

LIBERATING *Somalia*



Transformation towards
sustainable peace and security

ATMIS | KENCON - XI

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EDITOR

Capt Francis Warware



Welcome to the sixth edition of *Liberating Somalia* magazine that captures the resilience and valor by the eleventh Kenyan contingent troops (KENCON-XI) serving under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). The magazine highlights key aspects that KDF troops have engaged in their tour of duty to transform Somalia towards sustainable peace.

During the tour of duty, there was a reconfiguration of the mission. The mission transited from African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). The new mission was adopted through United Nation Security Council (UNSC) resolution 2628 with the mandate set to expire in December 2024. The mission; a 33 months period is to be executed in four phases; reconfiguration, joint shaping and clearing operations, decisive operations, withdrawal and liquidation of ATMIS. The Somalia Security Forces (SSF) are expected to take up security responsibilities after the withdrawal of ATMIS forces.

KDF in line with the ATMIS mandate has constantly engaged the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) in capacity building programs and courses as well as training local medics to tend to the local patients. Local women have benefited from agribusiness sessions organized by the Female Engagement Team (FET). KDF troops have carried out day and night patrols to clear Main Supply Routes (MSRs) of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in order to open up routes for free movement of people and goods.

The words of the current Somalia President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, *'a Somalia at peace with itself and the world,'* are a pledge of transforming the country and KENCON -XI troops have undertaken to their duties to initiate transformation to key aspects of livelihood like food sector, capacity building of institutions and personnel as well as ensuring security of civilians in their areas of responsibility in pursuance of sustainable peace in Somalia.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECTOR COMMANDER

UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATION ENVIRONMENT

Brigadier Jattani Gula OGW 'ndc' (EGYPT) 'psc' (K)



The operating environment has become an extraordinarily complex, dynamic, and adaptive system of systems with both state and non-state actors increasingly playing complimentary roles. Military capability alone, may not contribute to mission success unless it is complimented by political, economic and social cultural capabilities. Thus the understanding of the operating environment betters the quality of decisions made by commanders during planning, preparation and execution of operations.

Such understanding is vital in the ever-changing operating environment as it helps in focusing efforts of identifying some of the root causes of threats to security. The contemporary operating environment requires a multifaceted approach to threats to security and mission accomplishment.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), was replaced by African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) on 01 Apr 22. The ATMIS is a phased, multi-year, conditions-based and sustainable

plan to counter Al Shabaab and build the core security functions of Somalia. The sustainable recovery of strategic locations in a sequenced approach will lead to transfer of security responsibilities from ATMIS to Somalia Security Forces by end of 2024. The operating environment will therefore take a more offensive posture under ATMIS.

As implementation of ATMIS CONOPS is taking shape, AS is also taking more emboldened actions including both kinetic and soft actions. Unseen before, AS is now conducting CIMIC activities in areas under its control. Just like all other conflict zones, winning the hearts and minds of the populace is becoming central to mission success. The criticality of Key Leader's Engagement in the operating environment also heavily contribute to mission success. All subordinate commanders have effectively made winning the hearts and minds of the local populace their first line of defense.

The operating environment is characterized by very perishable information that

requires real time intelligence. Integration of all information collection assets are critical in real time to exploit fleeting opportunities across the theatre. It is therefore important to focus on capabilities such as surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance to enhance both early warning and real time intelligence. The use of social media, to mislead or misinform is a common tool used by the adversary that requires constant watch and countering. Commanders at all levels and Public Information Officers (PIOs) require deep understanding of the human terrain in the operating environment in order to develop an accurate strategic operational and tactical situational awareness. This has facilitated our interaction with the population, informed us about individuals, groups, and organizations more relevant in Sector II and allowed us to influence them.

The Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) troops deployed under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) continue to support the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) by enhancing their capacity and capabilities through training, mentorship and conduct of joint operations as envisaged in the ATMIS Concept of Operations to prepare them to take up security responsibilities by December 2024 when the ATMIS mandate expires.

Finally, I congratulate our gallant soldiers for their sacrifice and their continued service towards a sustainable peace in Somalia and express my sincere gratitude to the KDF leadership and families of KENCON – XI troops for the guidance and moral support they accorded us, which has been critical in making the tour – of – duty successful.

May the Almighty God bless us all.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY SECTOR COMMANDER

BRINGING PEACE TO SOMALIA'S DOORSTEP

Colonel J K Maiyo OGW 'psc' (U)



Somalia has been experiencing waves of conflict for more than three decades which has led to collapse of several aspects of peaceful co-existence among the people in the country. The collapse of government administration, social and economic dimensions plunged the country into a dark abyss.

The confluence of various factors, including the inequalities between members of various groups in terms of their access to political power and resources led to the emergence of armed clan-based movements. Individuals retreated to their clan and various sectors of the civil society, including clans, sub-clans, and businesses, armed themselves to ensure their security and enforce their own rules.

This led to the disappearance of any institutional culture regarding the respect of rule of law and human rights and created the conditions for a weapons market and arm dealers freely moved cheap weapons into and out of the country resulting to a desperate state of weapon proliferation

The violent struggle between members of various groups to control the state and certain resources, rise of notorious warlords, criminal gangs, business interests, clan leaders, religious courts, local militias and civil society have been multiplying and engaged in shifting patterns of alliances and fighting that have crippled every aspect of Somali society.

This multiplicity of actors in Somalia and adoption of conflicting and fluctuating ideologies and interests by each group has led the country to experience a long road towards peace-building and for the last two decades, Somalia has been characterized by slow but steady recovery and a modest reconstitution of state institutions and adoption of a contested and unsettled federal governance structure.

This aspect of conflict has called for a holistic approach in efforts to foster peace building in Somalia. With the appreciation that sustainable peace will be achieved in different fronts; civilian empowerment, institutional capacity growth as well as security forces capacity building. The Kenya Defence Forces Contingent Eleven (KENCON- XI) troops, deployed under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) have undertaken their duties and operations in line with fostering peacebuilding aspects to the communities.

The KENCON-XI continued the fight against Al Shabaab to usher in a conducive enabling environment for Somalia's human capital development through knowledge and skills transfer to develop an empowered and healthy Somali population with the necessary skills and attitudes for productive sector-driven and sustainable economic development.

Empowerment of human terrain is very key in fighting the Centre of Gravity (CoG) of the Al Shabaab insurgents who for a while fight to recruit from locals who are struggling to feed for their families. As enshrined in the Africa Dialogue Series (ADS) theme 2022 to accelerate the human capital, social and economic development KENCON-XI has undertaken various activities to

enhance the livelihood of the Somali communities. Empowerment of the human capital by enhancing their capabilities, and training them on self-reliance skills has been a focal point of KENCON-XI as its very key in preventing conflict recurrence in a community.

With the transition to ATMIS, which called for handover of several Forward Operating Bases (FOB) and subsequent transfer of security responsibilities to SSF, capacity building on SSF became paramount and in particular the understanding of the mission command. Mission command philosophy guarantees success as it provides the commanders' intent, but leaves the method of execution to the subordinates. With this and professional development in decision

making beforehand, the junior leaders can exercise initiative, particularly in case of a changing situation especially with the understanding that the conflict in Somalia discloses an interesting absurdity where many of the factors that drive armed conflict have also played a role in preventing the same.

It's worth noting that, the conflict in Somalia has fractured relationships within and between communities, and undermined social cohesion. To break cycles of violence associated with such kind of conflict, KENCON-XI constantly engaged on interventions anchored in the needs of the communities affected by conflict. These interventions which are local and community-based down-up approaches increase the likelihood of achieving peace in the long term.



Officer Commanding Hoosingo Forward Operating Base Major Matthew Ingolan discussing security issues with one of the clan elders in Hoosingo on November 2022.

TRANSITION FROM AMISOM TO ATMIS

Colonel Johana Chemitei psc (K)



The fall of central government in Somalia led to the rise of armed conflict, insecurity, lack of state protection, and recurring humanitarian crises. This exposed Somali civilians to serious abuse and necessitated the deployment of a regional peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union (AU). African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was fashioned by the African Union's Peace and Security Council on 19 January 2007 with an initial six-month mandate. On 21 February 2007 the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1744 adopted by the Security Council (SC), approved the mission's mandate.

AMISOM was tasked with fighting the Al-Shabaab militants bent on overthrowing the government in Mogadishu and mandated to support

transitional governmental structures, implement a national security plan, train the Somali Security Forces (SSF) and to assist in creating a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid. The mission drove Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu in 2011, creating enough stability for government and federal agencies to take shape, and two rounds of elections to be held. AMISOM was however criticised for failing to defeat the terror group because it had no way of totally dissuading the Somali population from joining the extremists.

The UNSC Resolution 2628 authorized the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) to reconfigure AMISOM and replace it with the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), with effect from 01 April 2022. ATMIS evolved after a comprehensive

consultation between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU) and other international partners. ATMIS has a more offensive remit than its predecessor and calls for security to be assumed by Somalia's army and police force by the December 2024. The mission will be conducted in a phased manner to ensure smooth handover of security responsibilities to Somalia's government and Somalia Security Forces will take a lead role in the country's security.

The resolution adopted by the council recognises significant changes in the security situation since it authorised AMISOM in February 2007 and improvements in Somalia's capability to respond to security challenges, but also reaffirms "the need to combat terrorist

threats by all means”.

Somalia’s government welcomed the decision and reiterated that it was committed to ensure the transfer of responsibility of security from ATMIS to the Somali Security Forces. Over that time, troops will be gradually withdrawn in four distinct phases coinciding with major ground operations against Al-Shabaab. ATMIS will be different from AMISOM because although it will retain combat active troops, it will also have a significant team of technocrats to draw up the country’s recovery from years of war.

decision to reduce the peacekeeping forces’ numbers by 2,000 by that date and “zero personnel” by the end of December 2024.

The resolution also welcomed the Somali government’s intention to create 3,850 additional positions for security personnel by December 2022, 8,525 more by September 2023 and an additional 10,450 by June 2024.

The ATMIS CONOPS lays an emphasis on the provision of enhanced capabilities to enable ATMIS and SSF adopt a more offensive approach with dedicated force multipliers and enablers, it also calls for stabilization efforts in local governance, social cohesion, community recovery and the rule of law.

