



CRITICAL MALNUTRITION IN HARTSHEIK AND FAFEN IDP CAMPS, SOMALI REGION

Alarming malnutrition rates have been reported in two IDP camps in Jijiga zone of Somali Region. Preliminary findings from a SC-UK, DPPC/Ethiopian Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) nutritional survey indicate critical malnutrition among children. More than 7,000 IDPs have been living in the area for more than 5 years. In Hartishek camp a GAM of 24.2 percent and SAM of 5.1 percent was recorded. The under five mortality rate per 10,000 was 4.7. In Fafen the GAM was 15.5 percent, SAM 1.2 percent and under five mortality per 10,000 was 3.4. According to the report the food security situation of the camps has been deteriorating during the last five months due to the irregular and erratic general ration distribution and lack of other coping mechanisms. The last general food distribution was in October/November 2004. The situation in terms of water, sanitation and health is also considered critical. Recommendations include urgently resuming general food rations, starting targeted feeding programmes and providing free medical services. It also recommends voluntary return of the IDPs to their home areas. UNDP with UN Country Team support are now developing plans with the regional authorities to reintegrate the families in their home areas. Contact: scukethiopia@savechildren.org.uk

IDPS IN AFDER ZONE, SOMALI REGION

MSF-Belgium has conducted a rapid nutritional assessment in Guradamole district in Somali Region and estimates there are between 10,000 – 15,000 IDPs living in four camps. The IDPs moved from Oromiya Region several months ago following the results of the October referendum. MSF-B says the situation is critical as the last food distribution to the area was in December 2004. A MUAC assessment indicated a 16.3 percent GAM and 3.5 percent SAM. In Guradamole town there is no water at all. ICRC has distributed tarpaulins and agricultural tools for 1,200 IDP households and has started a full two month food ration. MSF-B plans to start nutritional and medical interventions shortly. The DPPC indicated that once the number of IDPs are confirmed they can be included as new beneficiaries for the emerging general food ration distribution under the Joint Humanitarian Appeal. For more information contact: msfbet@ethionet.et

NEW CASES OF MENINGITIS REPORTED

As of today, a total of 433 cases of meningococcal meningitis and 40 deaths have been reported from areas in Tigray, Afar, Benshangul-Gumuz and Oromiya Regions in the last few months. The Ministry of Health is closely monitoring the situation in Benshangul-Gumuz region, where about 167 cases were reported in the past few weeks. UNICEF and WHO have been supporting the MoH with vaccines through support from the Dutch Government. A Flash Appeal is planned for the funding gap. Contact: igetachew@unicef.org and goitomg@et.afro.who.int

UPDATE ON MALNUTRITION IN BORICHA, SNNPR

Preliminary findings of a GOAL nutritional survey in Boricha woreda, Sidamo zone in SNNPR indicate serious malnutrition. The GAM is 12.3 percent, SAM is 1.3 percent and under five mortality rate is .98. The Regional Health Bureau in collaboration with SC-US is coordinating screening of severely acute malnourished children. SC-US is setting up Community based Therapeutic Care (CTC) funded by USAID/OFDA. The CTC intervention will provide Outreach Therapeutic Programmes and Supplementary Feeding Programmes at kebele level. Stabilisation Center sites at woreda level Health Centers are under preparation to effectively screen and treat the severely malnourished children, pregnant and lactating mothers. Meanwhile active screening and treatment of severely malnourished children is on-going at Yirba and Darara Health Centers. DPPC provided relief food for the original assessed number of 13,000 emergency beneficiaries in Boricha woreda at the end of March, and has allocated food for full rations for an expanded number of 50,000 beneficiaries for April and blended food for 35 percent of the targeted population considered particularly vulnerable. The April food distributions have begun. In addition, supplementary food for 6,728 malnourished children and pregnant and lactating mothers has been allocated in Boricha woreda as part of UNICEF/WFP Enhanced Outreach Strategy/Child Survival Interventions programme. For more information contact: Goal.ethio@ethionet.et, smhusain@savechildren.org.et, igetachew@unicef.org and wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

EMERGENCY MEASLES & VITAMIN A CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF

Measles cases have been reported in Afar, Gambella, East and West Hararghe of Oromiya Region by the Regional Health Bureaus. With UNICEF support, the Afar Regional Health Bureau is targeting 230,000 children between 6 to 59 months, while in Gambella about 200,000 children from 6 months to 15 years will be targeted for emergency measles vaccination and Vitamin A supplementation by the end of April. NGOs are expected to be strongly involved in the implementation process in Afar and WHO/UNICEF are technically supporting both RHBs. Another campaign will follow in East & West Hararghe. For more information contact: igetachew@unicef.org and goitomg@et.afro.who.int

DPPC HOLDS TALKS WITH UN, DONORS & NGOS

The DPPC had consultations with international donors, UN and NGOs last week. The DPPC briefed both groups on the current humanitarian concerns and the Food Security Coordination Bureau provided donors with a status report on implementation of the Productive Safety Net Programme. The DPPC indicated that it will update the beneficiary numbers and requirements of the 2005 Humanitarian Appeal before the Belg assessment in June/July based on current joint assessments and surveys, as well as considering needs in Afar and Somali for the last six months of the year which were not provided for in the December 2004 Appeal.