



MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT FOR ETHIOPIA April 1998

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❑ UN Secretary General Kofi Annan visits Ethiopia to inaugurate the new UN Conference Centre in Addis Ababa and present a key note speech at an international conference on "African Women and Economic Development";
- ❑ Economy of the Ethiopian Somali region faces severe disruption arising from the Saudi Arabian ban on livestock imports from the Horn of Africa;
- ❑ A further 8,000 refugees have been successfully repatriated to "Somaliland" bringing the total number of Somali refugees assisted under the UNHCR voluntary repatriation programme in the east to just over 28,000;
- ❑ Operations to control swarms of Desert Locust have been successfully undertaken in the Somali region but concern is growing that favourable breeding conditions could lead to further outbreaks later in the year;
- ❑ Despite dry spells in March and again in early April, the 1998 *belg* rains have been generally favourable and conducive to land preparation ahead of the planting of main season crops in the coming weeks.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Debt to Russia: Ethiopia has called for bilateral negotiations to determine the extent of the country's debt to Russia. The debt, estimated at US \$492 million, was lent to Soviet-backed former dictator Mengistu for the purchase of arms. Russian Federation ambassador to Ethiopia, Vladimir Volkov, has said his country would write off a "lion's share" of the debt but has not given figures. Russian sources added the conciliation could be as much as 80 per cent of the total debt based on Paris Club conditions. Russian trade to Ethiopia had fallen from US \$300 million in the 1980s to \$37 million in 1997. (*The Reporter, April 8*)

Road rehabilitation: Ethiopia plans to start spending US \$3.4 billion this year on overhauling the country's dilapidated road network, two years after the launch of a 10 year road rehabilitation programme. Funds have been raised through loans and grants from donor nations and institutions as well as from the government's budget. As well as constructing new roads, the project aims to restore 24,000 kms of rural roads of which only 20 per cent are said to be in good condition. The Ethiopian Roads Authority say up to US \$2.75 billion will be spent between now and 2001, with the remainder of the fund to be spent by 2006. The World Bank has agreed to grant US \$309 million in loans which will be used to upgrade 1,300 km in the northern and eastern regions of the country. The European Union is funding a US \$300 million four-year 1,000 km asphalt road restoration programme, connecting Ethiopia's farming regions with ports and external markets. (*The Monitor, April 18-19; The Ethiopian Herald, April 14*)

China signs contract for Addis Ababa ring-road project: A Chinese company (Road and Bridge Corporation) has signed a contract agreement of US \$65 million to complete in three years the Addis Ababa ring-road project. The contract with the Addis Ababa Road Authority calls to build 33 kms of highway. The same company built the 300 km Woreta-Woldiya road in 1983. (*The Monitor, April 16*)

Kofi Annan in Ethiopia: United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan arrived in Addis Ababa on April 29 on the first stop of an eight country African tour. During his three day stay, Annan met with the Ethiopian President, Negasso Gidada, and held discussions with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin. Annan expressed appreciation for the role played by Ethiopia in regional efforts to achieve peace and stability in Sudan and Somalia. Together with President Nagasso, Annan also inaugurated the new UN Conference Centre in Addis Ababa and gave a keynote address at the international conference on "African Women and Economic Development" held to mark the 40th anniversary of the founding of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, based in Addis Ababa. (*ECA Press Release No. 43; The Monitor, April 21-30 and May 2-3; The Ethiopian Herald, April 29; The Reporter, April 29*)

Civil aviation suspends MAF: The Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority has suspended the operations of Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) claiming that it is involved in "illegal" commercial activities. MAF have been providing humanitarian air transport services under a contract with UNHCR since 1994 as well as working with church, relief and medical organisations to provide subsidised air transport to remote areas of the country not serviced by Ethiopian Airlines or private commercial operators. (*Ethiopian Herald, April 29*)

