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PUNTLAND
LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER

SFS Garowe Office

Somali family Services 2009 Annual Report

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What is SFS?

Founded in 2003, Somali Family Services (SFS) is a non-profit organization with operations office in Garowe and a liaison office in Bosaso, Puntland-Somalia and a regional coordinating office in Nairobi, Kenya.

The mission of Somali Family Services is to support all Somali families and people through access to resources and opportunities, and also to promote greater community awareness and advocacy for the Somali Diaspora. SFS is committed to promoting positive community development towards a peaceful coexistence, global acceptance, and a world community that is both responsible and productive. Through its Somalia location, SFS operates and is managing the Puntland Library and Resource Centre (PLRC).

INTRODUCTION

Somali Family Services (SFS) is supporting programming in the following areas: Democracy and Governance, Youth Empowerment, Literacy and Skills Training, with a thematic emphasis in the areas of Human Rights, Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment in Somalia. SFS programs work in collaboration with the Diakonia – Sweden, National Endowment for Democracy, UNFPA, during the period from January 2009 – December 2010. SFS also has abilities to design, develop, and deliver training programs according to the needs of client organizations working in Somalia.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the progress, achievements, challenges and recommendations for programming in Puntland Somalia by Somali Family Services and Puntland Library and Resource Centre.

Core Values

SFS core values are the fundamental principles and standards to which we adhere. They reflect our rich and diverse organizational history, our culture and our identity. In achieving its Vision and Mission, SFS is guided by the following core values:

- **Integrity:** - unwavering commitment in promoting the dignity of Somali people based on the principles of human rights, social justice, democracy, capacity building and development, and sustainable livelihoods.
- **Innovation:** – encouraging the exploration of new ideas and developing workable approaches to benefit Somali communities.
- **Effectiveness & Responsiveness:** – using resources in a considered, appropriate and transparent manner for maximum and timely benefit.
- **Inclusiveness:** - embracing impartiality and diversity; standing in solidarity with partners, local and Diaspora Somali communities and acting to improve lives.
- **Engagement & empowerment:** - uniting with national and international communities to build an equitable and sustainable future.

SFS's Strategic Areas are:

- Democracy and Governance
- Youth empowerment
- Literacy and Skill Training
- Program-wide themes: Human Rights, Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment
- Managing Puntland Library and Resource Centre

Problem Analysis

The main characteristic of a democratic society is civic participation and political liberties. Unfortunately, these qualities are still not widespread in Somalia. Bringing security to the lives and minds of people is the foundation for the physical security in Somalia. By creating and maintaining this broad security to the lives of people we lay the foundation that other components of nation building can be built on. Food, health, education, and job security are essential as it gives hope and optimism to the communities that they have a future .At present the government is not able to provide these basic services which overall affect the public's trust and reliance in their governing authorities. The concept of security must evolve beyond military operations to a stable and sustained level of security.

The root causes of violence are power inequity, poverty, denial of basic human rights, inadequate access to resources, and exclusion from decision making institutions and when the basic human needs of people are not met. The present government has been established with good intention of eliminating violence but unfortunately it does not have enough capacity to effectively and efficiently deal with root causes of conflicts.

In Somalia, there are few specialized organizations concerned with human rights and democracy due to low public awareness of democratic principles. Democracy has never been functioning in Somalia and therefore majority of the people are not familiar with democracy. This has led to limited capacity for monitoring human rights both for the authorities and also for the civil society organizations that are working in democracy building. Another challenge we

face is that authorities often regard the civil society as a potential competitor of power in the country and limit their autonomy. Together with limited access to information and weak media in the country, they have contributed to low awareness among civil society organizations of citizens' rights and responsibilities. Together these factors contribute to a weak civil society and low popular participation.

In the case of the Puntland Government, there is an absence of political parties due to the ethnization of politics that leads to low awareness of the civil society about their rights which make them weak and very dependent on other actors such as international NGOs and the government. In Puntland, a traditional approach has been adopted in which members of the parliament are appointed by their traditional leaders. The appointed parliamentarians (66 in total) then convene to elect a President and a Vice President. The clan based composition of government leads to an imposition of models of governments where many of the ministers and decision makers are not qualified for their positions. This leads to very weak capacity of the government with low legal awareness and a weak judicial system.

