

## **MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT FOR ETHIOPIA APRIL 1997**

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Consolidated UN report prepared by the Information Section of the Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia from information and reports provided by specialised UN agencies, the Government and NGOs

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Rains in the south and east of the country have continued at satisfactory levels, helping pastoralists to recover from the effects of the drought.
- Responses to the 1997 Special Appeal for Assistance to Drought Affected Regions have been slow. Food and water point rehabilitation are still needed in the affected areas.
- Distribution of a special one month food ration to drought-affected migrants and local residents in the Dolo/Suftu area has started under the "Cross-Mandate" approach.
- Wolayita continues to face an acute food shortage.
- *Belg* rains were reported to be normal for the month of April in most of the *belg* crop producing areas.

### **SPECIAL ISSUES**

Rains during April have been normal throughout most of the country. This has brought relief to the formerly drought affected areas of the south and east, with new vegetation being generated and water points being replenished. Assistance operations to these areas continue, however, in order to counter the effects of livestock loss and to help rehabilitate the weakened population. Water point development and rehabilitation is also underway.

#### *Update on DPPC Special Appeal*

Response to the DPPC's Special Appeal for assistance (issued 28 February) has been far below expectations. Canada has pledged between 5,000 and 7,000 MT of grain but so far no deliveries have been received. The Government of the Netherlands has also pledged US\$ 3 million in emergency assistance.

In the absence of international deliveries and donations, the DPPC has been diverting grain originally intended for other areas to the drought affected regions and has borrowed from the National Food Security Reserve. FSR stocks are now below their minimum level and special approval from the Board of Governors is required before additional loans can be made. This may result in delays in food deliveries.

On 29 April, 300 MT of grain was reportedly distributed to approximately 20,000 residents of three weredas (Hamer-Bena, Salamago and Kuraz) of South Omo Zone. This is part of the 1,530 MT expected to be supplied to the zone by the DPPB. Distribution was said to be hampered by insufficient heavy-duty trucks as well as damage to roads due to the rains.

Drought affected people in Shinile Zone of the Somali National Regional State were facing severe food shortages at the end of April as only 350 MT of the amount requested from the Region had been delivered and distributed. Another 160 MT was expected to be transported to the zone by the end of April.

UNDP has accelerated the release of \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of water wells in the Gode Zone of Somali Region. Phase One of a Contingency Planning Exercise for Borana Zone and the Somali Region was

undertaken as part of a special emergency grant made by UNDP. The exercise, carried out jointly between the UNDP/EUE and DPPC, with support from the WHO/PanAfrican Training Centre, seeks to develop contingency plans for the possible recurrence of drought in the areas affected in 1996/97. The reports of the two study teams are under review and will be further elaborated during May. A proposal for a study of existing water points in the Somali Region and Borana Zone has been submitted jointly by UNDP/EUE and UNHCR to the Ministry of Water Resources for approval.

The Government of Ethiopia has decided to use 40,000 MT of US-donated Title III development grain for emergency relief purposes related to the Special Appeal. An agreement to this effect is expected to be signed soon between the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (MEDAC) and the US Government shortly.

The Emergency Operation (EMOP) allocation of 25,200 MT requested by WFP has been approved by the agency's headquarters in Rome and forwarded to FAO for final approval.

The European Union (EU) is currently studying several project proposals for water source (borehole, well, pond) rehabilitation in Borena and parts of Somali Region. As mid- and long-term measures, these projects are expected to improve the general situation of the drought prone areas in the south. Agencies that submitted project proposals include UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, SCF/UK, CISP (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli) and COOPI (Cooperazione Internazionale).

CARE, which donated 157 MT of maize to the Oromiya DPPB, has also been involved in water tankering operations around Yabelo (Borena). CARE is now financing the drilling of a new borehole (with a submersible pump) for Yabelo town.

