

Duduble Canal inaugurated – first development project in the south for 20 years

80-year old Mumin Abdi's simsim farm is about 50 metres from the River Shabelle, but he can't access the river water because the canal that used to carry the water to his farm has silted up. This means that he can no longer rotate the four crops that he used to, which in turn reduces the productivity of the land and his income. His story is duplicated in farms all along the river for the past 15 years, in what was and to some extent still is the most fertile part of Somalia and renowned for its agricultural produce which was exported to the Gulf and other African countries.

One such canal, the Duduble (China) Canal, was built in the early 80s by Chinese contractors funded by Saudis, to avert flooding by diverting part of the river flow and to irrigate the surrounding land. Since the collapse of the Somali government in 1991, infrastructure and canal maintenance were not undertaken resulting in the silting up of the canal, the gates either destroyed or malfunctioning, and vegetation growing on the embankments and in the canal. More devastating perhaps, is the fact that every year, whenever there is heavy rain in the Ethiopian Highlands, the source of the River Shabelle, the lowlands in Middle Shabelle flood, displacing thousands of people and destroying their homes, crops and livelihoods. International agencies have been providing emergency assistance to address humanitarian assistance due to flooding.

The rehabilitation of the Duduble Canal is the first development project in the south of Somalia for two decades, and is a joint venture between the local community and administration, UNDP and WFP. UNDP supported the rehabilitation of the barrage and gates, operation house and local capacity building to maintain and manage the canal following its rehabilitation, while WFP, under its Food for Work Programme, provided 600 metric tonnes (MT) of food commodities for the labourers to partially subsidize their contribution. The community and the Middle Shabelle Administration desilted the Canal, a mammoth exercise to remove an estimated 725,000 cubic metres of soil. They have absorbed 65% of the total project cost of USD one million by utilizing eight bulldozers and two cutters and engaging 750 labourers as their contribution. In two months, men and women dug down six metres to reveal the gates of the barrage and the concrete beds which had been buried for about 15 years.

The 15-kilometer canal has been dug up and is now feeding water to the reservoir which is also in need of rehabilitation. Between the canal gates and the reservoir, 1200 families are beginning to access water for their farms. It is estimated that at least 50,000 people will benefit from the rehabilitation of this canal.

At the inauguration ceremony on 7 June 2005, attended by Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi, members of the Transitional Federal Government and the international community, the Prime Minister stated that the rehabilitation of priority infrastructure in Somalia is critical as it will support the economic activity that is essential to recovery of the country. The local administrator and community have agreed to allocate 50% of the additional irrigable land for the local community, 30% for the displaced families and 20% for the rehabilitation of demobilised militia, thereby contributing to the ongoing peace building initiatives.

With time, farmers like Mumin Abdi will be able to get the water they require not only for their subsistence needs, but also to engage in more farming activities to generate extra income and improving their quality of life.

***When the river
was full, our
farms flooded,
when the river
was down, we
had no water,
and we could not
farm. Now we
can plant and
sell our crops -
Abdirahman
Mahdi (59),
Farmer,
Duduble Village***



Prime Minister Gedi inaugurates the 15-km Duduble Canal, off the River Shabelle

Supporting the relocation of the Transitional Federal Institutions

UNDP's Somalia Emergency Budgetary Support Project (SEBSP) has been responsible for the arrangements of the relocation of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) in response to the December 2004 request of Prime Minister Gedi to establish a mechanism through which budgetary support can be channelled in a coordinated and responsive manner. This request was echoed by the international donor community.

Arrangements were made for all 275 Members of Parliament, and as of mid-July 2005, the great majority of MPs, an additional 500 Government Officials, delegates and supporters had actually returned to destinations of their choice within the regions of Bakool, Banadir, Bari, Bay, Gedo, Galgudud, Hiiraan, Lower/Middle Shabelle, Lower/Middle Juba, Mudug and Nugaal. All 275 MPs received a set relocation allowance of EUR 2,500.

At the same time, the SEBSP has been providing support services to Government institutions such as the establishment of Transitional Federal Government (TFG)-led UNDP/Donor Working Groups/Task Forces on Civil Service Issues, Relocation and Revenue Generation, support to the TFG Liaison Office in Nairobi (Office of the President and Office of the Prime Minister) ensuring ongoing functioning of the facilities to the end of the year, completion of a draft "Development of Policies and Procedures to Guide the Payroll and Recruitment System for the TFG" and "Salary Survey to Guide the Establishment of TFG Civil Service Salary Levels" and finally, initial steps are underway to establish a Resource Centre in Jowhar and Mogadishu for interim use by the TFG/I prior to the establishment of longer-term Government Offices.