Poverty and the high rate of unemployment of young people forces many of them to make bad decisions like joining the militias and other armed groups including piracy, in order to earn a basic income. This threatens efforts to promote peace, security, democracy, social, and economic development. In order to meaningfully engage the young people in peace and prevent them from making bad choices in lawless countries like Somalia, there is need for deliberate education and skill-building.

It is in response to these needs that Somali Family Services has been building the capacity of concerned stakeholders, trained and raised the awareness of key persons in Democracy, Human Rights and built their skills in related fields. As a result of the execution of the work, there is linkage between the government and the civil society which has legitimized the government, the degree of civil engagement by the government and civil society has increased and youth are armed with useful and necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to have greater chances for life opportunities and enhance their learning skills and employability. SFS spearhead the attainment of MDGs 1 and 3 through Democracy and Governance, Youth empowerment, Literacy and Skill Training, and Cross Cutting (Human Rights, Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment).

Projects SFS implemented in 2009

1. Democracy and Governance

One of SFS strategic objective is to build and strengthen the capacity of the Puntland Government, civil society organizations, and local religious and secular leaders to create

sustainable institutions and mechanisms for engaging citizens in nascent democracy-building and education processes in Puntland, Somalia. This was made possible by conducting forums, workshops, focus group discussions, and using mass media. SFS funded by **Diakoni, Sweden**, which is SFS's strategic partner and National Endowment for Democracy implemented the following activities under Democracy and Governance:

1.1 Civic Education Workshops



SFS designed two workshops format to illustrate ways to link traditional mechanisms of 'Heer' and the 'Geedka' to modern concepts of democracy. Heer acts as..."an unwritten legal and social practice..." that is the legal foundation for traditional Somali politics...by which Somali society settles its legal and political disputes." Geedka is a meeting or process that traditionally takes place under a large tree, where men, young and old, discuss and debate, on an

equal footing, and come to decisions on large or small issues of importance to the community. The aim of the workshop was to educate and develop a strong, well-informed group of leaders that can educate the wider public on enhancing democratic processes by merging the traditional concepts with the modern processes.

60 stakeholders from different media outlets, government officials, traditional elders, local institutions, women associations, youth, business community and religious groups. The participants acknowledged that Somalia has good Somali traditions such as information sharing, consultation, fairness, common law, honesty, unity and discipline, justice, implementation, job delegation, and charity.



However, the participants unanimously agreed that old Somali traditions are not practiced nowadays and that is why there is no democracy.

Participants observed that Somalis are hanging in the balance as they have failed to embrace their democratic traditions and to accept modern democratic system, which in turn has created confusion on how to govern them.

Outcome

Participants were willing to embrace modern democratic mechanism provided it includes the traditional mechanism. The participants identified means that can modernize the traditional mechanism as:

- To record in written records the traditional democratic mechanism Strengthen the traditional mechanisms.
- Train traditional leaders

- Use media to raise awareness and educate the people on the traditional mechanism and ways we can modernize it.

Diverse group of leaders with linkages to wider community used their knowledge to lead new processes.



1.2 Strengthening Democracy and Civic Engagement in Puntland, Somalia

Toward increasing impact, promoting innovation, and facilitating growth, SFS is holding a series of civic engagement activities linking civil society organization, media, and government to social co-existence, social cohesion, and nation-building. The aim of the workshops is to build the capacity of the

Puntland Government, civil society organizations, media and local religious and secular leaders to create sustainable institutions and mechanisms for engaging citizens in nascent democracy-building and education processes in Puntland, Somalia.

The first workshop titled, “Linking civil society and the Puntland government towards Nation Building” was held from the 14th – 15th November 2009 on linking the civil society and the government at the Puntland Library and Resource Centre in Garowe Puntland. The workshop brought together media outlets, government officials, traditional elders, local institutions, women associations, youth, business community and religious groups.