Lutheran World Federation/Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus: LWF/EECMY has distributed 150 MT of maize, 450 MT of lentils, 303 MT of oil and 120 MT BP5 high energy biscuits to four storehouses in Borena (Moyale, Mega, Yabelo, and Hagere Mariam).

#### *Dolo Distribution Carried Out*

Under the arrangements of the "Cross Mandate" approach being taken in the south under the coordination of the DPPC, distribution to migrants and local residents has started. The one-month ration of 360 MT is being distributed by WFP in three rounds instead of one in view of security concerns and storage difficulties. According to WFP, two of the three distributions were completed in April. Approximately 240 MT of grain was distributed to migrants and local residents in Dolo and Suftu (190 and 58 MT, respectively).

In addition to this amount, the central DPPC allocated an 18.9 MT of supplementary food to Dolo and Suftu, to be distributed to children in need among both migrant and local populations. The supplementary food was expected to arrive in Dolo around 23 April.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) assisted the Somali Regional Bureau of Health by transporting 7 MT of drugs (provided by the Bureau of Health and Central Ministry of Health) to Dolo. These drugs are to be sold to members of the local population on a cost-recovery basis. The ICRC will also assign a nurse to assist the operations of the Dolo Health Center and to take part in the distribution of supplementary food.

#### *Afar Drought Not Yet Over*

More than 275,000 people in Afar Regional State were reported to be affected by drought according to the Afar Regional DPPB. All twenty eight weredas in the region were drought-stricken due to lack of rainfall in 1996 and 1997. Rains over the past month have not been sufficient over most of Afar Region. In addition, the Bureau of Agriculture requested an urgent supply of veterinary drugs and health agents. Central government said these needs could be met with existing resources.

#### *UNICEF: Migrants to Moyale in Need of Assistance*

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) carried out a field visit to Moyale Wereda in Liban Zone of Somali region. The mission reported that there is a large group of Kenyan migrants (estimates vary between 327

and 1,200 households) camped at the outskirts of town with very little food and no assistance. In the Somali part of the Moyale area an influx from Kenya of an estimated 120,000 people, the majority of them having lost their animals, are believed to be in need of assistance. Movements of these people in the areas of El Gof and El Ley were observed, but no back-migration across the border into Kenya has so far been confirmed. The nutritional and health status of that influx appears to be above the official critical mark, but still gives cause for concern. Food distribution by the DPPC (two trucks) to the local population in need is facing logistic constraints due to poor road conditions.

Based on this assessment and discussions with local health authorities, UNICEF has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Health for a rapid-implementation anti-diarrhoeal and micronutrient deficiency disease intervention. The proposal is now pending with the MOH.

#### *Food Shortage in Wolayita*

The 1997 *belg* rains started in Wolayita during the third dekad of March after a delay of almost two months. Also, according to available information, the late onset of the rains had a negative effect on the planting of the maize crop. Even after the rains started there was at least one five-day dry spell. In addition, the coverage of the rains cannot be considered satisfactory both in distribution and amount. It is too soon to tell what the effect will be on the late planted crops.

The latest report from the SCF (UK)'s Nutritional Surveillance Programme (April 1997) indicates a general decline in nutritional status. Mean weight for length figures have dropped from the January levels of 93.0 % and 94.5 % to 91.7 % and 92.2 % in the east and west highlands respectively. Cereal prices have jumped by 20 - 25 % in the past month.

At a meeting between the DPPC and NGOs operating in the area, it was announced that the official number of people in need is 423,258. The DPPC has distributed food for April based on these figures, but reports that it will not be able to meet the distribution requirements with existing stocks for the remaining months (May - July). In addition, there is a serious shortage of private transporters in the Soddo area, and those NGOs that still have trucks have been assisting in providing transport between wereda and Peasants Association stores. A technical task force has been formed with SCF-UK, USAID's Famine Early Warning System and WFP to examine the different assessment figures and identify priority actions to be taken.

