

CHAPTER 3



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Basic Services

Several of the basic services in Somalia such as educational institutions, health facilities and water sources and supplies were heavily damaged or became non-functional during the civil war and the conflicts thereafter. Some of these services have been provided to a certain extent with the support of international assistance and the Somali private sector. However, except for primary schooling, countrywide data is not available for most of the services. Therefore, the survey schedule was designed to assess the availability and accessibility of some of the basic services to the population. Accordingly, questions were posed on availability, affordability, distance and time taken to reach educational and health facilities and water sources (availability here refers to physical access to the nearest facility, and affordability refers to economic access).

Enrolment Rates

Somalia has one of the lowest school enrolment rates in Africa. The primary school enrolment survey undertaken by UNICEF estimated the number of pupils enrolled in grades 1-8 as 286,808 consisting of 64 percent boys and 36 percent girls

for 2002. These enrolment figures were used to estimate the primary school enrolment rates for boys and girls with the estimated population for the corresponding age groups. The overall primary school enrolment rate is 16.9 percent for Somalia, 20.8 percent for boys and 12.7 percent for girls.

Educational Institutions

Koranic schools focus on the learning of the Koran and to some extent the Arabic language. They are low cost institutions organised and managed with community support. Most of them function under temporary shelters or under the shade of trees. They are widespread and affordable. The average distance to a Koranic school is estimated as about a quarter of a kilometre for both urban and non-urban areas. The average distance to a primary school is about three quarters of a kilometre. The distance is marginally less for rural and nomadic areas compared to urban. This is partly due to clustering of houses in non-urban settlements. Moreover, the distance refers to only about 48 percent of the rural and nomadic households compared to 93.8 percent of the urban households who reported availability of primary schools. There are no secondary schools in rural and nomadic areas. Availability of vocational training facilities was reported by 15.7 percent of the



urban population compared to 1.9 percent amongst the rural and nomadic population. The mere existence of educational facilities does not however guarantee that they are accessible. Prevailing insecurity conditions in many urban areas in central and southern Somalia affect accessibility. The majority of the respondents confirmed that the available educational facilities were affordable. However, this reflects the perception of the general respondents rather than that of actual or potential users alone.

Health Facilities

About 95 percent of the urban population and 60 percent of the rural and nomadic population confirmed the availability of at least one health facility within an average distance of 1.3 km and 2.4 km respectively. About 63 percent of the households in urban areas and 36 percent in rural and nomadic communities confirmed their affordability. The major health

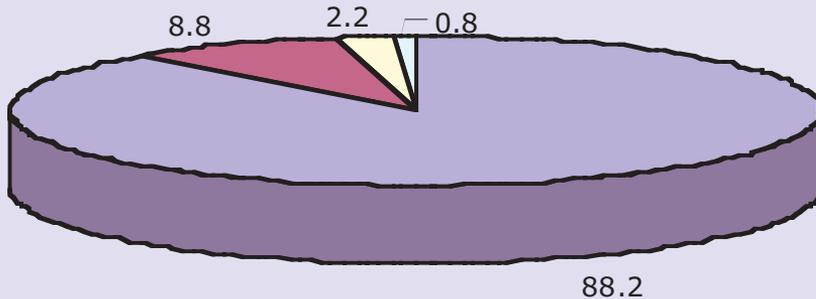
facilities are Mother and Child Health centres (MCH, 42.4%) and hospitals (41.2%) in urban areas and health posts (23.9%) and MCH (19%) in rural and nomadic areas. Other facilities include out-patient dispensaries (OPD), mobile health clinics and health centres.

Place of Delivery

The survey results show that most childbirth takes place without adequate medical facilities. In fact, for the country as a whole, 88.2 percent of childbirths during one year prior to the survey took place at home; only 8.8 percent were in hospitals or other health facilities. Medical assistance is usually absent during childbirth in rural and nomadic areas as only about 0.5 percent deliveries are handled at hospitals or other health facilities. This appears to be mainly due to lack of access to adequate health facilities. Only 2.9 percent of the rural and nomadic households confirmed the availability of a hospital.



Chart 3.1 - Distribution of children born by place of delivery (%)



□ At Home □ Hospital/Health facility □ Other □ No response

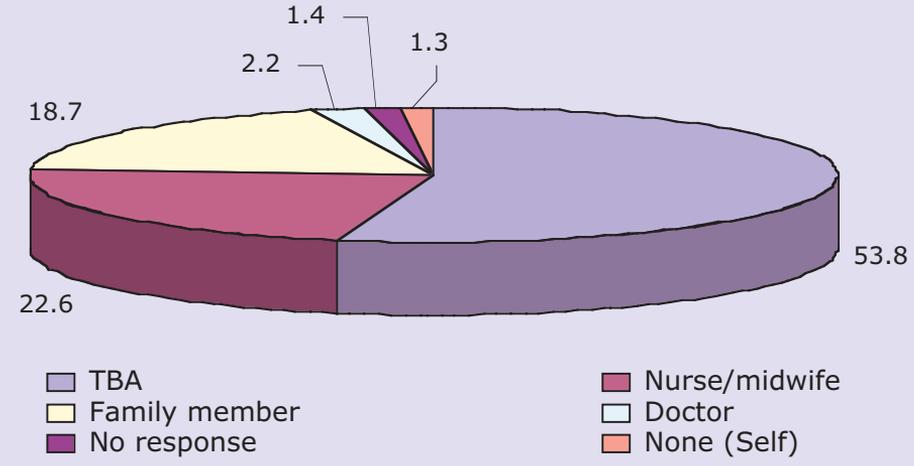
Source of Assistance During Delivery

The main sources of assistance during childbirth are traditional birth attendants (TBA). About 43 percent of all childbirths in urban and 61 percent in rural and nomadic areas are attended by TBAs. Nurses/midwives assist about 23 percent of childbirths consisting of 40.7 percent in urban and 11.7 percent

in rural and nomadic areas. Family members assist in 18.7 percent of cases, 7.2 percent in urban and 25.5 percent in non-urban areas. Doctors' assistance is confined to urban areas and then only in 6 percent of the total urban deliveries. Family members, relatives or friends handle one out of four childbirths in rural and nomadic areas.



Chart 3.2 - Distribution of children born by source of assistance (%)



Water

The average distance to a water source suitable for human consumption is estimated to be 0.5 km during the wet season and 0.7 km during the dry season in urban areas. The corresponding figures for rural and nomadic areas are 1.2 km and 5.8 km respectively. About one-third of the population have access to piped water in urban areas compared to 3.8 percent in non-urban. Over half of the urban population depends on a well or

borehole during both wet and dry seasons. In rural and nomadic areas, wells and boreholes are the main source of water during the dry season and a *baraag* (artificial ponds made to collect rain water) during the wet season. About 47 per cent of the urban population and 96 per cent of the rural and nomadic population stated that they are using water that is not treated. However, it should be noted that these figures are based on local perception and could not be verified from the agencies concerned.



Sanitation

About half of the population does not have access to proper toilets. This consists of 6 percent of urban and 70 percent of the non-urban population. Lack of sanitation including uncollected garbage was identified by 27 percent of the population as the most important environmental problem in urban areas. The corresponding figure for non-urban areas is 6 percent, indicating possibly a lack of concern and/or awareness on sanitation.

The lack of access to health facilities, safe drinking water, and adequate sanitation facilities for a large segment of the population appears to be the major factor contributing to the high morbidity and mortality rates, and to low life expectancy. This is also evident from the stated causes of death that occurred during the one year period prior to the survey.

Chart 3.3 - Distribution of households by type of toilets used (%)

