



United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Situation Report: Drought/Food Crisis in Ethiopia

25th August 2008

Highlights:

- **Children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) continue to be admitted for treatment in SNNPR and Oromiya**
- **New cases of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) in Ada'a, Gimbichu and Lume in Oromiya Region**
- **Total shortfall for relief, Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and Targeted Supplementary Feeding (TSF) amounts to 170,000 mt valued at US\$ 138.8 million.**
- **Sir John Holmes will arrive in Ethiopia on the 1st September in his dual capacity as U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator and Coordinator of the High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis.**

Humanitarian Overview

Current Context

Government and partners continue to respond to the needs of people generated by the drought and food crisis in Ethiopia, however, shortfalls of resources and supplies persist. Reports of new admissions to Out-Patient Therapeutic Programmes (OTPs) indicate that children are still in need of treatment and are accessing life-saving therapeutic feeding in Oromiya and SNNP Regions. The confirmation of additional cases of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) in Oromiya Region raises renewed concerns of the potential risk posed to people whose health status is already compromised by the food crisis.

The U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Sir John Holmes, will arrive in Ethiopia on the 1st of September. The ERC will travel to SNNPR and Somali Region to meet with people affected by the crisis as well as government and humanitarian partners. Sir John Holmes will be acting in dual capacity as the ERC and as the Coordinator of the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis.

Health and Nutrition

Key Issues

Nutrition: New admissions of children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) are still high in SNNPR and Oromiya Region. Reports of new admissions indicate that a substantial number of children are still in need of treatment and are accessing life- saving therapeutic feeding. Despite the joint efforts of government and humanitarian partners to ensure treatment is available to all of those in need, access to treatment and therapeutic feeding is not available in each and every hotspot woreda affected by the crisis. In Oromiya Region alone, people living in 21 out of 58 hotspot woredas do not have access to any form of therapeutic or targeted supplementary feeding programme services.

- Oromiya: A total of 6,700 new admissions of children with severe acute malnutrition have been reported between 23 July and 12 August according to reports submitted by NGOs to the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU). The reporting rate for Oromiya Region is low and data has only been received from 46 percent of the Out-patient Treatment Programme (OTPs) sites and 68 percent of the In-patient Therapeutic Feeding Units (TFUs). Low reporting of the admission and fatality rates in some OTP and TFU sites is frustrating efforts to build up a comprehensive understanding of the scale and severity of the situation and accurate picture of the number of children accessing therapeutic feeding services. Hotspots include all woredas in East Harerge and West Arsi Zone, and 15 woredas in Bale Zone: Legehida, Sewenya, Rayitu, Ginur, Gololcha, Gasera, Goro, Sinana, Agarfa, Dinsho, Goba, Berbere, Mena, Harena Buluk and Guradamole woredas.
- SNNPR: Currently 3,600 children with severe acute malnutrition are admitted weekly to the Therapeutic Feeding Programme in SNNPR. This figure is based upon reports, submitted by NGOs to the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU), from 89 percent of the OTP sites and 79 percent of the TFUs. A total of 23,700 new admissions have been reported between 27th June and 14th August, indicating a high number of children in need of life-saving therapeutic feeding. Hotspots include all woredas in Welayita and KT Zone, Badewatcho woreda in Hadiya Zone, Lanfero and Sankura woredas in Selti Zone, Marko woreda in Gurage Zone and Alabe and Konso special woredas.

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Due to logistical challenges in SNNP Region, localized shortages of Ready-to-Use-Therapeutic Food (RUTF) is reducing the capacity of some partners to comprehensively respond to the treatment needs of those affected by SAM. OTP sites in Gedeo and Hadiya Zones are particularly affected and several OTP sites were forced to postpone services in East Badawacho.

