

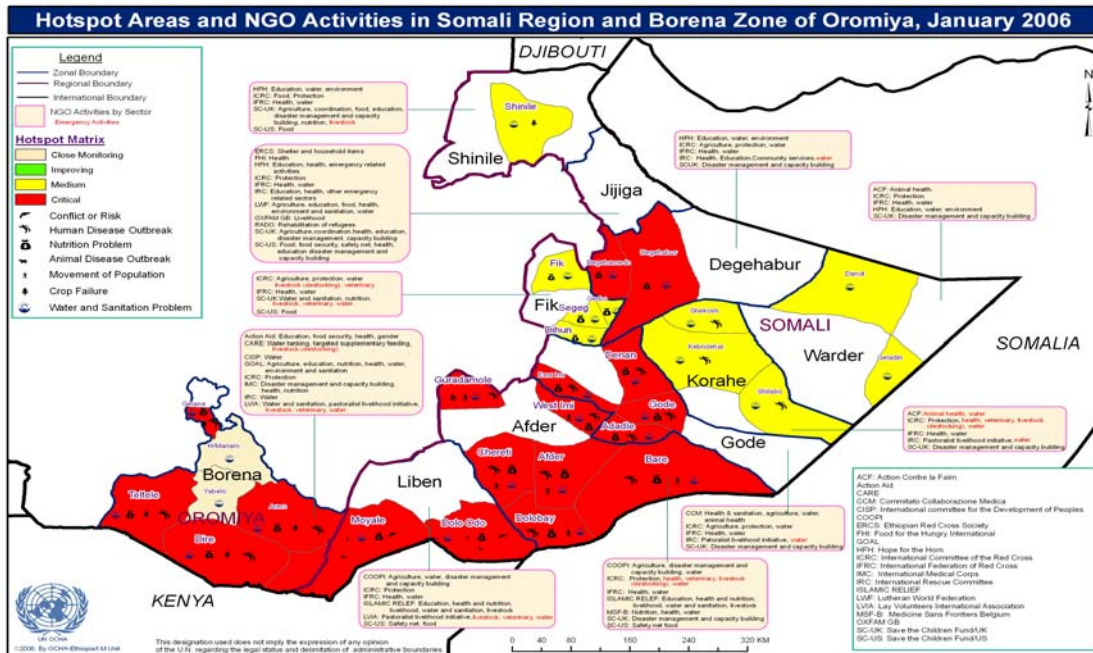


## SITUATION REPORT

### Drought Emergency in Somali and Oromiya Regions, Ethiopia

13 February, 2006

In response to the drought emergency in Ethiopia UNOCHA will prepare a fortnightly Situation Report (Sit Rep) for humanitarian partners providing an up-to-date account of the crisis<sup>1</sup>. A more detailed drought matrix is also available which details the needs, the response and any gaps. UNOCHA has also prepared a 3W (Who does What Where) that is available at [www.ocha-eth.org](http://www.ocha-eth.org).



### Highlights

- 1.7 million emergency food beneficiaries in Somali Region and Borena zone, Oromiya. It is anticipated that the 155,000 beneficiaries in Borena zone will double.
- Water shortage reaching critical levels with 640,000 people requiring emergency water in Somali Region; 100,000 in Borena.
- Critical malnutrition in Dollo Odo (Liben zone) and Dollo Bay (Aferder zone) (20.1% GAM and 1.6% SAM) and Denan woredas (23.5% GAM, 2.9% SAM) of Somali Region
- Meningitis outbreak in Teltele woreda, Borena
- Up to 75% decrease in value of livestock; significant increase in the grain prices; drastic reduction of milk production; livestock (cattle) dying with losses of up to 60% in some areas
- Serious pasture depletion and chaotic migration, with populations going from one direction to another looking for pasture without success. Influx of pastoralist from Kenya and Somalia
- The forecast for the ‘gu’ rains is not promising (March – May) which would see the number of beneficiaries double.
- Water & Sanitation and Health Sector urgently require US\$7.95 million to carry out life saving programmes in the next three months. Livestock interventions require an urgent US\$ 5 million.

<sup>1</sup> The information in this document is consolidated from reports and field information from a variety of sources including UN agencies, NGOs and government.

