



SITUATION REPORT FOR ETHIOPIA June 1999

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

Highlights

- ❑ The Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission revised the figure for drought affected people requiring food assistance to accommodate an increase in beneficiaries due to the 1999 *belg* failure. The new figure, released in early July 1999, identifies a total of 5.3 million (including 384,858 displaced persons) and places the total food needs from June until the end of the year at 425,144 M/T
- ❑ In general, the prospect of long-cycle *meher* crops over most of the country is of concern and the impact of the *belg* failure on the livestock population has been severe. The most affected areas include South Tigray Zone of Tigray, North Shewa, and North and South Wello Zones of Amhara and Northwest Shewa of Oromiya Regions.
- ❑ In response to the drought emergency, the UN Country Team released an appeal for assistance for the areas in critical need, outlining actions already undertaken by the UN and additional urgent needs. The UN Country Team Relief Action Plan and Appeal for Severely Drought Affected Areas of Ethiopia, issued on 12 July 1999, identifies special interventions that need to be implemented immediately in order to avert a humanitarian crisis. In addition to highlighting the need for more food aid pledges, the Appeal covers USD 7.5 million in non-food interventions.

General Events and Developments

Ethiopia's first syringe plant inaugurated: Ethiopia's first syringe production plant was inaugurated on June 5 by Dr. Kebede Tadesse, the minister in charge of the social sub-sector in the Prime Minister's office. The plant is a privately owned enterprise and was constructed at a cost of over USD 3.8 million. The new plant is located in eastern Addis Ababa and will manufacture two million disposable syringes during the first production year. The production level is expected to increase by some 70% within a year or two. (PANA, June 8; Press Digest, June 10)

NGO efforts commended by DPPC: The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission has said that the total number of non-governmental organisations operating in different parts of the country and engaged in various development activities currently stands at 310. In its statement, the Commission said 113 of these are international organisations while 197 are indigenous. 83 of the organisations are active in Addis Ababa, 55 in Oromiya, 44 in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples State and 32 in Amhara State. The commission described as exemplary the role played by the organisations and singled out the local NGO REST (Relief Society of Tigray) for its role in mobilising the people for development activities and in supplying relief to people displaced from their homes by the war. (Walta Information Center, June 30; Seven Days Update, July 5)

Addis Ababa residents to pay back tax: Addis Ababa residents have been issued with notice to pay up to 10,000 birr (USD1,200) for cumulative land and house tax arrears dating back 23 years or face a 50 – 100% fine. Some who have received the notices were asked to settle the demanded amount within one week. The land and house tax imposed by the Addis Ababa Administration is for homeowners who have not been paying taxes and others whose homes have been inadequately assessed for tax by the previous government. Not every resident is affected by the notices but the sudden demand and short notice with penalties has surprised those notified, many of whom who now fear they may lose their homes. (Seven Days Update, July 5)

The last Ethiopian Jews brought to Israel: The last remnants of a previously large Jewish community in Ethiopia are to be brought to Israel in an operation initiated by the outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. Some 2,500 –3,500 Jews in the mountainous Quara region of Ethiopia are to be brought to Israel aboard Ethiopian Airlines flights to Tel Aviv. 70,000 Ethiopian Jews currently residing in Israel arrived in two enormous airlifts, the first in 1985 in Operation Moses and the second in 1991, in Operation Solomon. The Quara Jews were reportedly left off immigration lists in these previous airlifts because of a dispute between rabbis. The Ethiopian government spokesperson discounted speculation about a “massive exodus of Ethiopian Jews” but conceded the constitutional right of Ethiopians to emigrate. Most of the Quara community Jews are gathering in Gondar in anticipation of their “return” to Israel. The decision to allow the influx of the Ethiopian Jews was made at one of the outgoing Israeli government’s last cabinet meetings. During the same meeting, a team of Israeli relief workers was also ordered to travel to Ethiopia to provide food and medical aid to the 3,000 Gondar Jews. Israeli Interior Minister Eli Suissa has ordered his office to make arrangements to process the immigrants at the rate of 1,000 per month and the outgoing cabinet of Binyamin Netanyahu has set aside USD 11 million for their assimilation. (AP, June 14; AFP, June 14, 21; DPA, June 15)

