

Media tips – visits to Southern Somalia

Trip arrangements: Media visits to drought-affected parts of Southern Somalia are arranged through the Communication Section, UNICEF Somalia Support Centre. Contact Denise Shepherd-Johnson, Cell - **+254-722-719867**, email: dshepherdjohnson@unicef.org or Robert Kihara, Cell - **+254-721-244-800**, email: rkihara@unicef.org.

More information on UNICEF Somalia website: <http://www.unicef.org/somalia>.

Journalists should give at least five days notice to ensure good planning for visit. Flights to Wajid and Jowhar locations for drought coverage originate from Kenya on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays. Wajid is the main centre for drought relief operations and is two hour's flight from Nairobi, Kenya. Jowhar, the main UNICEF office for Central/Southern Somalia is one to one-half-hours flight from Wajid (there are occasional stops between Wajid and Jowhar). Visits to Wajid can be two, four or five days based on flight schedule below.

UN Common Air Services provides the following schedules (as of 15 March 2006)

Mondays: Nairobi-Wajid **OR** Wajid-Jowhar

Tuesdays: Wajid-Jowhar **OR** Wajid-Nairobi **OR** Jowhar-Nairobi.

Wednesdays: Nairobi-Wajid **OR** Wajid-Jowhar **OR** Nairobi-Jowhar.

Thursdays: Wajid -Jowhar **OR** Wajid-Nairobi **OR** Jowhar- Nairobi.

Saturdays: Nairobi- Wajid-Wajid-Jowhar.

Sundays: Wajid-Jowhar- **OR** Wajid-Nairobi **OR** Jowhar- Nairobi.

Wajid is in Bakool region which borders Ethiopia while Jowhar is in Middle Shabelle region which borders the Indian Ocean. From Wajid, if logistics/security permit, overland trips can be organized to Garbaharrey Huddur and Rabdure. Trips from Wajid to Garbaharrey will take- about 20 minutes by air - and about an hour by road. Huddur and Rabdure are about three-hour drives away. At the moment these are the main district towns within traveling distance of Wajid where journalists can get stories on the drought. Flights between Wajid and Jowhar take between 45 minutes and an hour.

Media and visual opportunities: Journalists should expect to see: internally displaced persons, water wells that have been dug/rehabilitated; water trucking; ongoing initiatives to treat the sick and malnourished; drought-ravaged landscapes occasionally with carcasses of livestock; children learning in school tents.

UNICEF presence in Somalia: UNICEF has its main offices in the following locations in Somalia: Hargeisa Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland'), Bossaso Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') and Jowhar which oversees activities in Central/Southern Somalia. Other offices are in Mogadishu and Baidoa. A minimal presence of Somalia national staff runs Baidoa. Mogadishu and Kismayo offices. The Kismayo office has been closed due to insecurity and staff now operate out of Jowhar.

In Mogadishu, on-the-ground transport, security and accommodation logistics can be organized by a local Fixer given that the security situation does not allow UNICEF staff to chaperone media as in other locations. UNICEF has about 125 staff working in Somalia, a majority of them Somalia nationals.

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About another 75 are based at the UNICEF Somalia Support Centre in Nairobi, Kenya which serves as the head-office for UNICEF Somalia.

Food, clothing, travel and accommodation: In Jowhar UNICEF guest house provides meals and accommodation at rate of about \$30 per day. **ALWAYS CONFIRM WITH UNICEF ON SPACE AVAILABILITY.** This applies to Wajid too where accommodation is normally at WFP premises. Staying at a UN premise gives journalists more chances for briefing on situation. For trips to the field, prepare to carry toiletries (toilet paper etc). Food/mineral water can be obtained at UN guest houses. In Nairobi, \$20 departure tax is payable at JKIA as UNCAS is not a commercial airline. In Somalia, vehicle hire can be arranged subject to advice from UNICEF staff. In Jowhar, Central Somalia, foreign passport holders need to pay \$50 entry tax. **DRESS:** For women visitors/journalists, loose trousers or long ankle-length skirts and headscarf. **Arms-covered - no bare arms.**

NB: UNCAS flights have no toilet facilities. Eat and drink sparingly before travel.

Flights and costs: UN flight fares are in the RANGE of the following: **Nairobi-Wajid** - \$448, **Wajid-Jowhar** - \$174. A **Nairobi-Wajid-Jowhar-Nairobi** trip should come to about \$1250. **Nairobi-Wajid-Nairobi** should be about \$900. **Nairobi-Jowhar-Nairobi** is about \$1026. Please note rates are subject to variations. Maximum allowable free luggage is 15kg. Anything in excess has to be paid for. Confirm weight of cameras etc before travel. Flights have to be paid before travel at the UN Common Air Services Offices situated within the WFP compound in Nairobi, Kenya. The office is about 100 metres from UNICEF Somalia. **Note:** UN/UNICEF funded flights are subject to confirmation with UN/UNICEF Communication Officers before travel.

Pre-travel briefing: Journalists should visit the UNICEF Somalia office in Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya (office is high-walled compound along UN Crescent, 400 metres after Gigiri police station gate. It is at a LEFT JUNCTION).

Passport Details: Always ensure that you send scanned passport page (JPEG or PDF file) to UNICEF Somalia before travel. It should include: passport number, name, date of issue, place of issue, expiry date, place of birth, date of birth, nationality, employer organization.

About UNICEF

For nearly 60 years UNICEF has been the world's leader for children, working on the ground in 158 countries to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for poor countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: SEE DOCUMENTS IN PRESS PACK ON UNICEF SOMALIA WEBSITE - <http://www.unicef.org/somalia>. Click on link to Media Centre on homepage and you will access among others the document 'UNICEF in Somalia – Questions and Answers for The Media'.

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