

# Mashruuca Dowlad-Wanaag

## Dangoroyo District Authority

### Capacity Assessment Report

January-June 2025

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dangorayo District capacity assessment presents a critical analysis of the governance, institutional, and operational structures of this Category B district located in Puntland's Nugaal region, with a population predominantly reliant on pastoralism. Dangorayo's socio-economic profile reflects the challenges of an arid landscape where extensive pastoralism is increasingly challenged by climate-related stress, infrastructural deficits, and historically limited investment in public administration.

The district's assessment and analysis underlines deep systemic capacity constraints. These challenges are particularly severe in areas of financial management, human resources, and strategic programming into integrated development management. The assessment identifies community willingness to engage, noting the peer relations with the two major urbans of Qardho to the north and Garowe to the south-west (Dangorayo is the midpoint town on the link road through to Bossaso and Galkayio and southern Somalia with links into Ethiopia). It is a relatively secure and stable environment with the nascent shift toward participatory governance through democratic reforms as critical enablers for positive development reinforcing this stability.

## Key Findings:

- **Governance and Leadership (8/48):** Lack of a formal strategic process for a District Development Framework (DDF) and into action planning with prioritisation and resourcing as basis for institutional and citizen, as per the democratisation agenda, accountability frameworks.
- **Human Resource Capacity (0/48):** Absence of a functional HR system, job descriptions, capacity assessments and career planning as basis for organisational development to manage systems and structures delivering on the social contract established through strategic planning process.
- **Service Delivery and Infrastructure (2/48):** Ill-defined and known to be inadequate infrastructure, with erratic service delivery, and insufficient planning mechanisms to define baselines and develop action plans to deliver improvements.
- **Financial Management (0/72):** No systems for budgeting, financial revenue generation and tracking, management and reporting.
- **Community Engagement and Participation (6/48):** Sporadic forums without mechanisms for inclusion or feedback loops.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation & Accountability (4/48):** No MEA/MEL framework; minimal oversight or public performance reporting approach to build on participation in a systematic way reinforcing local resource mobilisation accountability as projects are prioritised and responsibilities established.
- **Disaster Risk Management (0/24):** Total absence of preparedness, early warning systems, or contingency planning fitting into district development frameworks, and addressing underlying causes and systemic drivers of exogenous shocks.

While Dangorayo's performance is critically low, it is important to note the stabilised security environment and population engagement as core assets to build on. The district's governance reform ambitions, including recent transitions to elected councils, offer a foundation for medium- to long-term development if structural and capacity investments are prioritised now.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Short-Term (Within Annual Planning Cycle):**

- Establish governance systems through the introduction formal decision-making and accountability guidelines, including meeting minutes, public reporting, councillor feedback to constituents, and service charters as basis for a social contract inside a DDF with specific community action plans.
- Launch HR reform in collaboration with Puntland State by establishing a merit-based hiring system that includes clear job descriptions and open recruitment processes. This may be complemented by on-the-job skills development and internship opportunities in partnership with local universities.
- Initiate basic administrative training to strengthen institutional knowledge, complemented by practical work on project cycle management, participatory assessment methods, and community engagement strategies.
- Community engagement built through monthly inclusive community forums with structured agenda and action-tracking based on established baselines.
- Community engagement to be further developed by research on different messaging approaches, outreach through digital engagement, what other preferred approaches by the different stakeholders identified in a full stakeholder analysis
- Establish essential financial administrative structures and systems, with support from Puntland State, to ensure the district's accounting practices comply with state regulations.
- Pilot a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability (MEA) system based on clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) aligned with the District Development Framework (DDF), and initiate regular performance tracking.
- Develop a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plan grounded in a threat and hazard profile created through community input. This plan will form the basis for mitigation and preparedness efforts integrated into the DDF and MEA processes, enabling the district to implement cash-based programming that meets donor verification standards and lays the foundation for diaspora-driven crowdfunding initiatives.

