

Somalia

Humanitarian Update

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Highlights

March 2005

Political:

The Somalia Transition Federal Government selected Baidoa and Jowhar as temporary relocation sites. In the last week of March fighting ensued in Baidoa. The situation remains tense.

Food Security:

Despite sufficient Deyr rains that helped to end a four years drought and is expected to result in good harvests, many parts of Somalia continue to experience food insecurity especially Aw-dal region in Somaliland where malnutrition of children under five years is 20.3%.

Security:

Hargeisa and the route to Mandera and Gebiley were last month downgraded from UN Security Phase 4 to 3 while the rest of Somaliland remained on Phase 4.

Tsunami Update:

Emergency needs in tsunami affected areas have largely been met. About 5% of the population is in a state of humanitarian emergency while 40% are experiencing livelihood crisis, requiring assistance until the next fishing season.

CAP 2005 : Funding for projects within the Somalia CAP 2005 remain low with only 3% of the appealed funds covered as of 7th April, 2005.

New Government identifies relocation sites in Somalia

This month saw a series of developments unfold around the Transition Federal Government's (TFG) relocation and the deployment of a peace support mission. The TFG delegation which travelled into Somalia, between 24th February and 4th March, was generally well received, yet incidents of fighting and demonstrations occurred over issues of relocation and deployment of IGAD frontline states troops.

Conflicting interests by faction leaders remained at a deadlock during Parliament's session on 17th March, 2005. IGAD's communiqué on 18 March reached a compromise by approving the deployment, of Sudanese and Ugandan troops to the peace support mission in a first phase. Other IGAD countries are expected to deploy in a subsequent phase.

On 21st March 2005, the Somali Council of Ministers voted to temporarily base the TFG in Baidoa and Jowhar until sufficient

security is restored in Mogadishu. However, the vote took place in the absence of about 10 out of 74 ministers, who left the meeting.

Fighting erupted in Baidoa on 26th March, 2005, when faction militias attacked demonstrators in favour of the temporary relocation of the TFG to Baidoa. It is unclear how many people died or were injured as a result of the fighting. International staff was relocated to Nairobi and National staff to Wajjid. Fighting was short lived but tensions remain high.

Any continued tensions in Baidoa will likely have an impact on the humanitarian situation, particularly on the livelihoods of the largely farming community. Many farmers have started preparing their land in preparation of the *Gu* (long rains season) planting season. If the conflict continues, it will interfere with the farming activities in the Bay region, thus affecting food availability and access.

Good *Deyr* rains ends drought but food security concerns remain

FOOD SECURITY

The Mayor of Berbera appealed for urgent UN assistance to combat locusts which were reported to have reached the eastern parts of Berbera in Somaliland. After an assessment by the Food Agriculture Organisation and Emergency Prevention System FAO/EMPRES, together with the Ministry of Agriculture, it was established that infestation was not significant. Also, present conditions were not favourable for breeding. The FAO/EMPRES carried out a control operation on March 4-12 and Placed the area under observation.

A preliminary rapid interagency situation assessment of the Awdal region calls for immediate humanitarian interventions in water, food, health and livelihood support to mitigate against continuing drought conditions in the area. The assessment was carried out following an interagency meeting on 12 March 2005 to discuss reports of worsening food security in the region. According to UNICEF, 20.3% of children under five years of age were moderately malnourished, while 2% are severely malnourished. Anaemia was also observed among women and children. The assessment team says the security situation of the areas visited was stable and calm and could facilitate humanitarian interventions.

The area is hosting pastoralist migrants from Shinille zone of Ethiopia who have increased by 30% compared to previous years thus exerting more pressure on limited natural resource. Livestock have poor body conditions due to scarcity of pasture, lack of water, diseases and long travel distance in search of water and pasture. This has in turn reduced food availability at household level (particularly milk production) as the communities rely mainly on livestock and livestock products. Veterinary services are almost non-existent in the visited areas. OCHA will share the finalized report once available.

