



# MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND

Newsletter Q1 2021

Dear Partners,

On behalf of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), I am pleased to share with you the first quarterly 2021 newsletter for the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN MPTF). The thematic focus of this newsletter is the UN's work under the Social Development Pillar.

The UNFPA is a proud partner of the UN MPTF. The overall goal of the new UNFPA country programme for Somalia for 2021-25 is to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of women, adolescents and youth, and most vulnerable populations. It is aligned with Somalia's ninth National Development Plan (NDP-9) and continues to focus on the four key areas of UNFPA: sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and empowerment of women, adolescents and youth, and population dynamics.

UNFPA Somalia is adopting the UNFPA global transformational results aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals in implementing the new country programme. The four transformational results are zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, zero violence gender-based violence and zero female genital mutilation. UNFPA Somalia is also strengthening the response to eliminate other harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage.

Life-saving services are particularly critical in humanitarian settings, where many preventable maternal deaths occur. The new UNFPA country programme for Somalia is focused on stepping up services that keep women and girls healthy and alive through childbearing and across their lives, and strengthening health systems to cut maternal deaths and ensure access to emergency obstetric and neonatal care in under-served areas.

UNFPA prefers the UN MPTF as it promotes integration and collective action, and joint programming through the pooled funding mechanism. The MPTF ensures complementarity by different UN agencies in areas of expertise that lead to gaining greater efficiencies in delivering services to the people of Somalia. I'm very thankful for the continued donor support of the UN MPTF programmes.

Sincerely,

**Anders Thomsen**

*UNFPA Somalia Representative*

## UN MPTF OVERVIEW

- 16 Active Joint Programmes
- 12 Active Donor Partners
- \$467m Commitments
- \$434m Deposits

## FUND CAPITALIZATION

-  Denmark: USD 45.2 m
-  European Union: USD 79.8 m
-  Finland: USD 35.9 m
-  Germany: USD 32.8 m
-  Italy: USD 28.7 m
-  Netherlands: USD 16.8 m
-  Norway: USD 39.0 m
-  Somalia: USD 3.3 m
-  Sweden: USD 107.3 m
-  Switzerland: USD 28.5 m
-  United Kingdom: USD 36.6 m
-  USA: USD 4.5 m
-  UN Peacebuilding Fund: USD 8.6 m



## SOCIAL PROTECTION

To address chronic food insecurity and poor nutrition in Somalia, exacerbated by shocks, weak food systems and lacking institutional capacity in urban areas, World Food Programme Somalia (WFP) and partners through the Social Protection Programme continued to build on its comparative advantages and worked towards Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger.

As part of these efforts, WFP works to build the capacity of the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States to put in place efficient, effective and affordable safety net systems that will assist affected populations directly through continued support to the most vulnerable throughout the year, and particularly in times of hardship.

There are three components to WFP's work in urban safety nets:

1. Establish safety nets by providing predictable cash transfers, either conditional or unconditional, to chronically vulnerable populations; ensure that these safety nets are shock-responsive by incorporating mechanisms to scale up assistance in times of crisis through pre-defined triggers.
2. Enable households to diversify their income sources through productive asset creation and human capacity building.
3. Support governments to take on ownership of these safety net systems in the long term, and/or to build their own.

The Banadir Regional Administration (BRA) is implementing one such safety net, the Social Safety Net Transfers Pilot Programme, with support from WFP. This innovative project has been funded through the Multi Party Trust Fund (MPTF) by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. The intent of this pilot is to build the capacity of the BRA to manage all aspects of the direct implementation of an urban safety net programme, targeting 1,000 households with predictable cash transfers of US\$ 35 per month, payable quarterly. Providing beneficiaries with cash transfers allows them to utilize the assistance according to their individual and most critical needs. The project specifically targets women as the primary beneficiaries of the cash transfers.