### **Mid-Term (Within Current Council Tenure):**

- Operationalise a comprehensive Human Resources (HR) system by rolling out the Puntland State HR policy. This should include standardized recruitment procedures, performance evaluations aligned with the DDF and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability (MEA) frameworks, as well as defined roles, responsibilities, and career progression pathways.
- Strengthen financial management by fully implementing participatory budgeting, informed by stakeholder mapping and community consultation processes. Install complete procurement guidelines to support the development of public-private partnerships, with a focus on promoting local social and solidarity enterprises. Ensure all financial staff are trained to meet competency standards required for operating these systems.
- Develop digital outreach and engagement tools to promote inclusion and accountability. This includes introducing SMS-based feedback mechanisms and radio broadcasts to expand citizen participation and promote open governance.
- Advance infrastructure planning based on detailed physical mapping of the district. Identify and prioritize key infrastructure gaps through inclusive assessments, aligning them with Disaster Risk Management (DRM) strategies and leveraging diaspora crowdfunding. Address procurement needs and mobilise essential technical expertise, particularly in civil engineering and project management.
- Expand the MEA/MEL framework to include community scorecards and biannual public performance reporting to foster transparency and accountability.
- Integrate comprehensive DRM plans into the DDF, incorporating mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery elements. Ensure these plans are scalable and supported by robust communication and engagement frameworks that strengthen the district's governance capacity.

### **Long-Term (Fitting Puntland's Development Framework):**

- Institutionalise governance and decentralisation by aligning all governance practices with Law No. 7. This includes developing district-level by-laws, drawing on peer learning, and incorporating guidance from central Puntland State authorities. Advocate for the delegation of powers in accordance with Puntland policy.
- Diversify revenue streams and establish a sustainable district tax system, focusing on land taxation and service-based revenue such as market fees and small business licenses.

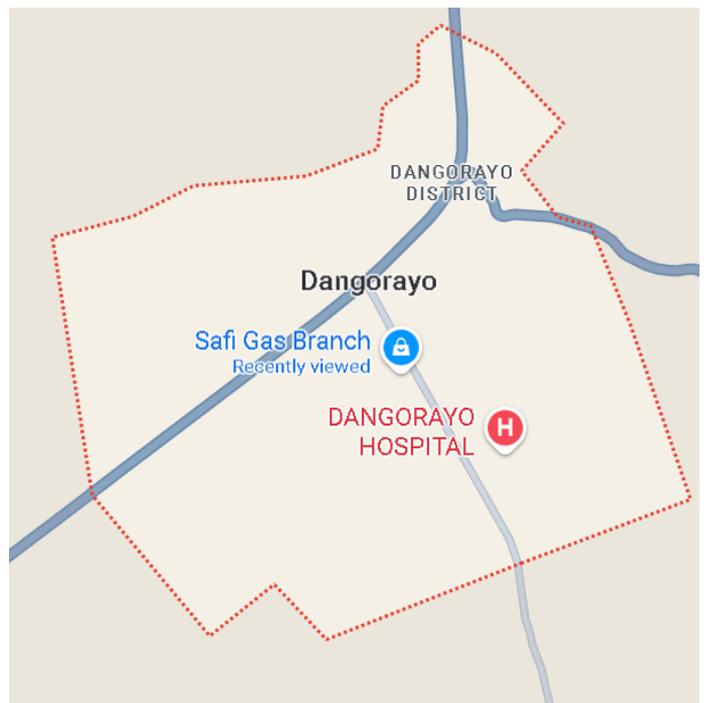
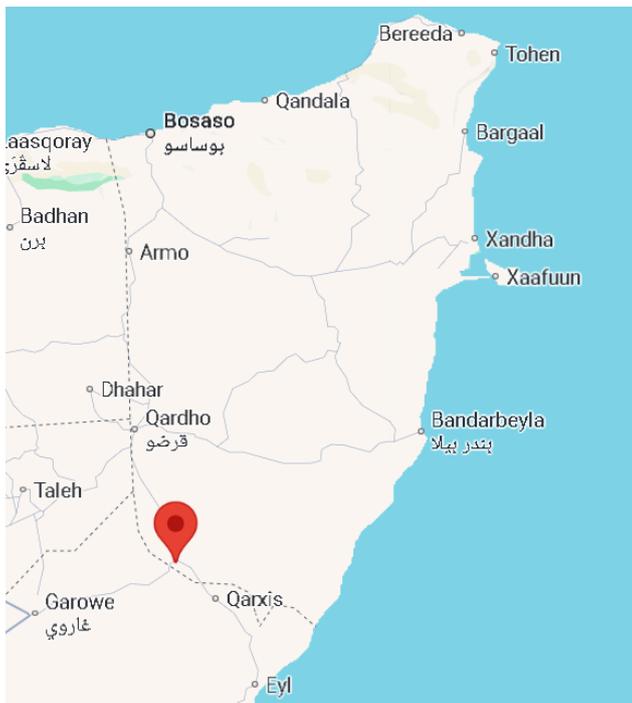
- In line with funding development, explore co-financing models and initiate crowdfunding for clearly defined business cases under the District Development Framework (DDF) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plans. Leverage the skills and resources of the diaspora to support district development initiatives.
- Promote professional development by partnering with Puntland universities to deliver targeted skills training, internship placements, and work experience opportunities. This should align with career mapping and encourage peer-to-peer learning across institutions.
- Support infrastructure development through public-private partnerships, mobilising resources via a District Development Committee and engaging established social and solidarity enterprises. Emphasis should be placed on the inclusion of women, youth, and marginalised groups in these efforts.



