

UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

October 2005



General developments...

Parliamentary elections were conducted successfully in Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') on September 29 with the process receiving praise from international observers. The elections were the first of their kind for Somaliland since it declared sovereignty in 1991.

UN celebrations: Festivities were held to mark the 60th anniversary of the United Nations with the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Maxwell Gaylard, planting trees to mark the occasion on 22 October in Hargeisa. Part of the festivities included a public meeting at the University of Hargeisa where Mr Gaylard spoke about the UN system. The university chancellor hailed the UN's assistance to the campus that has produced 150 graduates to date.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia/Somaliland Francois Lonseny Fall visited Hargeisa and met President Dahir Rayale Kahin. The UN special representative commended Somaliland leaders for their work on enhancing security and promoting democracy. UNICEF Somalia Representative, Christian Balslev-Olesen visited Jowhar and held a briefing with members of the Somali Transitional Federal Government, including the acting Prime Minister.

An earth tremor was experienced in Borama town on 15 October. The tremor lasted for several minutes. No casualties were reported.



A girl from a Tsunami affected area in Northeast Somalia attends school. Since the Tsunami UNICEF has constructed education facilities to cater for children from affected populations. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/2005/George Mulala

Security update...

Mogadishu was relatively calm during the reporting period. Levels of violence were lower, although killings and fighting between rival militia occurred. One of those killed was Colonel Raage Oon who had been training the police of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Jowhar where the TFG has its temporary seat. On 3 October Mohamud Uraage – a Somali UN staff member – was killed by gunmen in Kismayo southern Somalia. Investigations into the murder are ongoing.

In another incident, a ship discharging relief supplies in Merka port was hijacked but later released after the intervention of elders. Other incidents of insecurity were reported in Baidoa, Burhakaba and Gedo.

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Health update...

Training: UNICEF conducted a five-day refresher training course for nurses on drug management and use. The nurses will serve 33 health facilities in Galbeed, Awdal and Sahil regions of Somaliland. Preparations were carried out for a measles campaign that targets children up to 15 years of age, which will be carried out in November-December 2005 in Somaliland and Puntland. Some 30 people were trained as trainers in preparation for the campaign. Advocacy and sensitization workshops, attended by 320 local authorities and civil society members participating in the campaign, were conducted in Hargeisa, Borama and Burao towns in Somaliland.

Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI): In order to improve coverage, immunization was carried out in Las Anod and Erigavo towns. About 4,450 children were immunized.

Facilities: In Puntland, UNICEF and the Association for Integration and Development (AID) have completed construction of a health facility at the Gardho internally displaced persons (IDP) camp bringing to five the number of health facilities for service delivery in the IDP camps of Bossaso and Gardho.

Nutrition update...

Supplements: Seven thousand pregnant/lactating women received iron-cum-folic acid tablets during

immunization campaigns in Burao, Borama, Erigavo and Las Anod towns. The medicine is for the control and prevention of anaemia.

Training: UNICEF and the Somaliland administration trained 30 community health workers in the control of vitamin A deficiency and iron deficiency anaemia. The training focused on community health workers. In Puntland, UNICEF trained 30 health workers on issues related to malnutrition and other diseases.

Water and Environmental Sanitation

Projects: Construction of various water supply and sanitation projects continued throughout the month. The implementation of the Hafun mini water system is progressing well. Hafun was the area in Somalia worst-hit by the tsunami of 26 December 2005. The rehabilitation of seven wells in Sool, northern Somalia, continues. Local community partners are rehabilitating the wells in locations that had been affected by prolonged drought in 2003. Extension of water supply points for the Jowhar water system was undertaken.

Training: Twenty four teachers were trained in school sanitation and hygiene in Togdheer and Galbeed in Somaliland. Water operators and managers in Sahil and Galbeed region were trained in management skills.

