



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN SOMALIA

Monthly Analysis

March 2006

This report was written in cooperation with the UN Agencies in Somalia

HIGHLIGHTS

The end of March 2006 saw some rainfall in parts of Somalia including Lower Juba, parts of Gedo, Bakool, Awdal, and the Hawd of Hargeisa. According to FEWS NET, heavy rain also fell over the south-eastern highlands of Ethiopia, which could flow downstream along the Juba and Shabelle rivers in Somalia. Still, while the start of the 2006 *Gu* rains is highly welcome, it is too early to determine its effect on the present drought which is rapidly deteriorating in southern Somalia. The rains do not bring much relief to households that have already suffered from severe livelihood asset loss and there is no guarantee that they will continue. According to the Seventeenth Climate Outlook Forum for the Greater Horn of Africa which was held in early March, the 2006 *Gu* rains will likely be near to below normal in Somalia, the only exceptions being some coastal areas of Juba Valley and parts of Awdal Region in the North, which may receive near to above normal *Gu* rains.

Access in southern Somalia continues to pose a real operational problem. On 21 March, in Salagle village (Sakow district, Middle Juba), food distribution by WFP was temporarily suspended due to a security incident which resulted in the killing of at least one civilian. In Lower and Middle Juba, road blocks have reportedly been on the increase, while continued acts of piracy remain an issue. In Mogadishu, fighting that resumed on 22 March between the "Alliance for the restoration of peace and counter terrorism" and the Islamic Courts raised critical concern on humanitarian access to and protection of civilians in the capital. Despite the extremely difficult environment, aid organizations are managing to provide some assistance.

While the aid community is engaged in responding to the humanitarian crisis in southern Somalia, full recognition must go to local Somali initiatives that have been on-going since the onset of the drought. In one example in Mogadishu, over US\$ 230,000 cash has been raised over the past two months in a significant mobilisation effort by Somali civic actors. Nearly 500 metric tonnes (MT) of food and a number of water tankers are also being provided for local communities in the affected areas of Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle.

A total of 199 wild polio virus cases have now been confirmed in Somalia since the first case emerged in July 2005. 185 cases were confirmed in 2005, and another 14 have been identified since the start of 2006. Polio was eradicated in Somalia in 2002, but now the country poses one of the greatest threats to the global eradication of polio. As part of relentless efforts to halt the polio outbreak, a round of national immunization days (NIDs) has just been completed and another is scheduled for early May.

On 21 March, the Somalia 2006 revised Humanitarian Appeal was launched in Nairobi. Targeting around 2.1 million people, more than double the caseload identified in December 2005, the revised Appeal requests \$US 326 million in support of 92 projects. The Appeal in December 2005 requested around \$US 174 million. Almost 83% of the increase is due to food relief requirements until the end of 2006. To date, as per information received and recorded, the Somalia Appeal has received over US\$ 84 million, with other known pledges in the pipeline. Donor support in this first quarter of 2006 has proven very generous and is hoped will be sustained, particularly given the poor forecast for the coming 2006 *Gu* season.

On 7 March a Regional Humanitarian Appeal for the Greater Horn of Africa was also launched in Nairobi, in the presence of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mr. Jan Egeland. Requesting for nearly US\$ 426 million, the Regional Appeal includes the Somalia specific Appeal. Speaking at the event, the ERC mentioned that while food is paramount, support must also go towards other key sectors such water, sanitation, and emergency health in order to prevent massive loss of life.

ACCESS and SECURITY

As one of the worse drought affected regions, access to Gedo during the month of March remained somewhat stable compared to last month, with some aid organizations able to deliver assistance unhindered. Garbaharey and Luuq districts remained open for UN air and ground operations (Luuq still only open to UN national staff) and a WHO polio team was able to undertake a polio vaccination mission to Bardera district. This said, the situation remains highly fragile and security remains an issue of concern for humanitarian access in Gedo as well as other drought affected areas of southern Somalia.