# INTRODUCTION

Dangorayo is located in the Nugaal region of Puntland and is characterized by flat plains and semi-arid conditions. Its geographical position makes it a vital hub for pastoralist activities, with strong connections to the nearby towns of Qardho and Garowe. The district experiences significant seasonal variations, with rainfall being both scarce and unpredictable. As a result, pastoralist communities frequently migrate in search of water and pasture for their livestock. This seasonal migration shapes settlement patterns and influences the aspirations of younger generations, particularly those pursuing education in urban areas. These dynamics underscore the need for employment opportunities that promote inclusion, economic growth, and diversification to meet the evolving expectations of the population.

## OVERVIEW OF DANGOROYO DISTRICT:



Dangorayo has long been shaped by clan-based systems of governance, with clan affiliations and dynamics playing a significant role in local administration and conflict resolution. The district's political landscape is closely linked to that of the broader Puntland State, where traditional leaders—such as elders and clan heads—continue to exert influence alongside formal administrative structures established by the government. This blend of traditional and modern leadership has defined governance in the area. However, the recent introduction of direct elections has begun to shift the balance, fostering greater inclusion and active civic participation.

Despite these changes, the roles of various stakeholders remain critical to maintaining the existing stability. With appropriate external support, these actors can help chart a development path that benefits all residents of Dangorayo. Cultural norms in Somali society—such as hospitality, respect for elders, and clan-based solidarity—continue to deeply influence everyday life in Dangorayo. These traditions impact everything from conflict resolution to political organization and the persistence of gender roles. Traditionally, men have dominated roles in herding and trade, while women manage domestic responsibilities. However, women in Dangorayo are increasingly engaging in trade and small-scale businesses (Ahmad, 2013).

In recent years, the Puntland government has made strides to improve infrastructure in Dangorayo, yet significant challenges remain in unlocking the district’s full economic potential. Basic services such as water, education, and healthcare still require substantial investment. Despite being primarily dependent on natural resources, the district has opportunities for economic diversification through the development of livestock value chains, climate-resilient agriculture, and fodder/forage production. Supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) focused on value addition can help meet local needs and encourage public-private collaboration in both basic service delivery and broader economic development.

