

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

## February 2007



### Political and security developments

During the reporting period, the security situation in Mogadishu continued to be tense. Attacks were staged against Ethiopian troops and individuals. The targets included Ethiopian troops stationed at the former Somalia Ministry of Defence complex. Most of the victims in these incidents have been children and women some hurt when those under fire counterattack. The intermittent clashes have led to an exodus of people from Mogadishu to other locations in Central/Southern Somalia including Baidoa and Bardera. Various other incidents of insecurity and robbery some targeting public transport in Middle Shabelle and Hiran regions.

Conflict between rival clans in Daro, part of the Somali-populated part of eastern Ethiopia resulted in between 40 and 60 people dead and 40 others injured. The injured were taken for treatment to Burao and Hargeisa in Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland'). Efforts were made by local leaders and authorities in Somaliland and Ethiopia to secure an end to the hostilities. In June 2006, conflict had flared up between the two clans over access to grazing land and water. In Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') fighting was reported between police and some militia following a court verdict. The defendant was sentenced to death for killing two policemen in Garowe, Puntland's administrative capital last year. Pirates hijacked a UN-chartered cargo ship on 25 February, after it disembarked 1,800 tonnes of food aid in Bossaso, Puntland. The ship

was commandeered in the sea off the coast of Bargaal.

The Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) opened a passport issuance office in Garowe with others planned for Bossaso, Las Anod and Galkayo towns in Puntland.

The Somaliland administration marked the 25th anniversary of protests that marked the beginning of an uprising against the regime of the late Siad Barre in Hargeisa, Somaliland's capital. The protests 25 years ago flared after a death verdict was passed on intellectuals in present-day Somaliland which was then part of united Somalia. Somaliland broke away from the rest of Somalia and declared sovereignty on May 18 1991.



*Donation:* UNICEF donated a four-wheel drive vehicle to the Somaliland Ministry of Youth and Sports to support youth and sports activities. UNICEF officer, Awil H. Gure (left) hands over the vehicle to the minister, Mohamoud Saeed Mohamed.

**Credit: UNICEF Somalia/NWZ office**

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Somaliland President Dahir Rayale Kahin laid the foundation stone for rebuilding a bridge that was destroyed by floods in April 2004. The bridge links the northwest part of Hargeisa to the southwest. It is expected to cost US\$ 2000,000, most of it donated by Hargeisa residents.

*Donors:* The Puntland administration presented its plan of action for 2007 to a UN mission that included the UNICEF Somalia Representative Christian Balslev-Olesen. The administration also signed a memorandum of understanding to govern relations with the UN.

## Emergency

*Emergency:* UN agencies and NGOs convened a meeting to discuss their response to an influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into Somaliland from Central/Southern Somalia. From December 2006 to January 2007, about 1000 people arrived in Hargeisa from Mogadishu, Hiran, Merka, Baidoa and other locations. They have settled in Dami, State House, Stadium and Mohamed Moge settlements in Hargeisa. Fighting and floods led to their displacement. The IDPs are in need of protection, shelter, food, sanitation and water.

In Gal kayo, Puntland, IDP families mostly from Central/Southern Somalia and the border between Somalia and Ethiopia have gone for many years without assistance due to insecurity prevalent there. They are in dire need of basic services such as health, water, sanitation and education. During the

month, about 5000 families in North and South Galkayo received relief items.

Acute watery diarrhea cases were reported in IDP settlements in Bossaso. By 28 February, 100 cases had been reported with seven deaths. Poor sanitation and consumption of contaminated water were the causes. UNICEF carried out advocacy for hygiene awareness and provided chlorine for treatment of drinking water and medicine. The Association for Integration and Development (AID) a UNICEF partner has been carrying out hygiene education and sanitation improvements in the IDP camps. Learning activities continued in eight school tents in the camps. An increase in enrolment has been reported in Kalkaal and Daryeel schools.

*Cholera/diarrhoea:* UNICEF provided support to deal with an outbreak of diarrhoea in Middle Shabelle and Hiran regions that started in January. Some of the cases were later confirmed to be of cholera. The support included medical supplies and the provision of water to communities vulnerable to disease. Special teams were set up to provide oral rehydration therapy and health services to deal with the outbreak.

*Fire:* On 22 February, a fire swept across Bardera town in Gedo destroying the homes of an estimated 675 families in a densely populated section of the town. UNICEF donated 498 family tents to affected families and deployed a team to assist the victims and in collaboration with a local partner organization helped clear the debris. Construction of latrine slabs commenced to ensure that those

## 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 and Mogadishu

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

affected had prompt access to sanitation facilities.

## Health update...

*Malaria:* Insecticide treated nets for malaria prevention and control were distributed in Jamame and Jilib districts of Central/Southern Somalia. The exercise aimed to distribute about 20,000 nets. An outbreak of malaria was reported in villages south of Baidoa with 43 out of 63 suspected cases testing positive.

*Health services:* UNICEF and the Somaliland Red Crescent Society launched mobile health services in Lughaya and Baki districts of Awdal region. 6,170 clean delivery kits (CDK) were donated to 48 mother and child health (MCH) centres in Somaliland. The kits contain basic items to ensure hygienic delivery of babies.

