

UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

April 2005



Flood emergency

Heavy rains hit Hargeisa the capital of Somaliland on 24 April 2005 washing away a bridge and damaging buildings. A total of 170 households required immediate help. UNICEF distributed blankets, plastic sheeting and jerry cans. WFP distributed food.

Unusually heavy rains over southeastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia led to localized flooding in Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland'), in particular Hargeisa the capital and Burao towns with some casualties reported. Of possibly greater concern was the increased risk of serious flooding in Southern Somalia where a number of villages in Middle Shabelle region were affected. Somalia was last affected by a major flood in 1997 in which thousands died, mostly in the South.

In Hargeisa, Burao and a number of rural villages of Northwest Somalia, UNICEF's Hargeisa office assisted over 4,500 people affected by torrential rains and flash flooding on 26 and 27 April that destroyed homes, contaminated water sources and disrupted already insufficient essential services. By some accounts these were the heaviest rains witnessed in a half century. Heavy rains were also reported in Sool and Sanaag regions where populations were reeling from the effects of a three to four-year drought. While the rain will bring longer-term recovery, it has made conditions extremely difficult for communities rendered near destitute due to the loss of livestock and other assets. In some of these areas, UNICEF-supported

health and nutrition mobile outreach activities were disrupted.

In addition to the provision of relief and shelter assistance, UNICEF Hargeisa provided support to prevent malaria and cholera outbreaks, with water chlorination and the supply of medical kits supported by social mobilization activities. The response in the Somaliland has been closely coordinated with UN/NGO partners and area authorities.

In Southern Somalia, UNICEF's Jowhar office supported flood preparedness activities based on increasing Shabelle river levels and continuing reports received from humanitarian agencies in Ethiopia of heavy rains and high river levels. UNICEF provided sandbags to support strengthening of river embankments and supported overall monitoring efforts by boat.



UNICEF provided support to relieve effects of flooding in Northwest and Southern Somalia. **Credit: UNICEF Somalia/2005/UN Security.**

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Political developments

In 'Somaliland', the opposition Kulmiye Party proposed that President Dahir Rayale Kahin be impeached. Twelve of the party MPs called for investigation into a raid at the Kulmiye Party headquarters in Hargeisa.

The prime minister of Somalia's transitional government, Ali Mohammed Ghedi visited Mogadishu on 29 April. An explosion went off while he was addressing a rally on May 3, killing 15 people and injuring 50.

Key faction leaders in Mogadishu Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, Muse Suudi Yalahow and Osman Ali Hassan 'Atto' announced that they would soon unite their militia and take them out of Mogadishu to six former military camps at Hiilweyne near Balad town, Lafole and Arbiska near Afgoi town and Dhanaane on the coast between Mogadishu and Merka.

Crime case: Hearing of a case against 10 people accused of killing four humanitarian workers, wounding one and committing other acts between 2002 and 2004 started. During the hearing, the court heard evidence on the killing of two British teachers at Sheikh Secondary school in October 2003.

Security developments

Mrs Mariam Mohamed Hassan - health project coordinator of International Aid Services in Mogadishu was shot dead

on 18 April 2005 by gunmen who also wounded a Kenyan who was with her. On 12 April 2005, fighting erupted in Galkayo town between rival clans. During the fighting, five persons were killed and 13 wounded. On 9 April 2005, two UN staff were evacuated from Ceel Deer town due to security concerns while on 10 April 2005, international UN Staff were evacuated from Jowhar, the location of the main UNICEF office in Central/Southern Somalia. The office was re-opened on 14 April 2005.

Health

Special events: UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland administration, local and international organizations marked Africa Malaria Day on 25 March. During the celebrations in Hargeisa, capital of Somaliland, some 200 insecticide treated mosquito nets were distributed.



Halimo Abshir holds Abdi Nassir Muse, 3, as he waits for treatment at Bossaso MCH clinic on 11 April, 2005. Credit: **UNICEF Somalia/2005/Robert Kihara.**

UNICEF Operational Areas...

Northwest Zone – Hargeisa Office

Awdal
West Galbeed
Togdheer
Sahil
Sool
Sanaag

Northeast Zone – Bossaso Office

Bari
Nugal
Mudug

Central and Southern Zone – Baidoa, Jowhar, Mogadishu and Kismayo Offices

Galgaduud
Hiran
Middle Shabelle
Lower Shabelle
Benadir
Lower Juba
Middle Juba
Gedo
Bay
Bakool

Training: UNICEF held an Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) planning workshop in Garowe, Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') for 19 participants from the local administration and the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS). UNICEF trained vaccinators to be involved in upcoming immunization. Supplementary feeding was initiated in Bossaso IDP camps. It was integrated with immunization and hygiene and sanitation education.

Nutrition...

In Somaliland, UNICEF responded to drought in Awdal region, supplying food and distributing vitamin A and iron-cum-folic acid supplements to children and women. In Puntland, UNICEF in collaboration with a local NGO, Association for Integration and Development (AID) screened children and women in IDP camps in Bossaso so as to plan for the provision of supplementary feeding initiatives, immunization of infants and pregnant women and treatment of illnesses.

A consultative meeting was held and attended by representatives of the local administration, women's groups, health workers and teachers in Wagade and Golweyne districts. UNICEF printed 250 copies of a manual on supplementary feeding programmes and started distribution in Benadir and Lower Shabelle regions through partners.

Water and Environmental Sanitation...

