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UN-HABITAT in the Somali Region Newsletter

updates on the latest urban interventions – 10th issue



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UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Getting people talking: participatory district rehabilitation in Mogadishu

Early this year UN-HABITAT launched a project entitled Participatory District Rehabilitation in Mogadishu. It has received much positive attention, and the agency is currently seeking funding for a continuation in 2011. The project, which builds on interventions and partnerships in Mogadishu dating back to 2006, falls within the framework of the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.

Under the project, implemented by UN-HABITAT and a partner NGO, all 16 districts and the Bermuda enclave are scheduled to have a priority service delivery project funded. This **rehabilitation of public infrastructure** is part of a wider process aimed at strengthening local capacities, fostering dialogue, and improving governance in the districts.

The project's approach has been developed over the years and is highly consultative. Local leaders (formal and informal), civil society representatives, elders, religious leaders, women's associations, and youth representatives are all involved. Works commence once an agreement has been reached in the district and the following has been received: the proposed priority project, a detailed action plan, pre-intervention photos, GIS coordinates, and tender documentation.

The works are supervised by ad hoc committees established in the beneficiary district, and provisions for maintenance and custodianship are clarified early in the process. Sustainability is ensured through bodies such as vendor associations and school committees and, if possible, long-term funding from a third party.

The projects provide employment for IDPs and the host community and business opportunities for local firms. Though working in Mogadishu is very challenging, the investment in community participation and ownership has proved vital, and buildings rehabilitated in the past have rarely been looted or destroyed.

Despite the recent deterioration of security in Mogadishu, infrastructure projects have been finalized in seven districts over the past four months: district offices in Hamarweyne and Dharkenely; school rehabilitation and expansion in Deynile; second phase rehabilitation of Medina Meat Market in Wadajir; first phase market rehabilitation in Wardhigley (the second phase was recently initiated); the Women's Vocational Training Centre in Waberi; and sporting grounds for youth in Hamar-Jajab. Works or assessments are being carried out in Shingani, Hawl-wadaag, and Karaan Districts. Unfortunately, progress is hampered in the remaining six districts due to ongoing armed conflict and general insecurity; there, priorities need to be revised or sub-projects reallocated to more stable areas.

Another part of the project is **capacity building on conflict management**. This training, based on UN-HABITAT's *Building Bridges through Managing Conflict and Differences*, serves to strengthen the rehabilitation and prioritization process. Three trainers from SAACID attended a training of trainers course in Garowe in early 2010, and workshops have now been held for 16 districts and the Bermuda area, benefitting close to 600 local leaders.

District mapping is a new component in UN-HABITAT's work in Mogadishu. The exercise builds on the existing district profiles, updating and enhancing knowledge on the status of public infrastructure in all the districts of Mogadishu. With guidance and technical support from UN-HABITAT, two GIS-trained resource persons and six senior assessors are producing digital maps and databases. UN-HABITAT's successful GIS projects in Somaliland reveal the potential this district mapping has for revenue collection and urban planning.

Participatory District Rehabilitation in Mogadishu* is directly funded by Italian Cooperation and the UK's Department for International Development, with additional support from the European Commission and Sida.

Expected Results

- Upgraded community infrastructure and services in all target districts
- Renewed and strengthened partnerships among community leaders and district authorities, as well as among stakeholders
- Increased number of people with access to better quality services, sustainable livelihoods, and employable skills
- Improved management capacity at district level, including accountability and monitoring
- Updated and expanded district profile with clear baseline information on service delivery and governance structures and capacities in each district, including the mapping of key public assets
- Essential conditions and resources for successful development interventions in local governance and service delivery strengthened
- Local leaders trained on conflict resolution, mediation, and management

by Olof Nuñez, Associate Programme Officer

*See project pictorial on page 10

what's new!

Hargeisa

Land and Urban Management Institute opens



In a landmark event, the UN-HABITAT-supported Land and Urban Management Institute was opened in Hargeisa on 31 May 2010. The then President of Somaliland, Dahir Riyale Kahin, and three government ministers attended the ceremony. During their speeches, they informed those present that the institute will serve as the national planning body for Somaliland.

