

# SOMALIA



**CONCERN**  
worldwide

Working with the world's poorest people to transform their lives.



A young girl and her baby sister in the Daami slum district of Hargeisa. Photo by David Pratt/Sunday Herald

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# Foreword from Our CEO



History says, don't hope  
On this side of the grave.  
But then, once in a lifetime  
The longed-for tidal wave  
Of justice can rise up,  
And hope and history rhyme.

These words from our patron Seamus Heaney, who passed away in 2013, evoke the hope that Concern shares for the people of Somalia. This hope is evident through the stories of change encapsulated in this booklet - those of Miski, Abdiah, Ismail, and Amina, who with the support of Concern and our local partners are transforming their lives and carving a future free from absolute poverty. Throughout the years of the conflict, Concern has remained on the ground bringing life-saving assistance to the Somali people, and building their resilience to withstand and bounce back from the multiple hazards they have endured over the years. We were one of the fastest responders in areas that were devastated by the famine of 2011 and today, we are helping those affected by the crisis restart their lives and livelihoods and adapt to the ever-changing conditions they face.

Our work is reaching the poorest and most vulnerable throughout the country from the capital Mogadishu, which hosts around 369,000 internally displaced people, to the rural heartlands of Lower Shabelle, Gedo, and Bay regions in the south of the country. Elsewhere, we work in the rural heartland of Somaliland, including Gabiley region and in the urban slum area of Daami village in Hargeisa city. In each area, our mission is to help people living in extreme poverty achieve major improvements in their lives that last and spread without our ongoing support.

As CEO, I want to thank those of you who have already generously contributed to our work in Somalia. With your support, we have been able to reach hundreds of thousands of people in Somalia in times of need, particularly during the famine. As the Somali people begin to recover from one of most protracted and damaging conflicts of the 21st century, we help turn the page of history on a new chapter of hope and recovery. We thank you for your continued support for the years that follow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'D. MacSorley'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**Dominic MacSorley**

Chief Executive Officer, Concern Worldwide

# ABOUT CONCERN WORLDWIDE



A community water source built by Concern in Bay region. Concern Worldwide, 2007



A water seller in a district of Mogadishu. Much of Mogadishu's population relies on private traders like this for their water supply. Phil Moore, 2011

## WHO WE ARE

Concern Worldwide is a non-governmental, international humanitarian organisation dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in the world's poorest countries.

## WHAT GUIDES OUR WORK

Concern's core values derive from a single central value: extreme poverty must be targeted. The quality of our overall endeavour must ultimately be measured by its contribution to the rapid elimination of the extreme form of poverty defined by the United Nations as absolute poverty.

Our other values, stated below, are all derived from this central value:

- Respect for people comes first
- Gender equality is a prerequisite for development
- Development is a process not a gift
- Greater participation leads to greater commitment
- All governments have responsibility for poverty elimination
- Emergencies call for rapid response
- The environment must be respected
- Good stewardship ensures trust



« Abdi Youssef Hussein, a farmer in Gabiley, Somaliland. Concern staff visited his village to conduct a community needs assessment. Phil Moore, 2010

## OUR VISION

A world where no one lives in poverty, fear, or oppression; where all have access to a decent standard of living and the opportunities and choices essential to a long, healthy, and creative life; and a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to help people living in extreme poverty achieve major improvements in their lives that last and spread without ongoing support from Concern Worldwide.

### Operating in 25 countries:

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Burundi
- Chad
- Dem. People's Republic of Korea
- Dem. Republic of Congo
- Ethiopia
- Haiti
- Kenya
- Lebanon
- Liberia
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Rwanda
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Republic of Sudan
- South Sudan
- Syria
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia

# ABOUT SOMALIA



A boy in Mogadishu's Shabelle 1 IDP camp, where many displaced people have come to escape conflict. Phil Moore, 2010

Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world, devastated by over 20 years of war. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, much of the country's infrastructure has been destroyed and services are largely provided by the private sector or aid agencies. Decades of fighting have left the country ill equipped to deal with natural disasters such as drought. The famines of 1992 and 2011 are estimated to have claimed the lives of half of a million people.

Yet amidst this difficult history, the Somali people are recovering and resuming livelihoods. At the time of writing, the United Nations estimate that the number of people living in food insecurity has reduced from its peak in 2011 of four million to 870,000 people. This illustrates the incredible resilience of the Somali people. Somalis have a strong kinship network and a rich tradition of supporting those in need in their communities. This is evident from the vast flow of remittances from the diaspora, which is estimated to be over \$1.3 billion a year.

