



Somalia Water and Land Information Management System  
 Funded by the European Commission and implemented by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

**Feature Article #4**

## SWIMming in water sources information



*SWIMS Launch, Nairobi August 2006*

The need to harmonise data collection and management practices for water sources in Somalia was articulated long ago by key players in the water sector, and SWALIM, then still in its first phase, was mandated to take the lead. SWALIM's vision was to realize the objective in two phases, concentrating first on data collection and then on management. In close consultation with partners, SWALIM developed standard field data collection sheets for each type of source. The release of these sheets was greatly welcomed, and in no time, data started flowing in.

Now in its second phase, SWALIM began implementing the second stage, the development of software for storing and managing this valuable information. The software is known as SWIMS (Somalia Water Sources Information Management System). This relational database application allows multiple agencies to collect and manage information within their organizations while at the same time contributing to the national inventory of water sources.

In August 2006, SWIMS became a reality, with a colourful launch in Nairobi. SWALIM immediately embarked upon its deployment and training programme, engaging as many organizations working in the water sector in Somalia as it could, including government ministries, NGOs and UN agencies. Training has been conducted in Nairobi, Somaliland and Puntland for the software users,

and now our attention turns to the south. Six months down the lane, SWIMS has overcome "teething problems" – primarily from the north, the national database currently has over 650 verified source records.

Those already familiar with SWIMS would agree that it is indeed the ultimate information link to Somali water sources, as it links all players in the water sector to one national database. With its well-designed user interface and a database that is easy to manage, query for information and produce reports, the software caters for the demands of different users with varying computer knowledge. For decision makers, the software builds a history of water sources and reports on past, ongoing or planned intervention activities.

At present, about twenty organizations have completed training on the software and adopted it for the management of water sources. The relevant government ministries in Somaliland and Puntland have also adopted the system, and we have now obtained the agreement of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The response we get is overwhelming. . . .don't be left out - join the team and let us SWIM together!



*Training for Ministries' staff - Somaliland*



*Training for Ministries' staff - Puntland*



*Training for NGOs and UN Agencies - Nairobi*

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