

UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

May 2006



Security developments...

Mogadishu continued to experience insecurity and political tension as fighting continued between militia of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism and those of the Union of Islamic Courts.

Displaced persons from the fighting in Mogadishu are flocking to Balad and Jowhar towns. Most of the casualties were taken to Keysane Hospital, run by the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS). Later in May, armed militia occupied the hospital. Formerly a prison, the Keysaney Hospital was rehabilitated and opened in 1992. The latest clashes, which saw a resurgence on 18 May, first erupted on 18 February 2006. So far there have been at least 300 deaths and about 1,500 wounded. Most of the casualties in the recent fighting have been civilians, caught in the crossfire or killed inside their houses by stray mortars and artillery.

Doctors at different hospitals in Mogadishu were overwhelmed by the high number of people seeking treatment. Some of the casualties were brought into the hospitals on wheelbarrows. Medical personnel indicated that many patients were dying from treatable wounds because the clinics had run short of drugs and blood and because they lacked specialists to perform complicated operations.

A peace delegation comprising two cabinet ministers and a member of parliament from the Transitional Federal Government arrived in Mogadishu in late May in a bid to convince the warring groups to halt the fighting and observe a

ceasefire. Public Works Minister Osman Ali "Atto" led the delegation and reportedly met representatives from the Islamic courts.

Reacting to the clashes in Mogadishu, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan backed the calls by numerous local and international officials for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and deplored the deaths and suffering caused by the renewed violence. The clashes between the two sides threaten Somalia's fragile transitional government, which is struggling to impose its authority. Besides Balad and Jowhar, those fleeing their homes sought refuge in towns some 150km away, including Bulo Mareer, Owdhegle, Kuntuwarey, Sablaale, Wanlaweyn and Afgoy. They are reportedly living in deplorable conditions, lacking basic necessities like food, water and shelter.



Nomadic girls and women fill containers with water from a large puddle in the middle of the road near the town of Wajid, in the southern Bakool Region of Somalia. Access to clean drinking water is a major challenge in Somalia. **Credit: UNICEF/HQ06-0149/Kamber**

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Political developments...

Somaliland: A row is simmering between the Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') administration and the opposition over the move by the Council of Elders – the Upper House of Parliament - and Somaliland President Dahir Riyale Kahin to extend the current term of the Council until October 2010. The current term was due to end in October 2006. The opposition has rejected the move as unconstitutional.

Somaliland marked 15 years since it declared sovereignty on 18 May 1991. The Somaliland community in the United Kingdom called on the British government to support newly-formed democratic institutions in Somaliland and to recognize the state of Somaliland so as to promote democracy, peace and stability in the region.

Puntland: The President of Northeast Somalia ('Puntland'), a semi-autonomous state within Somalia, Mohamoud Muse Hirsi visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and held talks with the Prime Minister and senior administration officials of the Ethiopian administration. During the month, the President opened a mid-year review session of UNICEF programmes in Puntland. UNICEF Senior Programme Officer, Siddharth Chatterjee reaffirmed the organization's commitment to strengthening programmes that benefit children and women.

Visiting missions: Mr. Eric Laroche, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Co-coordinator for Somalia visited Garowe, Puntland's administrative capital and other places in the state. Another delegation led

by Dennis McNamara, UN Special Adviser on Displacement visited Bossaso to assess the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Leader honoured: A philanthropic organization named after Somaliland's founder president after the declaration of sovereignty in 1991, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, was launched on Monday 8 May in Hargeisa, 'Somaliland's capital. The Egal Foundation was founded by the late President's widow, Kalthum Haji Dahir and family friends. It will primarily focus on social issues particularly education. The launch coincided with the fourth anniversary Egal's death in 2002.

Emergency...

Drought and rains: A dry spell at the beginning of the month, that saw water being trucked to various locations in Puntland, later gave way to storms in late May. The rains damaged about 100 dwellings mostly in Bari region. Some farms were submerged by the rains.

Fire: A huge fire razed the 100 Bush IDP camp in Bossaso, 'Puntland'. The fire on 9 May 2006 destroyed two thirds of the dwellings. The camp is located in the western part of Bossaso and is home to an estimated 800 families. UNICEF provided blankets, jerry cans and medical supplies to affected families. An electrical fault may have been responsible for the blaze.

