



SOMALI REGION UPDATE

The food security situation in Somali Region remains concerning. A joint multi-sectoral Drought Emergency Response Plan that seeks approximately ETB 32.4 million to address outstanding emergency Sectoral requirement for a period of six months has been released by the Regional Government. The Response Plan, which focuses on life saving interventions in health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and livestock and agriculture, aims to mitigate the impacts of drought due to poor consecutive seasonal performance in 2007 coupled with the current dry season. The plan indicates that more than one million people are currently facing critical water shortage in 33 woredas. In addition to water trucking interventions, the need for rehabilitation of existing water sources has been underscored by partners. The Regional Water Bureau (RWB) in collaboration with UNICEF has identified 28 boreholes that are in need of immediate rehabilitation throughout the region. Livestock condition continues to deteriorate with recent reports of poor physical body condition of camel – the most drought resistant animal – which indicates the severity of the situation. Increased internal and cross border migrations of livestock continues to cause over-grazing increasing fears of further pasture depletion.

A total of 23,156 MT of food has been dispatched to the five zones under military operations as of 25 February. To date 16,284 MT of relief food commodities have arrived to FDPs of which 74 percent has been distributed to beneficiaries. The information is based on WFP monitoring missions and will be completed as monitoring progresses. Meanwhile, the measles campaign that commenced in 6 February is ongoing. For more information: ocha-eth@un.org & wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

DETERIORATING FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN THE LOWLAND AGRO-PATORAL AREAS OF OROMIYA REGION

In addition to the deteriorating food security situation in Borena zone, concerning food security situations are reported in other low land agro-pastoral areas of Oromiya Region including Liben woreda in Guji zone. These areas are affected by the poor performance of the consecutive rainy seasons in 2007. Serious water shortage for human and livestock consumption coupled with poor pasture availability contributed to the declining food security situation in Liben Woreda. Livestock body condition is deteriorating and milk production has reduced. Deaths of livestock have been reported in some kebeles. Adjacent woredas have also been affected hampering the traditional pastoral migration. School dropout rates have increased and one school has been closed in the woreda. On top of the deteriorating food security situation, there are reports of measles outbreak. Serious water shortages are also reported from the lowland woredas of Babile, Gursum, Meyu Muluke, Gole Oda, in East Harerge zone. There are also reports of serious food shortages in Midhega Tola, Chenaksen, Kurfa Chelle, Metta and Bedeno woredas. The situation is of particular concern in Midhega Tola and Chenaksen woredas. Immediate emergency intervention is crucial in these areas to address the outstanding sectoral requirements. The Liben Pastoral Development Association undertook a one month water tankering intervention in Liben woreda, which will phase out shortly. SC-USA has secured funding from the UN OCHA Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) to undertake livestock feed and water tankering interventions in three kebeles. Meanwhile, sectoral responses are underway in Borena zone. Funding has been provided through the HRF to CARE, SC US, Christian Aid/AFD and WHO in response to identified priority needs including water provision for both human and animal consumption, livestock feed and health interventions in hotspot woredas. For more information: ocha-eth@un.org

MEASLES OUTBREAKS

As of 22 February, six measles outbreaks were reported in various areas. Approximately 1,430 suspected cases have been reported, out of which 1,201 are laboratory confirmed. Most of the confirmed cases – 1,135 – were reported from Guji zone in Oromiya region. The most affected woredas is Hmbella Womena – where 67 percent of cases were under five. The Oromiya Regional Health Bureau submitted a proposal to WHO to conduct mass vaccination in Borena and Guji zones. WHO is seeking donor support amounting to US\$ 700,000 to undertake the intervention. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

UNHCR RESUMES STALLED REPATRIATION OF SUDANESE IN ETHIOPIA

The UNHCR Sudanese refugees repatriation programme from western Ethiopia has resumed. A convoy carrying 605 refugees from Bonga camp arrived to the Blue Nile State of South Sudan during the week. UNHCR plans to continue the operation on a weekly basis. The returnees were provided with a repatriation package including basic non-food items. Upon arrival, the World Food Programme and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization provided the returnees with a reintegration package comprising three months of food, seeds and agricultural tools. The Sudanese repatriation programme was disrupted for six month in 2007 with the start of the rainy season that hampered movement. The operation was resumed in December with the return of more than 1,800 refugees. UNHCR plans to complete its repatriation programme from Bonga and Dimma camps by May 2008. The two camps currently host approximately 7,600 refugees. The UNHCR repatriation programme commenced in March 2006 and has to date facilitated the repatriation of more than 23,000 refugees to Southern Sudan. For more information contact: GEGZIABK@unhcr.org