



WABE SHABELLE RIVER FLOODS, SOMALI REGION

The Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (FDPPC) advised last week in a Press Release that assistance is underway to the flood affected zones in Somali Region. The worst affected areas are West Imi district in Afder zone and East Imi district in Gode zone, after the Wabe Shabelle River burst its banks on 23 April. The rains have also caused flooding further downstream on the Wabe Shebelle in Mustahil and Kelafo districts of Gode zone and in the east of the region in Kebribeyah district of Jijiga zone and Kebreddehar district of Korahe zone. According to reports from the area, to date an estimated 100 people are unconfirmed dead and many people are missing. Initial assessments confirmed over 100,000 people are affected and more than 50,000 livestock have died. Some areas have not been able to report damage yet because of lack of communication. The Regional DPPB has requested the FDDPC to provide food and non-food items for an initial 77,000 people, a figure which may be adjusted as further information becomes available. However, transportation to the affected areas remains problematic, as the rains have made many roads impassable, with West Imi and East Imi currently only accessible by helicopter with carrying capacity of only three tons of food at a time. The FDPPC also reported that two chartered Antonov aircraft have already started airlifting high protein biscuits, shelter materials, jerry cans and household utensils from the DPPC stores in Dire Dawa to Gode. The transport of relief supplies from Gode to flooded areas has been hindered by the delay of fuel delivery for military helicopters. In addition to seven trailer loads of shelter items from Addis Ababa to Dire Dawa, UNICEF also deployed water and sanitation experts to Gode. It is also reported that the Fafan River in Kebridahar woreda swept away 200 houses and killed many livestock before flowing into the already swollen Shabelle River. A team composed of FDPPC, Regional DPPB, Save the Children UK, the Regional Health Bureau and UN agencies is in Gode to further assess the situation. ICRC is also active in assessing the situation and addressing needs. According to local elders, the current river overflow is the worst they have seen in 50 years. Meanwhile the regional president declared an emergency and appealed for immediate assistance on the 2 May.

MULTI-AGENCY TEAMS RETURNED

The DPPC led multi-agency team returned from the regions after a five-day (20-24 April) mission to re-assess the requirements for updating the 2005 Humanitarian Needs. The teams came up with additional beneficiary numbers from Tigray, Harari, Oromiya and Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples (SNNP) Regions. The team from Amhara was unable to identify the additional emergency needs and the results of further field assessments are expected. Findings and updated figures are being compiled and will be published in the Flash Update of the Appeal on 4 May 2005.

UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD DELEGATION VISITS ETHIOPIA

Seven members of UNICEF Executive Board visited Ethiopia from 17-22 April. During their mission, the team visited two therapeutic feeding centres in Derera and Yirba Health Centers in Boricha woreda of Sidama zone, SNNPR, where more than 130 severely acutely malnourished children are being treated. Speaking on behalf of the delegation, team leader Ambassador Andrei Dapkiunas, Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations, complimented the collaboration of UNICEF, WFP and the Government of Ethiopia on the effective implementation of the Enhanced Outreach Strategy/Child Survival Initiative. The Ambassador also noted the need to have generous donor support to crises matched with longer term development support. The team briefly discussed strategies to avoid crises in the future. For more information contact: igetachew@unicef.org

APDA CONDUCTS AN ASSESSMENT IN AFAR

Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) conducted an assessment to update the current drought crisis and ongoing perception of needs in Afar Region in late March. The team reported good rains in all zones except the northern and eastern woredas of Eli Dar and Afdera. Following the rain, human health is greatly endangered due to rotting animal carcasses. The team recommended continued provision of water tankering in order to stop people drinking contaminated water. Massive return of animals from Cheffa valley was also reported as farming has resumed in the valley. For more information contact: afarpda@yahoo.com

UNICEF CONDUCTS RAPID ASSESSMENT IN SNNPR

UNICEF led a rapid assessment with WFP/DPPB and Regional Health Bureau in Aleta Wondo, Dale and Shebedino woredas of Sidama zone of SNNPR in April. According to the assessment, the food security of the woredas is affected by population pressure and density that contributed to scarcity of cultivable land. The team also identified water problems and a high prevalence of water borne diseases. It is recommended beneficiary numbers be revised based on the present situation. The full reports are available at www.ocha-eth.org

EFSR STATUS

Ethiopia Food security Reserve (EFSR) reports stocks on hand as of 3 May are 119,560 mts, 106,600 mts stock under withdrawal and 178,847 mts outstanding loans.