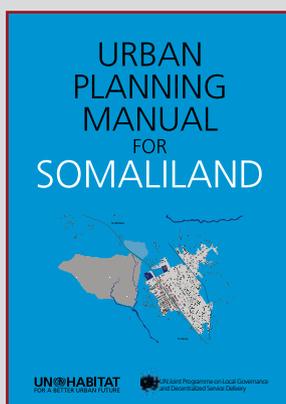
The then Minister of Public Works, Housing, and Transport, Said Sulub Mohamed, thanked UN-HABITAT and looked forward to a partnership with the agency for potential capacity building and support.

See the pictorial and an explanation of the **new road map** for the institute on **page 5**.

New offices for the Ministry of Interior in Bossaso

With celebrations and a formal ceremony on 20 June 2010, Government of Puntland officials and representatives of the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery opened the new Ministry of Interior sub-office in Bossaso. Construction started on 1 February 2010 and, **reusing the old stones**, a new building quickly emerged from the piles of rubble scattered over the site. See **page 4** for the full story.

Urban Planning Manual for Somaliland



A PDF of the manual is available from the publications page at www.unhabitat.org

We are happy to announce the publication of the *Urban Planning Manual for Somaliland*. The book will mainly serve Somaliland professionals and technicians engaged in urban development activities. It will also be a useful tool for decision makers, local non-governmental organizations, and communities involved in the planning process.

The manual focuses on “**plans and the plan-making process**”, defining what plans are and outlining the basic procedural steps one ought to follow. The manual is based on UN-HABITAT’s engagement in Somaliland under the Urban Development Programme for the Somali region (SUDP), which aimed at broad-based capacity development that combined different components: good local governance, strategic projects, rapid spatial analyses of towns, and municipal finance.

Additional inputs to respond to the specific local context have been made under the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery. UN-HABITAT finalized the manual together with the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport and the Somaliland Municipality Association. The manual will be used to **provide training** to technical and administrative personnel in both central and local government structures.

Rejuvenating Somaliland’s municipal finance sector

Since 2008, Terre Solidali – in collaboration with UN-HABITAT, the Ministry of Interior, and local governments – has designed and introduced a **computerized accounting system** and billing and revenue collection system in order to improve Somaliland’s local government financial management. Currently, six municipalities are fully using the automated system and have achieved clear successes.

The new information technology systems were conceived to help the councils better manage revenue and expenditure and improve reporting – thus enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability. See the full stories on **page 6**.

Old stones, new building: Bossaso sub-office for Puntland Ministry of Interior rises from the rubble

During a joyful ceremony on 20 June 2010, Government of Puntland officials and representatives of the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery opened the new Ministry of Interior sub-office in Bossaso.

Until now, the Ministry of Interior had been occupying rented offices in Bossaso, at considerable cost to the government. In late 2009, a dilapidated public building was identified for possible rehabilitation, and a joint assessment was carried out with UN-HABITAT. It was concluded that the old building was unfit for

restoration, and that it would be more cost-effective to demolish the entire structure and put up a new one.

Construction started on 1 February 2010 and, reusing the old stones, a new building quickly emerged from the piles of rubble scattered over the site. Within two months, the new offices were ready to hand over to the ministry. By recycling the old building, a significant saving was made, which was used to buy the required furniture and basic office equipment. At a cost of less than USD 37,000, a most remarkable transformation has been achieved!

*by Marco van der Plas, Output Manager,
Infrastructure, Reconstruction, and Basic Services*



before



during



after

Land and Urban Management Institute opens



In a landmark event, the UN-HABITAT-supported Land and Urban Management Institute was opened in Hargeisa on 31 May 2010. The then President of Somaliland, Dahir Riyale Kahin, and three government ministers attended the ceremony. During their speeches, they informed those present that the institute will serve as the national planning body for Somaliland. The then Minister of Public Works, Housing, and Transport, Said Sulub Mohamed, thanked UN-HABITAT and looked forward to a partnership with the agency for potential capacity building and support.