Meanwhile, exceptionally good *deyr* rains have ended the 4 years drought and led to above average cereal production in most cropping areas. Still, around 500,000 people remain in a state of Humanitarian Emergency or Livelihood Crisis.

In north eastern Somalia, the good rains improved overall condition of pastures and livestock yet the time it will take pastoralist communities to recover will depend on the outcome of the next *gu* and *deyr* seasons. In central Somalia, ongoing and recurrent civil tensions limit access to grazing, markets and other resources.

Still, around 500,000 people remain in a state of Humanitarian Emergency or Livelihood Crisis, in addition to the 370,000-400,000 IDPs.

Malnutrition rates remain critically high in Gedo District

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Food and civil insecurity have persistently affected the people of Northern Gedo district. According to FSAU food security categorization, the main livelihood groups of Bulet Xawa, Dolow and Luuq are experiencing chronic food insecurity with about 29% of the population classified as being in a state of either emergency or livelihood crisis and in need of continuing humanitarian assistance.

High malnutrition continue to be recorded in Northern Gedo in January and February. 30% of the average 100 children screened in Bulet Xawa MCH were acutely malnourished, and 40% of the average 200 children screened in Luuq MCH malnourished. A critical nutrition situation was recorded in Luuq District in October 2004. Despite the need, insecurity hinders relief operations and disrupts trade operations. Many roadblocks exist on the main trade routes and heavy tax extortion by the militias continues. Data from Belet Xawa TFC recorded high

numbers of severely malnourished children of about 50 per month between November 2004 and January 2005. Most of the Belet Xawa TFC beneficiaries come from Belet Xawa town, as well as Malkariyey, Arracasse, Belet Amin IDP village and nearby villages of Dolow. A few cases come from villages across the Kenyan and Ethiopian borders.

Food insecurity, diseases, limited diet variety, poor sanitation, poor water quality and limited humanitarian access are some of the factors associated with the critical nutrition situation in Northern Gedo and the consistently high admission rate into the TFC. FSAU plans to establish a sentinel sites surveillance system in Northern Gedo in the coming months to monitor trends in the nutrition situation in the area. FSAU and partners also aim to undertake a nutrition assessment in Luuq or Bulet Xawa Districts in the course of 2005. (Source March FSAU Monthly Nutrition Update).



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Somalia tsunami affected in livelihood crisis

Tsunami Update

According to the Interagency Assessment Report released this month, existing emergency responses in the form of health, water, shelter, non food items and food have largely met immediate humanitarian needs.

About 5% of the total population (around 2,200 people) are in a state of humanitarian emergency and 40% of the total population (17,600 people) face livelihood crisis. This is based on the Food and Livelihood Security Classification developed for the Tsunami context. At least 50% of the assessed population (22,000 people) require sustained resource transfer in the form of food and/or cash assistance until the next fishing season in October 2005.

access

This is necessary in order for households to access basic food needs and alleviate severe financial pressures due to reduced fishing incomes. It is also contingent on the fishermen having access to fishing equipment in time for the next fishing season.

Local communities were affected by six different shocks over the past year (drought, floods, freezing temperatures, continued livestock ban, civil tension, and the tsunami), straining social support mechanisms and dampening the regional economy.

The team observed that the estimates of the overall impact of the Tsunami in terms of infrastructure damage, number of people affected, and overall severity were generally less than previously reported in earlier rapid assessments.

affected

The areas most affected by the Tsunami are Hafun, Bender Beyla, Dharin Raqas and Kulub, where substantial damage to housing and infrastructure occurred. In view of the fact that the affected communities were tied to the fishing industry, of which much of the gear and equipment was destroyed or damaged, the current priority is the rehabilitation of the fishing sector.

