

UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

August 2006



Political and security developments...

Mogadishu has been quiet and calm since the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) took control of the city in June 2006. People feel secure and safe despite the heightened political tension between UIC and the Transitional Federal Government. The UIC has taken control of most parts of Central/Southern Somalia.

Editors note: Talks took place between the two sides on 4 September in Khartoum, Sudan. An agreement was reached to unify armed groups allied to the TFG with forces loyal to the country's increasingly influential Islamic courts as an important first step towards restoring peace.

Representatives from the Transitional Federal Government and the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) agreed during talks mediated by the League of Arab States in Khartoum, to "reconstitute the Somali national army and the national police force and work towards reintegration of the forces of the Islamic Courts, the TFG and other armed militias in the country".

Militia from Union of Islamic Courts were reported to have advanced to Galin Soor, about 80 km to the south of Galkayo, capital of Mudug district which falls under the jurisdiction of the semi-autonomous state of Northeast Somalia ('Puntland'). The advance to Puntland seems to have been averted following mediation by local elders.

The UIC announced that Mogadishu International Airport was now

operational and that rehabilitation activities were underway. The UIC appealed to the business community in Mogadishu, the public and the international community to contribute towards repair and rehabilitation of the airport. Mogadishu seaport was declared open on 23 August and the first ship to dock in was one carrying supplies for UNICEF. Meanwhile training of policemen to maintain law and order in Mogadishu started. Fifty people were trained over three days in Hawi-Wadag district.



Flooded terrain in Middle Shabelle following floods that ravaged the landscape. Story Page 2. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/CSZ Office.

The UIC has continued to facilitate UNICEF and WHO supported activities that have included immunization campaigns in Mogadishu.

Isolated incidents of insecurity were reported. In one incident UIC forces exchanged fire with militia resulting in one death at a compound in Wardegley district of Mogadishu. In Baidoa, Aweys Essa Amin, manager of World Vision's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) clinic in Burhakaba, was killed

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on the road between Baidoa and Burhakaba.

On the political front, Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland') President Dahir Rayale Kahin reshuffled his cabinet on August 12. Edna Adan, one of only two women ministers lost her seat in the reshuffle.

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) officially opened its first office in Hargeisa on Sunday, 7 August 2006, a move welcomed by the Somaliland administration for the expected boost it will give the livestock and agriculture sectors.

In Puntland, the Sa'ad clan announced a regional local administration called GalMudug in Galkayo South. The move received mixed.

Flood emergency in Central Somalia

Following flooding in Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF provided relief support that included 21,000 bags for stacking with sand to form embankments as well as a boat with crew. The floods broke out from the Chinese canal in Jowhar and left about 500 families displaced. Most of the families lost food stocks and crops on farmland. Among the items UNICEF distributed were 400 insecticide treated nets (ITNs) to reduce malaria incidence. UNICEF will distribute more ITNs to those in need in the coming days as well as plastic sheeting and blankets.

UNICEF plans to carry out more assessments to inform interventions in

the water sector as well as social mobilization for sanitation and hygiene promotion. Discussions are underway with the World Health Organization, InterSoS (an Italian NGO) and MSF-Spain with regards to supporting mobile medical clinics. There are plans to reactivate the cholera response task force.

Flooding also occurred in Mogadishu with heavy rains pounding the city on the night of 29 August. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were especially affected. One child was reported to have died in Kaluunka IDP camp and two others injured in Osob camp (both camps are in Mogadishu).

In Somaliland, a fire outbreak destroyed 12 dwellings at State House IDP camp in Hargeisa, capital of Somaliland. The UNHCR distributed relief supplies to affected people.

Health update...

Training: UNICEF helped set up delivery services at six maternal and child health (MCH) centres in Burao town of Somaliland. Thirty staff of the health centres were trained and delivery kits given to the centres.

Immunization: A total 3,575 children aged less than five years were immunized in Hargeisa. Another 12,000 children of similar age were provided with Vitamin A supplements and 3,000 women with iron-cum-folic acid supplementation for the control and prevention of anaemia. A measles

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

campaign was carried out in Baidoa, Central Somalia.