The ATMIS mandate entails; reducing threats posed by Al Shabaab and Other Armed Groups (OAGs), supporting the capacity building of the integrated Somali Security and Police forces, conduct of phased handover of Security responsibilities to Somalia and support peace and reconciliation efforts in Somalia in line with STP in support of the development of a stable, federal, sovereign and united Somalia.

What are the strategic objectives of ATMIS?



Conduct **jointly planned and targeted** operations with Somali security forces



Support Somali security forces by **jointly holding priority population centres** and securing main supply routes identified by the FGS



Assist the FGS in the **implementation of stabilisation** efforts for all recovered areas



Support Somali security **forces** across the clear, hold and build phases, in line with the Somali Transition Plan



Support the **capacity development** of the Somali security forces

ATMIS is aligned with the Somalia Transition Plan (STP). This means that the strategy of the government of Somalia and the objective of ATMIS will be aligned. This is the number one factor that will make a difference. This common vision by the AU and Somalia eliminates the one hurdle that had emerged during AMISOM in the previous years that forced the UNSC to extend the mandate of AMISOM numerous times. The ATMIS Concept of Operations (CONOPS) based on STP was adopted by UNSC under resolution 2628 of 31 Mar 2022 to replace AMISOM.

The UNSC authorised AU member nations to deploy up to 19,626 uniformed personnel, including a minimum of 1,040 police, until 31 December 2022. It also endorsed the AUPSC

THE 4 PHASES OF ATMIS

The African Union Transition Mission will implement its mandate in line with the Somali Transition Plan in four phases:

Phase 1



Reconfiguration

Phase 2



Joint shaping and clearing operations and the handing over of some Forward Operating Bases to Somali Security Forces

Phase 3



Decisive operations and handing over of the remaining Forward Operating Bases

Phase 4



Withdrawal and liquidation of ATMIS

A FIRM SHOULDER TO LIMP ON

Col (Dr) Edward Makutwa (SMO)



KDF nurse at Dhobley Level II hospital attending to a child during a medical camp in November 2022.

Like any other longstanding conflict, the protracted armed civil strife that bedeviled Somalia collapsed infrastructure, institutions and amenities. Healthcare services deteriorated to undeveloped levels. Although efforts have and are being made to restore this important component of social development, still there is quite a distance to cover. Meanwhile the sick, ranging from infants to expectant mothers, the young, the old and people across all demographics continue to suffer. Many man-hours and

lives inevitably get lost yet each would be very much needed to rebuild and restore a broken economy.

Be that as it may, the local populace found a sure friend in ATMIS that offered a firm shoulder to limp on. This restored hope for scores of them of not only surviving but also reclaiming full health in order to play a part in nation's regeneration as they look forward to the day that all the past glory of the nation of Somalia will be restored.

Kenyan Contingent Eleven (KENCON-

XI) in Sector II serving under ATMIS, has constantly stretched a helping hand to the ailing in the community in its area of responsibility. In robust cooperation with the community within the boundaries of the existing mandate, the medical cell at Level II Hospital in Dhobley strove to open its doors to the local hospitals serving as their immediate referral facility. This hospital would receive and attend to cases beyond the local hospitals' ability for trauma, emergency and routine ailments. Some cases would be facilitated to higher levels of care as



KDF nurse at Dhobley Level II hospital attending to a gun shot patient on August 2022.

appropriate. Some would be evacuated from scenes of traumatic incident in conjunction with the KENCON's aviation team.

In the year 2022, Kenya Defence Force (KDF) medical team in Dhobley Level II Hospital attended to diverse deserving cases drawn from all over the area of responsibility of the Kenyan Contingent.

KDF carried out a surgical camp at Dhobley Level II hospital which was informed by the need to have a wider reach of patients especially of surgical cases that were rampant in Dhobley District and its environs. It targeted patients with inguino-femoral hernias and hydroceles. Other common ailments targeted included urethral strictures and benign prostatic enlargements that blocked micturition causing misery among men.

The following is a feature of a handful of these cases within the terms of each individual's consent.

A GIRL WITH A THREE-MONTH FRACTURED LEG

Fatuma Abdullahi, a teenager didn't dream of ever walking again nor playing with her peers after she picked up a knock from a donkey while attending to household chores. The knock fractured

her leg and it was deformed. Fatuma didn't want to disclose the incident to her parent for fear of scolding and she was playing the waiting card for the fracture to heal. Two days passed and there was no improvement on the leg, the pain was unbearable and she could not use the leg. Upon discovery of her anguish, her parents tried to help in their own way but there was no tangible progress. Lack of health facilities in their vicinity hindered any meaningful care. Despair set in and depression stalked her.

One day her parents caught wind that there was potential assistance at ATMIS's Level II Hospital through Dhobley District Hospital. Three months after picking the injury, Fatuma was admitted at Level II Hospital. She was in pain and guarded her leg from any touch. The left leg had an obvious deformity at the lower third with an outward rotation. The X-ray showed a lower third tibio-fibula fracture with poor tibial bone healing.

She was taken in for surgery and the broken bone was fixed with a plate and screws and thereafter the leg was plastered. After four weeks of admission, Fatuma was discharged on partial weight bearing, using elbow crutches. She was followed up at the physiotherapy

department where her recovery was closely monitored. Three months after surgery the cast was removed from her leg and she could walk again. Her hopes were actualized, her parents evidently thankful to the service received.

A NEAR UNSALVAGEABLE ROTTING LEG AFTER A SNAKE BITE

Thirty-two-year-old Mustafa Keynan, the only bread winner of his family lost hope of fending for his family the day he was bitten by a snake while clearing bushes around his house. He was not only unable to afford medical attention for this misfortune, but also he would be forced to travel for at least three days to reach a health facility. Deprived of medical attention by his circumstance, Mustafa lay in his house waiting for his demise. Fortunately, he was able to survive the initial effects of the poison but he was up for a long painful journey ahead. His family watched him helplessly as he endured throes of pain, swelling and a leg that soon started to change color and became smelly.

Mustafa continued to languish away, his leg rotting day by day spewing malodorous pus. His children started keeping an uncomfortable distance from him, the wife trying all she could to wipe off pus dripping from his wounds. Word



KDF surgery team operating on a patient in Dhobley

went around of his predicament and on the sixth week, it caught the ear of a good Samaritan who volunteered to take him to Dhobley District Hospital for treatment. Mustafa was admitted to the hospital but the needs of his care soon outstripped the hospital's ability. Three weeks later, he was recommended for a referral to ATMIS's Level II Hospital.

At admission to the ATMIS facility, he barely weighed 40kg. The entire of his left leg's front compartment was necrotic (rotten) and exuded copious amounts of purulent material. Besides boosting his nutrition and bringing infection under control, a series of surgical cleanings were undertaken. On the 12th session, the large leg- wound which only had 5% of the shin bone exposed from an earlier 50% exposure was adjudged to be ready for closure. Skin grafting was done 6 weeks after admission and scheduled physiotherapy administered. Mustafa was glad to be discharged 3 months after admission with all his wounds fully healed and weighing 52kg. He was happy to be reunited with his family having not only narrowly escaped with his life, but with an intact leg also.

RELIEVING BLOCKED URETHRA

Breaking a sweat while passing urine was increasingly becoming unbearable

over several weeks for a forty year old gentleman, Mr. Abdalle Omar. His initial assumption that this would amend and disappear on its own never came to be. Mr. Omar had complete urine retention, not a single drop dribbling. He presented himself to a nearby local health facility where all that could be done was draining the urine by puncturing the groin with a needle that temporarily relieved the discomfort. By this time, his relations with his wife had long been curtailed by the blocked urethra. He was sure he would never regain his manhood. Tired with the pain from the urine and the needles, he demanded for any other solution than this. He was referred to Dhobley District hospital 100miles away, whereupon arrival he was referred to ATMIS's Level II Hospital as a urologic emergency.

On arrival, normal catheterization was attempted but wouldn't pass the 12cm mark. A groin puncture was made and cystofix was inserted and anchored in place. There was immediate relief when 600 millimetres of cloudy urine was drained at instant. The apparent urine infection was treated for a few weeks then an x-ray dye was used to image the urethra (urethrogram) which showed a single complete stricture (constriction) towards the back of the

urethra. The stricture was successfully excised one week later and urethra surgically rejoined. A re-imaging of the urethra with the x-ray dye 10 days later confirmed good repair and both urinary catheters that had been placed were removed sequentially. Six weeks later, the full functions of the organ had normalised and Mr Omar regained an excellent quality of life.

A similar case presented three weeks later involved a 69-year-old man Mohamoud Halake. Fortunately, his had been amenable to urethral catheterization on which he fully depended to drain the bladder. After carrying this catheter that jutted from his body for several weeks, he could not stand it anymore. He voiced his wish to his care-provider for a definitive solution. One Tuesday, he was referred to Level II Hospital as a routine patient from the local general hospital. Examination revealed a symmetrically enlarged, non-nodular prostate, whose volume was over ten times the normal confirmed by sonography. Open prostatectomy surgery was carried out and after eight days he was able to pass urine normally with a strong stream.

WHEN A BABY PASSES A DEATH SENTENCE TO THE MOTHER

A child brings joy to a family. It is a hope



KDF medics checking on a patient pressure at Dhobley Level II hospital in May 2022.

for days ahead, an investment for the future of a family. Losing a child is one of the most painful experiences a mother can bear. Worse still, is when she not only loses the baby during delivery but almost loses her life in the process, should there be no help at the critical hour.

This was the case for a 33-year-old Ubah Hassan. Ms Hassan was forced by circumstance to present to the local hospital for the delivery of her tenth baby, a situation she was not accustomed to since she preferred to deliver at home as was the case with previous nine babies. This pregnancy was unlike the previous ones. She experienced a long and difficult labor at home that lasted 48 hours but bore no fruit. She was taken to the health facility where she labored for additional 24 hours. Unfortunately, her womb could not hold the pressure anymore and it ruptured. She was rushed to theatre where a fresh still born with a cephalic anomaly was extracted. The uterine rupture was stitched and bleeding partially controlled. She was transfused a unit of blood and catheterized.