In Mogadishu, intense fighting resumed on 22 March between militia allied to the “Alliance for the restoration of peace and counter terrorism” and the Islamic Courts, ending in the former’s loss of control over northern Mogadishu. While consolidated and corroborated numbers are hard to collect, the fighting caused significant displacement, deaths and injuries. As the fighting quieted down, many civilians returned to their homes, while others fled to camps along the Kenyan border and to urban centers. Still, mediation attempts by elders have failed and reports indicate that more fighting is highly likely as both sides are regrouping and rearming. The fighting not only comes at a poor time for the political process but also raises critical concerns regarding humanitarian access to and protection of civilians in the capital. While civilians have so far not been deliberately targeted, there are limited capacities to monitor their situation. In addition, clashes like this can affect the delivery and access of humanitarian aid. About 6,000 MT of WFP food aid was stuck for five days until the fighting ceased.

As mentioned in the last monthly report, March started grimly in Lower Juba with the kidnapping of a UN international staff member in Afmadow district who was thankfully released after thirty hours. Field reports from Middle and Lower Juba have indicated an increase in road blocks between Afmadow and Dhobley and Buale and Sakow set up by rural youth who are looking to make some income at checkpoints. On 21 March, WFP-contracted trucks with WFP food aid were being unloaded at a food distribution in Salagle village in Sakow district, Middle Juba, when two local militias exchanged gunfire killing at least one civilian and wounding several others. The food distribution was stopped and WFP staff withdrew. The Agency has denounced the incident calling upon all local actors to do what is in their power to enable free and safe passage of aid personnel and assistance. Despite the precarious situation which causes a lot of unnecessary delays, interruptions and greatly hampers speedy deliverance of humanitarian aid, WFP managed to deliver food aid to most of the planned locations in the drought stricken regions.

In this regard, advocacy efforts on unhindered humanitarian access carried on during the month. The “Statement of Commitment” on access and protection has been shared with various local authorities to garner grass-root support and respect for humanitarian space for aid operations in southern Somalia. Clearly this is only one tool of a broader advocacy strategy which will involve dialogue and confidence-building with various levels of authority as well as with local communities.

Acts of piracy were again committed during the month, with one near miss for aid commodities. On 13 March, a vessel that had just unloaded WFP food aid in Merka narrowly escaped an attempted hijacking. On 18 March, two US Navy ships exchanged gunfire with suspected pirates off the coast of Harardhere, killing one and taking several others, including the injured. More recently, on 5 April, pirates seized a South Korean fishing boat, capturing the crew members. The UN Security Council’s Presidential Statement on Somalia on 15 March encouraged naval forces operating in international waters off the Somali coast to take appropriate action to protect commercial and humanitarian aid shipments. In its 20 March Communiqué, the IGAD resolved to work together to combat the menace.

After an encouraging first half of the month over activities related to the continued sitting of the Transitional Federal Parliament, the security situation in and around Baidoa slowly deteriorated due to the presence of roaming militia who returned from the ‘cantonments’ where they were encamped some 30 kms outside Baidoa town. Unpaid and unfed, the militia’s return to Baidoa resulted in high crime incidences and general insecurity to which the authorities in Baidoa responded by imposing a curfew on the town on 20 March. In the last week of March, Baidoa was also closed to all UN international staff until further notice. Means of addressing the payment, feeding and sheltering of the militia as soon as possible are being looked into, including by the UN. The continuation of the current situation could further negatively impact on the security in the area as well as on the parliamentary sittings. On the other hand, some of these issues could be addressed shortly bringing some positive developments to access and security in southern Somalia generally. The Digil and Mirifle reconciliation process in Bakool, which has reportedly been making steady pace could also bring about positive developments.

Access in the northeast continued to be relatively stable with unimpeded access for UN humanitarian interventions throughout the area. Security incidents, however, mar the environment. Armed gangs have reportedly been on the increase in Garowe, for which elders have intervened to halt the trend. Arms proliferation has also reportedly been on the rise, resulting in increased shootings in the main centers of Garowe and Bossaso. In Garowe, tension remains connected to a cabinet reshuffle which occurred at the end of February, following (and since) which all UN international staff were relocated to Bossaso.

PROTECTION

Despite the unfortunate incident which resulted in the interruption of the UNICEF/OCHA mission to Lower and Middle Juba in early March 2006, the mission was able to note significant drought induced movement in Buale and Sakow districts due to lack of water and fodder. In Buale, the villages of Arabow, Sariiro, Kudiyaq, and Humbusale – located 50 to 120 Kms from the Juba river, the closest water source - were empty as inhabitants abandoned their homes to move to riverine villages and Buale town. Other villages closer to the river (15 to 20 kms) such as Warabato, Dasa, Waraba Gub, Harganti, Waraha Dhobley, Bulo Golol, Bulo Gadud and Ahmed Sahal were almost empty, those remaining owning some means of transport to fetch and cart water back and forth. In Sakow district, unconfirmed numbers of people had moved to Sakow town or Galooley village, both of which have functioning boreholes, or to riverine villages in neighbouring Jilib district. It was not easy to confirm numbers due to the absence of concentration points and all nomadic communities were dispersed in the bush.

