



ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT
AND RELIEF AGENCY



A bi-monthly newsletter of ADRA Somalia

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New Education Project Launched in Puntland

Somalia is a country with one of the lowest literacy rates in the World. In recent years, basic education (both formal and non formal) has received considerable attention by the donor community, the national Ministry of Education and a number of INGO's, which has helped revive primary education to some degree. Unfortunately, literacy programmes for youth and adults have received little attention and have led to a situation where an estimated 80% of adults are unable to read, write or complete simple calculations. These people cannot be absorbed by the existing formal education system, or the systems in place for accelerated learning. Female dropout rates are much higher than boys, and few complete their primary education.

The revival of the education system has been slow and inadequate to meet the needs of the ever-growing population who yearn for better educational opportunities. Girls lack opportunities to learn vocational and life skills that would enhance their employability and support making life decisions. Since the collapse of the government in 1991, insecurity in many regions of Somalia has prevented investment in education and vocational skills training.

To address this need, ADRA Somalia with funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) through ADRA Norway recently began implementing

a three year intervention aimed at raising literacy levels and general knowledge of adults and young women by increasing their enrolment in, and completion of, literacy and numeracy courses in Somalia. The Education for Women and Children (EWC) Project is premised on the belief that educated and skilled citizens are crucial to achieve peaceful, democratic and sustainable development. It will not only promote and enhance gender equality but will also contribute to peace building and to state building.

A common Somali proverb says that if you educate a woman you have educated a nation. Educated and empowered women can contribute to the health and productivity of their families and communities, and improve the prospects of the next generation. It is not only education and knowledge that affect women's standard of living and participation in society in Somalia, but cultural factors also play a significant role. The project will address literacy and numeracy in the community, while integrating cross cutting issues which aim to raise awareness on key issues and promote a range of life skills. These cross cutting issues include thematic issues such as: HIV/AIDS, FGM, family health and hygiene, peace building in the community, domestic violence, the environment, management of small businesses and property ownership.

'RAAD' is the Somali word for 'footprints'. ADRA Somalia iconizes its interventions in Somalia/Somaliland as footprints left on the people's hearts as reported in this bi-monthly newsletter.



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Famine in Somalia: ADRA is Responding

It has now been over three months since famine was declared in the Horn of Africa. Indeed, the pictures coming out of Somalia are quite distressing and aid is desperately needed to avert a human catastrophe. More than four million Somalis are living in famine zones, according to the United Nations, with 750,000 at risk of starving to death in the next few months. A protracted drought has been made worse by decades of war, high food prices and local militants blocking foreign aid to those who need it the most.

Before the famine had been declared, ADRA was already on the ground implementing emergency interventions in Somaliland and Puntland. Through a network funded intervention – Puntland Emergency Drought Response Project (PUDER), ADRA was able to provide emergency water supply to an estimated 8,000 people from 7 villages in Nugal Region of Puntland. ADRA Somalia's team on the ground recently had a chat with the WASH Chairman of one of the beneficiary villages Mr. Abdikareem Nur. Says he: "Reebanti village seems to have borne the brunt of the harsh drought. It would even had been worse had it not been for the fact that we had stored enough water in the two existing *berkads* in the village and were also lucky to be one of the recipients of the water trucking initiative by ADRA. This has greatly helped our village survive through the hardest of times and we hope and pray that the expected rains will be enough this time round". According to Nur, a lot of livestock deaths were averted as a result of regular water supply. In order to be better prepared, the village has now dug two large water catchments and are in the process of mobilizing funds to construct three additional *berkads*. "Thank you ADRA for coming to our village's assistance during this harsh time", he concludes.

Moving further east towards Mudug Region, the ADRA assessment team is met with the Head of Gowlalo Village Mr. Osman Abdi Farrah. Through two ongoing ADRA Switzerland/Swiss Solidarity funded intervention, the village which has over 400 households has recently benefitted from the rehabilitation of a previously non functional borehole. Mr. Farrah explains that the community has greatly benefitted from the rehabilitation since members of his village no longer have to trek long distances in search of water. The livestock – which are one of the main economic mainstays of the members of his village – all seem to have relatively good body conditions. He explains that this can be attributed in part to the availability of water. The intervention aims to strengthen the resilience of part of the drought affected population in Puntland and Galmudug Region of Central Somalia by increasing access to safe water and improve IDP conditions through provision of NFIs. Through this intervention thus far, over 900 households have been reached and it is envisaged that over 19,000 beneficiaries will be reached by project end.

ADRA has also carried out food distribution exercises targeting IDPs in Galmudug Region. Through an ADRA Austria funded intervention, food rations consisting but not limited to rice, beans and vegetable oil have been provided to approximately 370 IDP families. Through this intervention, reprieve has been brought to women, children and the elderly who have borne the greatest brunt of the famine.

In Banadir which is one of the most affected Regions, ADRA has begun implementing projects on water trucking, food and NFI distribution as well as school feeding activities.



Touching Lives in the Midst of Biting Drought

Warsame Haji Yusuf has spent 40 of his 44 years at Dhardhar Village in Galmudug Region of Central Somalia. Prior to the drought, the village was beaming with life and was a picture of irenic tranquility and harmony. The village's main economic mainstay was livestock rearing and just like most other parts of Somalia, almost all of the once thriving herds of goats, sheep and camels at the village have been decimated by the drought. Says Yusuf, "Life was grand and delightful at Dhardhar, we had healthy livestock and good rains, but gradually the rainfall situation deteriorated and our living conditions also began deteriorating".

