



SITUATION REPORT: EXTENDED DRY SEASON IN BORENA ZONE¹ – 29 FEBRUARY 2008

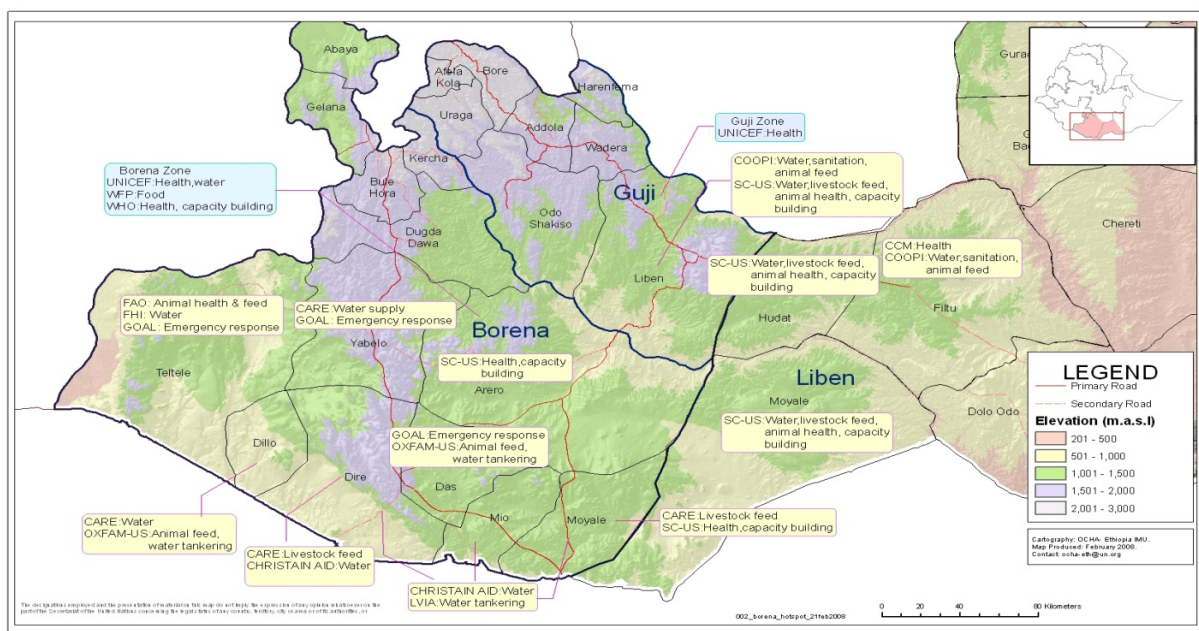
The situation in Borena zone with regard to animal health, food security and water for human and animal consumption is deteriorating on a daily basis. The extended dry season follows insufficient rainfall during the *hagaya* rain (October-December) and conditions have been exacerbated by overstocking of livestock and encroachment of land by farms and bush trees. Coping mechanisms are stretched to breaking point and pastoralist communities, children, the elderly and people living with HIV/AIDS are particularly vulnerable to livelihood and health risks.



UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

NGO Activities in Borena, Guji and Liben Zones

26 Feb 2008



While conditions in Borena do not currently fall under classification of a full scale drought there is a risk that poor performance of the upcoming *ganna* rains will have a serious impact upon human health, animal welfare and livelihoods in the region. Prompt and coordinated intervention by government and humanitarian partners could limit the impact upon human life, health and livelihoods in the region. Priority needs are water for human and livestock consumption, animal feed provision to mother cows and calves and animal health services. Specific programmatic

¹ This situation report is based on information gathered from a variety of sources including; UN agencies, NGO and government partners.

interventions include; water tankering, water rationing, refilling reservoirs and cisterns serving communities and schools and de-worming. Emerging priority action areas include; contingency planning for the anticipated poorly performing *ganna* rains, assessment of health risks associated with extended dry season and support to address health related issues with particular focus on vulnerable groups and improved coordination and information sharing between federal, regional and zonal authorities, UN agencies and humanitarian partners.

Assessment missions by UN agencies and humanitarian partners have begun to document the early signs and direct consequences of the extended dry season for water availability, animal health and food security in the region. According to woreda officials in Arero, limited availability of water for animal consumption is contributing to poor health of livestock and reported cases of livestock diseases including; Anthrax, black leg, bloody diarrhea and FMD. The number of reported livestock death is increasing on a daily basis. The Sub-Regional office WFP has registered 4,660 livestock deaths since mid-February. Access to food supplies from local markets is becoming increasingly difficult due to increased prices. Recent reports from the zone indicate that the price of maize has trebled from 100 to 300 Birr per quintal.