Group discussions reveal that the role of the citizens include working hard, participating in governance, forming association through which to channel their grievances, and getting involved in decision making processes by participating in the electoral process. During the workshop participants looked at issues dealing with both empowerment of the citizens and governance. This is important in strengthening the voice of the poor in influencing public policies, thereby making institutions more accountable and responsive to their needs.

The workshops educated members from the civil sectors listed above so they might establish sustainable linkage and understanding by learning a common framework of ideas from which each can draw to create initiatives that promote democracy within their relevant spheres of influence.

Outcome

- Participation and transparency within Puntland Communities strengthened.
- Coordination and collaboration linkages among the existing structures developed.
- The Puntland Government, Puntland Non State Actors and international community for the first time sat together to discuss Regional development Programme and how to implement it for Nation building.

- The roadmap during the process resulted in the establishment of a Neighborhood college; a leadership and civic development program designed to help individuals learn more about local government, democratic processes, rights and responsibilities and encourage them to participate in the process.

1.3. Neighborhood College



Somali Family Services held a workshop from 11th-13th May implementing the Neighbourhood college concept; a leadership and civic development program designed to help individuals learn more about local government, democratic processes, rights and responsibilities and encourage them to participate in the process. The goal of the

workshop was to engage the citizens in policy to allow governments to tap wider sources of information, perspectives, and potential solutions, and improves the quality of the decisions reached. Equally important, it contributes to building public trust in government, raising the quality of democracy and strengthening civic capacity.

The workshop targeted government officials, Members of Parliament, civil society, media, business community, youth, women and minority. During the workshop participants looked at issues dealing with both empowerment and governance. This is important in strengthening the voice of the poor in influencing public policies, thereby making institutions more accountable and responsive to their needs.

The aim of the workshop was to promote:

- Citizen-government co-operation
- More citizen involvement
- More freedom of expression
- More transparency
- Better accountability

Outcome

- Members of the community demystified the process of local government and democracy building and are empowered through a new familiarity with local decision making process.
- Strategic plans focused civil society organization activities and result in better integration of services and achievement of goals.
- Participants have become active facilitators and partyners in civic participation inkiatives.
- Civic empowerment.

Impact

- Civil societey under the stewardship of Puntland Non-state actors(PUNSA) show increased activity and coordination of activities with the Puntland Government and each other.
- Transparency and accountability from the government.

1.4. Capacity-Building Workshop for Puntland Legislative Leaders

Somali Family Services hosted a three-day workshop for Puntland legislatures from April 1st -3rd 2009 at the Puntland Library and Resource Centre. The aim of the workshop was to help the parliament become more effective through stronger committee work, strengthening of its watchdog role over the executive's public finance spending, and increased accessibility to its citizenry.



The workshop focused on ways to strengthen the capacity of legislators and organizations in an effort to enhance democratic structure, organization, practice and socio-cultural awareness through (1) improved legislative rules, practices and procedures; (2) increased knowledge and understanding on the part of the members of the Parliament regarding not only their representative, legislative and oversight responsibilities but also with respect to the legal,

economic, social and policy issues being considered by the National Assembly;(3) increased public outreach.

The parliamentarians compared their systems with the standard policies and procedures such as Order of the work, Confidentiality, Media relations, Health & safety, Complaint, and Disciplinary.

The legislatures noted that they lacked the code of conduct to guide. The workshop enabled them to draft their own code of conduct.



The project participants agreed that in an ideal society, citizens should work hard and pay taxes to help the government develop the country. Citizens should also participate in decision making at the local and national levels. Parents should undertake their responsibility of educating their children.

Outcomes

- Increased knowledge and understanding on the part of the members of the Parliament regarding not only their representative, legislative and oversight responsibilities but also with respect to the legal, economic, social and policy issues being considered by the National Assembly.
- The MPs committed to carry out their functions more effectively and in accordance with the spirit of democratic governance they immediately formed a

committee. The committee oversees, scrutinize, and hold to account the Departments of the Ministries of the executive branch.

