



DROUGHT UPDATE-SOMALI REGION AND BORENA ZONE IN OROMIYA REGION

The humanitarian situation in southeastern parts of the country continues to deteriorate, with increasing livestock deaths, serious shortage of water and high levels of malnutrition. In the **monthly Humanitarian Coordination Meeting** of Somali Region, which was held on 21 February in Jijiga town, the regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB) stressed that the situation is deteriorating as the dry '*Jilal*' season is advancing (January-March). Large-scale migration from Kenya and Somalia has been observed, and large population movements from rural to urban areas are also reportedly taking place. While several projects are addressing the drought situation, more interventions are needed especially in the non-food sector. Meanwhile, the DPPA continues the daily dispatches of food for some 1.5 million people in Somali Region, and some 155,000 in Borena zone of Oromiya Region. The transport capacity for deliveries of relief food has been limited. In order to increase the dispatch rate, DPPA has engaged their emergency transport fleet and the Road Transport Authority is coordinating the commercial transport fleet for priority loads to the drought-affected areas. For food dispatches to Somali Region, DPPA has now taken additional measures in order to ensure delivery of relief food to the intended beneficiaries. These measures include regular radio broadcasts informing beneficiaries of food allocations and their entitlements, deployment of DPPA monitoring teams to the worst drought-affected areas, deployment of military convoys to follow trucks carrying relief food to particular "hotspot" areas, and the establishment of committees at woreda level to control the receipt of food. WFP is also increasing its monitoring capacity in the areas, through hiring of new food aid monitors and field assistants. Contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

MSF-Belgium conducted a nutritional survey in Chereti woreda (Afer zone) and reports **critical malnutrition** of 18.6% GAM and 2.3 % SAM with 3.3/10,000/day under five mortality rate. Diarrhea is the main cause of death for children under five. Measles coverage, surveyed by both card and history, is 55%, which is not satisfactory. The survey recommends improving access to safe drinking water and increasing the capacity of the Therapeutic feeding Units. Meanwhile, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness and Food Security Bureau in its February flash update reports that a significant number of malnourished children have been admitted into the therapeutic feeding centers in neighboring Mendera town (Kenya). According to the report among the admitted, seven children have died. Contact: msfb-addis-ababa-hom@msf.be & ewprojectscuk@ethionet.et

WHO recently reported that the Austrian Development Agency donated 500,000 Euro to support the **polio eradication programme** in Somali Region. The campaign, which plans to cover an estimated 900,000 children under five, was conducted in the 53 woredas including bordering areas, from 20 –23 February. The region is considered to be at high risk of importing the polio virus as it borders East Hararghe in Oromiya Region, where the three most recently confirmed wild polio virus cases were identified and due to the outbreak of the disease in neighbouring Somalia. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

APDA REPORTS CRITICAL WATER SHORTAGE IN ZONE ONE OF AFAR REGION

Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) in its monthly report indicates critical water shortage in Elidar and Dubti woredas in Zone One, Afar Region. According to the report, all kebeles in Elidar woreda are dry except Immino, where there is underground water. Some people, particularly from Aba'a and Gensero kebeles, travel up to 24 hours to reach this water point. The water problem in this woreda is exacerbated after the DPPB and FSB stopped their water tankering service in early January due to lack of funds. In Dubti woreda people travel from 2-28 hours to reach to the existing three water points. APDA reports that animals are dying in significant number, especially in Musle, Lubak and Dagaba areas. The report recommends three water tankers to be allocated for each woreda for at least two months-until the rains come. Contact: afarpastoral@ethionet.et

MENINGITIS KILLS 28 PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY

The Ministry of Health (MoH) recently reported 792 cases of meningitis from October 2005 to 20 February 2006, with 28 resulting in death in SNNP, Oromiya and Tigray regions. Of the cases, 740 are reported from SNNPR. According to the MoH, Afar Region, East and West Hararghe and lowlands of Oromiya Region bordering Somali Region are areas of concern. To date, 2.9 million vaccines are secured, leaving a shortfall of 2.1 million vaccines. Contact: millioyon@yahoo.com

TARGETED SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING UPDATE

Targeted Supplementary Feeding in support of the Enhanced Outreach Strategy (TSF/EOS) continues. In Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) supplementary food is now moving to 105,000 beneficiaries. Distributions are 75 percent completed and the total tonnage moved in the region will be 2,625 tonnes of CSB and 294 tonnes of vegetable oil. In Oromiya, Tigray and Amhara regions, nutrition screening is complete and 248,229 beneficiaries have been identified. A total of 6,206 tonnes of CSB and 695 tonnes of vegetable oil is planned for distribution. Meanwhile, nutrition screening for further distributions is on-going in Somali Region. Two new regions are participating in the EOS/TSF for 2006: Afar Region, where screening is underway in Zone One, and Gambella Region where screening is planned for March. During 2006 the main focus of TSF activities is to consolidate the work to date. Delays are still being experienced in food distribution and the quality of nutrition education is patchy and attention will be focused to improve performance in these areas. For more information contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org