



UNITED NATIONS

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Somalia

Situation Report # 50 – 19 December, 2008

Key Overall Developments

Civilians continued to be caught in numerous violent confrontations between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG)/Ethiopian forces and insurgents during the week. On 13 December, at least 12 civilians died from alleged indiscriminate shelling by Ethiopian soldiers who were responding to a roadside bomb planted by insurgents. According to UNHCR's Population Movement Tracking, the victims were at a water collection point in Kaba Hirig, Lower Shabelle region.

On 13 December, a security guard hired by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was shot dead in Mogadishu. Both the ICRC field officer and a driver, who the guard was travelling with, were briefly detained by the police and then released. ICRC is in contact with authorities in order to shed light on the circumstances of the incident.

The United Nations Security Council this week voted unanimously in favour of a resolution sanctioning anti-piracy operations on Somali's territory and in its air space. Despite a large international naval presence in the country's territorial waters, ships are still being seized by pirates. Over 120 ships have been attacked this year, with approximately 35 vessels seized.

The International Medical Corps (IMC) is looking for a partner to take over its activities in Bay and Bakool regions and along the Afgooye corridor. A statement issued on 3 October, by Al Shabaab called for IMC and CARE to cease operations in areas under its control. IMC supported health facilities, supplementary feeding centres and several Out-Patient Therapeutic programmes that benefited approximately 30,000 people monthly.

On 17 December, WFP completed the trans-shipment into Somalia of all its food aid commodities that were stuck at the three Kenya-Somalia border posts during the border closure in November.

Two radio stations were closed during the week by Islamic administrations. On 13 December, the HornAfrik branch in Kismayo was closed for unknown reasons. On 10 December, Radio Markabley in Bardhere district, Gedo region was closed. Al Shabaab administration in the area said the station was airing music they forbid. In a statement released on 12 December, the National Union of Journalists condemned the attack of two journalists by Puntland Intelligence Service in Bossaso, who worked for the Somali Broadcasting Cooperation (SBC).

Response

Since 1 December, at least 370 suspected measles cases have been reported in Togdheer region, Somaliland. In response to the outbreak, UNICEF and partners provided vitamin 'A' supplementation and measles immunization to over 3,900 children under-five years in the affected area. Reports on daily suspected cases of measles have dropped significantly since the onset of the outbreak.

As part of Child Health Days in Somaliland, UNICEF and WHO are planning to reach at least 98,000 children under-five years in Togdheer region starting at the end of December. Throughout Somalia, UNICEF, WHO and partners will aim to reach over 1.5 million children and 1 million women of child bearing age through Child Health Days. A package of critical health services including measles and polio immunization, vitamin 'A' supplementation, de-worming, aqua-tabs for water treatment, hygiene education, tetanus toxoid vaccination for women and nutritional screening and referral will be administered.

On 18 December, UNICEF and partners commenced the distribution of Plumpy'doz (a ready-to-use food rich in micronutrients) for over 9,400 children aged six - 36 months in Bosasso IDP camps, Puntland. As part of the response, UNICEF is also providing standard medical treatment of acute malnutrition as well as micronutrient supplementation (Vitamin A), de-worming, aqua tabs and Oral Re-hydration Salts. Recent FSAU reports indicate the deterioration of the nutritional status of Bosasso IDPs (now reported at Global Acute Malnutrition 27.9%) and (Severe Acute Malnutrition 7.6%). In addition, UNICEF will be expanding Out-Patient Therapeutic Centers (OPT) in Bossaso IDP camps by adding five more sites to benefit IDPs and the urban poor.

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