- As an unexpected outcome, the MPs drafted their Code of Conduct. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to assist Members in the discharge of their obligations to the House, their constituents and the public at large by: Providing guidance on the standards of conduct expected of Members in discharging their parliamentary and public duties, and in so doing providing the openness and accountability necessary to reinforce public confidence in the way in which Members perform those duties.

Impact

- Improved legislative rules, practices and procedures;
- Increased public outreach.

1.5. Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Government in Democratic Society



The workshop which was held from the 11th -13th April 2009 aimed to help local authorities rise to the challenge of leading their areas, to be more confident and more proactive, working with their citizens to create strong, prosperous communities which are ready to make the most of the opportunities of the 21st century. The objective of the workshop was to enable the councilors to understand: their roles in respective districts, the working relationship between central government and local government structures and Better service delivery.

The participants unanimously agreed on the importance of strengthening local leadership everywhere, building stability and accountability to citizens through new executive arrangements including council leaders with four year terms and making it easier to opt for directly elected mayors or executives.

Participants strongly recommended having review meetings to discuss achievements and challenges and to come up with corrective actions; it is not enough for capacity building to deliver theoretical lessons without meetings for review.

Outcome

The participants of the workshop promised to use the knowledge gained in creating an effective local government that will serve the Puntland community in transparency and accountability manner with providing democracy values and good governance, creating peace and establishing effective local Governments in Puntland state.

1.6. Training the media on conflict sensitive reporting

Somali Family Services (SFS) conducted a 3-day media training session for outlets in all parts of Somalia. Participants from 22 media outlets representing television, radio, print, online and other media organizations from all over Somalia.

The objectives of the workshop were to: Take a critical look at media functioning and journalists' activities during war times; Discuss the constructive role media can play in de-escalating and even solving conflicts; Enable journalists to understand conflict situations better while going on field assignments to conflict-affected areas; and Deliberate on ways of producing unbiased reporting, with special consideration for promoting peace.

Outcome

Participants found the systemic conflict transformation methodology very significant for dispute settlement, reconciliation and peace especially in Somalia. Daily experience of the participants was recorded through a structured questionnaire by the trainers. On the last day a short evaluation was also carried out about the workshop with four questions: a) What did they like? B) What did they dislike? C) Was there something missing? And d) what do they take something at home?

In the evaluation process, participants revealed that after the training their perceptions on many issues had changed, they learned to respect all in a system, provide space to all, understand human feelings and emotions, construct non-violent communication, role play and perform solution-oriented practical work wherever they are. They found the workshop very useful to address various types of conflicts and agreed to carry out the knowledge they learned in their situation. They also liked the former trainees doing mapping of the conflict. What they disliked most was that the program was too condensed as there was little space for the trainee to share what they have learned. They suggested that a follow-up of training of this nature should be organized and participants should be allowed to perform on their own. They promised to take home the knowledge and experience of achieving peace at various levels of society, seriousness about writing, culture of group dynamics, friendship, etc

1.7. Peace building Initiative

SFS opened a platform whereby 12 Presidential contenders for Puntland Somalia met with the Election Security Commander for Puntland, Vice Minister for Security, Governor, Mayor and the Police Commander at the Puntland Library and Resource Center in Garowe



to discuss best practices to enhance and promote peace and stability during the upcoming election in the country. Also present at the meeting were the Women Groups, Civil society and the Diaspora.

The election which was on January 8, 2009 created fear and tension around the country. In Puntland, there is no democratic system of electing the member of parliaments or the President. This together with the misuse of the clan system has led to violent conflicts over power sharing and control of resources. The clan is the power base and its interest is superseding the common good. The clan system follows a hierarchical structure whereby the elders are in charge and take decision and they do not need to seek consultations with others. There is also conflict between major and minor clans with the major clans disproportionately represented in governing structures.

Symposium comprising of the MPs, candidates, civil societies, traditional and religious leaders and the media to address the role of the presidential candidates and the Mps in promoting peaceful elections.