New road map for urban management systems on the way

UN-HABITAT, in support of the Inter-Ministerial Urban Planning Committee, is preparing a road map for the new Land and Urban Management Institute (LUMI), as well as for urban planning and land management, in order to accelerate sustainable urban development in Somalia. The road map aims at advancing the institutionalization of urban planning and land management services in Somalia, based on the specific approach of UN-HABITAT and the results obtained and lessons learned in Somaliland and Puntland.

In Somaliland, UN-HABITAT worked closely with the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport to establish LUMI and will continue to collaborate on the development of the organization and its functions. It is anticipated that LUMI will serve as an inter-ministerial technical service provider for urban planning and land management at both central and local levels in Somaliland. The road map will include the overall vision for LUMI, short- and long-term work plans, and specific activities.

The main challenge of the road map is capturing how best to realize the full potential of LUMI, given the hurdles of securing sufficient financial and human resources and ensuring strong ownership by the Government of Somaliland. A main objective of the road map is to increase awareness and advocacy in the field of urban planning and land management. Another is to transfer and adapt legal and technical methodologies developed in Somaliland to other regions in Somalia. In order to finalize the road map, intense discussions will be held with the relevant authorities in the coming months.

by Akiko Kishiue, Urban Planning and Development Expert

Somaliland districts AIMing higher... with support from the UN joint programme

Entering the busy Hargeisa Municipal Finance offices, visitors jostle with revenue collection clerks bringing returns, businessmen coming to verify their tax records, councillors tracking claims, accounts officials searching for records, and data entry clerks busy at their stations.

During a recent visit, the new Minister of Interior, Dr. Mohammed Abdi Gabose, noted that the municipality is “way ahead of the ministries and this is something that should be emulated if efficiency and effectiveness have to be realized in the management of ministry operations”.

Mohammed Ahmed Mireh, the council municipal finance revenue clerk, explained the new technology the minister was referring to, known as Automated Information Management Systems (AIMS):

“We make daily records of revenues and expenditure, and the system is quite simple to use. Whenever the accountants or the mayor require a report, we are able to provide it quickly. Before, it would take us days or even weeks to locate a record or compile a financial report. Such reports are now generated automatically from the new computerized system. The system has also reduced operational space in the office: records used to occupy a huge space. More importantly, data entry and verification are less time consuming.”

Zainab Rashid, expenditure clerk, continued, “In the past, it was laborious to update records; it was not easy to make quick comparisons and reconciliations. Now, we take a very short time. I feel more motivated and satisfied with my work since the introduction of the new system.”

Awil Omar, the finance director of Berbera Municipal Council, was also excited about the system: “We used to have more



Zainab Rashid and Awil Omar at their desks.

than four ledger books; thanks to AIMS, we now have a computer system that performs and simplifies what used to be cumbersome work. Our quality of reports has improved, and the council is happy with our level of efficiency. However, we are required by the Ministry of Interior to maintain the manual copies of transactions, which we feel is double work. We were told that the two systems are being maintained because we are in a transition period from one system to another, and the government has not yet fully approved the operationalization of the new system across municipalities.”

For a long time, local councils’ management of funds was inefficient because they lacked effective control systems. AIMS, which was first initiated in 2008 under the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery and carried out by UN-HABITAT in collaboration with the NGO Terre Solidali, was conceived to help the councils better manage revenue and expenditure and improve reporting – thus enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

Adapted from <http://jplg.org>

New information technology revamps Burao Municipality

Since 2008, Terre Solidali – in collaboration with UN-HABITAT, the Ministry of Interior, and local governments – has designed and introduced a computerized accounting system and billing and revenue collection system in order to improve Somaliland’s local government financial management. Currently, six municipalities are fully using the automated system and have achieved clear successes.

