



## **SITUATION REPORT: DROUGHT/FOOD CRISIS IN ETHIOPIA – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008**

### **Highlights:**

- **Food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition expected to continue in hotspot areas in SNNPR and Oromiya.**
- **High-level meetings between government, donors and UN Agencies to enhance provision of emergency relief.**
- **WFP, DPPA and the Food Security Coordination Bureau prioritise food distributions in break in emergency food pipeline.**

### **Situation Update**

#### **1. Humanitarian Situation**

Ethiopia continues to face critical challenges related to deepening food insecurity fuelled by drought and adverse market shocks triggered by massive increases in food and fuel prices and limited availability of food stocks in local markets. Communities living in drought-affected regions are struggling to protect livelihoods and are resorting to extreme coping mechanisms to mitigate the impact of the crisis including; slaughter of animals, consumption of seeds and wild fruits and migration. In the Ogaden areas of Somali Region conflict related insecurity has further eroded the population's ability to withstand the impact of the drought and economic shocks and poses considerable access constraints for humanitarian actors.

As a result of the drought and deepening food insecurity the number of vulnerable people at risk and targeted for emergency intervention has increased from 2.2 million to 4.6 million nationwide. An estimated 75,000 children have been directly affected by severe acute malnutrition. The malnutrition crisis has escalated in SNNPR<sup>1</sup> and Oromiya with potential hotspots emerging in Afar, Amhara, Tigray and Somali regions. Additional food and cash assistance is also required for 5.7 million beneficiaries affected by drought in Productive Safety Net Programme woredas.

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<sup>1</sup> In Boricha Woreda - SNNPR, for example the rate of severe acute malnutrition has escalated from 0.2% in February to 3.2% in April.

Food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition are expected to continue in the hot spot areas of the south and south east of the country until harvests begin in September. Despite the technical expertise and best efforts of the humanitarian community the response to date is compromised by the lack of food (including CSB) and nutritional supplies to address the current and anticipated caseload of SAM and guard against further deterioration of the situation. There is a need to ensure a sustained pipeline of food supplies into the country in order to respond adequately to current needs.

## **2. Policy Developments**

A number of high-level meetings between government, donors and UN Agencies took place over the course of the week to identify mechanisms to enhance the provision of emergency relief to drought affected communities. Outcomes included a commitment to fast-track customs procedures for the import of relief commodities identified as priority needs in the revised 2008 Humanitarian Requirements document. To address the specific challenges in the Somali Region, the DPPA has established a Special Committee comprising OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, USAID and other partners, to discuss strategies to strengthen the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the Somali Region. UN Agencies continue to seek assurances from the government that trucks assigned for the transport of essential commodities for emergency relief operations are not utilised for movement of other goods and commodities.

### **Health and Nutrition**

According to the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU), the nutrition situation continues to deteriorate with rising rates of new admissions and identification of additional hotspot areas in SNNPR and Oromiya. MSF-B reports that in Kachabira woreda, Kambatta zone in SNNPR approximately 66% of SAM patients admitted present with kwashiorkor. MSF-G reports that 28.7% out of a total of 1,939 registered cases presented with kwashiorkor. 29 deaths have been recorded at the Stabilisation Centres in Ropi and Sembete giving a case fatality rate of 4.9%.

Reports from Amhara, Somali and Tigray regions indicate a high prevalence of moderate to acute malnutrition. The limited presence of humanitarian actors in Amhara, Somali and Tigray regions is creating obstacles to establishing the precise scale and severity of the crisis in these areas. The Regional Health and Nutrition Task Forces, with support from the ENCU, are mobilising actors to carry out joint assessments of the nutrition situation to inform response.

WHO reports a continued rise in the number of confirmed cases of Acute Watery Diarrhea in Oromiya, Amhara and SNNPP with anecdotal reports of AWD in the Somali Region. To date, 995 confirmed cases of AWD have been recorded with a case fatality rate of 1.1% roughly translating as one fatality per one hundred cases. Health officials are investigating reports of Acute Bloody Diarrhea in Tigray.

Response:

Since April 2008, a total of 849 mt of Plumpy'nut has arrived in Ethiopia. UNICEF has dispatched 663 mt of Plumpy'nut to the affected regions. Between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July UNICEF dispatched 140 mt of Plumpy'nut from Addis Ababa to affected areas including; Konso district health office, Dawro Zonal Health Bureau (ZHB), Gamo Goffa ZHB and Alaba ZHB in SNNPR (41 mt in total), UNICEF Jijiga (66 mt) and Harar ZHB (33 mt). UNICEF retains a contingency stock of 28 mt of locally produced Plumpy'nut to safeguard capacity to respond to unanticipated needs.

The training of trainers to facilitate the decentralized treatment of SAM cases has begun. The group of trainers who are receiving instruction from master trainers come from 57 districts in Oromiya and 44 districts in SNNPR. The group of trainers will offer training to Health Extension Workers from 3,000 *kebeles*. It is anticipated that approximately 720 mt per month of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) will be required for the treatment of malnourished children by the HEWs.

