

SAA CID



Mo'alim Ahmed Hussein Gutale



Mo'alim Ahmed Hussein Gutale teaching at his madrassa

Fighting in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, has forced tens-of-thousands of families to flee the city and subsist on whatever they can. The international response to this mass displacement (now more than 3 years old) remains sporadic, uncoordinated and systemically underfunded. Most of these families have sought shelter in the Afgoye Corridor just to the south of Mogadishu City.

Dhubad is an Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp in the Lafole area of the Afgoye Corridor. In this camp there are thousands of vulnerable displaced people – some of whom have been subsisting in the camp for more than 4 years now.

There is no emergency education for children in this camp, so most of the children go to Quranic Schools, while the others just roam around the camp. This lack of education in the camp is causing many problems among the children because, the children are growing in an environment that is brutal, and they are consuming those lessons.

Mo'alim Ahmed Hussein Gutale is a blind 47 year old Quranic teacher, with 7 children of his own. He currently lives in Dhubad Camp with his entire family, and has done so now for 2 years. Mo'alim Ahmed has been teaching the Quran for 27 years now. He established a Quranic school at Dhubad when he arrived 2 years ago; after he has been displaced from Hawl-wadag District in Mogadishu, in the midst of an Ethiopian military occupation.

“I was displaced from Hawlwadag District after enduring fighting between the government and opposition. We could no longer bear the heavy bombardments that occurred day and night. When I was in Mogadishu, I had almost 200 students, but now you can see there are only 48 students, and the school is narrow, and there are no good plastic sheets, so the students sit outside the school, and there is no shade; and when rain comes I let them go their homes, because the school can't protect the students from the rain.

Most of the families are very poor and they are refugees, and most of the children's parents are unemployed, so there are only 4 families who give me school fees each month. The other families do not pay any school fees, but I take them, and whenever they can pay I accept what they can give. In general, my teaching is charitable, but I have the joy of transferring my knowledge. The amount I teach for is very cheap. I take 20,000 Somalia Shilling [around US \$0.7] for each student each month. In reality, I don't even get this small amount, but I hope I will get Allah's mercy.

It seems to me shameful to close the school, because I have been involved this work for almost 30 years; and in addition, I am blind, and I can't stay away from this work because it is the only work that I am able to do”.

Finally, teacher Ahmed suggested rehabilitating the school in order for the students to survive the rain and sun, he also requested SAACID and its partners give special support for such a rehabilitation.