

**REPORT ON MISSION TO SOMALIA
BY THE ASSISTANT EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR**

28 – 29 JULY 2000 (SECOND DRAFT)

PURPOSE

This report summarises observations and lessons learned during a mission from 28-29 July 2000, by the OCHA Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Ross Mountain, to Bay and Bakol regions of southern Somalia. The mission coincided with a particularly important and delicate phase of the Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC), ongoing in Djibouti. As such, this report pays specific attention to issues of programme coordination and operational strategies during the anticipated transition phase.

OVERVIEW

The mission visited Rabdure village in Bakol region (28 July), and Baidoa town in Bay region (28-29 July). In both locations, the mission had the opportunity to view projects implemented by UNICEF and WFP, as well as to meet representatives of the regional administration established by the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA). The itinerary of the mission and a contact list are annexed herewith.

Bay and Bakol regions have been the epicentre of humanitarian needs in Somalia from the 1992 famine, until today. Further, the RRA is in the process of consolidating a civil administration for both regions following years of conflict with the 'occupying forces' of the USC-SNA led by Hussein Aideed. Baidoa town has been vetted by delegates of the on-going Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC) as the interim capital for an anticipated Transitional National Assembly.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Given the fragility of the current peace and reconciliation efforts, as well as acknowledging the need to take advantage of improving security and agency access conditions and increase the field presence of the UN agencies within Somalia, the following conclusions were reached:

- Given that 750,000 people across Somalia remain food insecure, simultaneous programming by both relief and development arms of the UN system are required, even in the event that a transitional government is established.
- When a transitional national government establishes itself in Somalia, the relocation and expansion of UN operations in the field should proceed in a cautious, graduated manner to avoid fuelling the war economy.
- When increasing engagement in the field, modalities of aid administration in all regions must be complimentary from the start if they will ever be effectively integrated on a national level.
- Until areas such as 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' can be brought into a national fold, it will be important to maintain a balance of programming between these

regions and southern Somalia in order to avoid political disputes concerning the UN's 'neutrality'.

- To guarantee the achievement of the aforementioned objectives and to ensure a symbiotic link between local, regional and national levels of aid activity, further Focal Points for situation analysis and coordination should be placed in the field – with Baidoa being an immediate priority.

1. Further OCHA Headquarters Support

To strengthen the current efforts of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to make joint planning efforts between headquarters and the field an on-going process, OCHA-Geneva and OCHA-New York should ensure timely follow-up to a number of matters:

- Immediate placement of an inter-agency Focal Point for southern Somalia in Baidoa to be administered by the UN Coordination Unit.
- Support field operations with additional staffing through schemes including the Danish Refugee Council, UN Volunteers, and Junior Professional Officers.
- Support field operations with additional communications resources, particularly through engagement of the Emergency Communications Project.
- Lobby UN agency headquarters regarding the security imperatives of developing and adhering to common operational modalities, principles of engagement and graduated approaches to increasing field presence.
- Lobby UN agency headquarters regarding the importance of joint strategies and programming, the need to enhance headquarters' contributions to the graduated increase of field-level programming, and to overcome any institutional policies which may hamper the common administration of contracts, salaries and related issues.
- Increase advocacy within various consortia of implementing partners (e.g. ICVA, VOICE, InterAction and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response) to raise awareness within the international community of the changes taking place in Somalia and the opportunities for effective relief implementation.

2. Recommendations for the UNCT

In addition to supporting the implementation of the objectives and activities listed above, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator is recommended to facilitate the accomplishment of the following tasks in conjunction with all Heads of Agencies:

- Establish a rotating mission schedule to ensure a continuous, high-level field presence. The mission schedule should ensure that at least one Head of Agency is in the field at any given time.
- Ensure further joint humanitarian and development programming, particularly by developing means to strengthen collaborative approaches through staff

secondment from operational agencies to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's office.

