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SITUATION REPORT: DROUGHT/FOOD CRISIS IN ETHIOPIA – 27th JUNE 2008

Highlights:

- ***Belg*/pastoral areas assessment has begun.**
- **Prioritized sectoral responses have been submitted for Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) consideration.**
- **UNICEF appealed for US\$ 49.2 million to scale up ongoing response to immediate emergency needs, enhance mitigation and preparedness measures and to strengthen assessment and monitoring to ensure timely and adequate action.**
- **A UN Country Team (UNCT) Mission led by the Humanitarian Coordinator to visit malnutrition affected areas in SNNPR on 27 June.**

Situation Update

Drought continues to be a major challenge for the humanitarian community. Despite the arrival of the rains and humanitarian interventions the emergency has not yet been fully addressed. *Belg* production has failed in most *belg* dependent parts of the country leading to expectations of extended food shortages until the next harvest. Armyworm and locust infestation has further depleted the limited available resources including farm lands and pasture.

Continued price hikes coupled with limited supplies of food and a shortage of emergency resources has contributed to the further deterioration of the food security situation. Timely and efficient emergency resource contributions are sought to the requirements included in the Revised 2008 Humanitarian Requirements document. Prioritized sectoral proposals including food, nutrition, health, water and sanitation against the US\$ 20 million CERF allocation have been forwarded for the secretariat consideration.

Local cereal prices have now become higher than global market prices. According to WFP, imported wheat is currently cheaper than local price of maize and sorghum. The current local price of wheat is US\$ 660/MT compared to import parity of US\$ 425/MT. The situation is expected to further escalate as the hunger season progresses from June to September. CARE reports that the price of grain continues to increase in most local markets of South Gonder,

Borena, East and West Hararghe zones where the price of livestock has decreased dramatically due to poor livestock physical condition and increased supply.

Although the rains improved pasture and water availability for both human and livestock use, the volume of pasture is still below normal to accommodate needs particularly in Borena zone. Most highland parts of East Hararghe in Oromiya Region and South Gondar in Amhara Region received improved rains during the first two weeks of June; while most of West Hararghe and Borena zones in Oromiya region received inadequate rainfall. Moreover, most parts of Gambella, Eastern/Western Oromiya, Beneshangul Gumuz and Western Amhara regions received below normal rainfall.

Crop production prospects remain poor in Borena, East and West Hararghe zones of Oromiya region. Crop performances in the highlands of East Hararghe and some parts of South Gonder and West Hararghe zones have improved with the rains. Locust infestation in Borena and armyworm in East and West Hararghe zones affected crops and pasture. Re-planting activities are underway in East and West Hararghe zones to supplement the damage caused by the infestation.

The DPPA led multi-agency *belg*/pastoral assessment mission started on 24th June for pastoral areas and on 28th June for the cropping areas. The findings of the assessment will update the Revised 2008 Humanitarian Requirement document.

Health and Nutrition

The Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) confirmed that admission rates in Therapeutic Feeding Programmes (TFP) are still rising in drought affected zones of SNNP and Oromia Regions. Newly emerging hotspot areas were identified by the Regional ENCU in Awassa during the Child Survival Task Force meeting and gaps in response were discussed during the Multi Agency Nutrition Task Force meeting (MANTF). Following a rapid assessment, MSF Belgium will respond in Kindo Didaye woreda of Welayita zone; ACF will support Supplementary Feeding Program operations in Loka Abaya woreda of Sidama zone; Concern will increase support to MOH TFP in several zones; and GOAL has started supporting MOH TFP in Damot Gale woreda in Welayita zone of SNNPR.

In Somali, while little data is available, NGOs reported that SAM cases and admissions had increased in the last week in Gode hospital and in Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTPs) in Kelafo woreda of Gode zone. NGOs report that mobile health and nutrition support operations are hampered by lack of access and the information available on SAM cases and treatment remains limited. Save the Children UK Rapid nutrition assessment in Amhara Region presented

high proxy GAM and SAM rates in Gidan woreda of North Wollo and Legambo woreda of South Wollo zones. Save the Children UK have also begun a full nutrition survey in Gidan. CONCERN reported that the nutrition situation in Dessie Zuria woreda of South Wollo zone is also deteriorating while Therapeutic Supplementary Feeding Program is planned to support the MoH TFP.