According to Yusuf, who is the Head of the Village, the residents of Dhardhar began experiencing the harsh effects of the drought from March this year when, as a result of no pasture, their livestock started dying off one by one. Although they were used to regular recurring drought, this particular one was unique: it was showing no signs of ending and was becoming severe by the day. As a result, most residents of the village by virtue of having lost their main sources of income, opted to move to IDP camps leaving the village as a dire shadow of its former vibrant self.

When ADRA carried out a rapid assessment of the village in early August, the area was as dry as a bone. Residents were moving from the village in their numbers to seek assistance at the many IDP camps that had sprouted all over the Region, with some making the perilous journey to Mogadishu, some 300kms away. The assessment revealed that residents were in dire need of food and water and considering that other Agencies were already distributing food rations in the area, ADRA began implementing water interventions. A number of trucks were sub-contracted to immediately begin providing water rations to people affected by drought in that area as a way of providing immediate relief and prevent the mass exodus from the area.

The water trucks also filled the previously dried up water points and thus helped stem the continued loss of human and animal life due to lack of water.

The only borehole in the area had stopped functioning a couple of years back but has recently been rehabilitated by ADRA. The borehole is now serving over 3,000 residents of the area, who have also benefited from the construction of animal troughs for easy water access for their animals. Yusuf observes that as a result, the village's residents have begun streaming back to their homes to begin their lives afresh. Restocking of livestock is the most important role for Yusuf and his newly constituted Dhardhar Disaster Response Committee which ADRA helped in establishing. "Thank you ADRA for standing by our village during this trying time", he quips.

At Hiran IDP camp in Galkaio Town of Galmudug Region, Hawa Ali Mohamed is preparing a meal for her six children. Hawa has recently benefitted from a distribution of NFI's from ADRA which consisted of plastic sheets, blankets, mosquito nets, soap and basins. She is glad that the items will make life a little bit more bearable at the camp as she awaits the drought situation to subside before making the long journey back to her home in Ceel Buur, some 200kms away. With outbreaks of water borne diseases at IDP camps a regular occurrence, the need for observance of good hygiene practices is important and by distributing these NFI's at IDP camps, it is envisaged that the prevalence of these diseases will be negated.

Yusuf and Hawa best represent the current drought situation in Somalia and the role that ADRA is playing in strengthening the resilience of part of the affected population. The Agency will continue implementing emergency response activities as well as recovery activities after the drought and is therefore still open to funding resources for continued response to the situation in Somalia.



Working with Non State Actors to Promote Renewable Energy

Somaliland as a Post-Conflict Transition country, is characterized by a devastated economy with human and physical infrastructure in shambles; severe economic distortions and macroeconomic imbalances; flawed or weak national civil institutions; a high dependency on official aid flows, mostly in the form of grants; and in addition the fledgling country must also carry out a number of critical peace-related activities that are distinct from normal development activities.

Conflict as a result of natural resources can be linked to energy production and use. For example, in the case of charcoal production, many conflicts have arisen and casualties recorded due to a complex relationship between producers and local communities. Through proper training of the communities on efficient production of charcoal, which include women and youth, it is possible to reduce the conflict, promote peace and preserve the environment. Well designed and implemented alternative energy interventions have the potential to promote peace and reconciliation, while reducing conflict amongst communities in Somaliland, leading to social and economic development. To this end, ADRA Somalia—with funding from the European Union—has been implementing a 30 month intervention aimed at preventing conflict and improving economic development of Somali people and reverse loss of biodiversity through provision of sustainable energy services in Somaliland.

The intervention—Engaging Non-State Actors (NSAs) in the Promotion of Alternative Energy Activities in Somaliland—is targeting 700 individuals from 70 NSAs that participated in the initial energy policy process leading to the development of the energy policy for Somaliland that was spearhead by ADRA in 2006. The project is also working with women and youth groups as well as 70 member organizations that form the Somaliland Renewable Energy Network (SOREN).

By project end and beyond, it is envisaged that 3.3 million people from Somaliland will benefit from an improved energy sector and 1,000 households will benefit from project activities that will be implemented by 10 NSA's which are going to receive small grants to implement renewable energy interventions. Thus far, 10 NSA's have been shortlisted to receive funding for implementation of renewable energy activities including solar installation and training, cookstove production and training as well as awareness creation on renewable energy technologies.

In addition to disbursement of small scale grants to NSA's, the project is also conducting training workshops and policy dialogue sessions on biomass energy issues as well as the conventional energy sector. Moreover, the project has organized community forums targeting unreached NSAs (specifically women and youth groups) and sessions for demonstration on the production and operation of alternative energy technologies and appliances.

The projects aims at achieving improved competencies and capacities of Somaliland NSAs to implement alternative energy projects as well as enhanced dialogue between NSAs and the administration in Somaliland in addition to ensuring greater public awareness on alternative energy. Other results include increased collaboration between NSA and State Actors in the energy sector of Somaliland, improved livelihoods of the people, improved energy services, reduced resource-based conflicts, better management of the environment and widespread sharing of lessons learnt.



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