# FINDINGS

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### Grade B

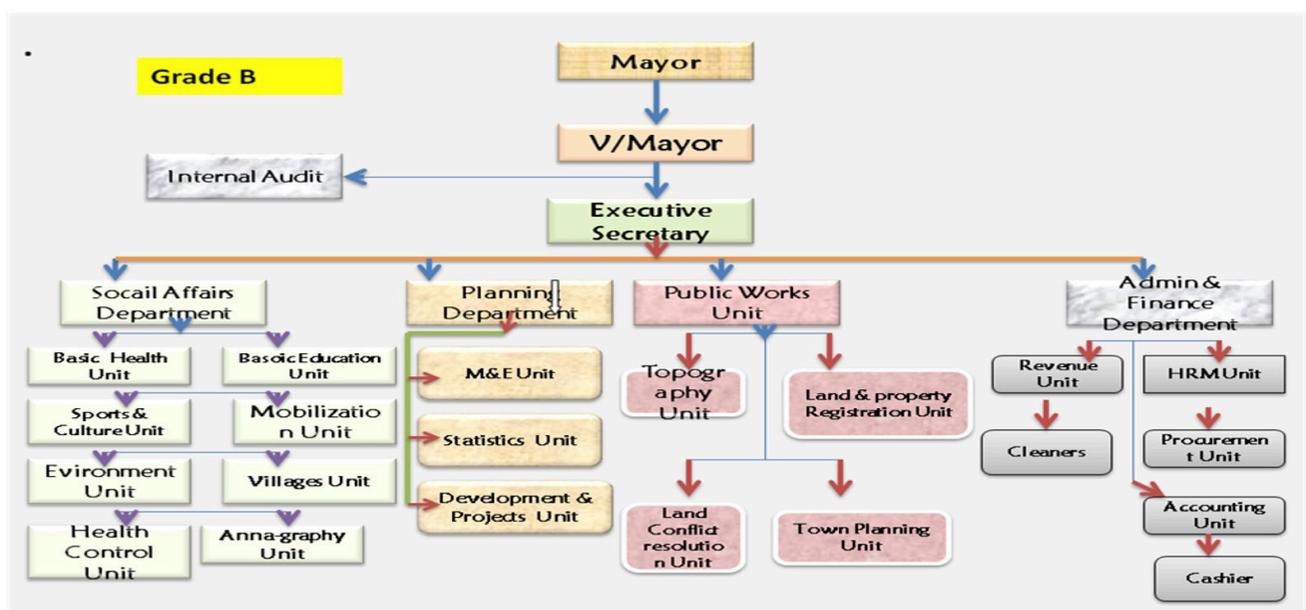


Diagram : MoIFAD District B Structure

Dangorayo, a Grade B district, adheres to the Ministry of Interior, Federalism, and Democratization (MoIFD) guidelines by maintaining four departments with a total of 18 sub-units. However, in practice, most of these units are non-functional due to severe staffing shortages, limited skills, and a lack of supporting systems, structures, and management capacity. Despite a stable security environment and a growing openness to decentralisation, the district continues to struggle in converting its inherited administrative framework into an effective, service-oriented system.

With an overall capacity score of just 6.25% (21 out of 336), Dangorayo exhibits critical institutional and operational gaps. Addressing these will require a phased, participatory reform process if the current stability is to become a foundation for inclusive and sustainable development.

It is also important to consider the geographical positioning of Dangorayo Town in relation to Qardho and Garowe. The dynamics of surrounding rural hinterlands—including how communities migrate between water points and areas with available forage—must be factored into planning. These patterns underscore the need for broader mapping of settlement functionality and a strategic approach to infrastructure development, including the integration of digital outreach tools to enhance service delivery and local governance.