Before the introduction of these information technology systems, municipal financial management in Burao was entirely a manually system, i.e. time-consuming, unreliable, and prone to low transparency and frequent mistakes. Now, however, things are different.

As an end-user of these systems, I can summarize some key advantages:

- AIMS (Accounting Information Management System) has enabled easier and more accurate financial data entry.
- Financial reports and budgets are readily available for managers, providing information for better and timely decision making.
- The system saves time in the preparation of reports and allows for improved control of income and expenses.
- AIMS leads to easier bank reconciliation and error detection and allows for faster recall of transactions.
- BIMS (Billing Information Management System) has simplified employee billing and revenue collection and has increased accountability.
- BIMS has increased income from property tax, business licences, and rental houses.
- BIMS keeps the historical data of customers for future analysis and decision making.

These information technology systems have greatly improved Burao Municipality’s financial management. Municipal employees are now paid regularly and municipal financial transactions conform to the relevant governmental regulations. With municipal revenue maximized, the municipality is now in a better position to play its mandated role – delivering services, co-funding development projects, and funding community priority interventions.

These steps could not have been taken without the commitment of Mayor Mohamoud Ahmed Hassan, whose constant guidance and support was crucial. Similarly, UN-HABITAT/UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery/Terre Solidali technical support was fundamental for the initiative’s success.

Ahmed Adan Yusuf

Director of Administration and Finance

Adapted from www.cityofburao.com

Jowhar: housing IDPs and the urban poor in a conflict zone

Jowhar has traditionally been an agricultural and production hub for south central Somalia, particularly Mogadishu. Rice, sugarcane, and banana cultivation and fired clay brick and other building construction material production were once key sectors in the region. With the ongoing civil war, however, the entire national infrastructure has collapsed, along with these economic lifelines.

Over the last 20 years, thousands of internally displaced people from different regions of Somalia have occupied public buildings and land in Jowhar, and there is an urgent need to relocate and durably resettle these families. Apart from the humanitarian aspect, these informal settlements and the resultant informal economy are major hurdles to revitalizing the economic life of the region.

Since the beginning of 2009, UN-HABITAT – generously funded by Sweden and Italy – has rolled out a shelter and livelihoods project in Jowhar, focusing on permanent, community-driven shelter development and an appropriate building material production and training centre. Both women and men are involved, and the shelter and centre have become tangible community assets with peace dividends.

Land for the shelter and centre development was provided after consultation with the local authorities and community elders. Through a joint effort, the land was secured and tenure of property was offered to displaced and urban poor families selected through a baseline survey from among Jowhar's 1,356 displaced households and 2,587 poor households.

The town's fluctuating stability creates a very challenging operational environment, but two local partners – Farjano Foundation and Somali Youth for Peace and Development – have been able to establish very good rapport with the authorities (previously the Transitional Federal Government, now Al Shabaab) and the local communities.

The shelter development, material production, and training activities – as well as the rehabilitation of the milk and vegetable market and clean-up of the town's surface drains – used a labour-intensive process that boosted opportunities for employment and skill development.

Local elders ensured an efficient transition as the authorities changed. The security situation led to project delays due to the necessary negotiations. However, the situation provided an opportunity to discuss with the various actors tenets of governance, local authority financing, and service delivery, as well as the UN's humanitarian mandate.

Since the project started, a significant number of young men have moved to Jowhar in search of work. Local and regional businesses have also benefitted from the upsurge in the supply of or demand for construction materials, tools, equipment, and transport.

The shelter design allows for a basic but comfortable standard of living, which is in harmony with the community lifestyle. A secure tenure, land-and-property rights certificate signed by all parties, including the local authorities, minimizes the threat of eviction.

When a settlement develops, organizes itself, and makes basic public services available, sustainable local governance is greatly enhanced. Household taxes can be collected from families who improved their livelihood opportunities and gained property ownership. Indeed, durable settlement development has a huge capacity for developing a society, building peace, and reviving local economies and livelihoods. In Jowhar, the displaced families are now permanent citizens of the town.

