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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Technical assistance and capacity-building

Written statement* submitted by Elizka Relief Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 August 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



The Right to Development in Somalia

The past three decades have seen Somalia has suffer many human rights and protection crisis. These include the failure of the State to protect of civilian within the contexts of cyclical humanitarian emergencies caused by conflicts and natural disasters, systematic impunity and lack of accountability and weak institutions and mechanisms capable of adequately responding to the various human rights challenges.¹ These issues are further complicated by the excessive interference of other countries in Somalia which led to the violations of international humanitarian law and human right in ways such as extra judicial executions, arbitrary arrests, gender-based violence including conflict-related sexual violence, abductions, ill-treatment and torture, violations of freedom of expression, association and assembly, discrimination in political participation, the recruitment and use of children by terrorist groups as well as by security forces².

Based on that, the right to development has severely been affected in Somalia. Goals and targets of Agenda 2030 are far behind achievement. Elizka Relief Foundation would like to shed the light on the top fields that were affected by the lack of development in Somalia.

1. Education

Somalia suffers from the lack of local educational institutions in addition to inability to accommodate all children who have reached school age. There is also a limited number of qualified educational personnel, as a large number of educational institutions in Somalia lack qualified individuals and number of teachers required.

Some reports, including one published by the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) indicate that the illiteracy rate in Somalia ranges between 60% and 70%. The organization also indicated that the educational level of Somali women is weak where the illiteracy rate is 75%. It is estimated that 4.4 million people in Somalia are without education³

In 2018, an international organization announced its intention to work to support education in the Puntland region, but it faced many problems, as the organization stated that it is difficult for donors to work in central and southern Somalia due to the security situation. In these areas, conflict and civil war often hinder educational activities. That region has at least 200,000 children who are still not enrolled in school⁴.

2. Access to Water

Access to water is both a basic necessity and a fundamental human right. Somalia is considered a water-stressed country, receiving less than 600 m of rain each year which leads to extended months of drought. The search for water for human and livestock use requires walking long distances which leads to encroachment on other clans' land and to intra-clan conflicts at the level of local communities. Providing infrastructure for water collection and storage for sustaining the pastoral lifestyles of people and livestock can help lessen the effects of climate change, thereby eliminate one of the causes of inter-clan conflicts.

In 2018 in the Bakool region in southern Somalia, assessments of the Action Against Hunger indicated a severe food emergency as 17.2% of the displaced children suffer from acute malnutrition. Their field work documented an acute shortage of water between communities

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/SOSummary20102011.aspx>.

² Ibid.

³ حسين عبدالرزاق، مشكلة الأمية في الصومال : الأسباب وطرق العلاج، مركز مقديشو، 2018، متاح على: <https://bit.ly/2W5vVCW>.

⁴ <https://bit.ly/3gJufa6> فرانسوا 24، ريبورتاج الصومال.. حين يتحول الحق في التعليم إلى مخاطرة، 2019، متاح على:

in Bakool. Many people are unable to access more than 7.5 liters of water per day, which is the minimum humanitarian standard for emergency survival needs.⁵

The United Nations estimated in 2019 that more than 2 million people die annually from water-related diseases around the world, and only 60% of Sub-Saharan Africa have access to safe water supplies.⁶

3. The Right to Adequate Housing

In 2018, a platform that includes non-governmental organizations in Somalia accused the federal government of dislocating the displaced in the borders of the capital, Mogadishu. That platform indicated that the government had demolished 21 camps that housed more than 5,807 families and destroyed their properties and other things considered necessary for their basic life, which affected their place of residence.⁷

At the end of 2019, there were at least 252,000 families living in 371 camps that contain internally displaced persons across the Baidoa district, 250 kilometers northwest of the capital Mogadishu, and that many of them had been displaced in recent years due to drought and conflict in the region. Which made them leave their housing or lose it.⁸

4. Rights of Women and Girls

The fragile Somali system does not protect women or girls from discrimination and sexual and gender-based attacks, in particular gang rapes, remains a major concern.

The Somali Integrated Management System has documented at least 271 cases of gender-based violence against displaced women and girls in Somaliland, 312 cases in Puntland, and at least 400 cases in southern and central Somalia. The drought led to the separation of more women from their families, which exposed them to a greater risk of sexual and gender-based violence, especially with the belief that they lack "male protection"⁹

The 12-year-old daughter of the Somali man, Elias Adam, was kidnapped on February 24, 2019 where Al-Shabab Terrorist group raped her, then killed her and threw her body near her home in the in Galmajo region in central Somalia. Currently, there are attempts to settle the matter customarily but the father disapproves that. To date, the perpetrator has not been punished. Her case is one of 12 rapping cases were filed against the group, during the period from the beginning of January to March 2019. Moreover, in April 2020, two girls, aged three and four, were subjected to sexual rape upon their return from school to their home in the Somali capital, Mogadishu.¹⁰

Despite the large number of these crimes and the clarity of criminals, the Somali government did not specify the identity of the perpetrator or perpetrators, which leads to the failure to achieve justice.

Al-Shabaab terrorist group also practices "applying the hudud" to Somali women, which is a physical punishment for violating Islamic law. Women who do not obey a dress code, work outside their homes, or are seen talking to men outside their families, or any other behavior that Al-Shabaab deems inappropriate, could be exposed to public beatings, flogging, or execution.

⁵ Action against hunger, Somalia: Coping With Extreme Water Shortages, 2019, available at: <https://www.actionagainsthunger.org/story/somalia-coping-extreme-water-shortages>.

⁶ <https://bit.ly/2zxsxod>أماني الطويل، إلى أين يقود "الفقر المائي" أفريقيا؟، الانديبننت العربية، 2019، متاح على:

⁷ <https://bit.ly/2O8z5RY>الصومال الجديد، اتهام الحكومة الصومالية بتهجير النازحين، 2018، متاح على:

⁸ الشروق، عشرات آلاف المشردين في الصومال يستفيدون من معونات المنظمة الدولية للهجرة، 2019، متاح على: <https://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?Cdate=05022019&id=bd67f275-4cea-495b-938f-36592d787cb3>.

⁹ Somalia 2017/2018, The Amnesty International Report 2017/18.

¹⁰ بي بي سي، الاعتداء الجنسي على الأطفال: غضب في الصومال بعد اغتصاب طفلتين في الثالثة والرابعة، 2020، متاح على: <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-52174155>.

In conclusion, despite the some progress many human rights challenges remain. It is therefore important for the international community to continue to provide support to the Somali Government in line with the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 17, and with article 3 of the Declaration on the Right to Development, following the “Building New Partnerships for Sustainable Development” to rebuild and consolidate federal and State institutions, the rule of law, and the justice and security sectors. It is also important for the government to use funds to fulfil its commitments to reach the furthest to ensure that no one is left behind.

Recommendations

Elizka Relief Foundation would like to present the following recommendations:

- Executing more plans and forming more effective laws to implement Agenda 2030
 - Monitoring the funds that the government of Somalia receive in order to make sure it benefits the Somali people
 - Stopping the international intervention in Somalia which leads to continuous conflicts
 - Take effective steps to combat corruption, gender-based violence and lack of food and water
 - Protecting the educational institutions and provide capacity building to teachers.
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