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OCHA Situation Report No. 6
Floods – Ethiopia

This report is based on information received from OCHA Ethiopia.¹

I- Situation

1. Excessive rains were reported in South Omo Zone during the night 26 to 27 August 2006, signalling the beginning of the region's rainy season, which traditionally runs from September to October. Forthcoming heavy rains threaten to make beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance in the remote flood affected area even more inaccessible in the coming weeks as WFP reports an increase in numbers of the displaced in the five resettlement sites in Yangatom and Dasenech woredas. Two of these sites are accessible by road; two by boat and one is still only accessible by helicopter. As the rainy season looms, there are fears that the area including some of these resettlement sites could suffer further flooding. The Gibe Dam is expected to reach its capacity shortly and its inevitable release of water will heighten this risk. The weekend's heavy showers damaged 450 quintals of cereals and 479 cartoons of oil.
2. As well as South Omo zone, other areas of Southern Nations Nationalities and People Regions (SNNPR) continue to be affected by flooding. A DPPA (Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency) / WFP (World Food Program) assessment team arrived back from Woleita, Hadiya and Alaba special woredas on 29 August. A total of 1637 households have been temporarily displaced. There is an urgent need of food and non-food assistance. Further reports from the local authorities in Dale woreda, Sidama zone claim that 5000 people have been affected and 1017 houses flooded around Abaya Lake. Thousands of quintals of maize, sweet potato, and haricot beans were destroyed and many chickens were killed. A DPPA's team is on assessment mission to verify these claims.
3. In Amhara Region, an NGO flood response coordination meeting has reported that the Joint Government and Humanitarian Partners Appeal does not adequately reflect the current flood response needs of the region. The meeting in Bahir Dahr on 26 August estimated that the Appeal underestimates the need by fifty percent. Over 9 woredas in South and North Gondar, West Gojjam, West Amhara zones and the regional capital Bahir Dahr are now affected and reports of new affected woredas continue. On the 29 August, WFP confirmed that Dara woreda in South Gondar has now been flooded with 2,017 people taking shelter in a local school bringing the total of displaced in the region to 17,360. An additional 7,000 people are expected to join them shortly.
4. The regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Food Security Bureau (DPPFSB) in Afar has reported that the Awash River has flooded farm lands in Dulecha, Amibara,

¹ The information in this document is consolidated from reports and field information from a variety of sources including UN agencies, NGOs and government partners.

Gewane and Buremudaitu woredas affecting 26,000 people. The situation is currently being monitored very closely as further floods are expected if the Koka Dam is forced to increase its release of water. The area at risk surrounding the Dam is of great economic importance with sugar plantations and state farms now in danger of flooding. One thousand military have been deployed to sandbag the area.

II- National and International Response

5. As of 28 August, the DPPA dispatched the following food and non-food items to flood affected populations across the country - 357.8MT grain, 17.3MT oil, 41.3MT Supplementary Food, 30.6 pulse, 22.17MT biscuit, 10,932 blankets, 142 rolls of plastic sheeting, 19,890 plates, 19,890 cups, 3,300 jerry can, 2,020 ladles, 250 jugs, 390 tents, 3,750 cooking pots, 1,150 mattress, 373 bowel bid cooking pots and 150 tea pots.
6. OCHA is currently accepting proposals from UN agencies and NGOs for the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF), a donor-led initiative to provide funds for crisis areas identified under the joint Humanitarian Appeal, updates to the Appeal, Flash Appeals, or other needs identified by the UN humanitarian Coordinator. Proposals should focus on the current emergency in flood-affected areas of the country. Agencies that are already operational in these areas and have an annual turnover of more than US\$2 million in Ethiopia are strongly encouraged to apply.
7. UNICEF released a Flash Appeal on 29 August, requesting donor financial assistance for the coming weeks in order to effectively respond to the current crisis. The total amount requested is US\$18.3 million among which US\$ 7.3 million is urgently needed. However, this amount is likely to increase as detailed figures are not yet known and as the assessment continues, figures will be updated. UNICEF has distributed so far US\$500,000 worth of supplies, principally in Dire Dawa and South Omo.
8. The Italian Government has contributed €100,000 (US\$128,000) to OCHA for the flood response. The money is to be used for emergency coordination and first aid efforts in the Southern Region of Ethiopia.
9. The Joint Government and Humanitarian partners Early Warning Working group has established a Flood Early Warning Task Force comprised of DPPA, WFP, OCHA, FEWSNET, USAID and Save the Children Fund (SCF)-UK. The taskforce will assess the immediate threat of flooding in the country and conduct impact assessments.
10. Oxfam has contributed US\$50,000 for school rehabilitation and material supply for affected children; and care and support for pregnant and nursing mothers as well as protection of abused children and women in Dire Dawa.
11. Oxfam has also allocated US\$13,500 for non-food items for the flood-affected community along the Awash River, South West Shewa zone, Oromiya Region.
12. The DPPA has received US\$30,000 direct financial assistance from China and the following assistance in kind from Japan, Libya and Egypt:
 - a. Japan has donated US\$44374 worth of the following non-food items - 100 x (3m x 4m) tents, 210 sleeping pads, 5 water tanks, 5 water purifiers, 560 jerry cans.
 - b. Libya has donated US\$617,565 worth of the following food and non-food items – 1500 pieces of canned food, 2000 blankets, 2000 tents, 200 cartons of milk powder, 260 cartons of tuna, 140 sacks of sugar, 6500 children’s shirts, 5000 women’s dresses, 10 tons of pasta.

