

# UNICEF SOMALIA MONTHLY BULLETIN

UNITE FOR CHILDREN

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## A word from the UNICEF Representative

Dear Friends, Partners and Colleagues,

UNICEF is very grateful to the governments of Ireland, Sweden, the UK and the USA for contributions against our 2008 Emergency Appeal. However, we only have five percent of the total US\$ 47 million we require and greatly appreciate your support in enabling us to ensure life-saving measures for Somali's children and women.

Looking ahead at next month's celebration of International Women's Day, I would like to take this opportunity to underscore the **importance of girl's education** in our overall efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals of gender parity and 100% enrolment of girls in primary school.

Though the past ten years have seen a threefold increase in the number of girls enrolled in school, only one Somali girl in four gets a primary education; only 121,000 Somali girls attend school. By 2009, UNICEF wants to see this figure increase by at least 50,000.

Through our flagship 'Go to School' programme, UNICEF and our partners deliver school spaces, teacher training and teaching and learning materials as well as ensure that schools have water, sani-



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tation and hygiene education, health care and life-skills education to create child-friendly environments where females are encouraged and supported in their learning.

If you would like to learn more about our activities for girl's education or any our programmes, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once again, thank you for your continued support to the children and women of Somalia.

*Christian*

Christian Balslev-Olesen

**UNICEF in Somalia contributes to meeting Millennium Development Goals and Millennium Declaration Targets by increasing access to and the quality of basic services for accelerated child survival, development and protection.**

## IN THIS ISSUE

Emergency Response	2
EC Support to Urban Water Projects	2
Launch of Puntland Water Policy	3
Australia Supports the Recovery of Somalia's Health System	3
Temporary Schools for the Displaced	4
Promoting Girl's Leadership	4
Female Journalists Launch a New Magazine	6
Supporting People Living with HIV	6

## ACCELERATING CHILD SURVIVAL

**95% of children under one in Somalia have not received the full recommended course of vaccinations. One in eight children dies before his/her fifth birthday. Somalia has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world.**

**UNICEF and WHO work with government and NGO partners to improve young child survival by increasing access to and the quality of health centres through vaccination, nutrition and malaria prevention programmes.**

## Emergency Response

**To respond to the outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea** in certain parts of Somalia, UNICEF partners (Hiran Water Supply, Mumin Global in Baidoa, ACF in Mogadishu, GHC in Gedo, Water Development Agency in Bardera and ADRA in Bay and Bakol Regions)

stepped up their provision of chlorine to water sources and households, while also providing residual testing kits, logistic support and monitoring assistance to local authorities. This support will continue until June 2008 and is complemented with hygiene promotion activities.

**To respond to drought conditions in Galgadud**, UNICEF partners continued providing tankers of clean water, particularly to schools, digging and constructing shallow wells and installing water pipes. Pit latrines have also been constructed for 2,400 children in five schools and messages on the radio continue to alert children and their families of where to go for assistance, even for issues related to the recruitment of child soldiers and female genital mutilation, continue. UNICEF complements this water response by providing necessary drugs and medical supplies to 12 maternal child health centres and four health posts serving over 20,000 children under five in the Galgadud region. In addition, over 38,000 children under five in the region have access to an UNICEF-supported therapeutic feeding centre and outpatient treatment centre for severely malnourished children as well as an outpa-



© UNICEF Somalia/2008/Warfa - Displaced children in a tented classroom in Afgoye, Somalia

tient health post and outpatient services at the Istarlin hospital in Guriel.

**UNICEF continues its response to the 240,000 internally displaced people in the Mogadishu-Afgoye corridor**, through:

- support to over 110 feeding centres that treat on average 15,000 malnourished children a month
- the provision of necessary drugs, supplies and training to maternal and child health centres that reach over 7,200 children under five and 1,200 pregnant women on a daily basis
- support to 28 tented schools that educate over 7,000 students
- the delivery of a million litres of clean water (from half-a-million in 2007) to benefit 100,000 displaced people. UNICEF partners complement this supply of clean water with hygiene awareness campaigns and the distribution of soap, chlorine, aqua tabs and other supplies
- the construction of close 1,000 latrines for the benefit of 30,000 people

**UNICEF, WFP and the Somalia Red Crescent Society continue efforts in**

**Berbera and Buroa IDP camps (for internally displaced persons) to improve nutritional status.** This month, they organized a second round of supplementary feeding for 160 malnourished children as well as identified another 57 moderately malnourished children.

**In addition UNICEF and the Somaliland Red Crescent Society screened 2,512 children under the age of five for nutritional problems** in 15 locations in Las Anod and Buhodle districts. Over

280 severely malnourished children were treated.



© UNICEF Somalia/2007/ CKMinihane - Hawo uses water channelled directly into the home

## EC Supports Sustainable Water Projects

*Bossaso, North-east Somalia:* Water. It's a precious commodity, especially in Bossaso. No one knows that better than Hawo, a house girl who lives and works in a small home on the outskirts of town.

