

World Vision Press Release
31 OCTOBER 2007

Today World Vision, along with more than 40 international and national humanitarian agencies working in Somalia, is highlighting the dramatic deterioration of the humanitarian situation in South Central Somalia and calling on those with a **responsibility to protect** civilians to act now to save lives.

Constrained access and deteriorating security is leaving international and national NGOs with little humanitarian space in which to operate in Somalia. All indicators point to a deterioration of the already dire humanitarian situation.

"We cannot stand by while thousands of children and their families suffer through one of the worst humanitarian crises in our world today," said Chris Smoot, program director for World Vision Somalia. "World Vision is calling on the international community to intervene for the sake of thousands of families before it is too late"

The following Statement of Concern was issued today by more than 40 organizations working in Somalia:

"There is an unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in South Central Somalia. Tens of thousands of people are currently fleeing violence in Mogadishu adding to the up to 335,000 people already needing immediate lifesaving assistance in Mogadishu and the Shabelle regions.

International and National NGOs cannot respond effectively to the crisis because access and security are deteriorating dramatically at a time when needs are increasing.

The international community and all parties to the present conflict have a **responsibility to protect** civilians, to allow the delivery of aid and to respect humanitarian space and the safety of humanitarian workers." ()

Full text available at:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200710310796.html>