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

Health update...

Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI): Following the successful implementation of a measles campaign launched in 2005, the Somaliland administration with support from UNICEF and WHO is planning to strengthen routine activities to sustain the gains of the campaign. Ongoing efforts are focusing on districts with low coverage and mobile vaccination in remote rural areas.

Advocacy: In Puntland, efforts to sustain the gains of the 2005 measles campaign and to apply the lessons learnt to maternal and neonatal elimination are gathering momentum with the organization on 18 May 2006 of an information and sensitization meeting for major EPI partners. The first round of the maternal neonatal tetanus campaign is planned for July targetting over 112,000 women of child bearing age using injection devices donated by the UN Foundation.

Malaria: Monitoring of the implementation of the new malaria treatment and training of staff involved in its dispensation took place in different locations. The heavy rains experienced at the end of April increased the risk of a potential malaria epidemic in Central/Southern Somalia. The new treatment, Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT) is made up of two drugs: *Artesunate* and *Sulfadoxine-Pyramethamine*. Rapid diagnostic tests have been introduced through Maternal and Child Health (MCH) centres and hospitals with the exception of Mogadishu due to the security situation. Insecticide

Treated Nets (ITNs) are being distributed through various health facilities.

Safe motherhood training: The Safe Motherhood project is giving priority to safe and clean delivery in rural areas and internally displaced people (IDP) settlements where over 80% of births take place without skilled assistance. Training for 20 midwives from the main health facilities offering delivery services in Burao and Borama in Somaliland were conducted on the theme of safe deliveries. Seventy traditional birth attendants (TBA) from IDP settlements in Somaliland benefited from refresher training to strengthen their capacity to monitor basic indicators of antenatal care and clean delivery at community level.

Measles: The measles campaign in Central and Southern Somalia has in 2006 been completed in 22 out of 26 districts. About 400,000 children aged 9 months to 15 years have already benefited.

Global fund: A review was made of grants made under the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Assistance was provided to HIV/AIDS commissions in Central/South, Northwest and Northeast Somalia.

Nutrition update...

Screening: Eighty six out of 466 children aged less than five years who were screened in IDP settlements in Burao, Somaliland, were found to be malnourished. Alongside the screening, the children were immunized and provided with vitamin A supplements,

deworming medication and iron and folic acid supplements for the prevention of anaemia. International Medical Corps (IMC) opened four new supplementary feeding centres/clinics in Bakool region of Central/Southern Somalia. An estimated 58,000 children are malnourished compounding further the nutrition crisis in Southern Somalia. Less than 20% of these children have access to vital health/nutrition services.

Advocacy: BILAN Women and Children Development NGO carried out social mobilization in Burao to sensitize women on appropriate infant and young child feeding within IDP communities.

Training: 30 community health workers were trained in the prevention, identification and treatment of nutrition deficiencies. The training took place in Borama, capital of Awdal region in Somaliland. Participants were from 30 villages in the four districts of Awdal.

Water and environmental sanitation update...

Projects: Construction and rehabilitation of various water projects and facilities continued in Somaliland. A new borewell was commissioned in Beira village of Puntland. UNICEF, the local administration and the Beira community collaborated to complete the project that will serve 3,500 people. A pump was donated to Oxfam UK for the Hurdia-Handha Water Supply System that will serve 2,500 people. In Central/Southern Somalia, digging and rehabilitation of 20 shallow wells was completed. Boreholes

rehabilitated included the Kulinjareer borewell that will serve about 2,500 people. Water trucking continued in areas affected by drought in Central/Southern Somalia.

Education update...

Primary education survey: The 2005/2006 Primary Education Survey data collection was carried out in various locations. The data enumerators visited both formal and non-formal learning facilities (non-formal centres cater for learners who are not able to attend schooling during normal learning hours). Some of the projects in learning institutions were videotaped. In Central/Southern Somalia, the exercise has been finished in 10 regions. The challenges of collecting data were immense in Central/Southern Somalia primary among them insecurity, rains and wild animals.

IDPs: UNICEF and a local NGO in Puntland, the Association for Integration and Development (AID) launched an education programme for youth in Bossaso IDP camps resulting in 800 of them enrolling in afternoon Non-Formal Education (NFE) classes. 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 such skills as relating to one another, reproductive health, peace, conflict management and protection of the environment.