- Clarify how limited security personnel are tasked between various agencies to reduce the potential for increasing levels of field operations to strain inter-agency coordination efforts.
- Mobilise resources for inter-agency coordination and the security system must be enhanced. The inter-agency cost-sharing agreement for security needs to be implemented and the UNCT should approach donors more aggressively on these matters.
- Match the efforts of the NGO Consortium to compile a GIS-compatible database of all projects in Somalia by region and sector that will be updated quarterly.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. Political Developments

The Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC) was officially opened in Arta, Djibouti, on 2 May. Elders and political representatives from all the main clan groupings arrived from across Somalia. These individuals, including representation for women, civil society and minority groups, held preparatory discussions until 15 June. On that date, the final round of the conference commenced, working toward the formulation of a national transitional government and resolution of some issues lying at the heart of the Somali conflict.

Whilst it appears that the conference has been successful thus far in assembling representatives from all over Somalia, some powerful political groupings remain opposed to and outside of the process. These include the regional administrations of 'Somaliland' in the northwest, 'Puntland' in the northeast, and a large number of militia-faction leaders in southern regions. Hence, at this stage, it is difficult to predict the SNPC outcome.

That said, the UN has been assisting the process since its inception as part of efforts to support peace and reconciliation in Somalia. The UN Secretary General and the UN Security Council have fully endorsed the Djibouti-led process. On 29 June, the Security Council reaffirmed its full support of the process launched by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in February 2000, and urged representatives from all parts of Somali society to participate actively and in 'constructive spirit' in the work of the SNPC. Thus far, the OAU and IOC have also voiced their support. This continues to cause consternation within the Somaliland and Puntland administrations.

Whilst the remaining timetable of the SNPC remains uncertain – contingent upon funding of the conference and continuing negotiations with powerful political groupings within Somalia – it is expected that some kind of transitional authority will be created within the next few weeks.

2. Security Concerns

The SNPC process has created new openings for dissatisfied political actors to challenge the dominant positions of current Somali leaders. Amidst the declining availability of resources to finance militia-factions, the usual role of the 'warlords' appears to be diminishing while the role of 'state' politicians appealing to popular sentiments for peace is consolidating. The immediate implications are threefold:

- There is potential for direct confrontation in areas where strong regional administrations have emerged as opposition leaders adopt different positions vis-à-vis the SNPC and cultivate support from different communities. This process may paradoxically strengthen state structures where current leaders are outright victors.
- There is likely to be a centrifugal effect on areas controlled by a single militia-faction alliance as warlords lose their central authority, militia activity becomes harder to contain/influence and the incidence of banditry increases. This may prompt further public support for political Islamist movements and Shari'a Court initiatives.
- Areas with 'traditional' leaderships that do not hold national diplomatic or factional aspirations – i.e. those rural areas controlled predominantly through inter-clanic consensus – are less likely to be affected by the deterioration of security conditions.

Although the security situation in this regard is concerning, there have so far been no developments which impact the general humanitarian situation in Somalia. Nevertheless, for purposes of emergency early warning, protection programming and principled aid agency access, continuous monitoring of the situation is essential.

3. Humanitarian Trends

The three major factors sustaining humanitarian need in Somalia are persistent poverty, drought conditions and factional violence. Although humanitarian conditions have improved on the aggregate, national level, an estimated 750,000 people remain vulnerable and food insecure across Somalia. Long-term processes of destitution – due to the combination of land alienation, violence, displacement and natural resource stress – have not affected all households equally. These have produced stratified livelihood conditions within Somali communities and generated grave disparities in the distribution of humanitarian need. The dispersion of IDPs and other destitute groups amidst populations with more assets and higher living standards renders their plight less visible to the international community and decreases the perceived urgency of humanitarian responses.

The drought situation was alleviated by three weeks of heavy rainfall in April and May. Crop growth and pasture availability improved in most parts of the country over the past month. Further, the condition of many malnourished populations has improved dramatically. However, pockets of vulnerability remain where rains have continued to fail, particularly in parts of Gedo and the west bank of Lower Juba. Evidence of asset depletion, livelihood stress and serious malnutrition remains obvious there.

Finding new modalities of alleviating the harsh conditions in northern Gedo and Lower Juba regions remains an immediate priority. Gedo region has not benefited from the recent *gu* season rains as much as neighbouring areas and malnutrition rates remain high. In Lower Juba, abnormal population movements, due to lack of water, have been reported. Problems with aid agency access and the small number of UN and NGO implementing partners in these regions have limited effective humanitarian responses.

