



FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

Despite humanitarian interventions, food insecurity continues to be reported in Somali, SNNP and lowland areas of Oromiya and some parts of Amhara regions. FEWSNET reports that soaring food prices are further affecting the food security situation of urban and rural poor, as well as vulnerable pastoral and agro-pastoral populations. According to WFP, in June 2008, the price of local maize was 87.7 percent higher than import parity. In the food-insecure areas of SNNP, Somali and Amhara regions, maize prices have shown a 150 to 161 percent increase during January to June 2008.

As *hagaa* season (dry) progresses, the food security situation in **Somali Region** is further deteriorating with reports of serious water and pasture shortages particularly in the seven *deyr* receiving zones. According to the DPPB/Save the Children UK June food security update, most *birkads* have dried in Degehabur, Korahe and Warder zones, highlighting the need for emergency water tankering interventions. The report indicates that prices of basic grains and imported food items have doubled/tripled in most areas of the region. Between January to June 2008, the price of maize has increased by 148 percent in Jijga town, 80 percent in Chereti and Degehabur towns and 200 percent in Fik town.

A recent OCHA mission to **SNNPR** reports that despite humanitarian interventions, new hotspot woredas including Benatsemay, Burji and Basketo special woredas have emerged. OCHA observed that severe acute malnutrition cases continue to increase in Dara Godo woreda in Wolayita zone and Korga areas in East Badwacho woreda of Hadiya zone. In areas where nutritional intervention started earlier including Kedida Gamela, Alaba Special woreda and Boricha, severity of child malnutrition has reduced decreasing admission rates to stabilization centers. CONCERN reported that it is conducting a rapid health and nutrition assessment in Soro, Duna, Gibe and Angacha woredas. Shortage of essential drugs, poor staff capacity and inaccessibility of some Out-Patient Therapeutic Programmes are the most pressing challenges encountered in nutrition response. The Regional Health Bureau together with UNICEF provided severe acute malnutrition management training for 31 health professionals for five days at Yirgalem.

CARE in its latest publication reports food security problems in Fentale woreda, East Hararghe, Borena and some woredas of West Hararghe zones in **Oromiya Region**. The report notes that production of short maturing crops is not expected until October 2008. It also indicates that the locust and army worm outbreaks in Borena, East and West Hararghe zones have been controlled. Most farmers have replanted damaged crops by the infestations.

FEWSNET in its June update reported that the *belg* crop growing areas of **Amhara Region** are facing acute food deficit due to poor performance of *belg* rains. Gubalafto and Dawnt woredas of North Wollo zone, Legabmo and Sayint woredas of South Wollo zone, Menze Gera and Menze Mama woredas of North Shewa zone are identified as hotspot areas. For more information contact: ocha-eth@un.org, care.eth@ethionet.et, ethiopia@few.net & wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The emergency response capacity for the estimated 4.6 million beneficiaries is threatened by extremely low emergency food reserve stocks and shortfalls in the food aid pipeline during the height of the hunger period that extends until September. WFP's funding shortfall remains high at 200, 543 MT valued at U\$ 162.6 million. Nevertheless, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) and WFP continue distribution of relief food to drought affected areas of the country. To date, approximately 70,776 MT of emergency food has been dispatched out of the 125,080 MT allocated. UNICEF reported that as of 10 July, 645 MT of Plumpy'Nut has arrived in Addis Ababa that will cover the needs of approximately 18,000 malnourished children. A total of 409 MT of Plumpy'Nut has been dispatched to the regions for further distribution to NGOs operating in the field. Additional 186 MT of Plumpy'Nut will arrive in the country until 14 July. UNICEF has requested its headquarters for second loan to import a second batch of 1,217 MT of Plumpy'Nut to cover anticipated requirements. Meanwhile, WFP reports that local supply of blended food (famix) has been reduced due to power shortages and high cost of raw materials particularly maize. For more information contact: kmcdonald@unicef.org & wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

HEALTH UPDATE

WHO reported that Acute Watery Diarrhoea cases have been identified in five woredas located in Amhara and Oromiya Regions. Conjie and Achefer in West Gojjam zone; Guagusa of Awi zone; and Alefa Takusa of North Gondar zone in Amhara Region and Akaki woreda of East Showa zone in Oromiya Region have been reported active cases. The newly established AWD Working Group has been meeting to discuss ways forward and to facilitate a coordinated response. Lack of water purification products at household level and shortage of drugs and medical supplies remain as major challenges.

WHO additionally reports a significant decrease in cases of meningitis and measles nationwide. The agency notes that sporadic cases of meningitis have been reported only from Wadera woreda in Oromiya Region. WHO reported that more than 600,000 people between 2 and 30 years of age were vaccinated against meningitis in high risk woredas. Additionally, 2 million doses of meningitis vaccines have arrived in the country. A portion of the vaccines will be used to replenish the emergency national stock that was utilized to conduct a nationwide campaign one month ago. The balance will be used to conduct mass vaccinations in woredas that were not covered by the previous campaign in Afar, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int