



## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN SOMALIA

### Monthly Analysis

### February 2006

*This report was written in cooperation with the UN Agencies in Somalia*

#### HIGHLIGHTS

An early warning issued by FAO/FSAU and FEWS NET reports that parts of southern Somalia are at high risk of a Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe from July to December 2006 and that in a worse case scenario, the number of people in need of critical assistance will increase from 1.7 million to 1.8 million (not including up to 400,000 IDPs) country-wide. According to the Seventeenth Climate Outlook Forum for the Greater Horn of Africa, the 2006 *Gu* (long) rains will likely be near to below normal in Somalia and the cross border areas with Kenya and Ethiopia. While the increase of people in need of assistance may not appear alarming, what needs to be emphasized is a major shift in severity of the situation, with an over 40% increase in the number of people facing a state of Humanitarian Emergency or Famine.

Such developments have direct and significant implications for response, and will be considered in the present revision of the 2006 Somalia CAP, expected to be launched on 21 March 2006. Even if the *Gu* rains are normal to above normal, there will still be need for concerted and sustained humanitarian assistance to address livelihood recovery so badly impacted by the present drought. As stressed before, improvement in conditions hinges on the appropriateness, timeliness, adequacy of emergency response and on international support. The 2006 Appeal is presently 13% covered according to information received by donors and partners and recorded by the OCHA Geneva Financial Tracking System.

In drought affected southern Somalia, humanitarian access to meet the needs of affected populations remains of prime concern. While February saw some improvements in regions like Bay, Bakool and Gedo, the detainment of a UN international staff member in Lower Juba attests to the very fluid nature of the operational environment of the most affected regions. Advocacy efforts on access and protection carried on in February with the dissemination of an "Open Letter" to Somali leaders urging all actors to work towards an environment conducive to free and unhindered passage of assistance and protection of aid personnel. Advocacy on these same principles also commenced at the local level to garner grass root support.

The newly appointed Special Humanitarian Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, paid a first two-day visit to the region between 21-23 February, during which he met with the Somalia Inter-Agency Standing Committee to acquire an advance understanding of the situation in the country. In receiving updates from various sectors on the drought response, the need for adequate and timely funding by donors, and securing humanitarian access and protection were the two concerns repeatedly highlighted. The Special Envoy took note of both points as well as the importance of water and infrastructure building given the recurrence of drought in Somalia.

While Somalia had successfully put an end to polio transmission in October 2002, in the past seven months, 194 cases of wild polio have been confirmed. Somalia now poses one of the greatest threats to the global eradication of polio. Of the 194 cases, 159 are from Mogadishu; 25 from Lower Shabelle; four from Middle Shabelle; three from Bay; one from Gedo; and two from Sool. Danger of spread and re-infection thus now persists in countries such as Yemen and Ethiopia, as well as polio-free Kenya.

Smuggling of Ethiopian migrants and Somali nationals from ports in Puntland to Yemen and the Gulf States continues to pose a serious humanitarian concern. Between 1 January and 28 February, 61 boats arrived from Bossaso to the Yemeni coast, which could amount to as many as 7,000 people. Aid partners have started a regional and international advocacy campaign but more efforts will be required to work with the local authorities to address and find more durable solutions to the issue.

## ACCESS and SECURITY

In Gedo region, subsequent to a meeting between UN officials and community leaders from Luuq district to discuss threats against UN personnel received last month, and a security assessment in Luuq and Garbaharey, the two districts are again open for UN air and ground operations (Luuq only open to national UN staff). A concern expressed by the elders in Luuq had been the exclusion of certain sub-clans from receiving aid, which the elders were reassured aid partners were carefully avoiding. This renewed access into Gedo is hoped to enhance delivery of response to one of the worse drought hit regions in southern Somalia. This said, an increasing number of checkpoints are reportedly appearing along major roads in Gedo – between Belet-Hawa and Luuq, and Belet-Hawa and Garbaharey - in some locations doubling since January. Young pastoralists who have lost all assets due to the onset of the drought are reportedly resorting to such activities as a means of gaining some income through exaction of money from travelers.

