



UNITED NATIONS

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

### Situation Report # 39 – 03 October, 2008

#### Key Overall Developments

Further attacks and fighting were reported in Mogadishu during the week. More than 25 people were killed and around 50 others were wounded as a result of indiscriminate shelling on civilian neighborhoods. The UN Refugee agency estimates that 30,000 people were forced to flee the fighting in Mogadishu since 20 September. Some people moved to relatively safer areas in Mogadishu while others went to the Afgooye corridor adding to the population of more than 300,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) already living in appalling conditions.

The Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Mark Bowden, issued a statement on 26 September calling on all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law, cease indiscriminate attacks on civilian neighborhoods and allow access whenever assistance is required. He said, "The renewed fighting in Mogadishu worsens an already desperate and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Somalia. A huge proportion of the population is in dire need of assistance."

During the week, due to deterioration of security, the number of roadblocks controlled by various groups in Mogadishu increased, affecting the transportation of supplies for the food kitchen project supported by WFP and partners. There were reports of looting of supplies and extortion of transporters. Despite the challenges, the food kitchen project served 14 million meals this week in Mogadishu's 16 districts. The number of women (56%) and children (38%) receiving the meals has continued to rise. A survey conducted by implementing partner SAACID indicated that women and children are returning from the Afgooye corridor to access cooked food, while male members of the family remain in Afgooye to receive dry food.

The largest vessel ever contracted by WFP in recent months arrived safely in Mogadishu from South Africa on 27 September carrying 13,770 metric tons of maize, escorted by the Canadian frigate. So far the Canadian Frigate has escorted five WFP contracted vessels into Mogadishu with a total shipment of 36,360 metric tons of assorted food commodities since 18 August. The frigate was initially scheduled to complete operations on 27 September, but extended to 23 October 2008.

According to WHO, 329 cases of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) were admitted to the Marka General Hospital, Lower Shabelle region, since the outbreak in August, with moderate to severe dehydration. Between 18 August and 19 September, 22 cases of cholera were confirmed at a Kenyan laboratory. Four deaths of patients less than five years of age were also reported. In August, the WHO's Early Warning and Response System (EWARS) detected an increase of AWD cases in Marka. Since the launch of the EWARS in May 2008, a total of 5,725 cases with 25 deaths were reported in Lower Shabelle region. Marka district reported 54% of the total cases and 68% of the related deaths. Marka town has more than 100 private wells which are mostly untreated. Residents are charged 500 Somali shillings (\$0.01) per jerry can at treated wells, which most people cannot afford. Therefore, most people use untreated water.

#### Response and gaps

UNICEF, in collaboration with NGO partners, distributed Non-Food Items to 8,000 displaced families in Mogadishu in response to recent displacements. The children's agency continues to support the immunization and provision of drugs for over 200,000 children under five years of age and 50,000 expectant women in Mogadishu. In addition, UNICEF supports two supplementary feeding sites, five out-patient therapeutic and two stabilization centres through which an average of 1,400 moderately malnourished and 1,800 severely malnourished children are reached every month in the capital. Blanket supplementary foods (UNIMIX) are also reaching 10,000 children under five on a monthly basis in Kah Shiqaal, Daynile IDP camps in the north of the city.

On 16 September, in Lower Shabelle region, WHO, in partnership with NGOs, started a distribution of a 14 day ration of aqua-tabs (280 tablets per patient for 20 litres drinking water per person per day), in response to the AWD outbreak. These are distributed to patients discharged from the Cholera Treatment Centers. Another 540,000 have been provided to INGO COSV, local NGO IIDA, Ayuub and New Way for distribution to the community, accompanied by social mobilization. Core health messages covering personal, environmental and food hygiene in Somali are also being aired on radio, Marka.

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