journalistic and technical)	Mogadishu	SNTV
25	May 4–6, 2017	Training with Somali Police Force on freedom of expression, safety of journalists, and public order	Mogadishu	Somali Police Force
26	Sept 26–28, 2017	Training on basic journalism skills and principles of journalism and ethics	Burao, Somaliland	SOLJA



Women journalists from Somali mainstream media at a skills development training in Mogadishu in May 2015.



Viestintä ja kehitys -säätiö  
Finnish Foundation for Media and Development  
PL 252, 00531 Helsinki, Finland  
[www.vikes.fi](http://www.vikes.fi)