

## Child Sponsorship in Gabiley, Somaliland Progress Report August 2011

Dear Sponsor,

Welcome to Gabiley, where the child you sponsor lives, and to another exciting edition of our Progress Report.

Gabiley is a rural community about 45km from the capital city Hargeisa. ActionAid is working here in partnership with Somaliland Hope Association (SOHA). Together we are working with the community to improve their livelihoods, provide access to safe, clean water, make improvements in education, and ensuring the people of Gabiley can enjoy their basic rights.

As Wario, the Country Representative for ActionAid Somaliland, explained in his letter, fortunately families in Gabiley have been spared the suffering of the worst drought to hit East Africa and Horn of Africa in 60 years. Even though the situation is not in crisis, as is the case in neighbouring Somalia, with your support we continue to work with families in Gabiley to improve access to safe and clean water and to improve livelihoods and family income amongst this poor and vulnerable community. In fact, today you will hear from Abdillaahi Daahir who received training to improve his farming methods, and a relieved Dhool Ismail will tell you about the new water kiosk that has been installed near her home, saving her from a back-breaking 8km round trip to collect water.

In last year's Progress Report, we told you about the problems children face in school due to overcrowded classrooms, so in this edition, Saynab Ismaila and Ahmed Nuur are delighted to tell you how you have helped them to have new, spacious classrooms. We will also tell you about our campaign to get more girls in school and some of our plans for the coming year.

On behalf of the child you sponsor, their family and community, I would like to thank you for your generous support of ActionAid's work in Gabiley.

I hope you enjoy reading this report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Zuhur".

Zuhur Yassin Ibrahim  
Sponsorship Coordinator  
ActionAid Somaliland



13-year old Hodo Abdi (left) and 10-year-old Bahja Abdi (right) are happy to be in school. Thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid has held a Girls Education Campaign to increase the enrolment of girls in school. You can read more about this campaign on page four

## 299 children now have new and spacious classrooms

**“I am extremely happy about our new classrooms. They are cool and we can study well in them. I will now be able to continue my education at my village school, which is less than five minutes walk from my home,”** says Saynab Ismail (11) who lives in Huluq village and is studying in grade three.

Thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid built six new classrooms, six toilets and six new teacher's offices in three schools, giving children more space to learn and enough space to accommodate more children. 299 children are currently benefiting from these new classrooms.

Saynab explains the changes these new classrooms have brought, **“Before, there were 40 students in the same classroom.**



**Saynab (centre) is excited about her new classroom and is happy she can study up to grade five**



**Ahmed can now concentrate better in his classes**

**The classroom was made of iron sheets and was crowded and hot. It used to take the teacher two days to check our work. But now, there are only 20 students in each of the new classrooms. They are much more comfortable and our teacher now checks our work the same day. I can understand my lessons better and I am hopeful I will complete my education. Before the new classrooms were built, I had only two options; either drop out of school when I finished grade two or transfer to Arabsiyo School which is 5km away. But with the new classrooms I can study up to grade five.”**

Ahmed Nurr (15) goes to Galooley School and told us about the new classrooms there and his hopes for the future, **“Now I can follow and concentrate on my lessons. The classroom is quiet and we have enough space to study. Before ActionAid built the two new classrooms, grades three and four used to share the same classroom. It was difficult to differentiate between the voices of the teachers. We were confused because everybody was talking at the same time.**

**I will now be able to complete my education here up to grade six. But we don't have enough classrooms for grade seven and beyond. So when I have to start grade seven, I will have to go to a different school which is far from my village. I would be happy if could stay here and finish my education at my village school.”**

Ahmed Nurr, like many children in rural areas, started his primary education at the age of 11, five years behind his age group living in urban areas. If he does progress to grade seven then the nearest school is an hour's walk away. He will be tired and his educational progress will be affected. This is why, thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid is planning to build more classrooms in Gabiley and advocate for the government to build more local schools so children like Ahmed and Saynab can complete their education in, or very near, their own villages.

