



UNITED NATIONS

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Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – SOMALIA

## Situation Report # 14 – 11 April, 2008

### Main Developments

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is deteriorating faster than expected. Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) and Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) have revised upwards the number of people in a state of humanitarian emergency. Compared to the post-*Deyr* report issued January 2008, the number of people in humanitarian emergency has increased from 315,000 to 425,000 and the number of newly displaced people from 705,000 to 745,000. The most severely affected areas are Galgaduud, Mudug, Hiraan, coastal Shabelle and pockets in Sool, Nugal and Hawd areas in the north.

There are three key contributing factors for this rapid deterioration: 1) an abnormally extremely harsh '*Jilaal*' dry season (January to March) with higher temperatures and unusually dry winds, 2) increasing civil insecurity, both in terms of number of incidents and locations, and 3) continuing and increasing high rates of inflation. According to FSAU/FEWS NET in south central Somalia prices of locally produced cereals (maize and sorghum) have increased by 300%-400% the last 12 months, prices of imported commodities like rice and vegetable oil increased by an average of 150%, while the Somali shilling depreciated by an average of 65%. During the past three months alone the inflation has increased by an average of 80%.

Inflation is also having a serious impact on urban populations which were not included in the FSAU figures. FSAU is currently conducting an assessment of the status of urban population which, when completed next week, will likely increase the current estimated figure of 1.8 million to 2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance or livelihood support.

Food and water shortages are seriously stressing both pastoralist and poor urban populations. There have been reports of distressed population moving both to and from urban and rural areas. According to UNHCR reports, since February about 1,200 IDPs have returned from Dhuusamarreb, Galgaduud region to Mogadishu, as the host communities are facing severe drought and are not able to accommodate the burden of additional needed people. At the same time people are also leaving Mogadishu, not only because of insecurity but also due to food shortage and increasing cost of living.

There has been an outbreak of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) in Dhahar district, Sanaag region, with seven deaths recorded out of 300 cases since 10 March. Just yesterday (10 April), Dhahar hospital reported 28 AWD admissions including two deaths. The outbreak has been associated with the use of a contaminated *berked* (a cemented underground water catchment) after the only borehole in Dhahar town collapsed. According to field reports, AWD is now spreading to rural and pastoral settlements in the district and the health staff in the area are not able to deal with increasing cases due to limited staff capacity – only one doctor and two nurses.

### Other Developments

In Garoowe, Puntland, a UN vehicle carrying one international staff and one driver was ambushed by a group of armed militiamen. The UN driver managed to drive away from the scene and both staff members are safe and unharmed. One Special Police Unit officer was injured and the police managed to capture the four perpetrators. More than 20 shots hit the vehicle. The motive of the perpetrators has not yet been established. The police are currently investigating the incident.

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During the past week, escalating clashes between Ethiopian/Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and anti-government elements were reported in many parts of south central Somalia. In Mogadishu a suicide car bomb exploded at the gate of the complex housing peacekeepers Burundian AU troops. At least seven people, including two AU peacekeepers, have been injured. One of the AU peacekeepers later died of injuries. In Jowhar, Middle Shabelle, anti-government elements temporarily seized the town. Due to the general security situation and local authority vacuum in Jowhar, international UN and NGO staff have been relocated to Wajid, Bakool region. A heavy explosion believed to be a remote-controlled roadside bomb exploded in the main road of Baidoa town, Bay region. According to media and field reports, three civilians were killed and six others wounded. The deputy governor of Bay region is among the wounded.

The deteriorating security situation all over the country is slowing down humanitarian deliveries and affecting the humanitarian agencies ability to support population in need. During this week, CARE dispatched 4,200 metric tons of assorted commodities from Mogadishu to Hiraa region. Follow on food convoys to Galgaduud and Mudug regions were scheduled to leave immediately after but insecurity along the route in Middle Shabelle region has delayed the departure. In the meantime the food convoys for these later regions are held in Mogadishu awaiting positive change in the security situation. In Mudug region, a UN drought assessment mission had to be cancelled due to the attack on UN in Garoowe.

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