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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – SOMALIA

Minutes of Hiran inter-agency meeting held on Saturday 26 April 2008 at DRC office

### Participants

Name	Agency	Email
Abdullahi Warsame Abdi	UNOCHA	<a href="mailto:awarsamew@yahoo.com">awarsamew@yahoo.com</a>
Ali Mohamed Shukri	ADRA	<a href="mailto:Aliby45@yahoo.com">Aliby45@yahoo.com</a>
Mahamed Hussein Nur	SRCS	<a href="mailto:nurqub@yahoo.com">nurqub@yahoo.com</a>
Salad Alas Daud	WAMY/HIWA	<a href="mailto:Wamyhiran@hotmail.com">Wamyhiran@hotmail.com</a>
Alia Aden Abdi	HIWA	<a href="mailto:hiwahiran@hotmail.com">hiwahiran@hotmail.com</a>
Ibrahim Hoosh	HWS Inc	<a href="mailto:hiiraanwater@hotmail.com">hiiraanwater@hotmail.com</a>
Abdillahi Qalinle Kahin	CARE	<a href="mailto:abdillahikahin@yahoo.com">abdillahikahin@yahoo.com</a>
Hassan A Abdi	CARE	<a href="mailto:Enghassan722@hotmail.com">Enghassan722@hotmail.com</a>
Ahmed Aden Mohamed	CARE	<a href="mailto:Aden-78@hotmail.com">Aden-78@hotmail.com</a>
Abdisalam Yusuf	IMC	<a href="mailto:imcbeled@hotmail.com">imcbeled@hotmail.com</a>
Mahamed-amin Adan Abdi	UNDP	<a href="mailto:somalienviorment@yahoo.com">somalienviorment@yahoo.com</a>
Osman Ali Yusuf	Muslim Aid UK	<a href="mailto:mobeletwein@hotmail.com">mobeletwein@hotmail.com</a>
Saudi Mussa Hussein	SCUK	<a href="mailto:saudimussa@yahoo.com">saudimussa@yahoo.com</a>
Hassan Abdullahi Hussein	SCUK	<a href="mailto:Habdalla_46@hotmail.com">Habdalla_46@hotmail.com</a>
Elmi Ahmed Nur	DRC	<a href="mailto:elmigarweyne@hotmail.com">elmigarweyne@hotmail.com</a>
Abdi Hashi Shimoy	DRC	<a href="mailto:Shihaab22@hotmail.com">Shihaab22@hotmail.com</a>
Mohamed Ahmed Hundubey	DRC	<a href="mailto:hundubey@gmail.com">hundubey@gmail.com</a>
Ahmed Haji Farah	WHO	<a href="mailto:poliohiran@yahoo.com">poliohiran@yahoo.com</a>
Dr. Mohamed Yusuf	WHO	<a href="mailto:Mymohamed2@yahoo.com">Mymohamed2@yahoo.com</a>
Ahmed Mohamed Khalif	MSF SWISS	<a href="mailto:Ahmedkhalif22@hotmail.com">Ahmedkhalif22@hotmail.com</a>
Abdirahman sheikh Ali	HARDO	<a href="mailto:Hardo_hiran@yahoo.com">Hardo_hiran@yahoo.com</a>

### Discussed agenda:

1. Opening remarks and introduction;
2. Security update;
3. Brief Update on Current Emergency/Humanitarian situation of the region (including AWD outbreak in Mahas and newly displacement from Bulo Burte town);
4. Updates of agencies interventions/response activities and plans to the current emergencies;
5. Discussion on resuming interagency coordination meeting and improving its effectiveness (priorities, strategies, approaches, etc);
6. Discussion on developing who does what and where matrix for the agencies operating in Hiran region;

7. And any other business;

### **Opening remarks and introduction**

DRC welcomed the participants to the meeting and opened the meeting. The agenda of the meeting was read and endorsed by the participants. UNOCHA briefed its mandate which is mainly the coordination of humanitarian response, policy development and humanitarian advocacy. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss and share information on the current drought situation emergencies and responses of the agencies operational in Hiran region to the humanitarian crises. And further discuss ways to improve the inter-agency coordination meeting of the region.