"It used to be that I had to walk 20 minutes to the water tank in the centre of town, climb up the ladder and scoop out the water. Then I would have to walk back to work with only a jug full of water. This would go on all day whenever I needed water," she said, eyes wide, hands outstretched. "Just to wash dishes or to do laundry was a long time. It took most of the day."

In fact, carrying water from the centre of town was the system for everyone in Bossaso until, in the late 90s, through initial funding from the Netherlands Government, UNICEF's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program be-

gan working on a programme to deliver water throughout the town. UNICEF assisted the government to create a water supply system, with distribution points throughout the town, and establish a public, private partnership for its management, making water more accessible to the people of Bossaso.

"It's changed my life," said Hawo with a large grin. "Now I can do other things besides spending so much time going to get water. The water actually comes to me! These days I finish my work much earlier and get to spend time with my baby. I like that a lot."

To date over 4,000 households have water directly piped into their residence thanks to GUMCO, the private agency which has taken over the management of the water system and expanded the delivery system to private dwellings.



© UNICEF Somalia/2007/  
CKMinihane  
2007 - A young girl at an IDP camp uses water at a local kiosk to rinse off.

It's now estimated that 40% of Bossaso homes are connected to water, with more projects underway in order to meet the demands of thousands of displaced Somalis arriving in Bossaso.

In addition to providing water to individual dwellings, GUMCO has also managed to pipe freshwater to the port of Bossaso and construct seven new boreholes. They offer reduced priced water to essential public services such as schools, hospitals, mosques and jails. Provision is made to ensure that the poor, especially internally displaced populations living in camps scattered around the town, have access to a basic water supply.

Currently GUMCO is planning an expansion project, with the help of UNICEF, through its European Commission (EC) funded programme for the development of urban water and sanitation services in Somalia, to meet the demands of an ever increasing population, which has more than tripled in the last few years.

"I don't know what this town would have done without this assistance," continued Salad. "So many people have benefited from this project. We're learning so

much. We are now ourselves running Bossaso's water project in a sustainable manner and even showing a bit of a profit. Most importantly, we are learning not to constantly rely on donors. We are learning how to help ourselves."

This dynamic water system is expanding remarkably, with the company growing right along with the town. Not only are the citizen's of Bossaso learning how to support and sustain themselves, they are learning about fighting illness through UNICEF supported health and hygiene programs.

"Prior to the installation of the water system, water was frequently contaminated due to close living conditions and seepage from toilets into the water supply," said Rage Mohamud, Project Assistant for WASH. "People were contracting cholera and dysentery at an alarming rate. It was killing children. Now, for the past 5 years, we've had a large reduction in outbreaks of cholera and dysentery."

"It used to be that I would bring my children to the physician every two months for deworming. Now they're rarely sick," said Salad, GUMCO's Manager. "it's much harder to contaminate the current system. In the past we had buckets that everyone used for everything from drinking water to washing; now we have pipes and that has made all the difference."

## Launch of Puntland Water Policy

The Vice President of the self-declared state of Puntland, launched a water policy in Garowe on February 18, 2008 in the presence of several international agencies, ministries, government officials, civil society and the media. This policy, which was developed in a very participatory manner with stakeholders (a process funded by the EC), will guide all water issues in the north-west zone as well as improve cooperation between the zonal and local authorities, communities, civil society and the private sector. Puntland's parliament is set to debate the policy in June 2008. UNICEF played an integral role in both the development and dissemination of this policy.

*UNICEF takes this opportunity to thank the European Commission and the Governments of Denmark and the United States for their long term commitment to increasing access to safe water and sanitation facilities for Somali families. In addition, we thank the numerous governments and UNICEF National Committees whose short term humanitarian funding has contributed to life saving interventions. These include Norway, USAID/OFDA, Netherlands, Sweden and Canada, among others.*

## Australia Supports the Medium and Long Term Recovery of Somalia's Health Care System



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UNICEF continues to support World Vision International (WVI) to provide essential equipment and drugs to nine maternal child health centres and 183 Health Posts in Bay, Bakol and Middle Juba. With these supplies, health care workers can better treat common childhood infections, provide vaccination, ensure cold chain operations and provide training in the area of nutrition education and food demonstrations

February also saw the construction of the Galkayo Health Post and Maternal Health Centre. Last year, UNICEF helped previously divided communities in the Galkayo region build a peace school for children from north and south Galkayo communities.

Through generous funding from Australia,

## THE GO TO SCHOOL PROGRAMME

**Only 30% of children in Somalia attend primary school. Enrolment of marginalized children especially girls and those from nomadic communities is a challenge. UNICEF collaborates with government and civil society organizations to increase access to and the quality of primary education. Amongst other initiatives, we train teachers, provide**

### Feature Story: Temporary Schools Bring a Sense of Normalcy to Children Displaced by Conflict

By Misbah M. Sheikh

safety along the Afgoye Road. Saadia was among them.