## 90 farmers trained in modern farming skills



Abdillaahi – “this training has really made a difference to the way I manage my farm”

Thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid and SOHA trained 90 farmers on the correct and safe use of pesticides to increase their yields of sorghum, salad leaves, tomatoes, oranges and mangoes.

Abdillaahi Daahir (52) attended the training. He tells us what he learnt, “I have learned the appropriate times to use the pesticides – either early in the morning or late in the afternoon when the pests are still on the plants.

I have also learned how to use pesticides safely by avoiding spraying against the wind and to always wear gloves. If gloves are not available then we were advised to cover our hands with plastic bags. But most importantly, I learned that we must not keep these chemicals in the houses where the children sleep. We must store it somewhere safe, away from the children, and dispose of the containers carefully.

They also taught us about the different kinds of pests and the types of damage they can cause, as well as how to make natural pesticides.

I really appreciate the work of ActionAid and SOHA in helping us manage our farms better. Their training has been a great help to my community and I am looking forward to learning more.”

## Clean and safe water for families



Dhool happy to receive clean and safe water in her village

“I now not only have water near my home, but it is clean and safe water,” says Dhool Ismail a mother of seven from Aro-tuul village. Thanks to your sponsorship, ActionAid and SOHA constructed a water kiosk to provide water for 450 families including Dhool’s.

Dhool explains the difference this new water kiosk has made to her life, “I had to plan two days before the day I had to get water for the family. When the planned day arrived I would walk 4km to the nearest water point. It would then take me four hours to carry the water home on my back, which gave me back pain.

But things have now changed. Whenever I need water, I take a 5-litre container and get the amount of water I need that day from the kiosk.

Instead of carrying the water on my back, I now use a wheelbarrow. This has made my chores easier and I have time to do other things. I have no water problems anymore: I can get water 24 hours a day, every day!”

Access to water is one of our priorities here in Gabiley. With your continued support we will provide more water sources and help more communities like Dhool’s realise their right to safe, clean water.

## Campaign for girl's education

To raise awareness on the importance of education, and to encourage more children to go to school, especially girls, ActionAid and SOHA organised sports tournaments in three different villages. Over 150 children came together to have fun in sporting activities, while their parents, teachers, and village elders attended lectures on the importance of education and encouraging them to enrol their girls in school. As a result, school enrolment has increased as explained by Zainab (49) a teacher from Galoolay Primary School, **“This year 60 students enrolled in grade one, and 30 of those were girls! This happened because of the education campaign which encouraged the parents and the community to send their girls to school.”** The children who participated also received school bags. They were very well received as 12-year-old Umalkhair Adbilaahi explains, **“At the children’s event, ActionAid and SOHA gave us bags to carry our school books and pencils. I used to carry my books and pencils in plastic bags which only lasted for two or three days. But now I will keep this bag for a long time and I will not lose my books and pencils.”**



Umalkhair (left) is very happy with her new school bag

### Some of our plans for the coming year

- Provide teaching and learning materials for six primary schools
- Repair eight shallow wells to provide water for 40 households
- Provide irrigation equipment to 15 women-headed households and seeds and tools to 23 women-headed households, so they can improve their yields and feed their children
- Train and equip nine Traditional Birth Attendants to provide safe birthing services
- Provide adult literacy classes for 270 women
- Start a revolving fund where 75 women can borrow money to start their own income generating projects. These women will also be trained how to run successful small businesses
- Train 75 women on women's rights and the importance of women's involvement in the political process. We will also establish three women's coalitions with a focus on political participation and ensuring women's needs are taken into account by local leaders

Children love to receive letters or postcards from their sponsors. If you would like to write to the child you sponsor or send a message of support to the community, please use the following address:

**ActionAid Somaliland,  
c/o ActionAid Kenya,  
P.O.Box 42814 – 00100,  
Nairobi, Kenya**

Please simply include your supporter and child's reference numbers, and it will be our pleasure to pass these on for you. Don't worry if you can't find your reference numbers, if you call your UK Supporter Care Team on 01460 23 8000 they will be happy to help.

**As you can see, your sponsorship of a child in Gabiley is making real and lasting changes to the lives of many people. Thank you so much for your support, we couldn't make these changes without**