**Overall Summary:** The Somali and Oromiya Regions continue to deteriorate as they move into the middle of the dry *jilal* season. In Somali Region where 1.5 million people are in need of emergency food, the situation remains most critical in Liben, Afder and parts of Gode zones. The food security situation is also critical in Borena zone of Oromiya Region where there are 155,000 emergency beneficiaries but life saving food is being shared with the wider community who fall under the safety net programme. The most affected areas in Borena zone are Teltele, Moyale and Dire districts. Worrying levels of severe acute malnutrition have been recorded. Estimates indicate that more than 56,000 children are currently vulnerable to moderate and severe malnutrition across the affected areas. Measles, linked to more than 20% of the deaths of children under five in the area's last major drought in 2000 is also on the rise. The lack of food and water is weakening people's immune system and therefore contributing to the rise in measles and meningitis outbreaks. Meningitis vaccines are being provided to the regions to contain the spread of the disease. Regarding the measles outbreak, the very low immunisation levels in the Somali Region, combined with the displacement of the population due to the current drought could lead to widespread transmission in the region. The drought conditions, and their impact on children's resistance to disease, also increase the likelihood of rising mortality figures.

Peoples' coping/distress strategies are stretched to their limit including increased begging in the streets of main towns, over-selling of basic assets, slaughtering of weak animals and killing of calves and closure of local schools following decreased/failed attendance. Given that the worst time of the *jilaal* is yet to come and no rain is expected before April, the current situation is expected to worsen further.

The availability of pasture and water remains poor and this has resulted in stress migration of the affected pastoral households. There have been widespread human and livestock migrations and tribal conflicts over scarce resources could eventuate. Pockets of particularly vulnerable communities in East Imi remain cut off from their livelihoods and assistance by an inter-clan conflict. The ICRC has provided 5,000 conflict affected families in East Imi with a full ration for two months. There is an increase in the number of livestock deaths. Cows and sheep are dying already; goats will survive another month and camels an estimated two to three months. There is slaughtering of calves to save cows and a decrease in the production of livestock products such as milk. Interventions are needed quickly in all areas, either to prevent a food security crisis with complete loss of livelihoods in the worst affected areas, or to prevent the situation further deteriorating in areas less severely affected. Recommended interventions need to focus on protecting the current assets and resources that the population still possess, and strengthen the coping mechanisms already in place.

**Coordination:** The UNCT has identified a building in Gode to facilitate an expansion of its presence in the zone in order to ensure effective response. UNICEF and OCHA are expected to both have field officers based there shortly to complement WFP's operations. While Gode is seen as the best possible location to base the UN's response to the crisis for south east Somali Region, overall coordination will remain in Jijiga where the fortnightly regional coordination meetings are held. At the Federal level, UNOCHA will hold its regular NGO information sharing meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> February and the sector task forces are holding regular meetings. Participation is strongly encouraged. The DPPA has also formed a Crisis Management Group to meet each Tuesday with the sector task force heads and will report to the Deputy Prime Minister and ministers each Thursday.

## SOMALI REGION

**Water and Sanitation:** Water tankering interventions are being undertaken as a priority in drought affected areas. 20 water tankers from the Government and 10 from UNICEF are now deployed. There is a gap of nine water tankers according to the initial requirement estimates of 39 water tankers. However, the gap could actually be greater given that the severity of water problems is increasing. This does not include livestock watering schemes which must also be thought about if the interventions are to save livelihoods as well. Work has begun on the rehabilitation of 20 currently defunct motorised boreholes and the drilling of two new boreholes. An emergency ICRC airlift to Gode has sent pumps and water storage tanks to support the local administration in Bare, East Imi and areas along the River Shebelle, and is also assisting with water tankering through six trucks.

