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Official School Hand-Over/Nomadic Education Campaign



Garowe, Puntland. On March 3, 2013 Somali Family Services (SFS) has organized official school hand-over and education campaign toward nomadic communities in Balay. SFS has established and supports nomadic education center in Balay in partnership with Puntland Ministry of Education, UNICEF and Save the Children International. The education campaign and official school hand-over ceremony attended by a delegation lead by Puntland Ministry of Education, Nugaal Governor, Mayor of Garowe and Nugaal Regional Education Officer, SFS senior management. Community education committee, parents, families, children and other many nomadic communities come to the function.

Bashir Jama SFS's project manager made briefed remarks about nomadic education project in general and highlighted different stages Balay School went through in particular. Mr. Bashir said, let me summarize why we are here today. In early 2012, we wanted to establish 6 nomadic education centers in Nugaal Region, while Save the Children and Dan door were supposed to establish nomadic education centers in karaka and Sanag regions. SFS, Dan-dor, Save the Children and Ministry of Education met in Garowe and developed an assessment tool. The assessment tool was to identify possible sites that need the most for nomadic education centers. In Nugaal Region 12 sites have been assessed and the following sites were selected Haar-Haar, Yibiyaal, Sin-u-jiif, Garowe and Balay which we are handing over to the community and the ministry of education today.



“Honorable Minister, the reason I summarized the history of the project is two folds 1) First, we wanted to update you, the governor, the mayor and Regional Education Officer and others where we were and where we are today 2) Secondly, we want inform everyone here today that the opportunity Balay community received that many communities that we assessed do not get it. Ladies and gentlemen as you know Xar settled Balay in 1958. Since 1958, they never had school and they are known for not value education for their children both girls and boys. The assessment tool scored Balay number one place to be established education center.



Bashir, continue and added, “We do not want hide our disappointment and excitement with government officials and the community. Let me start with our excitement, the Xer was easy **community** and they have leadership that makes most decisions, they contributed school building and land of the school. We really appreciated elder Jama and Hirsi for their support. However, when it comes to sending the children to school, educating the children, they seem not motivated and sometimes they seem looking at you and you can read their minds saying why you cared about our children’s education. The Xer are known to be a closed community in a much closed society and country. To accommodate them and respect their community value we hired teachers within. On behalf of SFS and our partners, I

want to make sure two things are very clear 1) We are very much interested to provide education opportunity to your children and we are not hiding that, and that is why we are here today and brought all the government officials with us 2) The other point is, we are not interested anything else, no hidden agenda at all.

Mr. Abdullahi, Nugaal Regional Education Officer stated “Many times Her community come to my office and asking school for their community. I asked SFS to include Balay on the assessment because there were perceptions that Har doesn’t value education. I knew Har settled here in 1958 and I as regional education officer worried me the many children in Balay who do not have an education opportunity.” The REO added “I am very disappointed to hear that you are not all excited and sending all the children to school. I understand some of the children have gone after the goats, cows or camels but you have to manage how all of them could take advantage of the school. SFS and my office have close working relationship and we share information. There are roles and responsibilities; we need the role and responsibilities of the parents and the community.

Hasan Osman one of the community members said, “I want to thank SFS, the ministry of education and other dignitaries. The community now understands how education is important.” Mr. Hasan added “The community is committed to educate the children and we are ready to play our role of educating our children.” Mr. Hassan stated “I agreed with you that historically this community has been categorized as a community that does not value children’s education and for many years been underdeveloped. Different generations have passed without primary education since 1958.” He asserted primarily this Xar used to focus on teaching Islamic studies such as rehearsing holly Qur’an and the Hadith but now also the community needs formal education to teach kids science and math.”



Nugaal Governor and Mayor Garowe speak on and stressed the importance of education. The governor said “The parents and community are the most important part of **community**. If the community and parents do not value education, they are not going to send to school their children and imagine if you do not send your children to school (that) who **else are you waiting for to send your children to school?** You may not understand but you are just wasting your children’s’ brain and potential.” The mayor stated “Children should go to school, when they reach secondary, they could come to Garowe and continue their education and finish high school.” He added “It is unbelievable that you settled here in 1958 and today is March 2013. You have wasted many brains and potential as the governor stated.”

Juxe Farah, Puntland Ministry of Education

Puntland minister of Education Mr. Abdi Farah Juxa asserted “Under my leadership, I promised that the ministry of education will fully support this education centre and it’s the ministry responsibility to provide primary education for every child with the help of the communities, parents and educational agencies like SFS”. While he was talking about the major role of the community regarding the promotion of quality education, the minister said “The efforts toward children’s education should be two-sided; the ministry of education alone cannot guarantee the development of quality education at Balley. Therefore, the community should contribute from their side, stand tall to eradicate ignorance and promote knowledge ”.



The minister clearly highlighted the backwardness of the community and told in bold language that they do not value education and in result they suffered socially as well as economically. He also acknowledged that the world is getting sophisticated and is not as simple as it was in 1958. As new technologies invented and new skills developed, it’s compulsory for the community to be integrated with the current state of the world by educating children up-to-date skills. Finally, SFS officially handed-over the school to the ministry of education and in turn the minister handed-over the school to the community. Mr. Juxe officially closed the hand-over ceremony and education campaign ceremony and said, “The school belongs to both the ministry of education and the community and I encourage SFS work closely with this community as much as they could.

Somali Family Services is a non-governmental organization dedicated to fostering a peaceful and democratic Somalia through the support of civil society, women, youth and other marginalized groups. SFS supports the Puntland Library and Resource Center in Puntland and operates projects in its core program areas: democracy and governance; civil society and reconciliation; education; health; and support for marginalized groups including women, youth and the internally displaced.