KEY ISSUES & PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Transitional Planning

Whilst the remaining timetable of the Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC) remains uncertain, it is expected that some kind of transitional authority will be created within the next few weeks. This process will create significant changes in Somalia's social, political and economic landscape. In light of these, UN agencies are actively reviewing their capacity to support peace, reconciliation and development in Somalia, while enhancing their capacity for emergency preparedness, prevention and response.

To structure this initiative, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, in close cooperation with the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS), has established the Somalia Planning Team (SPT). The SPT has prepared scenarios for contingency planning and is in the process of drafting an Operational Framework for UN agencies in Somalia. Of principle importance, this Framework will include a set of common 'principles of engagement' to guide UN relations with emerging regional and national administrations, as well as local *de facto* authorities.

Following observations and lessons learned during the mission to Bay and Bakol, it is recommended that the following considerations inform the preparation of the Operational Framework:

Continuous Planning: The Somalia Planning Retreat, held in Nairobi on 27 July, provided an essential forum for headquarters and field representatives to review the current situation in Somalia and develop joint plans based on scenarios prepared by the Somalia Planning Team. That said, the Somalia Planning exercise should not be seen as an end in itself. Rather, as the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator has already indicated, the retreat should be seen as the moment from which structure can be given to a dynamic and on-going process in which headquarters and the field will continue to work together and regularly adjust operational plans as required by developments in the Somali context.

Joint Humanitarian & Development Programming: As detailed above, some 750,000 people remain vulnerable and food insecure across Somalia. Following the establishment of a national administration, this precarious situation will not immediately disappear. For the foreseeable future, joint humanitarian and development programming will be required. The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator has already made successful efforts to develop such uniformity and complementarity within UN agency programming. For instance, the UN Coordination Unit (UNCU) is comprised of staff from both OCHA and UNDP, providing analysis, strategy coordination and support services aid operations conducted by UN agencies

and SACB partners across Somalia. These joint programming and coordination efforts should be further supported by all UN agencies (see below). If possible, staff secondment from operational UN agencies to the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's office is desirable to strengthen collaborative approaches.

Relocation of Operations to the Field: Since the departure of UNOSOM in 1995, most UN agencies and projects have been based across the border in Nairobi, Kenya. Over the past few years, UN agencies have increasingly decentralised operational planning and decision-making for projects operating in more stable areas. This includes those areas with functional regional administrations (e.g. 'Somaliland' in the northwest, 'Puntland' in the northeast, and areas controlled by the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) in Bay and Bakol regions of southern Somalia).

The question of when to return operations to bases within Somalia relates to the complexity of the political and security situation. This situation has at least three significant components:

- **The ability of the post-SNPC national authority to develop an inclusive transitional mechanism structuring relations with existing regional administrations, as well as faction leaders outside the SNPC process.** Without common agreement by each of these parties to accede to the authority of the post-SNPC administration, it will be difficult to establish a single locus for UN operations. Particularly with regard to their ability to implement humanitarian assistance, UN agencies will need to maintain independent relations with both *de facto* and *de jure* authorities. If UN agencies and their SACB partners will be operating on such multiple levels, further coordination services will be necessary and most likely to be implemented by the UN Coordination Unit.
- **The relocation and expansion of UN operations within Somalia should proceed in a cautious, graduated manner.** Even if a fully inclusive, national administration is formed, there is a danger that increasing the flow of aid resources and aid-related contracts too quickly will create or exacerbate conflicts. The UN and international donors must remain wary of providing resources in either quantity or quality that undermine these local, durable processes of state consolidation. Due to the low absorption capacity of emerging regional and national authorities, large amounts of foreign aid assistance may easily be diverted to serve the interests of local elites. Competition for such resources would lead to rivalries and possible conflict.

Too much reliance on external patronage will reduce the need for regional and national authorities to cultivate a local tax resource base by establishing a legitimate *modus vivendi* with the public and business communities they purport to represent. Nonetheless, it will be important for the UN system to define an appropriate means of supporting the salaries of civil servants in the transitional national administration to avoid causing a 'brain drain' of qualified technocrats who leave the government to work for aid agencies.