In Mogadishu, intense fighting erupted on 17 February between militia allied with Mogadishu faction leaders and the Islamic Courts, following the announcement of a newly created “Alliance for restoration of peace and counter of terrorism” by a faction leader. The clashes resulted in the death of around 60 people and over 200 casualties, as well as the temporary displacement of thousands of people. Calm returned as elders mediated between the two sides yet the situation remains unsettled. The conflict which started as a dispute over control of El Ma’an port could turn into an overall conflict between fundamentalist/extremist militants and moderates. Such a turn of events would carry grave implications for access and the humanitarian situation of vulnerable groups in the capital. Despite this insecure environment, UN activities continued during the month through presence of national staff.

During a UNICEF/OCHA visit to Lower Juba to consult with partners on the ground and identify quick impact drought-related priority interventions, on 1 March the mission was ambushed in Afmadow by armed militia and a UNICEF international staff detained. Thanks to direct negotiations with the TFG and local authorities, the staff member was safely released 30 hours later. In the past, travel to Afmadow was decided on a case-by-case basis and the situation remains unchanged. Still, the incident is highly denounced for its violation of the safety of aid personnel, and very unfortunate as the mission would have enabled progress in the drought response in the region. Lower Juba is one of the worse affected regions yet also one with the smallest presence of aid organizations. Response is thus limited.

Sea piracy is still an issue of concern as demonstrated by the hijacking of yet another vessel off the Mogadishu coastline on 26 February when pirates armed with guns in two speedboats boarded a wooden dhow and took the 25 crew hostage. Piracy impacts on supply pipelines of both commercial and aid commodities and remains a concern as shipping companies are still hesitant to sail off the Somali coastline. During the month, WFP brought into Somalia 2,237 metric tons (MT) overland through El Wak Kenya into Wajid and Gedo districts, and 8,570.5 MT by sea through the ports of Kismayo and Merka.

Against this backdrop, advocacy efforts on access and protection persevered during the month. On 17 February the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia widely disseminated an “Open Letter” to all Somali leaders urging all actors to work towards creating an environment conducive to free and safe passage of humanitarian assistance. Concurrently, the dissemination of the ‘Statement of Commitment’ on access and protection to local authorities and communities was commenced by OCHA to garner grass root support and adherence to basic principles of unhindered humanitarian space and operation. WFP’s advocacy and sensitization campaigns in preparation of relief distributions were also completed in Lower and Middle Juba, Bay, and Bakool where elders, community members, local and regional administrations voiced their commitment to providing support to aid agencies. WFP will soon start these campaigns in Gedo where relief distribution is planned to commence shortly.

Developments in Bay and Bakool could also bode well for humanitarian access. On 11 and 12 February, preceding the Baidoa Parliamentary Session on 26 February, a reconciliation meeting between Digil and Mirifle sub-clans in Wajid resulted in a Nine-Point Agreement, known as Wajid Accord. Among the points are the unification of the sub-clan militia, the relocation of all militia outside Baidoa town, the formation of a temporary court, and the establishment of a unified administration for the regions. The Agreement is being implemented through a series of committees and community elders have stressed that its essence is to facilitate humanitarian access to communities in need in the two regions affected by the drought. A parallel peace initiative in Idale town (Baidoa district, Bay region) between the Huber and Yantar sub-clans to cement the peace agreement reached in mid-2005 could also positively impact on humanitarian access in the region.

In early February, the Danish cartoons depicting the prophet Mohamed stirred several reactions and demonstrations throughout Somalia. In Bossaso, a violent demonstration on 6 February resulted in the death of one demonstrator and four other injuries. Later in the month, still in Puntland, tension resulting from a President awaited cabinet reshuffle resulted in a shoot-out on 27 February when militia loyal to the Minister of Planning surrounded the Parliament and faced presidential bodyguards. UN international staff based in Garowe was temporarily relocated to Bossaso, while clan elders met to find a solution to the disagreement over the reinstatement or not of removed Ministers. At the time of drafting, the situation remained unchanged and was being closely monitored.

