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UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
(OCHA) SOMALIA

Summary of discussions - Inter-cluster working group, Thursday 24 July 2008

Venue: OCHA Somalia Conference Room, Nairobi at 10.30 – 12.00 pm

- The meeting was called to discuss Regional Priorities and Response, Staff Support for Clusters as well as Post Gu Preview and Recommendations as presented by (FSAU). The action points from the meeting were sent out separately to cluster leads. However, a discussion on staff support for clusters was deferred to the next meeting.
- Alexandra Williams has rejoined OCHA Somalia as the 2009 Somalia CAP Consultant from July through mid-December 2008. Field consultations will tentatively take place between 7-13 August in Hargeisa and 26-29 August in Garowe.
- Effective Monday 28 July, the OCHA Somalia office will temporarily be located at the OCHA Regional office and IRIN until September/October when the office will move to a new location in Lakeview, along Ngecha road, past Spring Valley.
- On the morning of Thursday 24 July, Ethiopian troops re-entered Beletweyne town. Six civilian deaths have been reported. The Ethiopians are in control of the police station, two bridges and other strategic locations.
- OCHA Somalia is looking for a potential international NGO partner with presence in Garowe to support a capacity-building project involving HADMA. USD 150,000 is immediately available from OCHA Geneva to support this project.
- At the IASC-donors meeting on 23 July, a more flexible response was emphasized. The flexible response will require greater mobility by national and international staff, and will entail stronger partnerships with Somali NGOs and Somali staff through improved remote management. This approach will however require donor support for increased costs and for changes in existing programs. To support this flexible approach there is the need for alternative and innovative project proposals (see action points).
- The integrated response in the Jubas during the 2006-07 floods was positive and could be replicated in other areas in Somalia; especially parts of South Central where the humanitarian emergency is most serious. There are various challenges to a more integrated response including movement of IDPs, insecurity, and inadequate links between the clusters and NGOs on the ground. A coordinated phased approach and localized planning that targets vulnerable populations is imperative.
- Following the IASC Donor briefing, donors recognize the fact that locations which can be accessed are going to change, and partners may have to change their plans and locations. There is a need for flexible funding and understanding that monitoring and quality assurance may not be entirely possible. To that effect, clusters should maintain ongoing programs but develop inter-linked strategies that ensure a scaling-up of operations in areas of humanitarian emergency.
- The total number of people in need of humanitarian assistance will increase from the current 2.6 million, and in the worse case scenario could reach up to an estimated 3.5 million by the end of the year. (It should be noted that this is rough estimate in scenario planning. The actual numbers will come out of the ongoing *Gu* analysis workshop) This is caused by key issues of concern, including: poor *Gu* rains, increasing food prices, continuing currency devaluation and increased conflict and civil insecurity. There is a deepening drought and humanitarian emergency in central,

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Hiran and Bakool, with a doubling of the caseload of severely malnourished children in ACF feeding centres. There is a food price crisis for market dependent households, including urban, rural poor, pastoralist and IDP populations.

- There is the need to scale up emergency humanitarian assistance to save lives in south and central Somalia and there is a need to increase livelihood support to pastoralists in drought-stricken areas of central, Hiran and Bakool regions to protect and prevent the total loss of livelihood assets. Emergency livelihood support for the poor and most vulnerable urban populations is extremely important. Livelihood support interventions in areas of newly developing acute food and livelihood crisis in pastoral areas in the north are also needed.
- Recent nutrition figures indicate concerning trends in the malnutrition situation in Somalia. An estimated 180,000 children are believed to be acutely malnourished, of which very limited numbers have access to rehabilitation centres. [These children are from South Central and protracted IDPs in the north only](#) and represents one in six children under the age of five years. [\(The figure does not include the north east or north west of Somalia\)](#). 38% of these children are in the Shabelle region, 17% of whom are the in central region. Key areas of intervention for nutrition include Shabelle, central region, Bay and Juba respectively.

The next meeting will tentatively take place on 7 August, at 10.30 am.