## Dangorayo District Capacity

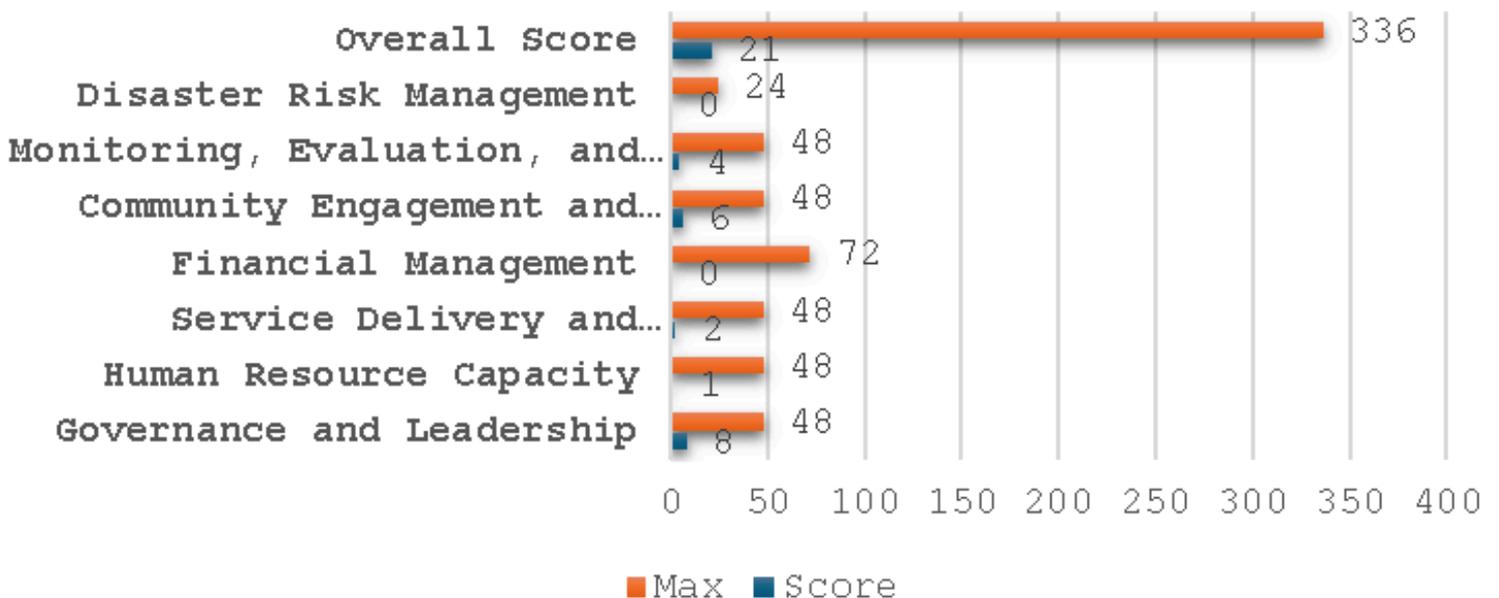


Chart 1: Dangorayo District Capacity Performance Scores Across Key Areas

## a) Governance and Leadership

### Key Gaps:

- Fragmented structure, minimal oversight, emerging democratic promise requires support in how councillors are to have legislative oversight of district mandate delivery
- Dangorayo's governance structure is basic and marked by deep functional limitations.
- The lack of coordination between local and state authorities further constrains progress, particularly in overlapping service mandates such as education and health.
- Community members recognised the district's efforts to present plans and solicit feedback, but criticised the irregularity and superficiality of engagement.
- A notable barrier is the absence of accountability mechanisms, with no public reporting, performance tracking, or grievance redress systems in place.
- There are periodic community meetings and alignment with Puntland's decentralisation objectives are positive indicators, they are undermined by the lack of formalised policies, strategic plans, or annual review mechanisms.
- Decision-making remains reactive, often driven by informal consultation rather than structured public policy.

### Recommendations:

- Formalise planning and consultation cycles with participative approaches building from a full stakeholder analysis
- Institutionalise feedback loops connecting council oversight with citizen expectations and the executive's management of delivery
- Build, noting the induction work for councillors undertaken, leadership skills among elected officials fitting on having the executive formalise a results-based DDF and taking forward inclusive governance.

## b) Human Resource Capacity

Noting points made under Staff Capacity, the HR section highlights considerations of structures, systems and management into which people, staff, are expected to fit. Staff are often assigned based on availability rather than merit or alignment with departmental needs. As a result, most departments are either understaffed or staffed with underqualified individuals, often without any functional structure supporting delivery. The paucity of structure reflects through on all aspects of organisational set-up and engagement.

