



SOMALI REGION UPDATE

The food security situation in Somali Region could deteriorate with reports that the *deyr* rains (main rainy season) have failed in large areas of the seven receiving zones of Degehabur, Korahe, Warder, Gode, Afder, Liben and Fik. Water and pasture shortages have resulted in livestock migration to areas that received better rainfall such as Gode and Ferfer woredas. Such high concentration of livestock in these areas is leading to overgrazing and depletion of rejuvenated pasture. Livestock prices have generally declined compared to the same time last year. While the DPPA-led inter-agency rapid nutrition assessment in Fik and Korahe zones is ongoing, the multi-agency seasonal assessment mission was completed in all zones of the region. Initial forecasts expect no significant crop production from riverine and rain fed areas. Reports further indicate that food prices particularly for imported food increased during the month of November. Meanwhile, over 14,340 MT of relief food has now been dispatched to the five military operational zones. WFP is currently working with local and federal authorities to expedite further food dispatches which have been delayed due to transport difficulties. Five Regional Health Bureau / UNICEF supported mobile health and nutrition teams started training in Jijiga on 15 December. The deployment plan remains to be finalized but will likely include Korahe and Degehabur, and will complement ongoing activities of the five teams already trained and deployed in Kelafo, Mustahil, Gode and West Imi, and will operate in close coordination and support of other actors active in the area. For more information contact: ocha-eth@un.org, wfp.addisababa@wfp.org & kmcdonald@unicef.org

IMPENDING FOOD SHORTFALL FOR REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA

WFP immediately requires US\$ 3.3 million worth of food commodities to meet impending shortfalls in its food assistance programme to refugees in Ethiopia from March to June 2008. The 5,600 MT shortfall of cereals (85 percent) and pulses is anticipated from March and April 2008 respectively. The shortfall could, however, occur even sooner given increased caseloads of refugees into Ethiopia from Eritrea and Somalia. On average, it can take up to six months between announcement of confirmed new contributions and in-country arrival of food commodities. This delay could shortly result in the reduction of food rations for current refugees unless new contributions are immediately received. WFP currently provides monthly food rations to 84,000 refugees in Ethiopia of which there are 40,000 Sudanese, 24,000 Somalis and 20,000 Eritreans. For more information contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

AWD UPDATE

Although the completeness of the report is poor – 30 percent, reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) indicate decreases in reports of new AWD cases in most affected woredas compared to the same period last year. Less than 20 woredas are currently reporting cases from three regions: Amhara, Oromiya and Somali. SNNPR, Tigray and Afar regions have reported zero cases for the last two weeks. Since 1 December, a new suspected AWD outbreak, however, was reported by WHO in Degehamedo woreda, Degehabur zone, Somali Region. Case investigation to confirm the status of cases in Degehamedo is underway. Meanwhile, the FMoH has decided to revitalize the Emergency Health and Nutrition Taskforce with a core group and technical working group to be established. There is still a need to intensify prevention and control measures to avert re-emergence of the disease. Risk factors contributing to the transmission including, inadequate safe water supply, poor personal and environmental hygiene and limited accessibility to health facilities are not well addressed. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

DESERT LOCUST INFESTATIONS IN BORENA AND GODE

FAO reports that the desert locust situation remains serious in northeast Kenya and southeast Ethiopia. There have been new reports of infestations in Borena zone, Oromiya Region and Gode zone, Somali Region. Neighbouring Afder and Liben zone are also at risk. In Borena, large numbers of adult locusts were reported in the woredas of Moyale, Dire, Arero and Yabelo. Teltelle woreda has been newly affected during the week. There is limited capacity to respond at zonal level despite the efforts of the zonal rural and agricultural coordination office's newly established emergency team. Given the migratory nature of this locust and its rapid spread, an airplane is urgently needed for control measures particularly in Teltelle. Oromiya Regional Bureau of Agriculture has promised to send an airplane as soon as possible. In Gode, Adadle, Denan, Kelafo and Gode woredas are affected by the locust. WFP has indicated that the locust is likely to have a negative impact on food security and is damaging the limited available browse and pasture. Additional pesticides and sprayers are urgently needed. The Gode Emergency Agriculture Taskforce is coordinating response. For more information contact: mandert@care.org.et, amare.mengiste@fao.org, wfp.addisababa@wfp.org & ocha-eth@un.org

LIVESTOCK DISEASE OUTBREAKS IN AFAR REGION

The Afar Region Monthly Food Security Update reports that livestock and camel diseases are affecting Ewa and Mille woredas. In Ewa woreda, a disease locally known as 'Garmolli' with severe diarrhoea and body weakness symptoms has affected camels and livestock in Ragden and Duba kebeles. Sheep pox, pestes des petits ruminants (PPR) and pneumonia is affecting shoats in Gegana Burtele, Bekaredaar na abelebaar, Hentimegentana hedisa, Harsisna bedaar kebeles, Mille woreda. Insufficient funding for livestock veterinary services in affected pastoral kebeles is hindering appropriate response. Only 30 percent of Mille woreda, for example, is currently covered by veterinary services. Assistance is urgently needed to prevent the spread of these diseases to other areas. For more information please contact: afardpfs@yahoo.com