



UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Somalia

Situation Report # 42 – 24 October, 2008

Key Overall Developments

The death of two United Nations workers during the week deeply distressed the humanitarian community in Somalia. Abdinasir Aden Muse, a senior programme assistant for WFP, was killed after evening prayers on 17 October in Marka, Lower Shabelle region. This comes at a time when WFP is delivering at least 35,000 metric tons of food on a monthly basis reaching 3 million people all over the country. Two days later, on 19 October, Muqtar Mohamed Hassan, an engineer with UNICEF's water and sanitation activities, was shot dead by unknown gunmen in Xudur, Bakool region. Water and sanitation projects are essential in a country where only 29% have access to clean drinking water and 37% to sanitation facilities. This week's killings bring the total number of aid-related workers killed in Somalia since January to 29.

On 20 October, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon issued a statement condemning the deliberate violence against those who are making every effort to alleviate the dire suffering of the Somali people. He called upon all parties to respect the neutral and impartial status of humanitarian staff, to allow them to do their work bringing vital life-saving assistance to the millions of Somalis who are counting on this support for their survival.

The Canadian mission escorting WFP food shipments ended on 20 October. During its nine-week mission, seven contracted vessels delivered a total of 44,800 metric tones of food into Somalia. During the week, the Dutch announced that a Royal Netherlands Navy frigate would start its second mission as of 23 October. The Dutch escorts are expected to end on 10 December.

WFP announced it will deliver emergency supplies of highly nutritious, peanut-based food to Somalia in a bid to combat the growing threat of severe malnutrition amongst children. In a statement issued on 22 October, the WFP Somalia Country Director Peter Goossens said, "This specialized product is expensive, but worth every penny for its ability to save lives, particularly given the depth of current crises in Somalia". This is the first time WFP is using "Supplementary Plumpy" on a large scale. It will be delivered through existing networks of feeding centers run by international, national and local NGOs in the next six months. The median rate of acute malnutrition in 20 surveys conducted this year is more than 18%, which is well above the 15% emergency threshold.

Response and gaps

An average of six cases related to Acute Water Diarrhea (AWD) were reported daily during the week at the Bossaso hospital in Puntland. Since the first case reported in mid-September, a total of 261 people (among them 127 children under five) have been treated for AWD complications.

AWD prevention activities were intensified during the week. UNICEF with partners conducted social mobilization, case tracing, water chlorination and household water purification campaigns in collaboration with the Mayor of Bossaso. Coordination meetings for all stakeholders to update on the AWD situation were held. Lessons learnt from previous outbreaks, mapping of high risk areas and assignment of specific activities to sub-taskforces were shared. In South Central Somalia UNICEF in partnership with local NGO SAACID, are implementing water chlorination and social mobilization campaigns in 13 villages in Middle Shabelle region.

WFP and Danish Refugee Council distributed 1,060 metric tons of assorted food commodities to urban poor communities in 16 districts in Bossaso, Puntland, benefiting 50,000 people. An additional 45,132 IDPs also received food rations during the week in Bossaso. In Marka, another distribution of 1,647 metric tons of food targeting 119,961 people took place. In Hargeysa, Somaliland, some 28 metric tons of food benefiting 1,560 people were distributed.

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