UNFPA Executive Director holds talks on Country Programme: Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive-Director of the United Nation's Population Fund (UNFPA), has held talks with the Ethiopian government on the US \$30 million 4th Country Programme on Population. Ethiopia is one of the major recipients of UNFPA's assistance due to its viable population policy under implementation. The country programme will be executed in three areas: reproductive health (mother-child health care and family planning), advocacy and information, education and communication as well as capacity building and research. (*The Ethiopian Herald, April 30*)

UNDP gives financial support for capacity building: The United Nations Development Programme has extended up to US \$30 million to Ethiopia annually in support of the government's capacity building programme. In accordance with the new five-year programme formulated by Government, UNDP support will now focus on the training of professionals in education, health, water resources development and agriculture. Besides the training element, UNDP is also providing equipment and is assisting the Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund to undertake various development projects in collaboration with international donor organisations in different parts of the country. (*The Ethiopian Herald, April 19*)

US-donated aircraft arrive: Two C-130B Hercules military transport aircraft will arrive soon at the Air Force base in Debre Zeit. This will be the first delivery of a total of four aircraft donated by the United States to Ethiopia; the remaining two will arrive later in 1998. The new equipment can be used for military, peacekeeping, or humanitarian missions. (*USIS News Release, April 9; The Monitor, April 11-12*)

Revised population estimate: The Central Statistical Authority (CSA) has reported that the total Ethiopian population presently stands at 58,652,158. The population living in rural areas is 50,149,190 while the urban population is at 8,502,968 (an 14.5 per cent : 85.5 per cent urban/rural split). The present figure has taken as its basis the 1994 population and housing census and includes the latest census figures from the Somali region. (*Ethiopian Herald, April 14*)

New foreign trade strategy: The Trade and Industry Minister announced in an interview with the *Mereva* magazine that rather than focus on substituting imported items with local products Ethiopia's trade strategy will change in favour of boosting foreign trade. The business community will have the opportunity to discuss the new strategy once its framework has been completed. On relations with the business community and the chamber of Commerce, the Minister said the government is working towards the implementation of a study on the organisation of chambers of commerce which are believed to promote the partnership between the government and the business community. (*The Ethiopian Herald, April 14*)

Ethiopian Jews in Jerusalem: Some 200 Falasha Mura families arrived March 22 in Jerusalem. The new comers marked another step in the government's programme to bring 3,000 Falasha to Israel within a year. Some 1,500 have already arrived, most of whom are at the Hazarat Yaas camp near Acre. The Israeli government plans to take hundreds of Ethiopian immigrants straight from the airport to Jewish settlements in the West Bank. (*Reporter, April 15*)

Afar mineral resources: The Afar mines and energy bureau says only a small proportion of the vast mineral resources available in the Afar state have been tapped. Minerals used in the manufacturing of glass, household utensils and floorings are found in Semera, Aliwuha, Burka, Dallol, Haddar, Awash, Gewane and Berhale localities. Steam from hot springs capable of generating electric power is available in Tendaho and Dallol. Elsewhere, deposits of salt, sulphur and potash are found. (*The Ethiopian Herald, April 19*)

Dawunt-Lalibela road opens provisionally: A major portion of the new north-south road linking Dawunt to Lalibela has been provisionally handed over to the Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) by the primary contractors. 84 kms of the total of 120.5 kms has been completed. 21 large and medium-sized as well as 32 smaller bridges have been built at key points. The all-weather road connects Meket, Bugna and Wadla weredas in North Welo. Berta Construction under the supervision of Roughton International runs the project. (*Ethiopian Herald, April 19*)

Ethiopia and Sweden sign co-operation agreement: Ethiopia and Sweden have signed a co-operation agreement to undertake 22 development and research projects. The Swedish government will spend 39 million birr (approximately US \$5.6 million) in the fields of agriculture, natural sciences and technology, health and related science and technology support activities in Ethiopia over a two-year period beginning January 1, 1999. (*The Ethiopian Herald, April 22*)

AGRICULTURE, PESTS AND WEATHER

The *belg* rains

After a dry and sunny start, moist air brought wetter weather to most northern and central *belg*-growing areas by the second week of April. Beneficial showers with isolated heavy storms were recorded from eastern Tigray, Amhara, the central Ethiopian highlands, western Oromiya, Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz. According to NMSA, however, only south western parts of the country received what was considered to be normal rainfall for the first dekad of April.

