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## **SITUATION REPORT: DROUGHT/FOOD CRISIS IN ETHIOPIA – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

### **Highlights:**

- **MoH to start training for Health Extension Workers to support nutrition response**
- **WFP faces a shortfall of 200,543 MT of food for emergency relief beneficiaries**
- **Both the emergency relief food and PSNP pipelines have broken**
- **Food insecurity likely to further exacerbate due to late planting of crops and continually soaring prices of food**
- **High numbers of malnutrition cases reported in Borena, Bale, East and West Harerge zones of Oromiya and Gurage, Siltie, Kembata Tembaro, Sidama and Hadiya zones of SNNP Regions.**

### **Situation Update**

Soaring food prices and poor rain performance are expected to further affect the food security situation of the urban and rural poor, vulnerable pastoral and agropastoral populations according to WFP. Maize, harricot beans and *teff* planted using the late *belg* rains in April and May are performing well in some areas but are wilting in others due to dry spells, whilst in some areas crops have been destroyed by armyworm. Green harvest of maize and some Irish potato harvest is expected beginning in late August/September. WFP noted also that unusual stress associated with the migration of both cattle and people within the Somali Region and some areas of Afar and Oromiya Regions is resulting in increased clan conflict over resources.

According to CARE, improved water availability has been recorded in South Gonder and East Harerge zones of Amhara and Oromiya Regions allowing cultivation of late planted crops. However, expectation of *belg* crop harvest in Borena for the current year remains low due to late planting. Reports from CARE also indicate that heavy rainfall accompanied by hailstorms have been received in East Este woreda of South Gonder in Amhara damaging 416 hectares of barley, wheat, potato, maize and *teff* crops. The overall rainfall performance during the period April-June is reportedly normal to above normal in Southern and Eastern parts of the country. Meanwhile, the National Meteorological Agency forecasts normal onset and cessation of *kiremt* season for a major proportion of the country. CARE reported that seasonal agricultural activities of weeding and hoeing of long-maturing crops (maize and sorghum) has started in South Gonder,

East and West Harerge zones. Meanwhile, land preparation and planting of short maturing meher crops has also started to take place in the zones.

FEWSNET reports show that the *belg* crop growing areas in Amara Region are also facing acute food deficit as a result of the poor performance of the *belg* rains. Gubalafto and Dawnt of North Wollo Zone, Legabmo and Sayint of South Wollo Zone, Menze Gera and Menze Mama of North Shewa Zone are among the most seriously affected. Assessment reports indicate that livestock conditions have deteriorated due to shortage of pasture and water during the extended dry period in March and April.

Rains in Somali Region were late, irregular and inadequate particularly in Shinile and Jijiga. Dry Hagaa winds are blowing with the start of the dry season leading to increased depletion of pasture and water. Reports indicate that armyworm infestation in some parts of the region has resulted in the quick depletion of browse and pasture and early migration of livestock.

WFP reported that armyworm has destroyed pasture, cabbage and haricot bean crops in 24 kebeles in Boricha, 11 kebeles in Chuko and 15 kebeles in Dale woredas of Sidama zone in SNNPR. Armyworm infestation in Borena, South Gondar and East and West Harerge zones is reportedly under control. Most farmers in the zones have replanted crops damaged by armyworm and poor *belg* rainfall performance. CARE also reported that water and pasture availability has also improved in most woredas of Borena, South Gonder, East and West Harerge zones with the exception of Fentale woreda in East Shoa zone, lowland areas of Borena and Southern Afar Regions where critical pasture shortage has been reported. Meanwhile, OXFAM GB has continued water trucking activities in Afar Region.

Prices of staple food remain high in most local markets with a marginal decline in the price of livestock. CARE's report shows that the price ratio of one shoat to a quintal of maize currently stands at 0.45 in Awash/Fentale and 0.41 in East Harerge local markets. Poor household access to food is hence negatively affected. High food prices are expected to continue at least until the next harvest season (October) as the *belg* production performance in most parts of the country is poor.

Moreover, increased food insecurity has been reported in Farta woreda of South Gonder zone in Amhara, Fentale woreda in East Shoa, East/West Harerge and Borena zones of Oromiya Regions, according to CARE. Milk production continues to be very low in Southern Afar, Fentale, lowlands of East and West Harerge due to the prolonged dry spell.

### **Situation update**

The nutrition situation in several parts of the country continues to deteriorate as new emerging hot spot woredas have been identified this week in Oromia and SNNP Regions through rapid assessments and mass screening by the Regional/Zonal Health Bureaus. Save the Children US has reported high levels of malnutrition in Burji, Basketo and Konso special woredas and will support interventions. CONCERN has reported high levels of malnutrition in Duna woreda, Hadiya zone and in Angacha woreda, Kembata Tembaro zone. CONCERN will work with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to support Therapeutic Feeding Programs in both woredas. Anecdotal reports of worsening nutrition situation in children have been received from parts of Tigray and Afar.

The Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) plans to follow up with partners and conduct standard rapid assessments to verify these reports. In Amhara, especially in largely *belg* dependent areas, the food security situation remains a concern. A recent survey conducted by Save the Children UK in Gidan, North Wollo revealed a GAM of 12.1% (9.2-14.9%) and SAM of 1.1% (0.3-1.8%) which is considered as serious in light of aggravating factors such as low access to food, inflation, livestock death and chronic poverty. Save the Children UK will support a nutrition intervention in the woreda. In Somali, the lack of formal assessment data and reliance on sparse anecdotal information continues to frustrate humanitarian partners. ENCU continues to offer support to the regional authorities to conduct surveys in the worst affected areas in order to generate the appropriate emergency response, save lives and alleviate suffering. Save the Children US recently conducted rapid assessments of Dolobay and Dolo Odo, Liben zone and found increasing numbers of SAM cases especially in Dolo Odo. Save the Children US plan to support MoH Therapeutic Feeding Programs (TFPs) and a Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program (TSFP) response in the woreda. MDM France has been asked to scale up support for health and nutrition in Shilabo woreda, Korahe zone of Somali Region in response to rising SAM observed in children.

Admissions to TFPs continue to rise in SNNP and Oromia Regions. Partners (MSF-Belgium, Save the Children US, Save the Children UK, ACF, CONCERN, GOAL, Samaritan's Purse, World Vision, IMC, MSF-Greece) are concerned that due to the serious shortage in Supplementary Feeding materials (Corn Soya Blend, OIL) new admissions and readmissions will remain high in the next three months.

## **Plumpy'nut response**

UNICEF reported that as of 10 July, 645 MT of Plumpy'Nut has arrived in Addis Ababa. Two additional air cargos bringing in 93.1 MT of Plumpy'Nut each are expected to arrive on 11 and 14 July. 409 MT of Plumpy'nut has been dispatched to the regions for further distribution to NGOs operating in the field. During the week from 30 June to 7 July, 71.7 MT of Plumpy'Nut and 5.8 MT of F-75 therapeutic milk were sent to Kembata Tembaro Zonal Health Bureau, Hadiya Zonal Health Office, Sidama Zonal Health Bureau and to SNNP Regional Health Bureau. Fifteen tents were sent to SNNP Regional Health Bureau to support Therapeutic Feeding Programmes (TFPs) to be opened by MSF-Belgium. Further, various materials for TFPs, including one TFP training kit were sent to West Showa Zonal Health Bureau in Oromiya Region.

UNICEF has requested a second loan from headquarters to bring in a second batch of 1,217 MT of Plumpy'Nut in the coming weeks. Meanwhile UNICEF's supply Division is looking for alternative sources of Plumpy'Nut supply considering the current shortage of the item in the world markets.

## **Coordination and trainings**

A task force including the Government, WFP, UNICEF and other UN and NGO partners is being established to undertake a joint national nutritional assessment. The task force is further discussing the methodology and timeframe for the assessment.

Coordination in Oromia is improving by the activation of the joint Health/Nutrition task force now meeting bi-weekly and chaired by the Oromiya Regional Health Bureau. This is a result of the strong leadership offered by the Federal MoH, now keen to support coordination and emergency response efforts in all affected regions. The Oromia Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB)/ Food Security (FS) with the Regional Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (R-ENCU) jointly identified 47 highly food insecure woredas in the Region. Mass screening of all children under-five years in the worst affected kebeles started on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July and should be completed by the 13<sup>th</sup>. Results will be shared through the Regional Health Bureau and NGO support has been requested to initiate appropriate emergency response interventions for nutrition.

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH), UNICEF, CONCERN and three Regional Health Bureaus will start training of trainers for Health Extension Workers (HEWs) starting from 14 July to support the *Decentralized management of severe acute malnutrition* and efforts to provide Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTPs) services down to kebele level health posts. Nutrition training for 454 Trainers followed by training for all HEWs, (approximately 6,000 people from the Regions of Amhara, Oromiya and SNNP) is planned to start immediately. Abbreviated reference materials have been prepared using the National Protocol on SAM treatment and

management with the help of UNICEF and CONCERN. Meanwhile, WHO and UNICEF are looking for strategies to financially support the training activity, in response to FMoH's request. CONCERN has so far pledged ETB 13,000. The total cost for the training program is estimated at USD 350,000.