Anti Retroviral Therapy begins in Hargeisa

During the last week of June 2005, UNDP participated in a joint UN mission on HIV/AIDS to Somaliland. The mission met with the President and several ministers, as well as a range of civil society organisations active in the HIV/AIDS response.

A highlight of the mission included the launch of the first anti-retroviral therapy project in Hargeisa which is being supported by several UN agencies, including UNDP, as well as NGOs. Most importantly, it has been endorsed the Somaliland authorities.

Reducing the number of prisoners by Access to Justice

Hargeisa Central Prison was built in 1942 to house 250 inmates. Currently, there are 623 inmates and by the end of June 2005, 122 of those were in remand, meaning that the person has been accused of engaging in behaviour prohibited by Somaliland penal law and is waiting in prison for their 'day in court' - to have a trial to determine whether or not they committed the crime(s) for which they have been accused of committing. Oftentimes the 'wait' for trial can be for periods that exceed the generally accepted notion of a 'trial without undue delay'.

On June 25, 2005, the University of Hargeisa Legal Clinic initiated an 'Access to Justice Project' that seeks to reduce the waiting period in remand, as well as the number of those on remand by 50%. The Clinic is the public service component of the university's Faculty of Law and provides no-cost legal representation to individuals and groups who cannot afford legal services while providing the law students with first-hand experience of their profession in a supervised environment. The overarching mission of the clinic is to contribute to making justice accessible to all who are within the jurisdiction of the Somaliland justice system.

The legal clinic now has seven remanded individuals as clients - four men and three women - whose cases will be reviewed and processed by the Criminal Defence Clinic. From this point, law students and members of the Somaliland Lawyers Association will be going to the Hargeisa Central Prison on a regular basis to handle their cases. The Access to Justice Project will feature the active engagement of ten members of the Somaliland Lawyers Association, five members of the Legal Clinic staff, and upwards to sixteen law students. The Legal Clinic in cooperation with the Somaliland Lawyers Association has assigned every person held in remand status at the Hargeisa Central Prison to a Project Attorney. Every remanded person will be interviewed by their new lawyer and student assistant before mid-August 2005.



*HIV/AIDS drama at ART launch in Hargeisa
(Photo by Giulio D'Ercole UNESCO)*

IN BRIEF ...

UN Transitional Plan is in the final drafting phase. The UNTP is the UN statement of policy addressing all aspects of the critical transitional period in Somalia from conflict to peace and includes an outline of proposed support in the areas of humanitarian relief and long term development

UNDP and other partners participated in a one-day workshop to begin developing a UN Implementation Support Plan for HIV/AIDS in Somalia (UNISP) that ensures a coordinated and effective response to HIV/AIDS in Somalia.

The exercise, led by UNAIDS, was to establish what activities are being implemented by the different agencies, what progress is expected, the gaps identified, which agency may be better placed to address the gap and how.

Puntland formulating a 5-year Regional Development Plan

UNDP has been supporting the Puntland Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MPIC) in the formulation process of a Regional Five-year Development Plan expected to be finalized by 15th September 2005. The Plan is expected to address various dimensions and challenges of the rehabilitation and development in Puntland, set development priorities, targets and estimate overall resource requirements, both internal and external. A Technical Unit has been established to support and coordinate the formulation of the Plan.

In addition, UNDP also supported the MPIC in conducting a consultative workshop in order ensure broad understanding of its objectives, contents and design process as well as to discuss policies and strategies to meet the development objectives. As a way forward, the workshop participants established a framework of sectoral and sub-sectoral focal points responsible for the coordination and formulation process within their areas of specialization. The participants from all regions of Puntland included private and public sector representatives, NGO's, INGOs and UN Agencies.

Enhancing financial management and planning

UNDP's Governance and Financial Services Programme recently launched its latest initiative, the Capacity Building of Somali Planners Project. Funded by World Bank through its LICUS initiative, the Project seeks to strengthen financial management in both the public and private sectors in Somaliland, Puntland and Central/Southern Somalia, through provision of a 9-month diploma course offered by open and distance learning. A preliminary needs assessment is being conducted in early August, with training scheduled to start in October 2005.

