



SOMALI REGION UPDATE

The DPPA has approved an additional seven NGOs to operate in the parts of Degehabur, Fik, Gode, Korahe and Warder zones affected by military operations, bringing the total number of accredited NGOs to 19. The UN has firmly established its presence in Kebridehar and Degehabur. In addition to existing coordination mechanisms, a coordination meeting will now also be established in Kebridehar. The UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) is facilitating air transport service for moving humanitarian staff in and out of the region. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) has started to dispatch the second round of relief food allocation to approximately 953,000 beneficiaries in the region. To date, 5,000 tonnes of food have been dispatched to beneficiaries in the five zones under military operation. To ensure targeting and effective food delivery, 186 Food Distribution Points (FDPs) have now been approved in the five zones, while 208 FDPs have been approved in Shinile, Afder and Liben zones. Moreover, WFP Logistics has joined the Government's Transport Committee based in Dire Dawa, in order to enable enhanced coordination on logistics issues between the UN and government. In addition, UNICEF is finalizing preparations to deploy 15 mobile teams. A DPPA led multi-agency nutrition rapid assessment team composed of UNICEF, WHO, Save the Children – UK and Save the Children US will be deployed to hot spot areas for malnutrition. An inter-agency training, which included protection, security, ICT and humanitarian principles, was conducted this week to ensure enhanced UN response in the region. Meanwhile, Mr. John Holmes, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs will visit Ethiopia with a field mission to Jijiga and Kebridehar during 26 to 28 November. For more information contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org & ocha-eth@un.org

HEALTH HAZARDS

Ethiopia is presently putting in place preparedness measures to prevent possible outbreaks of Meningitis and Rift Valley Fever (RVF). Although sporadic cases occur every year, a massive Meningitis epidemic occurs every 8-12 years as the country lies in the "African Meningitis Belt". The Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) recently notified humanitarian partners that there is a possibility of a large scale meningitis outbreak in 2008. The Ministry, in collaboration with WHO, is engaged in undertaking preparation activities including ensuring the national stock for vaccination, staff training, and developing IEC materials. Activities are also ongoing to strengthen surveillance across the country. Moreover, there is a high risk of cross border transmission of RVF from neighbouring states of Sennar, Gazeera and White Nile in Sudan. As of 14 November 2007, a total of 329 human cases and 96 deaths with Case Fatality Rate (CFR) of 29 percent have been reported in Sudan. As part of preparedness measures, a draft national strategy is being finalized and the National Committee has been revitalized. In addition, FMoH has notified the regions to conduct active case surveillance as well as to closely follow up the issue. A team comprised of Ministry of Agriculture, WHO, FMoH, and FAO was deployed on 6 November to conduct case investigation in the high risk regions of SNNP, Oromiya, Beneshangul Gumuz, Gambella and Tigray. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

AWD CONTINUES TO BE OF CONCERN

AWD cases earlier reported from Benishangul Gumuz are yet to be confirmed. A total of 149 woredas in six regions and one administrative town are currently reporting active cases. The hotspot woredas are Guna and Shakiso in Oromiya; Kecha Birra in SNNP; Alamata in Tigray; Dalol and Amibara in Afar; Yelma Densa and Jabi Tehnan in Amhara; Jijiga in Somali and Dire Dawa Administrative zone. The FMoH conducted a national AWD review meeting from 5 to 9 November 2007 in Nazareth town. In addition, WHO allocated US\$ 88,645 to Oromiya, Tigray and Beneshangul Gumuz Regional Health Bureaus (RHB) for AWD case treatment center (CTC) management, health staff training and deployment as well as community sensitisation. Furthermore, US\$ 19,000 has been allocated to Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) for community sensitization in Borena zone, Oromiya Region. The Somali RHB have provided drugs to Degehabur, Gashamo, Boh, Fik woredas in response to AWD epidemic. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

SOMALI REGION THREATENED BY FURTHER FLOODING

The water level of the Wabishebele River has reached seven metres, the highest recorded *deyr* season water level in recent years. This has increased fears of further flooding in riverine areas of Mustahil and Kelafo. The increase is attributed to localized rains in the areas. Early warning messages have been given to communities in high risk areas. To date, there are no reports of flooding in the upstream areas of West and East Imi. For more information contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

CONFERENCE ON PASTORALIST PEACE AND PROSPERITY

A gathering of nearly 280 Pastoralists in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) convened in the remote Nyangatom woreda in South Omo zone from November 8-12 to discuss and debate the prospects of pastoralist peace and prosperity. Sponsored by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Pastoralist Communication Initiative, the conference included pastoralists from over 17 ethnic groups to confer on issues of peace and conflict, burgeoning tourism, fair trade, and development of education and infrastructure. Other issues discussed included land utilization, construction of new transport routes (i.e. bridges and roads) to facilitate and open new markets and economic relations, and finally encouraging pastoralist participation in national affairs. The first three days were devoted to negotiations and planning among pastoralists and customary leaders on peace in the area, and decisions around ensuring peace in the future were reached. The final two days welcomed the participation of government, UN, NGO officials as well as the media. The regional president of SNNPR highlighted the importance of community leadership in resolving issues of conflict and poverty. For more information contact: pastoralistinfo@unocha-pci.org