

UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

January 2005



Tsunami relief continues

Tsunami update: UNICEF and partner organizations undertook relief efforts reaching an estimated 8,000 to 12,000 people in Hafun and other areas hit along the Northeast Somalia ('Puntland') coastline on December 26. An estimated 80 percent of homes in Hafun were destroyed. Initial consequences were lack of clean water and sanitation facilities and a serious shortage of food. Areas currently assisted by UNICEF besides Hafun include Bender Beyla, Arris and Garad.

It has been difficult to assess with accuracy the total number affected in Northeast Somalia due to the remoteness of many villages and lack of roads. In late January a multi-agency assessment got underway to get a more accurate perspective as well as the long term consequences of the tsunami.

UNICEF has distributed blankets, jerry cans, plastic sheeting, cooking sets, mosquito netting and soap to the most vulnerable. Other activities have included chlorination of drinking water, repair of damaged wells, construction of new water sources, trucking of water to communities and digging of latrines. UNICEF through a local community-based organization is rehabilitating 10 damaged wells in Hafun.

UNICEF has supplied dewatering pumps for removing sea water and debris which was swept into the wells by the tidal wave.

Relief interventions have also focused on the treatment of the sick and the training of health workers on management of diarrhoea diseases, acute respiratory infections, anaemia and antenatal care and the provision of medical supplies and equipment. Among those UNICEF has trained are workers of the Somali Red Crescent Society. As a result of UNICEF interventions, water borne diseases have declined.



A resident of Hafun which was hardest hit by the tsunami draws water from one of the wells rehabilitated by UNICEF.

Photo credit: UNICEF Somalia

In Kulub and Garacad villages, UNICEF distributed shelter materials to families that were affected. The waves destroyed Kulub village and its water sources. UNICEF is to rehabilitate five wells in Garacad village as well as construct latrine facilities in Garacad and Kulub.

UNICEF has also supported initiatives to ensure resumption of schooling. After the tsunami struck Hafun, displaced residents occupied the local

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primary school building. In mid-January, UNICEF in collaboration with the local community education committee facilitated the vacation of the building to allow the school to reopen.

Prior to the tsunami, the school had 92 students. Advocacy initiatives after the tsunami led to the enrolment in Hafun village surging to 148 with 85 of the pupils being girls. UNICEF provided tarpaulin sheets to serve as shelter for two additional classrooms.

Other coastal communities of Fooaar, Baal Madow and Garaan, all in Hafun district, which didn't have schools previously, are now readying to open them. UNICEF has helped the communities to form education committees. The communities will use plastic tarpaulin sheets provided by UNICEF as shelter for the classrooms.

To date, UNICEF Somalia has received approximately \$500,000 in total from the US and UK Funds for UNICEF while pledges have been made by the US OFDA/USAID. A donation of shelter items and fishing nets was also made by the Coca Cola company. Together with supplies that UNICEF already had inside Somalia for rapid response to emergency situations, these amounts have been adequate to cover the response so far. Additional funding may become necessary for longer-term recovery efforts.

More can be read about UNICEF and its work in the tsunami affected areas at www.unicef.org/somalia/

Political developments

Political developments: In Northwest Somalia ('Somaliland'), the House of Representatives deputy speaker, Abdilkadir Ismail Jirde, resigned citing the blocking of legislation for regulating parliamentary elections. Mr Jirde alleged that the chairman of the House of Elders (Upper Chamber of Parliament) and pro-administration legislators were opposed to the forthcoming parliamentary elections, scheduled for March 29, 2005. The bill on the Parliamentary Elections Act has been before the Lower House for the last several years.

The Presidential elections in Northeast Somalia took place on 8 January 2005 leading to a peaceful change of President. Mohamud Muse Hirsi "Adde" – a former military general – was elected as President replacing Mohamed Abdi Hashi who had been acting as president of Puntland since Abdullahi Yusuf, the previous President, was elected as President of Somalia at the Somali National Reconciliation and Peace Conference in Kenya in October 2004.. Mohammed Hassan "Af-Qurac" was elected vice president. Puntland is a semi-autonomous region of Somalia. It however has no intention of breaking away from Somalia unlike Northwest Somalia which broke away and declared sovereignty with no desire to be part of Somalia.

Cabinet approved: The Somalia Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP)

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

on 13 January endorsed the cabinet appointed by the Prime Minister of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), Dr Ali Gheddi Mohamed. The new government is expected to relocate from Nairobi to Somalia in mid-February. The first meeting of joint Coordination and Monitoring Committee (CMC) between TFG and the International Community was held. The AU re-iterated its pledge to provide security force to support relocation of TFG

Security developments...

Central/Southern Somalia experienced intermittent fighting among various communities. The fighting in Galgadud, Hiran, Benadir (Mogadishu) Bay and Bakool regions claimed lives and property.

