



First session on UPR (August 2009 –October 2010) South Central Somalia.

Prepared by: COGWO

Background

The Coalition for Grassroots Women Organizations (COGWO) is a network with 30 women organizations. The Coalition was formally established in January 1996. The coalition's headquarter is located in Mogadishu. Member organizations operate in different regions of Somalia such as Banadir, Middle Shebelle, lower Juba, Hiraan, Galgadud, Bay and Bakool.

The coalition members work in different social areas like education, peace, Agriculture, relief, emergency, health , development, child care and psychosocial support.

In 1997, COGWO has set up a documentation centre which since then, has been recording and documenting all human rights violations and abuses that occurred/occurs in Mogadishu and 5 other regions in the South-Central Zone of Somalia.

Since COGWO documentation centre has the mandate of documenting the cases of human rights abuses and violations, a data bank unit was established that records/have recorded many cases of H.R abuses that have approached our office or has been reported by our member organizations that are scattered through South-Central Somalia. These cases need to go through legal aid procedure.

There have been violent confrontations among the warlords, insurgents and the Transitional Federal Government in Banadir region especially in the capital city of Mogadishu for years. This has led to displacement of thousands of the people who have a problem with their basics needs such as food, water, shelter and medical care and also psychosocial support services. Thousands of Women, children and families came across in cross fire and wounded by bombing shells in and around Mogadishu.

The affected women, children families and population at large experienced a lot of problems and mental illnesses as a result of atrocities committed by the fighting parties. The hospitals are ill equipped not able to respond to the medical and psychosocial needs of affected children appropriately.

Women, especially, do not have access to emergency services even in government hospitals or health units due to lack of capacity, knowledge and skills among the health workers and community support structures,

There is existence of negative cultural practices and behaviour such as chewing khat and Female Genital Mutilation that are very rampant in Somalia. Gender based violence is also a common problem but still kept secret in Somalia. The high level of substance abuse especially excessive use of Chat exposes many families to violence, hence child abuse e.g. rape, domestic violence, and war related violence. All these constitute serious risks to women and children for whom COGWO provided with Documentation centre.

Empowering women rights through the Advocacy and lobbying in South Central Somalia

1.Right to equality before the law

What happens is that people are caught and kept in custodies without recognition of committing any crime. There are many obscure prisons exist in the areas controlled by the TFG. The obscure prisons include the one in the Somali state house, CID building and others where people are kept secretly. Police Inelegance Security (PIS) use to jail every day innocent people particularly youth who are caught from their homes without any clear confirmations indicating involvement any crime of and are kept here for ransom purposes. Moreover that, the opposition groups have undisclosed prisons which are dedicated to keep, punish and sentence people for death panel, hand, leg and tongue cut. During this year a Somali man was judged by the insurgent court to cut off his tongue with a knife and he is now unable to speak and eat.

Apart from catching and kidnapping acts executed by both PIS and the opposition groups, there are also cases discovered inside Mogadishu central jail and are contrary to right equality of law. On 20th October, 2009, as the court have listened the case of a woman who has been accused of being a murder killing her husband. She was judged to pay a "DIYA" which is a compensation of 100 camels while there are no verifications on hand showing her murder. After that, the judges of the court decided to make swear the victims of the murder for fifty times of swear.

The sentence of the court was regarded unlawful decision against our clients, and was proposed to raise appeal to the second level of the court of appeal, hoping that the women and her daughter will gain their liberty soon after the court decision. They are still weeping for more than one year inside the prison.

12/06/2009, a woman who has been indebted to another woman in Shibis district was caught her by two men armed with pistols of mask faces and put a pistol on her shoulder. They covered up her face and took her off a car. They took her near the stadium street and raped her.

In Banadir Regional court on 5th August 2010 hearing charges against some of their clients, who were accused with different kinds of charges. the court issued Verdict and sentenced to three accusers' death penalty. The notable thing is that one of the clients whom were sentenced the death penalty is underage.

2.Right to life, liberty and security of the person

There are plenty of security difficulties in the country. People of Mogadishu wake up every day with bombardments that Somali government forces backed by AU troops and Islamist insurgents exchange heavy artilleries and mass destructive weapons in the civilian territories where people are indiscriminately shelled.

Displacement rates are high, people have fled to the areas controlled by TFG and in the IDP camps of the surrounding areas. Civilian casualties intensified as deaths, injuries and loss of riches get increased against innocent civilians. This is the result of clashes escalation which are possible to happen every time.

On the other hand, group of women who involved in cleaning operations in the main streets of Mogadishu were targeted in bomb blast that a similar one happened a year ago. This was one of the worst incident which it's first one took place August 3, 2008 and more than 21 women killed and 46 others wounded in that event. The women were street cleaners in exchange for food. They were cleaning rubbish from southern Mogadishu street . Similar incident occurred during this year 2010.

This was a brutal act deliberately attacked to those women by unknown groups who buried the bomb inside the rubbish.

Actually such cruel acts against innocent people is not its first and second time to occur but also similar events took place in different parts of Mogadishu which are more painful from the one you hear of the other.

4. Right to marriage and family

Women face problems from their families due to early marriage, less access to education and circumcision. One incident occurred is that a young woman in the age of 13 year old was married. When her husband tried to contact her. He took nipple stick and punctured her urine suck to open because she was badly circumcised. After that, she became a victim of urinated incontinent for 25 months.

5.Right to free from torture , degrading treatment

On 2 August 2010, different incidents about torture and degrading treatment occurred inside the IDP camps of Mogadishu where huge number of IDPs are live. Among the incidents happened inside the IDP camps include a father killed his son by stranglehold which caused the death. On 11th August 2010, A women victim in Wadajir distract, particularly in Barwaqo camp, near the international airport hurt by her husband. Agust 10th,2009. A maidservant who used to work in a house to look after the children as baby sitter, to clean the house and cook food for the whole family, including shopping and buying dry foods from the market. Her month salary was 300,000 so.sh which is \$10.

she was working unpaid for six months, and whenever she asked her remuneration her employer answered that she will paid next month, but never happened to be paid. But unfortunately she was accused of theft that she has stolen a ring of 8 grams. All over sudden, she has been tied with rope both legs and hands, and were beaten body until she lost her consciousness and tortured to confess the theft, this torture caused her to about a baby of two and half month of pregnancy.

