



SOMALIA STANDING COORDINATION COMMITTEE

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Regional Profile : Mudug

UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN SOMALIA
DIVISION FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

REGIONAL PROFILE - MUDUG

OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

1. The Mudug region is located in the center of Somalia bordering Nugal to the north and Galgadud to the south. The borders of the Hawiye and Darod clans meet in the region and which has been the scene of frequent factional fighting. Mudug has five districts: Galkaio, Jariban, Galdugub, Hobyo and Haradera. Galkaio, the regional capital is shared by the two major clans, the Majertin of the Darod sub-clan and Sa'ad of the Habr Gedir sub-clan. Until eight months ago the region was divided between the SNA and an SNDU-SSDF coalition. In late May/early June 1993 both groups reached agreement on terms of a peace accord which has been holding since then. Unfortunately, a similar agreement has yet to be made between SNF and SNA, with the result that in the southern part of the region skirmishes have continued as a result of incursions by SNF fighters coming from Abudwak District, some as recently as September 1993.

THE ECONOMY

2. The economy of Mudug relies almost entirely on livestock. Pre-war statistical figures for Somalia estimate that livestock contributed 80% of the country's foreign currency earnings and employed over 70% of the population. The figures for Mudug region are estimated to be higher than the national average. For livestock center districts such as Jariban and Haradera, livestock employment is estimated at over 95 percent.

3. In the pre-war period, there were a number of animal health clinics and laboratories in the districts staffed by qualified veterinarians and assistants, although the services were considered inadequate and of poor quality. Bosasso was used as the region's quarantine station. At present, there is virtually no provision of veterinary services in the region, and few qualified veterinarians remain. For example, at one time there were seven veterinarians stationed in Jariban district and there are now none. Lack of facilities, drugs and other incentives are the other principal constraints to the restarting of veterinary services. It is likely that those veterinarians who remain will require refresher training.

4. As a result of lack of veterinary services, diseases among livestock have become rampant. The livestock population is exposed to a number of common and new diseases such as smallpox, bacterial and virus infections, anthrax, infectious parasites, rinderpest, foot rot, pneumonia, and dermatitis. In Haradera, an as yet unidentified disease is killing the camel population and the population appears unable to control its spread. The reintroduction of veterinary health clinics and a major campaign of vaccination and disease control will have to be undertaken before the quality and hence the price of livestock can improve. People appear willing to pay for all veterinary services.

5. With the exception of Haradera which practices dry farming (beans, water melon and a

traditional crop-Go'oso), and very limited small scale agricultural activities practiced in the valleys (Doho) of some districts, Mudug region is not an agricultural area and imports cereals from the south of the country and from Ethiopia.

6. Mudug region has a long coast along the Indian Ocean. As a consequence of the war, in addition to poor roads and declining of markets for lobster and shark fins, the fishing sector is mostly dormant at present. Former fishing centers such as Garad and Galhagoog could easily be rehabilitated.

7. Following the June peace agreement between the various clans in Mudug, commercial activities are reviving rapidly. Markets in Galkaio are thriving, although commerce has yet to reach pre-war levels. Galkaio the only large town in the whole of the central region, lies half way between Bosasso and Mogadishu and was a major centre of commerce and trade between North and South before the civil war. It is also used as a distribution center between Mudug and other regions in the central part of Somalia. After the port of Bosasso, Hobio is the main port of exit for exports of livestock and shellfish. Food stuffs such as rice, pasta, wheat flour, cooking oil, as well as fuel, textiles and building materials are the main imports, coming mostly from Djibouti and Dubai.

8. The absence of a national government and the lack of an effective system of law and order are held up as major constraint by businessmen in the region. The lack of a banking system and letters of credit are also said to be a disadvantage. In the absence of sales agreements, the exporters are sometimes forced to sell their livestock at very low prices in the open markets of Saudi Arabia and Yemen, although the low prices may also be a reflection of the current oversupply in the livestock market and the health problems outlined. It is alleged that during the last Haj (pilgrimage) season, some Arab traders falsified letters of credit and did not pay for millions of dollars worth of livestock exported to Saudi Arabia. The absence of telecommunications has also inhibited commercial activities in the region.

