

BORESHA SHEKO

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Education | Jubaland

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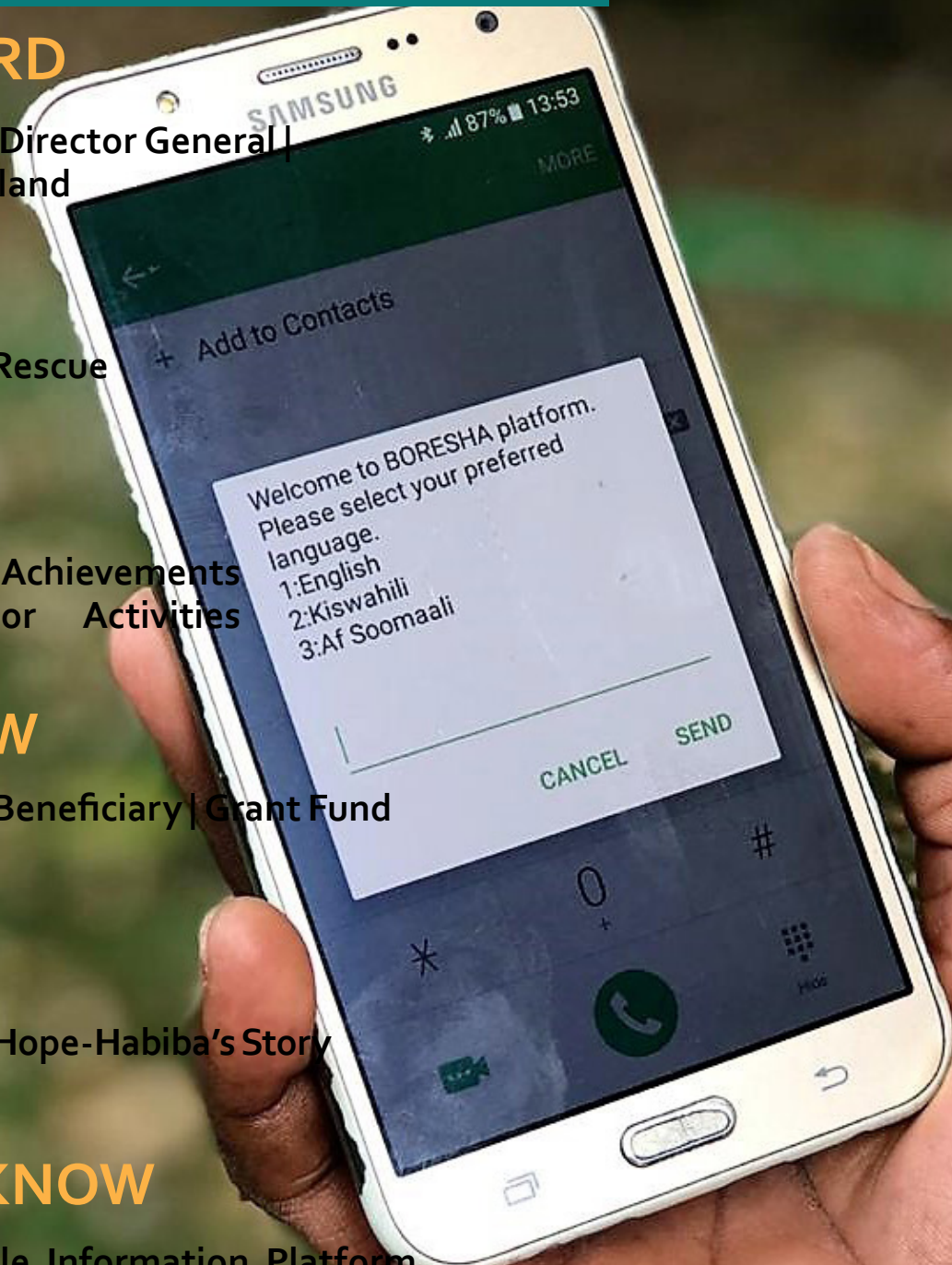
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FOREWORD

INTRODUCTORY NOTE | COVID19 IMPACT ON EDUCATION IN JUBALAND



It is my pleasure to introduce the 11th edition of the Sheko Newsletter for the BORESHA Consortium. It is a good opportunity and platform for the Jubaland State of Somalia which I represent as the Director General for Education to highlight and share the work we are doing in the education sector in Jubaland with the BORESHA Consortium and the good working relationship we have developed over the past three years. I will also highlight the impact of COVID19 on this crucial sector that was almost brought to its knees by this global pandemic. There are several Consortia operating in Jubaland and among them is the BORESHA consortium, it is a unique project and one of a kind due to its cross-border element. It mainly deals with Livelihood activities, resilience building and natural resources management and in there lies the several activities in the education sector especially in terms of offering our young people scholarships and enrollment in Technical Vocation Education training.