With the support of WFP, the BRA designed an objective targeting tool to prioritize the most food-insecure households to participate in the project. Participatory targeting methodology was used, integrating accountability to affected populations, with multi-layered selection criteria designed particularly to cover vulnerable groups – including those impacted by COVID-19. The objective was to target 300 and 700 households respectively in two selected districts, Hodan and Garasbaaley, to reach those

most in need in a transparent manner, and with broad consensus from community leaders and the local administration. WFP provided technical training to support BRA staff in this aspect of the project.

WFP also provided training on its SCOPE beneficiary and transfer management platform, strengthening the capacity of BRA staff to efficiently and transparently register participants for cash transfers under the project in line with prescribed protocols. BRA staff successfully enrolled all 1,000 households while also adhering to COVID-19 infection and prevention controls, and are now able to regularly follow up on ongoing cash transfers and ensure that issues are addressed in a timely manner.

In addition, WFP trained the BRA's social protection team on vulnerability assessment and monitoring procedures. This has strengthened the capacity of BRA staff to continue their assessments of current programmes, and to gather data in other districts to support social safety nets and service provision.

WFP will continue to undertake on-the-job training, and other related technical training, to further strengthen BRA institutional systems and procedures. Protection and gender mainstreaming are among the training areas prioritized for 2021.

With the successful conclusion of the pilot phase, the BRA is confident that it can continue to implement and expand government services to additional vulnerable urban households and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). It is also looking to expand its support to conditional cash transfers, in addition to the current unconditional transfers. WFP, through the Joint Programme, will continue to support the implementation of the national social protection agenda, ensuring that government-led systems and services reach the most vulnerable in Somalia.

## UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME

"Many Somali young girls are faced with a lot of challenges: early marriage, female genital mutilation, lack of education and many others. But you know? This does not stop them from pursuing their goals and dreams," said ZamZam Abdigafar, a young woman, 23 years of age, who lives in Garowe and has recently attended the body mapping workshop organized and funded by UNFPA Somalia. She graduated from university and is now working with civil society organizations advocating for child protection.

"Body mapping is a creative tool that brings together physical experience and visual artistic expression," explains UNFPA Somalia Programme Officer for Youth and innovation Fatuma

Kuno Muhumed, adding: “in its basic form, it involves painting a life-size representation of one’s body onto a large surface using vibrant colours, pictures, symbols and words to represent experiences. These works are made by amateur artists and provide a time for creativity, critical thinking, stock taking and ultimately engage people to better understand and respect one another.

Muhumed says body mapping provides a creative vehicle for expression that is not dependent on literacy levels. “The body maps have the potential to break down barriers, both in the process of their development and in sharing them with a wider audience since the individuals depicted in the maps are never reduced to stereotypes but rather express personally lived experience,” she explained. “This training was very important. The truth is that in the beginning, I thought I could not paint anything. Our society does not encourage visual art,” ZamZam said.

The norms in Somalia make it routine for girls to start housework from the young age of four or five years old. ZamZam recalled having to do housework constantly as she ponders on a woman’s place in Somalia. The painting ZamZam produced during the workshop reminded her of her childhood memories and the challenges she experienced after undergoing FGM.

“It took me an hour to think about how to express those bad memories. Finally, I managed to be confident and painted. This is the first time I have openly talked about FGM to men,” she explained.

The young woman also spoke out against child marriage. She hoped parents would stop early child marriage because the young girls’ bodies are still undergoing changes and their minds are still immature.

She explained that the girls end up dropping out of school and do not understand their husbands. “They face situations they cannot handle, and it makes them despise life and seek another life through illegal migration, or they end up committing suicide. Some husbands do not care and call the parents to take the body of the deceased and continue living their lives as if nothing has happened,” worried ZamZam.

The youth advocate said that people did not always appreciate her outspoken stand as she was growing up. “At school, I was told by others to close my mouth. Some even asked if I was a foreigner; are you from Somalia? Are you from the clan with great authority, or is your father a military general?”