Agriculture and Weather

According to the DPPC’s Early Warning Department, this year’s *belg* rain was a total failure in many northern parts of the country, particularly in South Tigray Zone of Tigray Region, North Shewa and North and South Wello Zones of Amhara Region, and Northwest Shewa of Oromiya Region. Likewise, the situation in SNNPR was critical and *belg* production there has been very poor. Arsi, Bale, East and West Harerge of Oromiya Region, particularly the highlands, anticipated some production but the yield will probably be much lower than normal. The impact of the poor *belg* rainy season goes beyond crop production and includes:

- scarce pasture and water supplies which has led to poor physical condition of livestock
- significant delays in planting and a sharp drop in the area of land under long-cycle crop (maize, sorghum and millet) production over many parts of the country
- long-cycle crops (which constitute a major part of the *meher* production) planted in April have dried up and/or are wilting. In some cases there has been total devastation of non-*belg* crops planted during the season and these crops will have to be planted with short-cycle, lower yielding crops.

Overall, land preparation for the coming *meher* season has been seriously hampered and this is likely to have a negative impact on *meher* production.

Impact of *Belg* failure on Livestock in South Wello and Afar Region.

The weakened condition of oxen because of the extended dry season is reportedly an additional factor hampering land preparation. Overall the poor rains have had a significant impact on Ethiopia’s livestock population, affecting both agricultural and pastoralist communities.

One quarter of Amhara region’s livestock population is reported to be in South Wello Zone. The livestock population in South Wello is entirely dependent on the annual *belg* rains for survival, as land holdings are too small to provide sufficient fodder. The cumulative effect of 3-4 years of poor *belg* crop performance and overgrazing by the large livestock population had limited the availability of fodder and the complete failure of the rains this year has decimated the livestock population. Legambo and Dessie Zuria weredas are reportedly the hardest hit areas. The South Wello Administrative Zone’s Department of Agriculture reports the following statistics on livestock deaths for the period April – June 1999:

Legambo

<u>Livestock</u>	<u>Drought Affected</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Cattle	47,300	10,410
Goats and Sheep	80,288	41,668
Equine	14,038	3,904
Total	141,626	55,982

Dessie Zuria

<u>Livestock</u>	<u>Drought Affected</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Cattle	75,176	1,891

Goats and Sheep	64,263	3,761
Equine	39,834	1,177
Total	179,273	6,829

Of the two worst affected weredas, Legambo has been hardest hit. A recent survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture to assess the impact of the drought on livestock in 6 of Legambo's worst affected PAs showed that 57.7% of the total livestock population in the surveyed areas had died due to the drought (Legambo Kebeles 022.023,018,025,026,027).

In response to the emergency faced by livestock owning farmers in South Wello, BGI Ethiopia PLC, (owners of the Kombolcha Bati Beer factory in South Wello), is currently donating 80% of its saleable byproduct (spent grain) to the DPPC for distribution as livestock fodder. The barley byproduct, although low in nutritional value, is considered to be effective therapeutic feeding for sustaining weak animals until they are strong enough to graze. Grazing grass in sufficient quality and quantity is not expected to be available before two months despite the arrival of the *kremt* rains.

Another hard hit area is the Afar region where pastoralists not only face drought depressed markets and food insecurity but economic hardships because of the war. The loss of the Assab market, now inaccessible due to the Ethiopian/Eritrean border conflict, has severely curtailed normal market activity and the animals are reportedly too weak to travel long alternative routes to other markets. This trip, without adequate water supply and grazing enroute and with the current hot season, is as risky as waiting for the main annual rainy season of *karma* expected in July.

The Afar Pastoralist Development Association also reports that the region is directly affected by lack of rain in the Wello and Tigray highlands since highland rivers normally feed the lowlands, either by visible streams or underground water. Pastoralist families spend long daylight hours without water while women travel up to five days to collect water. In their weakened state, the Afar livestock population is prone to foot and mouth disease. An epidemic has already broken out with large numbers of livestock deaths reported in Gowaneh, Buramudayto, Awash and Fantelle.

Entirely dependent on livestock for their diet, the Afar pastoralists are directly affected by the poor condition of the herds. Tuberculosis, water-borne diseases and malaria are also endemic and anaemia is widespread. There have been reports of a sharp rise in infant mortality. Alternative coping strategies, such as the seasonal crop cultivation, cannot be practised since animals are in such a poor condition that they cannot be sold to buy further crop seed. Also, the low level of the Awash river has meant that traditional Afar crop growing areas (adjacent to the Awash and dependent on river irrigation) are too dry to farm.