The private sector is also thriving and there is a healthy livestock trade with Gulf states and neighbouring countries. Agriculture makes up 60 percent of the economy and Somalia's long coastline provides rich fishing resources.

## AT A GLANCE : SOMALIA

Population : **10.25 million**

Life Expectancy : **51 years**

Infant Mortality (per thousand births) : **108**

Female Genital Mutilation : **98%**

Living with HIV and AIDS : **35,000 people**

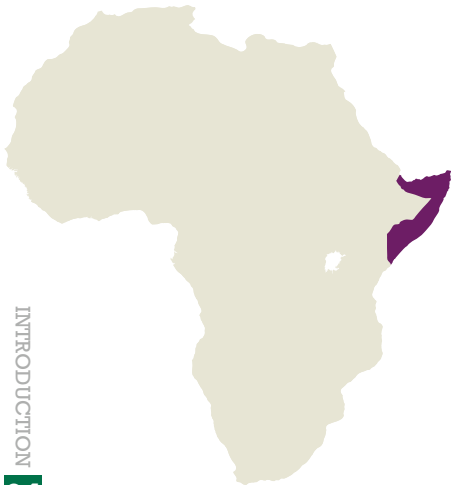
Maternal Mortality Ratio : **1 in 16**

Living without Access to Safe Water : **71% of population**

Internally Displaced Persons : **1.1 million**

Somali Refugees : **1,007,401**

Population under 24 : **63.2%**



# CONCERN IN SOMALIA

Concern Worldwide has worked in Somalia since 1986. We have responded to all of the country's major crises since then, including the famines of 1992 and 2011. We work with those in need, particularly need caused by drought, flooding, and conflict, bringing life-saving assistance and finding solutions for poverty reduction where possible.

## Where We Work

We work in the capital of Somalia, Mogadishu, and in the rural heartlands of Bay, Gedo, and Lower Shabelle Regions in South Central Somalia. In Somaliland, Concern works in the agro-pastoralist area of Gabiley Region and in the outskirts of Hargeisa.

## With Whom We Work

Concern works with extreme poor men and women, boys, and girls in South Central Somalia and Somaliland in the north. We understand that extreme poverty is due to a lack of assets and/or low return on these assets. Importantly, we also believe that extreme poverty is maintained by inequality and risk and vulnerability. In Somalia, there are many inequalities we are trying to address through programming. We work with women to empower them and to support gender equity. We also work with marginalised clans, who often suffer discrimination in Somalia, to ensure that they are not excluded from the development process. Additionally, we work with communities that are vulnerable to natural disasters such as agro-pastoralists in Lower Shabelle, who were the worst affected by the famine of 2011.

Our approach is grounded in partnership with the communities in which we work. Men and women from these communities provide labour, skills, time, land, and other inputs for our projects. These lasting partnerships have resulted in trust, confidence, and respect from communities and other humanitarian organisations where we work.



Shallow wells provided by Concern through an implementing partner, Bani'adam, in Lower Shabelle. Concern Worldwide, 2008

Concern's support has been described as **“the most meaningful assistance”** from any NGO in the IDP area by Shukri Bootan Abdi, a beneficiary in our emergency cash relief programme.

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Sustaining Lives and Dignity of People Affected by Disaster



Mothers queue with their children for health care given by Concern Worldwide staff at the Viishio Governo IDP camp in Mogadishu. Phil Moore, 2011



**Every year, disasters such as conflict, floods, drought, and earthquakes leave millions of people around the world incapable of meeting even their most basic survival needs. When disaster strikes, the poorest are the worst affected.**

## **Our Global Response**

In the event of natural disaster, forced displacement, or armed conflict, Concern works with local, national, and international partners to respond rapidly to save lives and reduce harm, meeting the immediate needs of the most vulnerable households. We provide essential shelter, food, clean water, and health care. After the immediate crisis period, we work with communities to ensure their long-term recovery and resilience.

## **Meeting the Challenge in Somalia**

The famine crisis of 2011 has ended, and the Somali people are slowly recovering. Conflict remains, as does the threat of drought and flooding. The Somali people, however, remain incredibly resilient. Concern supports this resilience through providing community-led interventions that help to reduce the impact of shocks.

