

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

November 2005



## New school opens...

The newly-constructed Hafun Learning Centre – a new school facility that now has about 260 children opened on 16 November 2005. The Centre was built with UNICEF support. Hafun was the worst-hit location by the Tsunami of December 2004. Members of the local administration, community leaders, media and UNICEF staff attended the inauguration ceremony. School furniture, learning and teaching materials and school bags have so far been distributed to about 600 children enrolled in five-newly constructed schools in Tsunami-affected communities in Hafun district.



Children starting school at the just-opened Learning Centre in Hafun. Each child received a new school bag, exercise books, a pencil and pen. Credit:UNICEF Somalia/SaidHassan/NEZoffice.

During a visit by UNICEF and UN-Habitat staff, the Hafun Mayor briefed visitors, teachers, youth and women on the progress of post-tsunami reconstruction activities.

A water supply system, construction of other schools and health centres are some of the UNICEF supported projects that are in progress. A housing project is expected to start soon as a collaborative venture between UNICEF and UN-Habitat.

## Political developments...

Members of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia temporarily based in Jowhar, Middle Shabelle region, welcomed an announcement by Mogadishu-based MPs and Ministers that they are willing to engage in dialogue with TFG members based in Jowhar. Sheikh Aden Mader, Somalia Minister for Reconciliation said the move by the Mogadishu group could lead to a constructive political settlement. The TFG in Jowhar has now appointed a committee to work on the modalities for the proposed reconciliation initiative.

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An Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) council of ministers met for the first time in Somalia in Jowhar on Tuesday 29 November 2005. The meeting was chaired by Augustine Nshimye, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in Charge of Regional Cooperation, Uganda and was opened by Somali Prime Minister, Ali Mohamed Gedi. The council expressed appreciation for the sustained efforts undertaken within the Transitional Federal Institutions to discuss how to overcome differences of political approaches and consolidate established state institutions. The meeting issued a communiqué resolving to encourage dialogue to accomplish reconciliation and warned that those who continued to obstruct the peace process risked being referred to the International Criminal Court of Justice (ICCJ). IGAD groups together Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti.

## Security developments...

*Explosion hits convoy:* On 6 November 2005 an explosion hit part of the convoy escorting the Prime Minister of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Ali Gedi and his cabinet upon their arrival in Mogadishu. Reportedly set off by a remote-controlled device, the explosion killed at least four people and injured another six.

*Fire:* A fire outbreak on 21 November killed three children aged 2, 4 and 8 in Awdinle internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Mogadishu. About 45

dwellings were destroyed. In response, UNICEF provided the fire victims with relief items including tarpaulin sheets for shelter and insecticide treated mosquito nets. The IDPs also received support from the World Food Programme, the business community in Mogadishu, the Diaspora, local and international organizations.

*Terrorism trial:* At a court in Hargeisa, Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') eight people charged with terrorism were sentenced to death and seven others to life imprisonment. Another six were sentenced in *absentia*. Judge Abdirahman Jama Hayan sentenced them for the murders of British teachers Richard and Enid Eyeington in October 2003, and a visiting Kenyan aid worker, Flora Chepkemoi, in March 2004. The judge ordered an investigation be reopened into the killing of award-winning Italian aid worker Annalena Tonelli in October 2003.

*Economy:* Wegagen Bank of Ethiopia become the first foreign bank to open an office at the Ethiopian-Somaliland border town of Togwajale for import and export related bank transactions. Ethiopia and Somaliland have signed an agreement allowing the country to use the port of Berbera which is 964 km from Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa. Berbera port is Somaliland's biggest income earner. A major drawback has been a livestock ban by Gulf countries which continues to deny Somaliland pastoralists and traders much needed income.

## 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

## Health update...

*Measles outbreak:* Thirteen people died of measles in Awdal region of Somaliland. Eight are understood to have been under 15 years old. Twenty-three others were diagnosed with measles symptoms. In response, UNICEF in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Somaliland Ministry of Health launched a measles vaccination campaign on 17 November to cover all six regions of Somaliland. A similar campaign was launched in Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') and parts of Central/South Somalia. Advocacy and sensitization workshops were held in preparation for the campaigns and were attended by community leaders, local authorities and civil society. The campaigns targeted children aged between nine months and fifteen years. In most locations, routine measles vaccination is done through local hospitals. However, this has proved insufficient to stop the spread of the disease, which is transmitted through person-to-person contact or through nasal and throat secretions.