### **Security update**

A brief security update on situation in Hiran region was presented by UNDSS. All the INGOs in the region have their security information system and analysis for their own uses. Given that, in general No clan conflict in Hiran region and crimes (such as robbery, rape, killings, money extortion) decreased to record low and this has been attributed to the ICU militants who Despite TFG/ET troops, made their primary objective clearing illegal road blocks and fighting against freelance militias who always erect the road blocks. Therefore, Hiran region can be described as relatively calm and quiet in terms of security. But on the other hand, the region is not stable politically. Anti government, elements or mainly ICU fighting groups (Al-shabab and Asmara) have strong presence and establishment in the region and have a number of recruitment/training camps. ICU fighters only target TFG and Ethiopian troops and in that regard, Life and the properties of the humanitarian agencies are not in an immediate danger and therefore no cause for alarm.

Due to political crises and local authorities vacuum, the flights are suspended. To resume the flights needs authorities to be engaged; no one can work in a vacuum situation. Though, the participants have different perceptions on the security issue, but the above-mentioned statement was the concluded consensus analysis made by the participants after the presentation of UNDSS.

There are no major access challenges noted and the business movements from Mogadishu and Bossasso are going normal. The international organizations operations are going smoothly as it was planned.

### **Brief Update on Current Emergency/Humanitarian situation of the region (including AWD outbreak in Mahaas and displacement from Bulo Burte town)**

The meeting agreed that the people in the region who have insufficient access to their daily food needs are increasing daily. Due to the delayed rains, the people's abilities to access food and income options are affected. The exhaustion of coping strategies to access sufficient food has resulted in a humanitarian crisis situation. A further number of people are also expected to be at risk and more vulnerable to the drought hazards if it did not rain in the coming few weeks. A lack of timely responses by the humanitarian actors my consequence a complete failure of the livelihoods that could lead a major crises of humanitarian catastrophe with a more costly humanitarian operations in the future. The situation is further aggravated by the deteriorating economic situation because of the loss of livelihood opportunities, increased inflations of the prices of

essential food commodities and general inflation that negatively affected food availability and accessibility in the region.

The recent AWD/Cholera outbreaks in Mahaas and the new flow of IDPs from Bulo burte town have exacerbated the situation. The reason of displacement was that the Ethiopian troops settled inside the town and excavated trenches for military protection which threatened the population afraid of possible conflict between Ethiopians and anti-government insurgents. There is a dire humanitarian situation reports of Bulo burte displaced families that they integrated with the host community in the villages putting more pressure on them. It was reported 25,970 people were displaced from Bulo burte.

In Mahaas, between 19 and 25 April 08, there are 107 cases of AWD of which 16 people died which is very high number. Only SRCS is working health sector in the district of Mahas. Among the reasons of the high deaths and occurrences mentioned are delayed reporting from the field staff, no treatment and prevention (chlorine) supplies availability in the area and poor cholera prevention awareness of the communities.

It was underlined that there is no preparedness plans for AWD outbreaks for Hiran which is prone to AWD/cholera outbreaks particularly during high risk periods between January and April every year. There were no preparedness stock such as chlorine, test kits and Carry Blair to take the stool sample available in the region when the cholera firstly strikes in Belet weyne town.

Actions to be undertaken:

- All agencies working on AWD/Cholera treatment and prevention should plan and organize meeting to discuss future preparedness and response plans to AWD outbreaks.
- All agencies operating in WASH to assist SRCS in responding to Mahaas AWD outbreaks and to discuss this further in the next Outbreak Disease Control task force-meeting.
- Organizations of Hapo-child and HIWA working on population Movement Tracking and Protection Monitoring to continue their monitoring of Bulo burte IDPs and assess the humanitarian situation of Bulo burte IDPs, their locations and the figures of each location and their priority needs.
- All agencies should closely follow up and monitor the current drought emergency situation and be prepared to timely response to the apparent humanitarian crises if rains fail.