2. Youth empowerment



Somali Family Services holds youth training programme for young people between the ages of 14-25 years in Puntland Somalia. This is aimed at increasing their skills and knowledge that will enable them to have greater chances for life opportunities and enhance their learning skills and employability. Somali Family targets the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as; out-of-school/ illiterate youth; youth with

disabilities; urban/ rural youth; homeless youth; young people affected by conflict (IDPs); youth under forced labor; orphans; girls and young women (single mothers); physically challenged youth; criminal youth; youth affected/effected by HIV/AIDS; and minorities.

The purpose of the project is to increase the youths' educational levels, increase their income generating capacity, and enhance their ability to contribute meaningfully to the development process in their communities including civic education activities and peace building dialogues. The training program entails:

- Peace Building and conflict management
- Leadership and Motivational Talks
- HIV/AIDS

The youth were trained in conflict resolution, peace-building processes and community policing initiatives so as to strengthen their participation in mediation and peace building missions and to facilitate discussions about social change and human rights.

The youth were introduced to mentors to positively influence them on business and integration into the community, and positive role modeling. The youth were also trained in business writing and workplace organization, and continued emphasis on personal empowerment.

The girls and boys were taught exposed to a leadership cycle approach which advocates for the girls and boys to become active participants and learners with a focus on the positive skills, attitudes, and behaviors centered on civic involvement and personal goal setting. Leadership development, a necessary component of positive youth development, represents an important shift regarding the way adults view, work with, and help young people achieve their potential. Instead of seeking to help youth by intervening after problems have occurred or by trying to prevent negative behavior, the leadership cycle focuses on preparing the girls and boys for the future.

SFS formed a community soccer team to engage youth in peace building initiatives. The youth soccer team won a match during the world's peace day. SFS has also been working closely with Puntland's Ministry of Labour Youth and sports and was among the organizations which sponsored and supported the Youth sports tournament.



2.1. Y-Peer education



The training targeted youth from South Central Banadir and Bay and the six regions of Puntland State of Somalia namely; Nugaal, Karkaar, Bari, Mudug, Sool, Ayn and Sanaag. Y-peer approach advocates for young women and men to become active participants and learners with a focus on the positive skills, attitudes, and behaviors centered on health issues, positive peer influence and

personal goal setting. Peer education, a necessary component of positive youth development, represents an important shift from adults lecturing adolescents, to youth advising and guiding their peers.

Project Objectives:

- To equip young people with skills regarding life skills and health education.
- Enhance adolescence skills and knowledge in HIV /AIDS, STI, Reproductive Health, and SGBV prevention
- Promote skills in facilitating group meetings and one-to-one sessions on peer education and life Skills.
- Support youth to understand effective communication amongst peers brings social change.
- Encouragement of youth to participate international and interregional Y peer network



The participants were exposed to; techniques for exploring values and attitudes, techniques for team building and trust building, gender awareness and sensitivity, co-facilitation, monitoring and evaluation and the roles of peer educators to enhance their skills as peer educators.

Peer to peer education is designed to help youth to learn important skills and change negative attitudes toward taking care of their health without pressure.

3. Literacy and Skill Training

3.1. Basic computer for Puntland parliamentarians

SFS trained legislatures in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an important factor in democratic development. On March 1st of 2009 thirty seven Puntland member of the parliament and their staff successfully completed two months training in basic computer hardware, windows Xp, word 2003, excel 2003, PowerPoint 2003 and using the internet.



3.2. Training on ICT



Our ICT program is to provide young people with opportunities to develop ICT literacy through ICT training facilities, as well as provide them with access to computers and the Internet. We trained 40 youth on basic computer software, web, and internet. The boys and girls will employ their skills acquired to create their own website to communicate developmental ideas / activities to other young people and the community

3.3. Entrepreneurship/Self employment skills:

Somali Family Service introduced training in micro-enterprise, facilitating access to capital and skills training in related areas of: determining local market needs, production, costing and business bookkeeping, marketing, money management and computer usage for business purposes.

