



**SOMALI NATIONAL
BUREAU OF STATISTICS**
Federal Republic of Somalia

SOMALIA POPULATION DEVELOPMENT COMPOSITE INDEX

PDCI - 2025





NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS
SOMALIA

Somalia Population
Development Composite
Index PDCI
2025



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

Preface

It is a great pleasure for the Somali National Bureau of Statistics to present the Population Development Composite Index (PDCI) for Somalia. This index marks a significant achievement in the country's capacity to measure and monitor progress towards the people-centered Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The PDCI provides a comprehensive assessment of the country's performance across the five key pillars of the ICPD Programme of Action: Dignity and Human Rights, Health, Place and Mobility, Governance and Accountability, and Sustainability.

More than just a statistical tool, the PDCI is an instrument that advocates for and focuses on people-centered development. By highlighting the importance of population dynamics in achieving the SDGs, the PDCI ensures that no one is left behind in Somalia's journey towards a sustainable and well-developed future. It identifies policy priorities, progress, and gaps at national and sub-national levels, guiding resource allocation to monitor and accelerate the implementation of the National Transformation Plan (NTP) and the people-centered SDG agenda.

The PDCI offers a robust framework for assessing the country's performance across various population-related indicators. Building on insights from the ICPD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the PDCI captures the dynamic nature of population groups in Somalia and their development in line with national and global goals. By integrating the people-centered NTP and SDGs into a consolidated measure, the PDCI provides a holistic perspective on Somalia's progress, highlighting both achievements and areas for improvement.

The development of the PDCI report was a collaborative effort involving the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS), UNFPA Somalia, UNECA, and the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) of UNECA. This collaboration has established the PDCI as a reliable and robust tool for policy analysis and decision-making.



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Director General
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Acknowledgement

The PDCI report for Somalia is an outcome of dedicated efforts by distinguished expertise in the field of population, development and statistics.

The Somali National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS) in collaboration with UNFPA Somalia and (ACS) of UNECA were instrumental in ensuring that the PDCI report was produced accurately and with attention to detail.

Deepest appreciation goes to Ms. Eman Aboaldahab Elsayed Ali (UNECA). Her support in developing the methodology of PDCI for Somalia, the mathematical calculations, and statistical validation as well as writing up the report is invaluable.

Enormous gratitude goes to the review, and validation of the methodology provided by experts participating in the validation of the report, special thanks to Mr. Abdirahman Omar Dahir, Mr. Said Abdilahi, Dr. Abdi Mohamoud Ali, Mr. Mohamed Abdinur, Mr. Abdirazak Abdullahi Karie, Ms. Hamida Sheel, Mr. Kamal Ahmed, Ms. Halimo Mohamed Abdirahman and Mr. Abdirahman Omar Ali.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of UNFPA Somalia and UNECA; Mr. Oliver Chinganya, Ms. Mariam Alwi, Mr. Richard Ngetich, Mr. Felix Mulama and Mr. Andati Samwel who in one way or the other contributed to the technical discussions and achievement of the project activities.

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List of Abbreviations

ACS	African Center for Statistics
ASRO	Arab States Regional Office
BAP	Budget Allocation Process
CPD	Commission on Population Development
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population Development
IDPs	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MC	Monte Carlo
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NTP	National Transformation Plan
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PDCI	Population Development Composite Index
PoA	Programme of Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SNBS	Somali National Bureau of Statistics
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SNBS	Somali National Bureau of Statistics
UN-DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VIF	Variance-Inflation Factor
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter One



Background and Conceptual Framework

1.1 Country Context

Geographical Information

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered by Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti to the northwest, Kenya to the southwest, the Gulf of Aden to the north, and the Indian Ocean to the east. Its estimated surface area is 637,657 km², and its terrain consists mainly of plateaus, plains, and highlands.

The country has the longest coastline in Africa, stretching over 3,333 km along the Gulf of Aden to the Indian Ocean to the east and south.

Somalia has a tropical hot climate, with little seasonal variations and daily temperatures that vary from 27°C to 40°C. The country experiences low annual rainfall and four seasons: two rainy seasons and two dry seasons.

Over the years, however, changing, unpredictable climate patterns have resulted in recurrent floods and droughts experienced across the country.

History and Politics

The southern part of Somalia obtained its independence on 1 July 1960 from Italy and, soon after, united with the northern part of the country that obtained its independence from the United Kingdom on 26 June 1960 to form the Republic of Somalia. In August 2012, Somalia adopted a provisional constitution that paved the way for the creation of Federal States and the formation of the Federal Government of Somalia. State formation has progressed since then, with the emergence of new Federal Member States (FMS), namely, Jubbaland, Galmudug, Southwest, Hirshabelle, and Banadir Administration, in addition to the existing Puntland and Somaliland. Continued efforts are underway to consolidate what has been achieved so far in laying the groundwork for stability and reconstruction in Somalia.

Economy

Since ending the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) tenure in 2012, Somalia's economy has made remarkable progress after more than three decades of political unrest. However, the development of Somalia's economy is subject to sharp fluctuations, according to the World Bank, growth rates between 2014 and 2020 ranged from 2.4 to 14.9 per cent. In 2023, Somalia's GDP was estimated at USD 10,969 billion in current prices registering a growth of 4.2 percent compared to 2.7 percent recorded for 2022. The GDP is projected to increase to 12.11 billion US dollars in 2024, at an annual rate of 3 percent. Somalia's economy runs largely on agriculture and livestock. This accounts for 65 percent of both the Gross Domestic Product and the employment of the workforce. Livestock accounts for about 40 percent of GDP and more than 50 percent of export earnings. Other main products include fish, charcoal and bananas, sugar, sorghum and corn. According to the Central Bank of Somalia, in 2017, aggregate imports of goods and services averaged about US\$ 2,892 million per year, which stands above the level before the start of the civil war in 1991. Exports of about US\$ 451 million annually have also surpassed pre-war aggregate export levels (before 1991) (FGS 2020).

Demography

The first population and housing census for Somalia, conducted in 1975, published limited results. Following this, the findings from a second population census carried out in 1986 were not published officially, as they were considered to suffer from significant biases, especially over-counting. Since then, it has not been possible to conduct another census as the ongoing conflict in the country did not permit it.

The recent data collection activities including PESS 2014, SARA 2016, HFS wave II 2017, LFS 2019, SHDS 2020, and SIHBS 2022 provided important data that respond to basic needs for humanitarian and development assistance. However, they do not fulfill major data gaps, which a comprehensive census can do.

Census is the only source of data that can provide the full picture of the population size, distribution, and characteristics. Moreover, the census is traditionally viewed as a vehicle for the development and enhancement of the capacity of national statistical offices as well as providing an up-to-date statistical frame that facilitates ongoing intercensal sample surveys. In this regard, the upcoming Population and Housing Census will be an essential long-term investment in the entire statistical system of the Federal Government of Somalia including the state-level statistical offices, as well as Somaliland.

The Population Estimation Survey for Somalia (PESS) estimated the total population at 12.3 million, with 51% residing in urban areas, 23% in rural settlements, and 26% leading a nomadic lifestyle. Nearly half (49%) of the population were female, with 50% of these women falling within the reproductive age bracket (15-49 years).

Age distribution analysis revealed that children under five years constituted 14% of the population, while elderly individuals (65+ years) accounted for a modest 2%. The 5-9 age group represented 17%, and the economically active population (15-64 years) comprised the majority at 53%, underscoring a youthful demographic structure.

The Somali Health and Demographic Survey (SHDS)—the most recent nationwide household assessment conducted in 2020—revealed that 52% of Somalia's population is female, with 55% under the age of 15. Among children in this age group, boys outnumbered girls, and the average household size stood at 6.2 persons.

Demographic trends have remained relatively stable in recent years, with three-quarters of the population under 30, highlighting a youthful demographic structure. This presents a significant opportunity for economic growth, contingent on strategic investments in education and the creation of viable employment opportunities. However, high youth unemployment and widespread disenfranchisement among young Somalis remain critical challenges, underscoring the need for targeted policy interventions.



1.2 Introduction of the PDCI

The general assembly emphasized the necessity for a systematic, integrated, and comprehensive strategy in Population Development as stipulated in its resolution 65/234 about the review of the programme of action from the international conference on Population Development and its continued relevance post-2014. This strategy aims to address emerging challenges linked to population dynamics and the evolving landscape of development. The resolution advocated for a stronger integration of the Population Development agenda within global development processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Based on the outcomes of the operational review, a new framework for addressing Population Development after 2014 has been proposed, structured around five key themes: dignity and human rights; health; place and mobility; governance and accountability; and sustainability.¹

In this regard, UNFPA- Arab States Regional Office constructed a composite index reflecting the position of Arab countries towards the International Conference on Population Development Plan of Action (ICPD-PoA) implementation within the context of the ICPD beyond 2014 review and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with specific focus on the global framework of the thematic Pillars for ICPD-PoA Post-2014.

The Population Development Composite Index (PDCI) is based on the Reference Framework on thematic foundations for Population Development post-2014, developed by the United Nations Population Fund based on 33 relevant sustainable development indicators classified according to five axes (pillars) stipulated in UN General Assembly Resolution No. 65. /234. PDCI allows as a tool to summarize complex multi-dimensional issues in the context of a people-centered SDG approach and measurements.

In 2023, the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS) with the support of UNFPA Somalia and the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) UNECA intended to construct the Population Development Composite Index PDCI for Somalia and its regions.

The PDCI-Somalia serves as a comprehensive tool to monitor and integrate complex, multi-dimensional issues within a people-centered SDG framework. It also highlights gaps and disparities using a data-driven approach, facilitating evidence-based policymaking with accurate and relevant information. Addressing these performance gaps is crucial for ensuring equitable and sustainable progress in the population agenda, ultimately making certain that development benefits are broadly shared across all population segments.

In May 2024, the SNBS in collaboration with UNFPA-Somalia and the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) organized a workshop aimed to discuss the methodology and calculations of the PDCI Somalia including cutoffs, individual indicators, normalization, weights, and aggregation. This workshop, involving the team from Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, focused on contextualizing and validating the methodology and assessing the robustness and statistical reliability of the index.

¹ [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/Compendium/ Volume%20I/t_Annex%20II.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/policy/Compendium/Volume%20I/t_Annex%20II.pdf)

1.3 Objectives and Rationale

Rationale

Somalia needs to report the progress of the ICPD-PoA and SDGs using the SDGs framework to monitor and evaluate its Population Development agenda. To support this, SNBS has developed a composite index with the assistance of UNFPA and UNECA. This index measures the progress of the ICPD-PoA and assesses Somalia's standing regarding ICPD-based SDG indicators within the post-2015 development agenda framework, ensuring comparability of Somalia to Arab States and other African countries.

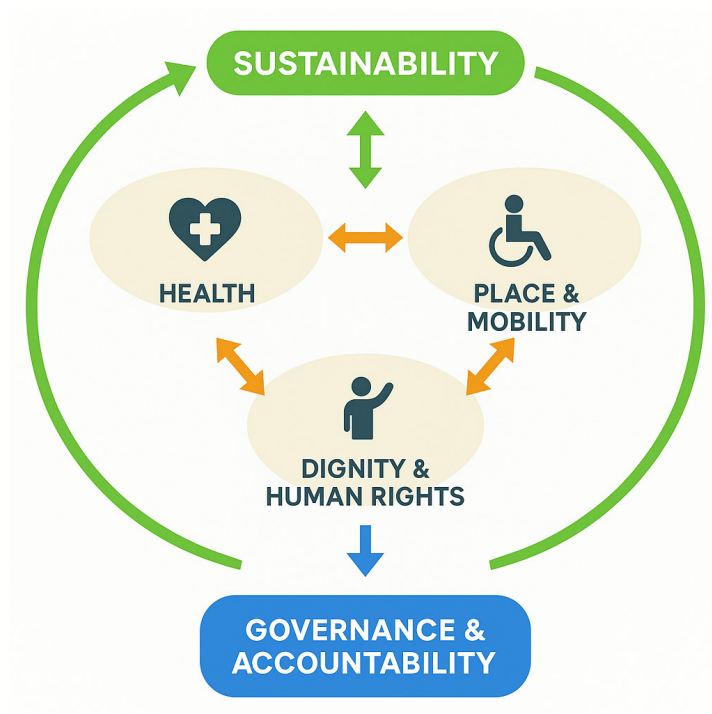
Objective:

The main objective of the PDCI for Somalia is to create a tool that advocates for people-centered SDGs by measuring development progress, tracking, and accounting for individual well-being while leaving no one behind. It identifies the policy priorities, progress and gaps at national and sub-national levels, guiding resource allocation to accelerate SDG progress.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

The PDCI is structured based on thematic pillars of ICPD PoA beyond 2014. This global framework (Figure 1-1) recognizes the crucial linkages between population and sustainable development for reducing poverty, bridging inequality, and improving the standard of living and the impact on population, resources and environmental degradation.

Figure 1 1: Linkages Between Population and Sustainable Development



Source: United Nations, 2014. "Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the ICPD-PoA Beyond 2014"

Consequently, PDCI is structured around five sub-indices reflecting the ICPD pillars as presented in figure1-1 namely:

1. Dignity and Human rights
2. Health measured in terms of SRH
3. Place and Mobility
4. Governance and accountability
5. Sustainability

Dignity and Human rights

The ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) establishes in its first principle that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” affirming their entitlement to the rights and freedoms outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, without any discrimination. It also highlights Principle 4, which focuses on “Advancing gender equality and equity, empowering women, eliminating all forms of violence against women, and ensuring women’s ability to control their own fertility.” Consequently, dignity is fundamentally connected with human rights and freedoms. The framework acknowledges the crucial role of equity and equality and notes that women and girls, young people, older adults, migrants, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, and individuals from ethnic, cultural, and linguistic minorities still face compounded layers of disempowerment and discrimination.

Health

The ICPD underscored the critical importance of sexual and reproductive health as fundamental to health and development. These fundamentals relevant across the lifespans of both women and men, empower individuals and couples to make informed, voluntary, and safe decisions about their reproductive health without facing violence or coercion. The promotion and protection of reproductive health, alongside the safeguarding of reproductive rights, are vital not only for achieving social justice and securing a healthy life but are also crucial for fulfilling national and global sustainable development commitments.

Place and mobility

The significance of place and mobility as a thematic pillar lies in its role in connecting broad population trends and movements to the achievement of individual dignity, well-being, and sustainable development. This pillar encompasses three major themes: A) International migration, which can contribute to inclusive economic and social development and poverty reduction, provided that migrants’ human rights are safeguarded; B) Internal migration and urbanization, which require the development of sustainable cities and the enhancement of urban-rural connections; and C) Internally displaced persons and refugees, who demand coordinated international actions to ensure their protection and access to necessary services.

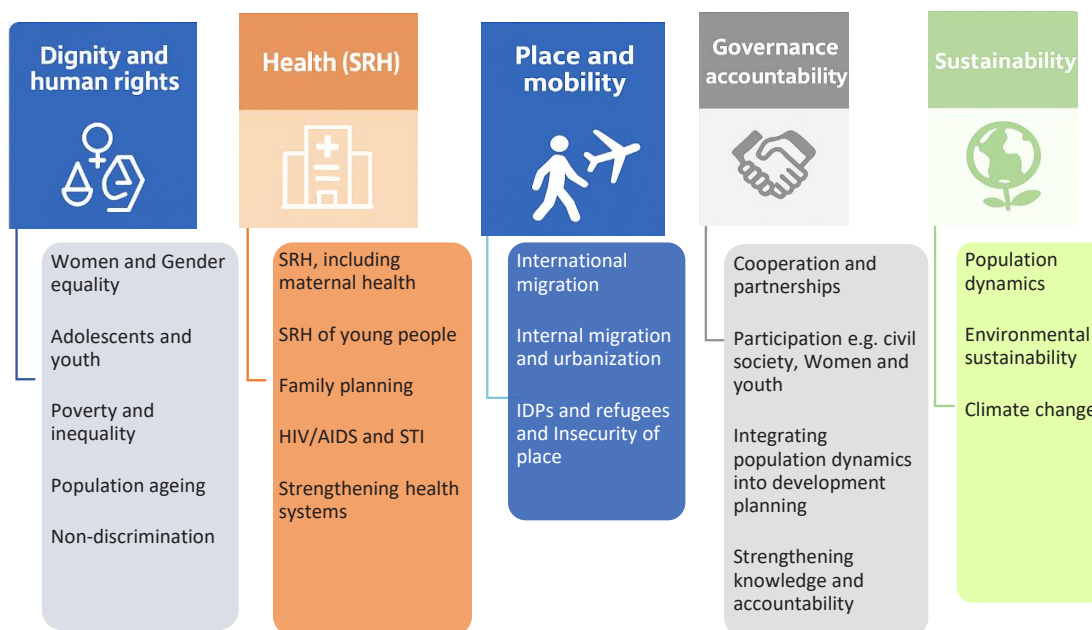
Governance and accountability

Good governance, characterized by transparency, accountability, participation for all, adherence to the rule of law, and reduction of corruption, is fundamental for achieving optimal development outcomes at local, national, regional, and global levels. It also plays a critical role in promoting international peace and security. Under the governance and accountability pillar of the ICPD-PoA, four major themes are highlighted: cooperation and partnerships; participation; integration of population dynamics into development planning; and the enhancement of knowledge and accountability systems.

Sustainability

The ICPD-PoA highlighted the importance of comprehensively understanding the interactions among population, environment, climate change, and economic development to establish a basis for sustainable development. This approach considers the present and future size, composition, needs, and rights of the population. Environmental impacts, including those from climate change, touch the lives of everyone but disproportionately affect the poor and marginalized groups. These groups have fewer resources to adapt and have contributed the least to anthropogenic environmental changes.