In February, a population movement information database was established to centralise and analyse field reports that track drought induced population movements. The tracking process is currently being stream-lined to increase the number of partners, particularly to monitor the cross border movements, which will help enhance the understanding of trends. The analysis thus far clearly indicates that search for water remains the most critical push factor for people to abandon their homes. This has resulted in a pull factor to riverine areas and urban centres. This month, the analysis noted an increasing concentration of people in places such as Bardera town (Gedo region) and Afmadow town (Lower Juba), as well as significant movements from Bay to Lower Shabelle districts of Marka, Qorooley and Kurtunwaarey. With the current movement patterns, the high concentration of people and animals around already limited water points will increase the potential of conflict. In a more worrying development, the over consumption of limited water resources is depleting different water points and drying up wells.

In the third week of March, approximately 1,700 individuals arrived in two big groups from Somalia into Dadaab Refugee Camp in northern Kenya. It is still not clear if these individuals left the country as a result of the drought or due to the recent fighting in Mogadishu. Verification by UNHCR is on-going to obtain more information, particularly in the more rural areas where their presence can be less apparent.

As a result of the deteriorating drought situation protection concerns such as the potential for conflict, recurrent and multiple displacements of people, forced evictions and access to aid persist. Coping mechanisms continue to include families splitting to seek resources and aid, conserving livestock herds by seeking new water sources and grazing lands, and/or identifying income alternatives including day labour in urban settlements. Search for security and social support through protective clan bases remains an important element in population movement decision. An equal protection concern is whether or not the displaced have access to sufficient assistance in their new locations of displacement.

Ethiopian Migrants and Smuggling in Puntland

The month of March witnessed continued smuggling of Ethiopian migrants and Somali nationals from ports in Puntland to Yemen. A particularly highly worrying issue is the dramatic number of Ethiopians crossing the Gulf of Aden. During the first two months of this year, 211 Ethiopian (including 49 women) and 3,329 Somalis (including 370 women) were officially registered with UNHCR in Yemen. Between 1 and 29 March, 1,263 Somalis and 1,467 Ethiopians reportedly arrived in Yemen on 23 ships. While the figure for Ethiopians migrants is an approximation based on information gathered and cross-referenced from interviews with Somalis and Ethiopians that did register with UNHCR (most Ethiopians do not register with UNHCR as they do not enjoy automatic refugee status in Yemen, but rather proceed to other neighbouring countries), it still provides a realistic idea of the severity and magnitude of the smuggling. The increase in March can also partially be attributed to the fact that in the coming months it will be difficult for smaller ships to cross the high sea due to the bad conditions brought on by the monsoon, and that people are therefore rushing to try the crossing now.

The Yemeni coastguard has intensified patrolling on the Arabian Sea leading to an increase in gun shooting incidents with smugglers' boats. In one such incident, on March 11, four immigrants (three Ethiopians including a female and one Somali) were killed in Mayfa Hajar in Yemen when Yemeni coastguards opened fired on a smuggler ship carrying 80 passages (47 Ethiopians and 33 Somalis). In another tragic accident, a shooting incident took place on 13 March in Shabwa, Yemen, involving two boats with 252 passengers (201 Ethiopians and 51 Somalis) and resulting in the death of two Ethiopians (one male and female each). In all, during March, a total of 12 Ethiopians and six Somali immigrants were killed in different shooting and drowning incidents.

The WFP/DRC emergency food assistance programme which started in November 2005 to provide life-saving assistance to over 2,000 Ethiopian migrants in Bossaso (Puntland) was formally closed down on 11 March 2006. In the final stages of the feeding programme, UNHCR and DRC monitored the responses and intentions of Ethiopians. To ensure continued respect for basic human rights even after the closure of the feeding programme, and to find a

durable solution for the Ethiopian emigrants, UNHCR's Somalia Country Representative met with senior government officials in Bossaso in early March. The latter assured UNHCR of their commitment to respect human rights without any discrimination based on nationality, ethnic origin, religion or gender and reiterated their request for support from the international community to solve the smuggling issue from Bossaso. Following a meeting with the President of Yemen on 30 March, the President of Puntland later announced that the two governments have agreed to collaborate to stop the illegal smuggling of migrants from Bossaso to the Gulf of Aden.

