

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

## August 2005



### Political developments...

Parliamentary elections for Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') earlier scheduled for 14 September 2005 will be held on 29 September 2005. Seven women are among the candidates. Uncertainty continues to cloud the situation in Mogadishu due to the differences between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) under President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed with its seat in Jowhar 90km north of Mogadishu and some Mogadishu-based leaders who insist on the TFG moving to the capital.

Deputy prime minister and TFG minister of interior, Hussein Mohamed Farah Aideed returned to Mogadishu for the first time in three years. Mr. Hussein said that he would lay the groundwork for the eventual arrival of the President and the Prime Minister, Ali Ghedi in Mogadishu.



A happy girl in Jowhar, Central Somalia in June 2005. UNICEF and Somali communities are running a Back to School campaign to ensure more

children get an education. Currently only about 20 per cent of eligible children are in school. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/001-06-05DAC/CSZ Office.

### Security update...

In Puntland, a convoy of vehicles belonging to a local NGO was attacked by armed men in Yaka, 40km south of Gardo town. One of the attackers was killed and a security guard injured. Some of the attackers were arrested. In Bossaso Puntland, the offices of a local NGO were attacked and a security guard injured. Central/Southern Somalia continued to experience internal displacement and unrest with intermittent fighting.

The security situation in Kismayo area showed improvement. UNICEF's Kismayo office was closed for security reasons. The Minister of Resettlement and Development in the TFG traveled to Koyame Island in southern Somalia waters in an effort to mediate the release of three captured Taiwanese ships.

### Health update...

*Training:* UNICEF trained 30 Maternal and Child Health (MCH) centre staff in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland. The training focused on ways to improve management of health services. UNICEF trained staff from partner organizations to enhance their supervision of maternal and child health centres in Puntland. Forty community based nurses were trained in safe motherhood and feeding practices in Bossaso. Another 102 members of vaccination teams from Gardo, Garowe and Galkaio in Puntland were trained in immunization.

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**Immunization:** Immunization activities took place in Las Anod, Hudon, Taleh, Baki and Borama districts targeting vulnerable groups in rural areas. About 1,900 children and 730 women were immunized. In Berbera, Sheikh, Hargeisa and Gebilay towns and Balligubadle and Salaxlay districts some 2,900 children and 720 women were immunized.

**Disease management:** The Somaliland administration has adopted the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) strategy to address the major causes of child illness and deaths. The implementation of IMCI began in 2002 with support from major partners and professional groups. In August 2005, following a review of IMCI activities in Somaliland, it was recommended that they be expanded to cover more maternal child health centre and health posts.

**Repairs:** Vaccine storage facilities in Biyo Ade and Burane were repaired and a new facility installed in Afgoi.

## Nutrition update...

**Training:** UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland administration trained 30 community health workers from Hargeisa on the control of micro-nutrient deficiencies such as Vitamin and Iron.

**World Breastfeeding Week:** UNICEF in collaboration with Somaliland National Women and Children Development Organization (NOW) and the Ministry of Health and Labour commemorated

World Breastfeeding Week between 1 and 7 August 2005 in Hargeisa town. Local newspapers, radio and television highlighted the importance of breastmilk and appropriate feeding for infants and children. The Week included workshops on breastfeeding attended by a total of 350 mothers/guardians from Hargeisa. The Week was also marked in Puntland and Central/Southern Somalia.

In Puntland 175 public and private health sector workers (including 25 traditional birth attendants that serve internally displaced persons' camps) were trained in nutrition and breastfeeding issues. A sensitization meeting was conducted for members of community organizations from Bossaso, Garowe and Galkaio.

## Education update...

**Training:** Since July 2005 and the Somaliland administration have trained 2,563 school teachers from 295 primary schools. In Puntland, 29 trainers of teachers were trained. They will conduct in-service teacher training for 1,700 primary school teachers. UNICEF trained 53 mentors of teachers as trainers in Merka, Southern Somalia. The trainees were drawn from local and international NGOs. The mentors' training focused on teaching methods, gender, child development, planning of learning initiatives, improvement of the school environment and motivation among other issues.

## 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

*Back to school:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland Ministry of Education and youth groups carried out registration of out-of-school children in all major regions. A total of 29,906 children were registered in Borama, Hargeisa, Burao and Berbera towns. The out-of-school exercise targeted children in preparation for eventual enrolment. UNICEF in collaboration with local communities will work to deal with problems such as poverty, lack of facilities and teachers which hamper children from going to school.

In Puntland, learning was provided in a pilot phase for out-of-school children during the June-September holiday break. The children were taught Somali language and mathematics. Seven schools in Gardo town provided free schooling to 1,813 children of whom 57.31 percent were girls. Dangoraia primary school gave free schooling to 340 children of whom 53 percent were girls.