In Mogadishu, a city that hosts approximately 369,000 displaced people, we are supporting displaced families with community-driven solutions. For those who wish to return to their villages, we provide mobile phone transferred cash assistance, enabling them to rebuild assets lost to famine and conflict and to restart their lives and livelihoods. Urban poor communities and the displaced are supported with cash as well as education, water, sanitation, and nutrition services.

In rural areas, Concern and partners bring emergency assistance and recovery to affected communities in Lower Shabelle, Gedo, and Bay regions. We are supporting farmers and pastoralists to adapt to the changing environment and diversify their livelihoods.

In Somaliland, we are helping to protect productive assets through the rehabilitation of rainwater catchments and reduction of soil erosion. In Mogadishu, through providing counselling on maternal and young child feeding practices, we are helping prevent childhood malnutrition before it starts.

## **Concern on Impact**

- » During the famine response, our food voucher beneficiaries increased the number of daily meals eaten by children from one to three and by adults from one to two.
- » There was a dramatic reduction in severe negative coping strategies such as going to sleep hungry or going all day without food.
- » In Gabiley Region, earth bunds have increased soil moisture retention capacity by an average of 80%, contributing to a 55% increase in harvests.

## **Concern Somalia: Resilience**

**In 2013, Concern, together with NRC, CESVI, IRC, and Save the Children, formed a DFID-funded resilience consortium. The consortium will pool expertise and resources to ensure that over 200,000 families in vulnerable areas of South and Central Somalia are able to resist and recover from cyclical shocks and stresses of conflict as well as environmental and economic crises. Priorities will be identified by communities themselves, and the programme will involve emergency assistance, disaster preparedness, and recovery in health, shelter, and livelihoods.**

# EDUCATION

Improving Access, Quality and Equity



Children play on swings during a recreation session at Jabuti School in Mogadishu. Phil Moore, 2011

Millions of children every year struggle to access adequate schooling or any education at all. This has life-long implications for their income, health, and well-being.

## Our Global Response

We secure access for extreme poor children to go to school, particularly girls and marginalised groups. We seek to improve school capacity and remove barriers to education such as extreme poverty, hunger, social stigma, and ill health. To help children make the most of their time in school, we focus on improving the quality of primary education, including classroom teaching, learning resources, and school management. We do this by working with authorities to train teachers and school committee members and to improve school facilities.

Distressed children cannot learn effectively, so we aim to improve children's safety and well-being. We work with teachers, pupils, and community members to combat gender-based violence, corporal punishment, and discrimination in schools. We install and improve school water supplies and latrines to reduce diseases and we train students how to stay safe during natural disasters.

## Meeting the Challenge in Somalia

Ongoing conflict, civil unrest, and fragility have had a catastrophic effect on education in Somalia, with only 31 percent of children enrolled in primary school; this is markedly lower for girls with only 25 percent enrolment. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, free-of-charge state education is no longer provided. The majority of education is now provided through fee-paying institutions, thereby preventing the participation of poor, vulnerable children, especially girls, orphans, and those from displaced families and minorities.

Concern has over 17 years' experience implementing education initiatives in Somalia, and we are currently improving access to quality primary education for 11,974 children in Mogadishu and the Lower Shabelle Region. This includes 1,511 vulnerable, displaced children and their families who are living in temporary camps.

## Concern on Impact

- » Due to intense mobilisation and integration of the education programme with the food, income, and markets (FIM) programme there has been a 60% increase in enrolment rates in Mogadishu from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.
- » 6,257 students now attend Concern-supported schools in Mogadishu (46% are girls).
- » Almost 90% of students who receive random literacy tests pass the exams.
- » Communities have established their own secondary school shifts in our schools, bringing secondary education to extreme poor communities in Mogadishu.
- » 258 students transitioned from alternative basic education (ABE) centres to formal education in 2012.

## Concern Somalia: Education (including adult literacy) in 2013

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 16,212  
people (40% female)

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 104,936  
people (50% female)

**Target Schools:** 24

**Where:** Mogadishu, Lower  
Shabelle



Children at a Concern-supported school. Liam Burke, 2003

## Formal Education

Literacy rates in Somalia estimate that only a quarter of the population can read and write, drastically reducing the ability of people to climb their way out of poverty.

“

I am more confident than before and respected at home and the community because of my education from school.

— Fadumo Sheikh Abdi,  
grade 7

Having opened a new school at the end of 2013, Concern now supports 25 schools in Mogadishu and Lower Shabelle, ensuring access to education for 14,234 extreme poor children. The emphasis is on ensuring that children have a safe space to learn and creating a sense of normalcy. Going forward, we also plan to focus on the quality of learning with an emphasis on improving the quality of literacy.