Meanwhile, different UN agencies, including UNHCR, OCHA, and UNDP together with IOM continue to work to implement a "one-off" assistance to facilitate the return of willing Ethiopians under an Assisted Voluntary Return programme, as well as continue with advocacy efforts to raise awareness on the issue. To find a lasting solution, the issue of Ethiopian migrants has to be addressed jointly by the aid partners, and authorities from Ethiopia, Yemen, and Somalia while effectively addressing and combating smuggling.

In Somaliland, a meeting of the Protection Working Group on 11 March focused on Gender Based Violence (GBV). Different forms of GBV exist in Somaliland including sexual violence (rape and attempted rape), domestic violence, trafficking and harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation. At two workshops held in Hargeisa in August and November 2005, it was reported that more than 100 cases of rape were referred to Hargeisa Group Hospital in 2005, one third of which were against children under 16 years of age. Many cases went uninvestigated and perpetrators never brought to justice. Particular concerns were raised regarding rape and sexual assault against displaced, minority and vulnerable women and children. There is need to strengthen the response of the justice system (law enforcement, judiciary and customary law mechanisms) to ensure apprehension, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators. Efforts should also be made to ensure access to effective medical services, psychological support for the victims/survivors of violence, and the establishment of a referral network to ensure effective access to services. The Protection Working Group is now working on finalizing an action plan to deal with GBV.

On 26 March, UNICEF inaugurated a GBV workshop to be conducted in three phases targeting participants from Puntland, Somaliland and south Somalia. The aim of the workshop is to facilitate the development of a framework to understand and respond to GBV. In collaboration with UNICEF and UNDP's Rule of Law Programme, the Somaliland Lawyers Association organized a workshop on the draft juvenile justice bill from 26 to 28 March. The workshop was attended by government officials, human rights organizations, members of Guurti (Council of Elders) and women's organizations.

HEALTH and NUTRITION

Malnutrition levels in drought affected areas have persistently been serious but the heightened concern is the prevailing aggravating factors like deteriorating diet, reduced food intake, poor water and sanitation and the compromised childcare and feeding practices, which potentially might undermine the population wellbeing and finally lead to increased mortality levels. The findings of a nutrition assessment in Gedo region (not including Bardera Town) conducted by FAO/FSAU in cooperation with Gedo Health Consortium, UNICEF, WFP, FEWS NET, the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS) and COSV between 19 and 29 March reported a critical nutrition situation and 'alert' crude and under five mortality rates. Adopting a 30 by 30 cluster sampling methodology on 922 randomly selected children aged 6-59 months from 4,367 households, global acute malnutrition was recorded at 23.8%, while severe acute malnutrition at 3.7%. Crude mortality rate was reported at 1.04 per 10,000 people per day, while under-five mortality rate at 2.46 per 10,000 people per day.

In other drought affected areas, such as Bay and Bakool regions, FAO/FSAU sentinel surveillance has shown generally high levels of malnutrition. In Lower and Middle Juba, following reports of high malnutrition, a nutritional survey is presently being planned to take place in April. Also in the course of April 2006, 18 new supplementary feeding programmes (SFP) are expected to become operational targeting about 16,000 malnourished in Bay, Bakool, and Middle Juba regions. The SFPs will be implemented by World Vision International, International Medical Corp (IMC), Somali NGO DMO and SRCS with the support of UNICEF and WFP. Plans are also underway to open 5 new therapeutic feeding programmes (TFC) with capacity of 300 beneficiaries in Bakool by MSF- Belgium, *Action Contre la Faim* and IMC with UNICEF support. This will bring the total to 28 SFPs and seven TFCs for southern and central Somalia.