Projects: Following an agreement with the Puntland administration, UNICEF distributed supplies and equipment for the development of rural water schemes in various locations. Drilling of Dhahar borewell started during the month.

Education update...

School support: UNICEF in collaboration with WFP identified 10 schools for establishment of school feeding support in Somaliland. The programme is part of a broader strategy to increase enrolment and promote active learning in primary schools through providing for the nutritional needs of pupils in schools.

Programme launch: The Education Section launched the Integrated Primary Education Programme in Somaliland and Puntland. The programme funded by the European Commission aims to contribute towards strengthening participation and learning levels in basic education, particularly for girls and children from marginalized communities in formal and non-formal primary schools. During the launch in Somaliland, the minister for education said the administration aimed to enrol an additional 35,000 pupils that year. According to the Minister, 2005 is the year of education in Somaliland.

Construction of Hafun Primary School started during the reporting period. Hafun was the worst-affected location by the tsunami that hit Northeast Somalia on December 26, 2004.

A child-to-child household census was held in Gardo town. The Gardo education officer, 120 students, 32 teachers and teacher-mentors undertook the survey and covered three-quarters of the town enumerating some 1,570 of the school children. Similar surveys were held in Bossaso and Garowe towns during which scores of children were registered for school against the next academic session.



Boys at a school in Bossaso wash their hands. The water comes from a UNICEF-implemented water project. Credit: **UNICEF Somalia/2005/Robert Kihara.**

UN and local administration staff attended the laying of the foundation stone by the President of Puntland, Mohamud Muse Hirsi "Adde". The President announced a massive drive to build more schools in Puntland. This was the first time since the conclusion of Somalia's peace talks in 2004, that a leader of such level in Puntland (a semi-

autonomous region of Somalia) has openly committed the administration to the goals of 'education for all' and to gender parity in access, retention and completion in basic education. He announced that the government will provide incentives to 200 teachers and will support school construction activities.

UNICEF visited schools in Bossaso, Gardo and Garowe in Puntland which organize non-formal education (NFE) in the afternoons and evenings and requested them to identify primary school age children who attend these the classes so that separate teaching arrangements can be made for them.

UNICEF-supported non-formal education initiatives in Somalia focus on helping young people who missed out on opportunities to attend formal education have a second chance to acquire basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The curriculum also has a component that teaches such skills as relating to one another, reproductive health, peace, conflict management and protection of the environment.

HIV/AIDS

Workshop: A six-day workshop to develop HIV/AIDS clinical management guidelines for Somalia was held in Hargeisa. Participants were 20 health workers from Somaliland. The workshop was a joint initiative between UNDP, UNICEF and WHO. In Bossaso, Puntland, UNICEF distributed information materials for

HIV/AIDS awareness to Lag Community School near Bossaso.

HIV testing: UNICEF is establishing voluntary counselling services in Jowhar hospital while InterSOS NGO is providing blood screening services. It is also developing guidelines for assessing the capacity of health facilities to provide HIV/AIDS related services.

Youth

A 10 day mentors training was held in Hargeisa from 20 April to 1 May where eight youth mentors were trained. The training equipped the mentors with skills to enable them provide on-site technical support to Somaliland youth groups and also enhanced the local partner, Somaliland National Youth Organization's (SONYO) understanding of leadership and organizational development and Youth Peer Education and mentoring activities.

Communication for development....

Youth broadcasting: A three-day meeting was organized in Hargeisa for 32 youth representatives from Hargeisa, Burao and Borama for evaluation of the youth broadcasting initiative. The meeting was facilitated by a BBC consultant. The youth broadcasting initiative is a UNICEF project that has empowered members of youth groups in audio and video programme production skills. The output of their work is shared with broadcasting stations and video

parlours. The youth produce programmes that focus on areas that include health, education, sanitation, HIV/AIDS and nutrition. UNICEF provides information to help them include the right messages when dealing with issues touching on UNICEF's mandate.

UNICEF staff participated in a five-day workshop on editing video films on hygiene and environmental sanitation held at Horn-Afrik radio and television in Mogadishu from 9 to 13 April 2005. A total of 25 participants took part.

Progress review: A review of the Youth Broadcasting Initiative was held in Merca from April 19 to April 24. Nine youth groups who contribute content to FM stations participated. One of the concerns to come out of the workshop was the high production cost.

Child Protection

Community mobilization training for child protection advocates was held in Bossaso for 22 participants from different locations in Somalia. Three agreements with local NGOs will ensure UNICEF support to community mobilization for child protection. The development of a booklet for Somali religious leaders on Islam and child protection has been finalized.

A partnership with the Ugandan-based NGO TPO (Transcultural Psychosocial Organization) has been established to provide further capacity building and support to Somali partners in the field

of community-based psychosocial care and support for vulnerable children and their families.

UNICEF is in the process of finalizing a partnership agreements with NOVIB Somalia (NOVIB is also known as Oxfam Netherlands) in the field of capacity building and monitoring and reporting in the field of child protection, as well as with the Senegal-based NGO Tostan on FGM abandonment through community mobilization and empowerment.

If you have questions about the UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review please contact:

Denise Shepherd-Johnson, Communication Officer.

E-mail: dshepherdjohnson@unicef.org

OR Robert Kihara, Assistant Communication Officer.

E-mail: rkihara@unicef.org

Tel: 254-2-623958/ 623950/ 623862/ 623959/ 350410

Fax: 254-2-520640/ 623965

Credit for majority of content in this report goes to UNICEF staff in Somalia.