In Somalia, parents still prefer to send their sons to school rather than their daughters. Concern actively works with communities to promote the benefits of girls' education; this has resulted in the current enrolment of 6,903 girls. Girls are also offered additional training to give them life and business skills. Additionally, parents receive adult education to give them essential literacy skills and help them value the importance of education for their children; over 440 adults currently receive literacy and numeracy training in Mogadishu. School-related gender-based violence is being tackled by raising awareness with teachers, students, community education committees, and parents.

# Non-Formal Education

Children continue to bear the brunt of the conflict in Somalia through displacement and trauma from what they and their families have endured. Many children are unable or cannot afford to go to school or have been uprooted from their schools due to displacement.

Concern offers children in Mogadishu a second chance to access education. An accelerated primary education scheme provides children who could not go to school at the expected starting age with catch-up classes. This enables them to join their peers in formal primary education later.

For children who cannot access formal primary education, alternative basic education (ABE) is provided through our partner Youthlink. This provides children with vocational skills, psychosocial support for those affected by the conflict, and a safe space for recreation. Many of the children who benefit from this scheme live or work on the streets. Their families are also supported with livelihoods support to lift the whole family out of poverty.



Siteyi Mohamed Aweys attends a non-formal education class run by Concern and local Somali NGO Youthlink. *Phil Moore, 2011*

Children affected by the conflict take part in recreational activities. *Concern Worldwide, 2007*



# FOOD, INCOME & MARKETS

Reducing Vulnerability and Inequality



Young men at the IIDA Centre in Mogadishu undergo instruction as electricians.

David Pratt/The Sunday Herald, 2013

Today, almost one billion people around the world are forced to survive on less than one dollar a day.

## Our Global Response

Concern is committed to enhancing the assets of the extreme poor as well as to addressing the underlying causes and maintainers of extreme poverty – in particular, inequalities, risks, and vulnerabilities. For Concern, food is the first step. Without adequate and nutritious food, people cannot stay healthy, learn, or work. That is why reducing hunger and improving food security underpins Concern's global work. Our food, income, and markets (FIM) programmes aim to improve food security and increase food production in ways that are sustainable over the long term and improve people's income by investing in their ability to support themselves and their families.

During 2012, we improved the food security and livelihoods of an estimated one and a half million people directly and over four million indirectly, giving them the health and resilience to support themselves. Almost three million were female.

## Meeting the Challenge in Somalia

In Somalia, over 40 percent of people live on less than a dollar a day. Agriculture and livestock, the primary livelihoods, were severely undermined as a result of the famine in 2011. However, there have been marked improvements since the famine when four million Somalis, almost half of the population, were food insecure. Today, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit of FAO estimates that 870,000 Somali people continue to experience food insecurity while one-third of the population remains vulnerable to food insecurity. Concern has continued to work with agro-pastoralist communities to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to sustain their livelihood through good times and bad. We are beginning to work with pastoralist communities to help them protect their livelihoods and adapt to the changing environment.

### Concern on Impact

- » 85% of self-help group members in Lower Shabelle were not displaced during the famine crisis in 2011.
- » In 2013, average saving among a sample of self-help groups totaled 28 USD per member.
- » A tracing study of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) graduates in Mogadishu found that almost a fifth of graduates were in permanent employment, with the remainder in temporary or casual employment one year after completion of training.

### Concern Somalia: **FIM**

#### **Farmer Field Schools/**

**Irrigation:** 300 farmers and 12 schools; 1,301 farmers benefitted from 3,464 tractor hours of land preparation

#### **Watershed Management:**

605 hectares of degraded land were regenerated by 201,826 linear metres of earth bunds

**Cash for Work:** 500 men

**Self-Help Groups:** 1040 women (74 groups)

**Productive Assets:** 148 people, 32% women

**TVET:** 185 TVET, 26% women

**Where:** Lower Shabelle

## FIM »



A community field assessment meeting between Concern staff and farmers in Gabiley, Somaliland. Phil Moore, 2010

In Somaliland, our FIM programme continues to reach over 50,000 people through farmer field schools, self-help groups, and watershed management.