## PROTECTION

In southern Somalia, the drought continues to induce population movements in search of water and pasture. Reports from Walaq village in Wajid district indicated that around 1,500 new families have arrived over the last two months as a result of the drought. The displaced have moved from villages around Wajid and parts of Bay region. New drought induced populations were also reported from the villages of Dah (300 people, of whom 240 women and children) and Dayel (450 people, of whom 365 women and children) to near Garsweyne in Hudur district (Bakool). The displaced are in poor conditions lacking access to basic needs such as shelter, food and water.

The Protection/IDP Working group continues to track population movements in drought affected areas. A population movement information database has now been established to centralise and analyse field reports and track trends. The present movement is following patterns noted in past drought situations, resulting from a combination of livestock migration and resource-based movements, principally in search of water sources for people and livestock, green areas for animal grazing, livelihood opportunities, protection/security and humanitarian assistance. At this point, coping mechanisms include families splitting to seek resources and aid, conserving livestock herds by seeking new water sources and grazing lands, and/or identifying alternatives including day labour in urban settlements. An important element is the search for security and social support through protective clan bases. Of concern is that movement to large settlements such as Wajid, Baidoa, Mogadishu and Galkayo may lead to clan based tensions, resource based conflicts, further displacement and increase in social issues including child labour and begging. Cross-border movement between Somalia and Kenya is following the same search patterns, with some specifics being better water sources in Kenya and therapeutic feeding centres in Mandera (Kenya).



IDP camp in Wajid. Many families have walked for days to arrive in this camp west of Wajid in the hope of accessing water and humanitarian aid. Credit: UNICEF/Brendan Bannon.

### *Ethiopian Migrants and Smuggling in Puntland*

Smuggling of Ethiopian migrants and Somali nationals from ports in Puntland to Yemen continue to pose a serious humanitarian concern, requiring urgent international and local efforts to address the problem. In a tragic incident, in the early hours of 25 February, a smuggler boat arrived in Yemen from Somalia, forcing 137 passengers overboard (134 Somalis and three Ethiopians) in the deep waters, far from the shore. Of these, 33 people (31 Somalis and two Ethiopians) drowned, while 84 (65 males, 17 females and two children) survived swimming to safety. Twenty people are still missing. The survivors were taken to the UNHCR Maifa'a refugee reception centre in Shabwa, about 760km southeast of the capital Sana, where they were given medical care, food and other help.

The magnitude of the smuggling problem can be judged from the fact that between 1 January and 28 February, 61 boat loads of people left the Somali port of Bosasso for Yemen, mainly Ethiopians and Somalis. With an average of 100-120 passengers per boat, this could amount to over 7,000 people. Very often, smugglers force passengers off the boat while still far from shore. In some instances, smugglers have been known to tie the hands of passengers behind their backs, leaving them at the mercy of the high seas. Unlike Somalis, most of the Ethiopians opt not to report to UNHCR as they do not enjoy automatic refugee status in Yemen and proceed to other gulf countries in search of better economic opportunities. However, even then, during the first two months of this year, 211 Ethiopian (including 49 women) and 3,329 Somalis (including 370 women) officially registered with UNHCR in Yemen. The Yemeni government has reiterated its call for help to stop smugglers from bringing Somali and Ethiopian migrants and asylum seekers, often under hazardous sea conditions, into Yemen.

The WFP/DRC emergency food assistance programme which commenced in November 2005 to provide life-saving assistance to the Ethiopian migrants in Bossaso continues to fulfil the nutritional needs of over 2,000 Ethiopians. However, to find a more durable solution and in line with the overall humanitarian response plan for these Ethiopian migrants, on 28 February, Heads of WFP and UNHCR met to discuss the phasing out of the WFP/DRC programme and agreed to close it down during the second week of March. IOM will thereafter provide a "one-off" assistance to facilitate the return of willing Ethiopians under the Assisted Voluntary Return programme, tentatively expected to commence in mid-March. UNHCR and DRC will meanwhile monitor the responses and intentions of Ethiopians in the final stages of the feeding programme, with results of the monitoring passed on to partners.