*Supplies distributed:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education distributed education supplies to primary schools in Awdal, Hargeisa, Sahil, Togdheer, Sool and Sanag regions of Somaliland. There are two kinds of kits that UNICEF distributes in Somalia: one kit provides teachers and pupils with the basic supplies for learning in classrooms in relatively stable environments while the other kit has supplies for use by children in locations such as internally displaced persons' camps or other emergency situations.

*IDPs:* As part of the strategy to establish a viable education system for children of internally displaced persons (IDPs), UNICEF met members of the main youth groups in Bossaso: Youth Development Organization (YODO); Puntland Youth Organization (PYO); Puntland Student Association (PSA); Puntland Education Network (PEN) and Girl Development Association (GDA). The discussions focused on identification of teachers to serve IDP communities and the provision of tents for classrooms. Each of the youth groups will work with one IDP camp to ensure access to education. The Bosasso District Council will provide land for the project and pay 30 per cent of each teacher's salary/incentives. UNICEF will construct the foundations and floors for 28 school tents and provide classroom furniture and teaching/learning materials; train teachers and community education committees; pay 70 percent of the teachers' monthly incentives; purchase school uniforms for the pupils; strengthen capacity of the Social Affairs Department of Bossaso municipality and sponsor radio and TV programmes on advocacy and social mobilization for education.

*Tsunami projects:* Construction of schools in areas affected by the Tsunami: Hafun, Handha, Hurdia, Foar and Baarmadoobe continues. The construction work has reached roofing level and is expected to be complete by September.

*School rehabilitation:* Rehabilitation of Biyo Kulule, Al-Nawawi and Kubo primary schools in Puntland has

## Water and Environmental Sanitation

Rehabilitation work continues on 13 hand-dug wells in villages of Sanaag and Awdal regions in northern Somalia.

Drilling of a borewell for the Garowe water system in Puntland was completed. In Central/Southern Somalia, six wells were drilled and rehabilitated.

UNICEF carried out the project in collaboration with Riverine Sanitation Concern, a local NGO. The wells will supply 2,000 people in Middle Shabelle region with water.

*Sanitation:* 100 latrine slabs were manufactured and distributed in Maandhera village.

started. The rehabilitation will be financed by the European Commission.

*Education review:* UNICEF participated in a meeting in Jowhar organized by students, teachers, women's groups, parents, youth and education sector organizations to discuss education. One of the recommendations of the meeting was the creation of girls' only schools. The Transitional Federal Government's Ministry of Education had prior to the meeting held a coordination meeting with members of Somali NGOs and community-based organizations.

*Non-formal education:* UNICEF provided orientation on classroom management and use of text books for primary alternative education/non-formal education centres in Jowhar town. The learning centres are supported by members of the community.

Primary alternative education is part of non-formal education. It targets primary age school children aged 6 to 14 years who are unable to access formal education due to environmental, social or economic factors. The children include those denied opportunities of formal education as a result of conflict and children who are vulnerable, marginalized or discriminated against. Vulnerable children and youth include girls; children of nomads; working children (rural and urban areas) and children of internally displaced persons' /returnees from other countries/locations and minority groups.

Other non-formal education initiatives focus on helping young people (15 to 18 years) who missed out on opportunities

to attend formal education get a second chance to acquire basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The curriculum also has a component that teaches skills as such as relating to one another, reproductive health, peace, conflict management and protection of the environment.

Due to high demand, overcrowding in the learning centres is prevalent with younger children sometimes forced to learn together with older youth. The orientation discussed ways of getting access to more learning space. In an immediate response, the chairlady of Jowhar Women's Organization donated land for tents/shelter to be put up for learners.

## HIV/AIDS...

*Training:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland administration trained 20 religious and community leaders in basic skills for HIV/AIDS prevention. Similar training was conducted in Bossaso and Garowe for 20 people. Another 62 people from all over Somalia were trained as trainers in leadership and advocacy for control of HIV/AIDS. People Living With HIV/AIDS participated. The participants from different regions developed action plans for community mobilization for HIV/AIDS prevention and community development. Training in voluntary counseling and testing was carried out in Bossaso, Puntland, for eight participants.

Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT): Establishing VCT services represents an immense challenge that UNICEF – in collaboration with other international agencies and partners – has decided to undertake in Somalia. The project is currently being implemented as a pilot and the success of this first phase will determine expansion initiatives. Some of the challenges include: communities are unfamiliar with the services; limited number of centres available; high proportion of the population that is nomadic and reluctance by some health partners to integrate VCT with their services. Given that the issue of VCTs has been integrated into all HIV/AIDS awareness/training sessions, it is hoped that the concept will gradually get support.

