ARDAAGA
Sharing Ideas — Empowering People.

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ORGANIZATION PROFILE

For collaboration, partnerships, or more information, reach out to us:

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📍 Kismayo, Jubaland - Somalia

Ardaaga at a Glance:

Ardaaga is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening democracy in Somalia. Founded in 2020 as Kismaayo Debates, the organization initially focused on fostering public discussions to encourage critical thinking and civic dialogue. However, recognizing the need for deeper community engagement and actionable solutions, the organization evolved into Ardaaga in late 2021. The name "Ardaaga," inspired by Somali cultural heritage, symbolizes a communal space for discussions, decision-making, and resolutions.

This rebranding marked a pivotal shift toward a holistic approach, integrating civic engagement, leadership development, research, and policy advocacy to empower communities and influence governance reforms. Over the years, Ardaaga has expanded its reach by forming strategic partnerships, launching impactful initiatives such as the Sahanka Madaniga (civic engagement program) and the Hogaanbile leadership development initiative, and advocating for policies that promote transparency and inclusivity.

Through civic engagement, research, leadership development, policy advocacy, and cultural heritage preservation, Ardaaga continues to strengthen governance, promote informed participation, and ensure that all voices—especially marginalized communities—are heard in shaping Somalia's future.

Vision
Statement:

A democratic, informed, and engaged Somali society where citizens actively participate in governance, policymaking, and cultural preservation.

Mission
Statement:

To empower communities through civic education, research, and leadership development, fostering informed participation and effective governance, fostering a culture of democratic participation and good governance.

Core Values:

Empowerment: We enable individuals and communities to take ownership of their voices, rights, and futures.

Integrity: We act with honesty, ethics, and responsibility in all our work.

Inclusivity: We ensure that all voices-especially those historically marginalized-are respected, represented, and empowered.

Curiosity: We foster a culture of critical thinking, openness, and lifelong learning as the foundation of civic progress.

Collaboration: We work in partnership across sectors and communities to co-create sustainable and inclusive solutions.

Cultural Grounding: We draw strength and wisdom from Somalia's rich cultural heritage to guide our identity, foster national unity, and inform democratic leadership.

Impact-Driven: We are committed to achieving angible, lasting change that strengthens governance and improves lives.

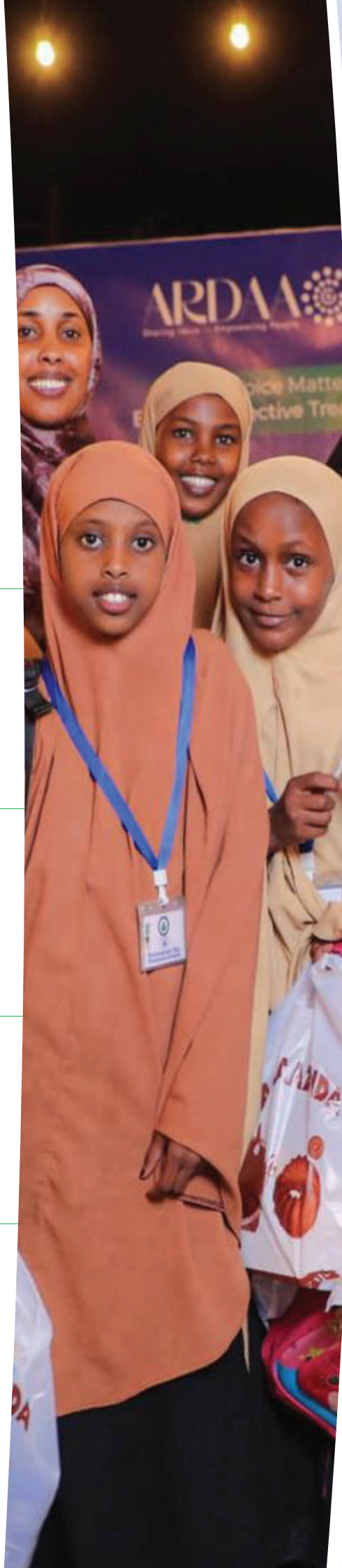![ARDAAGA logo - Sharing Ideas — Empowering People.]

Strategic
Objectives

1. Enhance Civic Engagement & Democratic Participation-Empower communities through education, advocacy, and participatory governance initiatives to strengthen democratic values and ensure inclusive decision-making.

2. Advance Evidence-Based Policy & Research-Conduct rigorous research and policy analysis to support transparent governance, inform decision-making, and drive impactful reforms.

3. Develop Ethical & Visionary Leadership- Equip emerging leaders with the skills, values, and knowledge to lead with integrity, accountability, and innovation in governance and civil society.

4. Preserve & Integrate Somali Cultural Heritage-Protect, document, and promote Somalia's rich cultural heritage as a foundation for national identity, unity, and democratic resilience.

5. Foster Strategic Partnerships & Sustainable Impact-Strengthen collaboration with national and international stakeholders to amplify Ardaaga's reach, ensure program sustainability, and drive long-term social change.