### **Key Gaps:**

- Absent systems, informal structures, deep professional gaps
- Human resources management in Dangorayo is virtually non-existent. There are no clear recruitment guidelines, role descriptions, or performance evaluations (Noting physical proximity to Garowe, seat of State Government, this raises further lines for inquiry)
- Feedback from the council highlighted staff's lack of basic skills in planning, procurement, or administration, compounded by the absence of computers, HR tools, or structured induction.
- Gender representation is weak: only 15% of staff are women, and none hold senior positions.

### **Recommendations:**

- Introducing the Puntland standard for district HR policy and practice. This leading with instigating job descriptions for all positions
- Partnering with NGOs and universities to deliver initial training in core administrative functions;
- Ensuring gender-sensitive recruitment processes and career development pathways.

## **c) Service Delivery and Infrastructure**

### **Key Gaps:**

- Severe delivery gaps; basic services ad hoc or absent. Services limited to sporadic activities, the garbage collection in the town itself, while essential services health, education and water (WASH) are either absent or coordinated by external actors.
- The district lacks any structured service mapping, performance monitoring, or maintenance planning.
- Despite the district's stated focus on primary services and afforestation efforts, it suffers from inadequate infrastructure (particularly roads), minimal community feedback integration, and a complete absence of service data.
- Residents reported inequitable access, particularly for rural communities and marginalised groups.
- Economic stimulus, public infrastructure to support enterprise, is non-existent. Communities highlighted electricity being absent or too expensive.

## **Recommendations:**

- Establishing a district service delivery plan with annual targets and costed priorities;
- Mapping infrastructure needs in collaboration with communities;
- Exploring co-financing, the approach of diaspora crowdfunding, or public-private partnerships to develop service delivery.

## **d) Financial Management**

### **Key Gaps:**

- No budgeting, tracking, or audit mechanisms in place
- Dangorayo has no functioning financial system. There are no revenue collection mechanisms, no documented budgeting process, and no expenditure tracking or auditing.
- Councillors cited a lack of financial literacy
- Technical staff cited there are no computers and related software plus skills to use these.
- There was no standard operating procedures (SoPs), and processing available: from budgeting through accounting to reconciliation and audit

This exposes the district to both fiscal inefficiency and reputational risk, undermining its credibility with Puntland authorities and development partners. Without a minimum threshold of financial governance then resource mobilisation, planning, and accountability are all compromised.

### **Recommendations:**

- Establishing basic ledger and procurement processes fitting with Puntland State requirements and guidelines
- Drawing on Puntland's PFM and previous decentralised service delivery work, training staff in budgeting, accounting, and related controls
- Introducing participatory budgeting fitting with development of revenue generation and livelihood development where local economic development and district development committee approaches can be built
- Preparing the district for annual internal audits as a foundation for full PFM engagement for access to external financial support.

## e) Community Engagement and Participation

### Key Gaps:

- There is no stakeholder mapping setting out and detailing the different groupings in the district beyond the basic women, youth and marginalised groups
- Emerging platforms have inconsistent reach and the exclusion of marginalised voices
- Dangorayo's community engagement relies on occasional town hall meetings, which are poorly structured and lack follow-through.
- There is no communication channel specifically designed to reach women, youth, marginalised groups or rural populations, resulting in low inclusivity and weakened legitimacy.

The residents interviewed, highlighting the bias to the town of Dangorayo, expressed willingness to engage and called for regular, structured consultations with clear mechanisms to see how their feedback shapes planning, decisions and any works to be done under these plans.

Importantly, engagement is seen not only as a means of informing people but also as an essential tool for cooperation of services, increasing local ownership and stimulating the local economy.