SFS trains youth in entrepreneurship skills to develop a better understanding of how to generate business ideas, how to write a business plan, development planning, budgeting and financial management and giving them start up grants to start their business. SFS Closely monitors the impact they are making individually, family, and community wide. SFS will also conduct group counseling of youth that will help them learn how to acquire the skills needed to strengthen their employment and basic livelihood capacities.

3.4. Enhancing literacy through donating books and educational materials

SFS is positively impacting on Somali educational and information through access to resources and opportunities. On March 16, 2009, Somali Family Services supported by Books for Africa and Counterpart International transported 40 feet container of books from St. Paul Minnesota,



USA to Puntland State of Somalia. SFS is the leading transporter of donated books to the Puntland region. The books include: English literature, Science, English language skills, Math, Social Studies, Reading Skills, Weekly Readers, Business Economics, Communication, Computer, Medical And Health, Social Science and Engineering Books. Somali Family Services distributes the books to Education Institutions, libraries, Government Institutions, Local NGOs and Community Centers.

4. Program-wide themes: Human Rights, Gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment

Somali Family Services mainstreams its entire projects in the following Program-wide themes HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights, and environment. SFS mobilize the community and advocate on social change, women empowerment and formulating of policies that protects and supports the Program-wide themes. To ensure that environmental issues are integrated into the programme, SFS increases the awareness on climate change issues among its staff, organizations and other stakeholders working on climate change. SFS was among the civil society who advocated for the enactment of environment policy and the bill was passed in parliament.

Women Rights workshop



Somali Family Services held a five days workshop on women rights with the goal to train 30 women representatives from the government, legal experts, human rights groups, religious groups, traditionalists, lawmakers, media people, women's groups and local NGOs from Puntland and South Central with women rights skills to strengthen their capacity to defend and promote the rights of women in Somalia.

The workshop was specifically aimed at enabling participants to set long-term objectives for women rights education and awareness in their own context and using the international monitoring mechanism, taking into consideration the impact of women rights education on local, regional and national levels.

The workshop engaged the participants to discuss compatibility of universal declaration of human rights and convention of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) with Islam and Somali culture in relation to leadership and participation in political and public life, equality of socioeconomic opportunity, marriage and family, cultural prejudice and restrictions and honor and morality with the aim of achieving the respect of women rights in Somali community.

Somali Diaspora Engagement

The Somali Diaspora has skills and resources to contribute to the reconstruction and peace building initiatives in Somalia. Thus, we co-sponsored Puntland Diaspora Conference which took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In finding ways of strengthening institutions in Somalia, SFS facilitated a study tour for Mohamud Hamud, Executive Director of Puntland State University in Minnesota, Sweden, and UK to see how institutions abroad function and how his university back in Somalia could gain from the Diaspora.



Puntland Library and Resource Centre

PLRC was opened on the 29th November 2007 and is expected to facilitate greater coherence and coordination among civil society groups in Puntland. The center also provides a platform for them to articulate their agenda and push for good governance through dialogue with the different authorities with a view to creating a common understanding and action for shared responsibility between the state and non-state actors.

PLRC has internet café, cafeteria and is particularly equipped with different state of the art conference halls that can host up to 20-80 people. The main conference holds up to 60 boardroom-style, 80 auditorium style; multi media equipments available.



The public library takes action towards the community's need for access to information. The library facilitates lifelong learning in the community at large and stimulates and nurtures a desire to assist young people to read and research. The library's target population is primarily college students, high school students, elementary school students, teachers, professionals, and

people who just love to read. PLRC is especially reaching out to girls and women in Somalia. The total number of people who visited the library from January to December 2009 is 5,103 which 3483 were boys and 1620 girls.