What We Do:

Ardaaga drives transformative change through comprehensive programs and strategic initiatives, fostering an engaged, informed, and empowered Somali society. Our work is centered around four key thematic areas:

01 Civic Engagement & Democratic Participation- We equip citizens with the knowledge, skills, and platforms to actively participate in governance. Through public dialogues, voter education campaigns, and grassroots mobilization, we strengthen democratic values and ensure inclusive decision-making.

02 Research & Policy Advocacy- Our data-driven approach informs policy reforms and governance improvements. By conducting in-depth research, publishing policy briefs, and engaging with stakeholders, we provide actionable recommendations that drive transparent and accountable leadership.

03 Leadership Development & Capacity Building- We nurture a new generation of ethical and visionary leaders. Through mentorship programs, leadership training, and governance workshops, we empower individuals to take on leadership roles that promote integrity, accountability, and innovation.

04 Cultural Heritage Preservation & Integration- We recognize the vital role of cultural heritage in fostering national identity and unity. Our initiatives document, promote, and integrate Somali traditions, arts, and history into contemporary governance frameworks, ensuring a balance between progress and cultural preservation.

How We Work:

Ardaaga employs a multi-faceted, community-driven approach to creating lasting change. Our methodology ensures inclusivity, impact, and sustainability through the following key strategies:

Community-Centered Engagement- We work directly with local communities, fostering grassroots mobilization, organizing town halls, and facilitating dialogues to amplify civic voices and encourage participatory governance.

Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration- We engage with policymakers, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and international partners to drive policy reforms, share expertise, and enhance program effectiveness.

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Leadership Development & Capacity Building- Through targeted training programs, mentorship initiatives, and skills development workshops, we empower emerging leaders, community activists, and governance practitioners to drive positive change.

Digital Innovation & Outreach- We leverage technology to extend our reach, utilizing digital platforms for civic education, policy discussions, and public engagement, ensuring accessibility for all segments of society.

Our Team:

At the heart of Ardaaga is a passionate and diverse team, united by a shared commitment to democracy, civic empowerment, and social progress. Our team consists of visionary leaders, dedicated researchers, and grassroots advocates who bring expertise, innovation, and an unwavering dedication to fostering positive change in Somalia. Each member plays a crucial role in designing and implementing initiatives that inspire active civic participation, ethical leadership, and policy transformation.

Our strength lies in collaboration and adaptability. With professionals from various fields-including governance, research, media, and cultural preservation-we combine knowledge with action to address complex societal challenges. Whether engaging with communities, shaping policy dialogues, or mentoring the next generation of leaders, the Ardaaga team is committed to building a more inclusive, informed, and democratic Somalia.

Our **Structure:**

Ardaaga's organizational structure ensures efficiency and effectiveness in achieving its mission. It consists of:

01 Board of Directors – Comprising five distinguished members, the board provides strategic oversight and governance, ensuring that Ardaaga remains mission-focused and impactful.

02 Executive Director – Leads the organization's operations and programs, ensuring effective implementation of Ardaaga's initiatives.

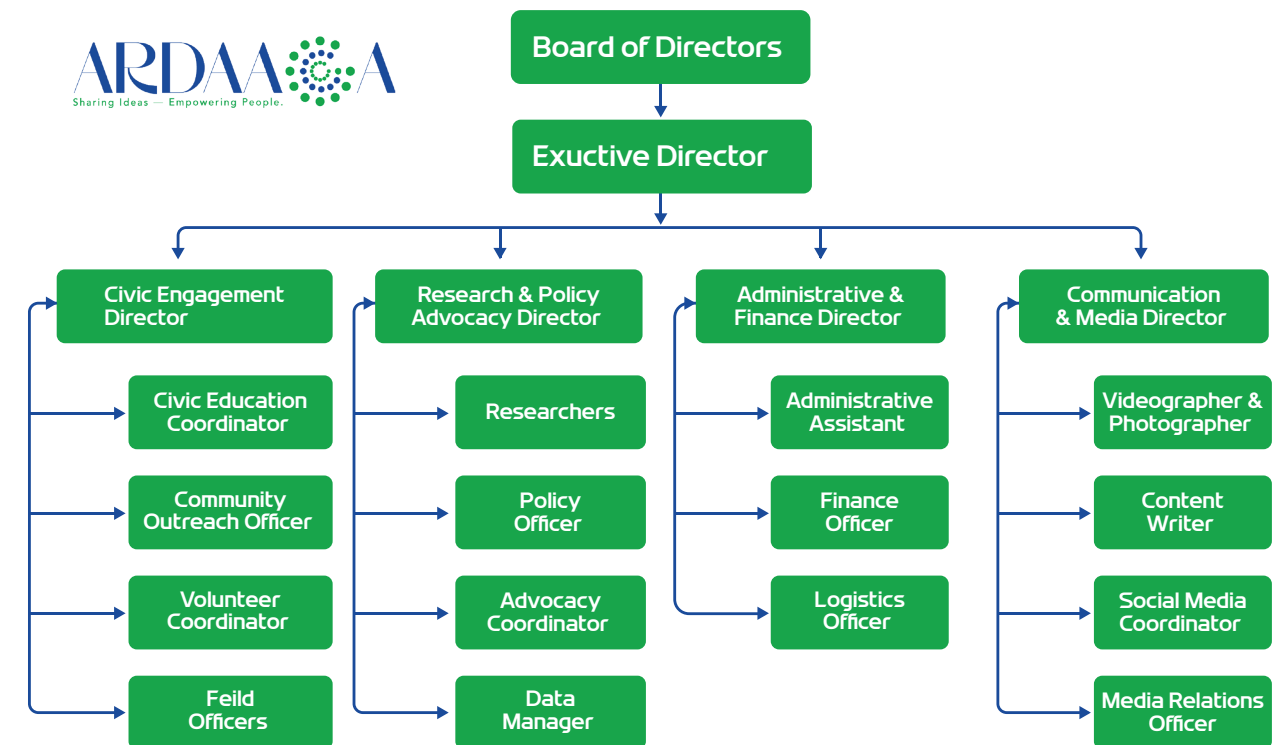**03** Thematic Directors overseeing key areas:
- Civic Engagement
- Research & Policy Advocacy
- Human Resource, Admin & Finance
- Communication & Media

