

CONFIRMED PLEDGES NARROW FOOD AID GAP FOR 2002

WFP reported that additional confirmed pledges are making it possible to cover the most of the acute food aid requirements in November and December, albeit at reduced cereal rations of 12.5 kg. Needs for the two months period are of 125,000 tonnes (November 70,000 tonnes for 5.6 million people; December 56,000 tonnes for 4.5 million people). Further confirmations of existing pledges and pledges under consideration, especially those to cover NGO distribution expansion proposals, are required. Cereal needs for the first quarter 2003 only will reach over 300,000 tonnes. Contributions are urgently needed.

MASSIVE MEHER FAILURE IN KALU, SOUTH WELLO

A recent crop assessment carried out by a multidisciplinary team drawn from the wereda revealed sorghum and maize fields are dying out rapidly as a result of rain shortage and stalk borer infestation in Kalu wereda, South Wello. According to the wereda 84% of the crop was reported damaged. Concern, a NGO, operating in the area is regularly conducting nutrition surveillance and is advocating for an increased food allocation in the area to prevent massive migration and rapidly deteriorating nutritional status particularly among the most vulnerable (children under five, pregnant and nursing mothers) population.

ANNUAL MULTI-AGENCY PRE-HARVEST NEEDS ASSESSMENT BEGIN

The annual multi-agency pre-harvest needs assessment has begun, with twenty-three teams led by the government Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission now in the field. While these teams will be collecting information on the drought-affected population and establishing the numbers in need, the concurrent FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment mission will be collecting information on crop production throughout the country. Needs for 2003 will be presented in the annual DPPC appeal at the end of the year; the FAO/WFP findings will be presented in a mission report.

EMPTY GRAIN STORES AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS NOTED IN ARSI

UN-EUE information team traveled to Arsi Zone from 4 to 6 November to compile footage on the current situation. Arsi Zone is normally one of the most productive areas in Oromia Region, however, currently the area is seriously affected by moisture stress and people are forced to migrate to neighboring areas. Footage obtained shows early signs of malnutrition, empty grain stores, and schools closed as students were forced to drop out in search of income and means of survival.

OROMIYA REGIONAL COUNCIL HELD MEETING

Oromiya Regional Council meeting took place in Addis Ababa where Regional and Federal Government Offices, NGOs, Donors and UN Agencies participated. The main objectives of the meeting were to update participants on the current food insecurity in the region, strengthen and increase level of partnership of all stakeholders to avert the situation and to closely monitor the disaster in the region and take required measures. Among the major issues included in the meeting were: the deteriorating food security situation in the region particularly in Arsi zone. Areas that are traditionally surplus producing are facing critical food shortages and seeking humanitarian assistance. The crisis is still looming and the number of affected population is increasing at an alarming rate.

UNICEF TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY DRUG KITS

UNICEF is providing emergency drug kits and renewable supply kits to Oromiya, Somali and Afar regions. Oromiya will receive 60 kits and 16 emergency renewable supply kits; Somali will get 20 drug kits; and Afar will receive ten drug kits and eight emergency renewable supply kits. Each drug kit can serve 10,000 beneficiaries for three months. The renewable supply kits contain essential medical equipment like forceps, syringes, and intravenous feeding tubes and catheters. The kits are expected to start arriving the week of 18 November.

LIVESTOCK INTERVENTION WORKSHOPS

Under the National Disaster Management Team the Agricultural/Livestock Task Force organized two workshops for pastoral and agro-pastoral regions in Awash (29 and 30 October) and Kombolcha (2 and 3 November). Findings indicated that there would be an impending livestock crisis due to shortage of feed in the near future. Thus, representatives from Government, International and National NGOs reviewed the ongoing livestock emergency interventions so far and recommended to adopt an integrated approach that combine animal health and feed. The workshop was organized by FAO supported by UNDP.