She was referred to ATMIS's Level II Hospital. She was stabilized further, transfused and taken to theatre immediately where a two-hundred-and-seventy-degree (270°) tear of her uterus was found. It tore through the left uterine artery which was found to be ligated. The urinary bladder was found to be severely bruised. Partial removal of the uterus was accomplished to prevent immediate and future complications. A total of five units of blood was transfused to compensate on the lost blood. She recovered uneventfully and on eleventh day discharged after urine dye confirmed patent ureters from the kidneys to the urinary bladder.

THREE BUSINESSMEN SUFFER THE WHIMS OF GUN MEN

Proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in Somalia and their trade continues to stoke conflict in the country in diverse ways. The prevalence of lethal weapons has made it easier for individuals and groups to disrupt economic activities and hamper trade

ruining lives and livelihoods for many families.

Three business men, Abdinoor Ali, Ismael Ahmed and Salim Ibrahim bore the brunt of the guns in the hands of bandits. They were forced to shut down their businesses due to attacks in separate incidents by gun wielding gangs who aimed to reap where they had not sowed as well as cause fear.

Bandits opened fire on a middle aged, Abdinoor Ali. He had discerned their ill-motive when they flagged him to stop his car and he did not fall for their tricks. While he sped off, three rounds caught his back. He was presented to ATMIS's Level II Hospital 48 hours after the incident, where he underwent a total of four surgical procedures. After one month of admission, he fully recovered and resumed his business shortly thereafter.

Ismael Ahmed, in his third decade of life, suffered four gunshot wounds; one on the buttock that injured his large colon and

others injured soft tissues on the upper and lower limbs. These wounds were cleaned, large intestines repaired and stool diverted externally into a collector bag through an opening in the abdomen (Ileostomy). He was transfused, put on high-protein high-calorie diet. The intestines were rejoined on his sixth and last surgery. He was discharged on the 36th day of admission in good condition and fared excellently thereafter.

Middle-aged Salim Ibrahim sustained three gunshot wounds; through the right shoulder that shattered his humerus bone, the right forearm and another injuring the left lower chin with loss of soft tissue over the jaw. The latter gunshot, also fractured his lower jaw as well as knocking off, weakening and chipping off six teeth. He underwent four surgeries spanning sixteen hours in ten days that included wound cleaning, sequential wound closure, interdental wire fixation of the jaw bone fracture and full thickness skin graft of the chin wound. The right arm was fixed in a U-plaster to immobilize the arm fracture. He recovered well with all wounds healed after three weeks and was referred to a level three hospital of his own choice for

the arm fracture fixation.

GUNS IN THE WRONG HANDS DO NOT SPARE EVEN THE CHILDREN

Children are the heirs of a nation and hold the key for tomorrow. Targeting them robs a nation of future opportunities and prospects. Therefore, it is double tragedy for any nation to not only lose the present when its prime populace is destroyed, but also when the future is vanquished as its young are maimed and killed.

On one fateful day, an infant and two children in their first decade of life were caught in a hostile situation when militants raided their village in the wee hours of the night. Their small bodies had taken in multiple bullets by the time of the rescue. By the time help arrived, their guardians weren't lucky. Two of the children were evacuated to Dhobley Level II hospital. Yusuf Ali, had both thighs and the left leg wounded while Hussein Abdi sustained wounds on the buttock and both legs. They had bled significantly from their wounds, were dehydrated, numbed with pain and appeared weak. Their lower limbs were heavily bandaged thanks to the work of

the KDF rescue team.

They were assessed, stabilized and transfused accordingly. Fortunately, neither had a broken bone. They were taken to theatre the same day for surgical cleaning, removal of the bullet and later admitted. The two children underwent a cumulative twenty-three theatre procedures to restore their injured bodies. Targeted physiotherapy sessions were added to their therapy. At the end of fifteen weeks of inpatient care, they were discharged to continue with outpatient care, which went on for six weeks before they fully recovered.

On another incident, Abdullahi Shuriye, had sustained a gunshot wound through the upper abdomen. The Dhobley district hospital could not handle the case and was referred to the KDF medics. The kid had some of his large intestines out through the exit of the gunshot. He was rushed to theatre immediately and laparotomy done. He had suffered a large tear on the stomach and multiple tears through the colon. The torn stomach and intestine were repaired and the kid discharged with excellent health.



KDF medics checking on a child's ear during an Ear Nose and Throat medcamp at Kismayo in October 2022.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF SOMALIA SECURITY FORCES

Maj Philip Katui



KDF instructors mentoring Somalia National Army Soldiers on casualty care at Dhobley in July 2022.

An unconventional battlefield is complex and probably only those who have an adequate technical coefficient and an in-depth knowledge of the adversary can substantially dent the enemy. To successfully face and defeat the enemy, a soldier must be well trained and equipped to give him the ability to adapt to situations and environments. Training a soldier need not only be composed of mere and coarse theory

but should be practical with real life scenarios. Military training involves risk and is more demanding in terms of will, resources and individual commitment of the soldier. Military training follows tactics, techniques and procedures to be mission ready. At the end of any training period, the military officers and soldiers should have conceptualized all aspects which ensures production of a well disciplined and professional soldier

who understands all battle drills and field craft.

The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) replaced the African Union in Somalia (AMISOM) on 1 April 2022 mandated by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) under Resolution 2658 (2022). ATMIS has a clear mandate to fully implement the Somalia Transition Plan (STP), a strategic plan that details the handover



Capt Sang demonstrating on how to operate radiograph machine.

of all security responsibilities to Federal Government of Somalia by 31 December 2024. ATMIS is to be implemented in four phases with the first phase involving reconfiguration and capacity building of the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) to take over security responsibilities in Somalia on exit of ATMIS forces. Under this mandate and in the word of James Keller “a candle loses nothing by lighting another candle”, Kenya Defence Force (KDF) troops deployed under ATMIS in Somalia took up the initiative to mentor and train the SSF operating alongside them to improve their operation capabilities and enhance their techniques and tactics in various fields.

KDF fully operationalized the Joint Operations Command Center (JOCC), responsible for planning and leading joint operations between the ATMIS forces and SSF troops at Sector II Headquarters, Dhobley. JOCC comprise members of both ATMIS and SSF operations cells. In order to harmonize and ensure inter-operability between the members of ATMIS and SSF at JOCC, the SSF operations cell personnel were taken through refresher training in various

fields including military decision-making process, mission planning, basic map reading skills and report writing. This was to ensure as commanders, they are able to communicate and make workable plans with their soldiers to accomplish missions. As operation commanders and leaders, they ought to put their problem-solving skills into action.

ATMIS troops in various FOBs within Sector II have continued to conduct joint operations alongside the SSF troops with guidance from the JOCC in a bid to build SSF capacity as well as improve their effectiveness, efficiency and confidence in the battlefield to be able to conduct independent operations against the adversary.

Various members of the SSF in small groups, have undergone Basic Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) meant to equip them with skills to react and what to do when a fellow soldier is injured during combat. The skills gained will enable the soldiers learn the different combat related injuries and what actions have priority during an active firefight. Sound understanding of principles of TCCC will enable the soldiers and combat medics

evaluate and re-evaluate all treatments, be diligent to minimize morbidity of potentially harmful interventions and prevent, recognize, and treat combat injuries.

The ATMIS medical personnel from Level II Hospital Dhobley have continued to conduct various medical training for the SSF soldiers. The training is tailor-made and involves both theoretic work and practical exercises where the soldiers conduct hyper-realistic and immersive simulation exercises to ensure they acquire techniques to save lives in combat. The SSF soldiers who are earmarked as potential combat medics are taken through advanced TCCC to improve on their skills and knowledge to become competent combat medics.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) remains a weapon of choice by the Al Shabaab and other armed groups in Somalia and around the world. The adversary has continued to evolve on the complexity of assembling IEDs. IEDs are a big threat to the ATMIS forces, SNA as well as the civilians who become targets or collateral. KDF Explosives Ordinance Disposal (EOD) expert



Ssgt Kirui demonstrating how to detonate and disarm a trip flare to a Somalia Security Forces in Dhobley

instructors in conjunction with United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) team in Dhobley have endeavoured to train, mentor and carry out refresher courses at various FOBs.

The training involves realistic training scenarios to simulate real combat and battlefield. Explosives hazard awareness training designed to enable the soldiers to safely operate an IED threat environment, apply the best practice and reduce casualties, recognize threat indicators for situational awareness as well as best practice procedures when

suspicious item are located or in the event of an uncontrolled IED initiation. The soldiers are also trained on route search to enable the force mobility by the use of targeted search in those locations where an IED is most likely to be used to target military operations through assessment of Vulnerable Points (VP) and Vulnerable Areas (VA) to define how best they should be searched to locate, isolate or render safe IED threats.

KDF has endeavored to enhance intelligence collection of SSF by taking the soldiers through basic training

on intelligence course to aid them collect information on the adversary to enable conduct of intelligence-led operations. Before making any plans or conducting any operations, the soldiers need accurate and actionable intelligence and understanding of the enemy posture to avoid any surprises in war. Report writing and analyzing of information to bring out meaning and develop timely actionable intelligence. The training is also meant to enable SSF analyze the adversary trend in order to establish patterns which aid to predict enemy intentions.

ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY IN SECTOR TWO

Capt Francis Warware



Sgt Kwamboka demonstrating to local women how to plant seedlings.

Food insecurity acts as a threat multiplier by negatively affecting health, education, livelihoods and individual productivity; setbacks in economic development; and the loss of confidence in state institutions. Equally, violent conflict aggravates food insecurity. Planting and harvesting sequences are often interrupted, and crops destroyed. Markets are interrupted, infrastructure damaged, government devotion to and investment in social service delivery drops. At the household level, conflict results in a loss of livelihoods and reduction in income which further reduces the ability to meet basic needs and aggravates food insecurity. In circumstances of hostilities, humanitarian actors may not access people in need of food assistance.

The number of people starving to death in prolonged skirmishes is greater than the number of people dying as a direct result of violence and thus its paramount for a country to achieve food security in order to kickstart the process of a sustainable peacebuilding. Destruction of infrastructure and establishments in conflict-affected areas confines accessibility and constrains distribution systems which leaves many to starve to death. A deep-rooted conflict economy skews production and trade incentives and increases transaction costs leaving the population with few assets with which they can generate income and afford to buy food.

United Nations 2030 Agenda seventeen on Sustainable Development Goals, item two highlights the need to end hunger,

achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture as a step towards common objective of building peaceful and resilient societies.