## Polio

An immunization campaign was carried out in Togdheer and parts of Sool region. The polio outbreak in Togdheer region of Somaliland has continued unabated since May 2006. Upto December, seven cases had been reported. In January, four cases were confirmed. Since July 2006, Togdheer has been the only region with confirmed polio cases in Somaliland. One of the four cases is suspected to have originated from Ethiopia highlighting the need to ensure immunization coverage in cross-border areas. One of the major challenges was rejection of vaccination

in Togdheer region, especially in Burao town. UNICEF carried out advocacy to sensitize people on the need to have their children immunized. Discussions were also held with the Somaliland administration and the World Health Organization to curb immunization refusal. Ten community education committees from Koranic schools were enlisted and trained for the sensitization effort in Burao. The trainees later convened meetings in areas where refusals had taken place to sensitize parents on the importance of immunizing their children. Feedback from some of the parents indicated that their refusal was due to lack of reliable information that made them distrust the vaccine and vaccinators.

## Nutrition update...

*Malnutrition:* Vitamin A supplements and de-worming medication was distributed to children in a section of Hargeisa. During the campaign, children were screened for malnutrition and treated for diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and common childhood illnesses. A total of 2987 children received vitamin A supplements, 2528 were de-wormed, 807 treated for diarrhoea and 1,465 pregnant/lactating women were provided with iron-cum-folic acid supplementation for control and prevention of anaemia.

About 4,200 children have benefited from supplementary feeding initiatives through various centres in Central/Southern Somalia since January 2007. There has been an increase in admissions of malnourished children to

feeding facilities. The centres that cater for moderately malnourished children in Central/Southern Somalia increased from 27 in December last year to 52 in January 2007. The new facilities are in Gedo, Lower Jubba and Middle Jubba. Supplementary feeding is being provided in El-Waq through COSV, an NGO from Italy that has since the setting up of the centres provided services to 16,000 children.

*Training:* 60 women in Odweine and Borama towns were trained in infant and young child feeding. The trainees will provide nutrition education to mothers. 121 people in Mogadishu who included vaccinators were given tips on the importance of breastfeeding and Vitamin A supplements for children's health.

## Water and Environmental Sanitation update...

*Projects:* Construction work started on the Lafaruug water supply system in Somaliland. Pipes and fittings for Wadamagoo, Agabar and Jamalaaye water projects were distributed. Staff of local and international organizations in Puntland were trained in hygiene and sanitation. UNICEF has entered into a contract with Caritas NGO to improve hygiene and sanitation among urban poor in Bossaso municipality. Bossaso is a seaside town on the coast of the Gulf of Aden. A generator was donated to the Garowe Urban Water Project. Construction and rehabilitation of wells was completed in nine villages in Jowhar district in Central/Southern Somalia through a joint effort with the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS).

*Policy development:* UNICEF and the Somaliland administration have finalized plans to distribute the Water Policy Framework document to relevant staff and partner organizations for discussion.

*Sanitation:* Staff of the Somaliland administration and partner organizations were trained in public hygiene and sanitation issues. Cholera control and prevention activities were carried out in Hiran, Middle Shabelle, Lower Jubba, Gedo, Middle Jubba and Bay region. Chlorine was distributed for use in the treatment of drinking water while staff of partner organizations were trained in hygiene and sanitation issues. Public hygiene awareness promotion was carried out in various locations targeting IDPs among other members of society.

## Education update...

*Resource-centres:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland administration completed construction of five regional resource centres in Erigavo, Borama, Hargeisa, Burao and Berbera. The centres will enable primary school teachers to access resources, share information and upgrade their knowledge. Besides being host to information materials, the centres are expected to serve as venues for holding refresher courses.

*Supplies:* UNICEF carried out an assessment of the needs of the Somaliland Ministry of Education such as furniture and computers. Furniture was distributed to schools in Armo and Beliwacatay in Puntland. Twenty-nine

schools in Middle Jubba, Lower Shabelle, Bay and Hiran regions in Central/Southern Somalia received supplies for 3,480 children. Six schools in Jowhar and Ruun-nirgood districts of Middle Shabelle received furniture.

*Mentoring:* UNICEF and Save the Children-UK (SC-UK) are collaborating to support the teacher mentoring programme in Puntland. The programme will be restructured and put under the management of the Ministry of Education. UNICEF and SC-UK will subsidize the salaries paid by the ministry. The mentors are mostly university graduates.

*Emergency:* A fire outbreak in Bardera town which destroyed dwellings also destroyed two Koranic schools. 250 children from five schools in the town lost uniforms, text and exercise books. Being from families which already have problems paying school fees, the fire left the children especially traumatized and vulnerable. To help them recover lost knowledge, discussions were initiated with teachers to help them provide additional learning to recoup the lost hours.

Part of the support to help them recover will include the provision of psychological and social care and support to help them deal with trauma. New education supplies will be provided to the 250 children and another 150 affected from Koranic schools. Books and tarpaulin sheets are some of the supplies to be provided. In Hiran region, seven students were reported to have died of cholera in five riverine villages which had been affected by floods. To

curb such problems, communities and teachers were asked to sensitize students on proper hygiene.