SECURITY

9. There are three main factions in the region: SSDF, SNDU and USC/SNA. Before the Galkaio Peace Agreement of 4 June 1993, the SSDF were allied with the SNDU against the SNA and Mudug was the scene of fierce fighting. The peace agreement was brokered by the factions themselves without outside involvement. Few weapons are now visible on the streets in the region, save in areas which have been the scene of recent SNF-SNA confrontations. Since the agreement was signed eight months ago, only four clashes have occurred and all have been immediately resolved by the elders.

10. A conflict resolution mechanism has been established. Immediately after incidents occur, a group of elders from both sides travel to scene of the incident to assure both the victim and the aggressor that the matter will be resolved as quickly as possible. There is a local radio station presently operating in Galkaio which broadcasts reconciliation messages to listeners all over the region.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

11. Very few international NGOs operate in the Mudug region, and particularly in Galkaio on the SSDF/SNDU section of the town. Two medical NGOs, Medair and MDM France, have established themselves in Galkaio for the past several months. Medair is planning to cease operations in Galkaio by mid February. Africare, ADRA, and CISP have or are planning to undertake assessments in the region. These NGOs will for the most part focus on health, water, and sanitation. The livestock sector remains unattended, despite its importance to the region's economy.

12. Both MDM and Medair are facing problems and are trying to address the high expectations of the local authorities. Though Medair does not give this as the reason for their departure, nevertheless, MDM has suspended its activities in part in an attempt to address this issue. MDM has tentatively agreed to work jointly with UNOSOM to operationalize a number of concepts including regional cooperation between factions/clans in directing and channeling relief and recovery assistance within the region, allowing aid intervenors to operate throughout the region, and the positive support/collaboration of all local authorities to the various aid interventions.

GOVERNANCE

POLITICS

13. There are three main factions in the region; SSDF and SNDU, which are both tribal as well as political allies, and USC/SNA. Besides Galkaio, which is inhabited by all groups, the other four districts are distributed evenly among the factions. Jariban and Galdugub are under the control of SSDF/SNDU, while Hobio and Haradera are controlled and inhabited by USC/SNA supporters. The three factions have signed a peace agreement in June 1993 in Mogadishu, the first of its kind in war torn southern Somalia. The three leaders of the factions continue to maintain close relationship and since then had several meetings together, most recently in Nairobi in December 1993.

ROLE OF ELDERS

14. The role of elders for the peace and security in the region is evident in all areas we visited. The elders expressed their firm commitment to continue to live peacefully together and

to avoid any more bloodshed at any cost. There exists a standing committee of elders from the three factions who meet regularly to discuss the overall situation of the region. This committee acts as deterrent among the community in case any incident happens. However, most of the political decisions are in the hands of the three political leaders.

INSTITUTIONS: DISTRICT AND REGIONAL COUNCILS

15. Of the five districts of Mudug, three districts have a district council; namely, Jariban, Galdugub and Galkaio where USC/SNA is not represented. The other two districts under the USC/SNA control (Hobio and Haradera) do not have any district councils due to differences between UNOSOM and USC/SNA. However, both districts have their own district administrations which are functioning and appear to be legitimate. As the two districts have yet to form councils, there is no regional council for the Mudug region. Some of the elders expressed the idea that the Galkaio district council is not final and therefore it is their interest to accommodate USC/SNA in the council members in the future. At the moment, both SSDF/SNDU alliance and USC/SNA have two different Governors who are both in Galkaio.

16. While the importance of effective and legitimate regional bodies with which international partners can interact with is recognised, recent events which cloud UNOSOM relations with SNA preclude any immediate setting up of a UNOSOM endorsed Regional council. On the other hand the various political groups and elders expressed their ability to cooperate at the regional level and establish a temporary functioning body to assist in coordinating relief/recovery interventions in the region, much like the framework established to implement the peace agreement.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

17. The elders and community members of the three different groups in Galkaio are reportedly in the process of forming a regional development committee comprising of skilled professionals who represent the community. As mentioned earlier, they share the idea that international agencies and donors should see the region as a whole and not as a divided one.

REVENUE

18. In the absence of a legitimate regional authority and revenue collection mechanisms, there is limited revenue generation in the region. However, the port of Hobio generates some income which is used reportedly used by the community to assist the displaced and also to operate some basic social services. Given that the region is situated in the center of Somalia, taxes on trade and business could generate reasonable revenues. Taxing of the livestock and fish products destined for export could also be a source of revenue.