Weather Assessment

The forecast for the 1999 *kremt* rainy season recently issued by the National Meteorological Services Agency (NMSA) indicates that most areas benefiting from the *kremt* rains are likely to receive normal rainfall during the season. The onset, as well as the withdrawal, of the rains is expected to follow its usual pattern. According to the forecast, exceptions to this general pattern may be pocket areas in the northeastern and eastern parts of the country (eastern Tigray, eastern Amhara and parts of Afar, northern Somali and the surrounding areas) where the rains, particularly in July, are anticipated to be deficient. These are chronically food deficit areas and are currently severely affected by the recent drought. The implication for these areas will be much more serious. Some highland areas should also expect heavy rainfall with accompanying hailstorms towards the onset and cessation of the season.

During the first dekad of June, with the exception of some pocket areas of northwestern Amhara and western Oromiya, most parts of the country exhibited below to much below normal rainfall distribution. Though the confinement of the rainfall activity was similar to that of the preceding dekad, the second dekad of June had a slight increase in rainfall activity over some areas of western and central highlands.

As a result, the western half of Tigray, most parts of western Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, parts of western and central Oromiya, western Gambella and few areas of northern SNNPR received normal to above normal rainfall, favouring the season's agricultural activity. The significant increase in rainfall activity over northern, northwestern and parts of central and southwestern Ethiopia (in areas which had deficient rainfalls during the preceding *belg* season) eased the dry situation and allowed farmers to start planting. In central Ethiopia, Bale and Arsi zones, eastern Oromiya, including highlands of Somali Regional State, the rainfall has had a positive impact on the current agricultural activities and improved the availability of pasture and drinking water.

Revised Beneficiary Figures

The total number of people requiring relief assistance was revised by the DPPC in early July and now stands at just over 5.3 million, including 384,858 displaced people. This represents an increase of nearly 700,000 people over the last DPPC estimate (27 May) and is attributed to the increased number of farmers affected by the *belg* failure.

Table 1: Population needing assistance & relief food requirement (June – December, 1999)

Region	Beneficiaries due to:				Relief requirement (M/T) (cereals only)		
	1998 <i>Meher</i> failure	1999 <i>Belg</i> failure	Displaced	Total	<i>Meher</i> & <i>Belg</i> related	Displaced	Total
Tigray	401,020	99,400	334,057	834,477	35,477	34,261	69,738
Amhara	1,103,420	1,220,895	17,000	2,341,315	218,962	1,020	219,982
Oromiya	743,410	443,920	2,114	1,189,444	84,927	127	85,054
SNNPR	-	577,620	327	577,947	24,879	20	24,899
Somali	-	219,042	-	219,042	13,143	-	13,143
Harari	13,309	-	-	13,309	799	-	799
Afar	-	129,300	29,278	158,578	7,758	3,004	10,762
Addis Ababa	-	-	1,981	1,981	-	119	119
Other Regions	-	42,477	101	42,578	641	7	648
Total	2,261,159¹	2,732,654	384,858	5,378,671	386,586	38,558	425,144

Source: DPPC Early Warning Department, July 12, 1999.

Food Aid and Logistics

In response to mounting concerns about the current drought situation in Ethiopia, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) announced that the government has pledged 20,000 M/T of grain to meet the rising relief needs of the country. In a press release issued on 24 June, the DPPC stated that the grain would be borrowed from the Emergency Food Security Reserve for distribution to the most seriously drought affected areas of the country. Repayment to the Emergency Food Security Reserve will be made in 2000 through local purchases. This special allocation is in addition to over US\$ 5 million the government has spent since April 1999 to cover internal transportation costs. Additional pledges have also been announced by Canada, USA, UK and the Netherlands but the overall pledge situation remains alarmingly low. The new pledge from the Ethiopian government, combined with these new donor pledges, will provide sufficient food to cover next month's requirements but additional pledges are urgently needed if a major humanitarian crisis is to be avoided.

¹ The figure of 2,261,150 includes the relief needs of the pastoralists.