#### *Flooding in Arba Minch and Jimma*

Heavy flooding in Arba Minch reportedly killed 29 people, left 621 people homeless and damaged property estimated to be worth approximately 389,000 Birr. According to the *Ethiopian Herald* (24/4/97), the North Omo Zone DPPD distributed 93 quintals of grain and 495 pieces of clothing. The Ethiopian Red Cross Society supplied 857 pieces of clothing as well as grain, tents, and household utensils to those who were left homeless by the flood.

Six persons were also reported to have been killed in flooding in Kossa Wereda of Jimma Zone during mid-April. The individuals were swept away while trying to cross a local river.

## **SECURITY INCIDENTS**

Concerns over security threats have been raised following three grenade attacks in four days (12-15 April) in Addis Ababa and a fourth grenade attack in Dire Dawa on 26 April. One woman was killed and 41 others sustained serious and minor injuries in two separate blasts that occurred within minutes of each other on 12 April. The two explosions took place at Tigray Hotel in Addis Ababa's Piazza neighbourhood, and at Blue Tops, a restaurant located near Sidist Kilo. The blast at the Tigray Hotel claimed the life of a 25 year old waitress and caused heavy and minor injuries to 33 others. In the Blue Tops attack, four Britons and two French people were among the injured. On 15 April, a third blast occurred at the Tana Supermarket, in the centre of the busy Markato area of the capital. 33 people were wounded in the blast. No one has officially claimed responsibility for any of the bombings, although several arrests have reportedly been made. (*Ethiopian Herald*, 15/4/97 and *Monitor*, 15/4/97)

## **AGRICULTURE AND RELATED ISSUES**

### *Prospects and implications of the belg season*

The *belg* rains, which were suspended in many parts of the country during early and mid- March, returned in April. During the first dekad of April, most parts of the country received significant amounts of rainfall, exceeding the amount in the previous dekad. As a result, with the exception of the eastern tip of Tigray, most parts of the Afar Region, and a few areas in the northeastern parts of the Amhara Region and central parts of Oromiya (Arsi) the remaining parts of the country had normal to above normal rainfall distribution. Rainfall was exceptionally high in most of the SNNPRS, southern Oromia and Somali regions. NMSA is now forecasting close to normal rainfall for the rest of the season (until June).

#### *Fertiliser availability in 1997*

Fertiliser received this year so far amounts to 171,000 MT. This includes 100,000 MT provided by the Government of Ethiopia, 60,000 MT from the German government, and 11,000 MT from the Japanese government. Another 30,000 MT donation from Italy is in the pipeline. With the carry-over of 160,000 MT from 1996, the requirements for 1997 have already been exceeded.

#### *Food Security Meeting Held*

The United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Africa and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa sponsored a high-level workshop meeting of experts drawn from several African countries from 22-25 April in Addis Ababa. Participants of the meeting worked on a framework document for capacity building for food security and sustainable agricultural development in Africa, focusing particularly on market deregulation, agricultural sustainability, income generation, diversification of trade, cooperation and integration,

## **FOOD AID AND LOGISTICS**

#### *Food Aid pledges:*

WFP reported imports of 675 MT of oil to be used in food for work projects being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and 753 MT of sugar for the refugee programmes. 6,230 MT of wheat and 518 MT of oil are expected to be delivered shortly for the refugee programmes.

#### *Capacity Building Pledges:*

The Norwegian government has pledged to donate 50 large tents to the DPPC. The tents are intended to strengthen relief stations.

#### *EFSR storage capacity*

Between January and March 1997, EFSRA provided 64,586 MT of grains to four NGOs and the World Food Programme. A total of 13,305 MT of grains from previous loans has been repaid back to the reserve. Stock holdings as of 30 April were as follows (by storage location): Kombolcha - 48,524 MT; Mekele - zero; Nazereth - 20,472 MT; Shashamane - 8,167 MT; Dire Dawa - zero; total physical stock - 77,163 MT, below the level at which special procedures apply prior to the granting of any new loans.