- **UN aid delivery must reflect the realities of Somalia's political configuration into highly regional and decentralised administrative and security structures.** Until areas such as 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' can be brought into a

national fold, it will be important to maintain a balance of programming between these regions and southern Somalia. In the short run, this will be an important means to avoid conflicts with local authorities (e.g. any declarations of *persona non grata* against UN staff). Additionally, aid delivery in all regions will need to be complimentary from the start if it will ever be effectively integrated on a national level. Further coordination efforts will have to take place on and between a number of different local, regional and national levels of activity. The need for a regional and decentralised UN operational presence will place additional strains on existing budgets. As always, finding adequate staff and funds to support these operations remains an immediate challenge which will need to be reflected in the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal (CAP) process.

2. Current Operations

Containing and redressing the effects of long-term drought and displacement are the first order priorities of humanitarian operations in Somalia. Although recent rains and effective relief delivery have dramatically improved the livelihoods of Somalia's most vulnerable populations, an estimated 750,000 persons across Somalia are still considered food insecure. Given the current stability of the security situation, agency access has improved significantly in some areas, particularly Bay, Bakol and Gedo regions. This provides a window of opportunity for UN agencies to place more staff in the field and undertake the difficult task of reaching vulnerable populations with the appropriate assistance.

Increase Field Presence: Unfortunately, on-going efforts by the UNCT to expand the scope of aid operations in Somalia are hindered by external constraints besides security. The UNCT is confronted by both limited financial resources and the small number of local and international implementing partners on the ground. First, it should be recalled that the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia has been one of the least funded CAPs for 2000. The UNCT has only received 37% of the requested funding (including substantial carry-over from 1999). Second, many regions of southern Somalia are not served by the presence of NGOs with sufficient technical capacities.

These constraints have a highly negative impact in the field. As described in a recent WHO evaluation of this year's cholera epidemic response, emergency preparedness was minimal and case fatality rates were extremely high in areas with either medically weak international NGOs or none at all. Such was the case in parts of Bay and Bakol region until emergency support was provided by UNICEF and Medecins Sans Frontieres.

It was impressive to note the significant work undertaken by WFP and UNICEF operations in Bay and Bakol regions. In a remarkably short amount of time since the stabilisation of the local security situation, UNICEF was able to establish an effective presence in Baidoa, including the construction of its compound, and the implementation of supplementary feeding, education and water programmes. Simultaneously, WFP is effectively shifting from general distributions to food-for-work programming where local conditions allow the agency to support livelihoods and the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure. Further, WFP has achieved good understanding with the local authorities on the rationale behind this.

To further increase the field presence of both UN agencies and NGOs, it is important to raise awareness within the international community of the changes taking place in Somalia and the opportunities for effective relief implementation. There are opportunities to do so through various consortia of humanitarian agencies, such as ICVA, VOICE, InterAction and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response. However, in order to establish a motivating precedent, efforts to reach the field should begin within the UN system. In addition to establishing further field coordination posts (see below), it is imperative that UN Heads of Agencies follow the lead of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in undertaking more regular field missions.

It is advisable for the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to establish a rotating schedule for the Heads of Agencies to ensure that at least one Head of Agency is in the field at any given time. Obviously, these field missions should be coordinated to bolster UN presence in areas of particular humanitarian concern and development potential, as well as to ensure the delivery of a common policy message to Somali communities and authorities. It is opportune for such a rotating mission system to be established now when the UN agencies have recently agreed on a common message of optimism, but operational caution, regarding the on-going Somalia National Peace Conference (SNPC).

Common Operational Strategies: Given the long-term nature of drought, displacement and conflict in Somalia, many communities have become destitute. As a result, immediate life-saving assistance is not enough to rehabilitate livelihoods in a sustainable manner. As demonstrated by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and agreed by all Heads of Agencies, simultaneous and complimentary programming by both relief and development arms of the UN system are required over both the short- and medium-term to avoid the chronic recurrence of emergency situations. Specifically, it has become apparent that while immediate food assistance is invaluable to stabilising emergency situations, the provision of sustainable social services in other sectors, such as health care, sanitation and water access, are necessary to enable communities to rebuild asset bases and prevent the reoccurrence of emergency conditions.

It was very positive to note the strong programmatic relationship between UNICEF and WFP in Baidoa, focusing on improved coordination and the potential for jointly implemented projects. For instance, WFP is considering support to primary school teachers in Rabdure following the rehabilitation and construction of educational facilities by UNICEF. Similarly, UNICEF is planning to provide support in the form of medical supplies for health care, following WFP food-for-work activities to reconstruct building for the Rabdure women's cooperative. The hope was expressed by all parties that the impending establishment of UNDP in Baidoa would serve to strengthen this already positive dynamic.