**Livestock:** The lack of sufficient water and pasture has resulted in serious declining productivity in milk, meat and income for livestock. Animals are also dying in greater numbers than normal (60% for cattle and shoats). Migration patterns are more chaotic than normal caused by the difficulty to find substantial pasture resulting in a large concentration of livestock along the Wabi Shebelle River. Chaotic migration is also occurring in Afer zone. A decrease on animal weight is visible, with condition of animals worsening further south. There is an increase of animal diseases including: tick and tick borne diseases, internal-parasites, tripanosomiasis (camel & cattle), respiratory infection (camel & cattle), diarrhoea (bacterial and linked to food and water), new skin diseases (camel & shoats). In Bare and in zones along the Wabi Shebelle the ICRC is providing veterinary treatment to animals with the objective of treating 250,000 of them. Any emergency response in addition to the immediate provision of food and water should include livestock emergency interventions aimed at saving pastoralist livelihoods. So far the livestock emergency interventions are limited to animal health interventions but there are plans by some organisations to implement livestock feeding, destocking and restocking programs. See the drought emergency matrix for more detail.

**Health & Nutrition:** Interventions in the form of strengthening health facilities, mobile health care, EOS (including measles vaccination), and nutritional assessment and surveys are ongoing in Liben, Afer and Gode zones. The joint UNICEF/WFP/Government Enhanced Outreach Strategy is providing de-worming, vitamin-A supplementation, nutritional screening and measles vaccinations to more than 314,000 children and 77,000 pregnant and lactating women in 25 districts. To date 195 suspected cases of measles were reported from Degehabur, Liben and Warder zones; 14 deaths have so far been reported.

Preliminary results of a joint Save the Children UK/USA nutrition surveys in Dollo Odo (Liben zone) and Dollo Bay (Afer zone) woredas of Somali Region revealed critical malnutrition of 20.1% GAM and 1.6% SAM in the agro-pastoral areas and 18.8% GAM and 1.4% SAM in the pastoral areas including Bare. The surveys conducted from in later January estimated the crude and under five mortality rates at 0.74%, 2.40% and 3.35% deaths/10000/day respectively. Diarrhoea is the main cause of death in under five children. Provision of targeted supplementary food distribution for moderately malnourished under five children is required for at least five months in addition to the implementation of OTP/TFP program and close monitoring of the overall food security situation in the woredas. In Denan woreda of Gode zone a nutritional survey by GOAL indicates a GAM of 23.5% and SAM of 2.9% with an under five mortality of 2.9%. Vaccination rates remain well below international standards and should be further improved through regular vaccination and supplementation campaigns by the health bureau. Access to health facilities and clean water remains very poor. Sanitation is practically non-existent with very few latrines. Hygiene practices are also extremely poor and many children are suffering from parasites and skin infections. Across the border

in a NGO operated therapeutic feeding centre in Mandera, there are 13 children from Dolo Ado in Somali Region. ACF says they recently discharged 20 other children. The next Nutrition Task Force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday the 15th of February at 2:00 pm at DPPA to discuss the nutritional surveys and appropriate responses.

**Food:** For Somali Region, 10,000 tonnes were allocated to the worst-affected woredas in December and transport and distributions of these allocations continued in January. Some 29,000 tonnes of WFP food was allocated in January with only 15% dispatched. The federal authorities say this is due to transport problems and hope to improve the situation in the coming month. There are concerns about reaching the most needy populations with services for the time being especially with food. DPPA says it is working to address the problem. February allocation dispatches to Somali region have amounted to slightly more than 10,000 tonnes. Emergency distributions include "general" rations of cereals, pulses and vegetable oil. Fortified corn soya blend is also being dispatched for blanket supplementary feeding as preliminary results of nutrition surveys indicate "critical" levels of malnutrition in Somali Region. This is an additional ration for the 35% of the population considered to be at particular risk (children under-five, pregnant and nursing women, the sick and the elderly). The impact of drought on the education sector is mainly reflected on school closures and increased drop outs of children from classes. With the exception of two schools that are assisted by WFP, the remaining 23 are not operational. In Gode 12 out of 30 schools are closed. It is therefore appropriate to intensify school feeding programs in the areas affected if the consequences of drought are to be averted. Currently, school feeding programs are going on at 84 schools of which only 15 are in the severely affected southern zones. Proper assessment and identification of affected schools should be undertaken and quick response should be made as soon as possible.