Another need is the provision of shelter. Hafun, Bender Beyla, Darin Ragas, and Kulub were badly affected in terms of damage to permanent structures and the need for

immediate reconstruction is highest and most critical in Hafun due to its location and exposure to high winds. OCHA's Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Indian Ocean Earthquake that caused the tsunami in December 2004 notes that the people of Hafun require urgent support for outright reconstruction of destroyed permanent houses. Some operational agencies, such as UNICEF, FAO, UNHCR and UN-HABITAT, have already planned recovery activities with existing funds. The remaining tsunami recovery needs that require funding will be addressed through the MTR of the Somalia CAP.

In view of the changes in the humanitarian context and in light of progress achieved, there is now a need to focus on the humanitarian needs of other vulnerable communities throughout Somalia. With attention diverted toward the tsunami, other life-saving projects in the CAP aimed at other equally, if not more vulnerable groups, risk being jeopardised.

In reference to the Somalia CAP 2005, the MTR notes that livelihood insecurity and overall vulnerability persist in numerous regions of Somalia, in addition to the tsunami-affected areas. Other vulnerable groups, including IDPs and destitute pastoralists, live in very poor and difficult conditions with minimum access to basic services and income generating opportunities.

malnutrition

The impact of sustained drought in some areas of the north has increased levels of child malnutrition. An estimated 900,000 Somalis face humanitarian and livelihood crises and require urgent assistance, especially in the south. Failure to address the needs of these communities could increase security risks and create potential challenges for the overall stability of the country.

Meanwhile, a new agency in Puntland, the Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency (HADMA) was formed by presidential decree to coordinate all emergency relief and livelihood recovery efforts. Its aim is to strengthen the coordination between government and humanitarian actors. As a priority, HADMA will develop an overall Puntland Humanitarian response plan.

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Hargeisa is downgraded to UN Security Phase 3

SECURITY

Hargeisa and the route to Mandera and Gembiley in western Somaliland have been downgraded from UN Security Phase 4 to Phase 3 following a security assessment that indicating that the security situation had improved. The rest of Somaliland remains at Phase 4.

In Somaliland, the trial of 10 people linked to the murder of four humanitarian workers in 2003 and 2004 begun on 24 March 2005 in Hargeisa.

Efforts to remove freelance militia roadblocks on the Belt-Weyne and Galkayo road have failed as new freelance militia managed checkpoints have appeared. Area administration attempted to consolidate the checkpoints in order to ease transport on this important road that links the north and southern parts of the country but the freelance militia resisted and introduced new checkpoints, which as a result has led to increased taxation of road users and heightened insecurity.

Control of revenue collected from this road is constantly contested and is a source of tension among rival groups in the Hiran region.

Renewed fighting in **Hobyo district, Mudug** (Central Somalia), between two sub clans of Habargir, the Saad and the Suleman reportedly left 16 people dead, despite a truce arranged by President Abdullahi Yusuf. The clashes

took place in and around the port town of Hobyo.

The conflicting parties have repeatedly fought over the control of territory since November 2004. Intermittent clashes continued in recent months with rival militias battling for the control of some disputed land. It is estimated that more than 150 people have died in the last two years while hundreds of others have become displaced as a result of the conflict. The area is now reportedly calm but tense.

Luuq Hospital in **Gedo District** continues to be closed and under militia control which is reportedly unsettling security in the district. The local authorities have attempted to intervene so far without success. Residents are eager to have the issue resolved because of prevailing health problems associated with the hot weather.

Fresh fighting between the Huber and Yantaar clans in Idale village, some 45 km from Baidoa towards Diinsoor, on 25th March reportedly resulted in the death of ten people and many others injured. Grain stores were burnt down in two villages and unknown number of people displaced.

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Airports re-open in Somaliland and Belet-Weyne

Access in Somaliland is set to improve after the Hargeisa Airport was reopened on 1 March 2005. The Airport was closed for repairs from 15 January to 28 February 2005 during which aid workers used the Berbera airstrip as an alternative.