A total of 199 wild polio virus cases have now been confirmed since the first case emerged in July 2005; 185 cases were confirmed in 2005, and another 14 have been identified since the start of 2006. As part of relentless efforts to halt the polio outbreak in Somalia, a round of national immunization days (NIDs) - which has just concluded in most parts of the country -- commenced on 26 March 2006. Approximately 1.4 million children under-five were expected to be covered during this round. Benadir has been the epicenter of the outbreak reporting 158 cases (85% of the total) in 2005. Thanks to repeated supplemental immunization activities, the number of cases in Banadir plummeted significantly to only three wild poliovirus cases out of 14 in 2006. The virus has, however, spread to new regions, including Lower Shabelle, Bay, Sool, Middle Shabelle, Gedo, Mudug, and more recently, Lower Juba. Effective active acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) surveillance has been maintained in the last few months to ensure that AFP cases -- as well as measles cases -- are

reported and paid the due attention. The next scheduled NID is from 2 to 4 May 2006 followed by additional rounds on 4-6 June and 9-11 July 2006. Given the extent and coverage of the polio virus outbreak, Somalia now poses one of the greatest threats to the global eradication of polio.

As scheduled, catch-up immunization measles campaigns in drought affected areas were completed in March in the worse drought affected regions of Bay, Gedo, Middle and Lower Shabelle. The target population is children between 9 months and 15 years of age, and preliminary reports estimate coverage of around 70% for all districts reached in the regions. Preparations are now being finalized to conduct the vaccination in the 13 districts that were not covered. Two districts in Gedo region will start the campaign in the second week of April to be followed by the others shortly after. As part of epidemiologic surveillance of communicable diseases, weekly reporting forms have been distributed by WHO for use by health facilities to report on diseases including measles.

This surveillance system forms part of an early warning, alert and response mechanism to possible outbreaks including measles. The forms were used in the reporting and response to measles cases by IMC in Hudur district. Investigations indicated that the cases were among families who refused to vaccinate children during the campaign but thankfully the outbreak was contained. To support early detection of outbreaks, a two days orientation for 120 Community Health Workers (CHWs), Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) and religious leaders was conducted in collaboration with WHO and World Vision International in Tieglow (Bakool) and Burkhakaba (Bay) districts.



WVI administering polio vaccines in Wajid. Source: OCHA

As mentioned last month, an increase in suspected malaria cases has been noted since the beginning of the year. According to information collected by Maternal and Child Health (MCH) facilities and hospitals, 3,527 suspected cases were reported in March through WHO's Weekly Surveillance System. Central Somalia has reported the highest number. Malaria control interventions vary across the country according to differences in malaria transmission areas (from low to high). Effective malaria treatment (Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy - ACT) is being introduced across the country to replace drugs to which there is high resistance. MCH and Hospital staff are being trained on new treatment guidelines and to date, the staff of more than 50 MCHs and seven Hospitals in the Central-South; 55 MCHs and three Hospitals in Somaliland and more than 20 MCHs in Puntland have received training. The aim is to complete all training in time for Africa Malaria Day (25 April 2006). The Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy is comprised of two drugs, artesunate and sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine, and distribution to the facilities that have been trained has commenced. As severely malnourished are particularly vulnerable to malaria, ACT is provided through the TFCs operating in Somalia. Alongside the new drugs, Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) are being introduced. These tests are simple to use in order to confirm malaria diagnosis and are useful where reliable microscopy is not available. Africa Malaria Day is being used to launch the introduction of ACTs and RDTs. Events, radio spots and community activities will be held in order to mark the day across Somalia.

Long-lasting insecticide treated nets are being distributed targeting the most vulnerable, pregnant women and children under the age of five. A recent shipment of ITNs (60,000) will be distributed to vulnerable groups affected by the drought and in highly endemic areas in southern Somalia. A team at the Kemri-Wellcome Trust has completed a preliminary risk mapping of malaria in Somalia that will be used to guide future interventions. In April, a presentation and discussion of this work will take place. In addition, two WHO consultants visited northern Somalia in order to devise work on epidemic preparedness for malaria. The outcomes of the consultancy will be shared during April.

HIV/AIDS

The South Central AIDS Commission (SCAC) was launched on 13 March, 2006 on the sides of an extraordinary session of the Somalia Transitional Federal Parliament in Baidoa. All the three zones of Somalia now have AIDS coordination mechanisms, with Puntland and Somaliland having established their own commissions and secretariats six months ago. Greater coordination of HIV/AIDS response at the national level is recognised as a global best practice for effective prevention, control, treatment, care and support. The launching of the SCAC thus marks an important milestone that could usher in the process of creating a unified AIDS coordination authority for Somalia.