*Photographs, opposite page:*

**Top:** Local farmers and Concern staff mark out a usage map of agricultural land during a community field assessment in Gabiley, Somaliland. Phil Moore, 2010

**Bottom:** Families in the Shabelle IDP camp were given money to start small businesses in Mogadishu. Concern Worldwide, 2010

We support Somali men and women to increase their food security. Farmer field schools provide agricultural training and space for farmers to trial improved crop varieties, pest management, and new farming methods. We provide seeds, tools, fertiliser, and storage facilities, which, combined with new skills, have resulted in greater yields and sustainable livelihoods for the poor. Farmer field schools are a cornerstone of the programme in Gabiley Region, Somaliland and are being extended to Lower Shabelle and Gedo regions in South Central Somalia as part of the new resilience programme.

Access to credit is very difficult for the poor. We support women's self-help groups in Somaliland and in South Central Somalia to enable poor women to have access to savings and credit schemes. The groups have a revolving fund, which is supported with a cash grant from Concern. Members are provided with training on business development, literacy and basic bookkeeping. Somalis are famous for their entrepreneurial spirit, which is espoused in much of the work of the self-help groups. They are now trading livestock or selling produce among other business activities.

In Mogadishu, there are many skilled artisans who have been forced to sell their assets due to repeated shocks. Concern supports these people to resume their livelihoods by providing them with productive assets such as sewing machines and barbering and electrician equipment.

Skills are vital for poverty reduction and economic recovery. Through our partner IIDA, we provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to young people in Mogadishu, providing them with the skills they need to compete in the world of work. Families of TVET students are provided with cash for the duration of training to enable the student to focus on their skills development rather than striving to earn a living for the family. This has a transformative effect, enabling TVET graduates to transition off assistance.





Concern's work with self-help groups in Somalia and Somaliland supports women to set up and run their own business.

## FIM | SOCIAL PROTECTION »



Men receive payment for a cash-for-work programme. Concern Worldwide, 2009

In many areas of Somalia, drought, flooding, and conflict still overwhelm poor people's precarious livelihoods, leading to displacement and loss of income. When this happens, Concern's food, income, and markets (FIM) work responds through a range of social protection and safety nets to ensure the poor can access food and services in the local market.

Since 2008, we have used **cash relief** as a critical component of our emergency response. Cash allows families to prioritise their own needs and to do so with dignity. We target families that have no other means of income and those that often are unable to work due to family commitments or disability.

When possible, we use **cash-for-work** programmes to rehabilitate water sources or other community assets. We offer income-generating opportunities to poor but labour-rich households, whilst the wider community benefits from rehabilitated water sources or roads. This gives a much-needed injection of cash into the local economy of communities affected by drought or conflict.

In the capital, Mogadishu, we have moved from the provision of food vouchers to providing cash assistance through mobile phone transfers to displaced and poor urban families. This has the dual benefit of increasing food security for vulnerable households whilst boosting the local economy. The switch from food vouchers to cash payments came in response to feedback from beneficiaries who wanted greater choice in how to meet their immediate needs.



**For the first time in my life in the IDP camp, my family could eat a decent lunch for 15 days in a row.**

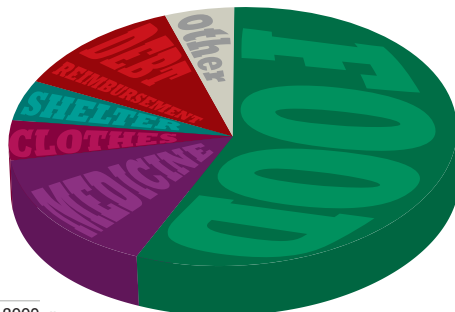
— Shukri Bootan Abdi, a mother of eight, talking about the cash relief she received in her IDP camp along the Afgoye corridor



Maryama Shiil Bakar, a mother of five, receives an instalment of an emergency cash intervention. Hawa Sharaf, 2009

### Concern on Impact

- » Our cash interventions have increased the purchasing power of the poor during times of crisis, enabling them to purchase food and access essential services.
- » Food vouchers feed poor households for almost two-thirds of the month. They have enhanced food security for the most vulnerable, with all of our beneficiaries able to eat an extra meal per day, ensuring a nutritious and diverse diet.



Families' use of cash interventions in 2009 »

# HEALTH

Bringing Services and Solutions to Communities



Fatood Aden Daud and her one-year-old child, Sitey Ahmed, who is severely malnourished, collect a month's supply of food from Concern Worldwide's food voucher programme in Wadajir District, Mogadishu. Jennifer Nolan, 2011

Every year around the world, 8.1 million children die before they reach their fifth birthday from preventable, treatable diseases, and over 358,000 women die from pregnancy-related causes.