- **Tigray:** Regional authorities have yet to officially confirm the location of hotspot woredas however information is expected in the coming days. Records indicate a total of 2,057 new admissions to therapeutic feeding programmes between January and June of this year however the actual number of children currently accessing services is not fully captured due to late and limited reporting by centres. In the period following EOS screening and opening of new therapeutic feeding sites the number of children accessing services doubled in the period between May and June.

Health: Despite the efforts of government and humanitarian partners to minimise the threat to human health posed by Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD), new cases have been confirmed in Ada'a, Gimbichu and Lume woredas in East Showa Zone in Oromiya Region. Government and WHO have already confirmed cases of AWD in Jawi, Bana, Takusa, Chilga, Dembia and Sekela woredas in Amhara Region and Akaki woreda in Oromiya Region. In addition to AWD outbreak, cases of bloody diarrhea have been reported from Raya Azeba woreda in Tigray and Gumer-Ezha woreda in SNNPR. Current rainfall is likely to increase the number of cases and areas with inadequate supplies of safe water, poor sanitation facilities and hygiene practices are particularly at risk of outbreaks.

Response

Assessments: In addition to ongoing provision of therapeutic feeding services, NGOs are conducting assessments to determine the nutrition status of people living in hotspot woredas. MSF-Belguim has recently conducted a rapid nutrition assessment in Bursa and Chuko woredas in Sidama Zone, GOAL has carried out an assessment in Bena Tsemay woredas and MSF-Holland has responded to need for nutrition assessment in Dita and Chenchu woredas in Gamogofa Zone. SAVE-UK is carrying out a nutrition survey in Teru woreda, Afar Region, Bugna woreda in North Wello and Sayint in South Wello in Amhara Region following reports of critical food insecurity. Additional rapid assessments and nutrition surveys are planned for 10 woredas in Amhara Region in the coming weeks.

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AWD: WHO has deployed one expert to provide technical input and support management of AWD cases in affected woredas in Oromiya Region. UNICEF has dispatched drugs, sanitary and cleaning equipment to Amhara and Oromiya Region to support the treatment of AWD cases. The following supplies have been dispatched: 60 CTC beds, 18 tents, 120 plastic sheeting, 300 plastic buckets and 300 cups to Oromiya and 40 CTC beds, 12 tents, 80 plastic sheets, 200 plastic buckets and 200 cups were sent to Amhara region.

Supplies: UNICEF has sent three more Essential Drug Kits (EDKs) that will cover the treatment needs of 7,500 people for a two month period in Adaar, Elidaar and Gulina woredas in Afar Region.

Gaps and Requirements

There is an urgent need to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to scale-up targeted supplementary feeding in hotspot woredas. Targeted supplementary feeding programmes are a critical requirement in the overall response to malnutrition and are necessary to prevent further increase in the number of people suffering from SAM and to avoid the need for re-admission of patients after discharge from treatment programmes.

All partners running therapeutic feeding programmes are requested to report admission data to the ENCU to facilitate analysis, further assessments and interventions and as a basis for resource allocations. Partners are urgently required to carry out nutrition assessments in the following woredas in Amhara Region: Mekete, Wedela and Gubalafto woredas in North Wello Zone, Beyeda and Telemet woredas in North Gonder Zone and Ambasel woreda in South Wello Zone.

Food Aid¹

Key Issues

Government and partners continue to work together to come up with solutions to the problem posed by ongoing resource shortfalls. Discussions between government, donors and WFP focused on finding mechanisms to ensure that limited food resources reach as many people in need as possible. Preliminary outcomes of ongoing discussions suggest that a reduced ration of 10kg of cereals will be allocated to all of the 4.6 million beneficiaries as well as additional relief beneficiaries in emerging hotspot areas. The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) has prioritized 3.3 million PSNP beneficiaries for food transfers in August 2008.

¹ Please see WFP External Situation Report for more detailed information.

