

Empowering CSOS to Deliver Basic Services in Somalia

Report to Islamic Relief Germany

June 2012 – October 2012

13 November, 2012

Background

For too long, Somalia has been seen as a “hard case” where aid is seen as ineffective, syphoned off or politicised. It is important to improve the effectiveness of local, Somali CSOs. The proposed project improves directly the effectiveness and accountability of Somali CSOs, and their ability to engage in decision-making and international partnerships.

Somalia has been in a protracted crisis for the past decade. In July 2011, following a prolonged drought, the UN declared famine in the region. 12 million people were affected in Somalia, immediate neighbours and other parts of the region. Following this, the amount of aid and of aid agencies increased dramatically from all parts of the world. Concerns emerged about accountability and effectiveness - and also that the voices of Somalis were not being heard. The famine has since ended, but humanitarian and developments challenges remain critical.

There are many local Somali organisations currently operating in different parts of Somalia. However even though they are able to access central south Somalia, compared to INGOs, most of these organisations are not able to scale up their activities. In order to do so, the capacities of these organisations need to be built. This is important since given the absence of a formal government infrastructure being in place in central south Somalia, there are few other viable alternatives to these local organisations and NGOs to provide vital services on health, education and social welfare in communities. This makes the services provided by local community-based organisations and NGOs even more crucial and necessary. Local organisations are taken to be a substitute to services provided by authorities in these areas and have the potential, with the right resources and tools, to make a strong and meaningful impact, hence, this project is aiming at strengthening the CSO sector, so THF can adjust budget lines and activity lines if circumstances change.

THF has organised 3 conferences in Nairobi with the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and UN OCHA, part funded by Islamic Relief Germany. These brought together multilateral organisations, western and Islamic international NGOs and local NGOs from Kenya and Somalia.

Activities:

The overall objective of the project is to improve the quality, influence, impact and cohesiveness of civil society organizations in Somalia and their ability to absorb and effectively utilize international and locally mobilized resources to the benefit of poor and disadvantaged communities, in particular in delivering essential basic services.

Expected result 1: A network of CSOs in Somalia built through the provision of capacity building training in 6 key areas.

Activities:

- Consultant identified, briefed and posted to Mogadishu. Consultation meetings carried out with the Board of the network, the Somali Humanitarian Operational Consortium (SHOC).
- Facilitated discussion of SHOC's Board about strategy and core activities.
- Needs assessment in key training areas.
- Greater insight into the general capacity and general sustainability of the network (understanding of financial position, details of members, reporting system between members and board etc).

Plans:

- Further consultation with the consultant, the Somali Relief and Development Forum and other partner NGOs
- Identify a Coordinator.
- Develop training modules in the key areas.
- Initiate training.

Expected result 2: A strengthened CSO network in Somalia which has the ability to engage effectively within itself, with donors and government.

Activities:

- Needs assessment with selected members in key training areas.

Plans:

- Further consultation with the consultant, the Somali Relief and Development Forum and other partner NGOs
- Develop training modules in the key areas.
- Initiate training.

Expected result 3: Preparedness in responding to emergencies.

Activities:

- Information obtained on NGOs, forming the start of a database.

Expected result 4: Confidence building between and among Local CSOs, Somali Diaspora, International NGOs and Donor can be achieved by direct engagement that builds trust, understanding and partnership.

Plans:

- A 2 day conference in Mogadishu/Nairobi amongst stakeholders will expose the CSOs to building trust, better understanding and partnership. There are still real issues that need to be tackled regionally including the involvement of NNGOs, coordination between UN/OIC, and the effectiveness of aid.

It has been hard to communicate with Mogadishu and therefore to see how best to help SHOC and its members quickly. This has been particularly so with Ramadan and Presidential elections.

Attachments:

- Financial report

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The Humanitarian Forum is a global network of key humanitarian and development organizations from Muslim donor and recipient countries, the West and the multilateral system. We help to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of aid by addressing identified gaps between humanitarian communities through training, dialogue and cooperation, working internationally and in partner countries like Indonesia, Libya and Yemen.