The modalities of the second year of Global Fund HIV/AIDS activities starting in July 2006 were elaborated during the reporting period. A call for proposals from implementing partners was released on 4 April - up to 44% of the available resources from the Global Fund are earmarked for Somali organisations, including NGOs, Government Ministries as well as the AIDS Commissions. The current call for proposals focuses on three interventions: documentation of good practice on HIV programming in Somalia; community education and awareness raising; and strengthening of umbrella HIV

response groups. Proposals for the latter two interventions are limited to Somali national organizations. Other activities such as behaviour change communication and strengthening of the AIDS coordination structures that have been conducted during year one of the Global Fund will continue into the second year.

As part of in-country capacity building, UNAIDS will conduct training on HIV/AIDS monitoring and evaluation for 30 participants – 20 from Puntland and 10 from South Central Somalia - in mid April 2006. The training will focus on the use of Country Response Information System (CRIS), a UNAIDS information management tool for effective tracking of the national HIV response.

LIVELIHOODS and FOOD SECURITY

The crisis in southern Somalia is rapidly deteriorating as water sources become scarcer and food security is incrementally stressed. Lack of water accessibility is the main factor affecting livelihoods and the well-being of the affected population: lack of water and pasture is causing distressed population movement; remaining water sources are not sufficient to meet the needs of both humans and livestock, and in some areas are not fit for consumption; livestock and humans are concentrating around water points adding pressure to local resources; and resource based conflict between in-migrating pastoralists and local farmers from riverine communities continue. According to field reports, cattle deaths have been on the increase in Gedo and Lower Juba although exact figures are hard to confirm. Due to poor body condition and lack of demand in the markets, the price of livestock has decreased, while owing to severe shortages, cereal prices continue to increase. A quick assessment by Save the Children UK in Lower Juba, Middle Juba and Southern Gedo reported that in Sakow district (Middle Juba) 100% of the schools have been closed due to the drought, that in Bardera town (Gedo) no school is functioning, and that in Afmadow (Lower Juba) the school dropout rate has reached 60%.

According to field reports and FEWS NET, the end of March saw some rainfall in parts of Somalia including Lower Juba, parts of Gedo, Bakool, Awdal, and the Hawd of Hargeisa. Heavy rain also fell over the south-eastern highlands of Ethiopia, which could flow downstream along the Juba and Shabelle rivers in Somalia increasing water availability. Still, while the start of the 2006 *Gu* rains is highly welcome, it is too early to determine its effect on the present situation and there is no assurance that the rains will continue. Furthermore, the rains do not bring much relief to households that have already suffered from severe livelihood asset loss.

In terms of the drought response, this continues to be most advanced in Bay and Bakool regions, with activities having picked up during the month in Gedo, Middle and Lower Juba. OCHA has established coordination mechanism in these regions to help promote and beef-up activities. In Lower and Middle Juba in particular, discussions included river embankment interventions should the rains eventually come.

In Somaliland, in areas that received good *Deyr* rains, pastoralists have been experiencing the positive effects of the rain and seeing aspects of their livelihoods restored (rangeland resources, water availability, kidding and milk production). Recovery is threatened, however, in areas that received poor rain. An emergency interagency assessment led by the National Environment Research and Management Disaster Preparedness Authority (NERAD), was fielded between 21 to 26 Feb (NERAD, Ministry of Water and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Education, FSAU, UNICEF, WFP, HAVOYOCO and OXFAM/GB) and recommended immediate water trucking in the areas of Farawayne, Balli-gubadle and Salahley. Water trucking is currently underway by HAVOYOCO supported by DRC and UNICEF, for which the Somaliland government, local businessmen and Diaspora members have also made donations. UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Labour has also established three mobile clinics to cover around 25 villages in the areas of Faraweine, Balababadleh, Sabowanaag and Salahlay.

FAO/FSAU field reports also indicated concern over water scarcity in most parts of the pastoral environs in the Hawd of Hargeisa and the Sool plateau that did not receive good *Deyr* rains. Water crisis is mainly experienced in areas where communities rely on *berkads*. The price of one water barrel currently ranges from US\$ 3 to 5 compared to US\$ 0.6 in normal times. Pastoralists are coping by incurring loans and selling more livestock. Another interagency assessment led by NERAD (with UNICEF, WFP, OXFAM-GB, PENHA, HAVOYOCO and CANDLELIGHT, in addition to national & international agencies on the ground) was fielded to Togdheer, Sool and Sanaag between 1 to 5 April to identify priority interventions. Concern was raised that the assessment was too late given that the driest months are from January to March.

