

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

March 2005



## Political developments

The Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') constitutional court gave a ruling that paved the way for the setting of a date for parliamentary elections. The date had been a source of conflict between the ruling party and the opposition. Somaliland's National Electoral Commission is to set a new date which will be announced by the President.

The Middle Shabelle administration in Central Somalia celebrated its fourth anniversary in the regional capital, Jowhar located some 90 km north of Mogadishu. The leader of the administration Mohamed Dhere expressed support for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and said Jowhar was ready to host the new government. He urged residents of Jowhar to support the TFG.

*Visiting missions:* Somaliland President Dahir Riyale Kahin on 10 March met senior staff of UN agencies working in Somaliland and Somalia led by the UNDP Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Maxwell Gaylard. The team's mission was to evaluate project implementation in Somaliland. President Kahin also met an Ethiopian government delegation which is working on modalities for improving trade relations between landlocked Ethiopia and Somaliland. As part of the effort to boost trade, Somaliland's Berbera Port Authority and the Ethiopian Maritime and Transit Service Enterprises signed an agreement to enhance Ethiopia's transit trade.

## Security developments

Incidents of insecurity continued in Central and Southern Somalia leading to loss of lives. The Imam of Muse Boqor mosque in Waberi district of Mogadishu was killed by unknown gunmen on 13 March 2005. A Russian medical doctor was shot and wounded reportedly over a pay dispute.

Fighting in parts of Galgaduud region led to at least 36 people killed. Three children were also killed and six others wounded while playing with an object on 13 March in Saliide settlement situated between Galinsoor and Dhabad, Galgaduud region.



Girls at work on a computer in Somaliland in 2003. UNICEF and its partner organizations are supporting initiatives to empower girls in Somalia. Credit: UNICEF Somali/2003/Pirozzi.

## Emergency

*Relief supplies:* UNICEF distributed relief supplies donated by Coca Cola to victims of the tsunami that hit the Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') coastline on December 26 2004. The supplies were distributed during a visit by UNICEF staff to Hafun, the worst-hit area.

### Contents...

Political developments...1

Security developments...1

Emergency...1

### Programme Updates...

Special Days...2

Health ...2

Water and Environmental Sanitation...3

Nutrition ...3

Communication for development...3

Education ...4

HIV/AIDS ...5

Youth ...5

Child Protection ...6

### OTHERS

UNICEF missions...4

Tremor in Somaliland...5

UNICEF completed the construction of a new water well to serve families affected by the tsunami in Hafun. The well is situated seven kilometres from the settlement.

*Drought:* The Second Deputy Speaker of the Somaliland Parliament, Elmi Hirsi Ali, sounded an alert on severe drought in Seylac and Loya-addo districts. He appealed for help from the local administration and international humanitarian organizations.

## Special Days...

*Days marked:* UNICEF supported the marking of International Women's Day on 8 March in various regions of Somaliland. Activities to mark the occasion included drama performances, lectures, songs and poems. The Day celebrated annually is a chance to review the progress women have made in the struggle for equality, peace and development.

World Water Day was marked on 22 March. In Somaliland, the main event was held in Gebiley where UNICEF has completed a major water project and where a sanitation project for schools is underway. The Day was also marked in Hargeisa, Somaliland's capital. The

Somaliland Ministry of Water organized the celebrations with support from UNICEF and other agencies in Somaliland.

In Puntland, the main celebrations were held in Puntland's administrative capital, Garowe, where the President of Puntland State Mohamud Muse Hirsi "Adde" officially launched the Garowe water system.

## Health update...

UNICEF held a coordination meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, with international and local NGOs implementing health and nutrition programmes in Central/Southern Somalia. Due to insecurity it could not be held in Jowhar the location of the main UNICEF office in Central/Southern Somalia.

*Maternal care:* UNICEF in collaboration with Candle Light for Health and Education (CLHE) started the production in Somaliland of the first of 12,000 Clean Delivery Kits (CDK). The kits contain medical accessories to ensure safe delivery of children. They will be distributed to Maternal and Child Health (MCH) centres.