#### **Updates of agencies' interventions/response activities and plans to the current emergencies**

- **IMC** is implementing WASH project in 25 villages in Belet weyne district. They support public and family level latrines, rehabilitate wells and provided water pumps. IMC provide aqua tablets to those villages and train its application and uses and participant water testing committees. IMC work on cholera treatment in Belet weyne and run cholera treatment center in Belet weyne town. And regularly chair Outbreak Disease Control task force-meeting.

- **CARE** in response to the current emergency has distributed food aid in the region through 10 partners ( 2 in Bulo burte, 2 in Jalkalaqsi, 4 in Belet weyne, 1 in Mahaas and 1 in Matabaan) as detailed below:
  - In Bulo burte, Jalalaqsi and Belet weyne 718.84 MT of food (Sorghum, oil, lentils & CSB) TB centers and MCHs to 4,951 patients;
  - Food for work rations for 11,474 beneficiaries in Bulo burte, Jalalaqsi, belet weyne,, Mahaas and Matabaan districts and they received 2,336 MT (Sorghum and lentils );
  - Food for IDPs in Belet weyne were distributed 467.346 MT(Sorghum, oil, lentils & CSB) to 2,666 people for 2 months (March and April); CARE engage IDPs through 4 women partners.

**CAREs' Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH)** project, in response to current emergency is undertaking extensive community awareness raising and conducting mobile clinics in 15 remote villages in Beledweyne area, 400 patients have been diagnosed and treated from common diseases (AWD, Anemia, Malaria, and Bronchitis).

Due to the current humanitarian crises of droughts, IDPs and inflations, CARE has future plans of moving FFW activities to general food distribution from May 08. The targets are 23, 433 people. Other plans are 29 market shelter, 25 culverts and 41 latrines. CARE WASH project rehabilitated 16 wells and 2 boreholes. They provide hygiene training to 30 villages in Belet weyne district.

- **SCUK** is implementing an Emergency Support for Vulnerable populations Project. They support construction of latrines, rehabilitation of wells, septic latrines for the families whose latrines are discharging to the river to stop river water pollution, this will contribute stopping diarrhea caused by river water. SCUK implement projects through CBOs, They work in 5 district of the region. In response of drought emergency, SCUK trained 72 CAHWs with basic animal health and treatments knowledge and were provided essential veterinary drugs and construct 15 berkads. For the prevention and protection of AWD, SCUK is conducting social mobilization and radio cholera prevention messages and dewatering of the wells in the 4 section which is not public wells.
- **ICRC:** Carried out seed distribution benefiting by 2900HHs (Bulo-Burte 1600 HH, Jalalaqsi 1300 and Mahas 1000 and amount of seed distributed for each HH was 8 kg of sorghum and 4 kg of Cowpea.
- **ADRA** has been engaged in the implementation of number of projects, mainly humanitarian response project and emergency response projects but these projects have come to an end on last December,07 and ADRA has been in gap for funds since then.  
ADRA is planning to conduct rapid assessment on IDPs in Bulo-Burte as its main office is located in Bulo-Burte.
- **DRC:** in response to the current drought emergency provides daily water trucking to drought affected agro-pastoral and pastoralist in 53 villages/settlements with quantity of water-drums 13,770 equivalents 2,754,000

litters (Beletweyne, Mataban and Mahas districts mainly with daily truck). Most critical villages have been selected because of DRC resource capacity is currently very limit in terms of water trucking, as the result of this DRC can not continue water trucking.

DRC provided seed package of three different species of cereals (Maize, Sorghum & Cowpea totaling 216,84 MT) to the farmers of Belet-weyne district both reverie and agro-pastoral areas and north east and north west of Buloburte riverine villages totaling about 215 village/settlements with 10,650 HH agricultural beneficiaries, this action was coordinated with concerned organizations on the ground.

