

## **Koranic School Project**

### *BACKGROUND*

Somalia is one of the first countries in Africa where Islam was introduced. Today almost all Somalis are sunni Muslims. The basic system of instruction in religion remains the Koranic institutions. Besides learning religion, Koranic schools provide pre-school Islamic education for the children, filling a very clear religious and social role in the country. Parents consider Koranic schools a part of basic moral education of every child and, therefore, are willing to support Koranic teachers to ensure that their children are instructed.

Koranic schools are the most stable local, non-formal education providing basic religious and morale instruction to a large number of Somali children between the ages of 5 - 14 years. The strength of the koranic teaching institution rests on its community support, its use of locally made and widely available teaching materials, and the high level of motivation of both parents and teachers. The koranic system teaches the greatest number of students relative to the other education sub-sectors. In addition to this, it is the only system accessible to nomadic Somalis who comprise approximately 50 percent of the total population. Moreover, because it uses locally made materials - erasable wooden slates, writing sticks and ink made from milk and soot - Koranic schools are better equipped than formal primary schools. Similarly, because parents pay koranic school teachers in cash or in kind (specially among nomadic and settled agricultural communities) teachers can afford to, and do, appear regularly for classes.

A survey conducted in 1993, with field visits by UNICEF Hargeisa education section, showed that several of these traditional institutions manifest poor physical facilities without basic sanitation and water. The quality of care being provided is also not compatible with the children's sociological, psychological and cognitive development, and this has a direct impact the child's health and nutritional status. As mentioned already, the teaching and learning materials are rudimentary and not suitable to other basic forms of education. Finally, teachers are never formally trained to teach, which leaves a lot to be desired about their method of teaching and the needs of the children.

In late 1993 UNICEF commissioned a survey on koranic schools in Somali land. The aim of the survey was to assess coverage and identify delivery approaches utilized by koranic education, and explore quality improvement possibilities for the system. The survey showed that, unlike in primary schools where gender disparity is enormous, around 40 per cent of koranic school pupils are girls; but the teaching staff have minimum or no qualification necessary to ensure intellectual development of children. The government, on their own part established the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs, under which koranic education falls. In 1994, UNICEF pioneered its first assistance to koranic schools with the aim to widen access to basic education, close gender disparity in both koranic

and primary schools and improve children's welfare in their learning environment. Thus for, some 102 koranic school teachers have been trained, and seven koranic schools constructed/rehabilitated. A total of 2,260 wooden slates, with improved quality and design, were produced and distributed to that many koranic school pupils.

#### *ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS*

No.	ACTIVITY	INDICATOR
Act 1.	Coordinate with other UNICEF programs to integrate health, nutrition, water and sanitation activities into Koranic schools	Number of koranic schools with UNICEF assisted water or sanitation project of health interventions involving koranic school pupils and teachers.
Act.2	Train 30 MEIA staff on management of Koranic school systems.	Number of MEIA staff trainees.
Act 2.	Train 150 teachers to teach B. E., basic alphabetic and numeracy in Koranic schools	Number of teachers trained and number actually teaching.
Act 3.	Provide basic education curriculum, child care in islam, facts for life for 150 koranic schools.	Number of copies of Child Care in Islam and facts for life distributed.
Act.4.	Provide basic education kits to 150 Koranic schools	Number of basic education kits delivered to Koranic schools.
Act.5.	Provide locally wooden slates to 150 Koranic schools.	Number of wooden slats distributed to Koranic schools.
Act.6.	Distribute leaflets and posters to promote the girl child education.	Number of leaflets and posters on girl child education distributed.
Act.7.	Provide stationary and office supplies to MEIA.	Number of times office items distributed to Ministry.
Act.8.	Design, develop and produce 10 newsletters, 3 songs and 3 radio programs for the promotion of girl education.	Number of newsletters, songs and radio programs for promotion girl education developed and disseminated.
Act.9.	Produce timely and quality monthly reports on the progress of project activities. submitted to Nairobi.	Percent of partners submitting reports on time. Timeliness of monthly and quarterly reports
Act.10	Salaries, transport, logistics and stationery.	Salaries paid, number of days transport or logistics support provided. Number of times

stationary supplied

#### 4. STRATEGY

- 4.1. A team of teacher trainers will be organized and training packages prepared. This team will train 150 teachers in workshops to be conducted in the five regional capitals of the zone.
- 4.2. UNICEF will provide transport cost to the trainers to travel from Hargeisa to the regions. UNICEF will also provide incentives for the training of participants.
- 4.3. UNICEF will airlift education kits and other Koranic supplies to the 5 regional capitals of the zone or where ever possible. UNICEF staff will be directly involved in the distribution of supplies to Koranic schools

#### 5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 5.1 Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs (MEIA) will be responsible for the implementation of most the training activities of the project.
- 5.2 MEIA will co-ordinate training activities and ensure effective execution of the training.
- 5.3 UNICEF, in collaboration with MEIA , will monitor the training.
- 5.4 UNICEF will collaborate with NGOs and community leaders on some training activities of the project.
- 5.5 UNICEF shall finance all project activities as per the budget.

Location:	North West Zone
Beneficiaries:	15, 000 Koranic students
Implementing:	Ministry of Endowment & Islamic Affairs and NGOs
Collaborating Agency:	SCF

Funding Agency: UNICEF

Duration: April - December 1995

Budget: US \$ 56,000 (Cash assistance)  
US \$ 24,920 (Supply assistance)

ORIGINAL SOURCE: SCF AND UNICEF SOMALIA.  
CURRENT SOURCE: UNDOS DOCUMENTATION UNIT.  
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