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

Sanitation: In Puntland, construction of sanitation facilities for seven primary schools continued. Local community education committees are implementing these projects. Separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls will be provided. An estimated 3,500 students will benefit from these facilities. The Association for Integration and Development, a local NGO, continues to undertake hygiene promotion activities in IDP camps in Bossaso. In Somaliland, construction work started for the provision of sanitation and hygiene facilities at the Ali Hussein and Harag Waafa schools.

Education update...

Training: Training of primary school teachers took place in Somaliland during October. In Puntland, training of 26 people to help in mobilizing community education committees took place. Among the issues discussed were school development, management and resource mobilization. In-service training for 1,141 teachers was undertaken in central and southern Somalia during the month with a focus on teaching methodology and record-keeping.

Tents and school construction: One of the first school tents was inaugurated in Somaliland by the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Director, Per Engeback. UNICEF, the Norwegian Refugee Committee and the Somaliland administration added five school tents to serve the Statehouse internally displaced persons (IDP) camp, which

will accommodate 300 school children of whom 150 are girls. School construction activities were also completed in five communities affected by the tsunami in Puntland - Hafun, Fo'ar, Hurdia, Barmadobe and Handa. Furniture was dispatched to Hafun. Construction works for the expansion of Al-Nawawi, Kubo and Biyokulule primary schools continued.

Back to school campaign: Advocacy and social mobilization efforts were undertaken through radio in four towns in Somaliland as part of the effort to get more children to enrol in school. In central Somalia, a female teachers' association in Belet Weyne and HIWA, an organization which runs a girls' only school, are working to support girl's education as part of the back to school campaign and are encouraging more female teachers to join teaching to serve as role models for girls.

HIV/AIDS update...

In Hargeisa, Somaliland, UNICEF trained its staff in handling HIV/AIDS in emergencies and conflict situations. The Puntland National HIV/AIDS Commission was launched in Garowe, the administrative capital of Puntland. Prior to the launch, a secretariat for HIV/AIDS affairs was established to coordinate advocacy activities. Among activities undertaken to highlight HIV/AIDS issues were the HIV/AIDS youth week in central and southern Somalia. Quizzes, football, road races, and awareness raising sessions were some of the highlights.

Voluntary counseling: Some 54 people visited voluntary counseling and testing centres in Mogadishu, Merca and Kismayo in October. While slow, gradual progress is being made in the number of people making use of these services.

Youth development update...

UNICEF organized a visit to Kenya for members of youth groups from Somalia to enable them learn about information, communication and technology (ICT) projects in rural communities. In some of the places visited, the resources centres were equipped with computers, printers. Some have student clubs which help raise awareness on various issues through drama, poetry and dances. Community centres have become important places where residents get the latest news and information on development issues. Student clubs from nearby schools and youth groups from the community also benefit from the facilities with special focus on getting information and educational programmes that build life skills.

Training: UNICEF trained youth aged between 14 and 18 years in Somaliland in leadership and organizational development/youth peer education.

Child protection update...

UNICEF plans to assist Somaliland in ensuring fair treatment and conditions for children in prisons in Hargesia, Burao and Borama. In Puntland,

UNICEF conducted orientation on human rights investigations, documentation, monitoring and advocacy for three partner organizations from the civil society. One of the major drawbacks to child protection in Somalia is that there is lack of legislation and enforcement capacity to prevent and protect children from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been signed but is yet to be ratified.

Communication for development update...

UNICEF staff held discussions on the participatory integrated community development process that seeks to involve community members and stakeholders in development initiatives right from planning to implementation. In Mogadishu, UNICEF and the World Health Organization trained workers involved in polio eradication on how to communicate to families and the community.

Discussions were held between UNICEF and HornAfrik radio and television in Mogadishu on how to enhance collaboration with youth groups that are involved in broadcasting activities. UNICEF has provided equipment and trained members of youth groups in audio and video production skills. They produce programmes which are shared through video parlours and local broadcasting stations. The youth select the topics they want to cover, but whenever they

produce some focusing on areas in which UNICEF has a mandate, UNICEF helps them in developing appropriate messages. HornAfrik used to support editing of youth productions but ceased at the beginning of the year 2004.

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