Figure 1 2: The Component Level Framework of the PDCI



Source: ICPD themes presented in the 47th sessions of the CPD in 2014

1.5 Monitoring Framework

The PDCI for Somalia is based on a monitoring framework for the SDG goals, viewed through a population perspective. Countries have committed to regularly reporting on these indicators, ensuring consistent data availability for measurement. The PDCI framework combines results with contextual and process considerations, recognizing that these elements are interrelated and crucial for maintaining the coherence of the SDGs.

The ICPD Programme of Action revolutionized the global development paradigm by shifting the focus toward the rights, needs, and aspirations of individuals, thereby establishing a critical linkage between population dynamics, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. It championed a human rights-based, people-centered approach that laid the foundation for the post-2015 development agenda.

The ICPD agenda is now deeply embedded within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), influencing fourteen of the seventeen goals and contributing to 28 specific targets. While the framework provides a comprehensive response to global development challenges, its impact could be further strengthened by explicitly addressing the unique and pressing issues faced by the Somali population—particularly those arising from forced migration, protracted conflict, and recurrent climate-induced shocks such as droughts and floods.

Chapter Two



Methodology and Validation

This section outlines the methods and techniques used to calculate the PDCI for Somalia and its regions. It also addresses issues related to data sources and validation. The Somalia PDCI offers a thorough evaluation of the distance to targets over time, beginning with the launch of sustainable development efforts.

2.1 Selection of Indicators

The PDCI for Somalia adapted the indicator framework from the PDCI for Arab States, incorporating necessary modifications to account for available data. Overall, the PDCI framework is aligned with the SDGs monitoring system, based on the official indicators approved by the UN Statistical Commission. While the PDCI for Arab States encompasses 33 indicators across five domains, the PDCI for Somalia comprises 29 indicators, reflecting adjustments made to fit the available data. The 29 indicators for PDCI Somalia are classified under the 5 dimensions as follows:

- ◇ 13 indicators under Dignity and human rights
- ◇ 5 indicators under Health (SRH)
- ◇ 3 indicators under place and mobility
- ◇ 4 indicators under Governance and accountability
- ◇ 4 indicators under Sustainability

It's important to note that while the PDCI for Somalia differs slightly from the PDCI for Arab States, this variation is primarily due to the availability of disaggregated regional data that captures regional disparities. Despite these differences, the revised indicators address the same core issues as those in the PDCI for Arab States. The modifications are detailed as follows:

The indicator secondary school dropout rate was replaced by youth literacy rate (percent of ages 15–24)

- a. The indicator on 'seats held by women in parliament' was replaced by the indicator for the 'proportion of women in managerial positions'. While this still measures women's leadership, the new indicator is also disaggregated by region to better reflect disparities.
- b. The 'freedom of choice' indicator was replaced by the 'percentage of women aged 15–49 who make their own informed decisions regarding contraceptive use and their reproductive healthcare'. This new measure not only reflects autonomy and control over personal choices but is also disaggregated by region.
- c. 'HIV incidence per 100,000' was replaced by the 'percentage of women who reported having STI during the past 12 months'.

- d. ‘Country is under conflict’ was replaced by ‘proportion of population aged 18+ who feel safe while walking and in public places’. The new indicator is more precise and reflects the disparities between regions.
- e. ‘Population who are directly affected by natural disasters per 100,000’ was replaced by ‘percentage of directly affected persons attributed to natural disasters’. The new indicator can also be disaggregated by region.

2.2 Data Sources

The PDCI Somalia relies primarily on official data sources, specifically national household surveys such as the Somalia Demographic and Health Survey (SDHS) 2020 and the Somalia Integrated Household Budget Survey (SIHBS) 2022. In addition to national administrative data and the international databases.

It was recommended to use the above data sources to ensure high quality in terms of relevance, completeness, timeliness, accuracy, accessibility and comparability of concepts and data collection methods.

2.3 Data Limitations

Measuring the SDGs’ people-centered agenda faces data challenges, emphasizing the need for increased investment in data collection and enhanced monitoring systems, particularly for indicators related to Population Development aspects.

Data gaps are notably present in indicators concerning discrimination against disabled persons and migrants, human trafficking, support for older persons, disparities between urban and rural areas, urbanization and internal migration, labor rights protections, civil society engagement, and women’s empowerment to make informed decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and sustainable human settlement planning. Despite access to information, education, and SRH services being a key pillar of adolescent and youth empowerment advocated by the ICPD Programme of Action, there is a lack of data reflecting country performance.

Table 2 1: List of PDCI Indicators

Dignity and Human rights 1. FGM prevalence (% among girls aged 15-19) 2. Early marriage by age 18 (% of women ages 20-24 who are ever married) 3. Ever-married women who ever suffered husband physical, sexual or emotional violence 4. Gender Parity Index for secondary education (%) 5. Female to male labor force participation rate (%) 6. Proportion of women in managerial positions 7. Share of seats in parliament (% held by members aged under 40) 8. Youth unemployment rate (ages 15–24) 9. Youth literacy rate (% of ages 15–24) 10. Vulnerable employment (% of total employment) 11. Population living below the national poverty line (%) 12. Old-age pension recipients (%) 13. women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding contraceptive use and reproductive health care (%)	Health (SRH) 1. Births attended by skilled health personnel (%) 2. Antenatal care coverage- at least four visits (%) 3. Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 adolescent females aged 15 to 19) 4. Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females) 5. Percentage of women who reported having STI during the past 12 months
Place and Mobility 1. Score of the Measures on international migration (%) 2. Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing 3. Proportion of population aged 18+ who feel safe while walking and in public places	Governance and accountability 1. Birth registration (% under age 5) 2. Scores of developing national population related policies/strategies (%) 3. Average WGI normalized scores (%) 4. Population using the internet (%)
	Sustainability 1. Renewable energy consumption (% of total final energy consumption) 2. Percentage of directly affected persons attributed to natural disasters (%) 3. Expenditure on research and development (% of GDP) 4. Population using at least basic sanitation services (%)

2.4 Construction and Calculations of PDCI

The construction of PDCI went through three stages:

- A. Normalization to rescale the indicators to ensure comparability,
- B. Assigning weights, and,
- C. Aggregating the indicators within and across dimensions.

Normalization

To make data comparable across indicators values for indicators were normalized by using a linear transformation to express the indicator into a scale from 0 to 100 where a value of 100 denotes the “optimum performance” and a value of 0 denotes the “worst performance”. The optimum performance is obtained by applying the principle of “leave no one behind” in setting.

the upper bound to universal access or zero deprivation in addition to the “equal opportunity” principle. The worst performance was identified as the value of the bottom 2.5th percentile in the databases. Censoring the data at the bottom 2.5th percentile was adopted to reduce the effect of extreme values, which might skew the results of a composite index.²

Each indicator distribution was censored, so that all values exceeding the upper bound scored 100, and values below the lower bound scored 0.

The following equation was used to standardize the indicators:

$$xs = ((x - \min(x)) / (\max(x) - \min(x))) * 100$$

Where xs = standardized value of the indicator

x = original indicator

min (x) = the worst performance, and

max (x) = the best performance.

Assigning the weights

Since the PDCI is used as a tool for assessing the progress and ranking countries, it is crucial to be cautious in the selection of weights assigned to the ingredients indicators and thematic components (dimensions) used in the construction of the index during the aggregation process. Indeed, weights can have a significant effect on the overall composite indicator and the country rankings.

² Recommended by OECD, 2008 and applied in the SDG index.

We used 1 percentile as a lower bound for skilled birth attendance to show the disparities between the regions.

When calculating each of the five sub-indices, equal weights were assigned to indicators. On the other hand, when aggregating the five sub-indices to construct the composite index, three weighting scenarios were considered (Table 2-2).

Table 2 2: Weights Assigned to Dimensions

	Equal weights	Mathematical weights (PCA)	Expert weights (BAP)
<i>Dignity and Human rights</i>	1/5	0.21	2/7
<i>Health (SRH)</i>	1/5	0.23	2/7
<i>Place and Mobility</i>	1/5	0.15	1/7
<i>Governance</i>	1/5	0.22	1/7
<i>Sustainability</i>	1/5	0.18	1/7
<i>Total</i>	1	1	1

In the first scenario, equal weights are assigned, which implies that the dimensions are considered equally important. The second scenario used statistical weights resulting from principal component analysis which resulted in higher weights for the three dimensions: SRH, governance and dignity. While the third scenario is to assign different weights to the dimensions based on the expert opinion, namely, Budget Allocation Process (BAP).

When comparing the ranks of countries resulting from three main schemes (equal, statistical and BAP weights) the results suggest that different sets of weights have little impact on the resulting composite index and justify using equal weights for simplicity.

Aggregation of PDCI scores

When calculating a composite index, sub-indices should be combined using a measure of central tendency, such as the arithmetic mean or geometric mean. The arithmetic mean is advantageous because it has certain statistical properties, such as the sum of deviations from it equaling zero and minimizing the sum of squared deviations. However, it is not always the most appropriate method, especially when dealing with extreme values, as these can distort the results. In such situations, the geometric mean is often a better choice, as it is less influenced by outliers.

The sensitivity of the arithmetic mean to extreme values suggests that it implies a degree of substitutability, meaning progress in one area can offset a lack of progress in another. In contrast, the geometric mean, which is less influenced by extreme values, reduces this substitutability. By doing so, the geometric mean penalizes discrepancies across indicators, meaning that failure in one area cannot be fully compensated by success in another. It is mathematically proven that the geometric mean is always less than or equal to the arithmetic mean, with the difference increasing as the variance among the observations being aggregated grows. Therefore, the geometric mean can be considered a more conservative method of aggregation, as it limits the extent to which progress in one sub-index can offset shortcomings in others.

When constructing the sub-index for each of the five dimensions the arithmetic mean was calculated for the normalized indicators within each dimension as substitutability of indicators within each dimension make sense. The following equation was used to calculate sub-indices:

$$Y_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_j} w_{ij} x_{Sij}}{\sum_{i=1}^{n_j} w_{ij}}$$

Where Y_j = sub-index j

w_{ij} = weight assigned to indicator i belonging to dimension j (equal weights are used).

x_{sij} = standardized indicator i within dimension j and

n_j = number of indicators belonging to dimension j .

In constructing the composite index, the geometric mean was chosen to aggregate the five sub-indices because of its reduced sensitivity to extreme values and its ability to penalize low performance in any one sub-index.

Unlike the arithmetic mean, which allows for full substitutability, the geometric mean ensures that progress in one dimension does not completely offset poor performance in another, thus rewarding countries that achieve balanced progress across all areas. The sub-indices were calculated using the following equation:

$$PDCI = \sqrt[1/\sum w_j]{\prod_{j=1}^n Y_j^{w_j}}$$

Where PDCI = composite index

Y_j = sub-index j

w_j = weight assigned to dimension j and

n = number of sub-indices.

2.5 Calculation of PDCI Thresholds

Thresholds for grouping divided the PDCI scores into 4 categories range from low to very high performance as follows: a) the PDCI scores of less than 55 percent for low population development performance, 55 percent to less than 70 percent for medium performance, 70 percent to less than 80 percent for high performance and 80 percent or greater for very high population development.³ The same cut of points are assigned also at the dimensional level, where each dimension scores are divided into 4 categories ranging from low to very high performance.

³ The same cut of points used here are the same as assigned to the threshold of the HDI 2020.

2.6 Statistical Soundness and Validation

Collinearity/Redundancy

The initial set of PDCI indicators for Arab states comprised 39 measures reflecting the Population Development Agenda. After testing for collinearity, six indicators were removed based on the results:

- A. Youth literacy rate (percent of ages 15–24)
- B. Healthy life expectancy at birth
- C. Maternal mortality ratio
- D. Access to electricity
- E. Access to clean fuels and technology for cooking
- F. Population using basic drinking-water sources

As a result, the final PDCI set for Arab states includes 33 indicators, which were used to construct the index for Somalia. Although the selected indicators were not correlated for Arab states, they were also tested for Somalia. The results confirmed that these indicators are free of collinearity in the context of constructing the index for Somalia. Moreover, the collinearity was tested across the 5 dimensions and the results emphasized that dimensions are not correlated.

Sensitivity/Robustness validation

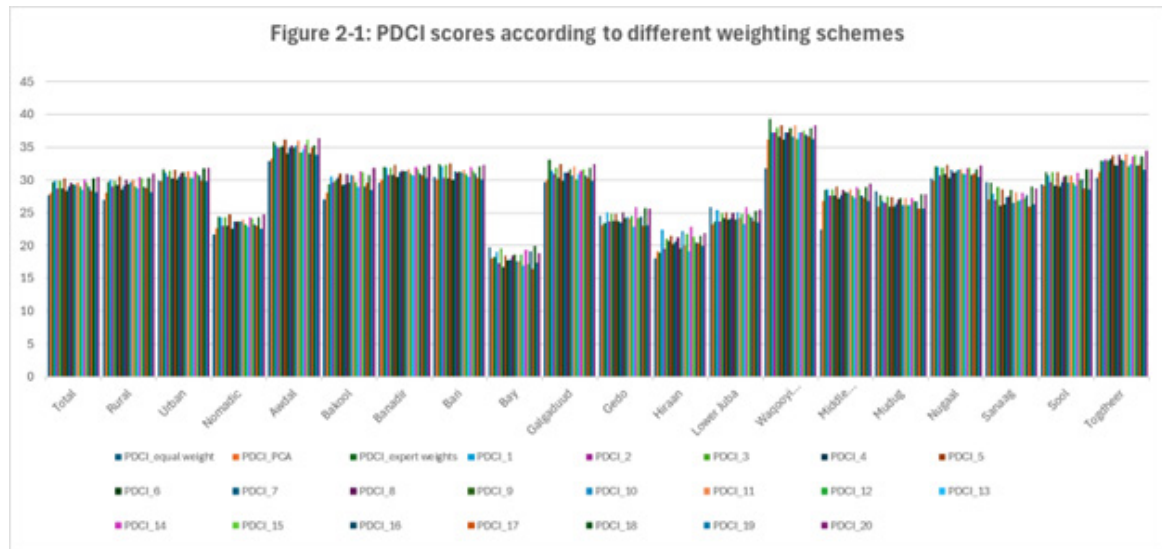
Testing sensitivity and robustness is essential to determine how stable the rankings are when different weighting schemes, aggregation methods, and normalization bounds are applied. Empirical studies often use a variety of weighting schemes and compare the resulting rankings, with Monte Carlo simulations commonly employed to assess the sensitivity of composite indicators to different weighting approaches, such as in the SDG index. However, given the limited number of observations (20 in this case), a uniform max–min bound approach was chosen. This method was used to generate alternative weighting schemes for assessing the robustness of pairwise comparisons, especially when there is no prior justification for assigning different importance to various dimensions or for allowing weights to vary to different extents.

In this scenario, the initial weighting scheme, w_0 , assigns equal weight to all dimensions. (Seth, S., McGillivray, M., 2018).

The assumption used for this purpose is that the weight on any dimension is not lower than $\alpha \in [0, 1/D)$ and the weight on any dimension not higher than $\beta \in (1/D, 1]$. Accordingly, $\Delta = \{w_1, \dots, w_D \mid \alpha \leq w_d \leq \beta \forall d \text{ and } \sum_{d=1}^D w_d = 1\}$, and let $\beta = 0.25$ and $\alpha = 0.15$ so a set of 20 alternative weighting schemes are obtained.

Figure 2-1 presents the PDCI scores calculated using 20 different weighting schemes, in addition to the three main schemes (equal, statistical, and BAP weights). The variation in scores across these schemes is minimal. Furthermore, a T-test was performed to evaluate the significance of the differences in index scores among the 23 weighting schemes, revealing that the differences are not statistically significant.

Figure 2 1: PDCI Scores According to Different Weighting Schemes



Source: Author's calculations

An alternative approach was employed to define the “worst” performance (set at 0) for testing the robustness of changing lower bounds during the normalization of indicators. The results revealed only marginal differences between regions. Similarly, slight variations were observed when using the arithmetic mean to aggregate the dimensions into the final index.

The quality assurance process for the PDCI Somalia confirms its robustness and validity in measuring the Population Development agenda. This is supported by several factors: a) the inclusion of relevant indicators; b) reliance on high-quality, official data; c) absence of collinearity within and across dimensions; d) an acceptable level of inter-consistency among indicators measuring the same dimension; and e) resilience to changes in weighting schemes, aggregation methods, and normalization bounds.

Chapter Three



Main Findings

3.1 Overall Performance

Performance is categorized into four distinct levels based on the PDCI score: A) Low performance: Achieved when the score is below 55; B) Medium performance: Ranges from 55 to less than 70; C) High performance: Spans from 70 to less than 80; and D) Very high performance: Corresponds to scores of 80 and above.

Accordingly, results in figure 3-1 shows that Somalia's performance in the Population Development agenda, as part of the sustainable development framework, is low, with the estimated PDCI value at 29.8. This underperformance across all dimensions highlights the need for increased efforts to enhance the overall population situation.

Among the 29 PDCI indicators for Somalia, 22 indicators, representing over 75 percent of the total, exhibit low performance. Only one indicator, the share of renewable energy consumption as a percentage of total energy use, demonstrates high performance at 94.3 percent.⁴ Due to limitations in the availability of additional data points, it is not possible to project the likelihood of achieving the ICPD by 2030. However, the progress observed underscores significant challenges that hinder the attainment of these goals.