As of the end of April, outstanding loans amounted to 128,293 MT while under-withdrawals were recorded by the EFSR administration as 61,297 MT. Deliveries expected shortly include 5,929 MT from WFP and a total of 34,262 MT from the European Union (includes a recent pledge of 24,000MT intended to bring the FSR up to its medium-term target holding of 307,000 MT).

The FSR board has agreed to conduct a desk study on how to determine price exchange ratios to be used to settle loans made in one type of grain with repayments made in another.

#### *Local purchase programme*

So far this year, 5,454 MT of grain has been delivered through WFP's local purchase programme. Another 37,412 MT has been contracted for but not yet delivered, and approximately 45,000 MT has been tendered but not yet contracted. Deliveries are reportedly significantly behind schedule due to problems related to access of available grain and quality specification procedures.

Contracts for the second phase of the European Union's local purchase programme (totalling 15,103 MT) have been prepared, but some of these contracts may have to be cancelled (7,218 MT of maize and 565 MT of wheat) at the request of the traders. The request was apparently due to increases in the market prices of these two

commodities since the launch of the tenders, meaning that some traders are now not in a position to supply the grain for the originally tendered prices.

#### *Grain export to other countries*

The European Union has received authorisation from its headquarters in Brussels to tender for contracts to purchase 9,070 MT for later montization in the Somali region. The operation is set to begin in June 1997. In another development, Ethiopia Amalgamated has been awarded a contract from the EU-Uganda office to deliver 5,000 MT of grain to Uganda. The Ethiopian Grain Trade Enterprise is also now completing deliveries of 48,000 MT of grain to Kenya.

## **HEALTH, NUTRITION & SANITATION**

#### *Drought-related Epidemics*

On 23 April, the Ministry of Health released a Plan of Action for drought affected regions, zones and weredas. According to this document, cases of measles, whooping cough, diarrhoeal diseases, and malaria were reported in the Somali Region. Meningitis was also reported to have occurred in Oromiya and SNNPRS. Anaemia and malnutrition were reported in all three regions. The plan includes a request for assistance to cope with existing health problems as well as to prevent the emergence and further spread of epidemics. Activities proposed include capacity building measures, supplementation of stocks of essential drugs, vaccines, and medical supplies, immunisation, education, and support for assessments.

#### *Malaria*

Malaria epidemics were reported in 19 kebelles of Omo Sheleko Wereda in Kembata-Alaba-Tembaro Zone. Approximately 6,800 people were reported to have been treated. No deaths were reported. Drugs were provided by World Vision International. Bahir Dar and Fenote Selam malaria control stations also reported that 25,000 of the 41,000 people tested positive for malaria. DDT spraying has been reported in Gojjam and North Omo zones.