*by Rene John Dierks,
Programme Manager,
Human Settlements, Shelter, and IDPs*



Above: Jowhar's new Material Production and Community Centre.



Above right: Stabilized soil blocks being made in Jowhar.



Right: Shelter units under construction in Jowhar.



Gender training tackles crucial issues



Participants from the gender workshop in Borama.

Good local governance cannot work if due attention is not given to gender equality and women's empowerment.

UN-HABITAT, working under the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery, is making sustained efforts to incorporate gender issues in its work with partners.

UN-HABITAT has produced a number of training tools that aim to build the capacities of local governments in areas such as local governance, leadership and financial management, and local economic development. A strong gender dimension has been incorporated into these tools and in ongoing training activities.

The gender training is carried out as part of the joint programme activities to enhance the awareness and capacities of local councillors, municipal core staff, and selected community leaders from the six target Somaliland districts: Borama, Hargeisa, Berbera, Sheikh, Burao, and Odweine.

In April 2010, UN-HABITAT funded a senior international trainer to come to Hargeisa and train six trainers (three from Somaliland and three from Puntland) on gender issues. They developed training materials, planned training sessions, and learned the best methods to deliver training.

The trainers then organized and conducted workshops in Sheikh and Borama. They related the training materials to

Somali culture and Islam, covering such topics as gender in Islam, gender mainstreaming and equality, and gender-responsive budgeting.

Discussions were constructive and the participants understood what the bottlenecks were for the involvement of women in local governance; they realized and agreed that the main obstacle was culture, and not restrictions related to Islam.

One of the traditional leaders said, "This training has changed my view, and now I strongly believe that women can participate in decision-making processes and the leadership of the state, since religion accepts it." The participants agreed that if women were involved in the development of their country, they could contribute significantly to its progress, since they were the main human resources in Somaliland.

The participants then developed an action plan to enhance gender issues and involve women in decision-making processes in the immediate future.

In conclusion, the trainings were a success. The districts of Hargeisa, Berbera, Burao, and Odweine will have similar trainings later in 2010.

*by Asha Mohamed Ahmed,
UN-HABITAT Community Development Officer*

Urban planning workshop comes to Sheikh

As part of UN-HABITAT's urban management initiatives in the Somali region, a workshop was conducted in April in the town of Sheikh to discuss urban planning activities required for the district and the wider region.

The UN-HABITAT and Sheikh Council publication *Sheikh: First Steps towards Strategic Urban Planning* (completed at the end of the Urban Development Programme for the Somali region) was also explored with participants.

Sheikh is a pilot area – along with Hargeisa – for UN-HABITAT's continued support to municipalities towards gaining a better understanding of urban spatial planning as a tool to guide local development efforts. Participants included the mayor, vice-mayor, district councillors, district office staff, and representatives from community groups and non-governmental organizations. On the second day, the focus was on the city's vision for 2015. The finalized vision articulated hopes for better services and increased prominence in the region.

The workshop agreed on the following as the key issues for district development:

- There is a desire for improved services and infrastructure, especially regarding the road network and water distribution systems.
- There is potential for expanded educational facilities: the two high-standard education institutes – the SOS Secondary School and the Terre Nuova Technical School – have given hope that Sheikh could become an education hub for Somaliland.
- The visit of a prince of Kuwait and the construction of his house in Sheikh have helped to improve the city's health facilities. Sheikh needs to identify and utilize this and similar opportunities as nodes for local development.
- Sheikh needs to have a strategic urban plan to guide further development.

After the workshop, copies of *Sheikh: First Steps towards Strategic Urban Planning* were officially handed over to the mayor. This publication series provides basic guidelines for district-level spatial planning, while long-term technical backstopping to Somaliland districts in urban planning issues is underway within the set-up of the Land and Urban Management Institute (see the article on page 5).