ZamZam shared some happy memories through her art as well. “I remember during my childhood, I used to advise on some

issues, and my grandfather used to say that my advice should be listened to. I felt like a princess. I was lucky, I grew up in an environment with love, and I was given everything I needed.”

The young woman said she is proud to be among the first in Garowe to undertake the workshop in Garowe. “We need more workshop projects to change wrong perceptions within our society. We are from diverse backgrounds and have different experiences within. Body mapping provides social cohesion ... I have decided that I will buy different painting colours and during my free time, I will start painting to express my thoughts. I also feel strong enough to speak for those people who cannot. Where there’s art, there’s life,” the young woman concluded.

UNFPA Somalia also continued to provide access to life-saving integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) services, including the provision of COVID-19 adapted dignity kits to help people like Fardowsa Ahmed from Galkacyo. At a very young age of four, Fardowsa was infected by polio, a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus. She was never taken to the hospital for treatment as her mother did not realize the seriousness of the problem. Fardowsa lost the use of both her hands and legs.

“I was being discriminated against even by fellow children. They did not want to include me in any activities,” said Fardowsa. Due to the stigma and bullying, her mother chose not send her to school. She also had problems moving around. “My family is very poor, and my mother only managed to get me a wheelchair at the age of 13,” Fardowsa said.

Fardowsa’s mother, Kalsoon, is a single parent with two children; the youngest is only four years old. Kalsoon depends on agricultural activities to earn a living. The family was affected by drought, and they couldn’t cope with the scarcity of water, depletion of pasture and livestock. Kalsoon ended up moving her family into a settlement for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Now at the age of 14, Fardowsa’s personal needs have increased. She’s reached puberty and requires menstrual hygiene products. Loss of livelihoods and food insecurity, especially among female-headed households and other vulnerable women and adolescent girls, have worsened food aid dependency and humanitarian assistance.

As part of the response to women and girls’ specific needs, UNFPA Somalia and its partner Somali Birth Attendants Cooperative Organisation (SBACO) has distributed 300 dignity kits to marginalized women and girls in the surrounding areas of Galkacyo.



“Beneficiary checklists were cross-checked to avoid the same person, or same household receiving multiple kits in line with a strict information sharing protocols for the protection of sensitive data,” said SBACO Programme Coordinator Hinda Abdi Muse.

“All the dignity kits that UNFPA distributed through SBACO suit our needs. We received sanitary pads, soap for washing, underwear, antibacterial surface cleaning solution for hands and hand sanitiser,” said Kalsoon. “I used to spend \$3 just to soap. We used to collect dirty and unwanted clothes from the neighbours to use as sanitary pads.”

Women and girls with disabilities face significant difficulties and discrimination by the community, which places them at higher risk of gender-based violence, sexual abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation.

“COVID-19 in Somalia has really exposed the protection needs of vulnerable women and girls. Those in the camps for internally displaced persons and hard to reach areas are most affected. UNFPA Somalia and its partners prioritize to address the needs of vulnerable women and girls, including persons with disabilities, displaced people and GBV survivors. Services provided include psycho-social support, case management, clinical management of rape, dignity kits and referrals,” said Ridwan Abdi, UNFPA Humanitarian Specialist.

He said preserving dignity is essential to maintaining self-esteem and confidence, critical to coping in stressful and potentially overwhelming humanitarian situations. Women and girls need essential items to interact comfortably and safely in public. “They also need access to personal hygiene, particularly menstrual hygiene. Without access to culturally appropriate clothing and hygiene items, the mobility of women and girls is restricted. Their health and safety can also be compromised. As a result, they might be unable to seek basic services, including humanitarian aid,” said Abdi.