3. Security

The UN security system for Somalia has been established in its current form since the departure of UNOSOM in 1995. It consists of seven expatriate security officers, recruited by the main UN agencies. Zone Security Officers (ZSO) are designated for six separate 'geo-political' regions across the country (including the northwest, northeast, center, south, Mogadishu and Kismayo). These officers report directly to

the Chief Security Adviser (CSA) and Designated Official (DO) based in Nairobi, Kenya.

All ZSO's are based in the field with the exception of those for Mogadishu and Kismayo due to the exceptional Phase 5 security conditions in both locations. Further, the ZSO for Kismayo acts as the Deputy to the CSA. Given the limited number of designated security staff, field officers from other UN agencies are appointed as Wardens in each UN operational base to monitor local conditions and staff movements.

Maintaining Field Responsiveness: The UN security system has been effective in protecting personnel and equipment from the UN and its implementing partners. Further, it has played a central role in collecting, analysing and disseminating information on the developing Somali context. However, with expanding UN agency operations, the existing system needs to maintain its flexibility and responsiveness.

Already, examples can be provided of how the limited resourcing of the security system is constraining aid operations. Due to the requirement that UN field staff must be accompanied by a Zonal Security Officer (ZSO) in areas that are not well traveled, the activities of one UN agency may prevent the simultaneous activity of another. During this mission, such was the case when the ZSO flew to Bakol to support a WFP distribution and a UNICEF mission in western Bay was forced to cancel. Further, the relationship between the ZSO and Wardens appointed from the operational agencies remains unclear in some instances.

Additionally, once a security incident takes place and travel restrictions are imposed by the UN security system, it is often a difficult and lengthy procedure to remove those restrictions. This is the case in Jowhar town of Middle Shabelle region. While international NGOs maintain their presence in Jowhar, UN staff can only visit the area with a ZSO. Until security staff are available to accompany a field mission to Middle Shabelle and approve canceling the travel restrictions, UN staff will not be able to visit programmes.

With due respect for existing efforts to maintain clarity of decision-making procedures and operational responsiveness, the high level of demands placed on the UN's limited security personnel poses risks for continuing inter-agency coordination. It is essential that the question of how limited security personnel are tasked between various agencies be clarified. In brief, given that security remains a support service for conducting effective aid operations, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator needs to ensure that UN security maintains its functional accountability to field operations.

Avoiding Security Incidents: Most serious security incidents in Somalia stem from localised disputes over administrative, contractual and salary issues, rather than political or military clashes. That said, it is often the case that isolated disputes over administrative issues are manipulated by militia-faction leaders for their strategic and financial gain. In this context, security incidents can best be avoided by proceeding in a cautious and coordinated manner when hiring and firing staff, establishing and changing pay scales, and issuing contracts for vehicles, houses and other services.

As agreed by all participants at the Somalia Planning retreat, new security problems will be best avoided by increasing field presence gradually and adopting singular, uniform administrative procedures for the various UN operational bases. However, this will not solve the problem of returning to areas, such as Mogadishu, where expatriate UN staff have not maintained a continuous presence over the past five years. In the former capital, many people continue to make claims against the UN for contracts issued during UNOSOM. Prior to the gradual return of UN agencies, security missions should be dispatched to Mogadishu and similar locations to ensure that past administrative issues and, hence, current security threats have either been resolved or a procedure has been established with local interlocutors for their peaceful negotiation. Further, efforts should be made to ensure a low-key presence in volatile areas by adopting a long-term focus on rehabilitation that encourages community action and local ownership, rather than external, capital-intensive inputs.

Finally, while recent efforts to increase the level of security information sharing between UN agencies, NGOs and donors have been successful, it is worth encouraging further coordination by the UN partners to provide details of the nature and timing of new and on-going interventions prior to their implementation.

