

## **The needs for Water & Sanitations in Somalia**

*(No 7 in a series of essays addressing current issues in Somalia)*

Water is life but in many places in Somalia today, if you want water, you have to walk a long distance to find it. And when you find it, you have to pay for it. And even then, it is often dirty, making people sick.

It is important to put in place more sustainable solutions for water including rehabilitating boreholes, extending water pipelines and improving the management of both water and sanitation facilities. Millions of people have fled to other areas due to conflict, abuse of their rights or drought. About 3 million litres of water are trucked in every day to the camps for internally displaced persons (IDP) to save the lives of children and their families. Somalia has experienced flooding, droughts and overgrazing during the past three years. Food security and clean water are issues of concern since there is little cultivation due to the vast areas of desert or semi-desert.

Water shortage has been one of the major causes contributing to the ongoing civil war, a determining factor in the fragile system of life in rural areas and one of the country's main traditional sources of social conflict because of its scarcity.

Since 1991, Somalia has been without an effective central government and has been ravaged by ongoing civil war, droughts and natural disasters. Somalia was ranked 161 out of 163 in the United Nations Human Development Report. Life expectancy is only 47 and nearly a quarter of all children die before reaching their fifth birthday. This has had severe repercussions for the country's population as well as its social and economic development. Seventy three percent of the population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day (1994-2008). As a result, there are now around 1.4 million IDPs in Somalia according to the UNHCR. The population was already struggling to cope after so much of the country's reserves and livelihood was destroyed by the ongoing civil War and following the worst drought in a decade. Recent events have only added to the pressure on resources.

Overall food security conditions across pastoral and marginal agricultural areas will continue to deteriorate in the coming future with expectation of late and below-average harvests, early depletion of pasture and water and continuing high prices of food, water and fuel. The importance of drinking water supply in the society, the key role it plays in subsistence farming and livestock raising and the significance for the different ecosystems are significant. Incorrect water management can be caused by industrial agriculture, over-grazing, monoculture forestry and deforestation".



The local villagers in waiting for Water supply affected the livelihood of pastoralist community.



Drought in Horn of Africa have

### **Recommendations for Action**

Put in place sustainable solutions for clean drinking water for many regions in Somalia, Rehabilitation of boreholes, water wells and make projects aimed for rainwater harvesting, Construct dams to benefit large populations both for irrigation and livestock, Improve the management of sanitation, hygienic facilities through seminars and workshops, Provide adequate water treatment to minimise water born diseases, i.e. bilharzia, diarrhoea, and cholera.

Train the local community and extend water management knowledge both in harvesting, hygienic, and sanitations.

Guarantee water supply in the target villages in correct quantity and quality,

Basic training for all water vendors in each target village and the village sub- committee and take them through implementation steps,

Sufficient water to benefit households and water,

Supply gap assessment up to WASH cluster standards,

Water storage facilities at both communal and household levels,

Raise consumption of water in the target groups,

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