## 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



**Child at clinic in Somaliland in 2003. UNICEF supports the health sector in Somalia to improve the lives of mothers and children. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/2003/Pirozzi.**

MSF-Sweden has conducted a feasibility study on the re-opening of Belet-Weyne Hospital. The hospital has been closed since 1998 when the Coordinating Committee of the Organization for Voluntary Services (COSV) pulled out due to financial constraints.

*Diarrhoea control:* Following reports of an outbreak of diarrhoea and shortage of water in Adenyabal district of Middle Shabelle in Central Somalia, UNICEF staff visited the district to assess the situation. The situation has now stabilised with the local maternal and child health clinic providing treatment to patients. UNICEF and its partners have launched an aggressive water chlorination campaign this year and it has borne fruit given that there has not

been any cholera outbreak throughout Somalia unlike in previous years.

## Nutrition update...

*Advocacy:* UNICEF organized a workshop to sensitize policy-makers from the Somaliland administration on infant feeding and also printed Operational Guidelines for Supplementary Feeding Programmes to help staff in responding to emergency nutrition needs of vulnerable populations.

*Drought assessment:* UNICEF staff participated in an interagency drought assessment mission to Awdal region, Somaliland. The mission found high rates of livestock deaths and increase of measles.

## Water and environmental sanitation

*Database:* In Puntland the local administration has formed a coordinating committee which is working closely with the UN and other agencies to establish a database of key actors in the water sector.

## Communication for development

In Puntland, UNICEF engaged in advocacy and social mobilization for hygiene promotion in Hafun, the worst hit location by the tsunami which struck in December 2004. Other areas covered by the initiative include breastfeeding, HIV/AIDS education, immunization and eradication of female genital mutilation.

UNICEF supported women's groups in Jowhar, Central Somalia for cholera control and prevention. UNICEF staff met those of three youth broadcasting groups in Merka - Shabelle Peace Development, Shabelle Youth Development Organization and Ayub Orphanage Centre to explore how the youth could help in collaborating with video centres to broadcast material of relevance to the youth.

*Projects launched:* The Garowe Water Supply System was inaugurated on World Water Day. While the Puntland State Agency for Water and the Environment and borewell operators are running the supply in the interim, plans are underway to ensure a private management company is put in place to run the system as soon as is logistically possible. The Day was also marked in Jowhar, Central Somalia, a town which is served by the Jowhar Water System, the first major public-private sector partnership water project since the fall of the government.



Children at a water supply point built with UNICEF support in Somalia. UNICEF supports water projects to ensure a healthier population. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/2003/Jesper Morch.

The Jowhar Water System was initially constructed by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) between 1982 and 1983. Unfortunately it was vandalized after the collapse of the Somali state in

1991. However, the European Union financed the rehabilitation of the system and on 16 August, 1997, Farjano Company made up of representatives of key clans in Jowhar took over the management of the supply system that supplies water to most of the between 30,000 and 35,000 residents of Jowhar.

*Training:* UNICEF trained some 60 people from Hiran region, Central Somalia, in management and hygiene for water sources.

## Education update...

*Girl education:* UNICEF Somalia staff participated in an Eastern and Southern African education network meeting in Kampala, Uganda that ended on 4 March. The meeting had participants from 24 countries from the region and discussed strategies for boosting girls' education.

*School feeding:* UNICEF's Somaliland office held discussions with the World Food Programme on the possibility of enhancing collaboration in the school feeding programme. The aim of the intervention is to increase school enrollment and learning with a special focus on girls. The two UN organizations agreed to identify 20 more schools for the programme. UNICEF will construct school canteens in ten schools in the current year. The canteen facility in each school will include a kitchen, a dining hall and a store. WFP will provide the food.

### UNICEF missions

During the period under review UNICEF Somalia Representative Jesper Morch met Somaliland administration officials and discussed issues related to UNICEF's work in Somalia. Mr Morch and his deputy, Siddharth Chatterjee also visited Jowhar in Central Somalia where they met representatives of the local administration and reviewed UNICEF programmes.

