



Civic Space & Extremism Prevention in Jubaland

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*Aligning Local Stability with Somalia's National
Transformation Agenda*

Policy Brief

Published: October 2025

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Studies (CRPS)*

Focus Areas:

*Civic Space | Governance | Preventing Violent
Extremism | Democratic Participation | Community
Resilience*

1. Executive Summary

Civic space plays a critical role in strengthening governance, preventing violent extremism, and promoting inclusive development in fragile contexts. In Jubaland, where security threats and governance transitions intersect, expanding civic participation can help address drivers of radicalization while reinforcing state legitimacy.

This policy paper proposes a multi-stakeholder approach that supports community engagement, strengthens democratic processes, and enhances cooperation between government and civil society. The recommendations align with Somalia's **National Transformation Plan (NTP) 2025–2029**, which envisions “*stable and inclusive governance, anchored on the rule of law*” and identifies transformational governance as a pillar for promoting peace and an inclusive political process.

2. National Policy Alignment

2.1 Somalia's National Transformation Plan (2025–2029)

The NTP serves as Somalia's strategic blueprint for **inclusive growth, resilience, and sustainable development**.

It prioritizes:

- Governance reform and security enhancement
- Judicial efficiency and economic resilience
- Building effective institutions to address long-standing challenges such as insecurity and weak governance

The plan is organized around four pillars:

1. Transformational Governance
2. Sustainable Economic Transformation
3. Social and Human Capital Transformation
4. Environment and Climate Resilience

Importantly, the governance pillar aims to establish an **effective, decentralized, and democratic federal system supported by an inclusive political process**.

Policy implication: Expanding civic space directly supports national priorities by enabling inclusive politics, improving accountability, and strengthening citizen trust.

2.2 Continuity with the National Development Plan (NDP-9)

Somalia's earlier development framework emphasized:

- Improved security and rule of law
- Inclusive economic growth
- Stronger political stability

It also highlighted the need for **rights-based security institutions and access to justice** to guarantee safety for citizens.

Policy implication: Civic participation complements security reforms by addressing grievances that extremist groups exploit.

3. Jubaland State Context and Priorities

Jubaland plays a crucial role in Somalia's peacebuilding and federalism process and is committed to:

- Strengthening security
- Fostering inclusive development
- Delivering essential services
- Building effective institutions and expanding economic opportunities

CRPS Research on Jubaland governance recommends:

- Strengthening traditional justice mechanisms
- Improving governance structures
- Promoting civic engagement
- Supporting democratic processes and reconciliation

Meanwhile, state security forces such as the Jubaland Darawiish focus on **counter-terrorism and destabilizing actors**, highlighting the ongoing threat environment.

Policy implication: Security operations must be complemented by community engagement to ensure durable peace.

4. Civic Space as a Tool for Preventing Extremism

Somalia already recognizes the importance of collaborative approaches; the national strategy for preventing violent extremism calls for active involvement of **regional administrations, civil society, and private sector partners**.

Investment frameworks further emphasize supporting **community-driven programs that address the root causes of extremism** through Somali-led solutions.

Key Linkages

Expanding civic space helps:

- Reduce marginalization and political exclusion
- Strengthen citizen–state relations
- Promote early warning and community resilience
- Counter extremist narratives through trusted local actors

5. Policy Challenges in Jubaland

Despite progress, several structural risks remain:

- Persistent insecurity and extremist threats
- Weak institutional capacity
- Limited citizen participation in governance
- Socioeconomic vulnerabilities among youth

National reforms increasingly emphasize unity, inclusion, and broad political consensus to strengthen counterterrorism efforts.

6. Strategic Policy Recommendations

1. Institutionalize Civic Dialogue

Create structured forums linking government, CSOs, religious leaders, women, and youth to support inclusive decision-making.

2. Integrate Civic Engagement into Security Strategies

Pair counter-terrorism operations with community-based prevention initiatives.

3. Empower Youth as Prevention Actors

Expand skills training, mentorship, and educational opportunities to reduce recruitment risks.

4. Strengthen Local Governance and Justice

Support decentralized governance and accessible justice systems to build public confidence.

5. Promote Rights-Based Approaches

Ensure that prevention strategies reinforce rule of law and protect fundamental freedoms.

7. Expected Outcomes

If effectively implemented, these measures will:

- Enhance public trust in state institutions
- Reduce vulnerability to extremist recruitment
- Strengthen democratic governance
- Support long-term stability in Jubaland
- Advance Somalia's national transformation goals

8. Conclusion: The Role of Civil Society

Preventing extremism requires more than military responses—it depends on inclusive governance and active citizen participation. Expanding civic space aligns directly with Somalia's national vision for stability, democratic federalism, and sustainable development.

9. CRPS Engagement

The Center for Research and Professional Studies (CRPS) works to advance civic participation, human rights, governance accountability, and community resilience. Through policy dialogue, research, and capacity-building initiatives, CRPS is positioned to support Jubaland authorities and national partners in developing locally driven strategies that prevent extremism while strengthening democratic space.

CRPS stands ready to collaborate with government institutions, development partners, and community stakeholders to operationalize civic-space programming that contributes to peace, security, and inclusive development in Somalia.