As the Ministry of Education some of our main objectives include: ensuring free access to quality education for children, empowering livelihoods of youth through education, renovation/construction of durable schools and adult learning centers. The ministry also ensures the curriculum is practical and relevant to children, establish ethical protocols, assessment and examination processes that protect women and girls from exploitation by anyone and provide for safety and security in the education environment as well as draft education policies and laws that protect against gender discrimination. These are some of the main objectives and it important to note that we cannot achieve all of them on our own hence the importance of partners like BORESHA, NGOs and the private sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global health crisis that has resulted in great disruption to education worldwide. In Somalia, it has affected learning and forced the closure of learning institutions including schools and universities since March 18th, 2020. In responding to this outbreak, a harmonized and coordinated approach is needed to enable learning to continue and to minimize the effect of the disruption to children's learning. With schools closing down, the school activities in Gedo Region similar to the other Regions, transferred to television, radio and online platforms in order to minimize the disruption caused by the pandemic. The education system in Somalia was already fragile before the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of multiple crises, including the impact of long-lasting civil war, continued violence by armed groups, and natural disasters including recurrent droughts and floods.

Without a well-resourced response, the combined impact of these crisis risks having a lasting negative impact on children's' education and increasing dropouts in not only Jubaland but the whole country. Without a conducive and disease-free school environment, COVID19 poses a risk to children's health and wellbeing. It is therefore imperative that our development partners understand key priorities of the Jubaland State of Somalia and to align their interventions with ours. The initiatives should be driven by us since we are the ones that understand the needs of our people and where there are existing gaps. There is need for all the relevant stakeholders to work together in this common goal since education is a key component. With quality education, our people can become better citizens, knowing right from wrong, allowing for a better society where laws are followed, and has the power to mold people into functional members of the society with the right kinds of values.

There are major gaps in not only the area of education but also infrastructure coupled with perennial natural disasters, as a government we are committed in improving the lives of our people in Jubaland and especially in the education sector which we have invested heavily, we are therefore open to meaningful partnerships that help us in meeting some of our objectives.

Mr. Ahmed Osman
Director General
Ministry of Education | Jubaland State | Somalia

NEWS

ZOOM TO THE RESCUE OF EDUCATION IN GEDO, SOMALIA

Author | Maslah Mumin



"I am glad that we have the option of continuing with our education via ZOOM despite the interruptions caused by COVID-19 throughout the whole world and certainly in the education sector," says Sharmarke, a student living in Gedo, Somalia, "I have learned many new things, concepts and acquired skills in the past few days. I wish I could go to our normal school again, but I know that because of the pandemic we shouldn't go out and should stay at home unless it is absolutely necessary," he quipped.

Meet Sharmarke Ahmed

Sharmarke Ahmed is the first born of a family of 7 children. He successfully completed his high school education back in 2016, where he performed quite well in his final exams considering the prevailing circumstances in the country. Upon finishing high school, he volunteered with Garbaharey Youth Group in order to get some work experience and at the same time to give back to his community which had sacrificed so much for him. The group focused on advocating for the rights of the youth in the community especially on equal employment opportunities considering the high levels of unemployment in the area. Considering his good performance in high school, Sharmarke went on to become a teacher at Al-Qalam Primary and Secondary School in 2017 where he is providing his services pro bono. It is a sacrifice he is willing to make if only to provide a learning opportunity to other young learners yearning for education.

BORESHA Support

"Considering I am a teacher and also a student at the same time, I have a unique perspective on the important role played by education in Somalia, every day I spend my time consumed in the world of education and looking for opportunities to better myself and to nourish my brain" says Sharmarke.