ALONG THE AFGOYE ROAD, Somalia, 7 March 2008 – Saadia, 18, last saw her husband more than a month ago, before fighting in Mogadishu forced her to flee with her newborn baby to safety some 15 km outside the capital.

#### *A Promise fulfilled*

UNICEF Education Officer Maulid Warfa visited Afgoye Road last November, when thousands were fleeing the capital every day.

“I fled with my neighbors when mortars started falling in our street,” she said. “I don’t know where my husband is because he was on the other side of town at the time, but at least he knows I am safe; that our son is safe and that I am attending primary school.”

“Right under this tree, we promised these families that we would find a way to install schools for their children,” he recalled on a recent visit back to the camp.

By January of this year, UNICEF and its partners had erected 28 tented classrooms, which now school more than 7,000 displaced children along the Afgoye Road.

It may seem odd for an 18-year-old to be attending school in a tent along with dozens of smaller children, but much about this situation – hundreds of thousands of displaced people living together in overcrowded huts – is indeed odd, and sad.

“I just wish we had more tents so we could accommodate all these children sitting outside,” added Mr. Warfa.

Somalia has been in turmoil since 1991 with the fall of the regime of Said Barre. Late last year, the situation took a turn for the worse. Fighting intensified between

For her part, Saadia is appreciative of the small breath of normalcy. “I didn’t have anything to do but take care of my daughter and worry all day,” she said. “Now, at least I can concentrate on learning, reading and writing.”

government and opposition forces in Mogadishu, leading to the displacement of an estimated 600,000 people. Many found their way to

© UNICEF Somalia/2008/Warfa – Children outside a tent school in Afgoye.





© UNICEF Somalia/2008/Warfa - Saadia, 18, attends class with her daughter in a temporary school.

### *Education contributes to saving lives*

UNICEF launched an appeal last year for close to \$50 million to provide life-saving assistance for almost 1 million people affected by violence, drought and disrupted livelihoods in Somalia.

“Education, while not seen as life-saving,

does contribute to saving lives,” noted UNICEF Representative in Somalia Christian Balslev-Olesen, “because it provides a safe and healthy environment for children to learn, to occupy their minds, while we occupy ours with ensuring that they have clean water, adequate sanitation and enough to eat.”

The 28 temporary schools are not an ideal long-term solution; for that, UNICEF continues to work with donors and partners to address the root causes of Somalia’s chronic discord. In the meantime, however, these tent schools are ensuring a fundamental right for children in an environment where far

## UNICEF Renews Agreement with IIDA to Promote Girl’s Leadership

UNICEF renewed an agreement with IIDA in February 2008 to manage a Youth Multi-Purpose Centre in Merka. This agreement is part of a larger programme to empower youth and promote their participation on issues that affects their lives. The centre has been and will continue to provide sports and recreational services, access to IT facilities and skills and information on leadership, HIV prevention, etc. This year, IIDA and UNICEF look forward to training 1,400 girls in the central-south of the country to become pioneers for youth advocacy issues and take leadership roles in youth related activities such as children’s rights, community work and most importantly, access to education



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## THE COMMUNICATION, HIV/AIDS, EMPOWERMENT AND PROTECTION PROGRAMME

*Children in Somalia live in one of the most vulnerable environments in the world. UNICEF protects children, empowers communities, advocates for social and behavioural change and reduces HIV risks. We also work with decision-makers to promote policy and institutional change for a more protective environment for children,*

## Contact Us

If you would like to learn more about our programmes or where your support would make a difference, please contact:

Christian Balslev Olesen  
Representative  
cbalslev@unicef.org  
+254 733 629-933

Denise Shepherd-Johnson  
Chief of Communication  
dshepherdjohnson@unicef.org  
+254 722 719 867

Misbah M. Sheikh  
Emergency  
Communication  
msheikh@unicef.org  
+254 727 534 713

Robert Kihara,  
Communication Officer,  
rkihara@unicef.org  
+254 721 244 800 or  
+254 722 206 883

## Female Journalists Launch a New Magazine on Social Issues

In Hargeisa, female journalists, who have just completed a training on journalism, launched a new magazine called "Aman Magazine" which for the first time will be produced by women only and focus on health and other social issues that affect children and youth.

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**We are on web!!!**

**Find us at : [www.unicef.org/somalia](http://www.unicef.org/somalia)**

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## Supporting People Living with HIV

Garowe and Bossaso now have two new HIV support groups, with over 30 members, at least a third of whom are female.

These groups meet at least twice a month and provide assistance in counselling and caring for hospitalized HIV positive patients in Garowe and Bossaso Hospitals. understand HIV and AIDS.

© UNICEF Somalia/2007/CKMinihane



Their work includes visiting sick members, helping families deal with loss and advocating with communities and religious leaders to end stigma and discrimination, as well as helping to raise funds. Although the road ahead is long, members do report that their work is making a small difference in helping their communities better