Advocacy and social mobilization: 15 school clubs that aim to raise awareness on issues related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child were formed in Bossaso, Gardo, Dangorayo and Garowe in Puntland.

School supplies: 680 sets of school furniture were distributed to 14 primary schools in Bari and Karkaar regions of Puntland. Construction of three schools in Quljeed, Bus and Illinta Dhexe villages is underway in Somaliland. Construction of a girls only schools in Borama and Berbera has commenced. Two school tents with furniture were set up to accommodate 200 new learners in Hargeisa as part of the provision of alternative education. In Central/Southern Somalia, supplies were distributed to various schools for formal and non-formal learning initiatives.



A woman stands behind two small children outside their makeshift tent at a camp for persons displaced by the drought in the town of Wajid, Bakool Region, Somalia. **Credit:UNICEF/HQ06-0153/Kamber**

Donors: Various donor missions visited schools serving IDPs in Wajid, a drought-affected area in Central/Southern

Somalia. The visitors included The United Nations Special Humanitarian Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Kjell Magne Bondevik who said that given the high cost of ensuring security, it was critical for donors to provide funding and to invest in enhancing the capacity of organizations that work in Somalia.

School construction: Some six schools in Central/Southern Somalia were rehabilitated to make them more child-friendly. Twenty one classrooms were rehabilitated and the schools now have offices, stores and separate latrine facilities for boys and girls. Concrete slabs and foundation works for setting up tent schools in Wajid were completed. The tents will serve children of IDPs.

HIV/AIDS update...

Training: 23 women participants from Central/Southern Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland participated in a workshop as part of the development of the women-to-women initiative to raise awareness on HIV. The trainees are expected to raise awareness among women on HIV prevention and control measures. Thirty UNICEF staff in Central/Southern Somalia were trained in HIV issues related to emergency situations. Similar training was provided to staff of partner organizations as well as members of the HIV/AIDS Commission responsible for Central/Southern Somalia. Meanwhile, two new HIV/AIDS working groups have been set up for Benadir and Lower Jubba regions.

CHILD PROTECTION

Training: Nine child protection advocates and five representatives of partner organizations were trained in issues related to psychological and social care of children. Those trained are expected to raise awareness on the need to protect children among families and communities in Puntland.

Advocacy: Peaceline, a UNICEF partner continued to engage in advocacy initiatives for child protection in Central/Southern Somalia targeting communities as well as the Transitional Federal Government and Parliament.

Capacity building: A meeting was held to enhance the capacity of the Somaliland Ministry of Religion and Islamic Endowment to coordinate community-based counseling initiatives for HIV/AIDS. Community counselors include religious leaders and traditional community leaders who are given a basic skills course in counseling for HIV prevention, control and awareness.

Youth development update...

Leadership training: Leadership and organizational development and youth mentoring initiatives continued during the reporting period. Since the beginning of 2006, 3,264 youth have been trained in leadership and organizational development education throughout the country.

Youth Day: UNICEF participated in events to mark Somali Youth Day on May 15. Key activities were held in major towns in Puntland with youth groups, the local administration and communities playing a major role.

Governance: A training of trainers session was held in Garowe, Puntland to enhance youth participation in local governance. It was done in collaboration with We are Women Activists (WAWA), a women's NGO and UN Habitat. UNICEF is also promoting linkages between youth and leaders of Gebiley and Borama local councils in Somaliland as part of the process to enhance youth participation in local governance. Youth groups from Gebiley and Borama have already presented a draft of their plans to the local

councils as part of this process. A similar process is being promoted by UNICEF for youth in Mogadishu.

Communication for development update...

Advocacy: Advocacy sessions were held with members of some community development committees so that they play a key role in distribution of relief items during emergency situations. During a fire outbreak that took place in the 100 Bush IDP settlement in Bossaso, Puntland, the local community development committee helped in relief interventions by UNICEF and other organizations. Other awareness raising initiatives took place to promote handwashing in Bossaso IDP settlements.

Community dialogue: Promotion of community dialogue for development continues in areas affected by the drought and the tsunami as well as IDP camps. The process seeks to ensure communities discuss issues related to their welfare and development and identify priority areas that require interventions.

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