The issue of Ethiopian migrants needs to be tackled comprehensively by addressing the problem of smuggling from

Somalia to Yemen and the Gulf States with the local authorities in Puntland. In this regard, the Head of UNHCR will travel to Puntland from 9-11 March to discuss the matter with the Puntland administration. Meanwhile, the wide information media campaign to raise awareness on the problem has started. A story describing the plight of Ethiopian migrants, which has appeared on UNHCR website, has been picked up by various media groups.  
See: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/news/opendoc.htm?tbl=NEWS&page=home&id=43f5db4e4>

On 4 February, yet another fire broke out in a small IDP settlement in Garowe town. A total of 80 people originally from the south were affected – mainly women and children – and lost everything. Due to overcrowding and congestion, people in the vicinity of the burnt shelters opposed the affected's relocation within the settlement. The Nugal Governor was successful in finding temporary private land where the IDPs could be relocated, while aid partners provided non-food items, food and water.

## HEALTH and NUTRITION

Since the onset of the drought, and as water and food continue to deplete, health surveillance mechanisms have been intensified to enable timely detection and response. The month of February saw levels of disease comparable to January 2006 as well as trends observed in February of 2005. Increased incidences of malaria, however, were noted on the increase since the beginning of the year. The watery diarrhea levels are within 'normal' parameters for this time of year although in Afgoi, near Mogadishu, one child death attributed to watery diarrhea was reported and is now being investigated. Surveillance efforts were also intensified in the area to detect any other suspected cholera case, and information is being disseminated to the local community on the symptoms of cholera and the importance of referrals to clinics.

Additional sentinel sites were also established to monitor the nutrition situation throughout drought affected regions. Sentinel surveillance by FAO/FSAU in Middle and Lower Juba in January noted high malnutrition in most sites due to limited diversity of diet, high morbidity levels and increased prices of food. Admission to MSF-Holland's Supplementary Feeding Programme in Marare increased from 93 in November 2005, to 145 in December 2005, while admission to the Therapeutic Feeding Center increased from 39 to 65 in the same period. In Gedo, sentinel surveillance in January also noted high malnutrition in all sites surveyed. Considering the deteriorating malnutrition situation, aid actors in the health and nutrition sector are recommending blanket supplementary distribution of blended fortified food among vulnerable groups (children under five, pregnant and lactating mothers) in increased quantities. CARE and WFP have confirmed the inclusion of corn-soya blend in their relief food rations.

Subsequent to catch-up measles campaigns in Somaliland and Puntland in January 2005, a similar campaign will be conducted in central and southern Somalia between March and April 2006. The campaign will target nearly 2.5 million children aged 9 months to 15 years and be carried out in three phases starting with the worst-hit drought-affected regions of Gedo, Lower and Middle Juba and Bay; followed by Benadir and Lower Shabelle; and lastly Hiran, Galgaduud, parts of Mudug and Middle Shabelle. Bakool was covered in December 2005. All supplies for the campaign have been pre-positioned in strategic locations pending the launch of the first phase of the campaign. It is expected that about 90% of children in these regions will have been vaccinated by the end of the exercise in April 2006.

While worrying reports on the avian flu have been coming from various countries in Africa, Somalia is still considered at low risk. Even so, organizations such as the US Center for Disease Control (CDC) are closely monitoring the situation and have developed a one-day training on sample taking of dead or sick birds which CDC plans to run in Nairobi in March. The workshop will target UN agencies, NGOs and aid workers in Somalia, starting with laboratory technicians. People trained in Nairobi will thereafter disseminate knowledge inside Somalia. There have been unconfirmed reports of dead wild birds in different locations in Somalia, although none so far have been considered suspect.

### *Polio in Somalia*

Between 1988 and 2006, an unprecedented sustained global partnership was forged in pursuit of one collective goal: the eradication of polio. Partners driving these efforts include WHO, UNICEF, Rotary International, and the US Center for Disease Control. By 2006, the international community invested more than US\$ 4 billion in this effort – the world's largest public health undertaking with 20 million volunteers immunising over two billion children across the globe.