In his address to the United Nations Security Council the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Director-General, José Graziano da Silva, noted that, peace and food security often mutually reinforce each other. Food security and a healthy agricultural sector can play a central role in our efforts to prevent conflict and build peace. He added that assistance to guarantee food security and rehabilitate the agricultural sector is an important contribution in the fight against hunger and can help to mitigate and even prevent conflict. Fostering agricultural prosperity helps to reinforce



Cpl Likombe explaining to local women on various types of vegetables they can farm.

social cohesion, reducing tensions arising from opposing claims on natural resources and, through the creation of rural employment, undermines the breeding ground for violent extremism around the world.

Food security interventions through the integration of a peacebuilding approach could address these symptoms of a protracted crisis through the generation of peace dividends, the reduction of conflict drivers, the enhancement of social cohesion, improve the sustainability of livelihood and support the development of capacities and public administration systems.

Acute food insecurity has continued to worsen across sector II and Somalia in general, with millions being affected by shortage of farm due to the current ongoing drought and in some areas due to the threat posed by Al Shabaab where some farmers have been reported to abandon their farms to seek refuge as a result of coercion by the militants. The civil unrest that the country faces has reduced access that farmers have to markets. This coupled with the aspect of illegal taxation on agricultural produce during transportation to market by Al Shabaab militants acts as a deterrent to farmers to produce crops and thus low productivity. Though the humanitarian

food assistance has been availed to prevent the worsening food security and nutrition outcomes the aid is far short of the rising level of need due to insufficient funding.

The Somalia's special envoy for humanitarian issues Abdurahman Abdishakur Warsameh said drought has hit 72 of Somalia's 84 districts and that six of them were already facing famine-like conditions with extreme food insecurity affecting more than six million Somalis.

This revelation coupled with the need to create a self-reliance community, Kenya Defence Force troops deployed under ATMIS in Dhobley have constantly engaged the locals especially women on small scale subsistence farming to help them grow their own crops and rear birds that can help substitute for meals to mitigate food insecurity. KDF has started a smart farm where they demonstrate crop and poultry management practices for several plants and chicken that can survive in the climatical conditions in the locality.

In effort of building resilience in nutrition on the African continent in order to accelerate the human capital, social and economic development in Somalia as enshrined in the Africa Dialogue

Series (ADS) theme 2022, KDF has introduced several vegetables and fruits to include; Spider plant (*Cleome gynandra*) a leafy vegetable which is rich in proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates and minerals which are lacking in most leafy vegetables. Cowpea, (*Vigna unguiculata*) a leafy vegetable which is rich in iron, vitamin E and vitamin K. Pigweed (*Amaranthus spp*) a leafy vegetable which is very rich in protein, carbohydrates and good quality fat and this makes it a good source of energy. It is also high in fiber and minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, and phosphorous. Amaranth grain is therefore good for those with low immunity, the elderly and children. Pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo*) a plant whose fruits and leaves are consumed and is rich in iron, protein, vitamins A and C and high in calcium. Watermelon fruits (*Citrullus lanatus*) which is a good source of beta carotene, magnesium, potassium, and vitamin A, B6 and C. All these crops require little management practices and are drought resistant thus they can do well in the semi-arid climatic condition that is in sector II and most part of Somalia. The locals can utilize the manure from the animal droppings to better the produce of the crops and boost the harvests.

KDF has also taught locals on poultry farming management practices to help improve the production levels of the poultry which helps to diversify the food varieties available to the people

Well-timed food security investments play a critical role in preserving life, livelihoods and nutrition. Interventions to improve food security may help weaken some of the tactics employed by Al Shabaab insurgent group in recruitment that lead to individuals willingness to join and support the armed groups. Food security forms part of long-term social service delivery, which is a core building block for broad-based economic growth, human security and sustainable peace as it strengthens efforts to prevent conflict.

SILENCING GUNS IN SOMALIA

Lt Col J K KOMEN 'psc' (K)



KDF troops on patrol.

The violent conflict in Somalia has for a while endangered human, national and international security and made the desired economic and political integration of the country difficult. The prevalence of lethal weapons has made it easier for individuals and groups to resort to and perpetuate violence, which has disrupted economic activities and destroyed infrastructure. This has deprived citizens of critical peace dividends such as employment, education, healthcare, roads, personal safety and decent livelihoods. There is need for Somalia to be characterised by peace, political tolerance and good governance.

Proliferation of illicit small arms and

light weapons in Somalia and their trade continues to be the biggest factor driving conflict in the country. Therefore, if Somalia wants to consolidate peace and development, it becomes imperative for the country to address the issue of illicit trade in weapons.

In 1992 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 733 which called for an embargo on weapons and military equipment being sent to Somalia to address the violence and conflict that had rocked the country but since its passing, this resolution has become one of the most violated resolutions as Somalis kept receiving fresh supplies of weapons.

The collapse and volatility of the state in Somalia can be linked to the dynamic proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) in the aftermath of the decades long-running conflict. Today Somalia is an awash with arms fueling violence and war economy. Porous borders, weak governance and dysfunctional national security apparatus, present a major challenge for controlling the proliferation of SALWs across the country. The prevalence of ungoverned spaces and resurgent violent non-state actors within Somalia opened up the spaces of illicit arms trade.

“ **Tackling illegal proliferation of weapons in Somalia is in line with AU’s Agenda 2063 of ‘Silencing the Guns - Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development’ which aims at ending all wars and violent conflicts on the continent.**

Kenya Defence Forces troops operating under Africa Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) have continued to degrade the enemy and fighting the proliferation of firearms in Somalia which if left to the wrong hands would continue to harm the Somalia people. KDF has constantly carried out robust patrols to deter enemy freedom of movement and action in the Moyale–Takaba–Elwak–Burahache–Fafadun–Sakow corridor which Al Shabaab uses to traffic illegal firearms to their sanctuaries in Buale and Jilib and even across the border.

KDF troops deployed in Burahache have constantly kept the area clear of illegal weapons by constantly carrying out robust

patrols to deny the enemy freedom of movement which they use to transport weapons. Notably, KDF troops on their normal patrol on 27 April 2022 in the areas of Horbaati intercepted a motorcycle carrying two men with a suspicious cargo. Upon the search, it was established that they were carrying eleven AK 47 Rifles, thirteen magazines, 210 rounds of the weapon. Further, on 29 April 2022, KDF troops detonated an improvised explosive device that had been laid to cause harm to the patrol. Elsewhere on 15 May 2022 we intercepted two AS militants within Burahache who had been deployed as arms traffickers, and improvised explosive devices experts in the region.

Interception of such weapon is very key in the fight against Al Shabaab and fostering peace and development in Somalia. Proliferation of illicit firearms leads to militarization of society where every community want to acquire weapons to protect themselves from the aggressor. This in turn leads to loss of lives which is

the country’s production force that foster development. Loss of such lives is a blow to the country notwithstanding the loss of children who are the future of a country.

In many cases, illegal proliferation of illegal weapons has caused strengthening of criminals and criminal organizations, Gender-based violence (GBV) widespread, erosion of public trust caused by armed violence, inter-community armed tensions as a result of competition over natural resources leading to huge number of human casualties, internal and cross-border displacements of people and general insecurity among the populations due to traumatized incidences.

KDF troops deployed in Somalia under ATMIS remain steady fast in helping Somalia silence the guns in their country as it’s a key aspect towards community reconciliation which foster national healing and economic development.



Cache of weapons and magazines captured by KDF troops in Burahache.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROTECTION OF SOMALIA SECURITY FORCES

Major Kevin Mulupi



Major Mulupi directing the grading of Dhobley airstrip during the renovation in August 2022.

Force protection and survival are key for success of any operation. Without protection it is impossible to undertake military operations due to loss of troops and facilities. This calls for application of pro-active and reactive risk mitigation measures like threat prevention, pre-emption, negation, mitigation and response to preserve the freedom of action and operational effectiveness thereby contributing to mandate implementation and mission success.

The growth of complexities of operations and the dynamic set of threats and asymmetric complex attacks targeting military troops, facilities and operating bases remain persistently high resulting in fatalities and injuries. Force protection measures and considerations need to reflect the changing environment and be continuously reviewed and updated.

Over time, there have been cases where some African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) Forward Operating

Bases (FOBs) have been attacked and overrun by the enemy. This has not only happened in Somalia but all other operation environments where the FOBs are not well fortified. The most recent such incidence occurred in May 2022 within the ATMIS area of Responsibility (AoR). The ancient kings and emperors protected their cities by building thick and high walls to protect their people from the brutal enemy attacks. This concept is very important and still being practiced up to date.



Construction of anti-VBIED trench by KDF troops to SSF camps around Dhobley area in April 2022.

The military engineers are the ones who are usually bestowed with this great responsibility of enhancing protection of troops in FOBs for generations. Fortification of bases is very critical aspect in force protection. The transition to ATMIS requires capacity building of Somalia Security Forces (SSF) in a holistic aspect to prepare them to take up security responsibilities of their country. The SSF will take lead role in the operations to fight the insurgency and liberate lands under Al Shabaab and thus force protection is paramount for them so that they can maintain the number advantage and keep pressure on the insurgents. The SSF require safe bases where they can launch their operations from while protecting their facilities and personnel.

In line with the role of Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) Engineers, of enhancing mobility, countering enemy mobility, survivability, sustainability the KDF engineers team operating in Somalia under ATMIS embarked on improving the SSF bases in Dhobley as Al Shabaab has been known to prey on exposed camps to acquire weapons and ammunitions. KDF Engineers under

ATMIS excavated an anti-Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED) trench and soil parapets around the bases. The anti-VBIED is a physical measure of force protection, other measures like intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination, deterrence and preventive posture, effective command and control, communication, law enforcement liaison and a swift but graduated response were impacted to the SSF during seminars and training to achieve a holistic approach in force protection.

“Improvement of the SSF bases will help the troops to defend and protect themselves appropriately against prevailing threats throughout the operational environment.”

Additionally, KENCON-XI, engineers' team was called upon to help in maintenance of the Dhobley airstrip after several civilian planes raised concern on the rate of tear and wear of their crafts due to the eroded surface of the airstrip. The Dhobley Airstrip is one of the major transport corridors in lower Somalia serving civilian, security personnel and humanitarian planes. Left

un-attended the airstrip would paralyze movement in the area. The airstrip had several potholes that made landing of planes difficult and increasing the tear and wear of the planes that did land. The rampant tear and wear of planes contributes to the maintenance burden to investors because of frequent repairs of the planes. The repair burden further makes several investors to shy off from the business, negatively affecting the economic use of the infrastructure.