*by Akiko Kishiue,
Urban Planning and Development Expert*



Participants have a group discussion during the Sheikh workshop.

sample Mogadishu projects

before

during

Deynile District



Hamarweyne District



Waberi District



Wadajir District



after

conflict resolution workshops



1. Deynile District project: Sheikh Anoole Primary and Secondary Schools
2. Hamarweyne District project: Hamarweyne District Offices
3. Waberi District project: Vocational Training Centre for Women
4. Wadajir District project: Medina Meat Market Phase II

UN-HABITAT donors and funding agencies

Danish International Development Agency	DANIDA funds the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.	<p>UN-HABITAT contacts:</p> <p>UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States</p> <p>Alioune Badiane, Director alioune.badiane@unhabitat.org</p> <p>UN-HABITAT Office for the Somali Region</p> <p>Dorothee von Brentano O-i-C / Chief Technical Advisor sudp@unhabitat.org Tel: +254 20 7625030</p> <p>www.unhabitat.org/somaliregion</p>
European Commission	The EC is the main donor of UN-HABITAT operations in the Somali region. The commission provides funding and technical and strategic guidance to programme design and implementation.	
Government of Italy	The support of the Government of Italy has been consistent throughout UN-HABITAT's presence in the Somali region. It funds shelter and service delivery programmes and is involved in the elaboration of the new joint programmes.	
Government of Japan	The Government of Japan funds shelter interventions in support of internally displaced people in Hargeisa, Garowe, and Bossaso.	
Government of Norway	The Government of Norway funds the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.	
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	SIDA financially supports UN-HABITAT for the implementation of shelter activities for IDPs and the urban poor in south central Somalia.	
United Kingdom Department for International Development	Through DFID, the Government of the United Kingdom funds a number of governance-related interventions and activities related to the Community-Driven Development and Reconstruction Programme.	
United Nations Development Programme	UNDP and UN-HABITAT have a history of cooperation, and this partnership extends to a wide range of programmes, most prominently the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.	
The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UN-OCHA, which manages the Humanitarian Response Fund, released some funds to support the reconstruction of the tsunami-affected village of Xaafuun. UN-OCHA and UN-HABITAT also collaborate on the planning and implementation of IDP-related activities in Puntland and south central Somalia.	

UN-HABITAT implementing partners

Danish Refugee Council	DRC has been one of UN-HABITAT's closest implementing partners, particularly concerning community development and IDP-related issues.
Farjano Foundation	Farjano Foundation is a Somali organization that has been administering construction and rehabilitation projects on behalf of UN-HABITAT.
International Labour Organization	ILO has partnered and continues to partner with UN-HABITAT on a number of programmes: the Urban Development Programme for the Somali region, the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery, and the IDP resettlement intervention in the south.
SAACID	SAACID is a Somali NGO that has been implementing urban governance activities and local projects on behalf of UN-HABITAT in south central Somalia.
United Nations Capital Development Fund	UNCDF is one of the five partners involved in the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.
United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF financed the reconstruction of the tsunami-affected town of Xaafuun and partners with UN-HABITAT in the implementation of several activities.
United Nations Development Programme	The UNDP and UN-HABITAT partnership extends to a wide range of programmes, most prominently the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery.
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR is a key UN-HABITAT partner for the implementation of land-, shelter-, and IDP-related activities. UNHCR funds some IDP settlement-upgrading components and supports joint research on land-related issues; it also financed UN-HABITAT action-planning activities in Mogadishu. In addition, UNHCR and UN-HABITAT are co-chairs of the Somalia Shelter Cluster.
World Food Programme	WFP supports UN-HABITAT shelter activities by providing food-for-work at the construction sites of the shelter projects.
Somali Youth for Peace and Democracy	SYPD is a Somali NGO that has been undertaking survey and material production activities related to UN-HABITAT projects for IDPs and the urban poor.
Other national NGOs	

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This newsletter was prepared and edited by Edward Miller.

The opinions in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of UN-HABITAT or the UN-HABITAT donors and partners.

Cover photo: Urban planning workshop participants, 2010.

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