- c. Egypt has donated US\$316,000 worth of food items – 3 tons of medicine and 5 tons of children’s milk.

Amhara Region

13. A SCF-UK assessment team visited Dembia woreda, North Gonder Zone earlier in the week. Their findings indicate that 1110 households are displaced in two temporary shelters with a further 480 households still marooned by floodwaters. Conditions in the settlement sites are deplorable. Food and shelter are scarce and water and sanitation facilities are inadequate. No deaths have been reported so far but health could become critical.
14. Save the Children–UK (SCF-UK) are leading coordination efforts in Amhara Region. A NGO Coordination meeting on the flood response was held on 26 August and another meeting is planned on 2 September at 9.00 a.m. in Bahir Dahr.
15. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent and the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) has visited the temporary settlement sites for the displaced in North and South Gondar zones, Amhara Region between the 22 and 25 August. The assessment found poor sanitation facilities and no potable water. Shelter is an immediate non-food requirement. IFRC plans to distribute non-food items to the region and to conduct community based health and hygiene programs across all affected areas through its partner the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS).
16. MSF-Greece has provided medical assistance to the displaced at the three temporary settlement sites in South Gondar zone. In collaboration with the Bureau of Health, MSF-Greece has conducted a mass vaccination of measles to all children under 15. They are also involved in screening for malnutrition and have provided 10 rolls of plastic sheeting, 400 blankets, 757 jerry cans and 100 packets of F100 therapeutic milk.
17. A USAID/OFDA and Care International joint team has visited the settlement sites in Fogera and Libo woredas. Inadequate potable water, poor sanitation and food provision were reported.
18. A joint OCHA – UNICEF assessment mission will visit Bahir Dahr and the flood affected woredas around Lake Tana, Amhara Region on the 30 August 2006.

South Omo Valley

19. Christian Aid has committed UK£60,000 (approx. US\$114,000) for the flood response in South Omo, specifically to address the non-food items and short term rehabilitation needs. So far commodities worth UK£15,000 (approx. US\$28,485) have been channelled through their partner organisation the Ethiopian Evangelical Church (EECMY) to fill the critical gaps for non-food items. The commodities include 20 plastic sheets, 2000 mosquito nets, 1000 cooking pots, 2000 plastic plates, 1000 plastic cups, 2000 jugs and 504 jerry cans. They are currently considering proposals from Action for Development and Health Unlimited for funding emergency health and veterinary services.
20. Oxfam plans to provide US\$28200 to the Education Bureau through the SNNPR Emergency Coordination Committee for the supply of school materials for flood affected children in South Omo. This will include school materials, the salary of teachers and the purchase of 10 water tankers for schools.
21. Goal delivered 1075 blankets to Omarate to be distributed through the DPPA.

22. UNICEF has reported one confirmed case of measles in one of the resettlement sites. They will continue vaccinations of the displaced to avert disease outbreak but have also stated that accessibility to some of the settlement sites is still a problem.
23. UNDP will provide US\$3000 immediately to cover one month's fuel for the boats required for the response.

III- Gaps in the Response

24. Logistics and communication remains a problem in South Omo, which is likely to be exacerbated by the forthcoming raining season. The heavy rains reported over the weekend have resulted in the closure of the main road between Jinka, the capital of the zone and Omorate, capital of Dasenech woreda and transport will become more difficult in the coming weeks. More trucks are needed to transport food and non-food items to the affected populations. More boats and fuel are also required. The fact-finding mission led by UNICEF that visited the area on the 26 – 27 August reported that boats were unable to operate over the weekend due to the lack of fuel.
25. Plastic sheeting and kitchen utensils are among the immediate non-food items required in South Omo Valley.
26. Ethiopia is currently facing an acute watery diarrhoea disease (AWD) epidemic, which is spreading rapidly from region to region. As of 22 August, the Ministry of Health confirmed 16,555 cases and 196 deaths in five regions including the capital Addis Ababa. The current flooding crisis is an aggravating factor for the spread of AWD and must be considered in the wider flood response. In addition to AWD, the threat of malaria and other water born diseases is increased by the ongoing flooding situation. NGOs are already warning of the imminent threat of AWD, typhus, malaria and other outbreaks of epidemic diseases in the resettlement camps in Amhara Region.
27. Non-food and food items such as shelter, blankets and medicine are required immediately for the resettlement camps in Amhara Region. Water and Sanitation facilities are inadequate and their improvement should be a priority to avert potential disease outbreaks.
28. Standard operating procedures or protocols for fast onset emergencies such as floods need to be developed to strengthen future flood responses in Ethiopia.
29. This situation report, together with additional information on other ongoing emergencies, is also available on <http://www.reliefweb.int>.

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