The community, through their leaders requested for help in maintenance of the airstrip and the KDF engineers team embarked on grading the airstrip to level it and fill the potholes for smooth landing. Equally, they dug out water tunnels to collect run-way water to help reduce water erosions during the rainy season and extended the airstrip from 1.6Km to 2Km in order to increase the size of the aircrafts that can land on the airstrip. The repair of the airstrip would see the resumption of the flights in the region bosting movement of goods and people positively influencing the economy of the region and the Somalia country at large.

ADOPT A TREE TO SAVE LIVELIHOOD

Capt Francis Warware



Commander Kenya Army Lt Gen Peter Njiru and former Commander Kenya Army Lt Gen Walter Koipaton during a tree planting session in Dhobley on July 2022.

Somalia has been experiencing its worst drought crisis this year with millions going hungry and many being forced to leave their homes in search of food and water. This drought has wiped out thousands of camels, goats, sheep and cattle dying from drought-related causes depriving many pastoral communities of their only source of income.

The key drivers of acute food insecurity in Somalia include the combined effects of consecutive seasons of poor and erratic rainfall distribution which can be attributed to inadequate forest cover as a result of many communities cutting down trees for charcoal burning/firewood which is the only source of energy in many households.

The increase in charcoal demand in Somalia has witnessed an increase

in deforestation which in turn has led to increasing land degradation, food insecurity, and vulnerability to flooding and drought. Al-Shabaab also funds itself, in part, through the illegal production and sale of charcoal even after Somalia government and United Nation Security Council Resolution 2036, banned the export of charcoal from Somalia.

The drought has seen villages being abandoned which has resulted into school-age children not attending school and several schools closed down. The worst of the disaster is the aspect of forcing girls to early marriages as their families cannot feed them. Drought has left thousands of children in Somalia risk the development of life-threatening form of malnutrition.

According to a 2021 document by African Union's Peace and Security Council, climate

change poses significant challenge for the continent's future peace and security and there is need to adopt a climate-sensitive planning dimension to peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction missions, and in development efforts to prevent any relapse to armed conflicts in fragile communities.

This therefore calls for the development of climate-friendly policies to represent long-term peace and sustainable growth and opportunities for building bridges across communities in Somalia.

Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) being alive to these facts constantly engages the local community on an environmental conservation programme which involves restoring the forest cover within sector II by planting trees to reduce the impact of climate change which has multiplied

and amplified existing risks to peace and development by obstructing access to water and food.

KDF has achieved this through encouraging communities to embrace tree planting as it's a simple and effective way to help reduce the impact of carbon emissions and restore natural ecosystems in an attempt to transform the environment to mitigate resource related conflicts in the area of operation.

In developing countries, people's livelihoods are reliant upon environmental resources for energy, sustenance and income. Conflict often undermines access to and availability of these resources and in a post-conflict setting, limited natural resource availability can trigger fresh conflict.

Trees help to regulate the climate by absorbing Carbon from the atmosphere. When trees are cut down, that beneficial effect is lost and the carbon stored in the trees is released into the atmosphere, adding to the greenhouse effect. When

communities plant trees they can help to reduce the impacts of climate change in their local area and around the world.

KDF has also prepared nursery beds for seedlings which are supplied to the locals to plant on their respective areas. KDF helps communities in planning carefully the tree planting so that issues like water availability and the suitability of tree species to the local area are considered. In almost all cases, indigenous trees are the first choice for planting, though sometimes hardy, exotic species will be introduced to the community in order to diversify the benefits to the community.

KDF has held environmental education which is playing an increasingly vital role in environmental and conservation strategies as it creates awareness about the environment and helps people understand their environment better. Children are sensitive to adverse changes in the quality of the environment and are vulnerable to environmental degradation and care for the environment is care for our children.

Kenya Defence Forces troops have introduced the Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) or Muarubaini (in Swahili) which has anti-bacterial; anti-parasitic, anti-fungal, anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties.

The tree has a wide climatic adaptability and thrives under sub-humid to semi-arid and arid climatic conditions, grows on a variety of soils, clayey or sandy, saline or alkaline, but will not grow in waterlogged soils. KDF also makes sure that trees are planted in the height of the rainy season and when there is already moisture in the soil, giving the trees the best chance of survival.

Adoption of tree planting initiative will go a long way in mitigating the effects of climatic change to the Somalia communities. Grassroots efforts by individual communities, like expelling those who cut down trees or imposing fines on those caught felling trees will greatly help the initiative.



ATMIS allied forces and KDF troops in Dhobley plant trees to mark world environmental day on June 2022.

BUILDING MENTAL RESILIENCE FOR MISSION READINESS

Capt Francis Muriithi



Capt Muriithi delivering lecture on mental wellness during *tushauriane* hour in Dhobley.

Soldiers undergo a tough initial phase as they are converted from civilians to military personnel. This is the period that immediately follows recruitment and is known as the Basic Military Course (BMC). It is tailored to transform the 'fresh' and 'green' members into the mainstream military organization. Not only are physical limits tested, but mental resilience too. In a nutshell, the ability to perform under intense pressure, sleep deprivation, while maintaining high morale and a positive attitude towards the course and the instructors. Military operations not only require extreme levels of physical fitness and agility, an equal magnitude of psychologically performing soldiers is paramount.

The military environment has a unique culture and occasionally the operational environment is characterized by complex and traumatic conditions. Although the military personnel deployed in close and deep operations are more susceptible

to Trauma-and-Stress-Related disorders like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), their counterparts in peacetime may also face day to day mental health issues of concern that include: Non-combat stress, Marital discordance, Anxiety, Alcohol & Substance Use Disorders, and Depression due to other underlying illnesses. It is discernible that in spite of the rigorous BMC and other subsequent trainings that soldiers undergo, they are not immune from the overwhelming stressful situations and can also suffer from other psychological issues just like any other human. However, continuous training in various aspects of a soldier do foster their physical and mental capacities making them more resourceful while operating under pressure.

Deep Operations presents an array of distinctive challenges that cut across from one Forward Operating Base (FOB) to another. Horrors of perceived threat or laid Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)

& ambushes along the Main Supply Routes (MSRs), witnessing distressing scenes of wounded colleagues and human remains, extreme weather conditions, preoccupation with health concerns, family separation and other home front stressors are some of the factors that contribute to combat stress. Unique challenges call for unique ways of addressing them thus the need to extensively comprehend the psychological needs of soldiers in active war.

Combat Stress Reaction (CSR) sometimes known as "Battle Fatigue" refers to an unlimited cluster of behaviours and maladaptation that a soldier exhibits while deployed in an active war environment which inhibits their overall effectiveness. Nevertheless, CSR can also be experienced by military personnel in close Ops and other professional military trainings. This results from that both close operations and war trainings simulate the actual war putting equal



Ssgt Owiti giving additional points during *Tushauriane* hour at Pumua Gardens at Dhobley

physical and mental pressures like in a real situation. Among the most common symptoms are physical and mental fatigue, irritability, indifference to danger, indecision, emotional outbursts, unexplained physical complaints and negative spiritual reactions. These manifestations are acute in nature though their effects are detrimental to both an individual soldier and the overall fighting capabilities of the combat teams in which the combatants belong to.

Consequently, the prevention and management of severe CSR greatly do contribute to the gross achievement of the key mandate of the contingence in the mission area. Furthermore, the intervention of commanders especially at the tactical level goes a long way in enhancing a psychologically healthy fighting force.

Firstly, the incorporation of various Mental Health issues in different trainings during peacetime do equip both the commanders and their troops with the prerequisite knowledge and

skills to prevent and manage CSR while deployed in close and deep operations. At a personal level soldiers participate in various workshops on stress management and recognition of early signs of psychological distress in themselves and their colleagues. In addition, the tactical commanders at different levels of command get more insight on how their daily administrative and command responsibilities can be utilized to minimize, and/or manage CSR and other psychological issues at the FOBs.

Kenya Defence Force (KDF) has deployed Psychological Counselling and Mental Health Practitioner alongside the troops to address the psychological issues for the KDF troops operating in Somalia under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

The practitioners have from time to time visited various FOBs to sensitize KDF troops on psychosocial issues that they are likely to encounter in their tour of duty and ways in which to handle them in a healthy manner as well as assessment

of soldiers' adaptability in the mission areas. During the visits they have also helped in selecting and training soldiers to establish Mental Health Peer Support Team (MHPST). The MHPST were further engaged and trained to act as the Training of Trainers (ToTs) and supplied with training materials in an endeavor to ensure continuity of the program.

The MHPST which is an equivalence of the peer counselors or the community health volunteers continue to engage the troops from time to time to foster the psychological wellbeing of the soldier. Other complementary activities like administration of leave to reconnect with families, Chaplaincy for spiritual nourishment, sports to keep in shape and build cohesion among soldiers and the weekly '*Tushauriane*' hour launched by the Sector Commander have helped the soldiers in maintaining their psychological sanity enhancing teamwork performance pushing further to the realization of the mission's key mandate.

REVISING GENERATION MISCONCEPTION ON WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING

Capt Hilda Amwayi



KDF female engagement team and local women mark International Womens Day in Dhobley.

Women face numerous challenges when it comes to participation in peacebuilding efforts. The most common among many people is the public perception which views women as passive victims rather than active participants and adds that it is men who engage in violence and it is them who should determine peace.

In Somalia for example it's commonly perceived that while women can build peace only men can make it. This misconception has been attributed to a woman's affiliations to several clans not limited to, her father's clan, her mother's, husband's, children's and son-in-law's clans and thus it is assumed that a woman's clan loyalty is

perceived as unpredictable. This whole generation misconception is the reason Somali women are not included as clan delegates in negotiations and decision-making forums that can affect the fortunes of the clan. This misconception has limited the involvement of women in aspects of peacebuilding in the Somali community.