In 2003, global polio eradication was threatened when false rumors in Nigeria brought immunization campaigns to a halt in the country, causing severe consequences, including the spread of the poliovirus to 19 other countries, which has cost the global programme an additional US\$ 280 million. The virus spread to countries such as Niger, Ethiopia, Sudan, Yemen, and eventually to Somalia in July 2005. Somalia now poses one of the greatest threats to the global eradication of polio. While the country had successfully put an end to polio transmission in October 2002, in the past seven months, 194 children have been paralyzed by polio since Somalia was re-infected.



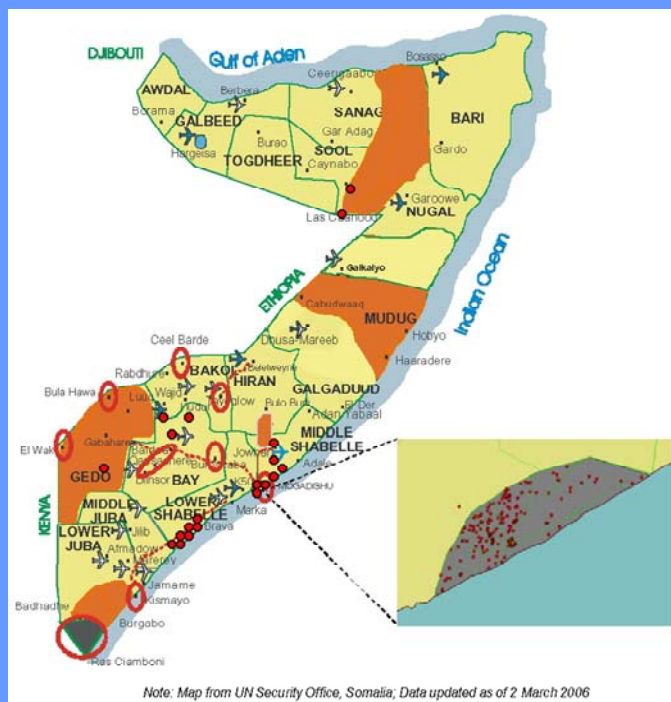
The risk of proliferation was high in 2005 considering the low level of routine immunization, and ongoing outbreaks in neighbouring countries. The first polio case was identified in Mogadishu in July 2005, where it caused an explosive outbreak, paralyzing 159 children; from where it spread to other insecure and challenging regions of the country, including Gedo, Bay and Sool. Danger of spread and re-infection still persists in countries such as Yemen and Ethiopia, as well as polio-free Kenya.

In 2005, four rounds of National Immunization Days (NIDs) were originally planned in Somalia, yet due to the threat of importation from neighbouring Yemen and Ethiopia, an additional four rounds were conducted. Monovalent oral polio vaccine (MOPV), the vaccine type which produces the best protection against P1 virus, was used in five of the last eight rounds conducted. On average of 1.4 million under-fives were targeted during each round, and the reported coverage throughout the country varies between 80-95%. This year, with the continued spread of the virus, sub-NIDs were conducted in the central and south zone in January 2006, achieving 93% coverage, followed by a round of NIDs in February that was synchronized with neighboring Ethiopia and Sudan. MOPV was used in both rounds. Due to the ongoing transmission, an additional seven rounds of NIDs are planned for 2006.

Since January 2005, a total of 412 Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases have been reported; 194 of which are confirmed, 164 have been discarded and 48 are pending laboratory results and final classification. Of the 194 cases, 159 were from Mogadishu; 25 from Lower Shabelle; four from Middle Shabelle; three from Bay; one from Gedo; and two from Sool.

Polio national staff currently visit 434 sentinel sites to conduct active AFP surveillance, and collect information on measles cases, and other disease outbreaks as part of the integrated disease surveillance. Community awareness and sensitization meetings occur on a regular basis where religious leaders, local authorities, NGOs, peers, teachers, and even warlords are updated on the polio outbreak as well as the importance of reporting AFP cases. Despite the challenges faced, Somalia has reached and maintained certification-standard surveillance indicators since 2003, a tremendous achievement for a country with such a complex operating environment.