Figure 3 1: Somalia PDCI Overall Score

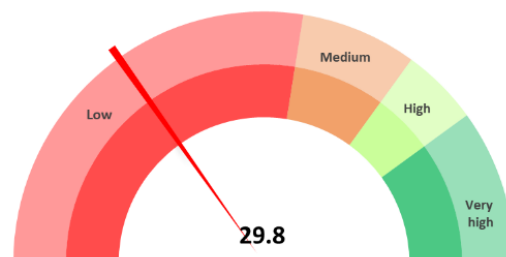
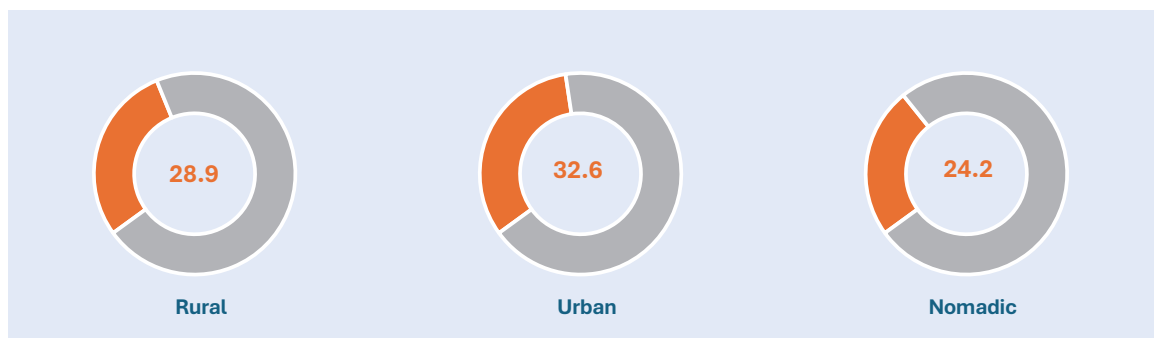


Figure 3 2: Somalia PDCI Scores by Residency

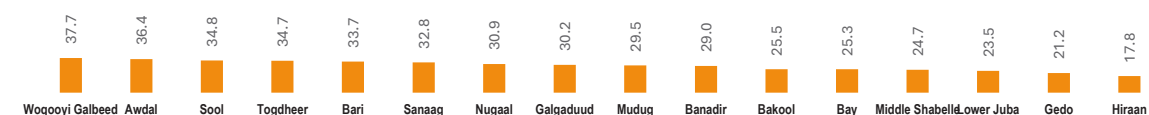


Source: Author's calculations

The analysis reveals significant disparities between urban, rural, and nomadic populations in Somalia, as well as among different regions. While all areas exhibit low performance, nomadic populations face the greatest vulnerability, with a PDCI estimate of 24.2, substantially lower than that of rural (28.9) and urban (32.6) areas. Additionally, regional disparities are evident, with Woqooyi Galbeed performing relatively better than other regions at 37.7, followed by Awdal at 36.4, Sool at 34.8 and Togdheer at 34.7. In contrast, Hiraaan has the lowest performance at 17.8, as illustrated in Figure 3-3.

⁴ According to SDG 7.2.1 meta data, renewable energy consumption includes consumption of energy derived from: hydro, wind, solar, solid biofuels, liquid biofuels, biogas, geothermal, marine and renewable waste. Total final energy consumption is calculated from balances as total final consumption minus non-energy use.

Figure 3 3: Somalia PDCI Scores by Region



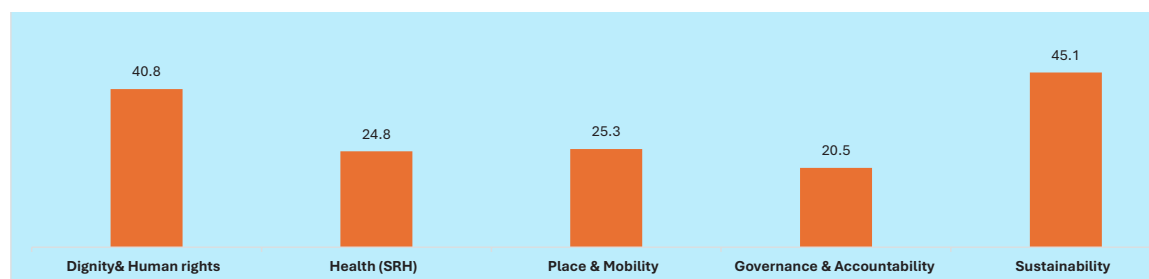
Source: Author's calculations

3.2 Performance by Dimensions

This section shows the performance according to each dimension to identify the disparities and gaps where identifying performance gaps is crucial for advancing the population agenda effectively in Somalia. By pinpointing areas where progress is lagging, policymakers can focus their efforts on the most critical issues, ensuring that resources and interventions are strategically allocated. Understanding these gaps enables the development of targeted strategies to address specific challenges on the dimensions of the population development agenda.

Figure3-4 highlights the varying degrees of progress or challenges in different areas of Population Development in Somalia. All dimensions have low performance; however, Sustainability dimension has the highest score at 45.1, indicating relatively better performance in this area compared to others followed by Dignity & Human Rights with a score of 40.8. On the other hand, Governance & Accountability has the lowest score.

Figure 3 4: Somalia PDCI Scores by Dimensions



Source: Author's calculations

3.3 Dignity & Human Rights

The dimension of dignity and human rights encompasses four key issues: gender equality, youth and adolescent concerns, aging, and poverty. This dimension is evaluated using 13 indicators (Table 2-1). Somalia's score in this dimension is 40.8, reflecting low performance overall, with only minor variations among urban, rural, and nomadic populations. Specifically, urban areas scored 41.0, rural areas 38.8, and nomadic populations 37.9 (Figure 3-5). In contrast, regional performance shows more pronounced differences.

Bari and Woqooyi Galbeed exhibit relatively higher performance levels, while Bay, Hiraa, and Gedo report the lowest scores, indicating regional disparities in the dignity and human rights dimension.

Examining the components of the dignity dimension reveals that poverty remains a major challenge in Somalia, with over half of the population (54.4 percent) living below the national poverty line as per SHIBS 2022. Compounding this issue is the inadequate social protection for the most vulnerable. This stark contrast highlights the urgent need for enhanced social safety nets and targeted interventions to uplift those most in need.

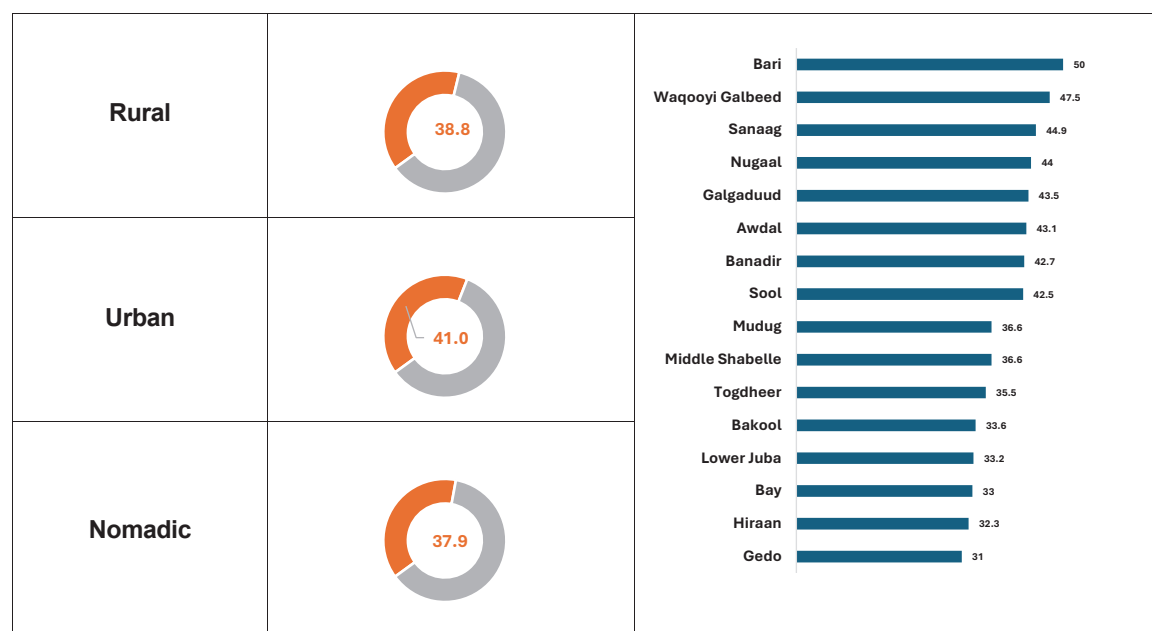
The index also sheds light on the status of women and girls in Somalia and the significant challenges they face. The prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is alarmingly high, with 98.8 percent of girls aged 15-19 having undergone the practice, indicating a deeply entrenched cultural norm that persists despite efforts to eradicate it. Additionally, 39.5 percent of girls marry before the age of 18, highlighting the continued prevalence of early marriage.

These issues underscore the urgent need for stronger legal protections, community education, and empowerment programs to safeguard girls' rights and delay marriage until adulthood. Furthermore, female participation in the labor force is considerably lower than that of males, and women hold only 22.8 percent of managerial positions, emphasizing the gender disparities that still exist in the workforce.

The index also brings attention to the challenges faced by youth in Somalia, particularly in education and employment. Youth literacy (15-24 years) remains a challenge, with 70.4 percent of young people able to read and write, and a notable gender gap exists—76.1 percent of males are literate compared to just 65.6 percent of females.

Additionally, youth unemployment stands at 29.1 percent compared to the global average of 13.3 percent, underscoring the significant barriers young people face in securing meaningful employment.

Figure 3 5: Dignity & Human rights Scores by Residency and Region



Source: Author's calculations

3.4 Health (SRH)

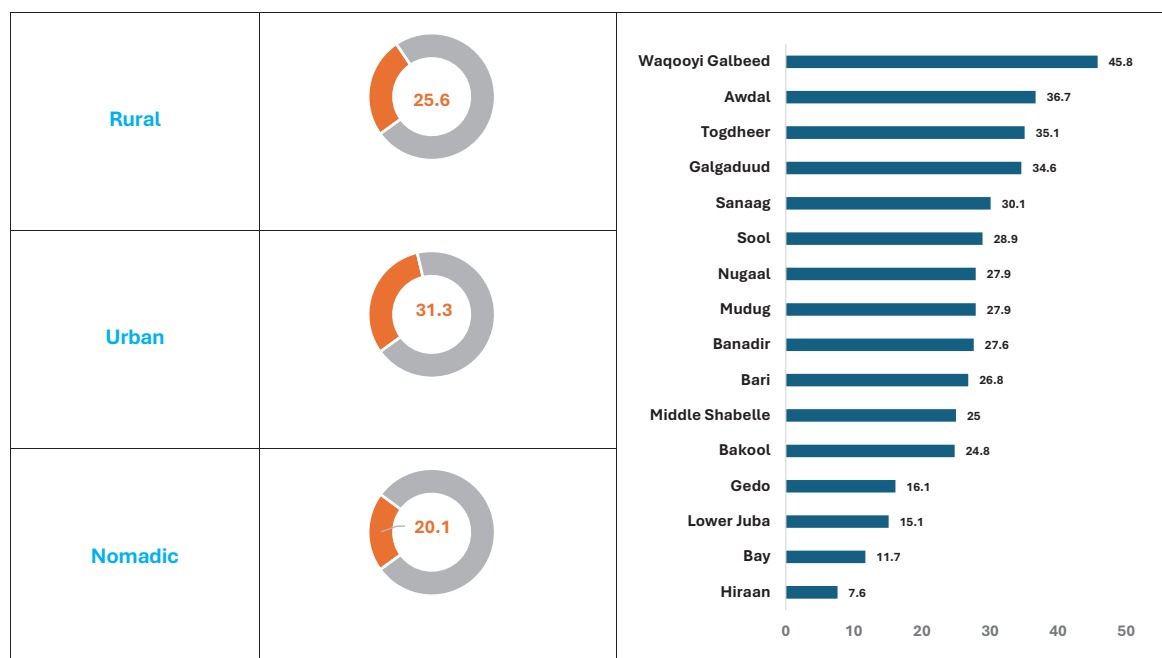
The health dimension is assessed reflecting sexual and reproductive health including maternal health, family planning and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). The analysis shows low overall performance in Somalia, with the health index estimated at just 24.8. This poor outcome highlights the urgent need to improve sexual and reproductive health services and strengthen the overall health system in Somalia. Disparities are evident across different populations as observed in figure 3-6, with urban areas scoring 31.3, rural areas 25.6, and nomadic populations lagging further behind at 20.1.

Additionally, stark disparities are evident across regions. Woqooyi Galbeed leads with the highest performance score at 45.8, followed by Awdal with 36.7. In contrast, Hiraan emerges as the most deprived region, scoring just 7.6 in this dimension.

Examining key health components reveals that less than one-third of births in Somalia are attended by skilled health personnel, with a rate of only 31.9 percent. Additionally, the coverage for antenatal care, involving at least four visits, is alarmingly low at just 8.8 percent. Adolescent fertility is also notably high, with 118 births per 1,000 adolescent females aged 15 to 19, ranking among the highest in the world.

To address the critical health challenges in Somalia, it is essential to prioritize and strengthen maternal and adolescent health services. Additionally, targeted interventions are needed to reduce the high adolescent fertility rate, including education and empowerment programs for young women, as well as improving access to reproductive health services. A concerted effort from both the government and international partners is necessary to make meaningful progress in these areas.

Figure 3 6: Health (SRH) Scores by Residency and Region



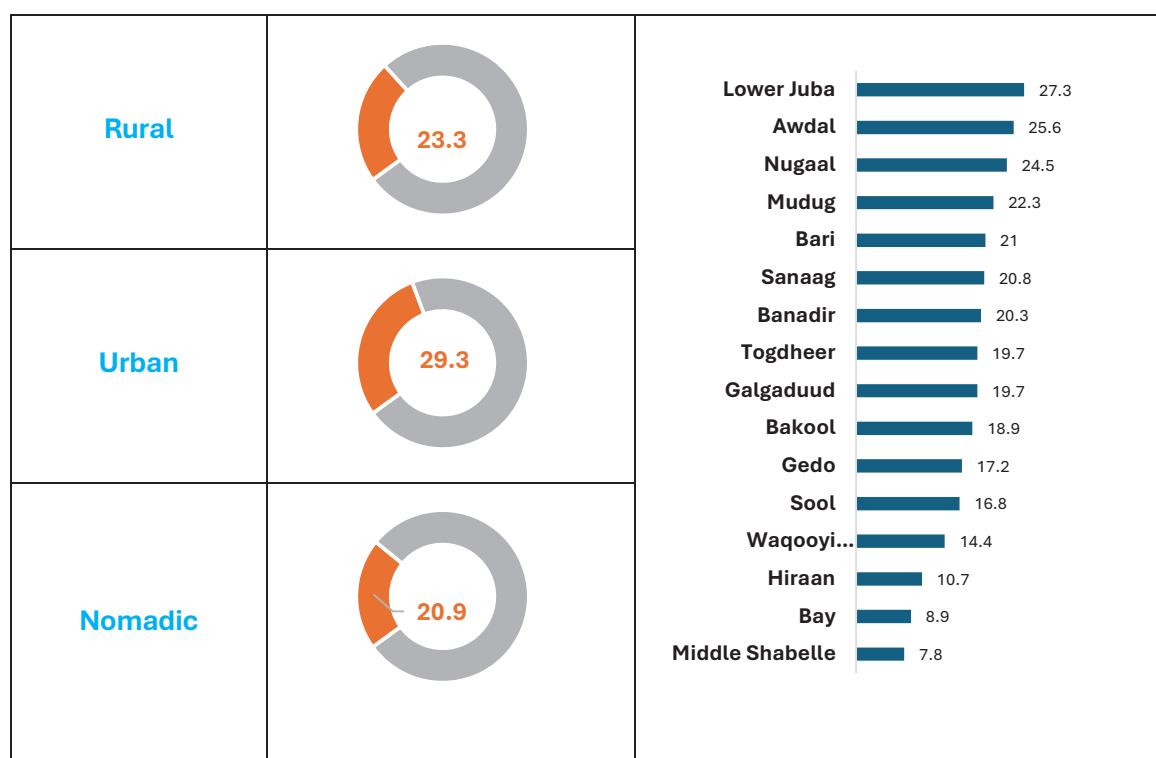
Source: Author's calculations

3.5 Place and Mobility

The analysis indicates that Somalia has low performance in this dimension, with an estimated score of 25.3. As observed in figure 3-7, there are significant disparities based on residency and region, with urban areas scoring 29.3, rural areas at 23.3, and nomadic communities at just 20.9. Regionally, Lower Juba shows relatively better performance, followed by Awdal and Nugaal. In contrast, Middle Shabelle and Bay exhibit the lowest performance, with scores of 7.8 and 8.9, respectively.

It is estimated that 79.9% of the population in Somalia are living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing. It is crucial to prioritize comprehensive urban planning and development strategies. Strengthening policies to improve housing conditions, investing in affordable housing projects, and enhancing basic infrastructure and services in these areas are essential steps. Moreover, only 43.3 percent of the population aged 18 and above in Somalia report feeling safe in public places and while walking which highlights a critical issue of public safety and security.

