

# UNICEF Somalia Monthly Review

June - July 2005



## Transitional government relocates to Jowhar, Central Somalia

On 26 July, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) for Somalia arrived in Jowhar, 90km north of Mogadishu, to establish the temporary seat of his administration. The President has chosen Jowhar as an interim location due to ongoing insecurity in Mogadishu. On his arrival, the President was met by hundreds of residents and members of his government including Prime Minister Ali Gedi, various Ministers and Members of Parliament. In an address to residents of Jowhar, the President and Prime Minister called for reconciliation and political stabilization. To strengthen the presence of the TFG in the location, Prime Minister Gedi launched construction of an improved airport in June and inaugurated the Duduble Canal, constructed in a collaborative effort between the Jowhar administration, the local community and the United Nations.

The President has also visited Northeast Somalia (or 'Puntland') and met members of the Puntland administration. Prior to election as President of the TFG, Abdullahi Yusuf was the leader of the Puntland administration, a semi-autonomous region of Somalia that has committed to remain an integral part of Somalia. Unlike Puntland, Northwest Somalia (or 'Somaliland') has declared sovereignty and asserts their independence from the rest of the country.

Also in July, the three main political parties in Somaliland submitted their nominees to contest for seats in their House of Representatives. Elections will be held on 15 September.

*HIV/AIDS - taking charge:* The Somaliland President Dahir Rayale Kahin has assumed the chairmanship of the National HIV/AIDS Commission, underscoring the seriousness with which his administration is taking the HIV/AIDS threat. In late June, the Somaliland President met with a joint mission for HIV/AIDS from Nairobi, including the Director of UNAIDS Somalia, Mr. Leo Kenny, UNICEF Somalia staff and other UN and NGO representatives. Mr. Kenny briefed the President on the role of the UN in AIDS prevention, control and awareness-raising.



A woman and child seek refuge under a UNICEF supplied tarpaulin sheet following floods that hit Huriwaa village, Mahaday district in Central Southern Somalia in June. Credit: UNICEF Somalia/001-06-05/CSZ Office.

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## Security update...

Abdulkadir Yahye – a Mogadishu-based peace activist, chairman of the Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) and member of the Board of Directors for the Elman Peace Project– was killed in Mogadishu on 11 July 2005. Agencies working in Somalia, including the UN and both national and international NGOs, have condemned the killing, calling Yahye, “a committed advocate for peace and reconciliation.” CRD through the leadership of Abdulkadir Yahye conducted several reconciliation meetings for feuding faction leaders, politicians and intellectuals.

In Galkayo, the administrative capital of Puntland, revenge killings occurred during July. The killings spiraled into conflict between government forces and militia belonging to one of the clans involved in the killings. The conflict later abated through dialogue. In Gedo region, 32 people died and 64 were wounded in fighting between rival militia over the control of Elwak town. In June, intermittent fighting in various parts of central and southern Somalia claimed many lives. One of those killed was a reporter with Horn Afrik, a Mogadishu-based news agency, who was shot dead as she covered the dismantling of an illegal roadblock at a checkpoint near Afgoi along the Mogadishu-Afgoi road.

Finally, trainees at the Hiilweyne militia demobilization/training camp received salary incentives as part of the demobilization activities in Mogadishu during June.

## Health update...

*Training:* UNICEF trained 30 Traditional Birth Attendants from Awdal region in Borama town, Somaliland. The training focused on delivery skills and basic hygiene services. Ten mid-wives from maternal and child health (MCH) centres were trained at the Edna Aden Maternity hospital in Hargeisa. UNICEF provides child delivery equipment and medical supplies to MCH centres.

*Polio:* A major polio immunization campaign kicked off throughout Somalia on 18 June. The campaign came after the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a warning that Somalia could become re-infected with polio from nearby Ethiopia and Yemen, the latest two of 16 previously polio-free countries re-infected due to an outbreak in west and central Africa. Somalia has been polio-free since October 2002. Supported by WHO and UNICEF, tens of thousands of volunteers, health workers, parents and community, religious and traditional leaders went house-to-house across the country to hand-deliver polio vaccine to every child under the age of five years. The activity was held from 17 to 19 June in Puntland; from 18 to 20 June in Somaliland and from 24 to 26 June in central and southern Somalia.

