



SOMALIA STANDING COORDINATION COMMITTEE

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Regional Profile : Nugal

UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN SOMALIA
DIVISION FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

REGIONAL PROFILE - NUGAL

OVERVIEW OF REGION

1. Nugal is the central region of the Northeast and covers an area of approximately 27,000 square kilometres. The new urban poor make up half the urban population. There are four districts: Garowe, Dongoroyo, Burtinle and Eil. The population of the region is fairly homogenous consisting mainly of two related Majerteen sub-clans, Issa Mahmood and Omar Mahmood. The Issa Mahmood is predominant in the three districts of Garowe, Dongoroyo and Eil, whilst the Omar Mahmood is predominant in Burtinle. The SSDF are the only political party present in the region.

THE ECONOMY

2. The mainstay of the economy is livestock with 80-90% of the population being nomadic. After three years of good rainfall, herds are in good condition. There is some potential to develop small-scale irrigated agriculture: dates, vegetables, beans, and legumes using shallow underground water, springs and seasonal rivers. However an ecologist working in the area cautioned against the introduction of large-scale irrigated agriculture which would be likely to erode the top soil within 2-3 years. The water table has fallen dramatically and there is a high salination content. The establishment of grasses as fodder for livestock, however, has good potential. Fishing is concentrated around Eil, which has a small port though which lobsters are currently exported, can also be developed. The widespread belief in the existence of oil and mineral deposits has not yet been confirmed. Many professionals originate from this region and have now returned as "displaced" from Mogadishu.

3. Trade is based around the export of livestock and the import of food (rice, pasta, beans), clothing, shoes, construction materials and household items. Markets for both imports and exports are Djibouti, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Purchasing of livestock in Somalia is for cash but trade at the borders is often conducted through barter. The difficulties of opening letters of credit for livestock exports was seen to be the main constraint on exporters but it was apparent that there is also an excess supply of livestock. The international Terra Nuovo are providing training and start-up drugs in support of privatised veterinarians but shortage of veterinary facilities were also seen to be a problem. This may be because it is still proving difficult to arrange for marketing and distribution of drugs in Somalia. The problem of frequent refusal of livestock shipments was also raised. The problem appears to be a combination of absence of official certification, and poor quality of testing for brucella.

SECURITY

4. As a result of a homogenous tribal base, Nugal is a peaceful area. There have been very few incidents of banditry against international partners. International NGOs expressed the view that the local government administration commands the basic authority to ensure a

secure environment, but that a system of law and order needs to be firmly established in order to sustain this.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

5. Rents in Nugal compare favourably with Bari. Nevertheless the administration has recognised the concerns expressed by the NGO representatives present at the Addis Ababa Humanitarian Conference regarding high rents and extortion. The regional government has therefore proposed to assist international partners to utilise, at minimal or no cost, public buildings currently being occupied by the displaced. The administration would seek assistance from the international partner in rehousing the displaced.

GOVERNANCE

POLITICS

6. The SSDF was described by the regional government as having three functions: a) to act as an umbrella organisation to bring together the Majerteed sub-clan and elders; b) to act as an interface with other Somali factions; and c) to represent clan interests in international fora. We were told that SSDF has no administrative functions and has no authority over the regional governor. Officials from Nugal made it clear that they expect the role of the SSDF to diminish when local government structures become firmly established in the north east.

ROLE OF ELDERS

7. With the establishment of institutions of local government, administrative matters traditionally handled by elders, are now increasingly being dealt with by the councils. Elders are still consulted on matters relating to community affairs and inter-clan conflicts within the region. Elders expressed confidence in the emerging government institutions and their leaders.

INSTITUTIONS: DISTRICT AND REGIONAL COUNCILS

8. The process of formation of district and regional councils has proceeded smoothly in Nugal. The existence of a largely homogenous tribal group (Issa Mahmood) in three of the four districts, with a sub-clan (Omar Mahmood) in the fourth, has allowed for a distribution of seats on the district and regional councils based on tribal balance. Nugal was the first regional authority to be established and was officially inaugurated on 9 October 1993.