## Our Global Response

All over the world, millions of children die before their fifth birthday due to poor nutrition and sanitation and limited access to health care. We are improving health and nutrition for mothers and young children. We do this by increasing their access to health care, including antenatal and postnatal care, advice on family nutrition and health, and supplementary feeding for malnourished children and pregnant mothers.

We reduce the spread of disease by increasing people's access to clean water, sewerage systems, hygiene, and vaccinations. We invest in appropriate infrastructures and improve community understanding of hygiene and health care practices to reduce disease and improve health outcomes.

## Meeting the Challenge in Somalia

The nutrition situation in Somalia remains critical with 18 percent of children under five acutely malnourished in most affected areas. Half of all women are anemic and deficient in micro-nutrients.

Health services and infrastructure are very limited in Somalia, particularly outside of the main urban centres. Knowledge and skills to ensure optimum health are also largely absent, with many traditional beliefs contributing to poor health outcomes such as poor infant and child feeding practices.

Over 70 percent of the population does not have access to safe water and less than a quarter of people have access to latrines. Waterborne diseases are endemic and contribute to high rates of illness and death, particularly amongst children under five. Maternal mortality rates are the third highest in the world, with women facing a one in 16 chance of dying during birth. This is compounded by high rates of female genital mutilation.

## Concern on Impact

- » Since 2011, in South Central Somalia, 86 sustainable water sources were constructed, repaired, or supported with spare parts, bringing water to over 600,000 people.
- » During the famine response, 30,000 people received emergency water supplies in drought-affected areas.
- » 85% of severely malnourished children recover within two months in our treatment programme.
- » Between January and June 2013, 7,732 caregivers received infant and young child feeding education.
- » 75% of new mothers who received Concern's support started to breast-feed immediately after birth rather than waiting two to three days as per traditional habits, providing a vital boost to their immunity.

## 2011 TO JULY 2013

### Concern Somalia: **WASH**

**Safe Water:** 86,549 households

**Where:** Gabiley, Mogadishu, Gedo, and Bay

### **Plans for 2013 and Beyond:**

WASH activities will be extended to Lower Shabelle and Daami village

### Concern Somalia:

### **NUTRITION**

**Treated for malnutrition:** 17,910

children and 4,166 women

**Where:** Mogadishu



## Water and Sanitation

**We ensure that thousands of poor families have access to clean water in Lower Shabelle, Mogadishu, and Bay as well as the Gedo region.**

Our priority is to transform and save lives through delivering water, providing latrines, and building local knowledge and skills on hygiene and maintenance of infrastructure so that the impact of these projects last well into the future. Communities are taught how to protect water from evaporation and contamination and how to maintain their water sources for the long term.

Water is provided through rehabilitation or building rainwater catchments, boreholes, shallow wells, and underground water storage tanks. In Mogadishu, water is pumped from private water sources to the communal taps in the IDP camps. In rural, drought-affected areas, donkeys or trucks bring life-saving water to men, women, and children.

We also support communities to build their own latrines through a community mobilisation approach. As part of this strategy, community

volunteers promote health and hygiene messages. Beneficiaries have reported an increased sense of dignity and a decrease in the spread of disease as a result of these efforts.

Equality is also an important aspect of the work we do. Women and girls traditionally collect water in Somalia and often travel long distances. By bringing water closer to families, we are also ensuring that women's and girls' time burden is reduced.

**Every year in this season of winter, our children were victims of cholera. But this time it is different. We saved our lives with our hands. We maintained good hygiene practice.**

— Faduma Barani, Bondheere District, Mogadishu

# Nutrition

**Eighty-five percent of all children admitted to our nutrition sites are cured within two months and we are actively trying to reduce the root causes of malnutrition in communities throughout Somalia.**

Concern is now concentrating its nutrition programme in Mogadishu, assisting both displaced and urban resident communities through a Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) approach. Community health workers mobilise parents to bring their malnourished children to Concern's centres for treatment. Undernourished pregnant women and nursing mothers are also referred to the centres for support. The children and women are given nutritious therapeutic or supplementary food, de-worming medication, and other treatments to bring them back to health along with blankets, soap, and mosquito nets to prevent malaria. Nutrition and hygiene education is also given.

Since famine conditions have eased, we are also now actively addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition, helping to prevent it before it starts. We provide counselling to mothers and fathers on appropriate breast-feeding and complementary feeding as well as good hygiene practices. Community health workers disseminate messages in the community and at the household level and actively encourage behaviour change. Mother support groups help other mothers to adapt to new, healthier practices and we also engage fathers as important allies in this process through father support groups.

