

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

October 2006



## Floods hit Somalia

Torrential rains hit various parts of Somalia and as of early November (**Editor's: note latest reports include November**) about 75,000 people had been affected by floods in Hiran region, Central/Southern Somalia. About 50,000 people were displaced in Belet Weyne and another 15,000 cut off. Another 10,000 have been affected in surrounding villages of Belet Weyne.

UN agencies, NGOs and local communities are working on relief efforts that include supply of food and non-food relief items, insecticide treated nets for prevention of malaria and water purification equipment. In Burao and its environs in Somaliland, the rains caused extensive damage to property. Food relief items were supplied to 350 households and non-food supplies to about 600 households. The relief items included food, plastic sheeting, blankets, utensils and medical supplies. Similar heavy rains in Puntland caused severe damage along coastal areas with houses damaged and people injured in Hafun (location worst hit by the Tsunami of 2004), Qalwo, Brookhle and other settlements in Bari and Karkaar regions. The current rainy season (*Deyr*) also affected Benadir and Lower Shabelle, Central Somalia. UN agencies provided displaced families with 390 plastic sheets, insecticide treated nets and blankets in Bulo A Geledi, Bulo Banaan, Bulo Hilowly and Doorale villages of Jowhar town. The floods hindered road communication between Jowhar and Mogadishu, and Jowhar and other regions in Central Somalia.



Scenes like these of marooned houses in Belet Weyne, Central Somalia, have become common place following recent flooding. **Credit: UNICEF Somalia/CSZ Office**

## Political and security developments

Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') and Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') experienced calm as tension simmered in Central/Southern Somalia between the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Efforts to get the two sides to talk in Khartoum failed when the UIC insisted that Kenya be moved from co-chairing the talks and that Ethiopians move out of Baidoa before the two sides could engage in dialogue.

A demonstration was held in Mogadishu on 27 October to mobilize support against the presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia. Mogadishu continues to experience calm with relative peace and security with increased traffic to and from other regions in Somalia. Meanwhile, more than 30 Somali MPs visited Mogadishu to continue dialogue with the UIC.

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Sporadic incidents of fighting between UIC forces and other militia was reported around Buale town. The UIC carried out the second public execution since they took over Mogadishu. The person executed was convicted of killing a businessman while robbing him off a cellphone.

The UIC has established a regional court for Benadir region as well as a court of appeal. This followed interviews of about 100 people. The new judges will be expected to hear and resolve disputes over looted property to ensure return to their actual owners. The property includes land, houses and vehicles looted in the last 16 years. Meanwhile, the entire administration of Middle Shabelle was sacked and a new team appointed by the chairman of the Islamic Courts who visited the area on 22 October. Mr Abdusalaam Hassan, 34, who was educated in Sudan was nominated as the new governor.

UN international staff who had relocated from Puntland following threats to their safety returned to their work stations.

## Health update...

*Training:* Fifty traditional birth attendants from nine IDP settlements in Somaliland were trained in home delivery and setting up of basic maternal health services in IDP settlements. In Central/Southern Somalia health workers were trained in malaria treatment and management of vaccine storage facilities.

*Immunization:* 3,200 children were immunized against the main childhood killer diseases – tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles and polio - in Hargeisa and Borama towns. Measles immunization was carried out to reach children who may have missed out in earlier exercises in Hargeisa, Baligubadle and Badhan districts. Measles immunization was also carried out in locations in Central/Southern Somalia.

*Malaria:* About 30,000 insecticide treated nets were distributed to riverine villages north of Jowhar. A further 900 nets and anti-malaria drugs were distributed in Puntland.

## Nutrition update...

*Supplies:* UNICEF and the Somaliland Ministry of Health and Labour provided supplementary food to 122 children in Burao and Jamalaye IDP settlements. The children were also treated for vitamin and iron deficiency.

*Training:* Staff from partner organizations were trained to set up supplementary feeding centres for malnourished children in Central/Southern Somalia. Those trained included some from World Vision and International Medical Corps. 435 vaccinators were trained to administer Vitamin A during campaigns in Banadir. Another 300 women were trained in infant feeding and maternal care.

## 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

## Water and Environmental Sanitation update...

*Training:* Twenty-five people from Somaliland were trained in water supply management. Another 50 were trained in operation and maintenance of water supply systems. Thirty school teachers were trained in sanitation and hygiene measures.

*Projects:* Construction works for water and sanitation projects including school sanitation continued in Somaliland and Puntland.