### **Health**

WHO reported that cases of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) have continued to be reported in Gonji and Achefer woredas of West Gojjam, Guagusa woreda of Awi and Alefa Takusa woreda of North Gonder zones in Amhara Region. These cases have been further exacerbated due to shortage of safe water supply and poor sanitation practices. In relation to case management, shortages of drugs and medical supplies are reported and being addressed. Additional technical support for logistics to support planning and transport from regional/zonal level drug stores to woreda/kebele level health facilities is required.

Meanwhile, according to WHO meningitis cases demonstrated significant decrease nationwide except sporadic cases being reported in Wadara woreda in Oromiya Region. Moreover, WHO's report indicates that more than 600,000 people between the ages of 2–30 years have been vaccinated against meningitis in high risk woredas selected from six Regions. WHO further procured two million doses of meningitis vaccination to replenish the emergency stock used for last month's campaign and to conduct mass vaccination in uncovered woredas during the last campaign in Afar, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNP Regions.

## **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**

The recently formed AWD working group, under the WASH task force are finalizing their Terms of Reference. The Working Group has started providing technical guidance, review existing guidelines, defining contents of AWD training, identifying key advocacy messages in AWD outbreaks, and developing a document for technical advice for key components that AWD response projects should contain.

OXFAM GB has developed an intervention plan to provide water trucking activities and hygiene education to some 35,000 people in Kori and Bidu woredas of Afar Region.

### **Pipeline breaks**

The response capacity for an estimated 4.6 million emergency beneficiaries is threatened by extremely low emergency food reserve stocks and shortfalls in the food aid pipeline. The annual national food requirement for relief assistance is 591,333 MT. WFP reported that the funding shortfall has currently reduced to 200,543MT after confirmed contributions were received from USAID for 91,000 MT. In addition, 70,000 MT of cereals have been procured using WFP Working Capital Financing (WCF). Meanwhile, WFP plans to resource some 80 percent of this required amount or some 473,066 MT for the 4.6 million beneficiaries.

Efforts continue with the Government to prioritize July 2008 food dispatches for relief assistance and Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) beneficiaries who need food assistance as a result of severe drought in their areas. WFP plans to support up to 2.4 million of these PSNP beneficiaries and is assisting the Government to procure cereals to meet the remaining food needs. Discussions on how to prioritize July 2008 allocations in light of the resource shortfall, for both PSNP and relief beneficiaries, will be finalized by the end of this week.

### **Food contributions and local capacity**

USAID is also planning to contribute between 75,000 and 105,000 MT of food to cover both PSNP and relief requirements through NGO operations. The food should resource food requirements for September to November in selected areas. WFP is also looking at other alternatives for the supply of blended food for supplementary food including Plumpy Dough and Ready to Use Food for Children (RUFC)

WFP reported that a local producer of Famix (a locally produced blended food) defaulted on the delivery of 760 MT of Famix due to power shortages and the rising cost of raw materials, particularly maize. WFP is re-tendering the defaulted quantity locally. In response to these challenges, the Ethiopian Grain Trade Enterprise (EGTE) is making available 4,000 MT of maize at a subsidized rate for procurement of Famix producers.

### **WFP current response (for relief) to date (figures as of 1 July 2008)**

**Somali:** to date, an amount of 34,077 MT has been allocated to 1,025,030 beneficiaries during January to June. Some 23,593 MT has been dispatched from this allocation.

**SNNPR:** To date, during January to June, a total of 58,900 MT has been allocated to 1,292,762 beneficiaries. Some 31,521 MT has been dispatched.

**Oromiya:** A total of 15,816 MT has been allocated to 435,369 beneficiaries and some 11,335 MT has been dispatched.

To date, between January and June, a total of 16,287 MT has been allocated to some 455,396 beneficiaries in the Regions of **Afar, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella and Tigray**, and a total of 4,326 MT has been dispatched to these areas.

### Agriculture and Livestock

CARE delivered 56 quintals of short maturing variety of maize emergency seed for Girawa and Kurfachelle woredas and 200 quintals of haricots beans for Bedeno, Haromaya, Kurfachelle and Girawa woredas in support of replanting activities.

Reports from CARE indicate outbreak of livestock diseases of Bovine Pasturelosis (BP) in Moyale woreda and sporadic cases of Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Dire and Dhas woredas of Borena zone in Oromiya Region. Unconfirmed death of livestock has also been reported in Borena zone caused by intoxication from poisoned plant. The critical shortage of pasture has also been reportedly resulting in the death of significant number of livestock in Amibara woreda of Afar Region.

OXFAM America has continued vaccination schemes under their veterinary care program while OXFAM GB is finalizing preparation for distribution of seed to 25,000 people and veterinary vaccination for 430,000 heads of livestock in Borena and Guji zones of Oromiya Region. OXFAM GB has also started distribution of goat feed in Afar Region.

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