



PRE-FAMINE CONDITIONS CONFRONT SOMALI REGION

FEWS NET Emergency Alert reports urgent responses are required to prevent an alarming escalation of food insecurity in Somali Region. More than one million livestock dependent people in the region are facing extreme food insecurity that includes emerging pre-famine conditions triggered by the failure of the *deyr* rains. Already there have been widespread human and livestock migrations and tribal conflicts over scarce resources. There is an increase in the number of livestock deaths and the slaughter of calves to save cows, and a decrease in the production of livestock products such as milk. Crop wilting in agro-pastoral areas, malnutrition and reports of child deaths are also some of the pre-famine conditions witnessed. Such conditions at this early stage are alarming, especially considering the onset of the *jillal* (dry) season (January - March/April) in the seven southern zones of the region, a time when food security conditions normally deteriorate to their worst levels of the year. Meanwhile, in response, the FDPPA has dispatched food aid to the region in December and is in the process of allocating blended food to the people most in need. While food aid helps to save lives, other interventions such as water, fodder provision and health (human and livestock) are also required. Meanwhile, the Regional DPPB has released its emergency response plan urgently requesting an estimated US\$ 40 million for these sectors. The FDPPA is holding a meeting on 3 January with humanitarian agencies to discuss actions needed. Contact: Ethiopia@fews.net

ASSISTANCE UNDERWAY FOR EMERGENCY BENEFICIARIES IN BORENA ZONE, OROMIYA REGION

The Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (FDDPA) has approved the allocation of food to 155,000 emergency beneficiaries in Borena zone that are affected by the failure of the *hagaya* rains. According to the preliminary findings of the pre-harvest emergency needs assessment the situation in the lowland areas is critical particularly in Dire, Moyale, Arero and Teletale woredas. People from these areas have been migrating to areas where the rains performed better such as Yabello and Arero woredas since October. No production is expected in these areas as there was no land preparation due to the failure of the *hagaya* rains. Currently 37 percent and 41 percent of the population in Moyale and Dire woredas are agro-pastoralists respectively. However, in the highland areas where enough rains were received especially Bule Hora, Abaya and parts of Galana woredas, good production is expected. Due to the critical water shortage in Dire and Moyalle woredas, the local administration in collaboration with NGOs is providing emergency water rationing, primarily for clinics and schools, in order to help them continue with their services. Malaria and bloody diarrhea were reported as epidemics in all lowland areas. Even though a nutritional survey was not conducted to confirm the level, malnutrition was observed in children under five and elders. Due to the occurrence of drought in northern parts of Kenya and tribal conflicts between the Gabra and Borena many people are migrating to the zone with their livestock putting pressure on the scarce pasture and water resources. Conflict between the Borena, Hamer and Erboke tribes is feared as the Borena have migrated to the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Region in search of pasture and water for their livestock. Several thousand people that are displaced due to the tribal conflicts between Gabra and Guji and Borena and Gabra are still in the area waiting for assistance. However, the allocation made by the FDPPA does not include these beneficiaries that are in a serious condition. In addition, non-food interventions are also equally important in this zone.

UNICEF INCREASES CAPACITY TO TREAT MALNUTRITION IN THE COUNTRY

In December, UNICEF has supported the opening of 17 Therapeutic Feeding Units (TFUs), increasing the number from 94 to 111 in the country. The TFUs are integrated into hospitals and health centers supporting the health system to increase its capacity to treat 13,295 cases from 10,215 cases at the end of November and only 2,000 cases in 2003. UNICEF's activities in these TFUs could be jeopardised if funding is not secured for the procurement of therapeutic food. For more information contact: mapped@unicef.org

WORLD VISION STRENGTHS EARLY WARNING CAPACITY

World Vision conducted capacity building training focusing on the collection and use of meteorological data for agricultural and early warning purposes in Bahir Dar, Amhara Region from 5 - 9 December 2005. The training among others included techniques for meteorological data collection, analysis, forecasting and interpretation. The participants were drawn from four woredas of the region working in local Agricultural and Rural Development Bureaus and World Vision project offices. The training is part of the organisation's effort to build the capacity of communities in early warning and disaster mitigation endeavours. Contact: wveth@ethionet.et

EMERGENCY FOOD SECURITY RESERVE STATUS

The Emergency Food Security Reserve (EFSR) reports 301,021 MTs stocks on hand, 38,084 MTs stock under withdrawal, and 65,899 MTs outstanding loans. These figures are as of 30 December 2005.