Construction of sanitation facilities for 15 primary schools continued. More than 3,500 pupils are expected to benefit from the facilities in the 15 schools.

## Education update...

*Partnership:* UNICEF and the Somaliland administration launched an education development partnership initiative with the UK Department for International Development. The partnership aims to promote capacity development in the education sector within the local administration.

*Training:* 281 head-teachers were trained in Mogadishu and Jowhar. The teachers were trained in child psychology, psycho-social care, gender, school management and administration as well as book keeping. Additionally, 135 primary alternative education teachers were trained in Merka in teaching methodology. Ninety-one non-

formal education teachers were mentored.

*Advocacy:* Initiatives in Central/Southern Somalia resulted in 200 pupils enrolling in Sablale town of Lower Shabelle.

*Resource centres/curricula:* Construction of regional resource centres for primary school teachers continued in Borama, Erigavo and Berbera. Discussions were held in Somaliland to review the existing curricula with focus on pastoralist communities and youth above 16 years.

*Pupil initiatives:* The promotion of school clubs for child-to-child learning continued in Somaliland and Puntland. The initiative involves translating and printing materials for children and training youth groups to act as trainers for learning through the clubs.

*Tents:* Violent summer winds damaged school tents serving children of IDP families in Bossaso, Puntland. Six of the tents were repaired. UNICEF supplied Save the Children UK with teaching/learning materials and tents for four primary schools built by SCUUK in Tsunami-affected areas of Puntland.

## Youth Participation and Development update...

*Training:* As part of the leadership and organizational development/peer education initiative, youth from Central/Southern Somalia raises awareness about HIV prevention and control, immunization, school enrolment and hygiene and sanitation among

members of youth groups in eight IDP camps in Mogadishu. About 300,000 persons live in IDP camps in Mogadishu. Similar sensitization was carried out for 325 youth in other IDP camps. In Somaliland, training commenced of 40 youth in the field of theatre for education.

*Sports:* A UNICEF-supported IDP tournament was held in Bossaso. Eight sports teams participated in the 18-day tournament. The winner was the Bulo Mingis IDP settlement team. The tournament sought to encourage interaction between youth from different IDP camps. The tournament was the first of its type to be organized in the IDPs settlements in Puntland. A football tournament was organized for youth in Merka during Ramadhan.

*Governance:* Youth in Bossaso have established education centres for children from IDP settlements as part of the youth participation in local governance initiative. SSCO, a youth organization based in Bossaso opened a new free education centre with 152 students from marginalized families. Three youth from Puntland are to participate in the African Development Forum. It will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November.

## HIV/AIDS update...

*VCT centre launched:* A new voluntary counseling and testing centre was commissioned at Bossaso Hospital, Puntland. The centre is jointly supported by UNICEF and Merlin, a UK organization. A CD-4 count machine

and anti-retro viral drugs are some of the services provided.

Voluntary counseling and testing continued through three facilities in Central/Southern Somalia. One facility is not operational due to lack of test kits.

*Women:* The women-to-women initiative for raising awareness for HIV prevention and control was launched in four of the six regions of Somaliland. The initiative depends on women to take a leading role in awareness activities that include generating dialogue and action to reduce women's risk vulnerability to HIV infection. The initiative also seeks to provide women with a 'safe space' to learn about HIV and to develop skills in responding to HIV related risks and vulnerabilities - and recognizing Somali women's immediate development priorities. It also has opportunities for women who participate in development projects and activities in micro-credit, vocational skills, literacy classes and health education sectors. Under the project, women take on the added task of monitoring and reporting on child rights violations that they meet in the course of their work.

*Advocacy:* HIV sensitization activities targeting the youth were carried out in Galgadud, Bay and Bakool regions of Central/Southern Somalia.

## Child Protection update...

*Networking:* Discussions were held with Somaliland Lawyers Association as part of lobbying for the passage of the Juvenile Justice Bill and the effort to

### IMMIGRANTS POSE CHALLENGE

Influx of thousands of Ethiopian illegal immigrants seeking passage to the Gulf continues to be a major challenge to the Puntland administration. In an effort to stem the influx, the Puntland administration arrested and repatriated 1,300 immigrants to Ethiopia without screening. Following concerns raised by the UN and international NGOs, it was agreed to provide humanitarian assistance to remaining immigrants and to establish a temporary screening camp in the vicinity of Bossaso Airport. UNICEF thereafter moved to provide shelter for the camp and install support services such as water tank and sanitation facilities. The UNHCR started a process to ensure that appropriate screening takes place in future. Current assistance is taking care of about 600 people in the camp.

help create regional child protection networks.

