



# Employment for Peace

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**NEWSLETTER OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME IN SUPPORT OF PEACE IN MOGADISHU,  
SOUTH AND CENTRAL SOMALIA**

**W**elcome to  
the first  
issue of  
the Employment for  
Peace newsletter.

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## **Employment and Peace**

**P**ace depends on a wide range of measures, critical amongst them is access to decent work. It helps to reorient people's minds from conflict and destructive activities. It improves their material welfare and reduces poverty, social exclusion and disintegration. Engaging in productive activities also provides human security, a channel for social healing and a means of reducing the plight of conflict affected vulnerable groups.

The ILO Employment for Peace Programme in South and Central Somalia seeks to provide a visible peace dividend to the lives of Somali people by engaging communities in large scale employment opportunities, injecting cash through wages, improving access and infrastructure, reviving local markets and building local skills and capacities.

## **Employment for Peace Approach**

**T**he main purpose of the Employment for Peace programme is to support the development of a culture of peace through creating employment and livelihood opportunities. It aims at providing immediate tangible benefits to communities while at the same time building capacity and acting as a neutral forum for dialogue between communities. The programme approach entails a process of engaging communities to be actively involved in project execution or simply put, Community Driven Recovery.

Initial activities take the form of employment intensive projects that act as an entry point for community mobilization and capacity building and draw heavily on ILO's experiences in other post conflict countries. Through dialogue with authorities, localities are selected for initial interventions and through introductory meetings to ensure transparency and legitimacy, local social dialogue is initiated. This leads towards the development of an appropriate locally driven development process and a mutual understanding of the intended partnerships.

By using community contracting for implementing employment intensive works in environmental works, low-cost housing, waste management or infrastructure improvements, communities take ownership of projects and learn by doing. Not only are employment opportunities created that provide a cash injection into local economies, social dialogue is fostered and local capacities built.



*Children playing on a mound of garbage in Baidoa oblivious of the health and safety risks.*

## Community Employment Projects in Mogadishu and Baidoa

In spite of the complex social dynamics and challenging working environment of Mogadishu and Baidoa, the Employment for Peace Programme, through a local partner SAACID (a NGO), is implementing solid waste management community employment projects. In Mogadishu 1,700 poor residents from the 16 districts and the Area of Bermuda are employed; while in Baido 200 people have been engaged. The works, which started in August 2006, involve removing the huge heaps of several years of uncollected solid waste that deface the city and town, block drainage and access roads, and pose a major sanitation hazard.



*Work site in Mogadishu*

To date over 200,000 workdays of employment have been created, dump sites prepared and approximately 30,000 cubic meters of garbage moved. The workers earn a daily wage of 2 USD a day. A typical worker employed on the projects supports eight dependents and prior to this work earned less than a dollar a day. Based on initial data collected, 63% of the workers are women and 52% are Internally Displaced Persons.

The successful implementation of these projects in the wake of the current volatile situation is due to the bottom up approach that involves dialogue with and cooperation of the local district leaders and their communities; and their desire to earn a living. A significant and inspiring achievement of the projects is the coming together of several districts to agree to implement joint activities.

In this first phase of the Employment for Peace Programme, relatively simple works being undertaken, aimed at simply getting people back to work, and engaging and developing local capacities. With time and as capacities and an environment for early recovery develop more complex works including rehabilitation of access roads will be undertaken.



*Workers earn two dollars a day and are paid fortnightly*

### Restoring hope amongst the youth

About 60% of the workers in the Employment for Peace community employment projects are between the ages of 18 - 35. For most workers this is the highest paying job they have ever held and for many their first job.

Binti Hussein Ali, a 19 year old girl, is employed in the Baidoa project. She is single and her income of 2 USD per day from the project contributes significantly to that earned by her mother selling vegetables at the market for the upkeep of seven others family members. Binti heard about the job opportunities offered by the project through her mother who is a member of a local women's group. She immediately presented herself and was recruited. "This is the first paid job opportunity I have ever had" said Binti, "I am very happy with the job because the income is making a change in my life and in those of several families. The project is also making a big difference in the cleanliness of our area. We are all so happy and wish the project could be extended as there is so much to be done, and we still need the wages." But most of all, Binti says the project has given her hope! Hope that she can pursue her ambition of becoming a nurse. She hopes she can save enough to go back to school, she dropped out of intermediate school after grade seven. Binti had



*Binti, a young worker employed in the Baidoa project*

previously done voluntary work with the Somali Red Cross Society where she learned first aid skills which she uses to help co-workers on the project deal with minor injuries. Each work site is fully equipped with first aid equipment.

## Preparing for Early Recovery and Reconstruction

Local skills and capacity crucial for the rebuilding of Somalia have been eroded by many years of conflict. One of the strategic objectives of the Employment for Peace Programme is to empower local stakeholders with a view to optimizing Somali content in terms of human resources, employment potential, and use of appropriate technology and local materials. The Programme is therefore involved in initiatives to develop capacity of Somalis so that they are in a position to play an active part in the future Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of Somalia.

### Training of Engineers

The reconstruction of national infrastructure will be a major objective in the RDP and engineers will play a major role. However, the general skills level of the local engineers is poor, mainly due to years of lack of practice. One of the immediate objectives of the Employment for Peace Programme's training activities is to develop a nucleus of trained Somali Engineers who can plan, manage and implement employment-intensive projects. An initial training of project engineers was held in Baidoa on employment intensive works. A further course for 20 engineers and technicians drawn from the whole of Somalia is planned in early January 2007. From this group, individuals will be identified who can be trained as trainers so as a core training group and eventually a national training network can be established. The long term objective is to establish institutional capacity at regional and national levels.

### Establishing an Association of Somali Engineers

The Employment for Peace Programme is supporting the Benadir University, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Mogadishu establish an Association of Somali Engineers. This will entail carrying out a survey of existing engineers in Somalia, setting up a database of engineers and registering them to become members of the Association.

The purpose of the Association is to help members develop their profession and actively contribute to the socio-economic recovery process of Somalia. It will provide an avenue to build up technical skills through educational and training, research and networking activities.



*Engineers after the first training on employment intensive works*

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