Needs:

- There is a continued need for nutrition interventions in both existing and emerging hotspot woredas.
- Humanitarian partners on the ground continue to stress the need for increased coverage of blanket supplementary feeding programmes and schedule of expected delivery of emergency food relief, including CSB. Blanket supplementary feeding programmes are crucial component of the overall strategy to cap the rates of moderate malnutrition in the wider population and to prevent return of those children who have been discharged from OTPs.
- There is a continued need for a national nutrition assessment. More specifically there is an urgent need to establish the scale and severity of the nutrition situation in Amhara, Tigray and Somali Regions through rapid joint nutrition assessments.
- Local factory producers require support, including supply of raw materials, guaranteed supply of electricity and additional capital, to upscale the production of CSB and Plumpy'nut.

Gaps: There are a significant number of OTPs that are not receiving blanket supplementary feeding. Additionally, there are still a significant number of hotspot woredas that have neither OTPs or SCs (see table overleaf).

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

On 8 July, 16 *kebeles* were flooded due to heavy rain in the Shashego district of the Hadiya zone in SNNPR. The total number of people estimated to be affected by the flood is 23,750. A disaster assessment is currently being undertaken.

## Food Assistance

WFP, DPPA, the Food Security Coordination Bureau and international donors have prioritized food distributions in light of the current break in the emergency food pipeline. A document outlining the proposed priorities has been submitted to the government for approval. The document includes recommendation to reduce rations by one third for the July 2008 allocations. This would allow the entire caseload of 4.6 million beneficiaries to be reached. Specifically, the entire planned relief caseload of 4.6 million beneficiaries will receive 10 kg of cereals, whilst some 2.6 million relief beneficiaries located in priority (hotspot) area one will also receive reduced rations of 1 kg of pulses and 0.3 kg of oil, and in addition 3 kg of corn-soya blend (CSB) will be distributed to 35 percent of these beneficiaries<sup>2</sup>.

WFP plans to support up to 2.79 million beneficiaries of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)<sup>3</sup>, located in priority (hotspot) area one, who require food assistance as a result of severe drought in their areas. It has been recommended to provide these PSNP beneficiaries with the same reduced food basket to be given to the relief beneficiaries, including CSB to 35 percent of the beneficiaries, for the month of July. These proposals have been submitted to the Government for their approval.

### Response:

#### *1. Relief Response*

**Somali region:** to date during January to July 2008, an amount of 34,475 mt has been allocated to 1,025,030 beneficiaries. Some 26,185 mt have been dispatched from this allocation.

**SNNPR:** To date, during January to July 2008, a total of 58,903 mt has been allocated to 1,292,762 beneficiaries. Some 43,530 mt have been dispatched from the warehouse.

**Oromiya:** a total of 22,705 mt has been allocated to 435,369 beneficiaries and some 14,369 mt have been dispatched.

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<sup>2</sup> CSB will be distributed to 35 percent of 2.6 million relief beneficiaries.

<sup>3</sup> The PSNP is a development-oriented programme, which provides some 7.2 million (annual average of 2.4 million for at least three years) chronically food-insecure people with cash (cash transfers are provided by the government) or food transfers to enhance their ability to participate in the development process. Beneficiary households mainly participate in community public works, although a limited number of households (disabled, elderly, etc) receive direct transfers.

**Other Regions:** To date, during January to July 2008, a total of 17,517 mt has been allocated to some 455,396 beneficiaries in the regions of Afar, Amhara, Benshangul Gumuz, Gambella and Tigray, and a total of 4,420 mt has been dispatched to these areas.

## 2. Targeted Supplementary Feeding

During 1-15 July 2008 an amount of 1,206 mt has been dispatched to 43,308 beneficiaries under the TSF programme in Amhara, Oromiya and Tigray.

### Gaps:

The relief and PSNP pipelines have broken. Although some cereals and blended food shipments are expected to arrive during July to August 2008, these are insufficient to meet requirements for all targeted beneficiaries.

### **Food Relief Needs and Shortfalls**

The total 2008 shortfall for relief, PSNP and TSF programmes amounts to 255,937 mt (valued at US\$209.7 million) as follows:

- **Relief:** Total annual requirements for 4.6 million beneficiaries amount to 591,333 mt<sup>4</sup> of mixed commodities. Considering available resources, the current WFP shortfall against the national relief pipeline amounts to 175,647 mt (valued at US\$141.7 million).
- **Productive Safety Net Programme:** WFP shortfalls for the PSNP amount to 63,000 mt of cereals (valued at US\$51.1 million).
- **Targeted Supplementary Feeding** has a current shortfall amounting to 17,000 mt (valued at US\$18 million).

## Agriculture and Livestock

Government, FAO and partners continue to support the protection of livelihoods through a range of agriculture and livestock interventions. Procurement and distribution of seeds to farmers in agro-pastoralist areas remains a key priority to safeguard future harvest yields. FAO is in the final stages of procuring seeds for SNNPR and it is expected that delivery will commence shortly. FAO has initiated the procurement of seeds for distribution in Oromiya region and is waiting for final confirmation of resources to commence procurement of seeds for Amhara Region.

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<sup>4</sup> WFP will cover 80 percent of these requirements or some 473,223 mt of food (under the relief component of under PRRO 10665.0).

FAO continues to support livestock interventions in Guji and Borena Zones. The CBPP vaccination campaign has been completed in both zones and woreda animal health officials have received anthrax vaccines. The distribution of veterinary drugs is underway in the lowland areas of Borena and Liben woreda in Guji Zone. The emergency animal feeding programme has been completed in Guji and Borena zones and feed conservation and range rehabilitation is underway in Dire and Miyo woredas.

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