

## Somalia

<b>Response to Information Request Number:</b>	SOM00001.ZHN
<b>Date:</b>	15 October 1999
<b>Subject:</b>	Somalia: Information on the Digfeer Nursing School in Mogadishu
<b>From:</b>	INS Resource Information Center, Washington, D.C.
<b>Keywords:</b>	Somalia/Education/Health/Health care services/Health education/Health personnel/Medical treatment/Nurses/Public Health

### Queries:

Is the RIC aware of the existence of the Digfeer Nursing School in Mogadishu?

What language of instruction was used there?

### Response:

The Acting Director of the International Medical Corps office in Nairobi has had extensive field experience in Somalia and the IMC has remained active in Southern Somalia when many other NGOs have departed due to security concerns. The IMC Acting Director stated that there was nursing school known as Digfeer Nursing School, in Mogadishu, but that it is now closed. The language of instruction used at Digfeer was a combination of English and Somali (Platt 5 Oct. 1999).

The following is provided for additional background information on official languages used in Somalia. For more than a decade after the 1960 independence of the Somali Republic, Italian and English were used as the languages of administration and instruction in Somalia's schools. All government documents had been published in both languages. From 1963-1969 a number of English-speaking northerners were put in government positions of prominence and English then dominated Italian in official circles. English had begun to replace Italian as a medium of instruction in southern schools. One of the objectives of the 1969 revolution was the adoption of a standard orthography of the Somali language. In 1973 educational materials written in Somali were introduced in elementary school, and by 1975 were also being used in secondary and higher education. By the late 1970s, sufficient Somali materials were available to permit the Somali language to be the medium of instructions at all schools below the university level. Arabic was taught to all students at the elementary and secondary level. Italian remained in wide use throughout the 1970s at the national university because Italians dominated the senior faculty. By the late 1980s Somali was the language of instruction at the university as well.

Until the collapse of the national government in 1991, the Ministry of Health was responsible for the organization and administration of health services, however regional medical officers had some authority. In the 1970s most health personnel and facilities were located in Mogadishu and a few other towns. An effort to increase health personnel resulted in the opening of two nursing schools. Although Siad Barre ended private medical practice in 1972, private practitioners returned in the late 1980s when Somalis grew dissatisfied with the quality of government health care (*Somalia: A Country Study* 1993, pgs 43, 105, 112).

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

**References:**

Platt, Georgianna. Acting Director of International Medical Corps, Nairobi, Kenya.

5 October 1999. E-mail sent to INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC.

*Somalia: A Country Study*. 1993. Edited by Helen Chapin Metz. Washington, DC: Department of the Army.

*Last Modified 06/14/2002*