*Malaria:* The distribution of long-lasting Insecticide Treated bed-Nets (ITNs) procured with funds from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) has started. The first

## 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

consignment of 80,000 ITNs is being distributed through partners. The target groups are those most vulnerable to malaria: pregnant women and children under five years of age.

## Nutrition update...

*Food demos:* UNICEF and the Somaliland administration initiated food demonstration sessions in 30 MCH centres during the reporting period for women with malnourished children. While most cases of malnutrition among children currently seen at the centres are due to lack of food, others are due to improper food use. Similar sessions were introduced at three MCH centres and two displaced persons' camps in Mogadishu as well as five centres run by partners in Lower Shabelle region. In Puntland, UNICEF and the Association for Integration and Development (AID) a local NGO, distributed food supplements to malnourished children in eight districts affected by drought.

*Review:* A review of the UNICEF support to the nutrition sector in central and southern Somalia reports that a total of 703,754 children aged less than six years received vitamin A supplements during immunization carried out in the period January-June 2005. An additional 26,824 pregnant women receiving ante-natal care at MCH centres were provided with iron-cum-folic acid supplements for prevention and treatment of anaemia. A total of 4,903 malnourished children received nutritional support with about two-thirds of them recovering satisfactorily while the remainder

required more specialized attention in hospitals.

*Breastfeeding:* UNICEF and the Somaliland Red Crescent Society (SRCS) launched a breastfeeding promotion campaign among mothers in Hargeisa town. The promotion targeted about 1300 pregnant and lactating mothers, including those from displaced communities.

## Water and environmental sanitation update...

A mission from the Government of Denmark visited water projects in Somaliland that had received support from their government.

In Puntland, UNICEF provided equipment, construction and repair support to various water projects including the Galkayo and Garowe water systems and completion of the Dhahar borewell, the latter serving 15,000 people. Earlier in June, repair works were completed for the Gardo Urban Water Supply System. UNICEF handed management of the Water System over to Hodman, a private-public sector partnership company. The Gardo project will provide water to about 25,000 people. In June, UNICEF and a local NGO supported rehabilitation of six wells serving about 3,500 people in villages around Jowhar district of Middle Shabelle Region, central and southern Somalia. UNICEF also helped rehabilitate the Gulane village borewell in Adan Yabaal district. The borewell will serve 2,000 people. Construction and rehabilitation of the

## Measles Campaign Underway ...

UNICEF and WHO have developed a new campaign to prevent measles.

It will target children aged 9 months to 15 years and is scheduled to take place before end 2005.

Preparations are underway in Somaliland, Puntland and Bakool Region in central/southern Somalia.

Administrations in Somaliland and Puntland have been involved in the planning process.

Hafun water supply system has started. Hafun was the worst-affected location by the tsunami that hit the northeast Somalia coastline. An Italian NGO, UNA/Africa 70 is carrying out the construction.

*Sanitation:* School sanitation and hygiene projects started in two schools in Burao town, Somaliland. The schools will serve pupils from internally displaced persons' camps. Exploratory drilling for an alternative water source for Hargeisa continued. UNICEF, through the international NGO Diakonia, will construct 30 latrines in Gara'ad and Kulub villages of Mudug region, Puntland, where facilities were destroyed by the tsunami that struck on 26 December 2004. Earlier in June, UNICEF donated 30 sets of sanitation tools for use by a local NGO in clean-up activities in displaced persons' camps in Bossaso, northeast Somalia.

In central and southern Somalia UNICEF trained 118 people in household sanitation and hygiene for prevention and control of cholera. The trainees were from Mahaday and surrounding riverine villages in Middle Shabelle and Goboto, Bakool Region.