In Oromia Therapeutic Feeding Program (TFP) caseloads remain high in Siraro and Shashemene woredas of West Arsi zone. IMC report that TFP admissions have also risen, although not alarmingly so, in Moyale woreda of Borena and several woredas of East Hararghe zones. Regional Health Bureau is currently assessing the situation in several woredas of Bale zone including Goro, Mena and Berbere woredas.

The Enhanced Outreach Strategy (EOS)/ Targeted Supplementary Food (TSF) nutrition screening registered 98,953 children under five and 45,600 pregnant and lactating women for the TSF programme in 37 woredas of SNNPR. In Oromiya, 52,126 children and 29,830 women from 73 woredas received a TSF ration card. Food is being dispatched to the regions.

During the last week, UNICEF sent 69 MT of Plumpy’Nut to SNNPR and 53 MT of Plumpy’Nut to the Oromiya Regional Health Bureaus for further distribution to Therapeutic Feeding Units (TFUs) and Outpatient Treatment Programs (OTPs). The distribution plan was finalized by ENCU together with Regional Health Bureaus and NGOs. The supplies will be sufficient for the treatment of a total of more than 12,000 malnourished children for a period of one month. UNICEF has recruited four nutrition consultants to be deployed in SNNP and Oromiya Regions starting from 1st of July to support the emergency nutrition response, including the dispatch and distribution of therapeutic food.

The third UNICEF supported airlifted cargo of Plumpy’Nut has arrived on 26 June to Addis Ababa, within the framework of the announced four weeks operation bringing in a total of 772 MT of RUTF.

Identified gaps in nutrition intervention include shortage of supplies in some woredas, and disruption in the steady pipeline of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF). The Multi Agency Nutrition Taskforce (MANTF) suggested that partners ensure they have the capacity to intervene to support the MoH effectively and to ensure quality services are delivered to manage and treat SAM cases following the FMOH National Protocols.

With the onset of the rains Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) cases have increased. Cases were reported from Ankesha and Guagusa woredas in Awi zone, Takusa woreda in North Gondar zone and Bahir Dar city in Amhara Region; Warder zone in Somali Region and Akaki woreda in East Shoa zone and Sebeta Hawas woreda in South west Shoa zone of Oromiya Region. The hot spot areas are Takusa woreda of North Gondar zone of Amhara and Akaki woreda of East Shoa zone of Oromiya.

One measles case was reported from Kirkos Sub city in Addis Ababa. No other region has reported measles cases during the week. Malaria and Pneumonia cases have been reported from Guji zone of Oromiya and Dirashe and Amaro special woredas in SNNP Regions. Other health threats including meningococcal meningitis have subsided.

WHO continue to provide technical support for AWD, measles and meningitis response to FMoH and Regional Health Bureaus. Currently national consultants have been assigned to Dire Dawa, Bahir Dar and SNNPR to support emergency preparedness, response and health cluster coordination. Additionally, fund allocated to Oromiya and Amhara regions have been reprogrammed to support AWD response in affected woredas.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Poor sanitation and hygiene practices in Case Treatment Centers (CTCs) with high concentration of malnourished children maximize the risk of AWD outbreak. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and nutrition partners are working together to enhance WASH services in Therapeutic Feeding Centers (TFCs).

A new working group comprised of Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), UNICEF, UNOCHA, WHO, Oxfam GB, IRC, PSI, CARE has been established. The main function of the working group will be producing guideline and tools to facilitate full-fledged AWD response, providing information and mapping on hotspot areas, prioritize interventions, identify response gaps and support in project appraisal for AWD funding.

Food Assistance

The national requirement for food is beyond the available resources at hand and upcoming supplies. WFP reports that the current shortfall for the national relief operations amounts to some 380,000 MT of food. Considering available resources, the shortfall for WFP's input to the national relief operation totals 262,000 MT valued at US\$ 212.4 million.

Meanwhile, WFP continues to exhaust all opportunities for more supply of food. WFP finalized a proposal to Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for US\$ 10 million for general relief food distribution. WFP also requested 40,000 MT of cereals from Emergency Food Security Reserve Administration (EFSRA) to cover the June relief requirements. As part of WFP's endeavor to procure food regionally, negotiations are going on with the Government of Sudan for procurement of Sorghum.