What most don't understand is that, the aspect of the woman being affiliated with several clans can give her a structural role as a peacebuilder, enabling her to act as a channel for dialogue between warring parties. In the wake of conflicts between the clans in Somalia women constantly find themselves at the centre of conflicts fought between their sons, husbands

and other male relatives and it's for this sake that Somali women can play a big role in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Kofi Anan once noted that in war torn societies, women often keep societies going and thus it is paramount to ensure that women are enabled to play a full part in peace negotiations processes, in peace missions.

Incorporating women in the peacebuilding process does not only give a holistic approach to the process but it improves the effectiveness of military operations in the area of operations as helps in understanding of underlying gender power relations and indicates how these relations are influenced by



KDF nurse explaining to a local nurse how to counter check medical records.

armed conflicts and conflict resolution efforts. The gender perspective helps to identify the factors that drive conflicts, potential agents, and opportunities for its resolution, as well as the practices of exclusion and discrimination present.

Guided by the African Union (AU) Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) policy framework turned 15 November 2021, which recognizes women's importance in post-conflict reconstruction and development, and the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000), which calls for more equal and comprehensive involvement of women in peace processes, Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) formed a Female Engagement Team (FET) which has constantly engaged local Somali women in conflict prevention, peacemaking, negotiations, agreements and peace support operations.

Constant engagement with women in sector II has helped in, analysing and understanding the causes and multipliers of conflict related to gender dynamics, choosing the best form of response through a deeper understanding of the specific needs, capacities and experiences of women and coming up with programs to promote gender equality and peace in the society that will not rebuild a gender-discriminatory post-conflict.

In Somalia conflict is seen to be fueled by deeply engrained divisions, mistrust and exclusionary politics and KDF Female Engagement Team has on several occasions organized seminars with local Somali women to raise awareness on their roles both formal and informal spheres. The engagements forms part of counterinsurgency (COIN) actions which places civilian component at its center and gender relations is very

key in targeting youths who have been vulnerable to radicalization and later recruitment into the insurgency.

Skill sets in small scale subsistence farming through the Dhobley smart farm and environmental conservations lessons and distribution of seedlings have also been impacted to the local women to ensure food security for the population and reduce on resource conflict.

African Union Transition Mission in Somalia Female Engagement Team (ATMIS-1FET) has worked towards revising the misconception about women and goes in line with this year's theme for the International Women's Day, "breaking the bias," which advocated for creating a truly inclusive environment and giving everyone equal opportunities in an unbiased manner.

ENHANCING SOLDIERS TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITY FOR MODERN WARFARE

Cpl Murithi Kinoti



Cpl Kinoti explaining to sector II Commander how Mavic drone operates.

Training is a significant aspect of improving the skills of soldiers and preparing them for upcoming or potential operations. Through training, readiness develops as an integral quality that allows responding to any situation timely and using the acquired skills in a real combat or tactical environment. Readiness is the military's capacity to engage in combat and fulfil assigned missions and tasks. This preparation helps to ensure greater chances of success when faced with challenges and the foresight involved allows military readiness to become a safety tactic.

Each operation environment is dynamic and its interactions keep on changing and for any success of operations, understanding of the environment and the enemy is key. The war against Al-Shabaab (AS) is an asymmetrical one. This means that it is not conventional like what you would expect between two militaries; the adversary is not defined clearly thus can dissolve within a population then emerge or strike when the opportunity arises; the adversary also does not live within distinguishable locations such as barracks like soldiers which makes them a legitimate target of an opposing military.

Rather, AS actually does the opposite and mostly lives within local population in order to avoid being targeted. Also, the enemy uses crude weapons and tactics that are not standard of any military thus essentially making the type of warfare that they engage in 'guerilla' in nature. Given this nature of war, AS has evolved over time adapting even more crude ways of fighting ATMIS troops within Somalia with an equal and more superior countermeasures being adapted by Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) through training.

Looking back at AS Modus Operandi

(MO) since the incursion of Kenyan troops into Somalia in 2011, a progressive trend can be established. The militants have not been able to confront KDF head-on so they adapted new ways of fighting borrowed from other insurgencies including mainly from Afghanistan. They resulted to using Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) coupled with ambushes that were intended to inflict maximum damage to the troops by first stunning the troops then subsequently attacking a disoriented force. This did not turn out well for the militants as KDF's armoured vehicles could withstand the shocks of the explosions and additionally counter-ambush drills that the KDF had previously been trained on proved fatal for the militants.

AS resulted to use of IEDs only to minimizing their own losses as they deployed individual trigger men. KDF troops Counter-IED (C-IED) skills to find and disarm IEDs at vulnerable points coupled with tactical medical care came in handy to save lives of soldiers. Over the years, AS has changed his tactics; from traditional ambushes, targeting of Command and Control elements within Forward Operations Bases (FOBs) by use of marksmen, the employment of indirect fire using mortars on hard targets and also in order to lure troops out of their bases for subsequent targeting, as well as using drones for surveillance of fortified bases. It is also worth noting the rise in sophistication of information operations conducted by the AS propaganda machine. AS has

leveraged technology to reach a wider audience for radicalisation, recruitment and sympathy. Nevertheless, this apparent shift has not deterred KDF troops operating in Somalia under ATMIS from making gains over the enemy.

Of particular highlight, the training, qualification and equipping of KDF troops under ATMIS-1 with Micro-Unmanned Aerial System (M-UAS) is one technological advancement that has enhanced the soldier's capability. The M-UAS commonly referred to as a drone has come with unprecedented advantages. The newly acquired tool and skills in our inventory has had immediate advantages. Among the tangible benefits that the drone offers include the ability to see Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) in real-time. This has further increased reaction times during planned surprise attacks such as ambushes which may otherwise result to injury or loss of life. The ability to see kilometres ahead is reassuring for troops on patrol, and it helps them to seize initiative over the adversary. Similarly, the M-UAS is very effective in conducting camp security. The amount of time and risk associated with securing the camp against enemy activities is greatly reduced. The mission can be done in a matter of minutes and without additional risk to personnel and equipment, only activating troops on a needs-basis. Enemy mortar positions can be marked and targeted effectively thus the equipment acts as a deterrent. The added advantage of operating during

the night further elevates confidence levels of both commanders and troops, and helps to plan ahead in case of confirmed enemy activity.

Convoy security is another benefit afforded by the drone. The versatility of the drone proves capable of offering all-round awareness during movement. The drone operator's role in this situation involves supporting the convoy commander with real-time surveillance of the surroundings and position of the vehicles which enables the commander to plan and prepare accordingly. This is only possible if the operator is able to detect anomalies and make quick decisions that potentially save lives. By far, the most important feature of the asset is the ability to capture and record both still images and video. The amount of data available for exploitation from the recordings is invaluable to any commander, not forgetting that the recordings are an archive of knowledge for planning future operations.

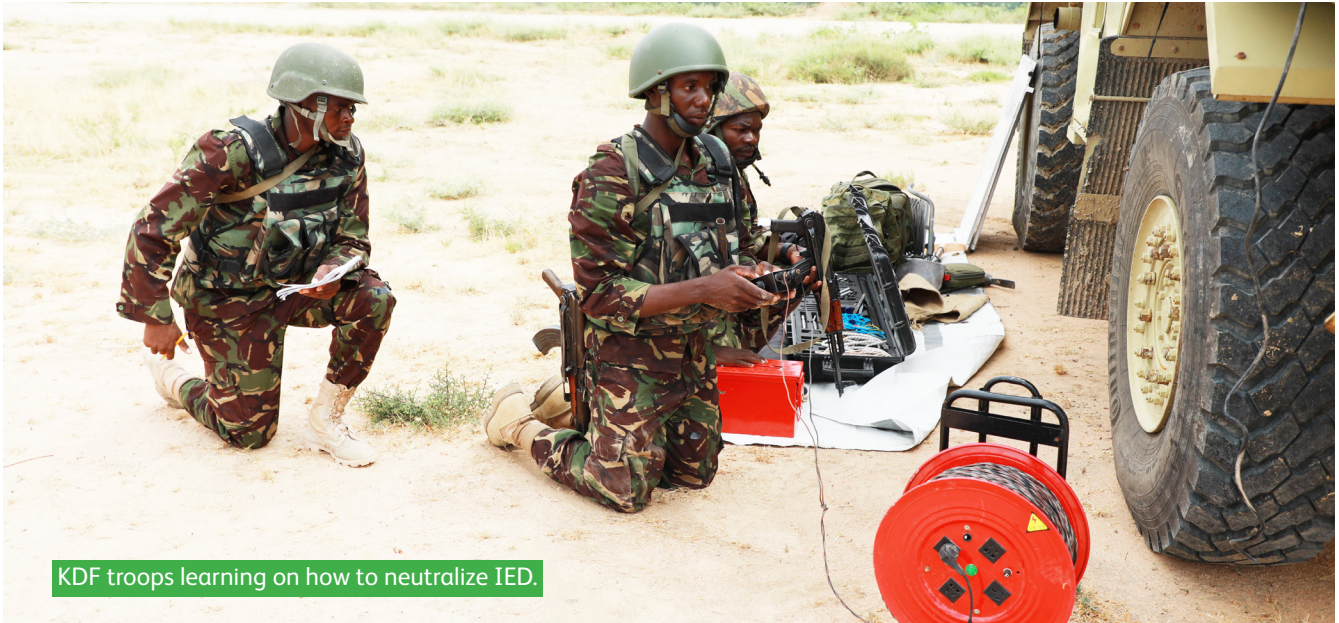
The modern warfare is changing rapidly due to the technological advancement. Training and equipping the soldier adds on to their capabilities to face emerging threats and be mission ready. It's also an aspect of holistic army readiness which highlights a connection between three echelons of warfare; tactical, operational and strategic and three military force operations; force generation, force employment and force projection.



Commander sector II observing the workability of the drone.

SUPPORT TO SAFETY AND SECURITY (DEFEATING IED)

Capt Annceta Munywoki (Mine Action Officer)



KDF troops learning on how to neutralize IED.

The war in Somalia cannot be defined as a conventional warfare. As former US president Kennedy said, "... it is simply another type of war new in its intensity, ancient in its origin-war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him."

Somalia is one of the countries that has been reported with the high use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) by the Al Shabaab militants. This continues to pose a threat to military operations and soldiers deployed in the war theatre requiring good knowledge on how to counter and mitigate the threat. Maj Gen James Mattis once said, "An untrained or uneducated soldier deployed to the combat zone, is a bigger threat to the mission accomplishment than the enemy".