## Education update...

*Back to school campaign:* UNICEF, the Somaliland administration, communities and youth groups established registration points for out-of-school children. The registration will assist in getting as many children back into school as possible. In Puntland, UNICEF carried out a child-to-child

registration drive in Bosasso, Gardo, Garowe, Galkayo, Hafun and Dangoray towns. The enumerators were 560 pupils supported by 30 teachers. Preliminary data revealed that there were 57,391 out-of-school children (of whom 53.5% were boys and 43.5% were girls). Between 150,000 and 200,000 children are estimated to be out of school in Puntland.

UNICEF continued discussions in Puntland with teachers and community elders in Gardo and Dangoray on the how to provide free coaching in Somali language and mathematics to out-of-school children during the current holiday break (June-September). UNICEF will provide education supplies and nominal financial support to the hosting schools. Similar initiatives are planned for the Garowe and Galkayo communities.

*Non-formal education:* Some 74 youth completed non-formal education courses in Mogadishu and Bule Burti in central and southern Somalia. Non-formal education (NFE) helps those who missed out on formal schooling to learn how to read and write. Some of the graduates later continue formal learning in primary schools.

*Training:* 40 people from Somaliland were trained in Hargeisa on educational instruction and management issues. The training covered areas such as teaching methodologies, gender and life skills, peace education, conflict-resolution and education management. Following the training, the trainees in turn facilitated in-service teacher workshops

## Emergency update...

Unusually heavy late season flooding in central and southern Somalia has affected about 25,000 families. In June, UNICEF provided relief items to 414 families displaced following floods in Huriwaa village, in Mahaday district, Middle Shabelle region. In July, as part of a UN inter-agency response, UNICEF undertook cleaning and chlorination of 25 wells serving villages in four districts (Jilib, Jamame, Bu'ale and Sakow).

The floods destroyed crops making people vulnerable to hunger. Water points were contaminated and sanitation facilities rendered useless. UNICEF trained communities in hygiene to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases. In mid-July, UNICEF, Save the Children Fund-UK, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Middle Shabelle administration organized a workshop to help build community capacities to respond to floods.

in seven regional training centres in Somaliland. Some 1,280 teachers from nearly 200 primary schools were trained in July with another batch due for training in August.

*Education policy:* The Puntland cabinet has approved the Puntland Education Policy Paper which was developed with support from UNICEF.

*Tsunami projects:* Construction of schools that were hit by the tsunami in Hafun, Handha, Hurdia, Foar and Baarmadoobe in Puntland continued. The construction should be complete before the 2005/2006 academic year starts in mid-September. A major constraint has been inaccessibility to the affected locations and lack of construction materials in the field.

*Displaced children:* UNICEF anticipates enrolment of more than 3,000 children from displaced communities throughout Puntland in the coming academic year. Special tents will be erected to cater for the additional numbers.

## HIV/AIDS...

*Advocacy:* Community leaders attended an advocacy and leadership training for HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Hargeisa during July. Earlier in June, 15 people were trained in raising awareness about HIV/AIDS issues among women and girls. In Mogadishu,

UNICEF and the Somali National Network of AIDS Services Organization (SONNASO) held a sensitization workshop for religious and traditional leaders and local authorities. A total of 126 people from the Benadir Region attended. The workshop ended with a declaration of commitment from the participants to work at community and family level to support efforts for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

*Advocacy:* In June, three HIV/AIDS awareness workshops were held in Jowhar, Dhusamareeb and Belet Weyne towns in central Somalia. Participants were religious and traditional leaders who have influence at the community level. They are vital in the work toward eradicating stigma and discrimination against people living with AIDS as well as promoting support and care for them.

*Counseling and testing:* UNICEF trained health staff from central and southern Somalia in preparation for the establishment of voluntary counseling and testing centres (VCT) for HIV/AIDS. UNICEF has supplied VCT equipment to a facility in Mogadishu's, Hayat Hospital. It became operational on 23 June. Upto mid-July the centre in Mogadishu had received 13 clients. A major challenge is the low awareness of the availability of VCT services and limited number of facilities to provide services.