From the second dekad of the month, more sustained rain was observed over most *belg*-growing areas, including northern parts of the Southern People's region and the highlands of Arsi. With cloud cover extending south and east, by the third dekad showers were also being recorded in eastern Amhara, Bale, Borena and the Somali region. By the end of April, an intensification of the wetter weather had led to more extensive rain across the nation with most northern, western and southern highland areas receiving normal to above normal rainfall with isolated storms leading to some localised flooding in southern Oromiya, the highlands of Arsi and Bale and parts of the Somali region.

For farmers in parts of Welo and eastern Tigray who had planted following the unusually late rains last year, the dry spell during March/early April came at an opportune time, providing favourable conditions for the harvest of mature crops. With the resumption of the *belg* rains farmers are expected to commence ploughing and preparing their land for the sowing of the main season, *meher*, crops over the coming two months. Overall, by the end of April conditions in most *meher*-dependant areas were considered to be favourable for land preparation ahead of planting which will take place in the coming six weeks.

Crop pests

In a recent press release, the Addis Ababa-based Desert Locust Control Organization for East Africa (DLCO-EA) reported that between July and December last year it was able to destroy over 85 million grain-eating *Quelea* birds that had been threatening lowland crops along the rift valley area. Deploying two planes equipped with chemical sprayers, DLCO control operations were conducted at known *Quelea* breeding colonies and roosting sites in Gode, Jigjiga, North and East Shewa, Arsi and East Hararghe. It is estimated that last year *Quelea* birds destroyed at least 1,300 hectares of food crops. *Quelea* are tiny seed-eating birds that under favourable conditions breed rapidly and flock in huge numbers. A large flock can comprise several million birds - collectively capable of devouring whole fields in a matter of minutes. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that annual control costs (excluding aircraft spraying by DLCO) have averaged over US \$95,000 over the last five years.

DLCO has also responded to a recent upsurge in Desert Locust activity in eastern Ethiopia. Control operations have been mounted during the months of March and April to combat swarms that attacked and devoured over 3,400 hectares of crops around Chinaksen, Danfel and Lafeisa in the northern part of the Somali region. DLCO contributed two aircraft to assist with control and survey operations as well as a four-wheel drive support vehicle and aviation fuel. DLCO-supported control and survey operations have also been underway in neighbouring areas of North West Somalia and Djibouti. On 9 April a swarm of locust 800-900 hectares in size was sprayed successfully north-west of Agabar while another swarm measuring 3 km² was sprayed the following day near the mountainous Hagal area, both places in North West Somalia. Surveys and mopping-up operations are reported to be continuing.

While ground conditions are generally dry in the Somali region, some egg laying is thought to have taken place leading to fears of further upsurges in locust activity later in the year. Moreover, with the resumption of the *belg* rains, conditions in the summer breeding areas in northern Ethiopia are very favourable at present also leading to concern that locust activity will continue for some time yet.

There have been no reports of African Armyworm (*Spodoptera exempta*) activity in Ethiopia so far this year. Last year, Armyworm infestations affected 30,400 hectares of cropland and 4,150 hectares of pasture in Amhara, Tigray, the Southern Peoples region and Oromiya. The Ministry of Agriculture estimate that the costs of ground and aerial control operations against Armyworms have averaged US \$2.6 million per annum for the period 1994-1997. The last major outbreak occurred in 1994.