The BORESHA programme, with a clear understanding on the importance of having scholarships as one of the key programme activities provided opportunities for many young people to access education. Without assistance from an outside source, well to do family members, donors or friends, students may have trouble paying for the degree or certificate they need in order to enter the workforce and become a contributing member of society and the economy at large. Sharmarke was fortunate to get one of our scholarship slots for Somalia and was enrolled in to The Siyad Moahamed Technical Education College (SaMTECH) in October 2019, he took up a Diploma in Community Development/Social Work course that will take one year to complete.

Online Learning

With schools closing down, the school activities in Somalia similar to the other countries, transferred to television, radio and online platforms, even though it is difficult to measure how impactful some of these tools are. If you work from home, you have probably heard about Zoom, one of the leading video conferencing software apps on the market. It allows you

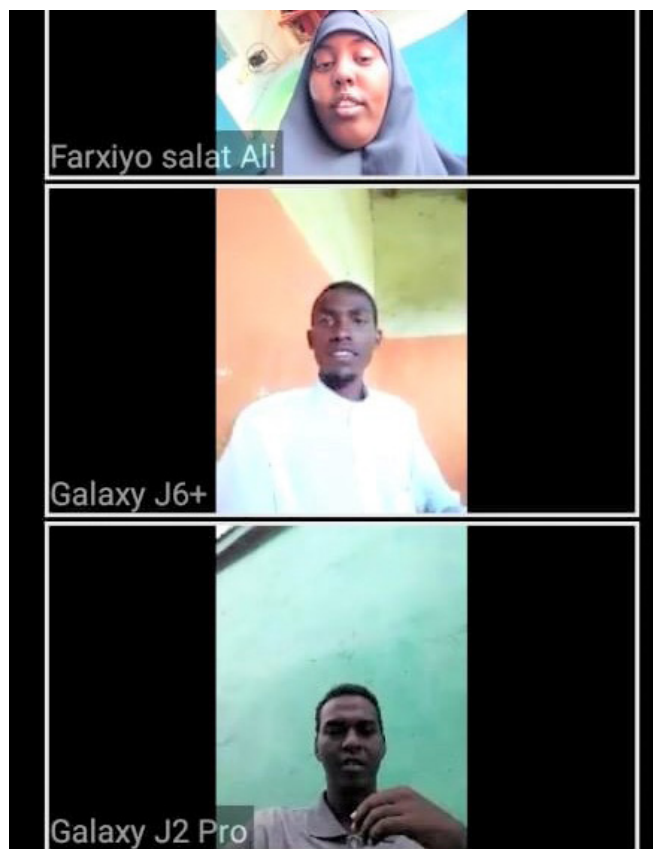
to virtually interact with co-workers or employers when in-person meetings aren't possible. This makes telecommuting seem much more human, as it helps you feel connected. Zoom has made it possible for Sharmarke and his classmates to continue with their learning through this platform, many would not associate such ingenuity with Somalia, a country that has been ravaged by civil war and its narrative distorted. It is stories like this that help to change the narrative of Somalia.

"The e-learning takes place through online and the fact that we have stable connection is a big plus for us since the classes run smoothly. We use ZOOM via the Zoom mobile app on Android and iOS, where you can start or join a meeting, in this case the lecturer initiates the meetings and has organized his sessions very well. A timetable has been developed whereby students know in advance the time each class will take place as well as the topics of discussion.

The Online class is conducted either through a video or audio depending on the connection" Says Sharmarke.

When asked if the quality of education is the same as compared to regular classes Sharmarke's response was the negative suggesting regular classes are much more fun, interactive and informative. "The classroom environment offers students the opportunity to have face-to-face interactions with their peers and lecturers. This is an added

social benefit as well as an educational aid. Because students see the same peers in class every session, they get a chance to form friendships and bonds. It is his hope that normalcy will return soon in order to get back to his learning in the right environment, which is the classroom," Said Sharmarke.