At this stage, the pressing challenge is the containment of the virus, which can only be achieved through quality NIDs, especially in insecure areas where the virus has appeared. It is imperative that the polio programme maintains sensitive and quality active AFP surveillance to detect any ongoing virus circulation. In 2006, a major constraint faced by the polio programme globally is a general funding shortfall. Somalia is in dire need of US\$ 11.5 million to be able to conduct seven rounds of high-quality NIDs, and maintain the sensitive surveillance system to detect polio cases as early as possible.



Map on UN Security and Accessibility with Location of Polio Confirmed Cases, 2005-2006.

## HIV/AIDS

As part of the 2006 annual planning process, the secretariats of the three zonal AIDS commissions - Somaliland National AIDS Commission (SOLNAC), Puntland AIDS Commission (PAC) and South Central AIDS Commission (SCAC) - held meetings with multi-sectoral partners during the month of February to i) clarify the mandate and roles of the Secretariats; and ii) to develop a workplan for ensuring effective coordination of the HIV response. Being new structures, there was some confusion on the balance between coordination and implementation of HIV responses by the AIDS Secretariats. The planning meetings resolved these issues and focused the activities of the Secretariats on coordination, resource mobilization and ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation as opposed to direct implementation of HIV responses.

The Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), through which Somalia receives substantial funding for the HIV response, was reviewed in light of experiences since its launch six months ago. The review meeting noted that the GFATM was on target for the planned activities for year one, ending in June 2006. Greater involvement of the AIDS coordination structures in the management framework of the GFATM HIV/AIDS component was recommended and will be strengthened henceforth.

In line with the UN General Assembly's December 2005 declaration on accelerating universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support, country-driven consultations for Somalia began in February 2006. A meeting drawing participants from the three zones was held in Bosaso between February 21-24 to share findings of a consultative study on the current status of HIV treatment, care and support services throughout the three zones of Somalia. The study noted major gaps in voluntary counseling and testing (VCT), antiretroviral treatment (ART) and sexually transmitted infections (STI) services in all the three zones. A work plan to accelerate access to integrated prevention, treatment, care and support is now under development for each of the three zones.

The TFG Minister for Health is currently leading a team composed of the Executive Directors of the AIDS Commission Secretariats from Puntland, Somaliland and South Central at a regional meeting in Congo Brazzaville focusing on the current status of, and a road map for accelerating universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support services. Somalia's representation at this meeting is useful in exposing it to the efforts of other countries and in pushing its HIV response agenda higher.

A mapping of vulnerable groups in Somalia is presently going on in order to help target HIV prevention, treatment and care interventions in the country. The outcomes of this process will be vital to the HIV response as there is currently minimal understanding of the dynamics of HIV vulnerability and risk behaviour among Somali populations.

## LIVELIHOOD and FOOD SECURITY

Based on early predictions for the upcoming 2006 *Gu* rain season (April-June), FAO/FSAU, together with FEWS NET, has issued an early warning that parts of southern Somalia are at high risk of Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe from July to December 2006. This is mainly due to severe lack of access and availability of both food and water resulting from an abnormally severe drought and persistent civil insecurity.

According to the Seventeenth Climate Outlook Forum for the Greater Horn of Africa, there is a high probability that Somalia will receive near to below normal 2006 *Gu* rains. Given that southern Somalia has experienced two consecutive poor rain seasons, another such season will further increase vulnerability. Following the FAO/FSAU 2005/6 Post *Deyr* Analysis, around 1.7 million people were reported in need of urgent assistance (figure not inclusive of up to 400,000 IDPs). In a worse case scenario, FAO/FSAU and FEWS NET warn that the number of people facing conditions of Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis or Humanitarian Emergency will increase to 1.8 million (still not including IDPs) between July and December 2006.