Doing better for countries in crisis and recovery

The Conflict Prevention and Recovery (CPR) Practice workshop for Arab States countries held 13-15 June 2005 in Nairobi was the fifth regional workshop organized to mainstream CPR within UNDP. The goal was to engage a core group of UNDP staff working on CPR from country, sub-regional and regional levels in an interactive dialogue on key issues of crisis, conflict prevention and recovery, to share practical experiences, discuss current challenges in crisis settings as well as to analyze regional approaches, operational issues and emerging trends.

The participants from Iraq, Lebanon, Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), Somalia, Sudan (including staff from the South Sudan sub-office), Syria, Yemen, New York and Beirut were diverse in terms of posts and functions, as well as their level of expertise in CPR issues and knowledge of the UNDP system.

New training centre opens its gates

The Civil Service Institute has recently opened in Hargeisa and is planning to offer its first courses in August 2005. CSI is a public-private partnership, whose main partners include the Civil Service Commission of Somaliland and the University of Hargeisa. UNDP, through its Governance and Financial Services Programme, has been facilitating the partnership process and is providing technical and budgetary support to the fledgling institute. While CSI's main focus will be on developing the capacity of the civil service in such areas as management, planning, office skills and accounting, private companies and NGOs will also be able to contract training services for their staff. Organisations interested in staff training can contact CSI at the University of Hargeisa campus, or by emailing: csiprincipal@yahoo.com or csisomaliland@yahoo.com

QUESTS expanding

The Qualified Expatriate Somali Technical Support (QUESTS) project established to engage the Somali Diaspora in the rebuilding of their country has increased both the number of Somalis coming home to assist for short periods of time, and the sectors of involvement to include Governance, Manufacturing among others. So far in 2005, 15 Somalis have committed to assisting organisations in Somaliland, Puntland and South/Central Somalia in the education, agriculture and health sectors. Four of the fifteen are female. So far two assistance projects have been completed in education and health.

UNDP's Poverty Reduction and Economic Recovery (PRER) Programme is currently assisting the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Puntland in formulating a Regional 5-Year Development Plan, and is using QUESTS to sponsor external technical experts to support the process. For CDs on the completed projects please contact christopher.erefa@undp.org

Steps towards Fisheries Sector Strategy

To encourage economic diversification and to allow Somalis to benefit from their coastal waters, fishing sector assessments are now complete for Somaliland, Puntland and the Central/South. The Somali coastline, the longest in Africa, has thus far been exploited by artisan fishermen with little large scale commercial activity taking place to the benefit of the local communities. In fact, it is largely foreigners that profit from the Somali coastline - it is estimated that Somalia loses approximately USD 100 million to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, resources that could go a long way towards improving the livelihoods of Somalis.

The assessments will be synthesised and analysed by the World Bank and FAO and will help inform a coherent and sustainable strategy to develop a commercially viable fisheries sector.

Preparing the Reconstruction and Development Programme

After extensive consultations with stakeholders, the Somali Joint Needs Assessment Concept Note has been prepared jointly by the United Nations and World Bank and reviewed by the TFG Minister for Planning and International Cooperation. The Somali Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) is intended to help begin to achieve sustained reconstruction and development and deepen the peace process by having teams of Somali and international technical experts work together to assess needs and develop prioritized initiatives to achieve reconstruction and development and reinforce peace building.

The resulting Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will provide a framework for mobilizing, distributing and coordinating related international assistance, and will be the basis of a global donor conference to be held in Rome, Italy in 2006.

Sustainable Livelihoods and Drought Mitigation project to commence

The Sustainable Livelihoods and Drought Mitigation Programme is a step closer to actualisation after the signing of a framework of cooperation with the administrations in both Puntland and Somaliland and the implementing agencies Diakonia and PENHA respectively. The project aims to enhance livelihoods for people affected by drought thus contributing to food security and increased capacity to cope with future drought situations. Specifically, this will entail the rehabilitation of the environment through soil and water conservation (supporting communities to establish tree and grass nurseries, forage reserves and gabions to improve grazing resources); rehabilitation of water sources to improve water availability; supporting livestock health services through skills training and promoting income-generating activities (processing of livestock products to increase value, promote adoption of alternative economic activities through training, and micro-financing). It is expected that the project will increase household income, improve capacity for planning and sustainable management of local resources, as well as information and knowledge to facilitate informed decision-making.

The project will benefit pastoralists, while providing alternative economic opportunities to women, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and destitute people falling out of pastoralism livelihood system. The initial six months of the project will focus on the Nugal and Karkar districts in Sool and Bari regions; and Garadag and Hudun in Sanaag - areas have been categorised as being in 'food crisis' by the FSAU. Other affected districts will be covered under the subsequent phases.