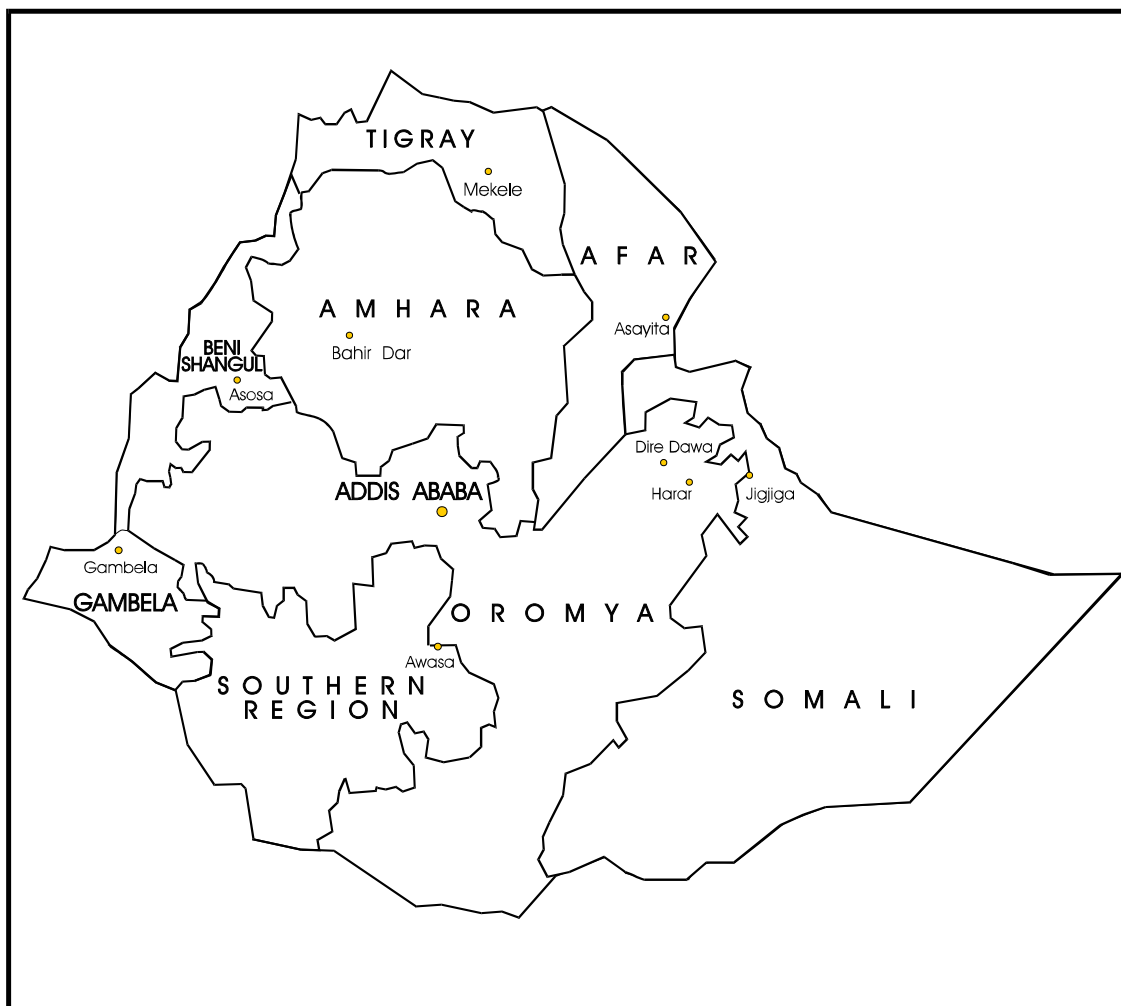
#### *Government / UNICEF Mid-Term Review Held*

On 30 April, the Government and UNICEF held a joint Mid-Term Review of the 1994-1999 Country Programme of Cooperation. The review examined the progress of UNICEF development activities in Ethiopia, and provided a culmination to the regional reviews that have been conducted in all of the regions. Since the start of its five-year country programme in 1994, UNICEF assistance to Ethiopia has exceeded US \$47 million, making it the third largest of the agency's assistance programmes in the world. UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Ms Karin Sham Poo attended the review.

## **REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA AND RETURNEE OPERATIONS**

We apologise for not including our usual sections on refugee and returnee issues. A comprehensive report, to include the latest refugee statistics, will be provided in our Situation Report for the month of May.

# Administrative Map of Ethiopia



## DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever of the UN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

## SOURCES:

UNDP/EUE field reports; CARE; Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC); European Union; FAO; FEWS; National Meteorological Services Agency (NMSA); Grain Market Research Project (MEDaC); SCF (UK); UNICEF; UNHCR; WFP Food Aid Information Unit; WHO.

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**UNDP-EUE**  
**PO Box 5580,**  
**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Tel.: (251) (1) 51-10-28/29**  
**Fax: (251) (1) 51-12-92**  
**Email: [undp-eue@telecom.net.et](mailto:undp-eue@telecom.net.et)**