Tetanus: Two rounds of vaccination against maternal and neonatal tetanus were held in late July and late August. The late July immunization vaccinated 97,669 women. The campaign took place in all regions of Puntland. Figures for the second round in late August are yet to be compiled. Similar campaigns were carried out in Central/Southern Somalia.

Supplies: Medical supplies and equipment were distributed to various locations. Among them were supplies for HIV testing and treatment.

Nutrition update...

World Breastfeeding Week: Various activities were organized during the first week of August 2006. In Somaliland, festivities were organized in collaboration with the National Women and Children Development Organization (NOW) and the Ministry of Health and Labour. Various dignitaries graced the festivities in different locations with workshops and print and electronic media playing a major role to highlight the importance of breastfeeding. In Puntland, activities were implemented in collaboration with women's NGOs. The activities included training of health workers and members of youth groups. The Week was also marked in Central/Southern Somalia.

Supplementary feeding: Since January 2006, 10,981 children in

Central/Southern Somalia have benefited from supplementary feeding. Another 2,234 have benefited from inpatient care at therapeutic feeding centres. Some 173 tones of supplementary food supplies were distributed to partner organizations in Wajid, Baidoa and Mogadishu.

Water and environmental Sanitation update...

Projects: Work continued on various water and sanitation projects in Somalia and Somaliland. Among the projects was the construction of three tanks as an emergency measure to serve 300 families displaced in Berbera, Somaliland. Also completed was the Kob-Dhexaad European Union-funded rural mini-water system. Meanwhile the Hafun Water System in Puntland is now fully operational. Hafun was the worst-hit location in Somalia by the Tsunami of December 26 2004.

In Huddur, Central Somalia, UNICEF trained 38 people in health education and sanitation. The trainees included teachers and members of community education committees. Some 24 other people were trained in community hygiene awareness. Chlorine for treatment of drinking water was distributed to well-owners in Berdale and Isha in Central Somalia. As part of environmental clean-up initiatives, UNICEF donated sanitation tools to Wajid and Huddur communities.

Education update...

Training: In Hargeisa, 16 non-formal education trainers received training in the developmental needs of adolescents and teaching methodology. Separately, a training course for head-teachers in school management was completed. A total of 534 head-teachers from public and private schools attended the training which also drew education officers. In Puntland, 630 head-teachers and district education officers were trained in school management and administration while in Merka, Central Somalia, 155 head-teachers and managers of primary alternative education centres were similarly trained. In Central/Southern Somalia, in-service training of 1,285 primary formal education teachers continued. Eighty-eight non-formal education teachers were trained in Bay, Bakool, Gedo and Galgadud regions. Non-formal education provides basic learning skills to students who missed out on formal learning opportunities.

Child-centred learning: UNICEF is promoting child-to-child learning in health, sanitation and hygiene promotion. To this end 15 teachers were trained. Through the initiative, teachers are trained to facilitate child-to-child activities through development of partnerships between children in organizations such as clubs in schools.

Books donated: Western Australian universities donated 28 computers and 10,000 new and old books to six tertiary institutions in Somalia and Somaliland.

The donation followed discussions between Curtin Business School and the UNDP. About six thousand students are expected to benefit. The Somaliland donation arrived in Berbera in mid-August. Books and other supplies were distributed to primary schools in Somalia and Somaliland.

Advocacy: UNICEF staff held discussions with the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in Mogadishu. They staff briefed the UIC on education activities and encouraged it to liaise with key players in the education sector so as to promote access to education. Community mobilizers meanwhile continued to sensitize community education committees from 90 schools in Central/Southern Somalia. The sensitization focused on issues related to enrolment, gender and school development. Committees serving IDP schools were given special focus.

School construction: UNICEF in collaboration with the UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS) handed over five newly-constructed schools to the Somaliland administration. Two of the schools are for girls. In Central Somalia, concrete basements were constructed for three tents to serve as schools for internally displaced persons in Merka. Seventy-four tents were distributed to schools in Middle Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, and Gedo regions. Rehabilitation of classrooms, offices and other school facilities continued in various locations.