Figure 3 7: Place & Mobility Scores by Residency and Region



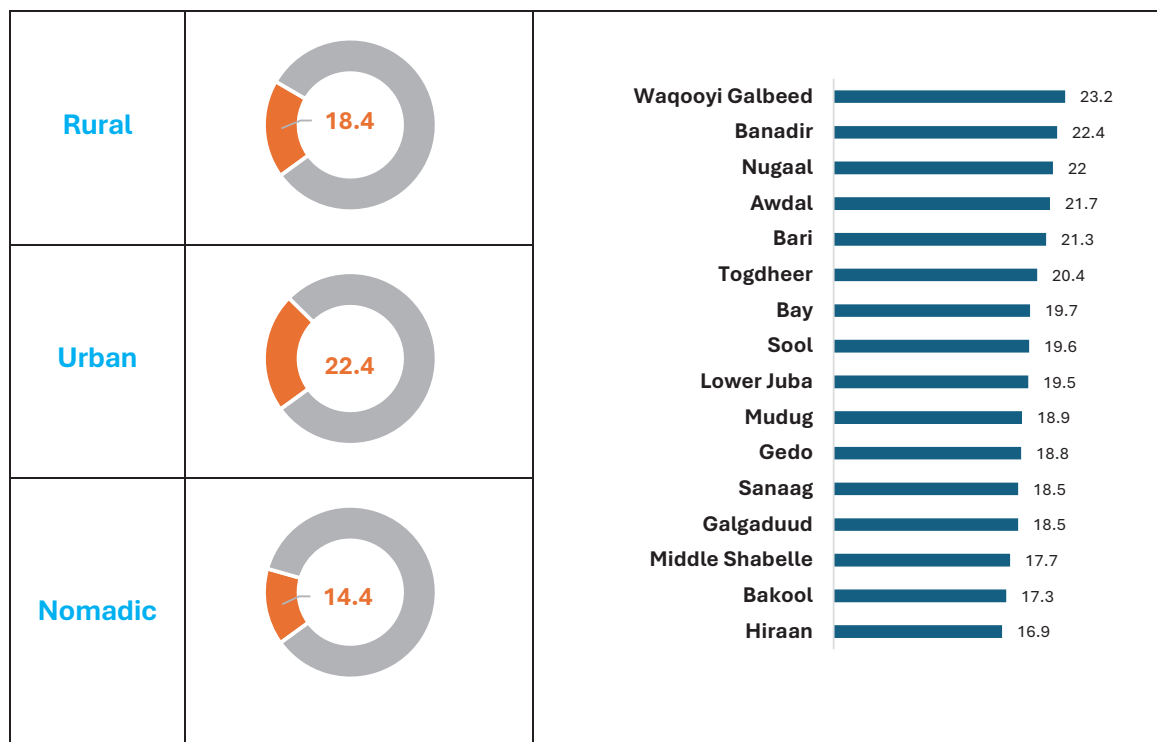
Source: Author's calculations

3.6 Governance and Accountability

Somalia's governance dimension performance is notably low, with an estimated score of 20.5. According to figure 3-8, urban areas show relatively better outcomes at 22.4, compared to rural (18.4) and nomadic populations (14.4). Regional disparities are also evident, with Woqooyi Galbeed performing relatively the best at 23.2, followed by Banadir, Nugaal, and Awdal (22.4, 22, and 21.7 respectively). In contrast, Hiraan and Bakool are among the lowest performers, scoring 17.3 and 16.9 respectively.

Civil registration remains a significant challenge for Somalia, with birth registration coverage for children under five estimated at just 5.9 percent (SHDS, 2020). This low level of registration hinders access to essential services and rights, such as healthcare, education, and legal protection, and underscores the need for strengthened efforts to improve civil registration systems across the country.

Figure 3 8: Governance scores by Residency and Regions



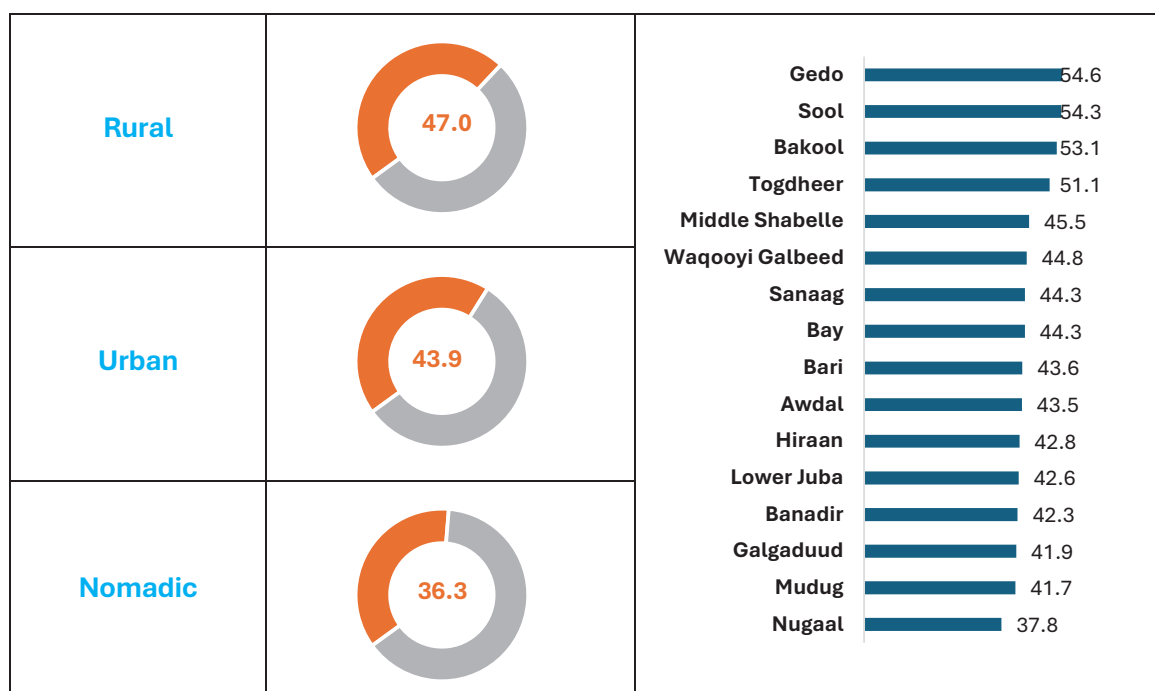
Source: Author's calculations

3.7 Sustainability

The sustainability dimension, encompassing environmental sustainability and climate change, is assessed through four key indicators: renewable energy consumption, population affected by natural disasters, access to basic sanitation, and expenditure on research and development. Although Somalia's performance in this dimension is relatively the strongest, it remains low at an estimated 45.1. This result is primarily driven by Somalia's high performance in renewable energy consumption as a percentage of total energy consumption. However, significant disparities exist across regions and types of residency. Nomadic populations score the lowest compared to urban and rural areas (see figure 3-9). In addition, while Gedo, Sool, Bakool, and Togdheer regions perform relatively better, with scores exceeding 50, while Nugaal, on the other hand, has the lowest performance, with a score of 37.8.

At the indicator level, it is evident that slightly over half of Somalia's population lacks access to basic sanitation (52.4 percent). Additionally, 54.9 percent of the population was reported to have been affected by natural disasters, according to the (SIHBS, 2022). To address the critical gaps in basic sanitation and disaster resilience in Somalia, urgent investments in infrastructure and community-based disaster management are essential. Enhancing access to sanitation should be prioritized to improve public health outcomes. Moreover, while renewable energy consumption is notably high at 94.3 percent, Somalia's expenditure on research and development as a percentage of GDP is almost nonexistent.

Figure 3 9: Sustainability Scores by Residency and Region



Source: Author's calculations

Chapter four



Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The Population Development Composite Index (PDCI) is a cutting-edge scientific tool designed to monitor progress on the SDGs, specifically the people-centered agenda, across the five pillars of the ICPD Programme of Action. Developing the PDCI for Somalia offers valuable insights into the country's progress toward achieving population-related goals and helps identify disparities at the sub-regional level.

The PDCI for Somalia is comprised of 29 indicators distributed across the five dimensions. Its calculation is based on national data sources, with indicators rigorously tested for quality, relevance, coherence, and collinearity. The PDCI Somalia adheres to the same methodology used for the Arab states index, utilizing the arithmetic mean to aggregate indicators within each dimension, which allows for full substitutability between indicators.

The geometric mean is then employed to compute the overall composite index, as it minimizes substitutability and is less influenced by extreme values. Additionally, equal weighting is applied both within and across the dimensions. The analysis demonstrates that the PDCI Somalia's value is robust, showing minimal sensitivity to variations in weighting schemes, boundaries, and aggregation methods.

This underscores the reliability of the PDCI as a tool for measuring the Population Development agenda in Somalia and its sub-regions.

The key findings reveal Somalia's poor performance in the population-centered SDG agenda, with an overall score of 29.8 out of 100, highlighting significant disparities across different regions and types of residency. While all dimensions show low performance, the sustainability dimension stands out as relatively better compared to the others.

This analysis underscores the urgent need for intensified efforts to advance the Population Development agenda, emphasizing the importance of addressing the priorities and challenges clearly outlined by the PDCI at both the national and sub-regional levels.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the analysis the following recommendations are suggested to improve the performance in the Population Development agenda:

- ◇ The SNBS to fill the existing data gaps by improving the collection of data through National Surveys, Censuses and administrative data.
- ◇ Strengthen existing population policies, advocate for missing policies, and incorporate them into the National Transformation Plan.
- ◇ Efforts on zero tolerance for FGM must be redoubled by engaging civil society, religious leaders, elders and the diaspora.
- ◇ Addressing the regional disparities by focusing on boosting performance in vulnerable regions.
- ◇ Strengthening legal frameworks to promote gender equality and to protect the rights of women, children, youth and vulnerable groups, particularly in areas such as early marriage, gender-based violence, and discrimination.
- ◇ Expand Social Protection that covers the most vulnerable populations, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those living in extreme poverty.
- ◇ Promote health including reproductive health through interventions to enhance healthcare accessibility, quality, and education.
- ◇ Strengthening Healthcare infrastructure, expanding skilled health workforce, enhancing SRH education and improving access to SRH Services through Increasing the availability of SRH services, including contraception, antenatal care, and safe delivery options.
- ◇ Promote inclusive regional development and ensure that development efforts are inclusive and equitable across different regions. Focus on reducing disparities by directing resources and development programs to the most underserved and vulnerable areas.
- ◇ Improve urban planning and infrastructure through developing and implementing strategic urban planning initiatives that focus on sustainable development, improved infrastructure, and better living conditions.
- ◇ Enhance efforts to improve public safety, particularly in regions with high levels of insecurity.
- ◇ Strengthen the institutional capacity and implement measures to increase transparency in government operations and decision-making processes.
- ◇ Improve birth registration through developing and strengthening legal frameworks, expanding access to registration services, initiating public awareness campaigns, Incentivizing the registration and integrating it with other Services.
- ◇ Strengthen disaster preparedness and response mechanisms by developing early warning systems, building resilient infrastructure, and establishing community-based disaster risk reduction programs to mitigate the impact of future disasters.
- ◇ Improve access to basic services through implementing large-scale projects to provide safe drinking water, proper sewage systems, and hygiene education.
- ◇ Data-Driven Policies through investing in improving data collection and analysis to ensure that policies are informed by accurate and comprehensive information. Enhanced data can help identify specific needs and tailor interventions more effectively.

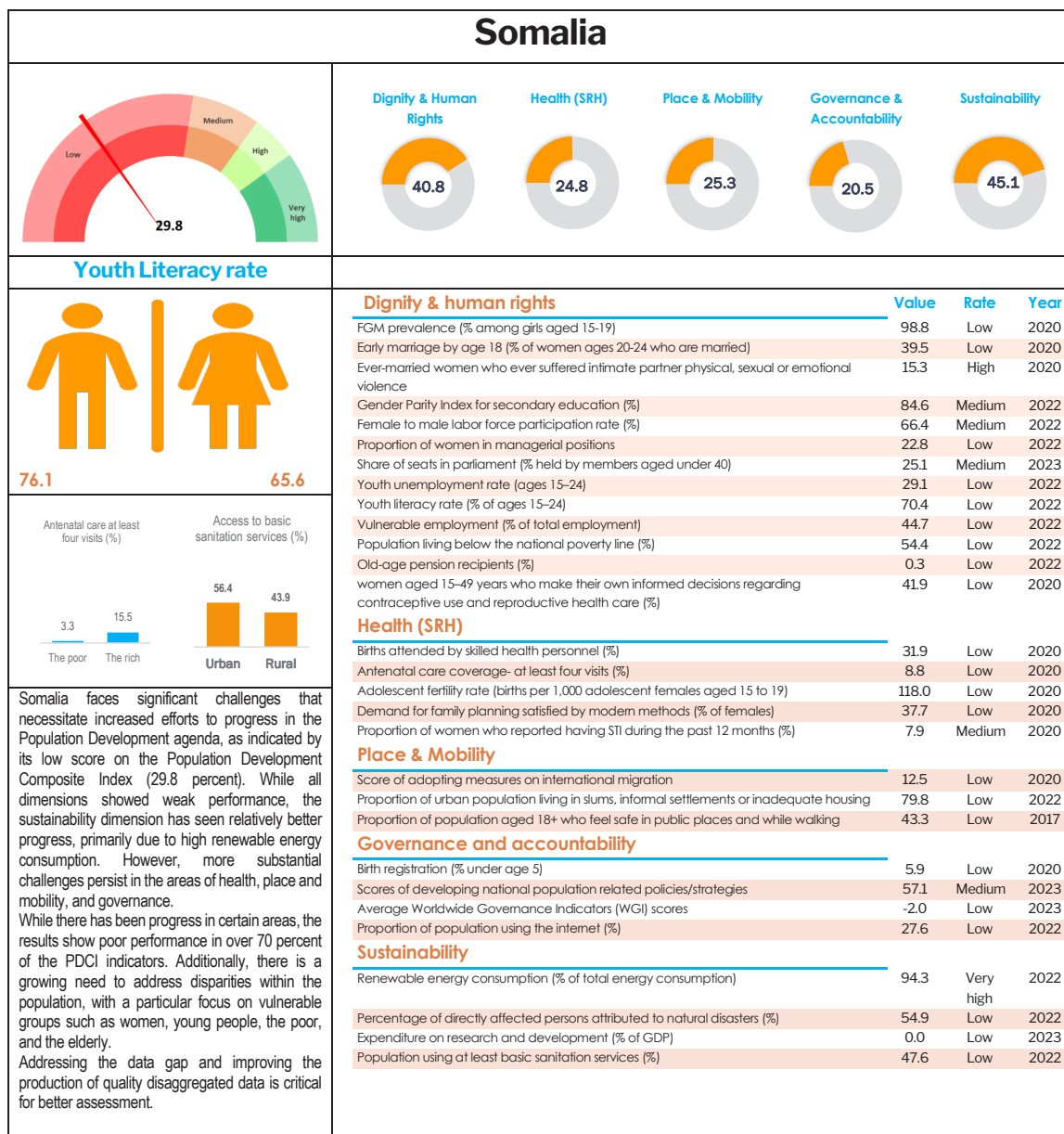
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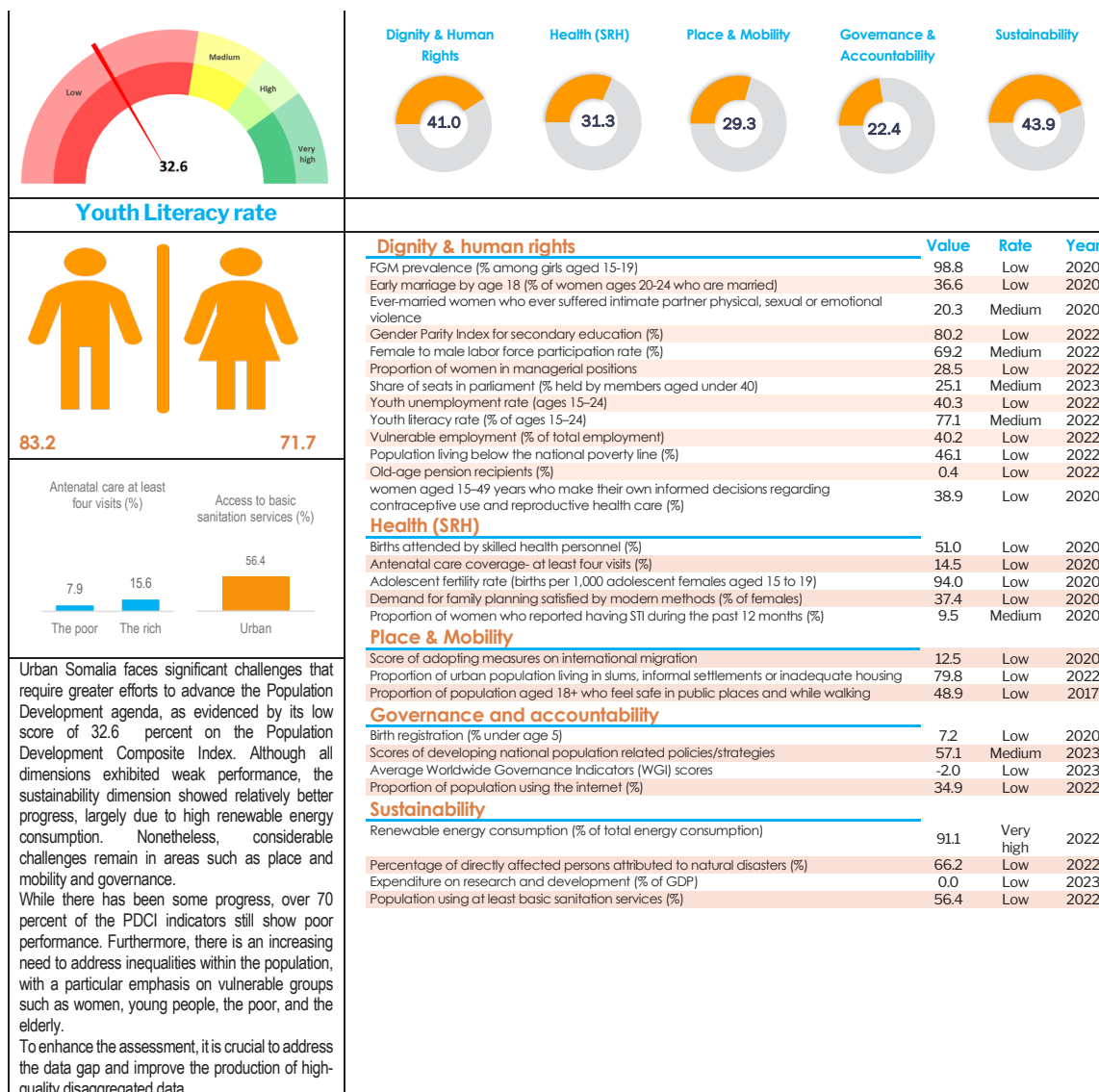
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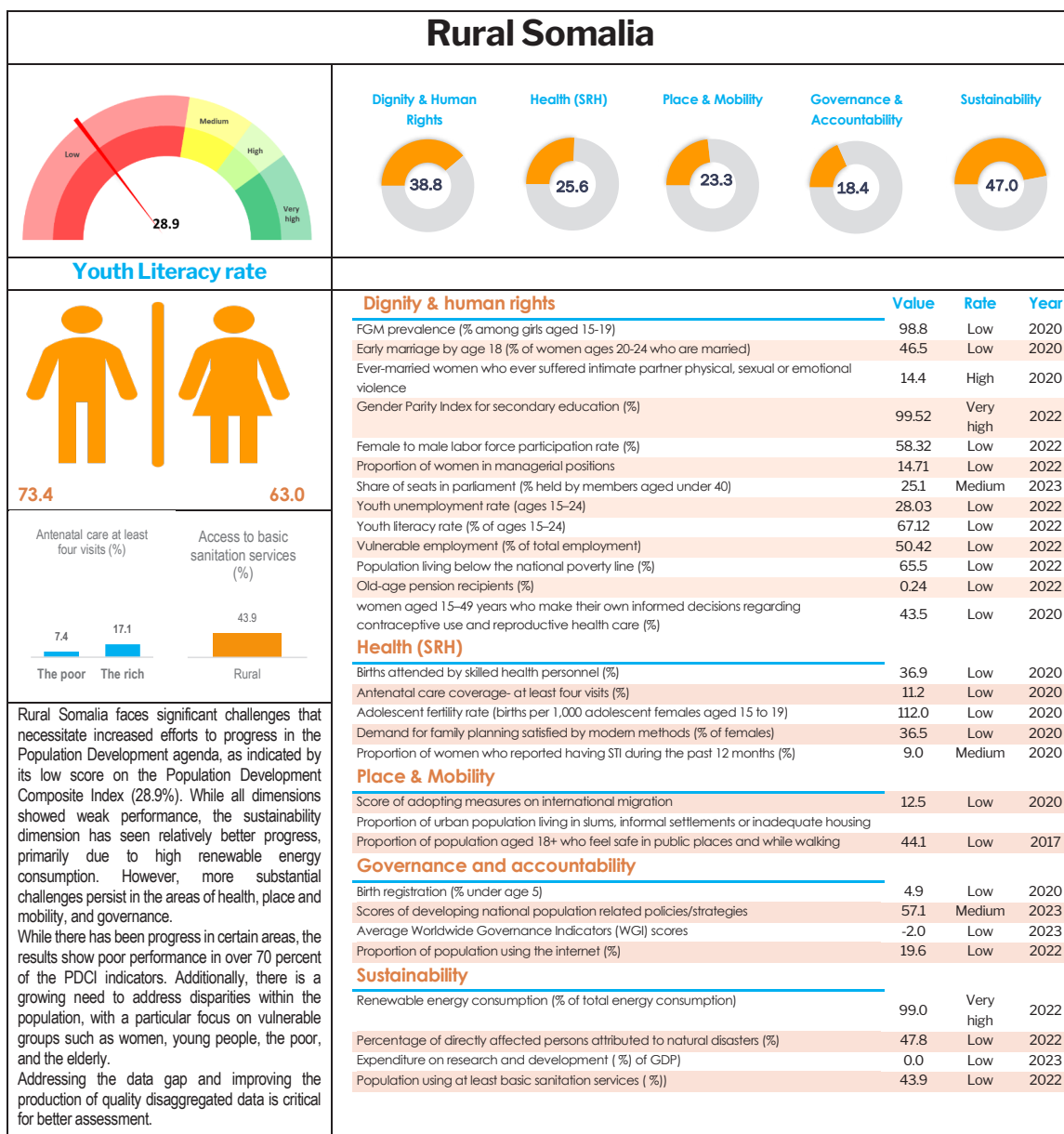
Regional Profiles