According to the DPPC and WFP, as of 12 July the relief food requirement, pledges and gaps are as follows:

Table 2: Current emergency food aid status – 1999 drought (cereals only)

Requirements	M/T	M/T
June – December Requirement	425,144	
Less internally displaced requirement	34,528	
June – December drought food requirements		390,616
Estimated available donor contributions/pledges as of 30th June 1999		
EU (balance from original 50,000 M/T)	20,000	
Netherlands	10,000	
UK (DFID)	6,000	
Canada (CIDA through WFP EMOP 6143)	9,000	
WFP (re-programmed from project 2488)	10,000	
USAID (response to the DPPC appeal)	40,000	
USAID (replacement to the DPPC)	10,000	
USAID (Title III switched by the GoE to relief)	25,000	
Government of Ethiopia/DPPC	20,000	
Danish Church Aid	300	
Total Contributions/Pledges		159,900
Unmet needs as of 12 July 1999		230,176

Source: WFP and DPPC

WFP Food Aid Transport System (FATS)

From 7th of June to 5th July 1999 a total of 39,495.95M/T of food aid has been transported from Djibouti to various destinations within Ethiopia at an average of 1,361.92 M/T per day. WFP received four vessels with a total of about 60,000 M/T of wheat after a break in the arrival of food aid commodities and 70% of this shipment has been transported between 7th of June and 5th July. Previously, FATS committed trucks had been released from the 2nd week of May to end of the first week of June due to a break in food deliveries.

A sudden flood and road damage in the Dire Dawa Djibouti route has caused some bottlenecks and the critical warehouse shortage in and around Mekele continues to cause delays. The FATS has also dispatched to the eastern refugee camps in Ethiopia 100% of June and 62% of July Rations. 97% of the supplementary food allocation was also transported. In the western refugee camps, 100% of the July – August general ration and 35% of the buffer stock has been transported. The delivery of food aid to the internally displaced, which began in May, has so far had about 7,500MT of food delivered. This amount represents all of the May and June rations but only a small proportion of the July ration. A new tender is being launched to deliver famix and vegetable oil.

UN Country Team Relief Action Plan and Appeal for Severely Drought Affected Areas of Ethiopia.

Over the past few months there have been a number of assessment missions to the most severely affected areas of the country, the most recent (June 17–25) being a joint DPPC/UN mission of four teams to the most several affected areas of South Tigray, Wag Hamra, North and South Wello North Shewa, East Harerge, Konso Special Wereda and Welayita in North Omo Zone. Although these teams were primarily concerned with assessing the non-food needs in connection with the drought, all missions reported that the most critical area was food supply. In addition to increased food distributions, special interventions such as targeted supplementary feeding programs were recommended and other critical needs identified include expanded EPI coverage, additional medical and health supplies, logistics support, emergency water supply rehabilitation and maintenance, provision of seeds and fodder for livestock.

In response to the findings of this mission the United Nations Country Team issued a Relief Action Plan and Appeal on 12 July 1999 which outlined actions already undertaken, future immediate actions to be funded from existing or re-programmed resources within the UN system and an appeal to the donor community for additional funds totalling \$7.5 million to meet the most critical needs. A summary of resource inputs and requirements is listed below.

Table 3: UN Country Team Appeal Summary

Food and Non-food Requirements	Amount
I. Food	
Food Requirement (WFP EMOP 6142)	94,253 M/T
II. Non-food	
Supplementary Food	USD 1,500,584
Health	2,819,688
Blankets	330,000
Water and Sanitation	1,773,000
Education	To be provided following assessment
Agriculture	1,008,000
Monitoring	18,000
TOTAL	USD 7,449,272

Refugees and Returnees

WFP/UNHCR Joint Food Assessment Mission

A joint WFP/UNHCR Food Aid Assessment mission was undertaken in Ethiopia between 26 April and 7 May 1999. Representatives from five embassies and aid agencies of donor governments (USAID, EC, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium) participated in the work of the mission. The mission reviewed the overall socio-economic and food supply situation of the refugees as well as the prospects for durable solutions. The mission assessed the implementation of WFP's project "Food Assistance for Somali, Sudanese, Djiboutian and Kenyan Refugees in Ethiopia", which is due to run until 31 December 1999. The total cost of the project is US\$43,623,782 and a total of MT 91,512 of food is expected to be distributed to the refugees during the duration of the project. The Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) is WFP's implementing partner for the project.

WFP has been providing food assistance to the Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia since 1984 and to Somali refugees in Ethiopia since 1988. Since 1993 assistance has also been provided to refugees from Djibouti and Kenya. Assistance to Djiboutian refugees was phased out in March 1999. At the time of the Joint Food Aid Assessment Mission in April/May 1999 WFP was providing food assistance to approximately 256,922 Somali, Sudanese and Kenyan refugees. The objective of WFP assistance, pending a durable solution to the problem, is to provide the refugees access to their basic food requirements until they can provide for themselves or be repatriated. One of the mission's objectives was to review refugee planning figures for the year 2000 and in the case of Somali refugees also for 2001.