Fertiliser

The World Bank's International Development Agency (IDA) and the Ethiopian government have earmarked a total of US \$230 million for a programme to develop and expand the use of fertilisers. Analyses of water and soil samples are under way at 33 sites to determine environmental risks associated with specific fertilisers. Under the programme, soil testing laboratories will be built in Awassa, Bahir Dar, Gambella and Mekele by the end of June with other labs planned for a later date in Bedele, Dessie, Wolkite and Ziway.

According to the Ethiopian Agricultural Inputs Supply Enterprise (AISE), the demand for fertiliser is growing by 15 per cent per year. This year the AISE will be procuring 55 per cent of the total demand, put at 368,000 tons, with the balance to be covered by private importers. Sales of fertiliser to farmers will be carried out in line with the free market economic policy of the government which, according to the AISE, will allow farmers to buy good quality fertiliser at a fair price. Debts owing to the enterprise from sales in 1997 currently amount to Birr 35 million (approximately US \$5 million) and regional states have been urged to facilitate the collection of outstanding debts to pave the way for new loans.

The fertiliser demand forecast is done by the National Fertiliser Inputs Agency using time series data on consumption patterns over past years. Considering the rapidly growing number of farmers covered by the extension programme, the consumption of Urea is expected to show accelerated growth in the coming years. Taking 1998 as the base year, and assuming an 11 per cent increment for Urea, the NFIA have recently issued a revised demand forecast for the period 1998-2001. The details are given in table I below. The NFIA caution that each years' estimate is subject to adjustment based on actual consumption patterns.

Table I: Fertiliser Demand Forecast, 1998-2001 (metric tonnes)

Year	DAP	Urea	Total
1998	270,000	98,000	368,000
1999	324,000	109,000	433,000
2000	369,000	121,000	490,000
2001	417,000	134,000	551,000

According to media reports, farmers in the southern zone of Tigray have managed to boost food grain production by as much as four-fold through the use of selected seed and fertiliser and by involving themselves in the government's expanding farm extension programme.

Grain markets

In the lead-up to the Easter holiday celebrations, wholesale prices were higher by up to 4 per cent over average prices recorded during the past three months. The increased demand, however, was not sustained and by mid-month grain prices had become relatively static once again. Overall, wholesale grain prices remain 34-40 per cent higher than the same time last year. According to the Grain Market Research Project, producer prices also showed some increase during the early part of April before levelling off. In April last year producer prices were lower by about 22 per cent.

Selected cereal wholesale prices for the second week of April were as follows (Ethiopian Birr per 100 kgs): Mixed Teff, Birr 243 - 147 (Dire Dawa/Shambu); White Barley, Birr 220 - 107 (Metu/Shashemane); Wheat, Birr 260 - 96 (Mekele/Robe-Bale); Sorghum, Birr 215 - 93 (Dire Dawa/Bahirdar) and Maize, Birr 150 - 76 (Mekele/Shambu).

Livestock export economy facing dire situation

Earlier this February, the government of Saudi Arabia imposed a livestock import ban on all animals originating from the Horn of Africa countries and Yemen. The ban was imposed after the occurrence of some cases of Rift Valley Fever in north-east Kenya and southern Somalia and Saudi concerns regarding livestock health in the entire Horn region. The blanket import ban has serious consequences for North West Somalia and the Ethiopian Somali National Regional State: both being areas where the local economy largely depends on the export of livestock.

The Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UNDP-EUE) conducted in early April a field assessment in the northern part of Ethiopia's Somali region which borders North-West Somalia, the self-declared "Somaliland". With Saudi Arabia being the most significant destination for livestock exports both from Ethiopia and "Somaliland", annually two to three million animals (sheep, goats, cattle and camels) are normally shipped out through the port of Berbera alone with the bulk of these animals thought to originate from the Ethiopian Somali region.