## School Health Initiative

Malnutrition is also tackled through education. Children in Concern-supported schools in Mogadishu receive health, nutrition, and hygiene lessons from their science teachers. The children bring these messages home and the knowledge spreads through the community. School health clubs have been established so messages can be promoted through play and fun activities. Children are also given de-worming medication twice a year and schools are equipped with first aid kits, latrines, hand-washing facilities, and safe water supplies.



Concern set up a washing and cooking area in the village of Haji-Dhager to address the lack of basic services that resulted from recent drought and food insecurity. David Pratt/Sunday Herald, 2013

Mothers in IDP camps and poor urban areas of Mogadishu are able to seek **health care and advice** for their children thanks to Concern's **Community Nutrition Centres**.



Women attend an IYCF Support Group at Shabelle Nutrition Centre in Mogadishu. Abdirahim Hussein Jama, 2013



Men attend a father support group. Ali Haji Ahmed, 2013



# PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that through partnership with local NGOs in Somalia and regional research organisations, we can further our mission to eliminate extreme poverty and bring about lasting change.

Our goal of partnership is to reach more extremely poor people with services through greater outreach as well as by increasing the capacity of pro-poor actors in Somalia and fostering local ownership of the development process. We currently have five local NGO partners. Each partnership is based on the principles of mutual respect, interdependence, accountability, transparency, integrity, openness, responsiveness, and trust. We also develop partnerships based on the premise of mutual learning.

Our partnership with Lifeline Gedo and GREDO has led to greater coverage and reach in difficult-to-access areas of Somalia, particularly for water and sanitation. SHACDO, a local partner in Lower Shabelle, has ensured throughout the ebbs and flows of conflict that children can access Concern-supported schools and that teachers receive the assistance they need. In Mogadishu, Youthlink has increased Concern's knowledge and expertise on child protection and together we ensure that children and their families are provided with emergency assistance and education. Our partnership with IIDA has enabled Concern to reach women affected by gender-based violence and has increased the capacity of our work with HIV and AIDS.

In the coming years, through a resilience consortium, we will work with the Humanitarian Policy Group of the Overseas Development Institute to conduct research on the impact of resilience programming in a humanitarian context in the medium term.



Concern staff participate in an ICRISAT-organised workshop in Somaliland. Phil Moore, 2010

Our **partnership** with **ICRISAT**, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, has helped farmers in Lower Shabelle through their research on **crop diversification**, trialed by our farmer field schools.



# STORIES OF CHANGE

FIM | **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT** »

## Sustainable Agriculture



Sheikh Ismail with his crops.  
Abdulqadir Ahmed, 2012

Sheikh Ismail Ali is 90 years old. He lives with his wife, son, daughter-in-law and five grandchildren in Boqor Village in the Gabiley district of Somaliland. Sheikh Ismail's farm is three hectares. He is one of the beneficiaries of Concern Worldwide's watershed management project.

"Concern has helped us to rehabilitate our degraded land and improve our production capacity and knowledge. I have been operating this farm since 1964 and I have never seen any water on the surface of the land. As the gradient of the land is so high, after rainfall all the water immediately drains down the valley. Thanks to Concern's intervention, now the water can stay on the farm surface for up to three days, and the moisture remains for 20 days instead of three."

Through extensive community-level engagement, Concern has supported village members to construct their own watershed system manually. This approach has created a great sense of ownership and sustainability and other members in the community have been inspired to replicate the approach.

Watershed management has increased Sheikh Ismail's yield. "Although the rainfall this year was very low, we have produced enough food," he said. "In the last few years, rainfall was higher but my yield was much less. A large part of my land was barren and unproductive but now I can cultivate all three hectares. I will get about ten sacks of food this year - this will cover the family's annual consumption. I will now be able to produce extra food to sell in the market. With the money earned, I can purchase cattle and fodder for feed. These cattle will produce healthy, fresh milk for my family."

# Supporting Rural Farmers

Abdiah Hassan lived in a refugee camp in Eritrea for many years, having fled conflict at home in Somalia. She returned to Gedo region seven years ago with forty other families in the hope that they would be able to restart their lives and livelihoods. As soon as her family of eight children reached Melkariyay, they decided to do what they had learned as refugees in Eritrea: farm.

“Although we left here many years ago as pastoralists, when we arrived at Melkariya and saw a small stream, we decided to settle near it and practice crop farming,” Abdiah explained.