## JOINT PROGRAMME ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE (JPLG)

Under the JPLG, one of the areas that UNICEF leads is the decentralization of service delivery at district level in the sectors of Education, Health and Water. In this area, UNICEF supports districts to deliver equitable services through a sustainable approach led by the local governments termed as the “Service Delivery Model/Mechanism (SDM).” The SDM is a ‘learning by doing’ exercise – a co funding grant mechanism intended to support local governments to implement the agreed devolved

functions in basic services e.g. primary education, health, water and contribute to improving access to, and the quality and consistency of, basic services available to the public. It seeks to demonstrate that districts can and should be actively engaged in responsive local service delivery.

Through the UNICEF-led efforts through JPLG, the Government of Somaliland in 2021 have increasingly taken ownership of its basic services in education and health and is now making substantial contributions at the sector ministries and local government level. The Government of Somaliland and in particular the local governments have demonstrated that they are willing and able to direct significant amounts of locally generated resources towards the basic services at the local level. Considerable progress has been made in stimulating district ownership of and investment in local service delivery. A total of approximately US\$ 14.8 million has been invested in the SDMs in Somaliland since 2014 and of this \$8.9 million (60 per cent) has come from local sources.

In 2021 alone, the Government of Somaliland has made its highest commitment (82 per cent) towards the SDM in basic education and basic health sector as compared to previous years. The total planned commitment for the SDMs investment for the eight districts amounts to \$ 5.1 million of which 70 per cent is the contribution from the districts, 12 per cent from the two ministries and the remaining 18 per cent from JPLG UNICEF. The Government’s investment in 2021 has increased by 27 per cent as compared to 2020, which is an indication of the increased commitment towards decentralizing public primary basic education and health services to districts and promoting sustainable local government systems. District contributions from eight districts in Somaliland alone stands at \$3.6 million. This modality proved equally effective during COVID-19 pandemic where the local governments contributed 15 per cent of the total COVID-19 response project in 2020.

The cost-sharing contributions of the districts is a demonstration of what can be achieved when subnational entities are committed – even in fiscally-constrained and fragile contexts. This underscores the importance of JPLG and other partners identifying opportunities to support decentralization of basic services including budgeting and planning at the local government level. Over 90,000 students (44 per cent girls) from 311 primary schools in six districts benefitted from improved and child friendly learning environments and 78 health facilities in five districts have been regularly supported through this approach. This year, the programme is expanded to three more districts, benefiting more women and children accessing those schools and health facilities.

## VOICES FROM THE FIELD

(INTERVIEW WITH ABDULLAHI OSMAN, A UNDP STAFF MEMBER)



### 1. What motivates you in your work for the UN?

I believe in working for the UN and applying my knowledge of stabilization, local governance and state-building in conflict areas, particularly in a country like Somalia. My motivation is knowing that by contributing my experience, I will add my part in serving the needs of my country and building a stable, peaceful and prosperous Somalia.

### 2. How does the work you do impact people's lives?

I strive to create an enabling environment in all of my work and lead by example in having a positive attitude, treating others with respect and empowering those I serve. Somalia has a large youth population who is ready to offer innovative ideas and concepts that will build the momentum to strengthen its institutions and foster a productive environment. I believe that by offering new ideas, we can work together to create a positive impact on the lives of all Somalis.

### 3. If you had to choose one Sustainable Development Goal, which one would you choose and why?

I prefer Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. This SDG encompasses what I feel is critical for Somalia and by investing in peace, we can achieve lasting solutions and create a resilient, inclusive and strong nation.

### 4. What is your vision for Somalia in 2030?

My vision for Somalia in 2030 resonates with my preferred Goal 16 from the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. I firmly believe that the ambitions of this SDG can serve as the basis to build progress and achieve sustainable peace.

### 5. How did COVID-19 affect your work in the past year?

I have faced some difficulties, just like most of my other colleagues who have had to adjust to alternate working modalities, such as distractions from family members and visitors, as well as the risk of COVID-19 exposure. With that said, I feel these challenges have been manageable and I am still able to carry out my duties and deliver on my objectives.

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