The EUE mission visited local livestock markets, general markets and retail shops, speaking to numerous officials, livestock traders and brokers, livestock owners and shepherds, shop owners and elders. While the report (*Cessation of livestock exports severely affects the pastoralist economy of Somali Region – Mission: 31 March to 7 April 1998 – By Joachim D. Ahrens, UNDP-EUE*) presents the findings in detail, it is very clear that already, some two months after the implementation of the ban, not only the economy directly depending on livestock exports but also the overall economy is experiencing a significant decline. If the ban is not lifted soon or if alternative livestock markets cannot be found in central Ethiopia the population might be forced to revert from a *livestock export oriented market economy* to a *livestock subsistence economy*. This change will create widespread dissatisfaction and could lead to social unrest further affecting political stability.

Neighbouring "Somaliland" is likely to suffer more since normally 80 per cent of hard currency earnings, as well as the bulk of government tax revenue, derives from livestock exports. Furthermore, social and political instability in the territory could seriously hamper UNHCR's current refugee repatriation programme. A "Somaliland" Government ministerial delegation met informally with representatives of the international donor community and UN agencies in Addis Ababa on 7 May to underline the seriousness of the situation.

FOOD AID AND LOGISTICS

Food aid pledges and shipments

The government of the Federal Republic of Germany is to provide up to 34,800 metric tons of food aid to Ethiopia during 1998. The German embassy said in a press release that 23,300 tons of the total package will be delivered to chronically food deficit areas in Tigray and Amhara states. The remaining 11,500 tons will be channelled through the World Food Programme for food for work projects implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and for refugee assistance.

Table II: Pledges against 1998 Food Aid Requirements - Cereals & Pulses (source: WFP 5 May 1998)

	Relief	Regular	EFSR	TOTAL
--	--------	---------	------	-------

<u>1998 pledges</u>				
USA	115,000	24,849	-	139,849
EC	-	-	50,000	55,333
WFP	60,000	27,239	-	87,239
Sweden	31,000	-	-	31,000
UK	16,722	-	-	16,722
Canada	1,000	1,100	-	2,100
TOTAL	223,722	53,188	50,000	296,043
Deliveries as of 05/05/98	75,000	4,382	-	79,382

The World Food Programme announced on April 9 that it was still urgently seeking donor contributions to make up the 60,000 tons of relief food pledged by the organisation to meet the needs of 800,000 people in drought-affected parts of the country. Country Director Khaled Adly says that WFP have so far received only five per cent of the contributions needed. The main season harvest between December and January normally represents 90 and 95 per cent of the county's annual grain production. 1997/98 production fell by 26 per cent to 8.8 million tons compared with the 11.8 million tons of the previous year. While famine is not imminent, to avoid a potential humanitarian crisis later in the year WFP say it is imperative that food aid donations arrive quickly in order that food can be pre-positioned in vulnerable regions before the start of the main rains in July. WFP still need 57,500 tons of food for its emergency relief operations from May through October 1998.

Table II summarises pledges against the 1998 relief food aid requirement of 572,835 tons (DPPC, November 1997). In addition to commitments for the current year, pledges totalling 188,196 tons were carried-forward from 1997, a figure which includes 69,883 tons and 7,500 tons cereals available for relief and regular programmes respectively, 2,500 tons of other commodities and 108,312 tons in repayments to the Emergency Food Security Reserve. As of May 5, deliveries of these carried-forward pledges amounted to 106,346 tons (total food aid deliveries so far in 1998 is therefore 185,728 tons)

Food Security Reserve Status

The Emergency Food Security Reserve presently manages a total notional stock of 282,740 tons of grain. Of this amount 112,926 tons is in the form of outstanding loans awaiting repayment and 13,485 tons in loans presently under withdrawal. Actual physical stocks (as of 7 May 1998) was therefore 156,329 tons.