9. In each of the four districts the District Commissioner has been selected to be one of the representatives on the regional council. The Governor is the Chairman of the regional council. All District Commissioners report directly to him.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

10. Plans are well advanced for the establishment of a regional development committee (RDC) in Nugal. The RDC will form the administrative wing of the regional council reporting to the regional governor. The intention is for the RDC to be made up of professionals in the fields of economic production, infrastructure, education and health headed by a development planner to coordinate and prioritise across sectors. A finance department would raise revenue and undertake budgeting.

INTER-REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

12. The establishment of an inter-regional development council composed of representatives of the regional development committees is under discussion. The regional leadership of Garowe stressed that this council would be a "consultative body" with authority resting in the regional councils. It was also stressed that this body was seen as an interim institution whose functions would be subsumed in the Development Council and eventually the Central Administrative Departments under the TNC.

REVENUE

13. The Regional Governor expressed a firm desire to establish an administrative structure, including a functioning system of law and order, before attempting to introduce a comprehensive taxation system for the region.

14. Bossaso port is foreseen as the main source of revenue for Nugal region. A revenue sharing system between the three regions of the North East has been designed but is not operating.

15. Other potential sources of revenue under consideration by the regional administration are licenses on business activities, taxes on trade at regional borders and at Eil port, property taxes and income taxes. Some scepticism was expressed by a local economist as to the viability of taxing property (without a property register) and taxing income (in a traditionally nomadic society). The negative impact on business activity arising from collection of taxes at regional borders was also raised, particularly as traded goods would be taxed at Bosasso port.

SECTOR ISSUES

POLICE, PRISONS AND JUDICIARY

16. The overriding priority for the regional administration is the establishment of law and order. This is seen to be necessary to enforce disarmament without which the authority of the regional leadership is seen to be under threat. Nevertheless there is understanding that judicial institutions cannot be established in a vacuum and that there is a need to address the sustainable financing of these institutions and the broader institutional framework within

which they would fit.

17. At present some former police work on a volunteer basis and elders perform the function of the judiciary. But district courts, a regional court, an appeal court and attorney general office have been established and judges at each level identified.

18. The regional governor and former commander of police support the establishment of a two-tier police structure consisting of a territorial force and a field force (rapid reaction force). Each region would allocate a proportion of their field force to form a national field force.

INFRASTRUCTURE

19. The second priority identified was infrastructure. The road between Bosasso and Galkaio has suffered flood damage including the washing away of some bridges. New roads to link important trading areas such as Eil were also felt to be high priority. Labour intensive road construction and maintenance was proposed as this would also assist with the process of demobilisation. Support from the international community with provision of road construction equipment would however be necessary. For small business people (eg, those running tea shops and market stalls) lack of electricity was felt to be the major constraint on business.

HOUSING OF DISPLACED

20. Many of the public buildings are occupied by displaced, who constitute the urban poor. This prevents rehabilitation of the buildings for use as offices and is placing enormous pressure on the limited resources of the region. The regional council have formulated a project proposal for 300 units of low cost housing comprising two rooms and a latrine at a cost of \$6000 per unit.

EDUCATION

21. Education is an urgent priority for the regional council who have formulated various project proposals for a major boost to primary and secondary education. It is not however apparent that parents place the same priority on education for their children, apart from koranic schooling. The regional governor also has plans for a university to be established in Garowe using an old military HQ which is in excellent condition. The Garowe orphanage, operated by a local NGO Somali Welfare Society, is a good example of a successful community-based initiative which provides services on a cost-effective basis.

HEALTH AND WATER

22. Provision of health services is proceeding reasonably well in the region. The Garowe hospital is being supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They also support a number of Somali run Primary Health Care clinics around the region. Three main services are provided at the hospital: outpatients, laboratory and X-Ray. IFRC believe there is good potential to develop an integrated health system with user charges introduced for cost recovery and to encourage an efficient referral system.

Widespread use of private clinics suggests that there is a willingness to pay for outpatient services (including OPD drugs). It is essential that planning starts now for handover of and financing and management of the hospital to ensure a smooth transition. Water is provided through community managed wells and through traditional rain water collection which is sold privately.