### Recommendations:

- Undertake a full stakeholder analysis aligning this with a communications/outreach plan to have people involved in the full development of a DDF and resulting plans and actions to deliver on this DDF
- Institutionalise quarterly town hall forums with feedback reporting
- Launch mobile and radio-based feedback mechanisms as first part of implementing a full communications engagement and participation approach.
- Ensure all engagement platforms meet gender inclusion and address social exclusion.

## f) Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

### Key Gaps:

- Weak internal oversight; no data systems or reporting tools
- There is no formal MEA or MEL framework in Dangorayo. No performance indicators tied to service delivery or administrative functions.
- Community members, council and technical staff all noted the lack of data, baseline and standards to be attained against which progress reporting could be developed

- No means for citizens to raise concerns, grievances or track implementation.
- Monitoring is further hindered by the absence of procurement processes, meaning there is no way to assess whether services or resources reach their intended targets.

**Recommendations:**

- Defining key performance indicators (KPIs) for government services (to be defined noting roles under Law Number 7), service delivery, livelihood supporting infrastructure development and other areas of development set out in a DDF
- M&E skills developed for baseline development and real time updates fitting to KPIs and feeding the DRM into DDF work
- Specific skills and systems development enabling district staff to lead on MEA/MEL plus how they can involve citizens in work on humanitarian verification and build interactive community scorecard approaches
- Introducing quarterly reporting templates, research the use of scorecard approach and linked to community validation sessions
- Establishing a grievance redress system with confidential feedback mechanisms using mediums different stakeholder groups are familiar with.

**g) Disaster Risk Management**

**Key Gaps:**

- No locally owned and near real time, noting the seasonality, vulnerability analysis to feed DRM inside the DDF leading to absence of how to develop mitigation approaches or preparedness/contingency plans
- No preparedness, and limited awareness of how to integrate DRM into ongoing programmingLack of local engagement, structured in governance approaches for early warning system with local trained personnel to undertake assessments. The district's sole DRM officer is unsupported and under resourced.
- No mapping of threats and risks and consequences of drought leading to conflict of access to water.

**Recommendations:**

- Integrate DRM into the District Development Framework (DDF) and community action plans;
- Develop a threat and hazard map with clear contingency plans;
- Create a district-managed emergency response fund and explore cash-for-work as a response modality inside the setting of infrastructure projects under the DDF.
- Reinforce the district's MEA capabilities and credentials to undertake social safety net full project cycle with reporting meeting donor requirements

## **h) Staff Capacity**

### **Key Gaps:**

- Limited qualifications, poor role alignment, gender imbalance, and zero professional development
- Dangorayo District's staffing profile exposes significant structural and performance vulnerabilities. With only 40 staff across five departments, the district operates well below the threshold needed to manage even minimal governance and service responsibilities.

### **The critical analysis reveals several key concerns:**

- Qualifications and role misalignment as 78% of staff possess no education beyond secondary school, and 12 of these have not completed high school. This severely limits the district's ability to carry out policy, finance, and service functions.
- Only 6 staff (15%) hold bachelor's degrees, and in most cases, these qualifications are not aligned with departmental functions—e.g., the Head of Revenue holds a veterinary degree, while the Head of Finance is an engineer.
- These mismatches contribute to weak departmental management, unclear role execution, and low organisational performance.
- Experience in roles. While the Revenue & Taxation department benefits from senior personnel, with 13 staff having over 10 years of experience other departments, especially Social Affairs and Public Works, rely on junior staff which compromises institutional memory and planning continuity.
- Gender Imbalance with 40 staff, 34 are male (85%) and only 6 are female (15%). Critically, no heads of department are women, reflecting systemic/systematic barriers to women's advancement in public sector leadership in the district. This gender gap limits the representation and inclusivity of governance and affects how services respond to women and girls' needs.
- Professional development is non-existent with no performance appraisal system, no career progression pathways, and no dedicated HR function in the district. What staff development to be undertaken has been supply driven when NGOs or the UN have delivered. There has been no formal training in the past two years,
- ICT literacy is nearly absent, blocking opportunities for digital transformation, data management, and service innovation.