- **WHO** is working on acute diarrhea cases surveillance and provide cholera medical kit to partners including SRCS and IMC and also provided Carry Blair to SRCS to take the stool sample from Bulo-burte and Jalalaqsi to send Nairobi in order to investigate the stool sample. WHO is ready to provide the partners with cholera medical kits if there is a need?
- **MSF**: is doing CTC referrals if they see any cholera suspect cases after they re-hydrate.
- **SRCS**: is currently dealing with AWD outbreaks in villages of Mahaas district. From 19 – 25 April 107 cases and 16 deaths, SRCS reported that they do not have enough stock to treat the patients. They have already submitted appeals to the ICRC, UNICEF and WHO and up to now, they are waiting for their responds.
- **Muslin Aid UK** has completed a Quick Recovery Scheme for flood affected villages in Beled weyne district project. The project consisted rehabilitation of irrigation canals, support for tractor hours operation for land preparation, provision of assorted vegetable seeds, construction of culverts to improve communications and construction of flood protection embankment. They have plans for support to IDPs and host communities suffered from the effects of drought and inflations.
- **HWS**: during last week they conducted water testing to all main wells whose providing the water in the town, they distributed 40,000 Aqua tab to Moqokori of Mahaas district and Abdi-Agweyn village of Belet-weyn district.
- **Hapo-child** - Ongoing construction of septic-tanks in Beletweyne district for improving health situation in the district with partner of **SC UK** in Beletweyne. They carry out health education awareness for cholera out break in Beletweyne. Hapo-child in collaboration with HIWA, they conducted an assessment on Bulo burte population displacement and the findings were 25,970 people are evacuated from Bulo burte town. Hapo-child is working on Monitoring Population Movement Tracking and Protection Monitoring Network (PMT&PMN) with partner of UNHCR&NRC). They also work on Child Protection monitoring, and lobbying advocacy activities (*Oxfam Novib*). *Future plans are:*

- Mobile team for community mobilization on Hygiene and sanitation promotion in displaced location especially, cholera and diarrhea effected places in Hiran region
- Community Integrated approach for enhancing emergency response in Hiran region
- **HIWA** is implementing a protection project. They document women abuses occurring in the region. They run psycho-social care project by providing counseling to the affected people. As an IGA, they train women on tailoring and baking breads and biscuits and provide trailing machines and ovens with some money a kick start for the business.  
HIWA is also working on  
Monitoring Population Movement Tracking and Protection Monitoring Network (PMT&PMN) with partner of UNHCR&NRC)
- **WAMY** is supporting health post for the communities in Belet weyne town. They also run TB centers in collaboration with WHO for the drugs and CARE for the patients foods.
- **HARDO** support four IDPs centers in Belet weyne and Buqda by providing cash grants s a livelihood support to the IDP families. They are partners with CARE, OCHA and Novib.
- **UNDP** is new in the region and they have implemented flood protection river embankments and public market. They rehabilitated waraboole canal to release Excess water from the river to reduce the floods in the town. UNDP have plans for agriculture support project for the region.

Action to be undertaken:

- All agencies operating in the region to contact their agencies for the filling water trucking gaps after DRC cease this operation and the rains did not start.

### **Discussion on resuming interagency coordination meeting and improving its effectiveness (priorities, strategies, approaches, etc)**

The meeting discussed on resuming inter-agency coordination meeting and its importance and ways to take forward. It was highlighted the synergy of the coordination in addressing community problem effectively and efficiently. The essence of such meeting is to improve mobilization and coordination an effective and timely humanitarian response. All the participants agreed the importance of resuming of the interagency meeting. It was painted that there are overlapping of activities by the agencies due to lack of coordination and honest sharing of information between the agencies. This had negative impact on maximization of humanitarian resources. In addition it was raised the need of sharing the information of approaches of work that each agency have in order to reduce negative impacts of the communities/beneficiaries' perceptions towards the agencies.

Action to be undertaken

- OCHA to organize monthly interagency meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> of every month.
- To resume cluster/sector meeting and to start with WASH cluster. The first meeting and the lead will be decided on the outbreaks disease control task force meeting;
- Harmonization of the strategies and approaches of work of the agencies working on same location/areas to reduce conflicts;

**Discussion on developing who does what and where matrix for the agencies operating in Hiran region;**

The meeting explained the importance of the matrix of the agencies working in Hiran which is to know who does what, where and when to identify the geographical and sector gaps in the region. A form of the matrix was distributed for comments and inputs and will be filled by the agencies with the sectors and locations they involve.

**Any other business**

No other business discussed in the meeting.

Next interagency meeting will take place on Monday 26 May 2008 at SCUUK conference room at 9.00 am