



FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

Although there were some reports of rainfall in pocket areas of Borena zone in Oromiya Region, food security concerns remain in the south and south eastern pastoral and agro pastoral areas of the country. In Somali Region, dry, hot and dusty weather conditions prevail. The start of the *gu* rains has delayed in Shinile and Jijiga zones, further deteriorating the livelihood and food security situation. In the remaining *deyr* receiving zones, the seasonal rains are expected to commence in mid-April. Stress coping mechanisms including borrowing of food and slaughtering of calves, continue to be reported. Acute water shortage is still a major problem and the price continues to increase significantly. As part of water trucking interventions, the Regional Government, UNICEF, Samaritans' Purse provided 1.4 million Birr, 480,000 Birr and 115,000 Birr respectively. In SNNPR, failure of root crops particularly sweet potato and *enset* poses a major threat to the food security situation. Delay of *belg* rains and continued below average performance is also anticipated to significantly impact *belg* crop production. APDA in its latest March update reported critical water and pasture shortages in the north eastern parts of Afar Region. Animal disease outbreaks are also reported from Elidar, Afdera and Teru woredas. Moreover, increased price of grain compared to declining value of livestock is further affecting the food security situation in Afar. The DPPA led multi-agency assessment teams are presently undertaking assessments in hotspot woredas of Tigray, Amhara, SNNP and Oromiya. Meanwhile, preparation of the 2008 Relief Multi-Sectoral Requirement is progressing. For more information contact: ocha-eth@un.org & afarpda@yahoo.com

SUSPECTED AWD CASES IN DOLO ADO, SOMALI REGION

A total of 97 suspected AWD cases with 8 deaths were reported from Suftu area in Dolo Ado woreda of Liben zone in Somali Region. The cases were reported between 14 January and 15 March 2008, according to the team deployed to the woreda. AWD cases were also reported by Kenyan health authorities in an area bordering Somali Region. According to Kenyan health authorities, the laboratory investigations identified *Vibrio Cholerae*. A cross border meeting was conducted by health and administrative authorities to exchange information and collaborate on the prevention and control activities by both sides. For more information: who-wro@et.afro.who.int

REFUGEE UPDATE

UNHCR reported that the Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR are considering the opening of an additional camp in the Somali Region of Ethiopia to accommodate the increasing inflow of refugees from Somalia. Current estimates indicate an influx of 800 persons per month. ARRA and UNHCR conducted a screening and revalidation exercise in Aware refugee camp in the Somali Region and are finalizing results. Furthermore, the number of asylum seekers coming to Tigray from neighboring Eritrea has continued to increase. Similarly, the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA), in its March update also reported increased Eritrean refugee influx in Erbeti, Afdera, Sodonta and Bure woredas of the Afar Region. Meanwhile, repatriation of Sudanese refugees from Ethiopia continued and to date a total of more than 27,000 refugees have returned to southern Sudan. At the end of February, the total number of refugees in the country, stood at 85,003. For more information contact: gegziabk@unhcr.org & afarpda@yahoo.com

MEASLES UPDATE

Measles cases continued to be reported in various places. Since the beginning of the year, a total of 1,812 confirmed cases and 93 deaths have been reported. The majority of cases were from Hambella and Karcha woredas in Guji zone of Oromiya Region. Mass vaccination campaigns have been completed in Somali Region and in four woredas of Guji zone in Oromiya Region. MSF-Belgium has been providing support to the Oromiya Regional Health Bureau's (RHB) response to the outbreak in the two woredas of Guji zone including logistical and financial support as well as provision of medical supplies and drugs. An estimated 93,000 children under 15 years were immunized and more than 1,000 patients were treated in the two woredas. The number of cases has reduced drastically and the outbreak appears to be under control. Meanwhile, UNICEF and WHO are seeking for funds to support large scale immunization campaigns in Oromiya and SNNPR. WHO has deployed two national consultants to Borena and Guji zones of Oromiya Region to support the RHB in the response of health emergencies. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int