Somali community-based mobilisation for drought response - Mogadishu

Over \$230,000 cash has been raised over the past two months in a significant mobilisation effort by Somali civic actors in response to the worst drought in a decade. In addition, nearly 500 MT of food and a number of water tankers are being provided for local communities in the affected areas of Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle.

Organisation and fund-raising A drought committee was established in Mogadishu on 30 January comprising 30 prominent Mogadishu civic actors (including civil society, religious and business community leaders). A steering sub-committee plans the distribution response. Bank accounts were opened in leading remittance companies to facilitate donations, promote public confidence in the transparency and accountability of the drought committee, and provide the basis for sustained fund-raising. Over \$230,000 cash had been raised by the end of March in this ongoing effort, in addition to in-kind contributions including 16 water tankers (eight donated by Mogadishu business community, and eight rented by the committee). The successful fund-raising is being seen as a symbol of the commitment of the Somali people to support one another and as a demonstration of effective organisation of civic responsibility.

There has been active engagement by civil society, both individually and institutionally, in mobilising funds locally and from the Diaspora. For example, in just four hours, a fund-raising telethon on 17 February raised over \$73,000 cash (as well as donations of gold, food and clothes). Contributions ranged from \$50 to \$15,000, with 60% of contributions made by women. The telethon was organised jointly by Somali Institute of Management and Administration Development (SIMAD) and Radio Horn Afrik with the assistance of three telecoms companies (NationLink, Hormood and Telecom), which donated 25 free local/international telephone lines installed in the conference hall of SIMAD. Horn Afrik aired details of the phone lines and bank accounts for two days in advance of the telethon event, which was broadcast live on Radio Horn Afrik in Somalia and east Africa and via satellite to the Diaspora in the Gulf, Europe and North America. Initially most donations were from Mogadishu. Subsequently, significant contributions were made by the Puntland civic community (\$34,000), the Diaspora in Canada (\$20,000), from the UK, UAE and Gulf. Other initiatives include the donation by Dahabshil remittance company of the cost of 150 water tankers for Togdheer region in association with the Somaliland government and Somali NGOs.

Assessment and response The Mogadishu-based drought committee led an assessment mission in early February to affected areas in Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Middle Jubba, Middle and Lower Shabelle. Water tankers and distribution of 450MT of food are continuing in the affected areas with a particular focus on Gedo and Bakool. In order to address the problem of destitute families, a food kitchen was opened in Baraawe district at the end of March, feeding 900 people twice a day. A second was set up in Salagle (Lower Juba) for the victims of the fire that destroyed Salagle village. If, or when the rains come, the committee plans rapid re-stocking through small-scale purchase of livestock and community redistribution systems, with seed distribution to agro pastoralist families to support destitute families and deter urban migration.

Location	Rice 50kg	Flour/grain 50kg	Arabian Dates 50kg	Oil MT	MT
Gedo	1436	932	500	15.6	159
Lower Shabelle	150	1100	100	4.4	71.9
Middle Juba	---	1000	500	4	79
Bakool	200	1000	500	6.7	91.7
Bay	---	600	---	2	32
Middle Shabelle	---	340	---	2	19
Metric Tons	89.3	248.6	80	34.7	452.6

Access The distribution effort faces significant logistical and access challenges. Four of the 16 water tankers returned early to Mogadishu to avoid getting stuck in remote areas if the *Gu* rains start. Checkpoint militia can cause delays, often demanding cash payments to allow convoys to pass. In order to minimise access problems, significant preparation is required prior to any distribution. Contact is made with community leaders, NGOs and civic actors to mobilise the community. Where possible, traditional and religious leaders and women come to the checkpoints ahead of deliveries to talk to militia and gain free access. If the community is not fully prepared (for example, if significant figures are absent or there is internal disagreement), community leaders will inform the convoys of the need to delay delivery.

