



UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Somalia

Situation Report # 49 – 14 December, 2008

Key Overall Developments

During the reporting period, civilians were victims of indiscriminate use of force in the fighting between insurgents and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces aided by Ethiopian troops in South/Central regions of Somalia. On 5 December, at least 16 people were killed and many more wounded in Mogadishu's Heliwa district following shelling of the livestock market. According to UNHCR's Population Movement Tracking, over the last two weeks, there was an increase in bombings in Baidoa, Bay region. In the four incidents reported, at least a dozen people were killed and more than 45 others wounded when insurgents targeted TFG/Ethiopian forces with hand grenades in the main market. Tensions in the area are high following these incidents.

In its most recent report, (*So Much Fear – War Crimes and the Devastation of Somalia* released on 8 December) Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused all parties to the conflict in Somalia of regularly committing war crimes and contributing to the humanitarian situation in the country. HRW African director Georgette Gagnon stated that "the combatants in Somalia have inflicted more harm on civilians than on each other." The report recommended that an international commission of inquiry be established to end impunity and lay the groundwork for accountability.

During the week, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation donated US\$251,256 to WFP Somalia in support of the humanitarian air operation being implemented by the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS). The donation comes at a time when UNHAS is facing financial difficulties due to fewer passengers. With this donation, UNHAS operation will be sustained till mid-March 2009. WFP encourages the use of common funds to support UNHAS as it is a common service.

On 8 December, the European Union launched its first anti-piracy naval operation off the coast of Somalia. The operation is scheduled to escort four WFP contracted vessels delivering 15,400 metric tons of food aid commodities to Somalia in mid-December.

Response

About 700 households in Xaafuun and Karkar districts, Bari region of Puntland who were affected by recent floods and hail storms have started receiving WFP relief food assistance. A joint rapid assessment conducted by WFP, Ministry of Interior, OCHA and a local NGO-HADMA two weeks ago confirmed that the affected households are in desperate need of relief assistance including food.

In Gaalkacyo, a UNICEF-supported supplementary feeding program continues to benefit over 770 malnourished children under five years. Some 55,000 children also continue to benefit from blanket supplementary feeding of UNIMIX – distributed by two UNICEF local partners. During the week, UNICEF distributed 15,000 mosquito nets in Jamame, Middle Juba, and 20,000 nets in Belet Weyne, Hiraan region. Another 47,000 nets are targeted for Diinsoor and Qansax Dheere districts in Bay region. Since January, 230,000 nets have been distributed in South/Central Somalia.

During the week, a WFP-supported Food for Training programme for literacy and skills training was temporarily suspended in Gaalkacyo, Galgaduud region, due to growing security concerns in the district. The programme was targeting 800 internally displaced girls.

Local NGO SORDA with support from the Danish Refugee Council distributed Non-Food Items to 4,000 households of IDPs settlements in Arbis, Hawa Abdi, and Kahshiqal a day before the Eid Al-Adha festivities on 8 December. The recipients situated in Mogadishu and its environs were provided with, among others, a set of various items including Jerry cans (20lt), buckets, plastic sheets and two pieces of mosquito nets.

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