According to the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) the deaths had been reported since October 23. The measles outbreak occurred in villages located on terrains and mountains in Zeilla district within Awdal region. The deaths were confirmed when a medical team visited the affected areas following complaints from the local population.

*IDPs:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Association for Integration and Development (AID) continued to support delivery of health services to internally displaced persons in Puntland. Similar services were provided in other locations in Somalia. Among services provided are immunization for pregnant women and children, screening for malnutrition and the supply of high-protein foods to the severely malnourished.

*Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI):* Immunization activities were conducted in Hargeisa, Las Anod and Erigavo towns in Somaliland. In Puntland, immunization against polio took place in Bossaso, Armo, Gardho, Bandar Bayla, Iskushuban, Ufayn, Bargal, Allula and Qandala. About 8,150 children and 1,820 women were immunized.

## Water and Environmental Sanitation update...

*Projects:* The El-lahelay water project (organised jointly by UNICEF and Handicap Hope organization) was completed in Somaliland. Work continues on water projects in Oog, Garbocawl and Afdoox villages in Somaliland along with the rehabilitation of seven wells in Sool region. The wells will serve nomadic populations and their livestock. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) completed the rehabilitation of a solar driven water system installed with UNICEF support in BaqBaq village in Nugal region of Puntland. NCA with UNICEF assistance is also

## Nutrition update...

UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland Ministry of Health and Labour and a local NGO, Network Against Poverty initiated activities to curb malnutrition in Hawd area of Hargeisa. These included the provision of vitamin A and iron-cum-folic acid supplementation to women and children, de-worming of children and nutrition education for mothers. Screening for malnutrition was done in Kismayo and Jamame districts of Central/Southern Somalia with a focus on IDPs and riverine communities. UNICEF in collaboration with Muslim Aid provided supplementary food to 4,346 malnourished children.

*Training:* UNICEF collaborated with the Somaliland administration and World Vision to train 14 staff of seven health centres in Awdal region in growth monitoring and promotion.

rehabilitating water sources at El Dhider and Bander Beyla. In Jowhar, Central Somalia, extension of a pipe network and construction of water kiosks began in Muyungaley and Hanti Wadaag sections of the town. In Puntland, construction of sanitation facilities for six primary schools was completed. About 3,500 students will benefit from the facilities.

*Training:* UNICEF in collaboration with the Somaliland administration trained 21 water supply managers in Gebiley. In Hargeisa, 25 teachers from eight schools received hygiene education. Community hygiene promotion activities were carried out in the villages of Burao, Odwayne and Aynabo in Somaliland reaching about 1,500 families. In Maadhera and Burdhuxunle villages, Central/South Somalia, 60 and 94 community members respectively were trained in sanitation and hygiene.



UNICEF donated this truck to the Bossaso Municipal Council for use in garbage collection and sanitation services in November 2005. The vehicle is seen outside the UNICEF office in Bossaso, Puntland before the handover. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/SaidHassan

## Education update...

*Training:* Sixteen mobilizers of community education committees were trained in mobilization skills and given tips to help them better understand their responsibilities. Community education committees play a crucial role in setting up schools, managing and mobilizing resources for primary education in Somalia. In Puntland, UNICEF in collaboration with the Puntland administration carried out in-service training for a total of 407 primary school teachers from Garowe and Galkayo. Similar training was carried out for 871 teachers in Jowhar, Merka and Dinsor in Central/Southern Somalia.

*Teachers' Day* The Day of the Somali Teacher was celebrated on 21 November in Jowhar, Central Somalia. The Transitional Federal Government was represented at the festivities. The Day was designated during the reign of Siyadd Barre and is commemorated annually.

*Mentoring:* Some 378 community education committees' members and 138 teachers were mentored on school management, resource mobilization, increasing enrolment and enhancing the quality of teaching through a joint initiative with World Vision and local/international NGOs.

