



## HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

### **Food Security**

The food security situation in some areas of SNNP, Amhara, Tigray, Somali and eastern Oromiya regions is gradually declining. Due to the delayed start and generally poor performance of the *belg* rains, the area planted this year has significantly decreased. The below normal rains received during the last two dekads of April (11- 30 April) have affected the development of *belg* crops as well as the germination of long-cycle *meher* crops planted in some areas. The situation in the *belg*-crop producing parts of the country is expected to deteriorate further during the July to September lean season. In the pastoral region of Afar, where rains have been below normal during the past two seasons, performance of the *sugum* (March to May) rains has been poor and the remainder of the season is forecasted to be below normal. Physical condition of livestock, terms of trade and livestock productivity are expected to decline until the main seasonal rains (*karma*) begin in July. In Somali Region also, although the start of the *gu* rains have been timely (early April), they have performed poorly during the last two dekads April (11 to 30 April) in some areas.

The latest Ethiopia Market Watch, meanwhile, indicates that the country-level general inflation over the past 12 months moving average stood at 45.2 per cent in March 2009, of which food price inflation averaged 59.2 per cent, while non-food inflation was 24.4 per cent. Local and import parity prices for grain, meanwhile, show a slight decrease for all commodities across selected major urban markets. Likewise, in most rural markets of the country, the price of cereals show a declining trend following increase in the supply rate and decline in effective demand.

### **Food Security Outlook**

The April to September 2009 FEWSNET/WFP food security outlook indicates that households in the eastern agricultural areas will harvest below-average *belg* crops following the delayed start of the rains. Additional areas of the northeast, which are not *belg*-dependant, will also face increased food deficits following poor 2008 *meher* production. These two groups include South Tigray zone of Tigray Region; North Wello, South Wello, North Shewa, and Oromiya zones of Amhara Region; Bale, Arsi, Borena, Guji, North Shewa, East Hararghe, and West Hararghe zones of Oromiya Region, and Harari and Dire Dawa Regions. It is also expected that cereal prices will remain much higher than the historical average and rise seasonably during June to September as the stocks from the last *meher* season are depleted and the 2009 *belg* harvest is anticipated to be low.

The National Needs Assessment for cropping and pastoral areas, which forms the basis for determining needs for the second half of the year, is scheduled to start in mid-June to fully capture the impacts of the delayed rains.

### **Nutrition**

Admissions of acutely malnourished children to Stabilization Centers (SCs) and Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTPs) have increased in parts of SNNPR and West Arsi, East and West Hararghe zones (Oromiya). The nutritional situation in SNNPR is further aggravated by the current outbreak of malaria in many low and midland areas where control operations are underway. New SCs and OTPs are being established in Seraro, Shashemene, Shala and Arsi Negele in West Arsi of Oromiya to cope with the rapidly deteriorating nutritional situation. The Regional Health Bureau supported by UNICEF completed a wide-scale nutrition screening, implementing the Enhanced Outreach Strategy (EOS) in five woredas of West Arsi, starting from 25 April. Children under five have been supplemented with one dose of vitamin A and de-wormed. Meanwhile, WFP reports that relief rations have been dispatched and targeted supplementary food dispatch will start when the findings are made available. UNICEF also dispatched six tons of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), drugs, and non-food items to the zone. For more information contact: [wfp.addisababa@wfp.org](mailto:wfp.addisababa@wfp.org), [kmcdonald@unicef.org](mailto:kmcdonald@unicef.org) & [info@fews.net](mailto:info@fews.net)

## HEALTH UPDATE

To date no suspected cases of Influenza A H1N1 have been reported by the Federal Ministry of Health. In line with the required preparation, the United Nations Country Team has revitalized technical working groups to revise the pandemic Influenza A H1N1 contingency plan coordinated by WHO. Thus far, Influenza A H1N1 case definitions have been prepared and distributed to the regions, emergency operating centers have been established, trainings have been provided and personal protective equipment have been provided to Bole International Airport Quarantine Directorate staff.

Meanwhile, malaria cases buildup has been reported in Amhara and SNNP regions. In addition, According to information received from the Welayita zone health department, approximately 77,830 clinical cases of malaria have been reported in Boloso Sore, Damot Fulassa, and Bolos Bombe woredas over the last four weeks. Similarly high cases are reported in Gamo Gofa zone, Konso and Burji special woredas. The Regional Health Bureau is trying to address the situation and DDT spraying is underway. UNICEF dispatched 4,500 Rapid Diagnosis Test and provided technical assistance to the RHB to support the bureau in controlling the situation. For more information contact: [who-wro@et.afro.who.int](mailto:who-wro@et.afro.who.int)