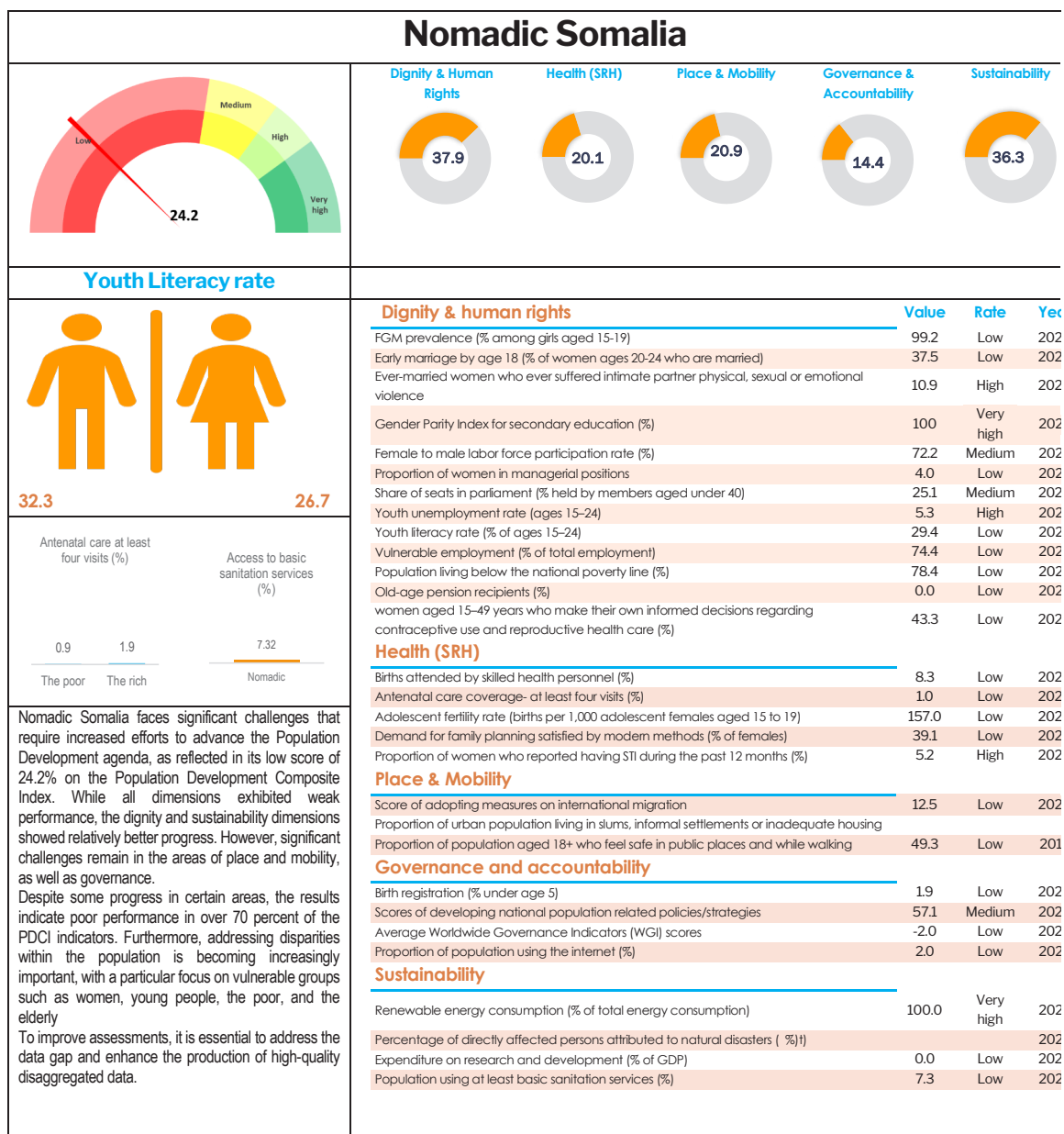
1 REGIONAL PROFILES

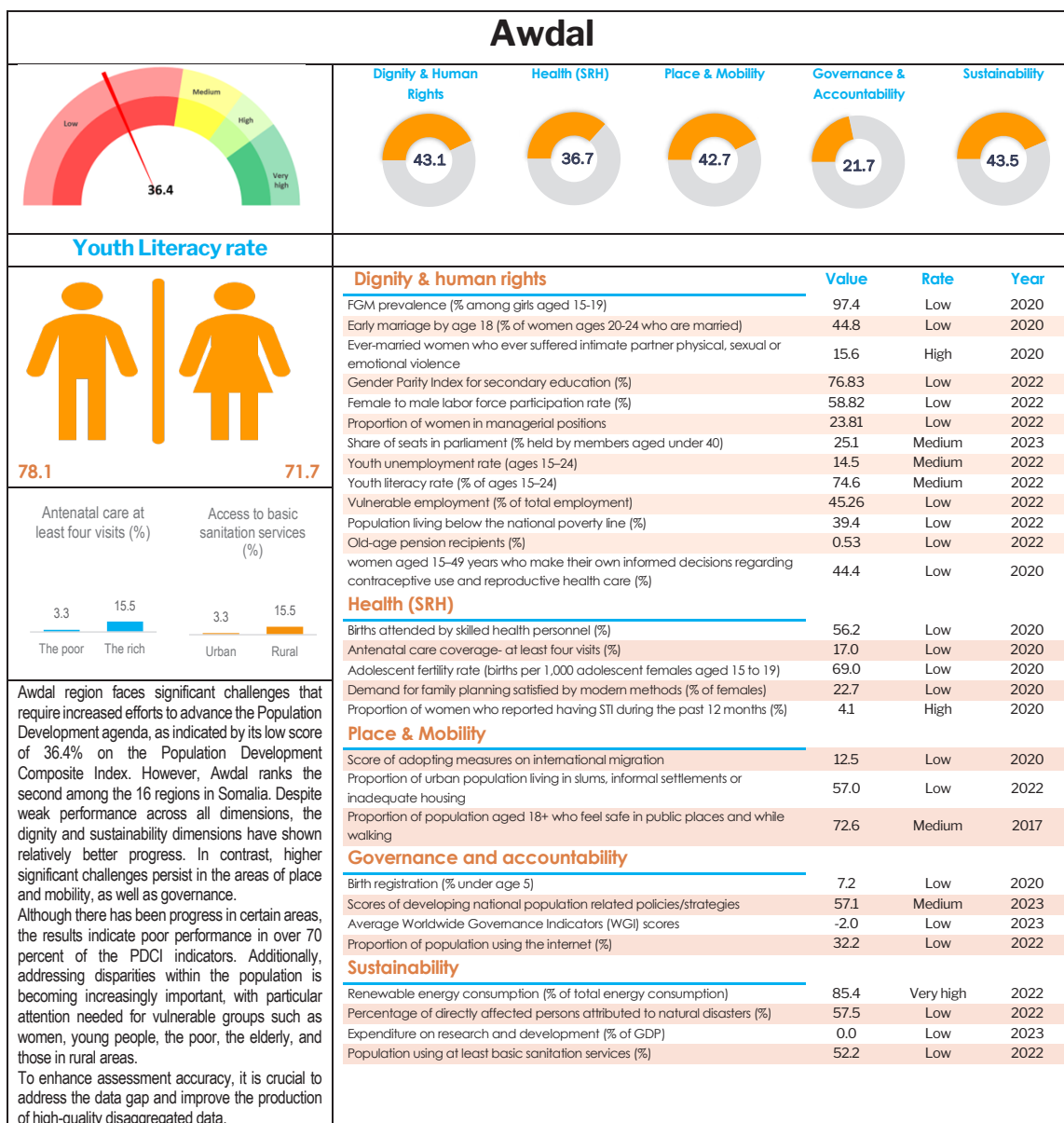


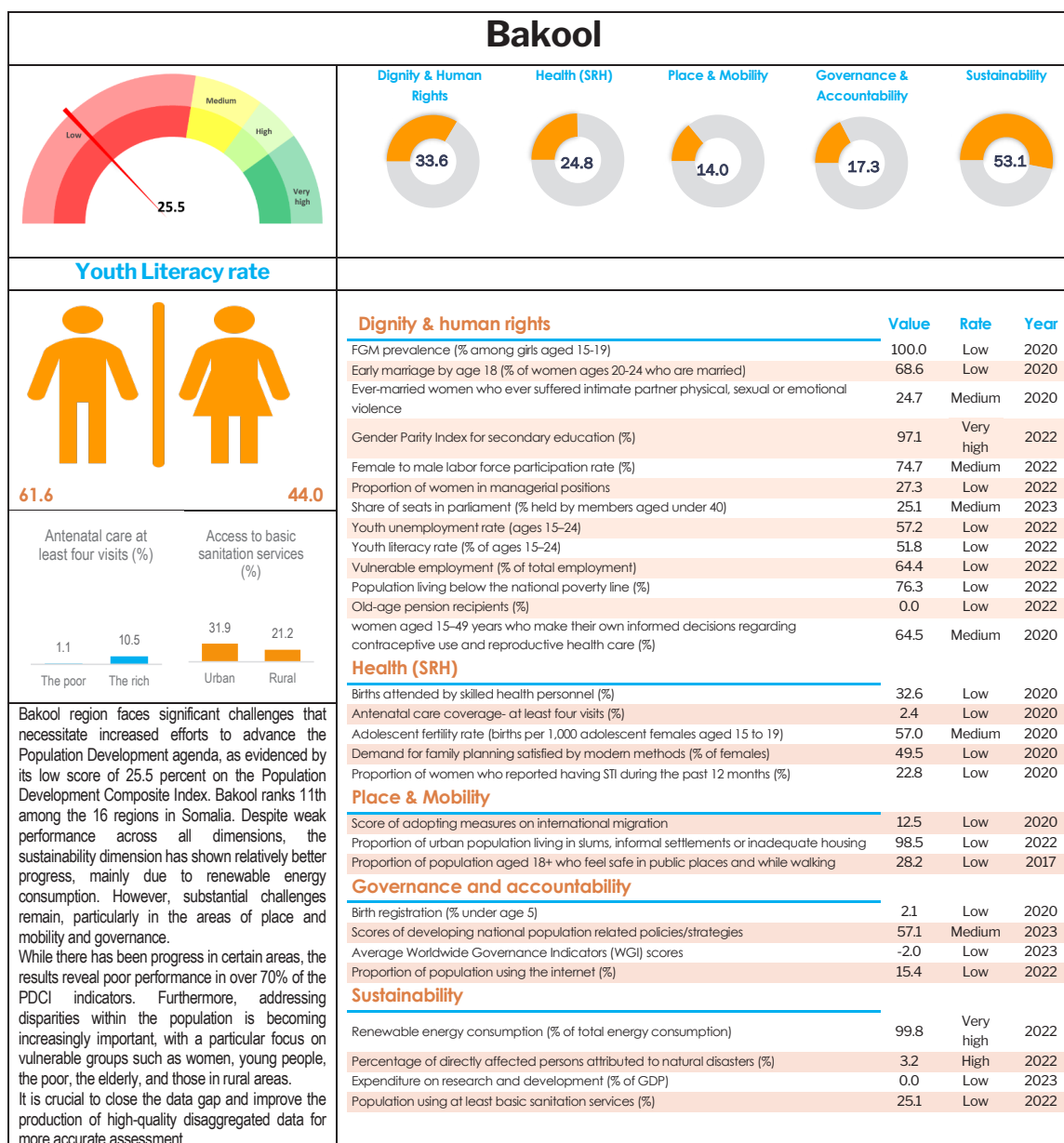
Somalia Population Development Composite Index PDCI - 2025