While the increase may not appear alarming, the shift in the severity of the situation is major, with an increase in the number of people facing a state of Humanitarian Emergency or Famine of over 40% – from the present 900,000 to 1.3 million. According to FAO/FSAU and FEWS NET's worse case analysis, Gedo parts of Middle and Lower Juba, Bay and Bakool in particular are at high risk of Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe between July and December 2006. Parts of Hiran are at high risk of descending into a state of Humanitarian Emergency, while parts of Lower Shabelle are at high risk of Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis. Parts of northern and central Somalia will remain in a state of Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis.



**One of the largest water catchments in Ufurow village, Qansahdere (Bay region) dried up 3 months ago.**  
Source: OCHA

These developments have severe implications for the humanitarian response. Cross border analysis also raises an alarm for Southern Ethiopia and northeastern Kenya where the situation is also expected to deteriorate facing a moderate risk of Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe.

All aid organisations and sectors are fully invested in the drought response despite some obstacles faced by some sectors due to limited capacity, funding and access. The response is most advanced in Bay and Bakool regions, and efforts are being made now to move ahead in Gedo where OCHA is looking into the establishment of coordination meetings in Belet-Hawa for northern Gedo and Garbaharey for southern Gedo. A UNICEF/OCHA mission intended to make progress in the drought response in Lower Juba was sabotaged on 1 March when ambushed just outside Afmadow and an international staff member taken hostage.

In February, ICRC commenced food aid distribution while CARE received donor confirmation for the expansion of its Rural Food Security Programme to meet drought needs. In light of available WFP food stocks and confirmed new funding, 78,000 MT of the total 95,000 MT of food aid needed by the Agency to cover needs until July 2006 is secured. However in view, of anticipated failed 2006 *Gu* rains, needs for the second half of the

year will substantially increase and WFP now estimates emergency needs in the order of 85,000 MT, bringing overall 2006 annual needs up to 180,000 MT. WFP thus has a shortfall of 73, 000 MT.

While the drought is focused in southern Somalia, some pockets in the north also received very little rain. Following an appeal by the Puntland Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency, an inter-agency assessment conducted in Qandala, Alula and Ishkushuban districts of Bari region between 1 and 8 February reported severe water depletion; increased movement of people; migration of pastoralists to coastal and remote areas with better pasture availability; and human and animal disease. The mission noted the inaccessibility of some of the visited areas owing to their location in mountainous areas and lack of proper road infrastructure to facilitate access and mobility. The mission also reported a noticeable gap by the aid community in reaching these areas and complaints by the communities that aid channeled through 'gatekeepers' does not always reach them. The mission recommended water trucking, rehabilitation of water sources, food and medical assistance to the displaced, and improvement of human and animal health services. A response is being mobilised.

Following alarming reports raised by the Middle Shabelle Administration, an interagency needs assessment mission also traveled to Adale and Warshiek districts (Middle Shabelle) from 28 February to 2 March to assess the humanitarian situation of vulnerable groups, including IDPs. Initial findings indicated livelihood stress across the sectors of water, sanitation, food security and health. An estimated 60% of the total population is affected by the impact of the drought with pastoralist being the most affected (40%), followed by urban poor (30%), and agro-pastoralists (20%). Among all the settlements visited, Adale town was the worst hit. The team observed widespread crop failure, weakened conditions of livestock with increasing animal deaths (particularly cattle and shoats), increased food prices, and declined terms of trade for livestock affecting purchasing power of pastoralists who in turn started reduction of food intake. Along the coastal areas, sand dunes covered large agricultural areas, burying water wells and closing access roads. Following the Tsunami, production levels of fish dropped considerably, due to the destruction of the natural habitat of the fish and demolition of the bulk of the fishing gear.

#### **COORDINATION and CONSOLIDATED APPEALS PROCESS (CAP)**

On 22 February, the Somalia Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) held a meeting with the newly appointed Special Humanitarian Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Kjell Magne Bondevik, during his brief visit to Nairobi. The meeting, attended by the TFG Deputy Prime Minister and Chair of the TFG's Disaster Committee, provided an opportunity to brief the Special Envoy on the drought sector response, the challenges being faced and key issues for which the Special Envoy's support is sought. The need for adequate and timely funding by donors, and securing humanitarian access and protection were the two concerns repeatedly highlighted by the different sectors. In the margins of the visit, regional actors endorsed the proposal to launch a Regional Humanitarian Appeal for the drought in the Horn of Africa, within which Somalia be referenced.