*Training:* Sixteen youth mentors and leadership and organizational development trainers for youth were trained in Bossaso. The training focused on child protection in emergency situations.



*Somali participants smile in Senegal recently after attending community empowerment training. UNICEF is supporting an innovative non-formal education programme to address issues including Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C). Photo Credit: Molly Melching*

*Advocacy:* Information materials (including the UNICEF Child Protection Study conducted in 2003) were disseminated to local authorities and community members in Puntland through KAALO Relief and Development Organization. Regional child protection networks in Mudug, Nugal and Bari conducted monthly child protection coordination meetings in Galkayo, Garowe and Bossaso. The networks organized radio programmes and talk-shows on different child protection issues. Social workers, medical doctors, politicians and civil society workers

participated in the radio talk-shows which were aired by local FM radio stations. Social mobilization activities raised awareness on the need to protect children in in IDP camps in Mogadishu and five drought-affected regions of Central/Southern Somalia. Special emphasis was laid on the need to prevent gender-based violence.

*Immigrants:* UNICEF in collaboration with partner organizations monitored Ethiopian immigrants and Somalis who were detained by Puntland authorities while in the process of attempting to secure passage to Yemen/Gulf countries by sea. This followed the setting up of a screening camp in response to complaints that some immigrants were forcibly returned to Ethiopia before screening.

The monitoring now in place aims to ensure that humanitarian standards of confinement and repatriation are met. Screening should prevent the repatriation of people who could otherwise be under threat in their place of origin. Given the presence of Ethiopian migrants who are under 18 years, the monitors were engaged to focus on newly-established screening facilities and detention areas including police stations. The monitors are expected to investigate, document and raise issues of violation against human rights of children and women, in particular to prevent any form of physical or sexual abuse. The monitors should also ensure that proper records are maintained and reports filed on the presence of minors.

## Communication for Development update...

### **Journalists trained**

Forty five journalists were recently trained to provide better coverage of issues related to polio eradication.

The journalists were from all parts of Somalia and the Somali region of Ethiopia. The training was timed to precede the next two mass polio vaccination campaigns across the Horn of Africa, starting on 3 November and 3 December 2006 respectively. The training took place over a three-day period in Hargeisa, capital of the self-declared republic of Somaliland

Somalia had been polio-free since 2002 and became re-infected in 2005 by virus reportedly from Yemen.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF organized the workshop to provide journalists with facts for dissemination to the public to help in polio prevention and control, along with numerous ideas for news stories and features. Participants included staff of the Somali service of the British Broadcasting Corporation led by Yusuf Garaad, Head of the Somali Service, as well as Mogadishu-based correspondent, Osman Hassan Barise, better known as the 'most popular man in Somalia'.

"Polio is a hugely important issue for our audiences," said Yusuf Garaad. "The BBC will continue to broadcast objective

and reliable information about polio eradication. Thanks to the information presented at this workshop, our programming will be even more relevant."

*Story illustration:* Work on the illustrated story character 'Sara' continued in the effort to develop the Somali storyline through a character called 'Zahra'. Sara is a character created by UNICEF in Eastern and Southern Africa to highlight issues of importance for the protection and improvement of the rights of the girl child. The character aims to help young girls make the transition to adulthood.

*Training:* Galkayo Education Centre for Peace and Development, an NGO from Puntland trained 30 health workers in behaviour change communication to improve infant and child-feeding practices. Trainees were from the local administration, Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS) and the Association for Integration and Development (AID). Some 25 facilitators and representatives from local authorities including UN Habitat took part in participatory community dialogue training. The training aims to enhance community participation to identify priority issues for development.

*Networking:* A meeting to promote the establishment of working relationships between different stakeholders working on children's and women's issues was attended by 35 participants from Puntland regions, urban and rural centres, local administration, NGOS and communities involved in development initiatives. Among those present were communities that use the participatory

integrated community development (PICD) dialogue process to enhance community mobilization, participation and ownership. The PICD process is crucial in helping UNICEF realize its goals for the improvement of the lives of children and women.

*Cholera:* The Somali Red Crescent Society conducted community mobilization for cholera prevention in Balcad town, Central/Southern Somalia. 355 people participated in the sessions. Similar initiatives took place in Mogadishu.

*School enrolment:* A radio drama was produced to help in campaigning for enrolment of children in schools. The broadcast commenced through Baidoa radio.

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