The current price of local Corn-Soya Blend (CSB) is increasing higher than imported CSB due to the increased price of raw materials, maize and soy beans. The offer ranges between US\$ 783/MT and US\$ 836/MT. However, given that local purchase is quicker than international purchase, international capacities are currently overstretched, and donors prefer it, the country office is going ahead with local purchase for the present time.

WFP has been working with DPPA to prioritize relief distribution to the most acutely affected during June to September based on the hotspot list, due to shortage of resources. Priority will be given to woredas under 1 and 2 priorities. Meanwhile, WFP reports that only half of the relief caseload can be reached in July 2008.

WFP current response (for relief) to date

Somali: An amount of 33,461MT has been allocated to 1,025,030 beneficiaries during January to June. Some 23,142MT has been dispatched from this allocation, and 7,951MT distributed to beneficiaries (out of the 10,907MT which was reported delivered to the FDPs.)

SNNPR: During January to June, a total of 54,402MT has been allocated to 1,292,762 beneficiaries. Some 29,612MT has been dispatched.

Oromiya: A total of 13,968MT has been allocated to 435,369 beneficiaries. Some 10,642MT has been dispatched.

To date, during January to June, a total of 11,234MT has been allocated to some 455,396 beneficiaries in the Regions of **Afar**, **Amhara**, **Benishangul Gumuz**, **Gambella** and **Tigray**. A total of 4,326MT has been dispatched to these areas.

Agriculture and Livestock

Procurement of seeds is underway for SNNPR using the US\$ 2.08 million obtained from Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF). The fund is provided jointly to FAO, GOAL and World Vision International (WVI) for seed, sweet potato, and fertilizer interventions. In addition, CARE supplied 56 quintals of short maturing maize crop emergency seed for distribution in Grawa and Kurfachelle woredas of East Hararghe zone in Oromiya Region.

FAO started vaccination campaigns and training of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) in Semera, Afar Region using the US\$ 1.28 million funding obtained from Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for Afar and Gambella. Under the same project, seed delivery in Gambella is ongoing. While the livestock vaccination campaign against Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP) is ongoing, FAO has purchased Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) vaccine and has just started vaccination of goats against CBPP in

Borena and Guji Zones of Oromiya. In addition, treatment against internal parasites and other infectious diseases are underway in Oromiya Region.

USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) approved a project valued at US\$ 309,000 for coordination of agricultural activities in Somali Region.

Emergency Appeals

- On 24 June UNICEF launched an appeal for US\$ 49.2 million. UNICEF has secured US\$ 5.6 million against requirement leaving US\$ 43.6 million net requirement. The fund will be used to scale up ongoing response to immediate emergency needs, enhance mitigation and preparedness measures in acute malnutrition levels and to strengthen assessment and monitoring to ensure timely and adequate action. In addition, UNICEF will work on strengthening local Government capacity to address the increasing needs; and pre-positioning essential supplies, including therapeutic food, essential medicines, water purification and sanitation materials. More information is available at:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_31288.html

- Caritas Internationalis in cooperation with Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat launched an emergency appeal on 20 June for US\$ 1.3 million. The fund will provide supplementary food to approximately 22,000 children and extra rations for an estimated 4,500 pregnant and nursing mothers over the next five months. More information can be obtained at:

http://www.caritas.org/newsroom/PressRelease23_06_08.html

- On 18th June, Save the Children family launched an appeal for US\$ 20 million to assist 900,000 people, including 335,000 children. More information can be found at: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/41_5931.htm.

Recent Missions

- UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Hilde Johnson visited Gurage zone in SNNPR during her recent trip to drought affected areas in Ethiopia. Ms. Johnson said 'The situation in the hardest hit areas is extremely serious and Children are now at risk of dying in several areas if help is not provided urgently. The "Government and partners are doing their utmost to help, but needs are not being met with adequate speed". The UNICEF official urged the "assistance to be scaled up and taken urgently". Ms. Johnson had "positive meetings with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and other senior leaders"

during her four day visit. She added that all Government officials she talked to agreed the food shortages are serious and getting worse.

- A UN Country Team mission led by the Humanitarian Coordinator visits malnutrition affected areas in SNNPR on 27 June.

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