

Oshima visit to Ethiopia

The Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator of the United Nations, Kenzo Oshima will visit Ethiopia from 5 to 8 October 2002. During his visit Mr. Oshima will discuss issues of humanitarian concern with government officials in Ethiopia and also examine closely the coordination mechanisms that have been established. He will look at the response to meet immediate needs of victims of the current drought and prepare for what is expected to be a prolonged humanitarian response in affected areas of the country. He will also join Government at launch of the appeal for immediate food needs on 7 October.

19,700 IDPs Moving from East and West Hararghe

More than 19,700 IDPs are moving from East and West Hararghe and the Arsi zone to areas alongside Bale National Park; according to Christian Aid these internal migrations began six months ago. Preliminary findings show that these IDPs do not have shelter, regular food distribution, health facilities or household equipment. The situation is difficult for children, who make up one-third of the IDPs. In response, Christian Aid has organized a team comprised of members from the Ministry of Agriculture and the zonal DPPB to conduct a nutritional survey; the team is currently in the process of compiling the information and the report will be distributed shortly.

Concern for Serious Crop Reductions in Western Oromia:

Results from a recent UN-EUE mission to parts of Jimma, Illubabor and Wellega Zones of the Oromia Region, show that both the belg (February-May) and meher (June-September) rains were inadequate and poorly distributed. The report indicated that at the onset of the season the rain was late by up to two months in various areas, necessitating the overlapping of agricultural activities and a change from the cultivation of long-cycle crops to short-duration crops. These short duration crops are less productive. In some pocket areas of the zones, hailstorms, strong winds and floods damaged crops during the crucial flowering and seed setting stages. Farmers say that unless the rains extend at least until the end of October in most places and up to mid-November in others, there will be a total failure of crop harvest. However, judging from the farmers' past experiences, it is highly unlikely that the rains will continue for the amount of time required to rectify drought-stricken harvests.

UNICEF Provides Support to Drought and Disaster Affected in Somali Region:

UNICEF has donated 5,737 jerry cans, 2,642 pieces of plastic sheeting and 1,250 blankets to drought and disaster-affected people in the Somali Region. The regional Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Bureau distributed these items to various members of the community, including vulnerable families who lost their homes in the fire that destroyed most of Danot town, and drought and conflict-affected people in the Shinile and Fik zones. In addition, UNICEF-supported water tankering is continuing at the Hartasheik IDP camp.

Donors Support Water Relief Efforts:

The British Department for International Development (DFID) has committed \$787,000 to support UNICEF's water relief efforts in the Afar Region. The money will be used for water tankering, rehabilitation and maintenance activities. World Vision is currently operating four water tankers in Dubti and Elidar woredas; the Lutheran World Federation is using one water tanker in the Arebti woreda; NACID is operating one water tanker in both Bure and Manda woredas; and the Ministry of Water Resources is using 11 water tankers in the Arebti, Afdera, Bureudaitu, Teru and Sumurobi woredas. In addition, a \$1 million donation to UNICEF by the Japanese Government will be put towards funding rehabilitation, water tankering, and new water schemes in Oromia, SNNPR and Amhara regions.

WHO's Assistance to Emergency Relief in Ethiopia

In response to Ethiopia's drought situation, WHO has assessed the health conditions in drought affected regions of the country, particularly Afar, the SNNPR, and some parts of Amhara and Oromiya regions, in order to identify priority areas for intervention. WHO proposed to the Head Office the usage of US\$572,956 from its limited budget for various activities, including 28 emergency health kits that will be airlifted to Ethiopia in a few days. Additionally WHO has developed and submitted a proposal on the emergency in Ethiopia to AFRO and other agencies, with the amount of the appeal totaling US\$1,539,954.