Common Security Training: To avoid future security incidents, enhanced training for UN staff is essential. Already, new staff are provided with a comprehensive security briefing and detailed Security Guidelines. Through the UN Joint Working Group, the Chief Security Adviser has initiated an exercise to outline a common 'training package' for all UN personnel working in Somalia. A consultant has visited Nairobi, conducted interviews with staff and is expected to provide a cost estimate by September 2000. However, due to the limited number of UN security staff, implementing this programme will prove difficult. Besides inter-agency support for the training process itself, this outstanding need further demonstrates the need for additional personnel.

Ensuring Adequate Resourcing: All agencies must ensure that if security rules require a minimum level of financial resources, staff and communications equipment in order to be effective, these must be provided. This year, UNSECOORD is facing a shortfall of some \$700,000. Resource mobilisation within the UN system and through further advocacy to donors is required on the part of the UNCT and concerned headquarters to ensure the minimum number of field staff and other necessary resources are provided forthwith. A major step in the right direction was made when a cost-sharing arrangement for security was agreed upon by all Heads of Agencies. It is now up to the individual UN agencies to ensure that this agreement is implemented, as most agencies have not yet provided their cost-codes to UNSECOORD.

4. Coordination

Coordination has improved dramatically over the past year both within the UN system and between UN agencies, donors, NGO partners and functioning regional administrations. This has resulted from the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's efforts to revitalise both the UN Coordination Unit and the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB). The SACB, including all UN agencies, the ICRC, donors and NGOs active in Somalia, has established effective sectoral coordination committees for food security, health, water, sanitation, governance and other aid activities. Further,

agreement from all key actors within the SACB has coalesced around a common Strategic Framework.

That said, there is room for further improvement and extension of existing coordination mechanisms, particularly at the field level in southern Somalia. This will entail a shift from holding sectoral meetings in Nairobi to establishing cross-sectoral, regional meetings that take place in the field. While the UNCT and partners in the SACB have developed detailed plans in this regard, further funding, human resources and communications equipment are sorely needed to effect the proper transition from effective coordination at the Nairobi-level to the same at the field-level. The remainder of this section describes some modalities through which this transition can be achieved.

Strengthening ‘Field Coordination’: In order to ensure operational coherence and reduce chances for contradiction, overlap or manipulation by local interlocutors, it is absolutely necessary to have inter-agency UN Focal Points to coordinate interventions and operational strategies in all regions of UN agency activity. At the time of this mission, Focal Points had only recently taken up duties in Somaliland and Puntland. Hence, ‘field coordination’ – in terms of support to the operational agencies within Somalia, particularly in terms of their relationship with local authorities – is still in its early stages of development.

With the large demands now being placed on the UN Coordination Unit and the existing Focal Points, as well as the improving conditions of access enabling further field operations in southern Somalia, additional coordination personnel are necessary. Consideration should be given to establishing Focal Points for each zone of UN activity, similar to the UN security system. Resources will be required for four additional Focal Points to operate out of Baidoa, Belet Weyne, Mogadishu and Kismayo, all in southern Somalia.

The first priority should be Baidoa given continuing humanitarian needs, improving agency access to vulnerable populations in adjacent areas, the limited, existing monitoring capacity and, of course, the prospect that Baidoa will become the seat of the transitional national assembly. In fact, the UNICEF Regional Programme Officer in Baidoa made a special point of requesting the mission to encourage a joint Focal Point to be appointed by UNDP, in conjunction with the UN Coordination Unit.

Further resources, particularly communications equipment, will be required to establish effective contact between these zones. Serious consideration should be given to providing each Focal Point with tele-visual conferencing systems. Given the sophisticated, private telecommunications sector in Somalia, such systems have already been established to link the Somalia National Peace Conference to Europe and North America. This and other avenues of communications support will be explored by the OCHA Emergency Communications Project.

Common Operational Strategies: A number of modalities can be envisioned that will ensure greater operational coherence as UN agencies increase their field presence. These modalities have already been agreed upon by Heads of Agencies, who prepared the inter-agency Framework of UN Engagement. First, it is suggested to have a common UN base of operations (including common offices, residences

and guest houses) in all zones of activity to improve communications and security. Second, it is essential to have a common administrative system in each area of operations to be shared between UN agencies. This singular administrative system will oversee and implement contracts, local salary scales and standards of service for all UN agencies and reduce the likelihood that the UN system will end up competing with itself. Third, a singular coordination mechanism should be established for dealing with local authorities (based on the 'principles of engagement' emerging from the post-SNPC planning exercise) and followed by all UN agencies. Negotiating and monitoring the implementation of these principles would be akin to the establishment of 'Ground Rules' in the humanitarian context. In this sense, a core role can be envisioned for the UN Coordination Unit, supported jointly by OCHA and UNDP.