In a letter dated 20 February, Prime Minister Gedi welcomed the appointment of the Special Envoy, noting also the TFG's need for support to establish itself fully. A second visit by the Special Envoy to Somalia is anticipated later in April 2006. Following his first trip and in a note to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, the Special Envoy conveyed recommendations that significantly more short term assistance must be integrated with strategic medium and long-term development programmes to break the cycle of vulnerability and food insecurity. The Special Envoy also conveyed that food aid alone is inadequate and that a comprehensive response involving non-food sectors, particularly access to water must be put in place. Finally, the Special Envoy informed of his intentions to urge donors to generously support efforts in the Horn of Africa.

Following the decision by Somalia IASC members to review the 2006 Somalia CAP, progress is being made in finalizing the document. The launch of the revised CAP will take place in Nairobi on 21 March. Thanks to recent interest and contributions by donors, the 2006 Somalia Appeal is 13% covered, according to information received by donors and aid partners and recorded by the OCHA Geneva Financial Tracking System. However, given the forecast of near to below normal *Gu* rains and major shift in severity in the humanitarian situation in Somalia in the coming months, donors are urged to provide generous and urgent support to the country in the coming months.

#### **JOINT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (JNA)**

During February, the JNA focused on finalizing on-going field missions to assess needs and undertake qualitative information collection. Almost all the field missions have finished their 'on the ground expert visits' and on 3 March questionnaires devised by each of the JNA six clusters<sup>1</sup> went to the zonal coordinators to pass on to the national technical counterparts who will use the questionnaires to carry out additional surveys on the ground. Indeed, the JNA process is a

<sup>1</sup> JNA clusters: i) Governance, safety and the rule of law; ii) macro-economic policy framework and data development; iii) infrastructure; iv) social services and protection of vulnerable groups; v) productive sectors and environment; vi) livelihoods and solutions for the displaced. Cross-cutting issues: i) peace building, reconciliation and conflict prevention; ii) capacity building and institutional development (public and private) plus anti corruption initiatives; iii) gender parity and human rights.

multi-phased complex analytical process where different assessment methods are used to extract an understanding of needs and the situation.

The questionnaires will travel with National Somali experts to the most inaccessible corners of Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia, who will engage many stakeholders including, women, youth, regional authorities, religious and traditional leaders and business groups to collect data. Some areas in South Central are still inaccessible to international experts, however with more than 50% Somalis on the JNA expert team (now counting 135 experts from all over the globe), the JNA will acquire the much needed information from these regions.

To prepare the Somali experts working for the JNA, 'Orientation and Briefing' workshops were held consecutively in Jowhar, Garowe and Hargeisa between 8 and 25 February. The workshops served not only as training but proved to be valuable team-building exercises and an opportunity to identify problems and deal with them collectively. Plans were drawn on the way forward and the workshops provided a setting for cluster teams to take stock of available data and identify data gaps. All participants had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the questionnaires, give feedback and adapt them to fit the Somali context.

The planned validation workshops - where Somali stakeholders and authorities will be invited to review and validate the preliminary findings and draft cluster reports that the experts will have drawn up based on the total of the cluster teams work (field visits, meetings, interviews, meetings, report and article research, questionnaires) – will take place at the end of March, beginning of April 2006. One such workshop already took place in Hargeisa (Somaliland) in January and five more are remaining.

In order to enhance understanding of the JNA process within Somalia, the JNA Secretariat launched a media campaign in February including information pamphlets and the co-production of six feature programmes on the JNA together with Horn Afrik to address basic queries and criticisms on the Process. The first two programmes, including interviews, have already been completed and aired on TV and radio on Horn Afrik's network in Somalia. Similar programmes are being produced for radio broadcasts in Somaliland and Puntland, where the JNA is buying airtime, and will also be sent to a number of local radio stations for their free use. The pamphlets will be distributed in various communication centers such as tea house, universities, and health clinics in the different zones.