Death and poor health conditions of livestock, dwindling water supplies and ongoing human disease outbreaks are having a negative impact upon health, nutrition and wellbeing in the region. Poor animal health is affecting child nutrition levels due to zero milk production in some woredas. Health officials from the Regional Health Bureau, UNICEF and WHO are responding to outbreak of measles in some woredas of Guji zone including Dimtu Hamballa, Qarca and Oddo Shakkiso and in Abaya, Bule Hora, Dugda Dawa and Gelana woredas in Borena zone. WHO have recorded an increased incidence of malaria compared to recorded cases last season in Abaya, Bule Hora, Dugda Dawa and Gelana woredas. Government, UN agencies and humanitarian partners are preparing for disease outbreaks associated with extended dry season periods and early onset of drought including; increase in water-borne diseases and pulmonary diseases. Children, the elderly and people living with HIV/AIDS are particularly vulnerable to infection and impact of livestock death on nutrition. Pastoralist communities are migrating to the west towards the border with the SNNPR and south-east in the direction of Welenso (Weliso) in search of water and grazing land for livestock. Schools are closing because of low, in some cases empty, water supplies and attendance rates have fallen by as much as 14 percent in Dire, Dhas, Dillo and Miyo.

Areas affected by the current crisis include; the lowland woredas of Borena zone (Arero, Dhas, Dillo, Miyo, Moyale, and parts of Teltele and Yabelo). Early reports from UN agencies and humanitarian partners suggest that conditions and vulnerability levels are similar in neighbouring areas as follows; Liben woreda of Guji zone, lowland woredas of Bale zone (Dawwe Sarari, Dawwe Qaccan, Laga Hidha/Beltu, Raytu, Meda Welabu) and some woredas of East Haraghe zone (Gola Oda, Mayyu, Midhaga, Chinaksen, Gursum-Borale, Babile-Darere Arba).

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

1. Oromiya Water Resources Development Bureau (OWRDB) and DPPA sent 7 generators and deployed four trucks to distribute water to communities in Arero, Dillo, Dire and Moyale. Only one truck is distributing water as two vehicles broke down and a rented truck disappeared.
2. The zonal water bureau, with support from Care and UNICEF, is implementing a water rationing programme. This intervention has distributed ration of 5 litres per capita per day to 56,000 out of 113,930 people identified as having high priority water needs.
3. Oromiya Pastoral Commission is sourcing hay and supplementary feed for livestock for distribution in the zone.
4. Oromiya Food Security and Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (FSDPPC) have delivered 3,646.9 quintals of grain to Dillo, Dire, Miyo and Moyale woredas and remaining 9,553.1 quintals will be delivered early next week.
5. Food Security Bureau has allocated 1,300 Metric Tonnes (MT) of relief food for 88,000 beneficiaries in PSNP woredas and increased cash entitlement for PSNP beneficiaries from 6 Birr to 8 Birr per day.
6. OCHA has carried out a field assessment and organized an all-NGO meeting to share information. Funding has been provided through the Humanitarian Response Fund 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 the hotspot woredas.
7. Civil servants are raising funds locally for relief activities.
8. The Zonal DPP has carried out rapid assessment of needs in the zone.
9. The Regional Health Bureau, in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO, is responding to the measles outbreak.
10. WHO has conducted an assessment of health situation in Borena zone. One consultant has been deployed to the zone with drug supplies.
11. UNICEF, in coordination with zonal water bureau, is rehabilitating water points and carrying out maintenance work on water points.
12. WFP has deployed a field officer to monitor coordination of activities.

13. CARE Ethiopia is training 26 health professionals from Moyale woreda on CTC management of acute malnutrition.
14. CARE has set up cattle camp feeding programmes targeting 4200 breeding cows in 4 districts. A new project to feed 5000 livestock will begin shortly.
15. CARE continues to support ongoing water tankering and animal feeding programmes in Dire, Dhas and Miyo woredas.
16. CISP has secured funding for a water scheme rehabilitation programme.
17. COOPI is working on food security issues in the area east of Dawa river.
18. GAYO is running a livestock feeding programme in Dillo district. 18,000 bales of grass and 82,000 tonnes of wheat bran will be delivered to feed an estimated 2500 livestock for a period of 2 months.
19. GOAL will begin a nutrition programme (supplementary feeding) in Dhas on the basis of a recent assessment by a nutrition team. GOAL continues to strengthen the CTC system to ensure that health officials have more information and capacity to respond to malnutrition.
20. Oxfam USA is funding livestock feeding and water programme in Dilo.
21. SC-USA is initiated a livestock feeding programme in 6 areas in Arero district and continue to engage in support to animal health interventions in Arero and Dhas districts. SC-USA is supporting a women's grain marketing initiative.

GAPS IN THE RESPONSE

22. Further discussions between government and humanitarian partners are required to confirm the number of beneficiaries requiring support in the upcoming period.
23. Lack of trucks in the region is hampering water tankering interventions.
24. Solar powered water pumps need to be replaced with generators and hand pumps. OWRDB estimates total cost of this operation to be 1.89 million Birr.
25. Efforts to contain measles and malaria are frustrated due to shortage of medical supplies and operational costs.
26. Limited assessment of potential health risks associated with extended dry season with particularly focus on vulnerable groups including children, the elderly and people infected with HIV/AIDS.

27. Assessment of specific needs of refugee communities living in the region and mapping migratory movements of pastoralist groups.
28. Limited presence of humanitarian partners in the areas east of Dawa River.
29. Loose coordination and information sharing between federal, regional, zonal levels and humanitarian partners.

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