

**Event Report**  
**On**  
**Graduation, Grants Distribution and Closing Ceremony for**  
**The Durable Solutions Project in Baidoa, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016.**



**Submitted by MMC International**

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**Baidoa**

## 1. Introduction

MMC organized a high profile graduation, grants distribution and project closure ceremony in Baidoa on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The event was held at ISWA meeting hall near the presidency. To raise the profile of the event, MMCI invited the most senior official in ISWA, The acting President and Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Hon. Mohamed Hassan Fiqi. Among the present guests include the deputy minister of Planning and International cooperation, The Governor of Bay Region Mr Abdirashid and his two deputies on Humanitarian affairs and Admin and Finance respectively and The Auditor General of ISWA Mr Abukar. From the NGOs UNOCHA and UNCHR representatives in Baidoa and other civil society members in Baidoa, The DG for the ministry of Diaspora and Resettlement and other honorable guests. The graduants of the Returns project and some members of their families were also present.

## 2. Opening Remarks/Speeches

The event was officially opened with Quran versus by one of the grandaunts. The president of MMCI Mr Sid Ali Abukar has then delivered a speech to the guests explaining the project, its implementation and achievements. He briefed the officials that the project was launched in February 20 with enrolling 320 caseloads ( 50% returnees, 20% Host communities and 30% of IDPs in Baidoa). “His Excellency and other honorable guests, I cannot get the exact words to express my deep feelings today regarding this event. Before 4 months we received 320 beneficiaries from Refugees and IDPs, and today we have 280 people with different skill sets, I can call this “From despair to Hope”. He remarked. Sid Ali also explained the journey of the report from its launching to this final graduation day. Sid Ali has appreciated the continuous support from the Ministry of Diaspora and Resettlement Affairs which contributed to smooth implementation of the project and he also thanked OCHA and UNCHR for their tireless collaboration and inputs.



**Mr Abdikarim** from UNCHR has talked on their role on the project. He explained the process of receiving Returnees from their original places to their final destinations. He highlighted that they have connected the Returnees to MMCI. He urged the grandaunts to utilize the skills provided and also efficiently manage the grants to those won. “All of you are winners. Those learned skills and got grants are winners, and those who did not get grants are also winners because you all got the skills needed to get jobs in the labor market” he concluded.



**Mr Abdirashid**, the governor of Bay region, thanked the donors of such impactful projects in Baidoa naming the Government and people of Japan, The ILO and MMCI. He thanked MMCI for producing young and beautiful talented men and women with skills. He also requested from the other NGOs to learn from MMCI and its approaches. “I urge you all to wisely use your skills and grants to make a living for your families and communities. This is a lifetime chance to make change from A Refugee to economically independent persons” he remarked. Mr Abdirashid pledged a full cooperation to all development partners who wish to implement projects in Bay region.



**Hon. Mohamed Haji**, The deputy minister for Planning and International Cooperation of ISWA started his speech by Thanking the Government of Japan, ILO and MMCI for such outstanding job in Baidoa. He highlighted the importance of Vocational Training for the Returnees and IDPs. “I can tell you that the Development and achievements of the Chinese people are the results of their prioritization in the TVET sector” He said. He also urged MMCI to continue the TVET projects and explore other skill gaps to train. “Today’s fast paced technology needs technicians with different skill sets, and it’s the TVET institutions who can provide such skills trainings” he added. He finally urged the grandaunts not to sit with all these investments on them.



His Excellency **Hon. Mohamed Hassan Fiqi**, The acting president of ISWA expressed his highest gratitude to Japan Government to fund such a work. “On behalf of the President, I thank ILO and Japan for this beautiful job” he commented. “Am very happy to see all these men and women got training for the 5 skill trades in MMCI center. Providing skills and opportunities for wage and self employment is the best thing for the refugee returnees because it creates an economic identity for them” he added. Hon Fiqi has urged the youth to stop risking their lives in immigrating and dying for meaningless in the oceans and the deserts.



### 3. Drama Performance

MMCI organized a short drama outlining the Repatriation process to enrolling MMCI centers. The drama was presented to the audiences by some of the caseloads of the project. A father immigrates leaving a distressed mother with a boy and three girls behind. With no hope in the refugee camps, a neighbor visits her and informs on the Repatriation activity and how those returned home are welcomed in Baidoa. She immediately calls her children to pack their things and get ready to return home. Once they arrive in Baidoa, The Ministry of Diaspora and Resettlement Affairs welcomes them, registers and connects to MMCI TVET center. After four months, all the four children got jobs and support for their mother. The mother thanks ALLAH and those who supported to bring change to her life. In a different story, a shoe shiner was approached by a businessman who graduated from MMCI center. He tells the shoe shiner to study skills in one shift and work for the other shift. The shoe shiner stops his job after learning Mobile Phone repairing and opens a shop where he earns good income. The audiences loved the way the drama is presented.





#### 4. Media and Coverage

To raise the profile and reach of the event, MMCI has invited three Somali Speaking TV channels namely Somali Channel, SNTV and SBC. These channels will run the event coverage for 24 hours. The radio stations invited included VOA Somali Service, Danan Radio and Southwest Radio. The Radio Muqdisho website has already published the event in their site, below the link.

<http://www.radiomugdisho.net/arday-baydhabo-loogu-soo-xiray-barashada-farsamada-xirfado-kaladuwan>

<http://www.voasomali.com/a/3362043.html> (event audio starts from 9.50 minutes to 16.15 minutes )

#### 5. Grants and Certificate Awarding

After completing the speech of the acting president, certificates were awarded to all the graduates. In the presence of Hon. Fiqi and the governor, Cash grants were also distributed to the grant winners via Bank Cheques. It was great honor that some of the caseloads received their cheques from the acting president and the Governor.

Sample photos