Prior to their tour of duty, pre-deployment training is provided to our Counter



KDF troop on a mine sweep patrol.

Improvised Explosive Device (CIED) soldiers to equip them with the necessary knowledge to carry out operations in an IED threat environment and enable them to understand the threat picture before deployment to Somalia.

IEDs pose an unpredictable threat that is not confined to traditional battlefields and is difficult to mitigate. Apart from inflicting grievous physical injuries, causing dire psychological harm, spread fear and disruption across affected communities, IED attacks not only hinder the political,

social and economic development of a country, they also block life-saving humanitarian efforts. The use of IEDs in the area of operation impede military operations and cuts off some towns to trade affecting their social-economic growth.

Insurgents looking to put pressure on governments also target key infrastructure like mobile communication networks, electricity grids and tourist resorts. Such actions, disrupt commerce and tax revenue, communication break down,



KDF troop neutralizing a mortar bomb during an exercise.

destroy identity-defining artefacts of civilizations, and undermine confidence in the authorities and by extension increase the burden of need presented to international donors and institutions.

Defeating IEDs in the war theatre is thus a paramount aspect in supporting the safety and security of the locals to enhance their social-economic development which is key in achieving sustainable peace in Somalia.

IEDs are the preferred 'weapon of choice' for the Al-Shabab due to the ease of access of the IED making material such as homemade explosives (HME) including ammonium nitrate (AN) mixed with diesel fuel, urea nitrate, nails, pyrotechnic fillers, and explosives harvested from Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), car/motorcycle alarms, motorcycle batteries etc., making the use of IEDs attractive.

Al-Shabab usually emplace the IEDs on the main supply routes (MSRs) by burying them under the ground or concealing them in vegetation to achieve their desired effect, be it directional or as a shaped charge. Also, the use of Vehicle Borne IED (VBIEDs) to breach FOBs and other targeted locations has been witnessed. Under Vehicle IED (UVIED) have been used to target individuals in the theatre.

The continued economic hardships and adverse weather conditions in most parts of the Somalia country has led to

hunger and drought prevalence among the communities. This has made the local population vulnerable to being used by Al-Shabab as spotters and triggermen, just to fend for their families. Others harvest explosive materials from remnants of war (ERWs) and sell them to the terrorist groups, who use them to construct IEDs. Most of the local communities do not have access to education facilities, are unemployed and as such, become vulnerable to exploitation through radicalization by the Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab thus use the local population to transport, emplace and initiate these IEDs.

The most encountered mode of initiation for the IEDs by KDF troops have been the use of radio/remote controlled (RC) switches with mobile phones, car/motorcycle alarms (Victim Operated by vibration from the target) and honest switches (arming switch). These kinds of IEDs are constantly changing as Al Shabaab has been further developing IED fabrication through the transfer of knowledge from other conflict areas.

KDF troops operating in Somalia under ATMIS have continued to reduce the threat posed by Explosives Remnants of War (ERW) which encompasses both the Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) and Abandoned Explosive Ordinance (AXO), which are common in any war environment though demolitions. These items pose a

threat not only to the troops, but also to a great extent the local civilian population. Civilians are exposed to the risk when they interact with the ERWs, unaware of the danger they pose, especially for children when harvesting explosive materials for sale to the terrorist groups.

This year's International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, was 'Safe Ground, Safe Steps, Safe Home,' and in such a spirit the KDF troops operating in Somalia have been in the forefront to enhance safety and security of the locals in sector II by removing and safely detonating Improvised Explosive Device which was attached onto a vehicle that would have otherwise led to loss of innocent civilians in Dhobley town. Further KDF troops successfully destroyed IEDs during clearance patrols in Gherile and Burahache.

Refresher training in Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD), Route Search, Explosive Hazard Awareness Training (EHAT), Battlefield Emergency First Aid (BEFA) and Mobility Planning Course have also been offered to Kenyan Contingent Eleven (KENCOX-XI) troops by United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) team to strengthen IED threat mitigation capacity and capability of the troops, to conduct patrols in the area of operation and secure the population from the IED threat.

TRIBUTE TO THE PEACE AMBASSADORS

2Lt Mutua Kithiki



Deputy Sector II Commander Col Maiyo and Commanding Officer Lt Col Chemitei pay tribute to fallen soldiers during KDF day celebrations at Dhobley.

Engraved in his heart is a mission a strong desire for a peaceful world at all costs. In his diamond heart is the will to help the hopeless, ensure their security and alleviate any suffering within his capabilities. In his mind is a tenacious software, a ruthless desire to conquer war and foster sustainable peace. He proudly carries his nation on his shoulders, with his feet grounded in good training for mission readiness. In the middle of the storm, when things seem insurmountable and hopeless in the natural eye he stands firm and brings hope of a peaceful day. He has his Creator, his personal rifle, and his buddy to look up to when turmoil arises.

In his hands is his loyal 'girlfriend' his rifle, married for life till death do them apart. From time to time, he cleans her to achieve an adequate performance standard. He guards her with all his might lest a jealous enemy prey upon her. She is admired by many but a friend to none. During sunset, he holds her even closer in the chilling nights, for she can be the shield you need when faced with danger lurking in the dark. The feeling of love and care is mutual, for he must ensure she is serviceable for her to guarantee competence. This is the life of a soldier in a battlefield, a realism he must psychologically defeat, put the need of others above his and carry his duties diligently.

Following the fall of central government in Somalia, an insurgency sprang out of the country and started carrying

out cross border attacks in Kenya. This prompted Operation Linda nchi in October 2011 by Kenyan government and Kenya Defence Force (KDF) troops were tasked with dealing with the militants to safeguard the territorial integrity of our country.

Throughout the deployment of KDF troops in Somalia, our troops have paid the ultimate price while serving in Somalia under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) but the courageous and unflinching dedication of KDF's troops to foster sustainable peace in Somalia is undoubtable. The threat posed by the enemy has not dissuaded KDF troops from doing what needs to be done, liberating the Somalia people from the violent and brutal reign of Al Shabaab so that they can enjoy freedom, peace and democracy. In the words of General. MacArthur, 'It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it,' KDF continue to degrade the threat posed by Al Shabaab.

KDF soldiers have paid their ultimate price while on Main Supply Route clearance patrol to pacify the routes by removing Improvised Explosive Devices to facilitate free movement of people and goods in Somalia for economic revitalization to realize sustainable peace.

For the brave soldiers who bear the risk, there is no victory free from sorrow. There is the anguish of the families of these fallen soldiers, loss to our military and to our nation. KDF soldiers fight enthusiastically, because they know the cost. They do not dread on the days of mourning that will come, but of the peace that will be enjoyed by those left behind. When we see these memorials lined up neatly, row upon row, and the flag-draped coffins that carry the remains of fallen soldiers we should remember the fallen peace ambassadors who stood in formation, answering to the nation's call to duty.

We honor all those who left us never knowing how much they would be missed, we salute them, and pledge that we will never forget the sacrifices they made and as General George Patton said "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died, rather, we should thank God that such men lived."

Thank you.

HEALTHCARE, A STEP TOWARDS PEACE BUILDING

Lt Col Mohamed Ali



KDF soldier undertaking covid booster dose at Dhobley Level II Hospital

Healthcare is defined as the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and management of disease, illness, injury, and the preservation of physical and mental well-being in humans.

Violence has a tremendous effect on the health sector and the population that public health workers serve. Conflicts diverts funds, many health facilities are destroyed and health workers often flee the country creating deficit on human resources. The survivors often cope with lots of issues like disabilities, loss of livelihoods, and psychological effects of trauma; depression, and increased aggression towards each other.

Healthcare is a key facet in the society because people get ill, accidents and

emergencies do arise and the hospitals are needed to diagnose, treat and manage different types of ailments and diseases. Many of people's aspirations and desires cannot be met without longer, healthier, happy lives. All over the world, the healthcare industry will continue to thrive and grow as long as man exists hence forming an enormous part of any country's economy.

A healthy nation is a wealthy nation and achieving health targets is essential to sustainable social and economic development which are all aspects of peace building.

Health is an important determinant of economic development; a healthy population means higher productivity,

thus higher income per head. Human capital serves as a catalyst to economic growth and development. Individuals with higher life expectancy are likely to save more, and savings in turn feed back into capital accumulation and therefore into Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth. Additionally, they are likely to invest more in education, which in turn enhances economic growth, creation and adaption of new technologies.

Health can be equated to capital invested by the government to its population and leads to an increase in labour productivity, thus increase in incomes and subsequent increase in the wellbeing of the population. When labour is healthy, their incentive to develop new skills and knowledge is



KDF medics attending to a child at Dhobley Level II Hospital

higher because they expect to enjoy long term benefits. However, when the latter is characterized by workers with poor health, they turn to have an adverse effect on productivity.

In line with the Africa Health Strategy (AHS) (2016–2030) whose goal is to ensure long and healthy lives and promote the well-being for all in Africa in the context of “Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want” and the Sustainable Development Goals, Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) medical practitioners deployed under Africa Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) at level II hospital in Dhobley, Somalia have developed a close working relationship with the administration of Dhobley district hospital to help administer medical care to the communities within Sector II.

The health system of Sector II is dysfunctional due to three decades of internal conflict in the Somalia. Lack of investment in healthcare to address the health concerns in the sector II has led to the crumbling of the economy and its revitalizing is of outmost importance to kickstart the process of peacebuilding. Health indicators such as infant mortality

rate and maternal mortality rates in this Sector and Somalia in general are among the highest in the world.

Dhobley district hospital, like other health facilities in Somalia faces multiple challenges such as insufficient funding, poor infrastructure, lack of qualified health professionals and poor health system management. The hospital is understaffed, lacks diagnostic facilities such as X-rays & laboratory and insufficient supply of drugs and pharmaceutical products.

This compounded with the threat of Al Shabaab terror group which has constantly threatened the stability of Somalia has left many people to suffer due to lack of health infrastructure in their regions and fear of targeting from the group which complicates the already dire health situation in the region.

Faced with such shortcomings, KDF medical team under ATMIS, have constantly extended their medical expertise to Dhobley Hospital to reduce the burden of patients. In line with the ATMIS mandate of institutional capacity building, KDF medics have continued

to mentor and capacity build local medical practitioners to take up medical issues in the community and reduce the dependency level from ATMIS level II Hospital whose primary role is treating ATMIS troops.