Given the prospect of a continuing crisis for the coming months, and worsening conditions if the *Gu* rains fail, the issues of security and humanitarian access are of paramount concern. It is hoped that community-based distribution of aid donations in the affected areas may improve understanding in local communities of humanitarian efforts and thus result in enhanced access for the international humanitarian response as well. The support of the wider Somali community, in-country and through the Diaspora, for the people in need in areas of south Somalia, may also be seen as part of the continuing shift towards reconciliation. Somali civic actors also appreciate the recognition of their efforts by the international aid community. Besides the Mogadishu committee, other local committees exist in Bay (Baidoa), Lower Juba (Kismayo), Lower Shabelle (Merka), and Gedo at different district levels.

CONSOLIDATED APPEALS PROCESS (CAP) and COORDINATION

The revised 2006 Somalia CAP was launched on 21 March in Nairobi in the presence of the Chairman of the TFG's Disaster Committee (Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Finance). The revised CAP seeks \$US 326,718,040 (up from \$US 174,116,815 in December 2005), in support of 92 projects (up from the original 77) targeting 2.1 million people (up from around 1 million in December). Almost 83% of the increase is due to food relief requirements until the end of 2006. As a result of the prevailing drought conditions and taking into account the time needed for pastoralists to recover from the large scale of livestock loss, key partners in the food sector decided to plan for a continuation of general food distributions in southern Somalia until the end of the year. Funding requirements for food have increased by 280% from the amount requested in the original Appeal.

2006 Somalia CAP ¹	
Sector	% Coverage
Agriculture	5
Coordination & Support Services	19
Economic Recovery	0
Education	0
Food	40
Health	6
Multi-sector	5
Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law	14
Security	10
Shelter & Non-Food Items	0
Water & Sanitation	0
TOTAL	26

As per information recorded, the Somalia CAP is presently 26% covered with US\$ 84,779,770 so far committed and other known pledges in the pipeline. Donors have shown a marked interest in Somalia in this first quarter of 2006, which is hoped will be sustained in the coming months, particularly given the poor forecast for the coming 2006 *Gu* season. Consistent with past patterns, the best funded sector is food, with other key sectors such as education, health and agriculture lagging behind. While food is undoubtedly a high priority in the drought response, support to other sectors must not be forsaken and is critical to mobilizing an integrated response to the drought needs.

As parts of efforts to raise Somalia's profile, a trip to Stockholm, Brussels and Geneva in Europe, as well as New York City and Washington DC in the United States by representatives of the UN Country Team was just recently completed. Following the meeting in Stockholm, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden issued a joint Communiqué confirming their support to the needs highlighted in the revised CAP. The four countries stressed the importance of the need for unhindered humanitarian access in order to reach those in need, and confirmed their support to the recently established Somalia Inter-Agency Standing Committee and cluster leadership.

On 7 April, the Regional Humanitarian Appeal for the drought in the Horn of Africa was launched in Nairobi in the presence of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mr. Jan Egeland. The Regional Appeal of nearly US\$ 426 million includes the Somalia specific Appeal and provides a second entry point for international support to Somalia.

Beyond the CAP, Somalia has benefited from another funding mechanism, the modernized Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) which was launched in New York City by the ERC on 9 March. Following approval by the General Assembly in December 2005, the CERF was strengthened to enable more predictable funding and an immediate response to humanitarian emergencies across the world. In early March, the Horn of Africa was allocated around US\$10 million by the ERC from which - following consultations with UN agencies - three project proposals were submitted and approved for Somalia amounting to around US\$ 3 million. The first project focuses on procurement and distribution of supplementary food and an enlarged polio vaccination campaign (USD 1.65 million), the second on water trucking and the restoration of water points (USD 750,000), and the third on de-stocking and providing care to livestock (600,000). In mid-March, a second allocation was made to the Horn of Africa, for around US 11.4 million, from which six project proposals were submitted for Somalia amounting to just under US\$ 3.4 million. These included: US\$ 1.45 million for common services and logistics; US\$ 500,000 on upgrading telecommunication infrastructure; US\$ 500,000 for school feeding in around 50 schools in drought affected areas of southern Somalia; US\$ 270,000 for de-stocking of livestock in Hiran and Gedo regions; US\$ 300,000 for the establishment of mobile clinics in drought affected areas; and US\$ 350,000 for a nutrition project on supplementary feeding.

¹ For more information on the funding status, visit: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc105?OpenForm&emid=ACOS-635PL7>
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