UPDATE

KEY PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Ongoing COVID-19 support – Procurement of PPEs and WASH materials and prevention awareness creation
2. Completed tendering processes for construction/ rehabilitation of several water points
3. Handed over equipment for alternative utilization of prosopis
4. Distribution of start-up kits in Mandera to TVET graduates supported by BORESHA
5. Distribution of start-up kits to Community Disease reporters (CDR)

UPCOMING MAJOR ACTIVITIES

1. Radio awareness on BORESHA project milestones
2. Start of BORESHA end of project Evaluation
3. Training of water management committee on hygiene promotion and mainstreaming of Covid-19.
4. Enrollment of TVET trainees and Assessment of new EBTET centers
5. Targeting and selection of CFW beneficiaries
6. Undertake BY-LAW formation for participatory Rangeland Management in Mandera East

INTERVIEW

WITH GRANT FUND BENEFICIARY BASED IN DOLO ADO, ETHIOPIA



Halimo Mahad, Grant fund beneficiary.
July, 2020
Photo | Tetrattech

Halimo Mahad is a 35-year-old business woman operating the Maandeeq Home and Office furniture cooperative established in 2015 in Dolo Ado, Ethiopia. The objective of the cooperative was to supply home and offices with locally made furniture products to cross-border towns and local markets in Dolo Ado, Ethiopia.

1. What made you choose this type of business?

Before the establishment of the business cooperative, there were few furniture suppliers in Dolo Ado and the residents were ordering home and office furniture products from Mogadishu and Addis Ababa with exorbitant prices and transportation cost. I went to the Dolo Ado cooperative promotion office and applied for the establishment of Maandeeq Cooperative. In the end, I received a cooperative certificate for the legal supply of the raw materials and registration of the business.

2. What kind of support did the BORESHA project offer?

The BORESHA project provided different types of support including: Grant, business skill training, long term mentoring, coaching and business management advisory services. BORESHA support has been instrumental in the successful operation of the business and have given me both the financial and technical support to expand my business to other towns and contribute towards the reduction of unemployment among the youth in Dolo Ado.

3. What are some of the major challenges you have experienced as a female business owner in Dolo Ado?

The challenges have been many, key among them is the current pandemic since there is currently lack of raw materials at the local markets due to COVID19 restrictions that includes closure of borders imposed by Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia governments, moreover the limited raw materials available are very expensive. The other challenge is the high fluctuation of the exchange rates for importation of raw materials from Kenya and Somalia. Lastly, being a woman in a largely male dominated field did not pose a significant challenge since there is mutual respect among the business community members in Dolo Ado.

4. If you had one piece of advice to a female entrepreneur just starting out in business, what would it be?

Starting a business isn't easy. Whether it's picking a business idea, creating a business plan or attempting to secure funding, a lot of things can go wrong. However, with a solid idea and a strong support system, a woman can become a successful entrepreneur, I would therefore urge them to go for it and to not be afraid to fail, scared and content with the assumed roles society has assigned them.

5. Where do you see this business in the next five years?

God willing, in the next five years, the business will be branching out to other towns while creating jobs for the youth in this region. I truly believe in job creation since they are central to economic growth and political stability. As long as the youth are busy with their work and are able to provide for themselves, their morale is high and things are stable. Jobs create earnings, which create demand, which in turn create production and investment and hence more jobs.



I truly believe in job creation since it is central to economic growth and political stability, not only in Ethiopia but everywhere.

STORY

Author | Mohamed Hassan

FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE - HABIBA'S STORY



Habiba Mohamed at her newly established business premise in Dollow. Photo | Mohamed Hassan | Dollow, Somalia

She soaks it in a mixture of salt, hot water and dye for a few hours and, after rinsing it, reveals a beautifully patterned cloth that she hangs out to dry. This is another of her intricately designed tie-and-dye fabrics that have made her renowned in Dollow Somalia. "I really enjoy my work with tie & dye especially when I wash the clothes and hang them to dry," says Habiba.

"Tie-dyeing is based on the traditional art of folding or tying fabric to create resists that stop the dye from being absorbed into parts of the fabric, thereby forming unique patterns of color. I can use tie-dye to create a design on white fabric. Using the bucket method is a quick way to tie-dye several items at one time, I thank Allah for this opportunity to learn this skill together with tailoring for the betterment of my life" says Habiba

Meet Habiba

We meet Habiba, sitting in her newly established business premise in Dollow, chatting with her for only a few minutes one will not believe the many hurdles she has had to overcome in order for her to set up her own independent and sustainable business. Dollow is a town in the Southern Gedo region of Somalia, it

sits on the Jubba river near the Somali Region of Ethiopia. It is among the least developed regions in Somalia with limited access to infrastructure and other services. There are therefore limited opportunities for people especially women. The BORESHA project is trying to mitigate this and has therefore introduced several interventions one of them being the Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Habiba enrolled in the Tie-dye training a few months ago and the results have been worth telling.