*Advocacy:* In Puntland, preparations for launching of the Back to School campaign continued. Consultations were held with representatives of the local administration, radio stations, school children, NGOs and teachers. Similar consultations were held in schools in Luq and Belet Hawo in Gedo region. The Back to School initiative will be launched this year in order to boost school enrolment in Somalia.

UNICEF staff and the Minister of Education for Puntland visited at least 40 schools in Nugal and Mudug regions. During the visit, they met teachers, mentors for teachers, members of community education committees and community mobilizers with whom they discussed issues related to enrolment, teachers, school buildings and financing. Lack of adequate teaching space was found to be a problem in major towns.

Meetings were held with the Norwegian Refugee Council in Somaliland to discuss and agree on cooperation in Basic Education.

UNICEF Somaliland staff held discussions with the Adventist and Development Relief Agency (ADRA) to explore the possibilities of collaboration in basic Education. ADRA supports 15 primary schools in Nugal, Puntland, through support of the European Commission.

In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF staff met those of partner organizations including the Human Rights Committee for Somali Refugees and the Indian Ocean University who have initiated education programmes in 32 internally

displaced persons (IDP) camps in Mogadishu.

In Jowhar, Central Somalia, UNICEF and Jowhar Women's Organization held neighbourhood meetings in four locations to advocate for girls' education.

As a result of mobilization, three new non-formal education centres have been opened in Jowhar. 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.

*Supplies:* UNICEF donated non-formal education learning materials to the learning centre in Mandere village of Jowhar district. The centre has attracted many youth learners. Another donation was for furniture to Shanta Primary School of Baidoa which has 159 students. The school's construction was financed by the Shanta village community in collaboration with the Diaspora.

## HIV/AIDS prevention and control update...

*Danish mission:* A Danish government mission visited HIV/AIDS prevention and control projects in Somaliland. The delegation that was in Somalia to evaluate projects that have

## Youth Development

UNICEF trained 20 youth from Northeast and Central/South Somalia to enhance their capacity to mentor youth groups.

*Supplies:* In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF distributed sports items to the Middle Shabelle Regional Olympic Committee to boost participation of girls in sports. The items included basket, foot and volley balls, stopwatches.

## Tremor in Somaliland

An earth tremor rocked the town of Gebiley, west of Hargeisa the capital of Somaliland. The relatively minor tremor caused only slight damage to some buildings in the northern parts of Gebiley town among them Tima Ade High School and neighbouring valleys.

been funded by Danish assistance also linked up with key partners who had benefited from the projects.

*Advocacy:* UNICEF staff held discussions with women, and youth groups and hospitals in Mogadishu on raising awareness on HIV/AIDS issues and women's empowerment. Women's organizations in Mogadishu run training courses for women and adolescent girls in non-formal education, home economics, handcraft-making, tailoring, child care, nursing, computer use, secretarial work and English language.

A Somali doctor from the Diaspora held a HIV/AIDS awareness session at Hayat Hospital in Mogadishu. The participants were civil society representatives, hospital staff, school students and university lecturers in Mogadishu.

*Testing:* UNICEF met staff of SOS Maternity Hospital, MSF-Spain Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre and Hayat Hospital in Mogadishu to discuss establishment of voluntary counselling and testing services. Another meeting was held with members of the Somali Public Health Professionals Association who had carried out an assessment of 100 IDP camps in Mogadishu. The assessment indicated that awareness of HIV/AIDS was very low.

## Child Protection update...

*Mine risk education:* UNICEF staff held discussions with the Somaliland Mine Action Center to review Mine Risk Education initiatives that the organization has undertaken in collaboration with UNICEF.

*Training:* In Puntland, UNICEF organized training in psychosocial care and counselling for 22 participants from different locations in Somalia. The objective of the training was to enhance the participants counselling knowledge and skills.

booklets on the eradication of female genital mutilation. Twenty child protection advocates refreshed their skills in raising community awareness on protection and how to prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination against children.

*Child soldiers rehabilitation:* The Elman Child Soldiers Rehabilitation and Reintegration project in Merka and Kismayo towns of Central and Southern Somalia continues. Some 120 former child soldiers are being rehabilitated in the current phase. The former child soldiers are benefiting from literacy, numeracy and vocational education.

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