*Somaliland's progress:* UNICEF Somalia's coordinator for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), Gary Jones, and the President of Somaliland, Dahir Rayale Kahin discussed the progress in the formation of the Somaliland National HIV/AIDS Commission and secretariat. The President will chair the commission. President Kahir said his administration had allocated a budget and office space to the commission. The President said Somaliland and Djibouti have agreed to collaborate in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. President Kahin expressed hope that Ethiopia would join the initiative.

*Emergency:* Construction of schools, water systems and health centres continues in areas affected by the Tsunami.

## Youth development...

*Training:* 34 youth were trained in leadership and organizational development/youth peer education (LOD/YPE) in Somaliland. The trainees will now commence the training of youth groups in leadership and organizational development while at the same time undertaking life skills training.

*Supplies:* UNICEF distributed footballs, referees whistles and some T-shirts donated by the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) in 27 districts of Somaliland as part of preparations for a football tournament to be organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF distributed sports kits to youth organizations in Mogadishu.

*Youth centre:* COSV, an international NGO has completed the construction of a youth multi-purpose centre in Merka. The centre will have facilities for community activities, a non-formal education room, library, room for access to internet and another for conducting voluntary counseling and testing for HIV/AIDS. UNICEF will provide furniture and equipment.

A workshop reviewed *KOOR* - the UNICEF-supported youth HIV/AIDS magazine. The review workshop brought together 20 youth from all over Somalia. The youth were involved in critiquing the existing magazine and suggesting ways to improve the magazine. Youth editors from Northwest, Northeast and

### Events Calendar

**International Day of Peace Day – 21 September 2005.**

UNICEF, UN agencies, NGOs, Somali leaders and communities will mark the International Peace Day on 21 September. In marking the Day, Somali communities hope to add their voice to the calls for peace, better public services, livelihoods and opportunities to improve their welfare. Somalis have since the overthrow of President Siad Barre in 1991 suffered greatly from localized conflicts, droughts, floods and the collapse of stable livelihoods.

Central/South Somalia were selected and have embarked on collecting stories for the next edition.



**A football team poses before kick off in Jowhar, in June 2005. UNICEF supports sports initiatives involving the youth. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/002-06-05DAC/CSZ Office.**

UNICEF trained 60 youth from all over Somalia in basic photography as part of activities geared towards the participation of Somali youth at the upcoming Africa Development Forum (ADF) 2005 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The youth documented aspects of youth leadership that will be exhibited in a pre ADF zonal symposia this month.

## Child Protection...

*Psychosocial care and support:* UNICEF supported a two-week field visit to Uganda - in collaboration with the NGO Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) - for 26 community based social

workers from Somalia. This initiative is part of a capacity building programme.

*Workshops:* UNICEF staff participated in a workshop on violence against women held in Hargeisa from 22 to 24 August. A human rights awareness workshop was organized in Jowhar by COGWO, a UNICEF partner. Participants included community leaders, human rights advocates and members of the TFG parliament. Participants received a brief outline of the international legal standards that protect the rights of children and in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which the precursor to the TFG, the Transitional National Government signed in 2003.

*UN Human Rights Independent Expert's visit:* UNICEF staff on August 26 met Dr Ghanim Al-Najjar, UN Human Rights Independent Expert for Somalia in Hargeisa, Somaliland. Issues discussed included children in prison and child rights' violations. In Jowhar, Dr Alnajjar met UNICEF partners and community groups in the field of child protection. Other key issues brought to the attention of Dr. Alnajjar were: female genital mutilation (FGM) eradication, protection of children of internally displaced persons and the fulfillment of the right to education for all girls and boys in Somalia.

*Monitoring, reporting, capacity building and advocacy:* Follow-up to the UN Security Council's Resolutions on Children Affected by Armed Conflict, in particular the latest Resolution 1612 (2005), a strong partnership has been established between UNICEF with NOVIB Somalia (also known as Oxfam Netherlands) to initiate community-based reporting and monitoring on child rights and child protection violations in Somalia.

Local partners are trained on monitoring and reporting tools and provided with organizational training and capacity building in the field of child protection advocacy. It is hoped that this initiative will form an important element of advocacy initiatives with the new government currently being formed in Somalia.

*Network meeting:* A child protection coordination and networking meeting was held in Mogadishu on 21 August. The participants reviewed the consultations on the UN study on Violence against Children held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in July 2005. The delegates from civil society organizations who attended the conference briefed the participants about the conference's outcomes.

## **Communication for Development**

*Leadership discussions:* UNICEF facilitated discussions on youth leadership which focused on the role of youth in peace and development.

*Community dialogue:* UNICEF supported initiatives to bolster community dialogue in Idhanka and Laasa-Da'awo in Somaliland. In Central Somalia, UNICEF staff visited five villages to review progress in the initiation of community dialogue. The visits sought to review the plans made for the process. Most communities exhibited a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to the process.

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