



MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND

Newsletter Q2 2020

Dear Partners,



On behalf of the World Food Programme (WFP) I am delighted to share with you the second quarterly newsletter of 2020 for the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN MPTF) for Somalia.

WFP is proud to be part of the UN MPTF mechanism where pooled funding allows for greater transparency and coordination among partners. This helps stakeholders ensure that resources are allocated and spent wisely and effectively.

We are immensely grateful to the UN MPTF donors for their invaluable support and flexibility. As the whole world is grappling with the COVID-19 crisis, we too, in Somalia, have had to adjust our programming and operations modalities to ensure our activities continued supporting the most vulnerable Somalis.

Thanks to the UN MPTF's funding, WFP has been able to continue supporting government-led social protection networks, through a number of interventions, including enhancing government capacity in implementing the Social Protection Policy, raising awareness among the population and providing much needed cash transfers to vulnerable households.

As we adjust to the new normal, we will continue to support Somalis and their government in building a bright future. UN MPTF is an invaluable tool to help us in this endeavor.

I would like to renew my sincere thanks to our donor partners for their continued commitment to ensuring that Somalia remains on an upward trajectory towards sustainable peace, stability and prosperity.

I look forward to continuing our rich cooperation and partnership.

Sincerely,

Cesar Arroyo

WFP Resident Representative for Somalia

UN MPTF OVERVIEW



FUND CAPITALIZATION



UN Peacebuilding Fund: USD 8.6 m

RECONCILIATION & FEDERALISM

The Joint Programme successfully contributed to strengthening bottom-up reconciliation initiatives, in this case in conflict resolution between Qardho and Dhahar districts in Puntland.

The districts of Qardho and Dhahar are inhabited by the Osman Mohamud community of the Majeerteen sub-clan and the Dubey community of the Warsangeli sub-clan, respectively, both of which hail from the larger Harti of Darood clan that dominates the Puntland State of Somalia. The two communities had been deeply hostile to each other and frequently engaged in active conflicts that, over the years, resulted in many deaths, injuries and loss of property.

Building on the initial consent of the elders of embattled clans, the Puntland Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization spearheaded thirty-seven-days-long reconciliation conference/workshop (held 29 February to 5 April) with the support of the Joint Programme. Each party was represented by a small committee of influential clan members and clan religious sheiks.

As a result of this dialogue, the two clans agreed on a number of areas that were the cause of conflict between them for the past 30 years, including reparations for deaths and injuries, restitution for damages, restoration of trust and mutual forgiveness. The two clans have agreed to implement all the agreements within one year.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

The Joint Programme supported a media outreach campaign for Constitutional Review Process, organised by the Ministry of the Constitutional Affairs, from May to June. The campaign targeted various levels of Somali society, including women and youth, to raise awareness of the review process and enhance people's understanding of the rights and obligations of citizens contained in the constitution.

Hawa, a young woman from Banadir region, summarised her thoughts, "My name is Hawa, I believe that the constitution is a social contract, which all should protect. The constitution is essential for the co-existence of peaceful society, justice and respect. The constitution is of paramount importance for me because it sets out my rights and obligations as a citizen. Also, I would like to see an inclusive constitution agreed by all."

PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT

On 18 and 19 April the Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the Federal Parliament (FP), based on the instructions of the Speakers of the Parliament, officially requested support from the UN to procure communication technology (i.e. zoom subscriptions and VTC sets) to host virtual meetings and voting and, accordingly, amend Joint Rules and Procedures of the Parliament to ensure continuity of the functioning of the Parliament in light of COVID-19 restrictions/guidelines. The Joint Programme supported coordination of efforts to provide requested support in a collaborative manner. Communication technology equipment was procured for both houses of the FP, including all of the committees, and necessary guidance and training provided to the FP ICT Unit. In addition, informed by experiences from other countries, the Programme provided technical support to the Parliament to draft amendments of the Joint Rules of Procedures, enabling both houses of the Parliament and the committees to function in light of COVID-19. The Amendments are now under consideration by the Speakers and the relevant committees.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, LEADERSHIP & EMPOWERMENT

With the support of the Joint Programme, women's caucuses of the House of the People (HoP) and the Upper House of the FP developed a joint plan of action to advocate for the gender-related legislations, including the Electoral Bill. As result, women members of parliament (MPs) from the HoP secured the enactment of 24% women's representation through separate resolution amendments to the Electoral Bill. Recent parliament discussions indicated that the current 24% of seats will remain only for women MPs. However, there is a growing fear that the 24% would become a ceiling for women's parliamentary representation. Women leaders and women MPs will continue their advocacy to secure the remaining 6% gap under the Political Party Law.

ELECTORAL SUPPORT

The Joint Programme on Elections provided much needed support for the construction of a data centre at the National Independent Electoral Commission's (NIEC) compound in Mogadishu. Construction began on 28 October 2019 and was completed in mid-May 2020. The keys to the centre were handed

over to NIEC on 28 May. The data centre is part of a range of operational support being provided by the Joint Programme to enable the NIEC to conduct electoral operations for the forthcoming elections. Other projects include ongoing construction of a hardwall warehouse and the construction of an electoral dispute resolution centre. Currently, the NIEC Headquarters is located in Villa Somalia, next to the Executive, and is difficult for electoral stakeholders to access. The new location should enhance the perception of transparency and independence of the electoral institution.