*IDPs and schooling:* Thirty-two school tents are being set up in IDP camps in Bossaso, Gardo and Dangoray. UNICEF continues to collaborate with the Bossaso mayor, youth

organizations and women's groups to provide education for IDP families.

## HIV/AIDS update...

*Training:* UNICEF held a five-day workshop in Borama for 21 women and girls to discuss knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to help themselves, their families and communities prevent HIV infection and to provide care and support to people already infected/affected. A week-long refresher course for 20 community and religious leaders was held in Hargeisa. The participants were in 2004 trained to provide counseling, care and support to those infected and afflicted by HIV/AIDS. The refresher course reviewed progress made since then and provided them with new knowledge and skills. UNICEF and the Somaliland administration organized the course. A similar refresher course was conducted in Merca, Central Somalia for 14 counsellors.

*Networking:* A HIV/AIDS annual meeting was held in Belet Weyne, Hiran region and attended by 19 representatives from eight regional HIV/AIDS working groups. The meeting reviewed achievements challenges and plans for 2006. Youth Week was marked throughout Somaliland with special focus on HIV/AIDS. The hallmark of the week was an advocacy campaign seeking to enlist the participation of youth aged 15 to 24 in HIV/AIDS prevention in Hargeisa, Borama, Berbera and Burao. Among activities that took place were discussions and debates involving 50 –

100 youth at a time; football tournaments and poster competitions.

*Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT):* The Galkayo VCT centre received Rapid Test Kits from UNICEF. The Galkayo General Hospital which hosts the centre expressed gratitude for the donation. Hayat VCT Centre in Mogadishu, Merca and Kismayo VCT centres In Central/South Somalia received about 65 clients in November. Awareness of VCT services in different locations is picking up.

## Youth development update...

*Networking:* The Somaliland National Youth Organization (SONYO) established four sub-groups for the 34 member youth organizations. The new groupings focus on HIV/AIDS awareness, non-formal education (literacy skills for those who missed out on formal schooling), human rights and sports. UNICEF staff participated in a round table meeting on female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in Cairo, Egypt that discussed how youth can help eradicate FGM/C.

*Training:* 220 youth aged between 14 and 18 years were trained in leadership and organizational development (LOD) with focus on issues related to community mobilization, conflict resolution, team building, substance and drug abuse, gender, community development, resource mobilization and HIV/AIDS. The LOD training is a UNICEF initiative that seeks to

## Communication for development update...

*Media training:* A four-day radio journalism course was held for 23 participants under the Youth Broadcasting Initiative. This initiative enables members of youth groups, trained and equipped by UNICEF, to produce audio and video programmes in areas of their interest. A five-day course in TV/video journalism was also held in November for male and female participants from across the country. Trainees also came from internally displaced persons'

strengthen youth groups through capacity building.

*KOOR magazine:* Promotional activities for KOOR, a youth magazine that focuses on HIV/AIDS issues were undertaken with youth encouraged to contribute. A meeting to review management processes for the magazine was organized for editors and the printing firm that produces it. The first revised edition has been printed, launched and circulated to youth groups across Somalia. Production of the second edition is set to commence soon.

## Child protection update...

*Child Rights Forum:* A meeting of the Child Rights Forum took place in Somaliland with the participation of the staff of the Ministry of Justice, UNICEF, Save the Children Alliance and Somaliland National Youth Organization. Other meetings were held in Bossaso by members of child protection groups to discuss their work.

*Workshop:* In Mogadishu, 50 participants among them health workers, education sector representatives and members of women's groups attended a discussion forum on how best to disseminate the findings of the UNICEF Child Protection Study undertaken in 2003. Partners involved in the dissemination are to target local authorities and emerging government structures in order to influence them to formulate policy, laws and legislation to ensure the protection of children.

*Street children:* In Mogadishu and Belet Weyne street children continue to benefit from literacy classes for two hours, six days a week. Students attend classes regularly and most of them successfully complete basic literacy and numeracy courses. In addition, participants receive regular psycho-social support from trained workers. Four radio programmes focusing on the problems of street children were aired over local radio in Mogadishu. The programmes included discussions, call-ins and dramas.

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