



## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION UPDATE

### **Food security**

A recent Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) update indicates that food security has generally improved in the *meher* crop producing parts of the country following the start of *meher* harvest. In the eastern *meher* producing areas, however, improvements in food security are not anticipated to last through June as performance of *meher* crops is below average. The report, therefore, highlights the need for continued monitoring of food security and provision of necessary assistance based on the findings of the multi-agency *meher* season needs assessment mission. Meanwhile, compilation of the national needs assessment report is underway. The various emergency task forces currently review the assessment reports to identify the 2009 emergency food and non-food requirements, WFP reports.

Cereal prices continued to decrease throughout the country since September 2008, primarily as a result of the start of *meher* harvest. Prices however, are 54 to 338 percents higher than the same time last year, notes FEWSNET. According to the Central Statistics Authority (CSA), the monthly average in the inflation rate started to decline since August 2008 as a result of decline in cereal prices especially for maize and sorghum. The FEWSNET report shows that prices have decreased by five to 30 percent for maize, and by four to 15 percent for sorghum. Wheat, on the other hand, showed a slight increase of two to five percent compared to September 2008. Recent WFP field reports indicate early cereal price increases in several zones of SNNP and Borena zone in Oromiya. This should be a cause for concern as it should have been the period when the lowest price levels are normally registered at or immediately after harvest. For more information contact: [ethiopia@few.net](mailto:ethiopia@few.net) & [wfp.addisababa@wfp.org](mailto:wfp.addisababa@wfp.org)

### **Nutrition**

Reports received this week from Amhara and SNNP Regions show that the number of new admissions to emergency nutrition therapeutic feeding programmes amount to 1,029 with over 90 percent reporting rate from the regions, the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) reports. Due to lack of compiled weekly reports from Oromiya, Tigray, and Somali Regions, new admission rates in SNNP and Amhara account for 94.7 percent of the total new admissions.

Results of a follow-up nutrition survey conducted by GOAL in Mekdela woreda of Amhara Region in early December indicates continued poor food security and nutritional situation among the highland population, notes ENCU. In addition, a monitoring nutrition survey conducted by CONCERN in Dessie Zuria woreda in the Region in mid December disclosed high level Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM). Both surveys highlight the need for close monitoring and strengthening of on-going nutrition interventions including Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), relief food aid, Enhanced Outreach Strategy (EOS) and Case Treatment Center (CTC) programs. Furthermore, nutritional screening conducted by Tigray Health Bureau in October in 20 hotspot woredas revealed that acute malnutrition level has increased significantly, reports WFP. Furthermore, efforts are underway to assess the effect of the situation in the woredas. Meanwhile, World Vision Ethiopia submitted a proposal to ENCU to conduct standard nutrition surveys in hotspot woredas of Wukro, Atsebi Womberta and Alamata woredas in Tigray Region and Ephrata, Menz Gera Midir and Tenta woredas in Amhara Region to monitor nutrition and food security situations. For more information contact: [orlao@dppc.gov.et](mailto:orlao@dppc.gov.et) & [wfp.addisababa@wfp.org](mailto:wfp.addisababa@wfp.org)

### **Food aid**

WFP continues to face shortfalls for its 2009 operations. Based on WFP's internal planning figures, the shortfall for Relief will be the highest, with 416,000 MT (US\$359 million). The requirements for Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) will be 100,000 MT (US\$ 87 million); TSF at 57,000 MT (US\$ 49.5 million); and Urban HIV/AIDS at 15,500 MT (US\$13.3 million). WFP will reconcile all carry-over stocks and pledges and present a new net shortfall as soon as possible. For more information contact: [wfp.addisababa@wfp.org](mailto:wfp.addisababa@wfp.org)

## HEALTH UPDATE

Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) has reappeared in Humbo woreda of Welayita zone in SNNPR according to official reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH), notes WHO. In epidemiological week 51 (15/12 – 21/12/08) 58 cases have been reported from the woreda compared to eight cases in epidemiological week 52 (22/12 – 28/12/2008). There had been no new AWD cases reported in the past six weeks from other regions. SNNP, Somali and Afar Regions continue to be vulnerable to AWD and the situation is being monitored closely by WHO and regional health bureaus. Meanwhile, WHO purchased water quality control testing reagents for 12 zones in Oromiya Region, which will reduce health risks from consuming unsafe water.

Reports indicated an increased number of measles cases in five woredas of Shinile zone (Meiso, Shinile, Erer, Dembel and Afdem) and three woredas in Degehabur zone (Degehabur, Aware and Degahmadu) of Somali Region. The Regional Health Bureau (RHB) sent samples to Addis Ababa for Laboratory investigations that confirmed measles cases. In response, the RHB is sending mobile health teams and drugs from Jijiga to help contain the spread of the outbreak. Case management training has been provided to Health Extension Workers (HEWs) and other medical staff. The RHB has also requested UNICEF and WHO to provide technical support. For more information contact: [who-wro@et.afro.who.int](mailto:who-wro@et.afro.who.int) & [ocha-eth@un.org](mailto:ocha-eth@un.org)