The NIEC Chairperson, Ms. Halima Ismail Ibrahim, presented the NIEC's report to the House of the People on 27 June, outlining the Commission's operational plan to implement the electoral law and hold federal parliamentary elections. Because of the delay in finalizing the necessary electoral legislation, the NIEC put forward two options for parliament's consideration: same day voter registration and polling, with elections taking place in March 2021; and elections with standard biometric voter registration, with polling taking place in August 2021. According to the electoral law, if there is a delay in meeting the constitutional deadline, the Parliament will decide when the elections will be held. Stakeholders subsequently called for timely elections with no term extension and urged for an inclusive decision-making process to agree on a viable electoral model that can be implemented within the remaining period of the current administration's term.

AID MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

After the COVID-19 outbreak project activities have been reprogrammed and part of the budget has been reallocated to providing support to the federal government (FGS) response to the pandemic. In Q2, the Aid Coordination Unit (ACU) has been fully engaged in facilitating coordination of different bodies established by the Somali Government in response to crisis.

Some of the outcomes of these meetings served to strengthen the capacity of the Somali health sector to cope with the crisis and prevent the expansion of the virus. Some of the actions agreed in this regard have been the setting up of a quarantine centre and of a well-equipped call center to provide advice to the public, including those experiencing symptoms and affected by the virus; the reconstruction of the Martini and Banadir Hospitals and deployment of new doctors and equipment to treat patients; and the preparation of ambulances to dispatch patient to the hospitals. In addition, different measures were

taken to raise public awareness on ways to prevent the spread of the virus, such as using social media to convey messages from religious leaders, or the printing of billboards to display in Mogadishu. Other measures were to urge the public to continue observing the instructions of health authorities, particularly washing hands regularly and maintaining physical distance from other people, restricting travel to Somalia and maintaining screening of travelers, applying enhanced border measures at international air, land and sea ports, and requesting private Somali financial companies (i.e. banks, Hawalas) to work closely with the government to effectively respond to the crisis.

The ACU also managed logistical support to Federal Member States in providing medical equipment for COVID-19 treatment in several cities, as well as catering services (food and refreshments) for health workers who spent long periods of time in hospitals attending COVID-19 emergencies.

The refined aid architecture, aligned to the structure of the National Development Plan, has been endorsed by the Somali Development and Reconstruction Facility Steering Committee, which met on 24 June. The new architecture is less burdensome than the previous one, and aims to be cost-effective, reinforce the role of the Mutual Accountability Framework as main tool to measure progress in implementation of must-not-fail priorities of the country, strengthen coordination amongst security, justice and development processes and focus on aid effectiveness.

JOINT JUSTICE PROGRAMME

The Joint Justice Programme has enabled mobile court missions in each Federal Member State to offer access to justice in locations that do not have access to any other formal justice mechanism. Mobile court cases are heard by judges, an impartial verdict is reached, and local authorities are instructed to enforce the verdict according to the law.

Mr. Hassan Ibrahim Masabirow lived in the village of Gobweyn, located near Kismayo in Jubaland, supporting his family through farming their land. In 2008, increasing Al-Shabaab violence in the area forced Hassan and his family to flee to a refugee camp. Upon their return in 2015, they discovered that their land had been claimed by another man and were unable to return to it to rebuild their old life. When the mobile court team visited the village on mission from Kismayo, Hassan brought the case before them and, with the support of documents of ownership and many witnesses, was successful in reclaiming his family's

land. The verdict delighted Hassan and demonstrated that returning refugees are able to peacefully resolve land disputes using the court system.

In Warsheikh district in Hirshabelle, a mobile court mission empowered Ms. Halima Adan Ali to bring a case of land dispute before judges. A man had settled on her plot of land and was now claiming that it was the property of his deceased mother. After both sides had presented their arguments to the court and witnesses had been called, the court ruled that the property belonged to Halima and ordered the man to return it to her. Both parties accepted the verdict and pledged to abide by the instructions of the court.

JOINT CORRECTIONS PROGRAMME

The Joint Corrections Programme helps support a number of interventions aimed at prisoner rehabilitation, psychosocial services, education and staff training to ensure the rights of prisoners are respected and inspiring hope that the prisoners themselves will use a new chance at life once released.

Baidoa prison is a small prison with no history of prison escapes, which, according to the Ministry of Justice is why it accommodates high-risk prisoners. The psychosocial rehabilitation programme for high risk prisoners aims to address violent extremist ideologies and ensure that inmates are fully disengaged from Al-Shabab (AS), and that they are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to contribute positively to society upon their release. The program is now in its third phase.

After attending a number of courses that are part of the prison education curriculum, prisoners and staff expressed satisfaction with activities such as psychosocial support sessions, religious sermons, motivational activities and basic education.

