

Young Somalis find employment opportunities in Fishery

In Bossaso's hot summer, a group of 5 young women from the Raf iyo Raaxo IDP settlement was busy in processing their fish in the fish processing facility (picture, below left) and selling fish to their customers at their Hantiwadag



Fishing Enterprise (picture, above right). They have opened their enterprise, where they sell fresh, dry and fried fish, nutritious fish products, such as pasta and soup and other marketable products at their community. All the women at the enterprise divide the works amongst



themselves, for managing their business. Anya, one of the entrepreneurs, proudly said, "I sell 30 to 40 pieces of dried fish in a day." And she added, "there is a high demand of fish in local market, even in the off season". Shukri, the other partner of the business, buys fresh fish directly from the fishermen and sells them at the enterprise. Fardowso, another entrepreneur, confidently said, "We have just started our new business at the end of the fishing season in May and will have better sale as soon as the next fishing season starts in August." Nasteho anxiously added, "In the off-season (May-July), we have diversified our business, by selling other marketable products at our enterprise – this is adding value to our business." Khadro, other entrepreneur, expressed her feeling with great satisfaction, "It is like a dream comes true for us. We did not believe that we had such potential to start and manage our own business for generating incomes." She further added, "We have a plan in place to

expand our business at our own earnings in the near future."

The internally displaced young women, who own the above business, were once unemployed; and several of them were illiterate with no marketable skills. They did not have regular jobs and several of them were simply buying and selling fish - which was hardly providing earning to meet their living. Being the bread winners of their respective families, they were facing numerous poverty-related difficulties in their daily lives; and it was very hard to get out of the 'trap'.



This group of 5 is part of 24 groups, comprising of 120 young women and men who are self-employed in their own fish enterprises (24) in Bossaso, Kismayo and Berbera. The disadvantaged young women and men passed through a series of stages to have the transformative change in their lives. After acquiring the skills in fish processing and entrepreneurship, along with the basic literacy and numeracy competency, they have

had access to revolving funds and business development services that enabled them to set up and manage their 10 fish processing facilities and enterprises.

This was possible through the UNDP-FAO joint initiatives under the Fish Value Chain Development framework of the Joint Programme on Youth Employment Somalia (YES), in collaboration with the regional and local authorities, civil society and private sector – thanks to Denmark, Sweden and Italy for their generous contributions to the Programme.



Given that the estimated 70% youth of employable age are unemployed as well as the country has its 3,330 km of coastline, the untapped fishery sector gives an opportunity for the young Somalis for creating employments, while supplying nutritious food to the households. The fishing sector contributes, presently, only 2% to the country's GDP, although it has tremendous growth potential.