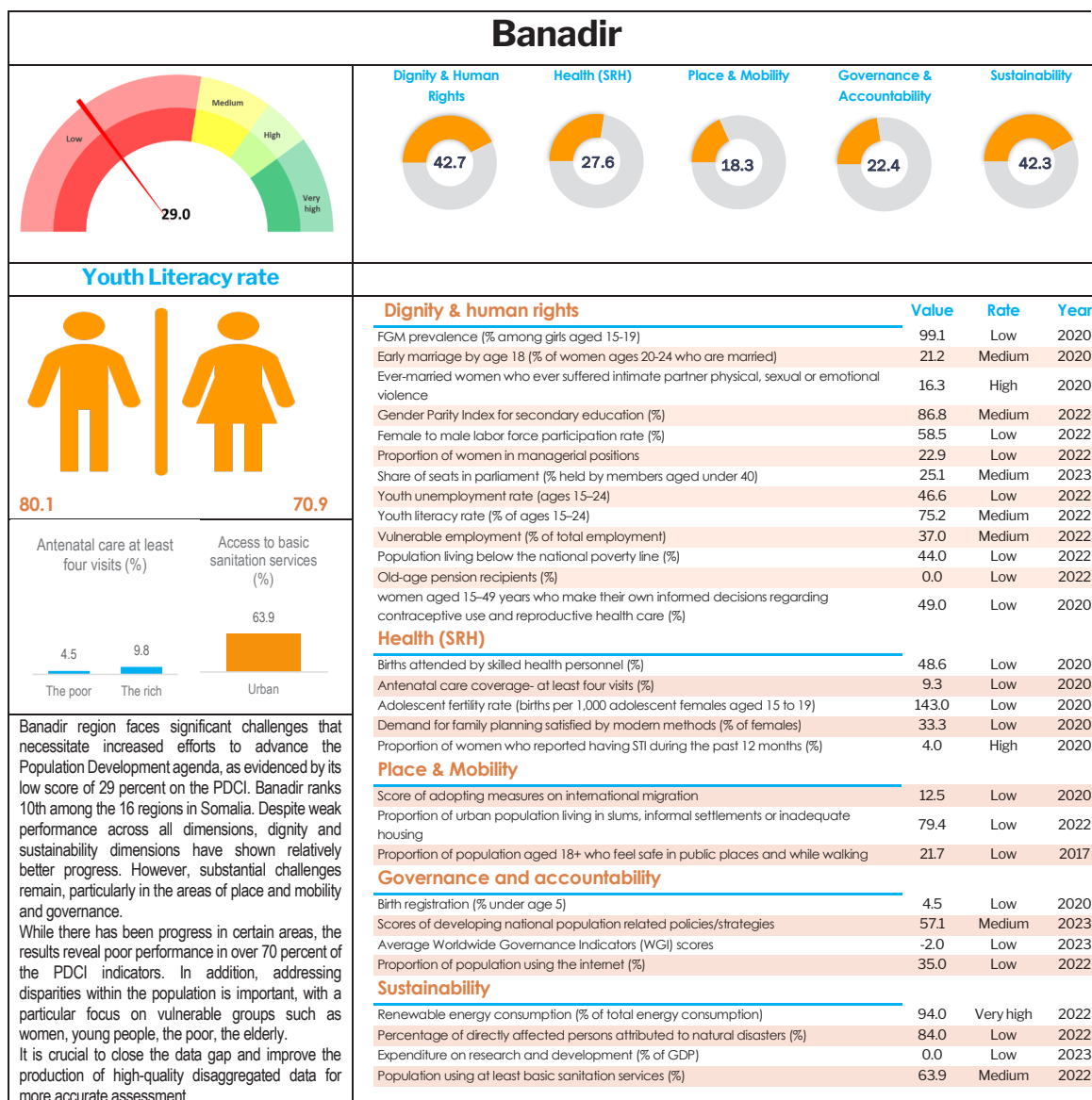


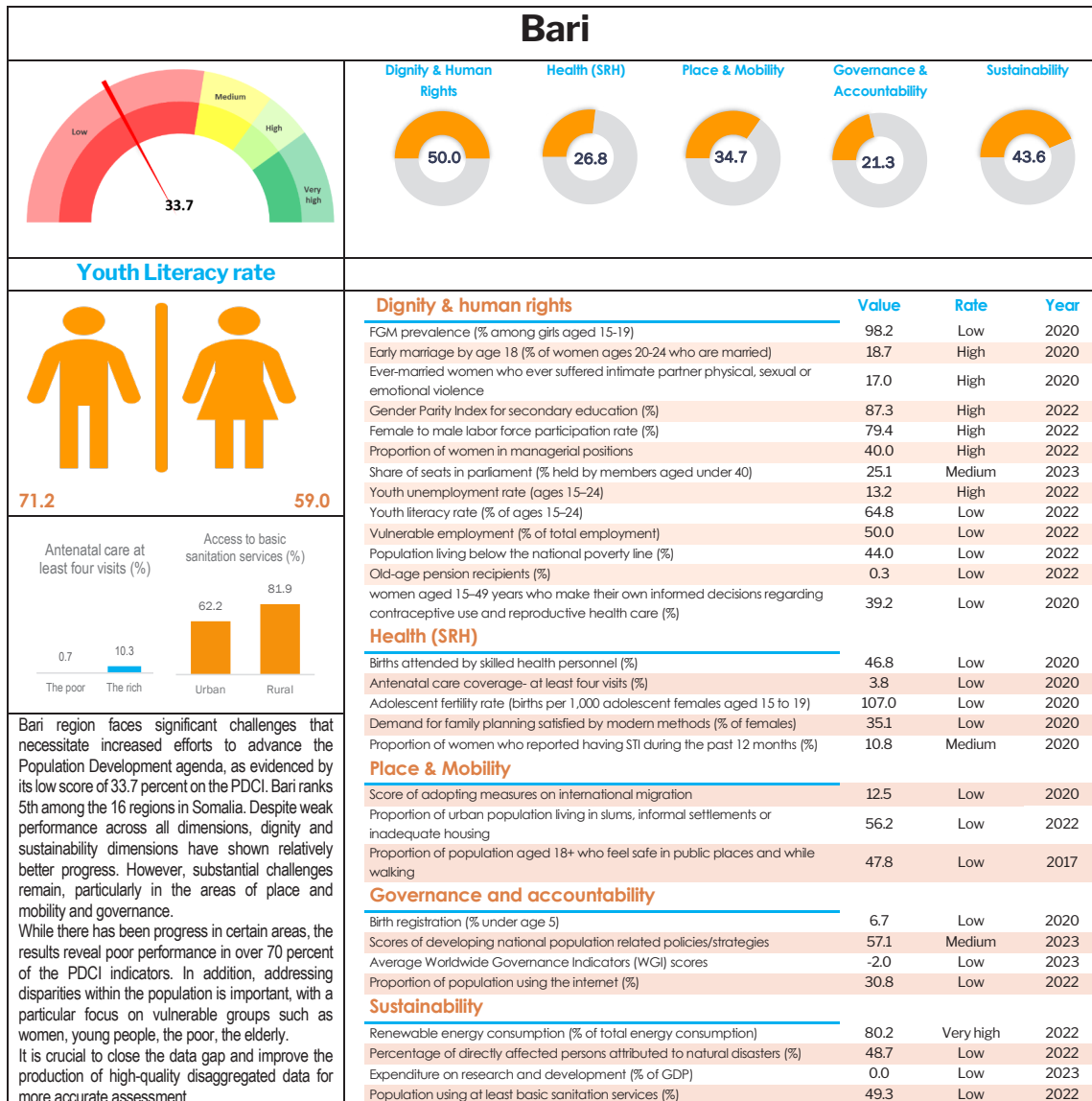


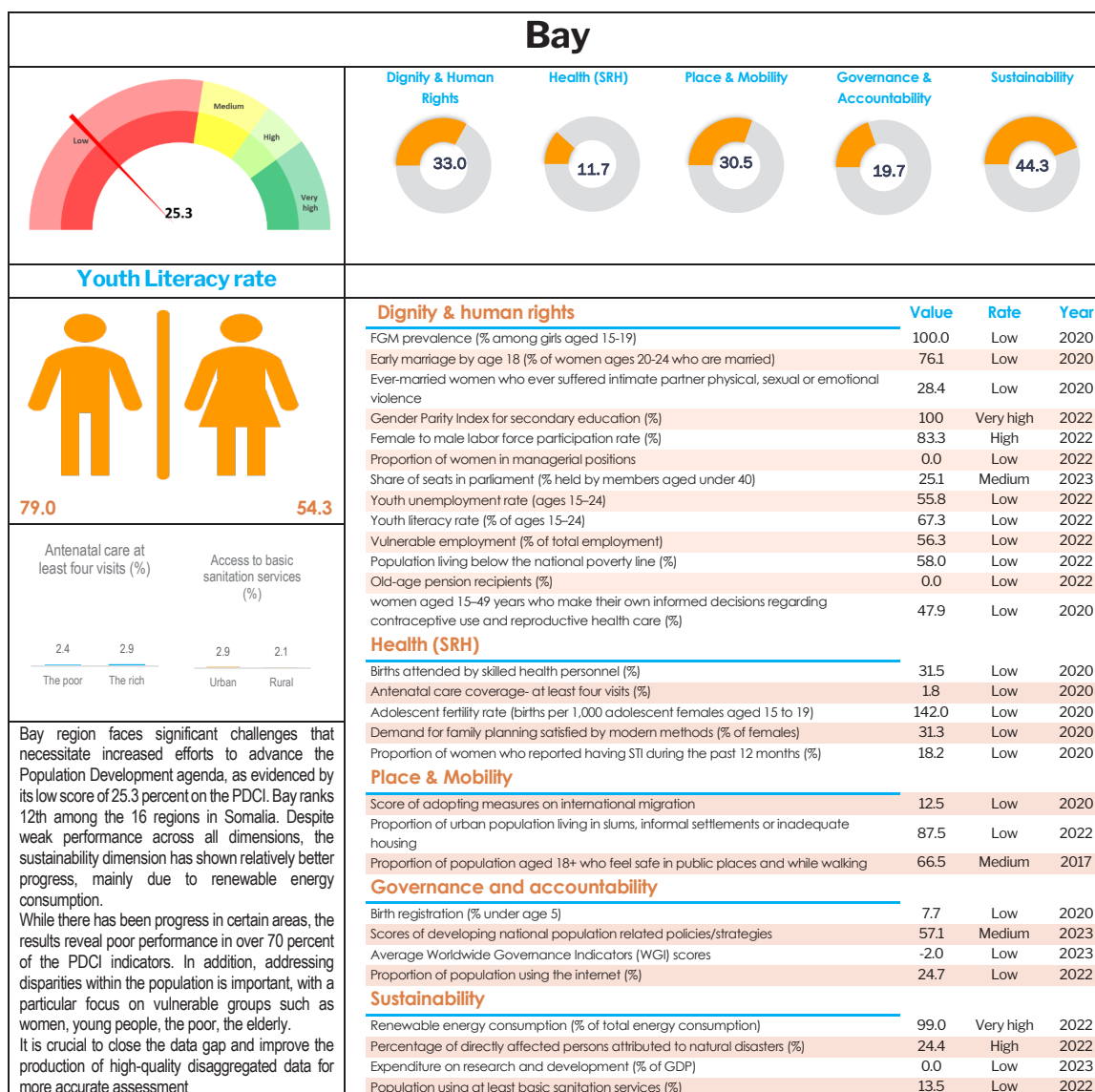


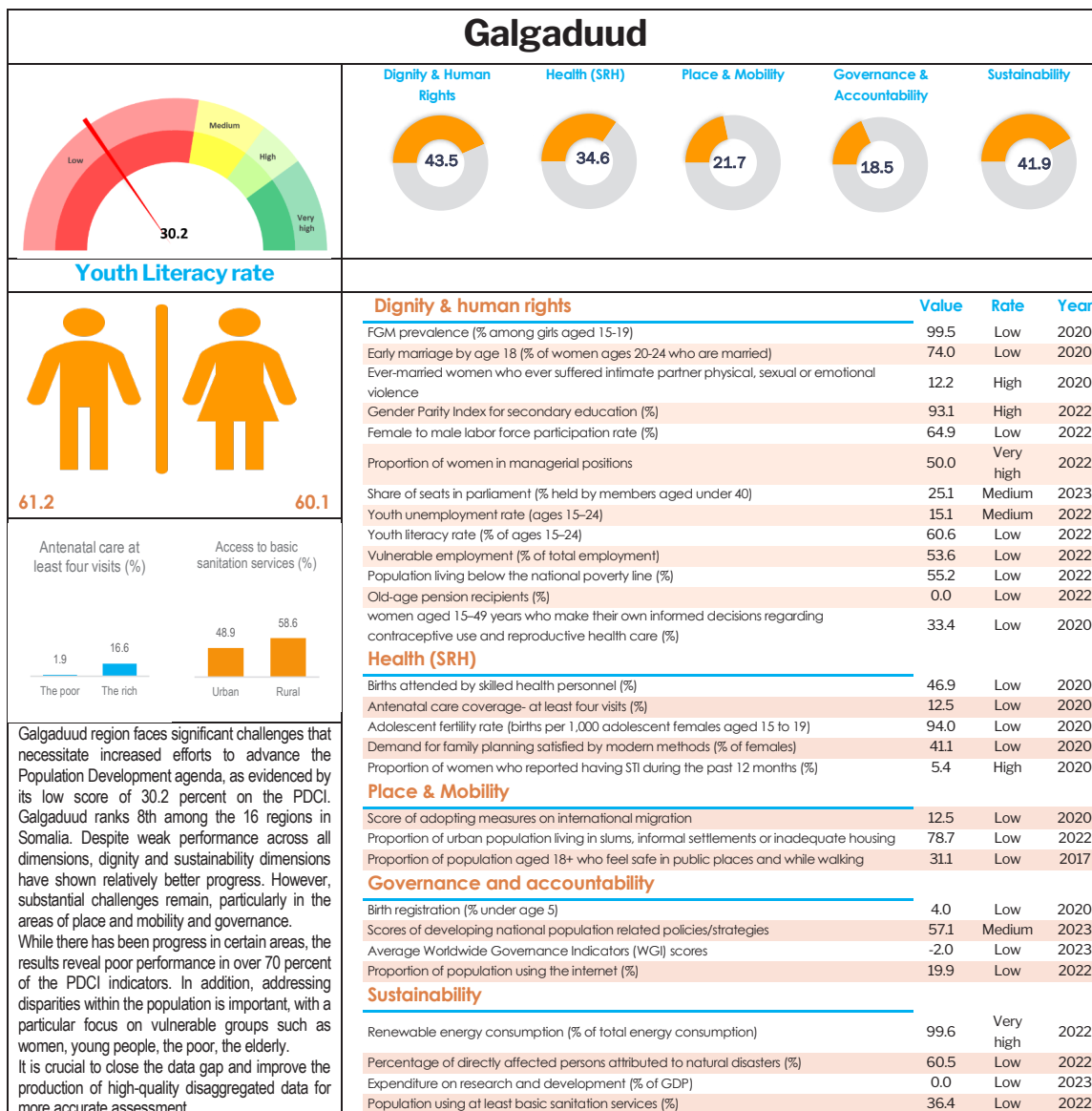


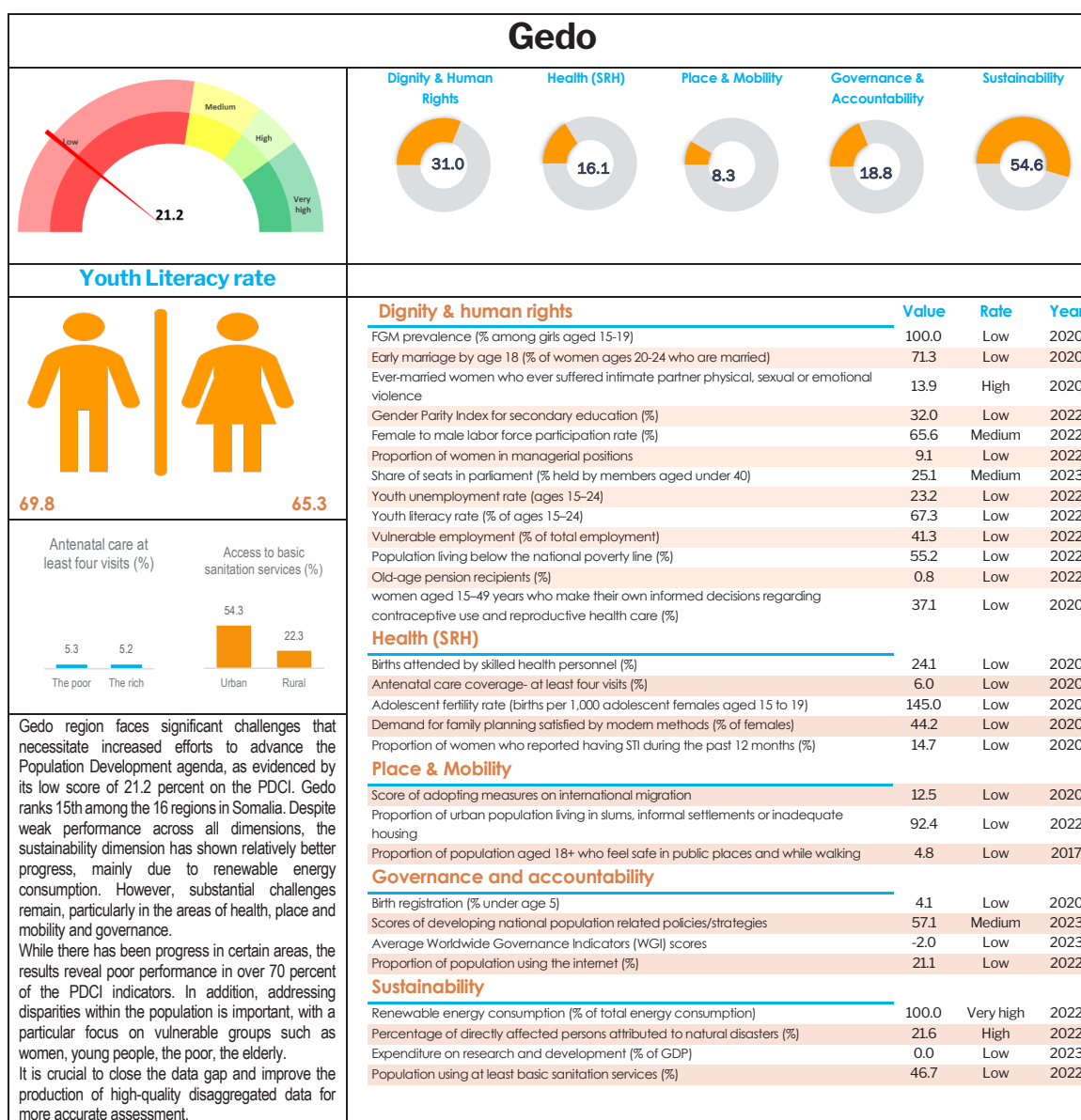


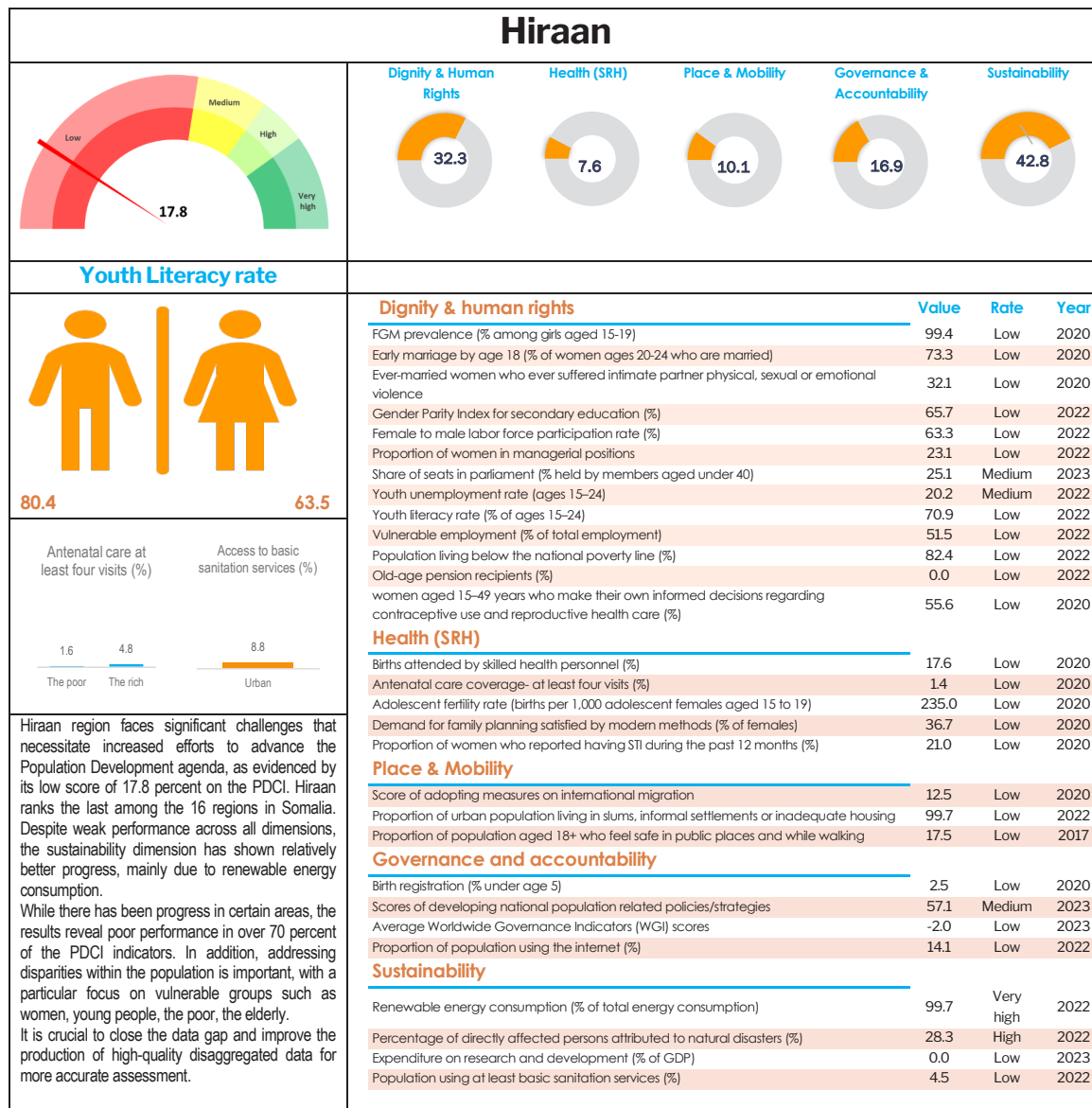