Monitoring and Data Management: Today, increasing levels of access pose a political and economic challenge for field staff to find modalities of locating dispersed vulnerable populations and ensuring that aid resources arrive in the hands of intended beneficiaries. To accomplish this task it is essential to increase the capacity of the UN system in the field to monitor outstanding needs, negotiate access and increase the level of dialogue with both vulnerable communities and local authorities. This is a prerequisite for strategic assistance and the possibility to engage in effective advocacy on behalf of war- and drought-affected populations.

It is positive to note that the UNCT is aware of the vital importance of establishing a central database of situation analysis, current operations and outstanding aid requirements. The Data Management and Information Unit (DMIU) established by UNDP is coordinating the technical aspects of this project, in conjunction with UN agencies and NGO partners. Already, the NGO Consortium of the SACB has compiled a GIS mapping survey of all projects in Somalia by region and sector. Unfortunately, the efforts of the NGO Consortium have yet to be matched by the UN agencies, with the exception of UNDP. Rectifying this discrepancy should be a first priority of all UN agencies, particularly given the necessity of programming inventories to assist in the Somalia Planning exercise.

Resources for Additional Staffing: While existing funds should be used giving priority to focal points and the importance of coordination, alternative staffing strategies should be considered. These include utilisation of the Danish Refugee Council (with whom OCHA has established a staff sharing agreement for emergency assistance), UN Volunteers and Junior Professional Officers

ANNEX: MISSION SCHEDULE, PARTICIPANTS & CONTACTS

REPORT ON MISSION TO SOMALIA BY THE DEPUTY EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR

28 – 29 JULY 2000

1. MISSION SCHEDULE

28 July	07.00	Fly to Rabdure, Bakol region
	11.00	Arrival in Rabdure, Bakol region
	11.30	Visit to UNICEF School Construction Site
	12.00	Visit to WFP FFW Site (Housing for Vulnerable Groups)
	12.30	Visit to Rabdure livestock water source
	13.00	Meeting with RRA District Officials (at WFP compound)
	13.45	Fly to Baidoa, Bay region
	15.00	Arrive Baidoa, Bay region
	15.30	Meeting with UNICEF / WFP staff
	16.00	Meeting with RRA Liaison Officer (at UNICEF compound)
	17.00	Tour of Baidoa town
	19.00	Dinner and Conversation with UN and NGO staff
	29 July	08.00
10.30		Meeting with RRA Regional Officials (at RRA Foreign Affairs Office)
11.30		Meeting with UNICEF Regional Programme Officer
12.30		Fly to Nairobi, Kenya

2. MISSION PARTICIPANTS

Ross Mountain, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA-Geneva

Andre Le Sage, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, UN Coordination Unit for Somalia

Moe Hussein, Field Coordination Officer, UN Coordination Unit for Somalia

Judy Grayson, Mine Action Specialist, UNDP-ERD-New York

William Feibig, Seed Security Officer, FAO-Rome

3. MISSION CONTACTS

Bijay Shaw, Zone Security Officer, WHO

Jonathan Veitch, Resident Programme Officer, UNICEF

Abdullai Kaikai, Water and Environmental Sanitation Officer, UNICEF

Malik Allaouna, Logistics Consultant, UNICEF

James Legg, Officer in Charge for Bay and Bakol regions, WFP

Project Officer for Bay region, World Vision

Hassan Aden Hussein, District Commissioner, RRA, Rabdure

Chief of Police, RRA, Rabdure

Mohamed Aden Buale, RRA Liaison Officer, Baidoa

Sheik Adan Mohamed, Vice Chairman of RRA, Baidoa

Adan Hassan Malaq, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Ali Iman, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Col. Ibrahim Moalim, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Col. Ahmed Rugei, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Ibrahim Rooba Sorgaal, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Hoghayuta Sheik Adan, RRA Representative, Baidoa

Mahamed Rahman Ali, RRA Representative, Baidoa