04 Program Coordinators and Officers – Implement and manage initiatives on the ground, ensuring seamless execution of projects and activities.

Organizational Chart

- Board of Directors
  - Exuctive Director
    - **Civic Engagement Director**
      - Civic Education Coordinator
      - Community Outreach Officer
      - Volunteer Coordinator
      - Feild Officers
    - **Research & Policy Advocacy Director**
      - Researchers
      - Policy Officer
      - Advocacy Coordinator
      - Data Manager
    - **Administrative & Finance Director**
      - Administrative Assistant
      - Finance Officer
      - Logistics Officer
    - **Communication & Media Director**
      - Videographer & Photographer
      - Content Writer
      - Social Media Coordinator
      - Media Relations Officer

Impact & **Success:**

Ardaaga has made significant strides in fostering a culture of active citizenship, where individuals are not just passive observers but active participants in governance. Through continuous civic education programs, the organization has empowered communities with the knowledge and tools necessary to advocate for their rights, demand transparency, and contribute to decision-making processes. Public dialogues and town hall meetings have provided a platform for marginalized voices to be heard, helping bridge gaps between citizens and government institutions.

In policy advocacy, Ardaaga has played a crucial role in influencing governance reforms by conducting research and presenting evidence-based recommendations to policymakers. The organization has contributed to shaping more inclusive policies, ensuring that governance structures reflect the aspirations of the people. Leadership development efforts have equipped emerging leaders with the necessary skills and ethical foundation to drive positive change in their communities, while cultural preservation initiatives have strengthened national identity by documenting and promoting Somalia's rich heritage. These collective efforts continue to foster a more inclusive, participatory, and democratic society

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Partners & Network:

Ardaaga believes that collaboration is key to driving sustainable change. Through strategic partnerships, we leverage expertise, resources, and networks to amplify our impact in civic engagement, governance reform, and cultural preservation. Our partners play a crucial role in ensuring that our initiatives reach the communities that need them most. We collaborate with:

01 **Government Institutions and Policymakers** - Working closely with Federal Government of Somalia nad Federal Member States, we contribute to policy reforms, advocate for inclusive governance, and support initiatives that promote transparency and accountability.

02 Civil Society Organizations- Partnering with local and international NGOs, we strengthen grassroots advocacy, enhance civic participation, and create sustainable community-driven solutions.

03 **Academic and Research Institutions** - Collaborating with universities and think tanks, we conduct evidence-based research, develop policy recommendations, and enhance civic education programs.

04 **Media Outlets and Communication Platforms** - Engaging with the media allows us to amplify civic voices, disseminate critical information, and foster public awareness on governance and democracy-related issues.

05 **International Development Partners** - Through alliances with international organizations, we access technical expertise, funding, and best practices that help scale our programs and enhance their impact.

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Future Roadmap:

Ardaaga envisions a phased approach to expanding its impact, with clear short-term and long-term priorities:

Short-Term Goals (Next 1-3 Years):

01 Expand civic engagement programs to more communities, particularly in underserved regions.

02 Strengthen research and advocacy efforts by publishing more policy recommendations and engaging decision-makers.

03 Develop a leadership training framework and pilot programs to nurture young and emerging leaders.

04 Enhance digital platforms for civic education, increasing accessibility and interactivity.

05 Strengthen existing partnerships and create new alliances to support immediate programmatic needs.

Long-Term Goals (Next 4-10 Years):

01 Establish permanent leadership training centers across Somalia to cultivate ethical governance at all levels.

02 Institutionalize civic education by integrating it into school curriculums and community programs.

03 Expand research capabilities to create a dedicated policy think tank supporting governance reforms.

04 Foster cross-regional collaborations, engaging more international partners to align with global best practices.

05 Ensure financial sustainability through diverse funding models, including grants, private sector partnerships, and self-sustaining initiatives.