Strengthening Distance Learning

With the assistance of UNDP, Amoud University in Somaliland has been competitively selected to participate in the African Virtual University/African Development Bank (AVU/AfDB) Teacher Education Program and as a result, an agreement to participate in the AVU programs was also signed. To qualify for the Teacher Education Program, the university needed to meet certain criteria in e-readiness and online learning programmes.

Discussions are also ongoing with the AVU in exploring ways of expanding these Teacher Education Program benefits to the University of Hargeisa in Somaliland and East African University in Puntland. EAU is expected to join the AVU network before end of July 2005.

The Distance Learning Project is under the Low Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) World Bank Initiative that supports tertiary institutions provide additional learning programmes and knowledge resources to students and faculty.

MDGs WATCH
*A preliminary
baseline
Millennium
Development Goals
Report for Somalia
has been drafted
with national and
international
stakeholders, has
been reviewed via
reading circles in
different locations
and is now in the
final stages of
formatting, to be
launched in the next
quarter of 2005*

Inter-agency strategies for IDPs and Refugees

UNDP has been participating in the development of the *Joint UN Strategy to address the needs of Internally Displaced Persons in Somalia* which is an operational and implementation tool for interagency-action for the benefit of IDPs and their communities. The strategy contains an analysis of the situation in Somaliland, Puntland and the Central/South, recommends interventions, delineates the responsibilities of the local authorities, and the coordination mechanisms present to assist in addressing the issue of IDPS in Somalia.

At the same time, UNDP has participated and contributed significantly to the *Comprehensive Plan of Action for Somali Refugees* (CPA), led by UNHCR. The CPA is a multi-pronged initiative which is being conducted in the four neighbouring countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen) as well as Somalia. It aims to identify and pursue appropriate durable solutions applicable to each Somali refugee sub-group and each host country; where durable solutions are not immediately available to identify measures to enhance the quality of asylum in current host countries, including through better legal and physical protection and improved assistance; to promote refugees' self-reliance in order to enable them to contribute to the development of their host communities, while at the same time preparing them for eventual voluntary repatriation; to further address the challenges posed to host communities through rehabilitation and development in areas affected by the presence of refugees; to make the option of voluntary return more attractive for refugees still in exile and to ensure sustainability of reintegration in the country of origin by providing access to protection, basic services and improved income generation opportunities for returnees, IDPs and other vulnerable populations.



26 June 2005 - A fire at the Buulo Eelay IDP Camp in Bossaso left 500 families homeless

Emergency Fund begins work

The newly created Emergency Fund assisted IDP flood victims in Burao, Somaliland (by improving water canals) and fire affected IDPs and returnees in Bossaso, Puntland by assisting in bush rehabilitation and construction of wind breakers to prevent further damage by heavy winds.

Meanwhile more info means better programming

Assessments on the vulnerable populations including IDPs, returnees and urban poor in Bossaso and Garowe have been completed. These assessment are crucial as the provide baseline data which allows for informed programming by various agencies. Based on this information, UN-HABITAT will fund the first housing project for IDPs, returnees and the host community in the old airport area of Garowe.

Re-establishing a civil service

UNDP is supporting the re-establishment of a civil service in Somalia through its Governance and Financial Services Programme. Although launched only two months ago, in June, the New Beginnings – Somalia Civil Service Project has already made significant progress. After holding extensive consultation with Transitional Federal Government representatives, the Project identified four areas in which policy studies were needed: Organisation & Structure of the Somalia Civil Service; Recruitment Policies & Procedures; Roles & Responsibilities of a Civil Service Commission, and; Terms & Conditions of Civil Servants. Draft reports from all four studies are expected in September. A dissemination forum at which both TFG and civil society representatives will discuss the reports' recommendations is planned for October.

Library Management Training

Librarians from Mogadishu, Beletweyne, Garowe and Bossaso took part in a 12-day Computerized Library Management Training conducted in Bossaso from 30 May – 10 June 2005 to introduce the UNESCO library software system and to train them to be proficient in using the software in their efforts to manage their libraries more efficiently.

At the finalization of the workshop each participant was provided a copy of the UNESCO library software. The specific aims of the workshop were to introduce the benefits to effective library management through computer software like WINISIS; training all participants in the installation of WINISIS software; provide training in the usage and trouble shooting of WINISIS software; assist in developing appropriate cataloguing system consistent with WINISIS software; assist in developing an appropriate database consistent with the WINISIS software and training in general principles of library management. The participants also established the Somali Librarians Association.