The population of sector II constantly overwhelms the Dhobley District Hospital due to limited capacity in terms of trained medical personnel and medical equipment. Mostly, the cases that overwhelm the hospital are life threatening and KDF medical teams are in the forefront to help save such lives. More often than not, the Dhobley district hospital refers patients for surgical review and subsequent operations, patients with physiotherapy needs, nutritional and psychological counseling as well as mothers who require obstetric ultrasound are also referred to our facility to help in diagnosis of any complications during pregnancy and initiating appropriate management. Civilian patients who suffer trauma including gun shot and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) injuries are also referred to our institution for medical management emergencies.



KDF medics attending to a patient in Dhobley.

The ATMIS level II hospital provides blood and blood products to patients at the local hospital during emergencies and surgeries, donating drugs and pharmaceutical supplies especially syrups and pediatric solutions. The KDF biomedical technicians are also called upon to service and maintain medical equipment such as autoclave machines, operating theatre lamp and oxygen concentration machines at Dhobley district hospital.

In addition to this, KDF medical practitioners under ATMIS in level two hospital have also conducted mentorship and training for local health care workers in particular fields so as to enhance their knowledge and skills in management of patients. The training sessions conducted were in the areas of obstetric ultrasound, pre-operative nursing, anesthesia and wound management. Such skills go a long way in capacity building of such local institutions so as to bring medical help closer to the communities to better their health.

In particular, women, children and elderly are the most frequent patients who have been referred to ATMIS level two hospital portraying trauma injuries including gunshot wounds, abscesses, burns, malnutrition and snake bites which are rampant within the communities in sector II. Such cases require immediate attention and its paramount for the survival of the patients.

As anchored on “Health as a Bridge for Peace (HBP),” health care service delivery can be a valuable first step into peace building, when health care is accessible, non-discriminatory and consistent, it can augment citizens’ trust in the administration by gesticulating the state’s readiness and ability to respond to its population’s needs over the long-term. Such trust can be utilized into preaching peace to the population, leverage on medical care to promote ceasefires and provide psychological therapy to patients with war trauma.

Lack of good health systems in sector II has led to low productivity of individuals as their health care is poor. This has translated to poor economy, low innovations and little or no investment in such areas as education which is a facilitator in economic revitalization. Economic revitalization is an essential part of peacebuilding as it provides crucial peace dividends and it is a necessary foundation for longer-term development. Lack of economic revitalization countries struggle to build lasting peace and will remain at risk of relapsing into conflict.

KDF medics at ATMIS level II hospital continue to collaborate with the local administration in the provision of healthcare and logistical support to the communities in sector two as well as impacting skills and expertise to the local medics so that they can improve the quality of health care services available to the population they serve.

DRIPS OF HOPE

Wol Mwamridza Mwakubo



KDF soldiers under ATMIS donate a water tank to locals in Burahache.

The continuous decline in availability of freshwater in several parts of Somalia has resulted in fierce competition over water resources and conflicts in these regions. The deteriorating quality of groundwater resources as a result of over exploitation, increasing population and pollution exacerbated by climate change which has been manifested through recurrent floods and droughts has made the situation worse.

The villages of Bulla Garas and Dudundeer in Burahache District for a long time had depended on water weirs for their survival which hold little water and dependent on rainfall patterns. During the dry seasons the

villagers would watch their animals, which are their source of livelihood, die due to lack of water to sustain them. Consecutive seasons of little or no rainfall, drying up of water sources exposed many households to losses. With the additional threat from the Al Shabaab militants, many villagers were left with limited options in their quest of accessing water. Most of them kept clear the water weirs and watched their animals die while others had to travel far and wide to avoid encountering Al Shabaab militants on the way who would either take their cows or kidnap the herder.

The constant moving most often brought about clashes over the remaining weirs



KDF mechanic repairing water pump in Tabda.

between herders leading to lose of lives and destruction of properties. Involvement of young people in the conflict denied them of formal education, a vital aspect in peace building. The whole aspect of lack of access to clean water not only affect the animals but it also increases the risk of contracting diseases, such as diarrhea, acute watery diarrhea and cholera. Additionally, girls and women who are mostly left with the responsibility of fetching water are often exposed to conflict at water points and this adds their risk of physical or sexual assault while limiting their time to go to school too.

Tabda residents further found themselves in an additional challenge when their water generator broke down and the water supply was cut off. The residents had to

endure months of searching for water for their livestock and domestic use. The holistic aspect of lack of water brought negative social-economic effects to the community.

Kenya Defence Force (KDF) troops operating in Somalia under African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) took up the responsibilities of solving the water challenge in these three areas. The KDF engineer team in Tabda established the faulty parts of the water generator and made efforts of replacing them, repairing the generator and servicing it so that it can serve the locals and their needs.

On the cases of the villages of Bulla Garas and Dudundeer, the KDF team in Burahache established the hardship the villagers were undergoing to find

water and constructed tanks for each village where from time to time the KDF water bowser would be delivering water. The team installed a five thousand litre (5000L) tank where the villagers can fetch water without walking long distances. Additionally, water stored in such tanks is clean for consumption as compared to the weir water which poses health risks for the spread of water-borne diseases due to contamination and pollution.

Water availability is very key in building the human capital in Somalia as water is the backbone of social, economic and environmental growth in the country. The outbreak of COVID-19 also highlighted the dire need of availability of water.



Tabda locals and their animals quench their thirst following the repair of water pump by KDF mechanics.



Commander Kenya Army Lt Gen Peter Njiru, former Commander Kenya Army Lt Gen Walter Koipaton and Sector II Commander Brigadier Jattani Gula during a tour at the Bustani Garden in Dhobley in July 2022



Graduation of Somali medics at Dhobley Level II hospital in December 2022



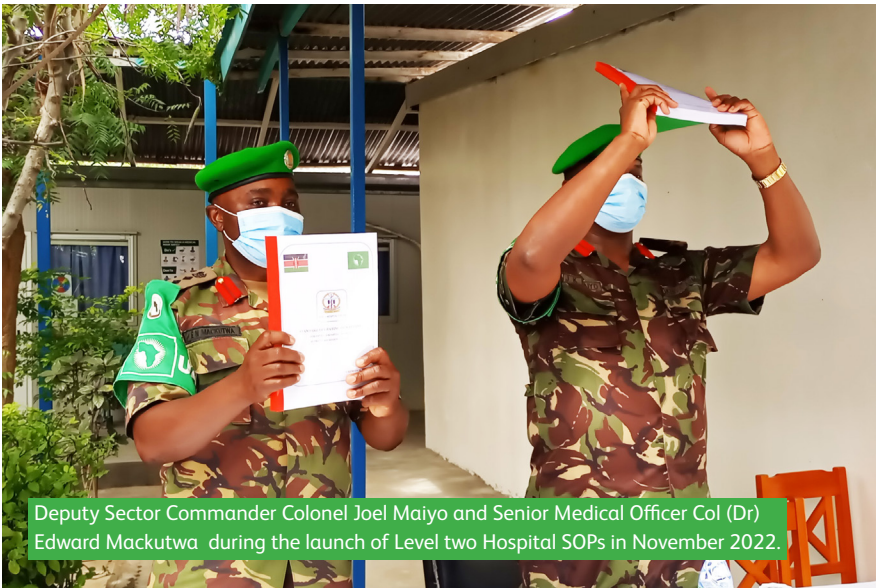
Maj Gen Jeff Nyagah then AMISOM sector II Commander hands over ATMIS flag to incoming sector II Commander Brigadier Jattani Gula in February 2022.



KDF troops engage in a football match at Dhobley in May 2022



Cabinet Secretary for Defence Hon. Aden Duale and Vice Chief of Defence Forces Lt Gen Francis Ogolla visit to KDF troops in Kismayo in December 2022.



Deputy Sector Commander Colonel Joel Maiyo and Senior Medical Officer Col (Dr) Edward Mackutwa during the launch of Level two Hospital SOPs in November 2022.



Deputy Sector II Commander Colonel Joel Maiyo decorating Cpl Akoth with ATMIS medals in December 2022.



Sector II Commander Jattani Gula shares a light moment with a boy who was being treated by KDF medics at Dhobley Level II Hospital



Deputy Sector II Commander Col Maiyo and Commanding Officer Lt Col Chemitei pay tribute to fallen soldiers during KDF day.



Sector II Commander Brigadier Jattani Gula receiving six Armoured Personnel Carriers from ATMIS Headquarters in December 2022.



Former Cabinet Secretary for Defence, Hon Eugene Wamalwa and Deputy Sector Commander Colonel Joel Maiyo during a visit at Kismayu in July 2022.



Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Ms Fiona Lortan and Deputy Sector Commander Colonel Joel Maiyo during a tour visit at Belis Qooqani in July 2022.



Commander Sector II, Commanding Officer Somalia National Army in Dhobley, Individual Police Officers representative and Jubaland Security Forces representative during Joint Operations Command Center inauguration at Dhobley in October 2022.



Commander Border Security Command Major General Stephen Radina during a tour visit to soldiers in Somalia in May 2022.



Sector II Commander Brigadier Jattani Gula meeting with Colonel Adow Somalia National Army Commander 11th Brigade in March 2022.



Female KDF Soldiers during a football match at Dhobley in September 2022.



KDF troops and United Nations Mine Action Service personnel during IED awareness session at Dhobley in April 2022.

MY VOW

Sgt Doreen Mbaka



I'M A SOLDIER,
A mom and a friend,
A warrior to the end,
A comrade and a sister.

I guard, I fight,
I do it for the love of my country,
To preserve the precious thing: peace,
I fear no gunshots nor bomb bangs.

I left behind all that I love,
My family, my home, my life,
A call of duty for the strong and brave,
For mankind to enjoy tranquility.

In a stuffy armoured carrier and harsh terrain,
I traverse breathing peace,
I don't walk unworthy,
I fight for land and home.

I will keep 'em memories, because I don't stand alone
Of comrades we laughed and cried together,
Of good times and bad tides
We rowed together on the bumpy roads.

When my people long for me,
When they cant reach me on my cell,
Because they miss the good times we had,
Tell 'em I am a soldier, we go far and wide to save homes,
Am ready, Am steady,
To give it all for my country,

