



## Expansion of emergency health care for internally displaced communities in Somalia's Afgooye Corridor

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Muslim Aid and WHO are currently running eight health clinics in the Afgooye Corridor and Mogadishu. Since September, these clinics have provided emergency health services to almost 25 000 people.

**Background:** Renewed hostilities in Mogadishu since May 2009 have led to new population displacements in Somalia. Over half a million internally displaced people (IDPs) have now taken refuge in the Afgooye Corridor outside the city.

These displaced communities face health risks from overcrowding, lack of drinking water and sanitation and disrupted access to health services. Women and children are particularly vulnerable.

**Health intervention:** Through a grant from the Central Emergency Response Fund, WHO and Muslim Aid have opened another three clinics in the Afgooye Corridor and on Bal'ad Road in North Mogadishu, bringing the total number to eight. The principal objective of the grant is to improve the general health of the IDPs and other communities and thus reduce the risk of communicable disease outbreaks. These clinics are serving nearly 200 000 people however they are struggling to cope in the face of ever-increasing numbers of IDPs.

Muslim Aid is distributing ready-to-use therapeutic food in a number of sites to combat high levels of anaemia among the IDPs, particularly children and pregnant women. The other main health conditions among the IDPs have been acute respiratory infections, anaemia, acute watery diarrhoea and parasitic infections. Health



Location of the Afgooye Corridor in Lower Shabelle, South Central Somalia

staff in clinics have taken advantage of IDP visits to raise awareness of communicable diseases and other health and hygiene measures.

**Lessons learned:** The number of health facilities will need to be increased to allow Health Cluster partners to handle the growing numbers of IDPs. Funding limitations have not allowed for further expansion of these essential health facilities.

**Results:** Between September and November 2009, nearly 25 000 people including 6500 children under the age of five were treated and provided with health education at the eight clinics.

Through these clinics and the activities of other health partners, the Health Cluster is maintaining coverage of PHC services within 1.2km of IDP settlements of more than 10 000 people.



**New population displacements in 2009 have made the Afgooye Corridor one of the most densely populated places in the world. The overcrowding, lack of drinking water and sanitation and limited access to health services pose significant risks to health.**

This emergency health intervention is supported by CERF