## Communication for development...

*Station boosted:* The Somaliland Minister of Information and Guidance, Abdillahi Mohamed Duale, recently commissioned new equipment for the Somaliland National TV broadcasting station. Currently only covering Hargeisa, Somaliland, the station plans to expand its reach to the major towns of Berbera, Burao and Borama.

UNICEF undertook audience surveys to gather information on the development of programmes in Somaliland, Puntland and central/southern Somalia. UNICEF staff were also trained in community dialogue for development at a session held in Hargeisa, Somaliland. UNICEF and the Somaliland Ministry of Family Welfare and Social Development discussed possibilities of enhancing collaboration to strengthen the community dialogue processes.

## Youth development...

*Youth magazine:* A workshop was held in Hargeisa for youth representatives from throughout the country to review the content and quality of the youth publication called *Koor*. The publication, produced by youth with UNICEF support, discusses HIV/AIDS, conflict resolution, counseling, peace education and life skills. The first post-review edition of the publication is planned for early October 2005 and has expanded to include additional topics and issues.

*Training:* A three-week session in leadership for 32 youth from Somaliland and Puntland started in late July. Earlier in June, 22 youth from central and southern Somalia were trained as trainers in leadership and organizational development. Among the areas covered in the training was HIV/AIDS.

*Youth centre:* The rehabilitation of the Berbera Youth Multi-purpose Centre in Somaliland has been completed. In Mogadishu, UNICEF continues to support the Somali Youth and Development Network and receives about 20 readers daily. Most users of the centre are students from schools in its vicinity and adults. UNICEF has provided books and furniture. Among the constraints facing the centre are limited space and shortage of learning materials especially those for math, science and management.

*Sports supplies:* UNICEF donated sports equipment and materials to youth in Madera village in Middle Shabelle region.

## Child Protection...

*Child care:* UNICEF trained 27 participants from Somalia in care related to the psychological and social dimensions of their lives. UNICEF assessed the social support needed by street children in Borama and organized public education sessions for the community on the problems these children face. Programmes for street children continued in Mogadishu and Belet Weyne. These programmes seek to re-integrate children with their communities; provide education and medical care and to educate leaders and communities on the situation of children living in the street. A total of 231 street children are currently participating. In June, a workshop was held in Mogadishu to sensitize participants on the need to protect children living on the street. The participants were businessmen, security guards, community and religious leaders.

*Summit in Jo'burg:* UNICEF and three partner organizations from Somalia participated in a UN consultative meeting on violence against children held in Johannesburg, South Africa between 18 and 20 July 2005. The team from Somalia provided insights into the situation of children there. The UN consultation on violence against children is a global initiative that seeks to collect information on violence against children.

## Special events...

The Day of the African Child (DAC) was celebrated in major towns throughout Somalia on 16 June. The day was set aside by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the African Union, (AU) in 1990 as a day for African countries to rededicate themselves to improving the welfare of children. The highlight of the celebrations was the launch in Hargeisa of the Back to School campaign at a ceremony attended by members of the Somaliland cabinet.

Starting from August, UNICEF and the Somaliland administration will begin social mobilization activities to get children back to school and will open registration centres for them. In Mogadishu, the celebrations were attended by the Minister for Education in the Transitional Federal Government and representatives of UN agencies, NGOs and civil society.

*Advocacy:* A workshop on human rights issues and their link to child protection was organized in June by COGWO, a local NGO in Mogadishu. Participants were community leaders, human rights advocates and members of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The participants were briefed on international legal standards that protect the rights of children and in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Somalia is yet to ratify the CRC that it originally signed in 2003 through the then Transitional National Government (TNG). The TNG was formed after the Djibouti peace talks that preceded the Nairobi peace talks which in turn led to formation of the TFG. A meeting of the child protection network in Middle Shabelle was held in June to discuss ways in which the members could support child protection initiatives in collaboration with UNICEF.

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