“This project really changed the welfare of all the prisoners (not only our project beneficiaries) and also made them optimistic about their future life. Earlier they used to stay idle and that was risky to us,” said Sergeant Hassan Adan, one of the Baidoa prison staff.

“When I was informed about the activities of this project, I thought about it negatively, but when I came back from the first day of the activities and sat in my corner of the cell, I began thinking differently. After that day, I really liked those activities, and attended them regularly,” Hussein, an inmate who was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment for being an active AS member, says.

“I especially liked basic education and sports. It helped me un-

derstand how to manage stress and depression. The individual counselling by the psychotherapist was essential for us,” says another prisoner, Abdullahi. “I was excited about the chance to join vocational training and gain new skills.”

“Also, our friendship among other inmates improved gradually. We used to make revisions about lessons, play games and having fun by telling comedy stories from our different background experiences before the prison life,” Hussein said. “The psychosocial support gradually reduced the level of stress, sleeplessness and hopelessness. We started sharing plans for a better life after prison.”

UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME

There is limited data on the effects of COVID-19 in expectant mothers, but there are recommendations that any febrile respiratory illness in pregnancy should be treated seriously with immediate diagnosis, appropriate care and precautions to avert infections.

“This is really a challenging and difficult task because of the Somali traditions of staying together in close contact and greeting each other by hugging and shaking hands. So one could expect to see things only get worse for pregnant women in Somalia. However, we need to work to ensure their compliance with COVID-19 requirements and safe delivery,” said Dr. Naima Abdulkadir, Maternal and Reproductive Health Manager at the Federal Ministry of Health and Human Services. Dr. Abdulkadir advised that specific attention should be given towards raising awareness among and protecting midwives and health care workers who are in close contact with women delivering babies, to reduce infection, and ensure prevention and control of the virus in all health facilities. She emphasized that efforts should be made to continue outreach of maternal and reproductive health services, particularly for vulnerable groups such as internally displaced persons and people in informal settlements.

“We should not lose sight of our fight to reduce the exceptionally high maternal mortality in the country and, after all, mothers and their babies will always be supported in giving birth during this highly sensitive COVID-19 pandemic period,” stressed Dr. Abdulkadir.

Fay Osman Gabow, a senior midwife with over 35 years of experience assisting women with delivering babies, is worried that fears caused by COVID-19 may stop pregnant women from visiting hospitals for antenatal care. Already, not as many women seek antenatal care in Somalia.

“Clear and tailored messages should be shared, directed at pregnant mothers and health care workers. Pregnant women should be aware of the availability and accessibility of important services and measures that can be taken to protect them from infection,” said Ms. Gabow.

Even before the news of the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Somalia, UNFPA sprang into action, developing internal plans to respond to the pandemic and continuing to develop the capacity of national institutions. UNFPA works closely with governments, UN agencies, community-based organizations and other partners, to ensure that reproductive health is integrated into common COVID-19 responses. The agency also supports the procurement and supplies of personal protective equipment, sanitizers, N95 masks, soap and gowns/goggles for health professionals, including midwives for both infection prevention and control at Emergency Obstetric Care and Neonatal Care (EmONCs) facilities. UNFPA also supports the training of health care workers on infection prevention and control (IPC) and risk communication and supports facilities with obstetric and family planning supplies. Support is provided to vulnerable populations and to address the needs of women and young people, both at emergency and recovery phases.

SUSTAINABLE CHARCOAL REDUCTION AND ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

The Joint Programme supported an initiative that provided livestock and agricultural equipment to low income families in Somalia to boost their economic growth and help mitigate Somalia’s recurring shocks.

Ali Dayah Abdi Dahir, who lives in Gobweyn village, was one of

such beneficiaries. Ali is 45 years old and the father of four children. He was selected to receive fodder chopper machines and fodder seeds as part of this project.

Ali is a member of the “Goobweyn animal farm cooperative” which is made up of low-income families living in the Goobweyn area who are dependent on livestock and agriculture products as a means of livelihood.

Over the last two years, Ali and his community have struggled with the effects from frequent droughts and floods causing major economic problems. Ali expressed that “the fodder machinery is essential equipment for our economic growth and survival of our livestock. It is a good source of animal feed products, and the chopper machine has made significant changes in our animals’ lives and enhanced production.” He went on to say that since the inputs were received, “our economic productivity has increased in terms of dairy products and the high expenditure on livestock food has been minimized.” Ali estimated that the machines saved approximately US\$ 40 compared to previous expenditure and he claims it was the best economic development in many years.

The project has contributed substantively in bringing the attention of policy makers to find solutions towards unsustainable charcoal production and illegal trade to meet the national and regional demands while promoting environmental sustainability and security in Somalia. As such, on 19 May, the Attorney General, held a press conference highlighting the number of investigated cases on environmental crimes including illegal production and trade of charcoal. He reiterated on Twitter that culprits will be brought to justice upon the finalization of the ongoing investigations, and warned business groups against trying to profit from environmentally destructive activities.

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