Youth Participation and Development update...

Training: Thirty participants from the Puntland administration and local and international organizations were trained in issues related to young people's participation in governance. Some 25 youth were also trained in participation in local governance at a workshop in Huddur, Central Somalia. Another 30 people were trained in hygiene and sanitation. Among them were trainers and mentors of youth in leadership issues. Leadership and youth education trainers carried out social mobilization training on HIV prevention, immunization, school enrolment and improving hygiene and sanitation in eight IDP camps in Mogadishu. Web content managers from different locations in Somalia were trained in Hargeisa as part of an effort to develop a policy for the UNICEF-supported site: www.hellosomaliyouth.net.

Meanwhile, preparations are underway to provide capacity building training for three youth multi-purpose centres in Hargeisa, Berbera and Burao in Somaliland.

Youth: ORSOD youth organization of Somaliland marked its second anniversary. ORSOD is dedicated to fighting the chewing of *khat* (an amphetamine leaf akin to the coca of South America).

Supplies: Through collaboration with the Puntland administration, youth and sports supplies were distributed to 20 organizations. The support is part of a

capacity-building effort to promote access of young people to recreational and sports activities. UNICEF continues to help the Puntland administration in youth development. Construction of a basketball playground was completed in Hafun.

Celebrations: UNICEF in collaboration with Mudan Youth Network and the Puntland Ministry of Labour, Youth and Sports organized commemorative activities on the occasion of the International Youth Day on August 12. Participants during the main festivities in Garowe, Puntland's capital, emphasized the importance of youth education and development and participation in social activities. UNICEF supported the organization of International Youth Day celebrations between 12 and 15 August in Baidoa, Central/Southern Somalia. The festivities included sports tournaments, radio programmes, workshop on youth empowerment and participation and a discussion forum.

HIV/AIDS update...

Advocacy: Initiatives to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS have kicked off through print and electronic media in Somaliland. UNICEF staff held discussions with the Puntland AIDS Commission to discuss ways to improve collaboration in HIV prevention, awareness and control.

Meetings were held between UNICEF and members of HIV/AIDS regional working groups in Belet Weyne, Bu'ale, Mogadishu and Jowhar.

CHILD PROTECTION

Ratification: The Somaliland administration, UN agencies and NGOs held discussions on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Somaliland Ministry of Family Welfare organized a meeting to discuss coordination between UN agencies and other organizations involved in initiatives to curb female genital cutting.

Advocacy: Information materials on child protection were disseminated to 100 guardians and local authority members in Sool and Sanaag regions. This was done through an initiative organized in partnership with KAALO Development and Relief Organization of Puntland. Child protection advocates were also trained in community mobilization.

Community mobilization was undertaken in IDP camps in Mogadishu and five drought-affected regions with focus on eradication and prevention of gender-based violence.

The meetings discussed ways to strengthen coordination, information sharing and channeling of assistance to the groups. The groups were also briefed on the South/Central AIDS Commission as well as capacity-building. Meanwhile, Somali Public Health Professional Association organized five HIV awareness forums for IDP communities in Mogadishu. Some 160 participants attended. They included women, youth, religious, local authority and community leaders. A leadership and advocacy forum was organized for religious leaders, teachers and youth representatives from Hiran. Thirty five people participated in the three-day forum held in Belet Weyne. The objective of the forum was to enhance the capacity of participants to play an informed leadership role in HIV awareness, prevention, control and the reduction of stigma and discrimination faced by people with HIV.

HornAfrik radio. A workshop was also held for youth from seven organizations in Merka to discuss ways in which youth could better access information through information and communication technologies and other channels which could enrich their knowledge and perspectives.

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

Communication for development update...

Training: 30 participants were trained in Participatory Integrated Community Development (PICD) in Bossaso, Puntland. The aim of the training was to build capacity of facilitators of the PICD concept that seeks to boost community dialogue to identify development priorities.

Broadcast training: 15 youth from Central/Southern Somalia were trained in development and editing of youth programmes as part of an effort to boost youth issues. The youth will produce programmes for broadcast through