Habiba Muhumed is a 39-year-old mother of 6 children who recently graduated from Prestige college in Dollow with the support of World Vision through the BORESHA project. She used to reside in Gedweyne village which is 37km North East from Dollow town together with her husband and children where they were leading a comfortable life, this was unfortunately disrupted by the 2011 famine that ravaged most parts of Somalia. She lost her livestock, home and worst of all her husband died in the same year due to illness. "That moment, that horrible moment 10 years ago, when suddenly from one day to the

next my whole world came crushing down. I will never forget that feeling of utter helplessness, despair and disbelief as the realization dawned that my husband was no more and I was left a widow with six children to take care of and will never get to see their father again” says Habiba

Journey to Dollow

She moved to Dollow town to fend for her children where she used to undertake some manual jobs which included hawking women’s beauty products, clothes and perfumes in town. However the little profit she got from this was not enough to cater for the school fees of her children, food and even medication. “The feeling of not meeting the basic needs of your children is one I would never wish on any mother, it has been made worse with the demise of my husband, I was and still is the sole breadwinner

of the family and I have no other option but to fend for my children regardless of the challenges. One thing I will never accept is for my children to sleep hungry” says Habiba.

Support

Through the grapevine she heard about the opportunity for the youth in Dollow to be equipped with different skills in the Technical Vocation and Education Training. With her desire and great determination, she was enrolled in Prestige College and took up a tailoring course. She was lucky that she was chosen as one of the trainees in vocational education training skills. At that time her life took a turn for the better where she acquired new skills, learning how to sew clothes. Along the way she also learnt the tie-dye skill considering majority of the women in the area are Somali and dera is their



Tie & Dye dresses made and sold in Dollow by Habiba. Photo | Mohamed Hassan | Dollow, Somalia

dress of choice. Upon graduation she was provided with the necessary start up kits, business training and coaching, which saw her set up her own stall where she currently operates from.

Grateful

“Glory be to God, I got quality life skills training of which I believe has helped me immensely and completely changed my life. I have endured a lot and worked hard throughout and made it through the course successfully. I have started the sewing business, tie-dye and hired a small stall to work from, getting better money that enables me to cater for the basic needs of my family, my children are now going to school and are provided with three meals a day. I am grateful to BORESHA for the boost and I encourage them to continue with the good work

and uplift more women who are in my past situation” says Habiba.

Habiba now sews and sells clothes for women and children purchasing the materials from Mogadishu. Now her earning per month is around 400 USD depending on the market. She uses the small income from her shop to support her children and also make a few savings in case of a rainy day, the rest she invests in her business. She hopes to expand her business in to the neighboring towns and grow her brand beyond the Somalia border. There is no stopping Habiba, from here on it is only onwards and upwards for her. “I have put my time, energy and money into this business, there is no way I am going backwards now, I know there will be challenges ahead but I have overcome bigger ones” says Habiba.

DID YOU KNOW

BORESHA MOBILE INFORMATION PLATFORM



Check out the platform by dialling *384*55# on a Safaricom line. Photo | Maslah Mumin

The business community in Mandera County and across the border in Dollow Somalia and Suftu in Ethiopia are now able to know market prices of commodities by use of mobile phones. This has been made possible after BORESHA launched a mobile information platform in Mandera. This innovation that is based on Safaricom USSD is aimed at supporting business operators and the general population with valuable business, weather and health related information in Mandera and the cross-border areas. The information is available in English, Somali and Kiswahili languages and are free to access for any potential users.

The information is provided in partnership with information providers both in the private and government sector who provide verified and reliable

information. For example, COVID-19 information sources include the World Health Organisation (WHO) and local government guidelines. Market price providers include ministries of agriculture and organizations such as World Food Program (WFP). The beauty about it is that it does not even require internet and does not consume the users bundles.

The platform was developed following a research BORESHA conducted in the cross-border area between Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia and it revealed significant information gaps for people in business that showed most traders lacked information on the market prices of commodities. During this digital age, access to information is very crucial in order for people to make informed decisions.

Check it out by dialing *384*55#

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