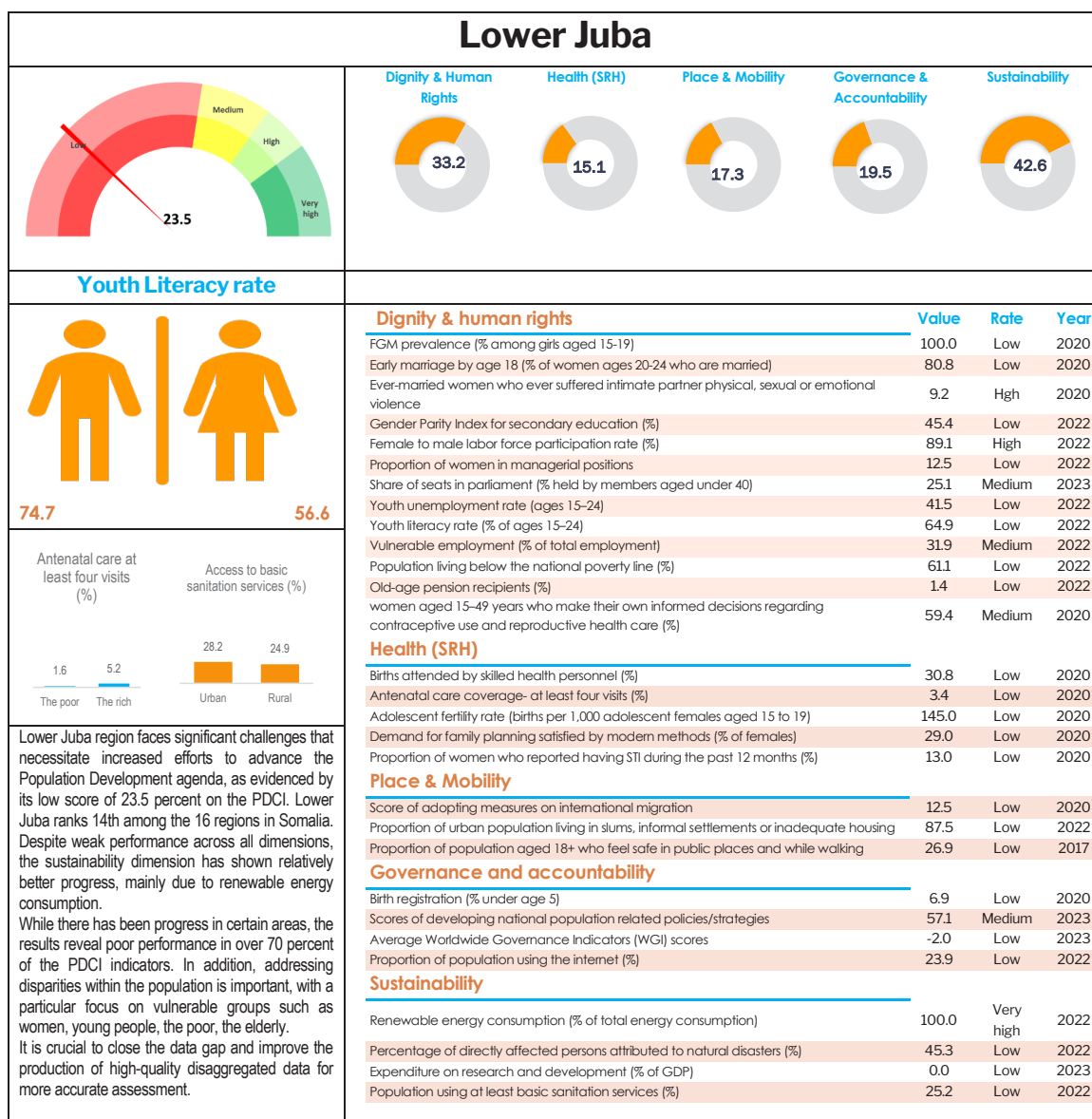


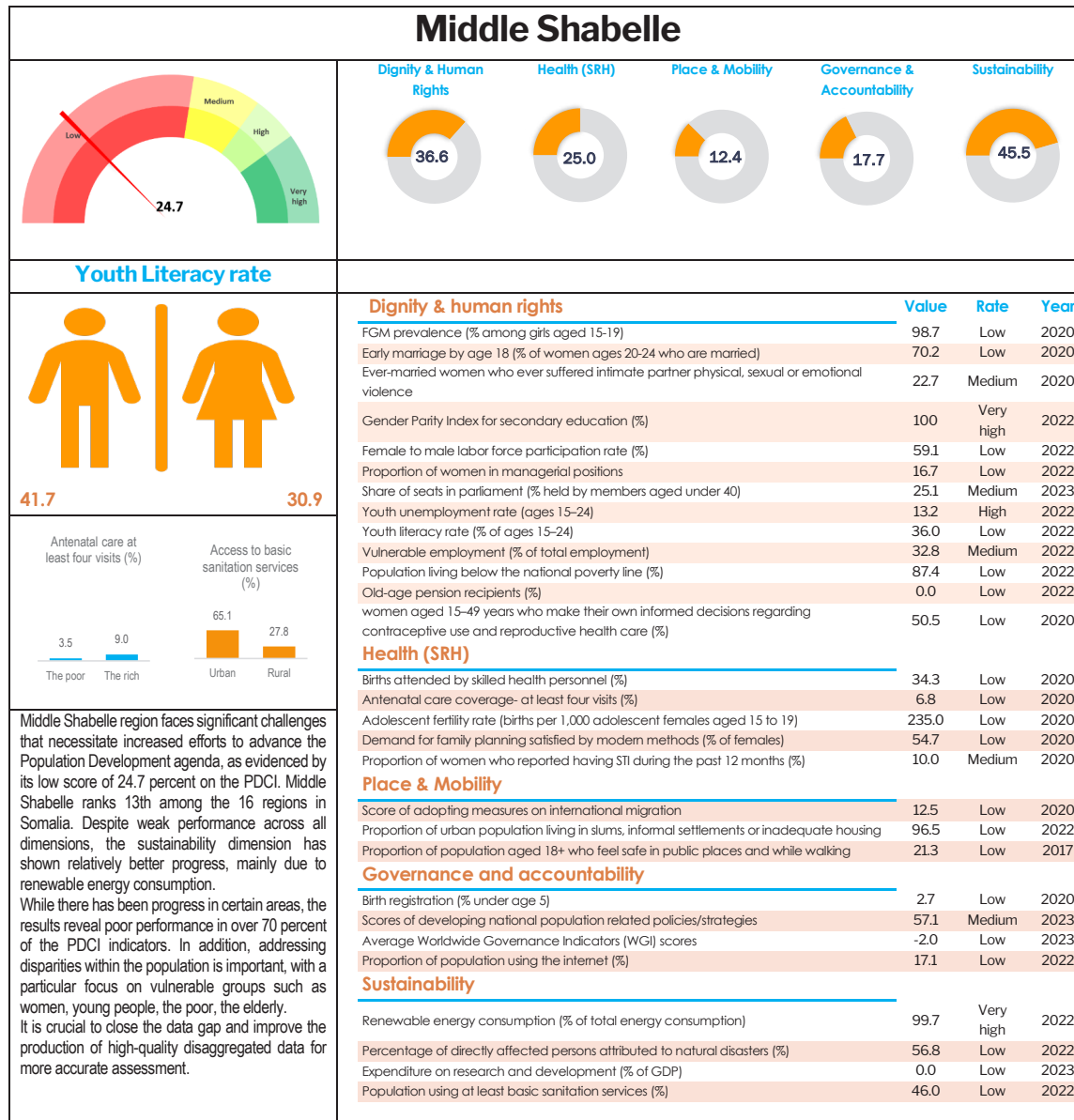


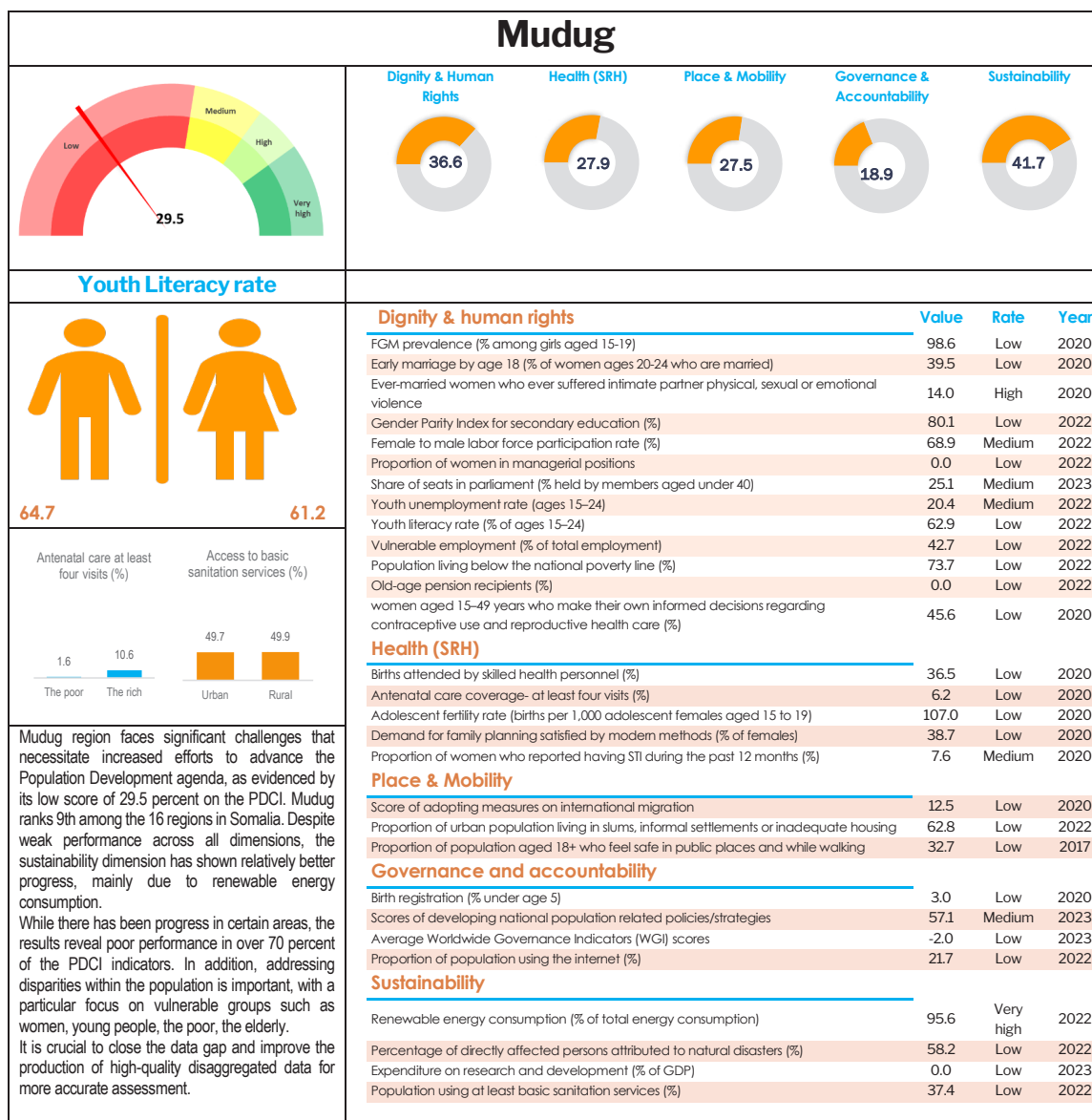


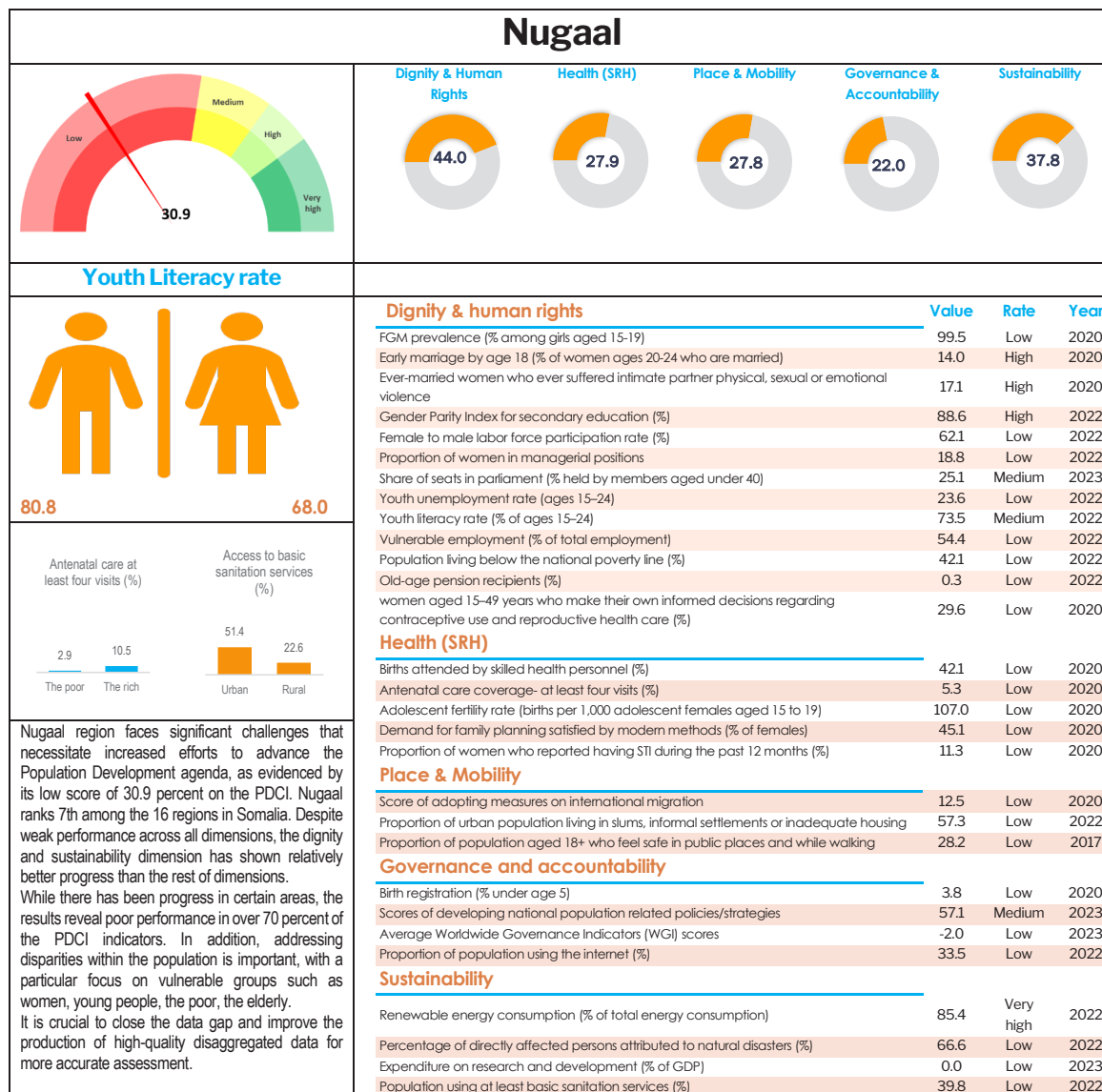


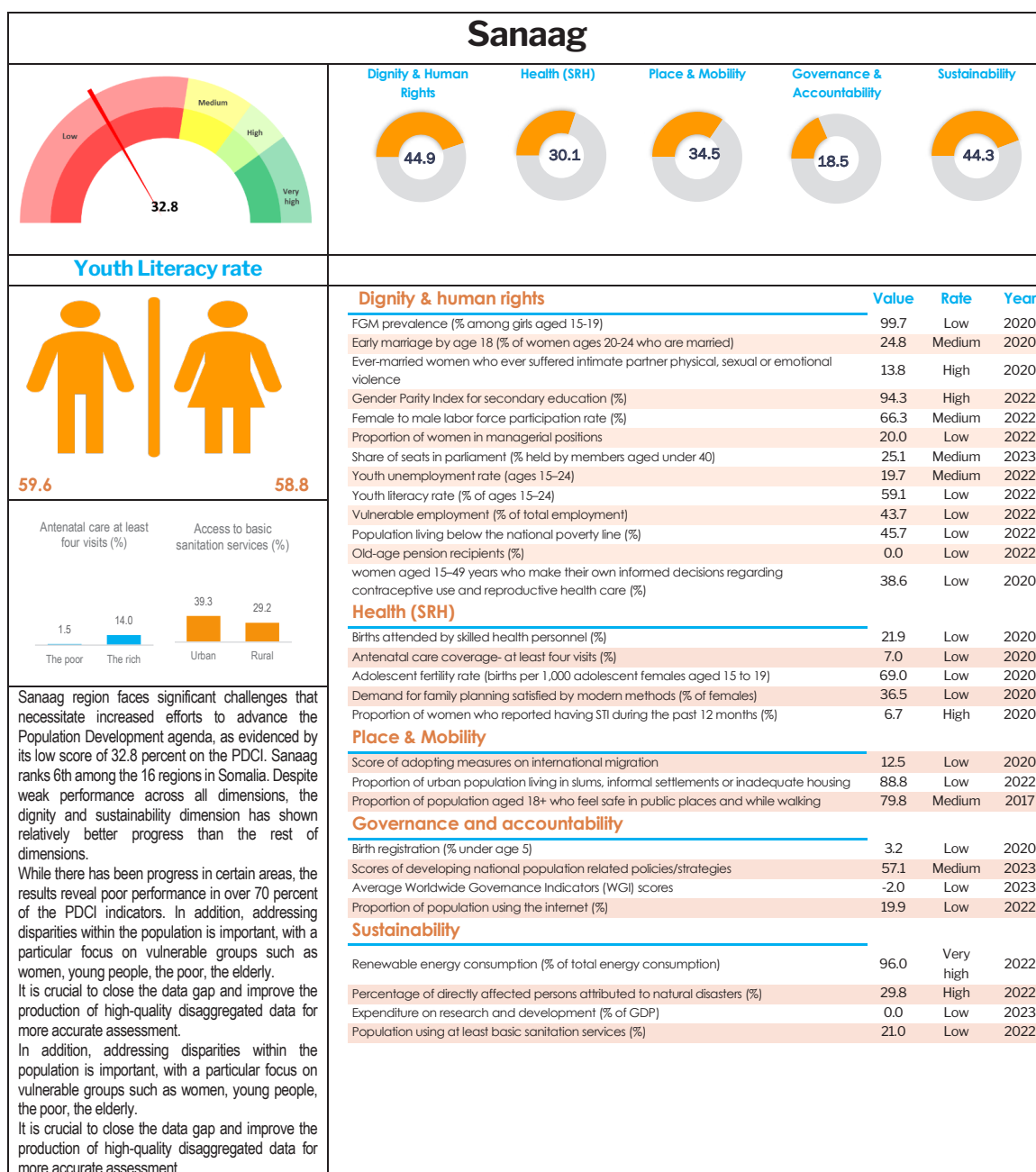