Belet-weyne airstrip was temporarily closed to UNCAS flights at the beginning of the month due to a build up of militia presence at the airstrip. Their presence was attributed to a khat business disagreement. Though the UN planes were not targeted, flights were diverted to the nearest airport in the zone. Elders are negotiating with the traders to solve the matter amicably.

Access in the South Central region remains difficult. ECHO service provider Ross Air went bankrupt in February. ECHO has indicated that it will resume its flights into Somalia in July 2005. ECHO flights provided crucial access to areas in the South Central parts of the country that are otherwise inaccessible to UNCAS because of UN security regulations.

The UN Country Team met with the Somaliland Authority President and Council of Ministers to discuss working relations between the Authority and UN agencies.

The UN team expressed concern on the issue of access by the UN to the eastern regions of Sool and Sanaag where an estimated 119,000 (Food Security Analysis Unit of FAO estimates) remain in humanitarian emergency and livelihood crisis following more than four years of drought.

In 2002, the authorities had signed an agreement to facilitate unhindered access to the drought affected communities from either the Puntland or Somaliland side but the agreement not being fully adhered to.



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Somalia CAP 2005 funding update

Only 3% of the total amount of funding requested in the Somali Consolidated Appeal (CAP) 2005 has been covered at the end of the first quarter. To date only Economic Recovery and Infrastructure (4%), Food (4%), Protection (2%) Coordination and support Services (7%), and Water and Sanitation(30%) have received partial funding as per the table below.

Some 500,000 people are in a state of humanitarian emergency and livelihood crisis following four years of drought in northern and Central Somalia and approximately 400,000 IDPs, are in dire need of assistance for livelihood recovery support, access to basic social services and protection.

Projects in the CAP address life saving measures to help vulnerable populations become more resilient to crisis and enhance protection and human rights.

Sector	Appealed Amount	Received Amount	Unmet needs
Agriculture	18,757,667	0	18,757,667
Coordination and Support Services	9,192,970	636,301	8,556,669
Economic Recovery and Infrastructure	3,000,000	0	3,000,000
Education	11,984,153	0	11,984,153
Family Shelter and non-food items	2,624,670	0	2,624,670
Food	45,200,000	1,591,788	43,608,212
Mine Action	9,612,564	0	9,612,564
Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law	28,775,017	480,000	28,295,017
Security	990,000	0	990,000
Water and sanitation	4,163,261	1,247,000	2,916,216
Grand Total	164,163,170	4,604,289	159,859,881

Source: OCHA's Financial Tracking System as per 7 April 2005: www.reliefweb.int

IDPs issues are addressed in Puntland and Somaliland

Interagency IDP working groups in both **Hargeisa**, Somaliland, and **Garowe**, Puntland, met toward the end of the month to finalise their TORs and draft Strategic Action Plans for 2005.

In Somaliland, the main issues discussed evolved around the implementation of the Action Plan and mechanisms for joint monitoring and evaluation. UNICEF conducted a 3-day workshop on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) from 12-14 March for 35 partners from local and international NGOs and the UN. The objective of the workshop was to follow guidelines as per the Strategic Action Plan and provide skills for local NGOs to conduct a PRA. UNICEF has selected five IDP camps for quick impact interventions (three in Hargeisa, one in Burao and one in Berbera) and Ayaha and Dami camps in Hargeisa were selected for the PRA exercise during the workshop. A plan of action was prepared for both sites where communities identified school fees as the most severe problem. Based on these plans, UNICEF will implement Quick Impact interventions in the two sites. In the meantime, as a pilot project, the Norwegian Refugee Council received a plot of land donated by the Municipality of Hargeisa in Ayaha – a few kilometers from the center of Hargeisa - to erect low-cost housing for 20 families (approx 120-140 people). Beneficiaries will be selected from among the IDPs & Returnees.

In Puntland, UN-HABITAT has finalized a feasibility study on the viability of public land allocated for IDPs in Puntland and a similar study will follow in Somaliland.

This update is prepared by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Somalia.
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