## Recommendations:

- Conduct a comprehensive staffing audit to realign qualifications with departmental functions and reassign misallocated staff
- Using existing approaches available in Puntland, implement a gender-sensitive HR policy, including targets for women in management and pathways for promotion
- Partner with local universities, vocational centres, and NGOs to introduce modular, blended learning courses in public administration, finance, procurement, ICT, and project management;
- Introduce an internship and mentorship scheme for youth and recent graduates to bridge the staffing pipeline;
- Secure dedicated funding for HR reform, including retention incentives, performance evaluations, and digital HR systems.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Short-Term (Within Annual Planning Cycle):**

1. Establish governance systems through the introduction formal decision-making and accountability guidelines, including meeting minutes, public reporting, councillor feedback to constituents, and service charters as basis for a social contract inside a district development framework (DDF) with specific community action plans.
2. Launch HR reform with Puntland State structuring for merit-based hiring involving clear job descriptions and open recruitment processes possibly linked to on-the-job skills development and internships with local universities
3. Commence basic administrative training for administrative functions to build institutional knowledge, accompanied by engaged work on project cycle management, participatory approaches for assessments and community engagement.
4. Community engagement built through monthly inclusive community forums with structured agendas and action-tracking based on established baselines.
5. Community engagement to be further developed by research on different messaging approaches, outreach through digital engagement, what other preferred approaches by the different stakeholders identified in a full stakeholder analysis
6. Core, necessary, financial administrative structures and systems put in place through Puntland State support for district accounting systems meeting Puntland State regulations.
7. Pilot MEA system fitting to the identification of key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the DDF and begin performance tracking.
8. Disaster risk management (DRM) is developed based on threat and hazard profile designed through community input. This as the basis for mitigation and preparedness work feeding into the DDF and further development of MEA work allowing the district's governance structures to undertake cash-based programming directly meeting donor verification requirements and setting the basis for crowdfunding further works by diaspora.

### **Mid-term (within council tenure):**

1. Operationalise full HR system with roll out of (Puntland State) HR policy including recruitment, performance evaluations (fitting to DDF and MEA work with defined roles and responsibilities) and career progression procedures.

2. Strengthen financial management by building on compliance with full implementation of participatory budgeting (noting input from stakeholder mapping and community consultation processes and communications). Install full procurement guidelines allowing development of public-private engagements favouring social and solidarity (local) enterprises. As systems installed, all financial staff are trained to meet competences set for the systems operation.
3. Digital outreach and engagement for inclusion and accountability developed built on introducing SMS feedback tools and radio-based community broadcasting to increase participation and build open governance.
4. Infrastructure planning developed on the physical mapping of the district. Identify key infrastructure gaps through inclusive assessments, prioritise works and fit this with DRM work plus diaspora crowdfunding noting the procurement processes and need to mobilise critical resources in terms of key civil engineering and project management skills.
5. Expand a full MEA/MEL framework with community scorecards and biannual public reporting.
6. Comprehensive DRM plans integral to the DDF with full mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery elements and how to undertake different approaches at different scales with the necessary communications and engagement frameworks to support the district's governance structures.

### **Long-Term (Fitting Puntland's Development Framework):**

1. Institutionalise governance and decentralisation work aligning all governance practices with Law No. 7. Drawing on peer learning and central Puntland State input, district-level by-laws, and advocate for delegated authorities in line with Puntland policy.
2. Revenue diversification and sustainable district tax system based on land taxes and fit to service delivery for market fees, small business licenses.
3. Fitting with funding development, explore co-financing models and instigate crowdfunding on defined business cases under the DDF and DRM work. Look at other resources noting the diaspora skills available to support district development.
4. Professional development taken forward working with Puntland universities for defined skills development, possible work experience/internships. This to fit with career mapping and exploration of further peer-to-peer learning opportunities.
5. Public-private developments to support infrastructure delivery fitting with resource mobilisation and the involvement of a District Development Committee plus established social and solidarity enterprises (focus women, youth and mobilisation of marginalised groups).



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