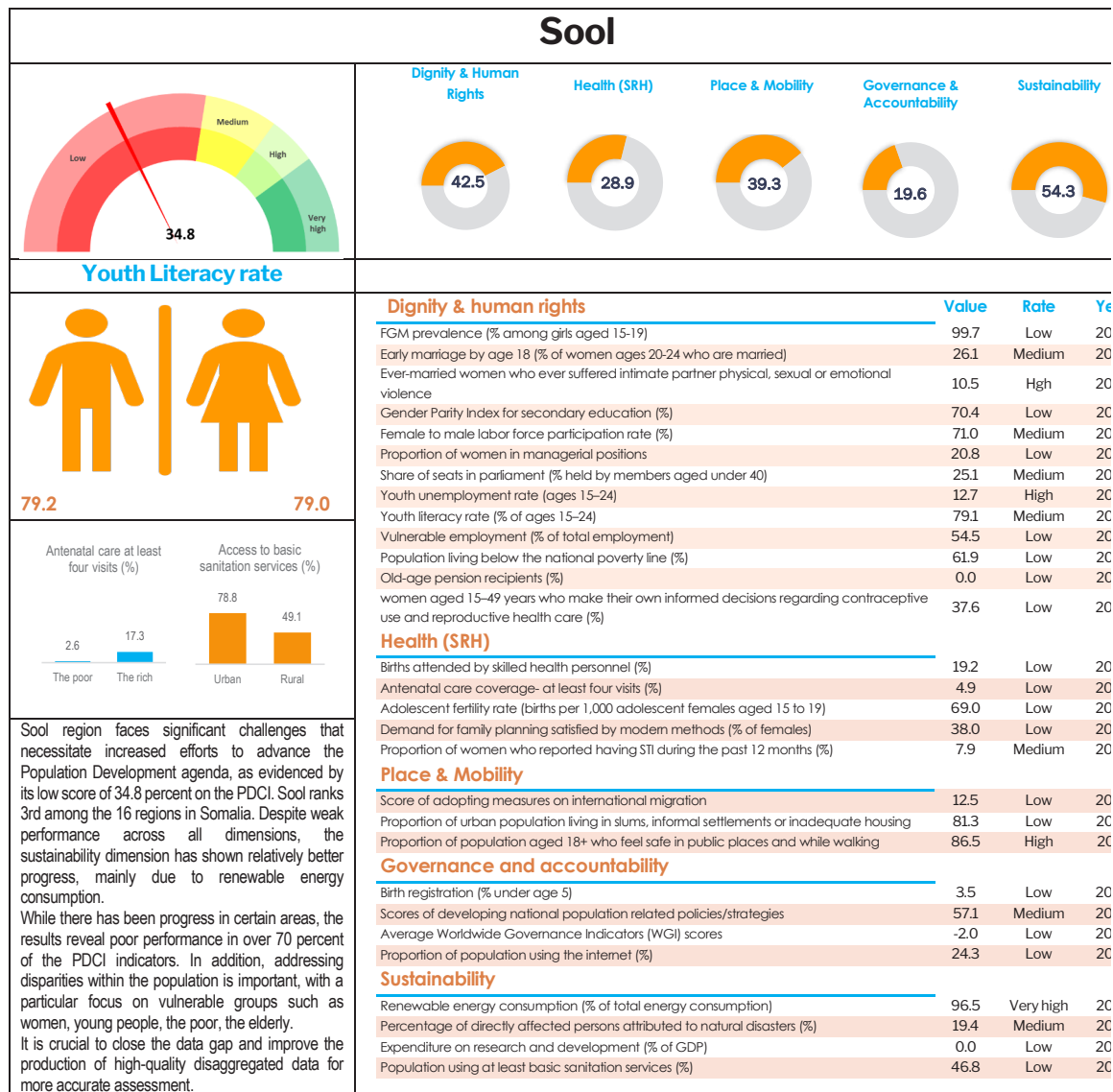


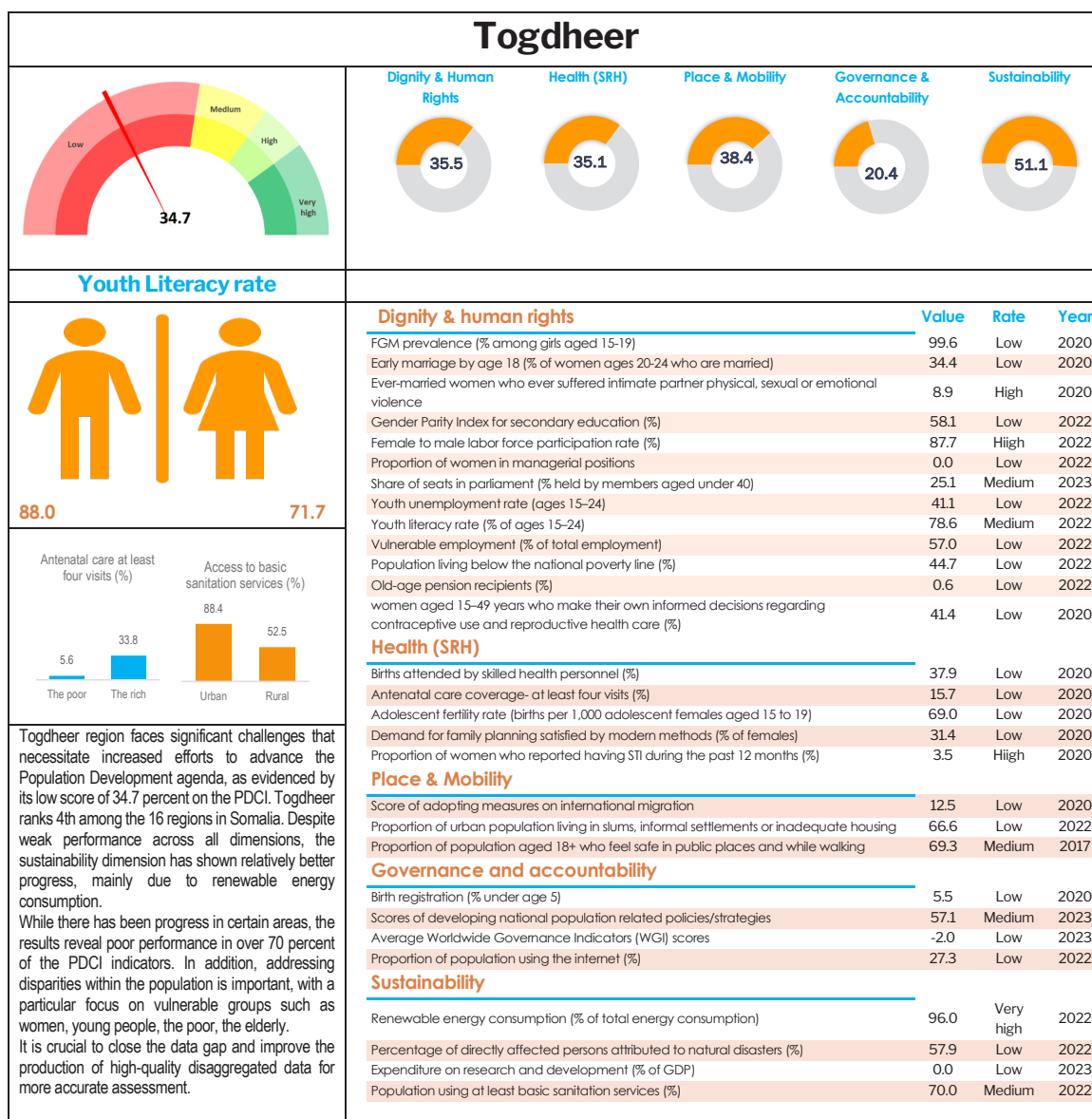


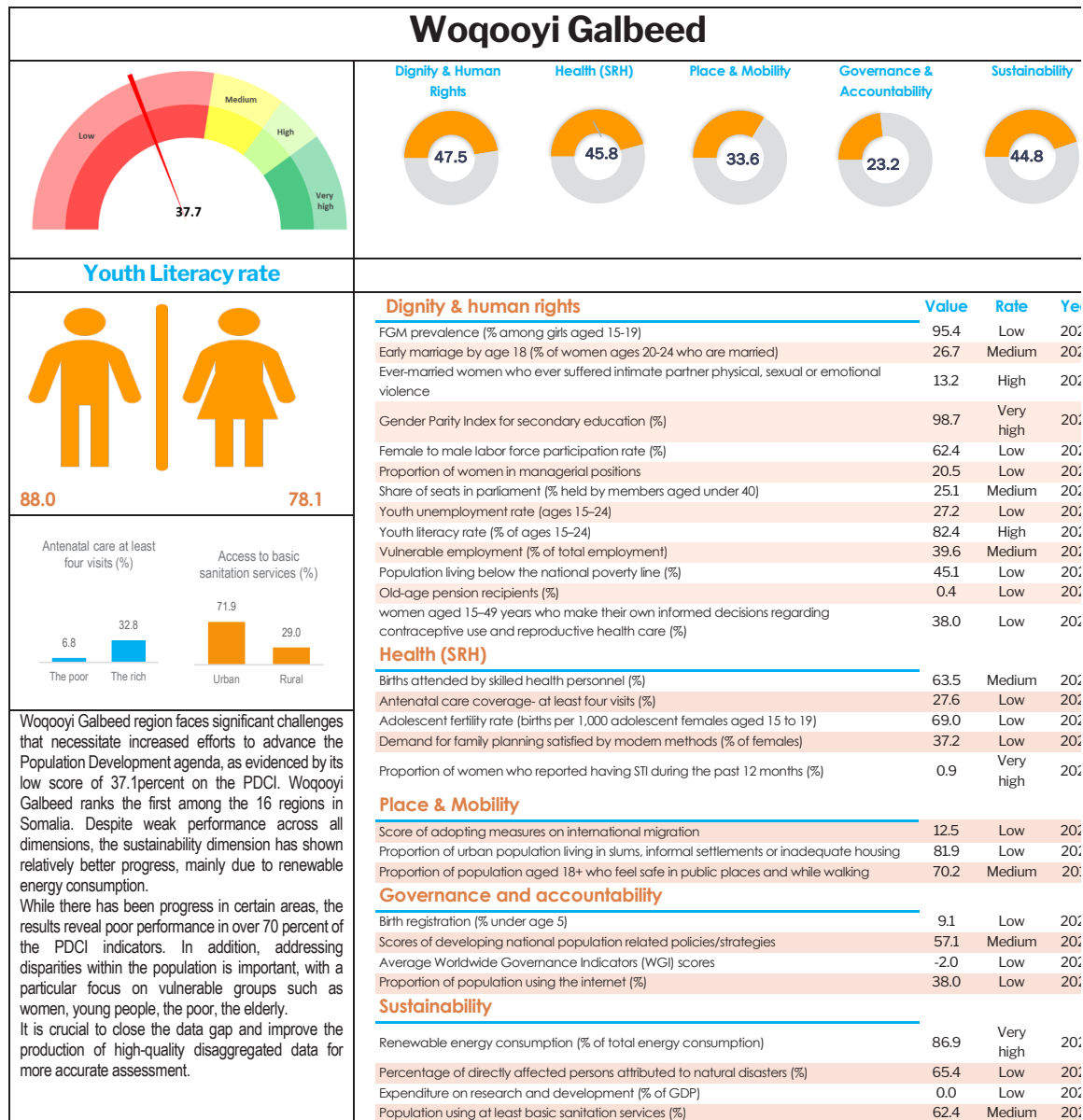


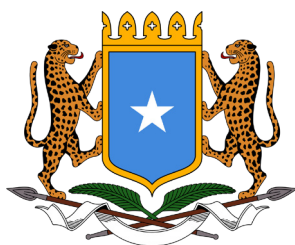












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2025