## BORENA REGION

**Water & Sanitation:** The number of people in critical need of water in the Borena is estimated to be about 100,000. As part of the emergency response the regional water bureau has started water tankering with seven trucks for transporting water using rottos and four water tankers. 12 additional tankers have been requested. This is not sufficient to cover the water needs of a population spread over a large geographical area. This activity needs to be expanded to ensure adequate coverage of women and children who remain behind in the villages. Out of 230 schemes in the zone, about 30% are non-operational and in urgent need of repair. Regional authorities report that 25 motorised water points are now functional; 19 hand pumps and 1 solar pump are rehabilitated, but still there is serious shortage of water supply in Moyale, Dire, Arero and Teltele woredas. Sanitation coverage in the zone is below 10% and puts the affected population, especially children under five extremely vulnerable to diseases.

**Livestock:** Pastoralists are taking drastic measures to preserve their livestock, slaughtering newborn calves to save their weak mothers. The prices of water and cereals are sky-rocketing, while the price of livestock is falling. Access to markets is a concern as most animals are too weak to be brought to the markets. There have been outbreaks in Black Leg, CCPP, FMD, Anthrax, LSD, Trypanosomiasis, diarrhea and tick born diseases. Livestock deaths and emaciated cattle are on the rise resulting in pastoralists walking hundreds of kilometers in search of better pasture, often into Kenya. Likewise severe drought conditions on the other side of the border have forced Kenyans to move into Borena with their livestock putting additional pressure on fast depleting resources. With competition over resources becoming tense there are concerns that old conflicts could flare up. There are some destocking interventions in the zone but they are limited and are having a minimal effect due to the large number of animals dying. Destocking needs to be urgently scaled up to have any impact.

**Health & Nutrition:** The health service system in Borena is in a state of crisis. While the shortage of qualified health staff in this remote and under serviced area has been a chronic problem, it has turned into a severe crisis since last December when over 40 health practitioners left the Zone for upgrading studies. More than 33% of health facilities in the affected woredas are closed due to lack of staff, while the remaining facilities operate under severe shortages of qualified health practitioners. In Moyale, the district most severely affected by the drought, only three out of eight health clinics remain functional. Outbreaks of bloody diarrhea have also been reported in affected districts. Meningococcal meningitis has been confirmed in Teltele district (13 cases), and the regional health authorities are carrying out meningitis vaccination in the area to 43,300 people. No measles cases have been reported, but with routine vaccination coverage for measles as low as nine percent in the second half of 2005, the risk of measles outbreak among children weakened by poor nutrition is high. Signs of malnutrition among children have also been observed. A CARE nutritional survey conducted from 18 January – 2 February in Dire, Teltele, and Moyale woredas in Borena zone, Oromiya Region recorded serious and poor malnutrition (10.0% GAM and 1.1% SAM in Dire; 10.9% GAM and 1.0% SAM in Moyale; and 6.1% GAM and 0.3% SAM in Teltele woredas).

**Food:** Borena received over 2,000 tonnes in December and 2,900 tonnes were allocated in January with 25% dispatched for 155,000 beneficiaries, another 100,000 are under close monitoring. Relief food is distributed on the basis that only a maximum of five household members receive food. The number of needy population in the zone is expected to have sharply increased due to unavailability of milk. The zone has deployed a rapid assessment team to look at the number of needy and the finding is expected to be finalized in the coming days. CARE from its nutritional survey recommends amending ration distributions that are not currently based on family size. They also report that the number of beneficiaries in the zone could radically increase (up to 50%) from the number estimated in November 2005 by the multi-agency assessment team. The traditional sharing of food (both in normal and in crises times) to relatives/friends/neighbours remains a challenge for relief operations in Borena zone. An awareness campaign aimed at showing the effect of sharing relief food rations is needed. Schools are closing as parents move their children to take them on long migrations to find water and pasture. So far five schools and 11 alternative basic education centres have closed affecting 1,500 children.

### PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS IN PRIORITY

<b>Funding Gaps by Sector</b>	<b>Somali Region &amp; Borena Zone</b>
Water and Environmental Sanitation	US \$2,070,103
Health and Nutrition	US \$5,464,715
Livestock health	US \$529,657
Destocking	US \$2,515,571
Emergency Feed	US \$1,961,938
Shelter/Non-Food Items	US \$198,250
Logistics Support	US \$210,206
<b>Total</b>	<b>US \$12,950,440</b>

Please refer to the UNICEF Donor Update, 27 January for a more detailed summary of funding gaps in their relevant sectors. This is not a comprehensive summary of all needs for the emergency and other needs by Government and partners remain.

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