The library offers:

- Reference materials such as books and periodicals.
- Educational programs.
- Encourage people to read and write
- Create a culture of reading and not fighting
- Enhance information sharing



Girls' leadership forum in Puntland

Capacity Building of staff

By better delivering our programs SFS builds and enhances the capacity of its staff through in house and external trainings, attending conferences, study tour, and supporting further education:

- TOT on social protection
- TOT-Y-Peer Education
- Decent Work (study tour to Uganda.)
- Financial and auditing
- Project cycle management
- Library management
- 21st century literacy in Africa conference
- Conflict Analysis and Management
- DO NO HARM

Working with others:

Somali Family Services activities are guided by different international, regional and national frameworks and by doing so been involved in:

- Coordinating 25 youth groups from 8 regions of Puntland and Bay and Banadir

- We Are Women Activists (WAWA) in Puntland
- FAWESOM, African Civil Society Platform, African Civil Society Forum
- World Movement for Democracy
- In January 2009, with the support of the AVU, SFS facilitated Somali Centers' participation in Accelerated Capacity Enhancement Plan (ACEP) Program workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya on institutional capacity development in using ODL methodologies.



Nafisa Abdirahman SFS Program Coordinator presenting during the Youth stakeholders meeting at the resource centre to discuss current/ future SFS youth project.

Meeting with strategic partners:

In 2009, SFS facilitated numerous missions by our development partners such as Diakonia, UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, ILO, UNFPA, Book Aid, Save the Children, Diaspora etc who visited the PLRC on numerous occasions on assessment, monitoring and evaluation. The delegates toured the library, learned about the resources available, and met with staff, and management. Puntland Library and Resource Center (PLRC) was funded by United Nation Development Program (UNDP), Somali Family Services, Diakonia, Books For Africa and Counterpart International to serve the local community.

Our strategic partners

- UNDP
- Diakonia
- National Endowment for Democracy
- ILO
- UNFPA
- Books for Africa
- Counterpart international
- SFS board of directors fully contribute and support the programs
- Diaspora
- And many individuals through monetary fund and in-kind.

Main Constraints of Programming

- Continued regional insecurity and conflict has lessened the willingness of international partners and slowed their support to additional projects.
- Creating opportunities for work and education to prevent youth from making bad choices in a difficult environment where piracy, alshabab and kidnapping is a threat to democracy, rule of law, youth and women empowerment
- Puntland Library and Resource Centre is designed to be a public place where by all sort of people come together to share ideas, information exchange, come for reading and interact. However, continuous threat to the security and discriminate acts of killing created fear and anxiety whereby on one hand we have to make sure the centre continue serving the community as usual while, on the other hand suspecting each and everyone and thus, affects the day to day operations.
- Social-cultural factors that curtail active participation of women in Somali in all level of development.
- Consistency of project funding and limited financial resources to fully sustain the available potential in the program. SFS is actively resource mobilizing and additional funding is expected.
- Surging Foreign Exchange Rates leading to diminished value of actual disbursements and hence funding gap on budgeted activities.

Conclusion and Way Forward

Despite the above challenges faced during the year 2009, SFS is proud of several achievements attained. The most significant are captured in the areas of linking the government and civil society to partner in providing services to the community, establishment of the neighbourhood college concept where the government informs its citizen about local government, democratic processes, rights and responsibilities and encourage them to participate in the process. This has contributed to building public trust in government, raising the quality of democracy and strengthening civic capacity. Empowerment of women in issues of governance and human rights was also complemented through testimonies of people in the community.

SFS hopes to build on the achievements of 2009 and continue supporting its strategic areas come 2010 by promoting and enhancing:

Democracy and Governance

SFS is committed to build and strengthen the capacity of the Puntland Government, civil society organizations, and local religious and secular leaders to create sustainable institutions and mechanisms for engaging citizens in nascent democracy-building and education processes in Puntland, Somalia

Youth Empowerment

Alternative livelihood and education opportunity to curb unemployment, drug abuse, risky behavior, piracy, and militia

Program-wide themes

By main streaming human rights, gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment through creating a platform for women in Puntland to strengthen and empower to advocate on social change and increase women leadership role. Advocacy and awareness raising campaigns on HIV/AIDS; environmental education, campaigns and dissemination on IEC materials