*Back to school:* A campaign to mobilize community support for increased enrolment is going on in areas previously affected by floods and conflict in Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle and Hiran region. As a result of such initiatives, three permanent block classrooms have been constructed in Odowa Baali Primary School in Jerey village of Belet Weyne district. The support came from the Diaspora in Sweden. The construction was carried out by the Jerey village community. 147 members of community education committees from 21 schools in areas affected by floods were trained in school management and community mobilization skills. The committees play an important role in establishing, supporting and managing learning in small communities in Somalia in the absence of central government.

*Training:* fifty-six primary and 22 non-formal education teachers were mentored in Middle Shabelle region. Mentoring helps teachers improve teaching methodology and mastery of subject matter. UNICEF-supported non-formal education initiatives in Somalia focus on helping young people who missed out on formal education to have a second chance to acquire basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. The curriculum also has a component that teaches skills such as human relations, reproductive health, peace, conflict management and protection of the environment.

## Youth Development update...

*Advocacy:* Youth in Somaliland were trained in networking skills. Newsletters carrying content on HIV awareness, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) eradication, education, youth empowerment and the need to eradicate *khat*-chewing were produced and distributed among youth. Mentoring was provided to 15 youth organizations in Puntland which were also helped to refine their plans of action. Somaliland National Youth Organization (SONYO), participated in activities to mark National Youth Day on 20 February, 2007.

*Sports:* Construction of Adale Basketball playground continued. Once complete, the playground will benefit 5,000 youth from communities in the area. Adale district in Central/Southern Somalia was one of the areas affected by the Tsunami of December 2004.

*Donation:* UNICEF donated a four-wheel drive vehicle to the Somaliland Ministry of Youth and Sports to support implementation of youth and sports activities in Somaliland. UNICEF officer, Awil H. Gure handed over the vehicle to the minister, Mohamoud Saeed Mohamed.

*Capacity building:* SOYDEN, an umbrella youth group in Central/Southern Somalia trained 50 youth in information technology. The organization helps manage a youth website: [hellosomaliyouth.net](http://hellosomaliyouth.net). The training was conducted at Somali

Institute of Management and Administration Development (SIMAD) in Mogadishu. Another 18 youth from seven Merka-based youth groups received similar training.

## HIV/AIDS update...

*Briefing Advocacy:* eight HIV awareness workshops were held in Awdal, Sahil and Togdheer regions of Somaliland. Each of the workshops was attended by about 30 community elders who are expected to pass on the knowledge to their communities. Similar advocacy forums were held in the regions targeting women. The Network of People Infected and Affected by HIV, Youth Advocacy & Social Development (NIYAD), a Somaliland-based organization continued to support people living with HIV. The second issue of *The positive voice*, a publication for people living with HIV was distributed.

HIV awareness activities were carried out targeting 1,600 women in Puntland. This was done as part of the women-to-women initiative by We Are Women Activists (WAWA), a local NGO. Visits were made to 190 households as part of the advocacy. Another 1,084 women from Central/Southern Somalia were registered for training as peer educators under the women-to-women initiative. Once trained they will undertake advocacy for HIV prevention and control at community level. Distribution of information materials on HIV commenced in Bossaso. UNICEF staff held discussions with members of HIV regional working groups from

Central/Southern Somalia to review the progress in advocacy initiatives, provision of support to IDPs, youth and women.

## Child Protection update...

*Special event:* February 6, the International Day for the eradication of Female Genital Cutting/Mutilation was marked in Somaliland and Puntland. The commemoration was organized in collaboration with local administrations and community organizations.

*Advocacy:* The Sanaag Child Protection Network was launched. Its members comprise UNICEF partners who are engaged in child protection work. Following advocacy efforts, community child protection plans were developed for 16 communities in Puntland.

*Child soldiers:* UNICEF in collaboration with Somali Peace Line organized a meeting to lobby civil society to help in preventing recruitment of child soldiers by warring parties in Somalia. The effort seeks to have children already recruited freed from the ranks of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and other groups. The participants were 30 people from organizations that are members of the Child Protection Network in Central/Southern Somalia.

*Study:* A survey on "Justice for Children in Somaliland" is in the planning. This will be part of a joint UNDP/UNICEF programme. The survey will look at the relationship between three legal systems: *Sharia* (Islamic law); *Heer* -

traditional legal systems and the legal system based on various codes.

## Communication for development update...

UNICEF supported the training of six staff of partner organizations from Puntland in community dialogue for development. The training took place in Nairobi, Kenya from 24 to 27 February 2007.

### Global Fund Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)

*VCT:* Group counseling sessions were organized for police in Hargeisa, Somaliland. So far about 200 armed services personnel have opted for voluntary counseling in Somaliland.

*Training:* 27 representatives of 20 civil society organizations from Central/Southern Somalia participated in a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss ways to enhance youth participation in HIV education.

*Supplies:* Stocks of much-needed medical supplies for home-based HIV care and advocacy information materials were airfreighted into Somalia.

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