



MID MEHER SEASON ASSESSMENT - PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

A short mid-*meher* multi-agency assessment has been conducted from 30 August - 9 September in 58 woredas of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP and Afar regions. The information collected by the multi-agency teams is mainly intended to serve and complement the current preparation of the contingency plans for 2006. The teams debriefed partners at the government-led Early Warning Working Group on 13 September. According to their findings, in comparison to 2004, the performance of the 2005 rains has been good to very good. However, due to delay of the onset of rain in some areas, planting and agricultural activities have also been delayed. Therefore, it is crucial to monitor the continuation of the rains to the end of September to early October as it will determine the performance of the late-planted crops. In Tigray Region, long-cycle crops are in good condition, with the exception of *teff* having been planted late and needing further rain to mature. The southern zone of Tigray Region (mainly Raya Azebo and Alamata districts) is of concern due to a long dry spell in July; as a result it requires further rainfall in the coming weeks. Oromiya and Ahmara regions have experienced good to very good rainfall compared to recent years and are expected to have good crop performance. The exceptions are East and West Hararghe zones of Oromiya Region and the lowlands bordering Afar in Amhara Region (such as North Wello, South Wello and Oromiya zones), which have received less than average rainfall and need to be monitored closely in the coming weeks. For Afar region, the situation in all woredas of zone two and Yallo and Taru woredas of zone four is of serious concern because the livestock condition is not improving. Although the situation is not as serious as the recent drought years, pasture conditions are not good enough for livestock recovery. Furthermore, the National Meteorological Services Agency forecast the eastern and north-eastern part of the country is expected to receive below normal rainfall in the coming weeks; therefore, it is expected that the current situation in Afar will not improve. For further information: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

UPDATE ON THE FLOOD SITUATION IN AFAR REGION

The joint OCHA, FAO and UNICEF assessment team to the flood affected woredas of zone one of Afar Region reported the flood in Assaita woreda has covered a very wide area and affected up to 8,900 people in five kebeles. However the team could not confirm the population and livestock affected as the area was inaccessible. Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) also reported that an estimated 3,000 people in Rumaitu kebele have been water-bound for the past three weeks but the team could not confirm. Meanwhile, APDA has responded by placing two women extension workers among the displaced women to assist with coping and sent health workers to Rumaitu by boat. The team reported that the flood in Dubti woreda is under control and 50 percent of the IDPs have returned to their original location. However 30,000 people have reportedly become vulnerable to food-shortages as the flood damaged the bridge that connects Dubti and Date-Bahri woredas on 1 September. So far five people have died attempting to swim across the river. ICRC reported that there are new floodings in Afambo and Bure Mudaitu woredas and indicated they will respond in Bure Mudaitu as they are operational there. Meanwhile the FDPPC reported that it has airlifted over 137 quintals of wheat to more than 10 flooded localities last week. A Dubti woreda official reported the transportation of the relief grain to the various areas of the woredas will continue with a boat from the Ministry of Water Resources. However, the woreda reports that the assistance provided is insufficient compared to the huge number affected. Last month the FDPPC provided 52 cartons of biscuits to Assaita and Dupti received relief assistance in late July. Contact: ocha-eth@un.org

SITUATION UPDATE, SOMALI REGION

The Somali Regional Disaster Prevention Preparedness and Food Security Bureau in its monthly food security update reports that the overall food security situation in the region is below normal to near normal. According to the *belg/gu* Needs Assessment the total estimated needy population of the region that require relief food from August to December 2005 was 1,366,378 (29.7% of the total population in the region). However, the report indicates that this figure was reduced to 447,600 for the first three months (August –October); 401,100 for November and 388,100 people for December. The report claims that this has worsened the humanitarian situation in the region with some zones already experiencing the consequences; in Charati the price of 1Kg wheat has increased by 100% (from 2 Birr to 4 Birr). Meanwhile as a result of improved access to pasture and water, livestock condition is normal although their prices are below normal due to poor demand. There are no reports of major disease outbreak except increasing cases of malaria and diarrhoea in almost all zones of the region. In addition there have been conflicts and tensions in a number of woredas in the last two months which has restricted pastoral mobility, undermined traditional resource sharing, increased risks and slowed trade activities that in turn increased prices of commodities. It was also reported that no crops were planted in Miesso as a result of the ethnic conflict between Somalis and Oromos. For more information contact: ewprojectscuk@ethionet.et

UPDATE ON THE REINTEGRATION OF HARTISHEK AND FAFEN IDPS, SOMALI REGION

UNDP reports pre-movement activity is in progress to move the first group of nearly 1,000 IDPs in Hartishek and Fafen camps at the end of this month. A memorandum of understanding was signed between UNDP and IOM on agreed responsibilities in early September. Consequently IOM is conducting a revalidation, profiling and registration assessment in the camps. UNDP has provided US\$ 339,720 towards facilitating the movement of the IDPs. This week a United Nations Country Team is planning an assessment in the area of return, Degehabur zone to finalise the necessary preparations for their return. For more information contact: takele.teshome@undp.org

Contributions are welcome. Please submit to UN OCHA-Eth by Friday 1100hrs, ocha-eth@un.org