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Response

Relief²: 1,025,030 beneficiaries in Somali Region have been allocated an amount of 43,029 mt of which 36,089 mt have been dispatched since January 2008. In SNNPR, 1,332,010 beneficiaries have been allocated 74,261 mt, of which 72,001 mt have been dispatched. In Oromiya Region, 1,088,537 beneficiaries have been allocated 35,034 mt, of which 26,460 mt have been dispatched. Some 1,332,835 beneficiaries in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella and Tigray have been allocated 31,639 mt, of which 28,764 mt have been dispatched.

Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP): Between January and July 2008, an amount of 95,614 mt³ has been allocated to 3.6 million PSNP beneficiaries in Afar, Amhara, Harari, Oromiya, SNNPR and Tigray, and some 74,844 mt have been dispatched.

Targeted Supplementary Feeding: Between 16th and 28th July 2008, an amount of 1,275 mt of blended food and oil has been dispatched to 45,766 beneficiaries under the TSF programme in Oromiya, SNNPR and Tigray.

Gaps and Requirements

The total shortfall for relief, PSNP and TSF programmes amounts to 170,000 mt valued at US \$138.8 million broken down as follows:

Relief: Total annual requirements for the current 4.6 million beneficiaries amount to 591,333 mt of mixed commodities. The food shortfall is 93,000 mt. However, due to extensive borrowing, the funding shortfall amounts to some 123,000 mt of mixed commodities valued at US\$99.4 million, which includes an advance of US\$21.3 million from the immediate response account (IRA) and working-capital financing (WCF).

Productive Safety Net Programme: WFP shortfalls for the PSNP amount to 38,000 mt of mixed commodities valued at US\$30.1 million.

Targeted Supplementary Feeding has a current commodity shortfall of 3,700 mt. In addition, some US\$4.6 million needs to be repaid to the Immediate Response Account (IRA) bringing the total shortfall to 9,000 mt valued at US\$9.2 million.

² Allocations/dispatches refer to mixed commodities of cereals, pulses, oil and blended food.

³ This figure will be update in the next WFP External Situation Report.

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Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Key Issues

Severe water shortages continue to pose major threats to the health and livelihoods of people living in drought-affected regions. Partners report that communities in Akobo, Itang and Lare in Gambella Region have been hit by floods and further investigation and confirmation is pending.

Response

A range of stakeholders are responding to the needs generated by severe water shortages in the Somali Region through rehabilitation and construction of boreholes and water tankering interventions. The Regional Health Bureau (RHB), with financial assistance from UNICEF, has dispatched teams to rehabilitate all non-functioning boreholes in Degahabur and Korahe zones in the Somali Region. In addition to rehabilitation of existing boreholes, the Regional Water Bureau (RWB) has contracted Water Works Construction Enterprise to drill 5 new boreholes and plans to construct an additional 25 to serve the water needs of communities in the Somali Region. The RWB is preparing to train 20 electromechanical experts with technical assistance from the Ministry of Water Resources and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Regional Water Bureau, with financial assistance from UNICEF, will deploy 10 water trucks to provide water to communities affected by severe water shortages in Warder. UNICEF office in Kebridehar is working with a range of stakeholders to identify villages that require water interventions. Medecins du Monde (MDM) distributed Water Guard to 2 villages in Kebridehar in response to reports of increased cases of diarrhea.

Gaps and Requirements

Additional supplies of chemicals for water purification and treatment are required to prevent the further spread of AWD.

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Humanitarian Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting	Location and Time
Monday 25 th August 2008		
Tuesday 26 th August 2008		
Wednesday 27 th August 2008	Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU)/ MANTF Meeting	DPPA Board Room, 14.00.
Thursday 28 th August 2008	Humanitarian Coordination Meeting	UNDP Conference Hall, E.C.A. 10.00.
Friday 29 th September 2008	Food Aid Task Force Safety and Security Meeting	DPPA, 09.00. UN Department of Safety and Security Office, 09.30.

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Editorial Note: The information in this document is based on reports and field information from a variety of sources including UN agencies, NGOs and government partners as well as the different coordination forums.