All outstanding loans are expected to be repaid to the reserve by the end of June through a combination of imports and local purchase. Table III gives the details by donor/borrower:

Table III: Status of Loan Repayments to the EFSR

Donor/Borrower	Amount
WFP/WFP & DPPC	28,914 tons
EuronAid/LWF, SCF, REST and Consortium	6,843 tons
European Union/GAA, SCF-UK and Consortium	40,890 tons
DFID/SCF-UK	4,395 tons
USAID/DPPC, FHI, REST and EOC	31,100 tons
CFGB/FHI	1,000 tons
CIDA/DPPC, REST and FHI	11,265 tons
German Government/ORDA and ECS	2,004 tons
TOTAL	126,411 tons

1998 Operational Plan

On 28 April, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) issued its *Relief Plan of Operation for 1998*. The document describes the allocation of Government and NGO resources and highlights gaps which still need to be filled. According to the document, in line with Government policy, regions have been encouraged to identify and develop Employment Generating Schemes (EGS) through which at least part of the relief food could be channelled. However, capacity to implement such schemes efficiently remains very weak in many deficit areas of the country.

Though a DPPC-led post-harvest assessment was conducted in February/March (1998), with the participation of the UN and donors, the results are not yet available and the operational plan uses as its basis the figures released in the DPPC appeal of November last year. Based on the present analysis, about 80 per cent of all relief food in 1998 will be distributed in the Tigray and Amhara regions. As the flexibility afforded to resources channelled through NGOs is often limited, in so far that they do not normally have the capacity to work beyond their traditional areas of operation, the plan emphasises the "gap filling" strategy adopted by the DPPC in the use of its own food resources. Most of the NGO food so far available for 1998 (about 68 per cent) is allocated to Amhara region.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

The Ministry of Health has reported the development of a strategy to popularise the use of mosquito nets as an effective method to prevent the effects of malaria in epidemic-prone areas of the country. The team leader of the national malaria control programme says there are plans this year to distribute about 33,000 mosquito nets to people free of charge in selected areas and offer technical training on the proper use of nets. The World Health Organization has donated 15,000 mosquito nets to the programme; however, the MoH are appealing for an additional 18,000. The new strategy also aims to develop schemes whereby people can purchase nets at reasonable cost. It is hoped prices can be kept down by encouraging the private sector to begin the local manufacture of nets.

Regional health bureau staff have instituted special provisions at the hospital in Jigjiga (capital of the Ethiopian Somali region) to cope with a significant increase in the number of patients being admitted with what is being termed Acute Diarrhoeal Disease (ADD). From 20 to 31 March a total of 105 cases were treated though the number of admissions had declined from 40 to 15 per day by the end of the month. Cases of acute diarrhoea, possibly cholera, were also reported from the southern town of Awassa during April. The Ministry of Health with the assistance of WHO have sent a team to collect medical samples for laboratory analysis.

REFUGEES AND RETURNEES

General

Ethiopia has been host to large numbers of refugees for over three decades. The current refugee population stands at some 304,436, broken down by country of origin as follows: Somalia - 233,558; Sudan - 58,507; Kenya - 8,671; Djibouti - 3,000: Urban - 700.

All camp and settlement-based refugees are provided with assistance by UNHCR while the World Food Programme is responsible for the resourcing and delivery of basic food items. In the western camps, for Sudanese refugees, the strategy has been to encourage refugees to grow at least some portion of their own food needs. However, effective implementation has been hampered mainly by a shortage of suitable farmland made available for the use of the refugees.

The provision of adequate supplies of clean water has been a major challenge for assistance programme in the eastern camps since the first major influx of Somali refugees in 1988. CARE continues to deliver over half a million litres of water daily by road tanker to the Hartisheik and Kebribeyah camps from boreholes along the Jerrer Valley. Tankering from Lafaissa near Jigjiga was finally phased-out in May 1997 following the construction of shallow wells in the camps of Teferi Ber and Darwenaji, as well as a new water system for Lafaissa town. The construction of a pipeline from the Jerrer Valley to Kebribeyah scheduled for 1998-99, will reduce the distance and cost of tankering water to Hartisheik. The three Aware camps at Camaboker, Daror and Rabasso are directly supplied by new *Hafir* dams and existing water catchment structures. In the West, sufficient water is available in the Bonga and Dimma settlements due to systems developed with the help of Oxfam. Meanwhile, a major upgrading of the water distribution system in Fugnido has recently been completed with the installation of new pipes, reservoirs and a number of motorised pumps. The new system will greatly relieve persistent problems of access faced by refugees in the camp. At Sherkole, established in 1997, a water and sanitation programme is being implemented by MSF Holland.