Police chief killed: In Mogadishu, General Yusuf Ahmed Sarenle, the commander of the police force of the Transitional National Government (precursor to the current Transitional Federal Government) was shot dead at his house in Harmar Bile section of Wardigley district in Mogadishu early in the morning of 23 January. The killing was the latest in a string of attacks that have targeted senior military and police officials in Mogadishu.

Driver killed: A contractor distributing relief items was attacked in Il Focshe village in Jariban district of Mudug region. The relief items were looted and the truck driver killed. The team had been contracted to distribute relief items

by WFP in the tsunami hit areas along the northeast coast of Somalia.

Cinema attack: On 13 January an attacker threw a hand grenade into a cinema in Bulo-hubey section of Madina district in Mogadishu. Four people died on the spot and seven others were wounded in the 11.30pm incident. At least two children were reported to be among the wounded.

Cemetery desecrated: Some unknown militia removed about 70 skeletons from the Old Italian Cemetery located near the SOS Hospital in Mogadishu South and placed them near Mogadishu International Airport. Local organizations including civil society groups, women's organizations, religious groups, intellectuals, youth groups and local radio condemned the action.

Health programme update...

Immunization: Residents of 115 settlements in Eil Afwein, Erigavo and Badhan districts in Somaliland were immunized in an effort supported by UNICEF, the local administration and NGOs. A total of 3,164 children were immunized against the six childhood killer diseases: polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles and tuberculosis. A total of 2,653 people were provided with vitamin A supplements and 1,269 women of child-bearing age vaccinated and provided with tetanus toxoid immunization.

Water and Environmental Sanitation Update

Assessment: UNICEF staff made technical assessments of two borewell sites in Lower Shabelle to determine suitability of rehabilitation. Project repair and rehabilitation work continued in various projects in the country.

Training: UNICEF trained 46 staff who maintain water projects in Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle and Galgadud regions. Hygiene education for water committees was

Nutrition update...

UNICEF and WFP distributed supplementary food rations to 1,655 children in Sanaag and Togdheer regions in northern Somalia. In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF distributed information on infant care.

Education update...

Drought: Some nine out of 11 schools in Togdheer region of Somaliland that had closed due to effects of drought reopened through the efforts of the Somaliland administration and the community.

In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF staff met those of the Women Care Association (WOCA), a local NGO based in Jowhar, Middle Shabelle region. The discussions focused on how to improve educational management and increase community awareness on enrolment with special focus on girl-child education. WOCA runs seven schools with an enrolment of 397 school age children and 324 youth learners.

UNICEF conducted social mobilization to boost school enrolment among children of riverine communities in Middle Shabelle region. Remarkable progress was reported on non-formal education initiatives in Jowhar, Central Somalia. Non-formal education (NFE) helps people who missed out on formal schooling to learn how to read and write.

Youth development...

The rehabilitation of Berbera Youth Multi-purpose Centre in Somaliland continues. In Central/Southern Somalia, UNICEF conducted a five-day training on conflict resolution and peace building for 33 youth from Middle Shabelle, Benadir and Middle Jubba regions.

The training focused on basic knowledge and skills on conflict management and peace building initiatives.

HIV/AIDS prevention and control update...

Awareness raising: Information materials for HIV/AIDS awareness were distributed to resource centres run by local NGOs and the communities in Somaliland. The latest issue of *KOOR*, a magazine that focuses on issues related to HIV/AIDS and the youth was distributed throughout Somalia. It is produced by youth in Somaliland with support from UNICEF.

UNICEF distributed information, education and communication materials for HIV/AIDS awareness in Central/Southern Somalia.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Capacity building: UNICEF trained 26 staff of the Puntland administration in planning, monitoring and evaluation and report writing. The training took place in Galkaiyo.

Fire outbreak

UNICEF provided relief assistance following a fire outbreak in Askar internally displaced persons' camp in Bossaso town.

UNICEF staff visited Jowhar Hospital laboratory and discussed the testing of blood for HIV, pre and post-test counseling with hospital staff. Though the hospital tests blood from donors, it does not carry out counseling. HIV/AIDS awareness raising workshops were conducted in Huddur, Central Somalia. They targeted members of youth and women's groups and the urban poor.

Child Protection update...

Girl prisoner: UNICEF continued to lobby for the release of a 16-year-old girl, Zam Zam Ahmed Dualeh, from prison in Hargeisa Somaliland. On December 15, 2004, Zam Zam was sentenced to five years in prison for alleged espionage. Following this, the UNICEF Somalia Representative Jesper Morch appealed to Somaliland President Dahir Rayale Kahin to pardon Zam Zam. In January 2005, the President said in an interview with the media that he would consider clemency if and when Zam Zam requested for it. **(Editor's note:** On 2 February 2005, the Somaliland administration released Zam Zam into the custody of Ghanim Alnajjar, the UN Independent expert on human rights in Somalia, who accompanied her back to Puntland).

Child soldiers: The rehabilitation and reintegration programme for 360 former child soldiers continued in Mogadishu, Merka and Kismayo towns.

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