



Digital Sovereignty for Somalia

The Role of National Data Centres, Cloud Infrastructure and Local Hosting

"Sovereignty is not built by owning every server. It is built by controlling every critical decision."

Mohamed Adil

National Datacenter Manager

Growth Is Outpacing Control

A snapshot of Somalia's digital footprint entering 2026.

27.6%

Internet penetration — 5.47M users

DataReportal, end-2025

11.5M

Active cellular connections (58% of population)

DataReportal, end-2025

2

National data centres in operation today

ISOC Pulse, 2026

2%

Of top 1,000 sites locally cached — Africa avg. 38%

ISOC Pulse, 2026

37/100

Global Cybersecurity Index score

ITU / ISOC Pulse, 2024

14.7/100

UN e-Government readiness score

UN / ISOC Pulse, 2024

Somalia's people are already online. Somalia's data, in large part, is not yet home.

What Digital Sovereignty Actually Means

Sovereignty is not a single switch. It rests on three distinct pillars.

DA

Data Sovereignty

Knowing where data lives, who can lawfully access it, and under whose law it is governed.

IN

Infrastructure Sovereignty

Owning or controlling the physical and virtual capacity — data centres, cloud, networks — that services run on.

OP

Operational Sovereignty

Having the people, processes and authority to operate, secure and recover services without depending on a single external party.

“A sovereign digital state is not one that hosts everything at home. It is one that can always answer three questions: where is it, who controls it, and what happens if it fails?”

Why the Exposure Is Real

1

Thin local capacity

2 data centres nationally serve a population approaching 20 million and a fast-growing digital economy.

2

Content still flows abroad

Just 2% of Somalia's most-visited websites can be served from inside the country, against a 38% average across Africa — most everyday traffic leaves, and re-enters, Somali networks.

3

A concentrated market

A single operator carries the majority of Somalia's internet traffic, and international assessments rate ISP choice as poor — a single point of failure risk.

4

Governance still forming

Somalia's cybersecurity preparedness, data governance and e-government readiness scores remain low by global benchmarks — technology is arriving faster than the rules to secure it.

None of this means less digital. It means the control layer has to catch up with the growth.

Three Models, Three Lessons

DATA EMBASSY

Estonia

Since 2017, Estonia has hosted legally sovereign backups of its most critical registries in a Tier IV facility in Luxembourg, under a treaty that keeps them under Estonian law alone.

Sovereignty can travel — if the legal architecture goes with it.

NATIONAL DATA CENTRE + PLATFORM

Rwanda

A single National Data Centre hosts government workloads under a public-private model, while the Irembo platform now delivers well over 200 public services online.

One well-governed centre can carry a whole government.

DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

India

Built around open, interoperable “rails” for identity, payments and documents (Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker), reaching well over a billion people.

Sovereignty and scale reinforce each other when infrastructure is a public good.

Common thread: each country chose to control the architecture, not to close the border.

Somalia's Foundations Are Already Being Built

1

National Data Centre

MoCT's sovereign anchor facility for critical government workloads, under the National Datacenter Manager's operational leadership.

2

GovNet 2.0

A feasibility and expansion programme for Somalia's government network — covering design, viability and a phased rollout, delivered with EA-RDIP and World Bank support.

3

Digital Government Programme

The MyGOV portal, a NIRA-backed single sign-on, a Government Service Bus and Central Bank payment integration, digitising priority citizen services.

4

DPI Roadmap 2026–2030

A national roadmap for digital public infrastructure covering ownership, interoperability, identity, payments and cybersecurity — aimed at reducing vendor dependence over time.

The task ahead is not to start a sovereignty programme — it is to connect the ones already underway into one governed architecture.

A Sovereign Hybrid Cloud for Somalia

Three governed tiers — not government monopoly, not blind external dependency.

SOVEREIGN CORE

**National Data Centre /
GovCloud**

Critical registries • national
identity • PKI • classified data •
sensitive services

LOCAL MARKET

**Qualified Somali private data
centres & cloud**

Public-facing systems • disaster
recovery • CDN / cache • local
innovation

TRUSTED GLOBAL

Approved international cloud

Specialist SaaS • analytics •
geographic DR • selected low-
risk, high-scale workloads

“The objective is not to own every server; it is to control every critical decision.”

Classify First. Host Second.

Not every byte needs the same protection — but every byte needs a deliberate decision.

Data Class	Examples	Hosting Decision
Restricted / Sovereign	Critical registries, keys, national security	National Data Centre / GovCloud + DR
Confidential	Citizen, sensitive MDA records	GovCloud or controlled hybrid
Internal	Normal government workloads	GovCloud / local cloud / approved cloud
Public / Open	Websites, open data, public content	Local hosting / CDN / public cloud

A SIMPLE TEST BEFORE ANY HOSTING DECISION



Building the Infrastructure That Carries Sovereignty

1

National Data Centre Standards

Tiered resilience, diverse power and connectivity, a tested disaster-recovery twin-site, and a published service catalogue for onboarding MDAs.

2

Internet Exchange & Local Peering

Somali-to-Somali traffic should meet inside Somalia. Today, only 2% of local content is cached in-country — most everyday requests leave and return unnecessarily.

3

Backbone & Upstream Diversity

Somalia's international upstream diversity is already rated very good — more than two routes to the global Internet. That external strength is an asset to build the domestic layer on.

The external link is already strong. The missing layer is the domestic one — where Somali traffic meets, is cached, and is served.



CONNECTED TO THE WORLD.
CONTROLLED BY SOMALIA.
BUILT TO SURVIVE.

Thanks