In both the eastern and western settlements, an environmental programme, launched in 1997, is being strengthened to include environmental education, creation of tree nurseries, introduction of fuel-efficient stoves, and the establishment of an environmental/GIS database.

Recent developments

In the west there has been a sharp increase in the number of new arrivals in recent weeks. Most of the newcomers originate from a camp for displaced persons in Nairus (Dinka), the Akobo area (Anuaks) and the Yom/Nasir areas (Nuer). It is difficult to establish at present whether this is part of a "seasonal" problem or the beginning of a more serious influx. Screening is taking place on a daily basis to identify and filter out those asylum seekers who are already registered. The total number of families screened in April amounted to 735 compared to 190 in March.

The food delivery pipeline to the western camps remains precarious. Rations for March did not arrive in the camps until the middle of the month while deliveries for April did not arrive until the third week of the month. On this basis, May rations are not expected until the beginning of June. As a result of these delays, most of the refugee population, especially in Bonga, are searching for wild foods in the surrounding forests.

Heavy storms on April 28 led to the destruction of a number of school and other community buildings in the refugee settlements at Fugnido and Bonga. Out of 21 classrooms, only two or three are still standing. Except for grade seven, all classes are now taking place out-doors under the shade of trees. Classes have been merged into groups of up to a hundred students. Though moral is holding, in view of the upcoming rainy season current arrangements may not prove sustainable for very long. On a more positive note, the heavy rains were beneficial for refugee farmers preparing their land for the planting season. If the rains continue for another 6-7 weeks, 1998 could be a good cropping year.