SECTOR ISSUES

POLICE, PRISONS AND JUDICIARY

19. Before the outbreak of the civil war, the region had more than 1,000 police. However, when the government structure collapsed, faction militias replaced the national police force. According to the police chief (SSDF), 300 former police men had been identified and recruited as volunteers.

20. Crime in the region tends to be petty in nature. There does not appear to be any organized crime or car-jacking in the Mudug Region. However, camel looting which has led to clashes has been reported since the signing of the peace agreement in June 1993. To avoid misunderstanding, all arrests are made with the presence of the suspect's community elders. Islamic courts and traditional community elders sit on most of the cases where both the plaintiff and the accused are sworn on the Holy Koran. Almost all cases are settled through either fines or the recovery of the lost property.

INFRASTRUCTURE

21. There is significant economic activity within the region, as well as with neighboring regions and Ethiopia. Such activity is greatly handicapped by the extremely poor road infrastructure outside of the main Mogadishu-Bosasso road. Many access roads that pass through the main towns of the region, such as the roads between Galkaio-Galdugub and Galdugib-Jariban, are mined. Other main roads have been cut off by sand dunes, which pose a threat to the environment, and are no longer used. Alternative roads have been made by the travelers but are longer and hard to use. There is construction/road maintenance equipment in Haradera which appears in fair condition, which could be used to rehabilitating segments of roads in the region.

22. The Hobio port, as only port in the region is already used as a relatively important exit point for trade. Over the last two years, about 500,000 goats and 36,000 cattle per annum have been exported from Hobio. However the facility is limited and only small vessels can dock at the port. The rehabilitation of the port would invigorate the regions economy.

DE-MINING

23. One of the most significant problems in the Mudug region is the presence of land mines. About 26,000 land mines, both anti-vehicle and anti-personnel, are believed to be in the region, many around Galkaio and Galdugub which were the two major towns most affected by the civil war. In the Galkaio town and surroundings alone, about 10 explosions take place every day causing casualties. In Galdugub district, a border town with Ethiopia, it is believed that there are 100 mines for every kilometer up to the border.

24. Communities have already started de-mining the principal trade routes and are developing maps of mine fields. They are seeking assistance to clear the whole area. A recent visit of representatives from UNOSOM de-mining department has led to an agreement to start de-mining operations. A local NGO, NER Mine Sweepers has been set up in Galkaio by volunteers, former military officers, mine technicians and community elders. Amongst this group are people who had planted some of the mines during the war.. The local NGO has contacted former military and faction members who were directly involved in those operations and marked mined zones.

RETURNEES

25. The fighting of the last few years resulted in the total destruction of a significant portion of the Mudug region, particularly Galkaio. Many people moved out of the region and become displaced in the urban centers of the Northeast as well as southern Somalia. People are slowly returning to areas totally devastated by war. Initial food inputs will be required to sustain people while they start reestablishing themselves. At the same time attention will have to be given to rehabilitation of the social service infrastructure.

DISPLACED

26. The vast majority of the displaced in the main urban centres left their original areas of habitation many years before and have no desire or ability to return to their communities of origin. In effect they are the new urban poor. Among the issues that will have to be addressed are land ownership, reclamation of public buildings, establishment of social services.

EDUCATION

27. Basic education assistance is needed throughout the region. Primary schools are functioning in a number of districts but with very limited resources. Teachers are working on a voluntary basis. There is no provision of intermediate or secondary education at present.

HEALTH

28. Mudug region has one only hospital, in Galkaio, operated by Medair since May 1993 with one medical doctor and four nurses, all expatriates. However, their contract expires at February and are planning to leave. Another NGO, MDM, may take over from Medair and has already started restoring the surgery ward of the hospital. They have asked the community to pay incentives to national staff. MDM is also involved in assisting an MCH center in Galdugub and receives supplies from UNICEF and WHO. The remaining three districts do not have any properly functioning medical facilities. However, some communities have private pharmacies run by nurses and traditional birth attendants. The most common diseases are malaria, anemia, bronchitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and malnutrition. Casualties related to mine explosions are common and some are treated in the Galkaio hospital.

WATER

29. The current provision of water in the region is inadequate, particularly in arid areas used by pastoralists where rains are scarce and often late. Many water points, particularly in the central part of Mudug were destroyed during the fighting with pumps either looted or destroyed. There is an urgent need for new bore holes and the rehabilitation of the old ones. Water pumps and spare parts for the old ones are extremely urgent.