Soon after the families had settled, a well-wisher from the community donated land and the families were excited about the prospects. Year after year, however, their crops failed, as the water supply from the nearby stream was erratic and insufficient. With support from Concern and Lifeline Gedo, a shallow well in the vicinity was rehabilitated, providing water for the surrounding farming community.

“For the seven years that I have worked on this farm,” Abdiah said, “I have never seen anyone harvest grown plants for food, as the rain is never enough to make the plants grow well. We were selling the young plants in the market as food for animals as well. You can see now for yourself how the plants and the animals are healthy. I do not know how to thank them for this act.”

A few months after rehabilitating the shallow well, the farmers were looking at real prospects of harvesting fully grown crops for the first time.

The community at Melkariyay is an example of how the rehabilitation of water sources and the use of irrigation can be a viable means of achieving food security and creating livelihoods.



**Abdiah farming in Gedo.**  
Concern Worldwide, 2013



**Farmland in Gedo.**  
Concern Worldwide, 2012

# Formal Education for Girls

Fourteen-year-old Miski Hassan Omar lives with her three brothers, three sisters, and parents in a camp for internally displaced people (IDPs) in Mogadishu. Miski missed out on the opportunity to go to school when she was younger. In February 2011, Miski attended a learning centre supported by Concern and Youthlink to accelerate her education. Within six months, Miski transitioned into formal primary education at grade four.

Despite being from a poor family, Miski is committed to continuing her education. "I like mathematics and science subjects and I want to be a university lecturer in the future," Miski told us when asked about her hopes for the future. With Concern and Youthlink support, Miski also received medical treatment for a stomach problem.

Miski's mother, Lula, has started a small grocery store with training and financial support from the education programme. Poverty is one of the key barriers for children accessing education. With the profit she earns from her business, Lula now can afford to send one other daughter and two sons to school. "We now live a normal life and we eat two meals per day," Lula said. "Without the support of this project, our lives couldn't have changed."

Children like Miski continue to bear the brunt of conflict in Somalia. Hundreds of thousands of children are unable to go to school because of displacement, poverty, or lack of services. Disruption of normal life has a profound effect. Concern and local NGO Youthlink aim to improve the well-being of children in Mogadishu who are affected by the

crisis through a holistic, child-centred approach that provides formal and non-formal education, recreation, health support, and livelihoods support for their families.

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**I like mathematics and science and I want to be a university lecturer in the future.**

— Miski Hassan Omar



# Knowledge Is Power

Amina Ali Hussein is 25 years old and already a mother of six. She is a member of a support group at Shabelle nutrition site close to her home in Mogadishu. Amima explains how her infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices have changed since attending the group, benefitting both her and her baby.

“This baby is very lucky because, during his life, I have received IYCF lessons and counselling from Shabelle nutrition centre. Before joining the group, my infant suffered diarrhoea several times a day and I had to change his clothes every time. He also suffered vomiting and abdominal distension. I used to menstruate straight away after giving birth and then, after 40 days, would fall pregnant. But now, after IYCF consultations, things are much better.”

Before Amina joined the support group, she gave all of her newborn babies sugared water until the third day, when she would start breast-feeding. She would interchange breast milk with infant formula or animal milk. Her belief, a common one in most areas of Somalia, was that breast milk alone was not sufficient for her baby.

With the help of support groups and one-on-one counselling with Concern staff, Amina was given information about the benefits of exclusive breast-feeding for mother and baby, including its benefits for birth spacing.

“I was also told that breast milk will stop diarrhoea and, if I increase my breast-feeding, more milk will be produced. I was also told that breast-feeding will inhibit menstruation. I could not believe how all these



**Amina and her five-month-old baby, Hussein, in Mogadishu.** Abdirahim Hussein Jama, 2013

things could be right. Though it was very difficult for me to change my old ways and try these new things, I decided to apply them one by one to see if they work so that I can share the findings with my fellow mothers. I started to breast-feed exclusively.”

“

**Now my little child is five months old and he is healthy. From the day I started giving breast milk exclusively there was no more diarrhoea and vomiting; moreover, I haven't seen any periods for the past three months and I realise now that what I was told was right and every mother can try these things.**

— Amina Ali Hussein

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A boy attends a weekly sports session held at Jabuti School in Mogadishu. Phil Moore, 2011

*Front cover photo:* Children attend a student-organised assembly at the Concern-supported Jabuti School in Mogadishu. Phil Moore, 2011

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people to transform their lives.

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