Repatriation

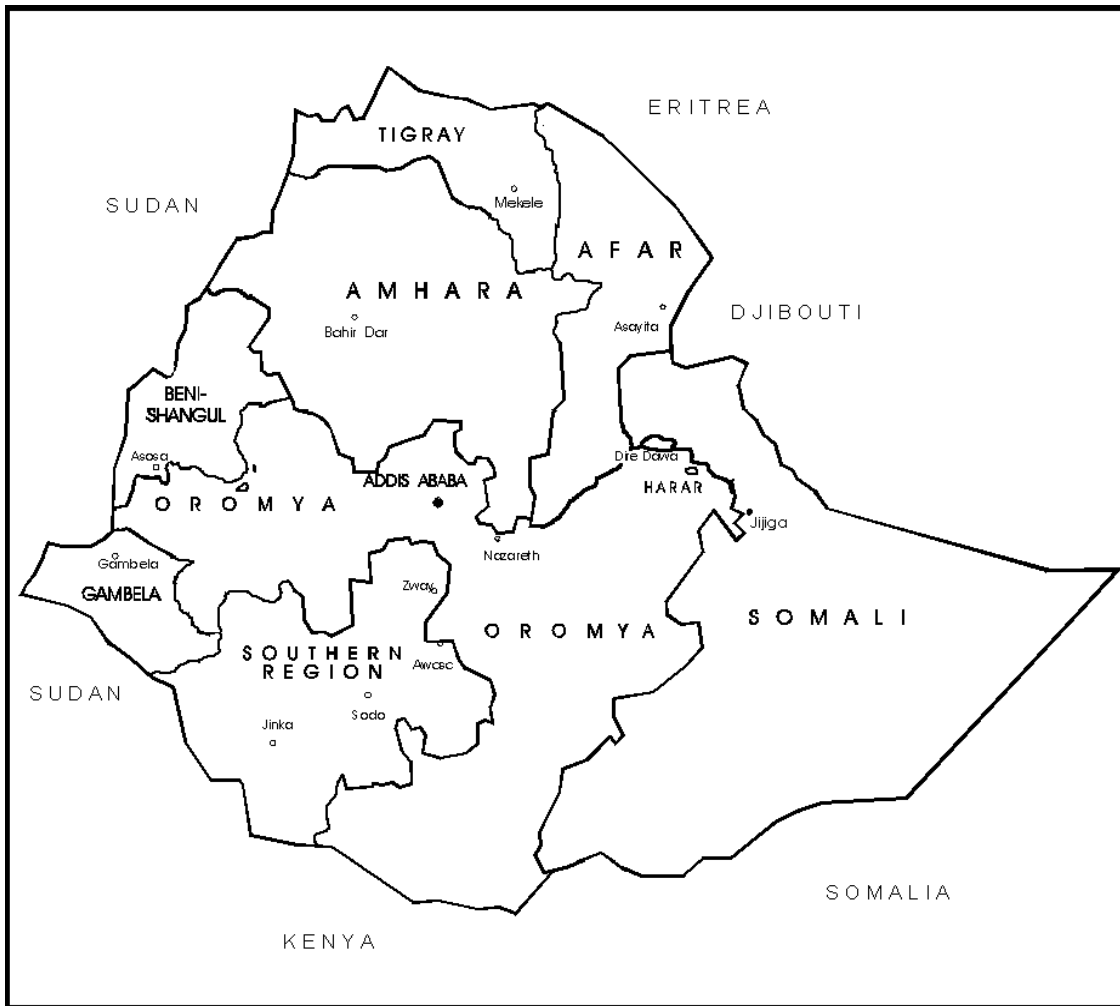
The success of the pilot repatriation of Somali refugees from camps in eastern Ethiopia last year paved the way for an expanded programme in 1998. In the first round this year (January-February but including one convoy on 21 December 1997), a total of 1,821 families - 9,923 individuals - were repatriated from Hartisheik "A" to various locations in "Somaliland". However, the accelerated programme hit a snag in March when refugee leaders opposed to the move disrupted preparations to repatriate 7,000 persons from Hartisheik "B". To make the most of the time remaining before the *Gu* rains make movements impossible, the operation was quickly switched to Darwenaji. In a two week period from 2 - 15 April, some 8,082 refugees were subsequently repatriated successfully in a total of seven separate convoys.

With the assistance of a number of donors, UNHCR have put together a comprehensive plan to repatriate a total of 80,000 Somali refugees this year. Though progress has been satisfactory to date, there are concerns that economic disruption caused by the Saudi Arabian ban on the import of livestock might seriously limit the capacity of the "Somaliland" authorities to successfully absorb these numbers.

Refugee Statistics (as of 30 April)

<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>	
Bonga	11,920	Hartisheik (A & B)	41,389
Fugnido	18,482	Aisha	15,282
Dimma	7,644	Kebribeyah	11,077
Sherkole	20,461	Teferiber	46,331
Sub-total	58,507	Darwenaji	32,090
		Camaboker	28,590
		Rabasso	16,814
		Daror	33,985
<u>South-east</u>			
Dolo Odo	5,000	Sub-total	225,558
Dolo Bay	1,200		
Suftu	1,800	<u>South</u>	
Sub-total	8,000	Moyale/Dokisso	8,671
<u>North-east</u>		<u>Addis Ababa</u>	
Afar Region	3,000	Urban refugees	700
GRAND TOTAL	304,436		

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); Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA); Grain Market Research Project of the Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operation (GMRP-MEDaC); SCF (UK); UNICEF; UNHCR; WHO; AFP; ENA.

11 May, 1998

UNDP-EUE
PO Box 5580,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel.: (251) (1) 51-10-28/29
Fax: (251) (1) 51-12-92
e-mail: undp-eue@telecom.net.et