Somali refugees

There are eight Somali refugee camps in eastern Ethiopia. Hartsheik, Rabasso, Daror and Camaboker camps were established in 1988 when an escalation of the conflict in Northwest Somalia caused thousands to cross the border. Darwonaji, Teferiber, Aisha and Kebrebeyah were established in 1991 following a further influx of both refugees and returnees as a result of the fighting that eventually led to the defeat of Siad Barre's Government forces. Currently the number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia is estimated to be just under 197,000, down from the peak figure of 600,000 before September 1994. The registration of new arrivals ceased in 1995 and consequently there was an unregistered camp population of an estimated 12,000 who were not receiving food rations. These were registered in January 1997. An additional 1,164 Somali refugees of the Hawiye clan in Hartsheik camp, who were not included in previous registrations, were registered in April 1999. Voluntary repatriation has reduced the number of refugees to 196,989, which is the figure adopted by the mission. If the voluntary repatriation programmes for Somali refugees proceeds as planned in 1999 and 2000 the number of Somali refugees may be reduced to less than 70,000 by January 2001.

Trading provides an important source of income for many of the wealthier refugees. These refugees arrived with capital and assets and trade routes between Somalia (including Somaliland) and Ethiopia have largely been kept open. There is significant movement of goods between the camps and Northwest Somalia (Somaliland), as well as the large Ethiopian trading centres in the area, such as Jijiga and Harar. Some

refugees have continued trading with the Gulf States. Other sources of income for the Somali refugees include sale of livestock, collection and sale of firewood and limited labour opportunities in the local communities. The scarcity of water and land is a serious constraint to agriculture in the Somali camps.

Sudanese refugees

The majority of the Sudanese refugees entered the country in the late eighties or early nineties and are located in settlements in the vicinity of Gambella and Mizan in western Ethiopia (Fugnido, Dimma, Sherkole and Bonga camps). In light of continued insecurity in southern Sudan the influx of new refugees to Ethiopia continues. As of May 1999 the mission adopted the figure of 61,119 Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia. The refugee population in the west has been increasing steadily due to the continuing conflict in southern Sudan. It was reported that the majority of new arrivals were young males. It is not clear why there are relatively few female arrivals. The number of Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia is expected to rise by 6,000 to 67,019 at the beginning of 2000.

The Sudanese refugees in camps in western Ethiopia have somewhat better opportunities than the Somali refugees in the east to attain some level of self-sufficiency in food production. Except for Sherkole, all the other camps are located in areas with potential for agricultural activities. Unlike the Somali refugees in the east, the Sudanese refugees are mostly agriculturists and are keen to cultivate any land made available to them. The refugees are allocated small plots by the Government of Ethiopia, varying in size from 18X18m in Bonga to 25X25 in Fugnido per household. These plots provide an estimated 10 –15% of households food needs. Other income generation opportunities are very limited in the Sudanese refugee camps. Fishing, hunting and collecting firewood are illegal and there are practically no waged labour possibilities in or around the camps. The illegal collection of firewood has caused visible environmental damage.

Djiboutian and Kenyan refugees

Fighting and civil strife in the Afar areas of the Republic of Djibouti in July 1993 caused some 18,000 Afars to cross the border to the Northeast of Ethiopia. Registration of this caseload has always been difficult, as most of the Afars live not in camps but with their kin. Many of the Djiboutian refugees have returned spontaneously and the their number is believed to be no more than 3,000. Food assistance to this caseload was terminated in March 1999.

Following ethnic conflict in northern Kenya in June 1993, some 8,670 persons fled to the area around Moyale and Dokisso in the south of Ethiopia close to the Kenyan border. Insecurity in the northern Kenya has for a long time prevented the refugees return. However, increased stability in the refugees' area of origin is now reported and a joint WFP/UNHCR/ARRA mission visited Moyale in May 1999 to finalise plans for repatriation of the remaining case load of about 5,000.

Refugee Statistics as of 1 June 1999

West - Sudanese

Bonga	12,748
Dimma	8,056
Fugnido	23,353
Sherkole	15,599

North-East – Djiboutian

Afar Region	3,000
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South - Kenyan

Moyale	4,760
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East - Somali

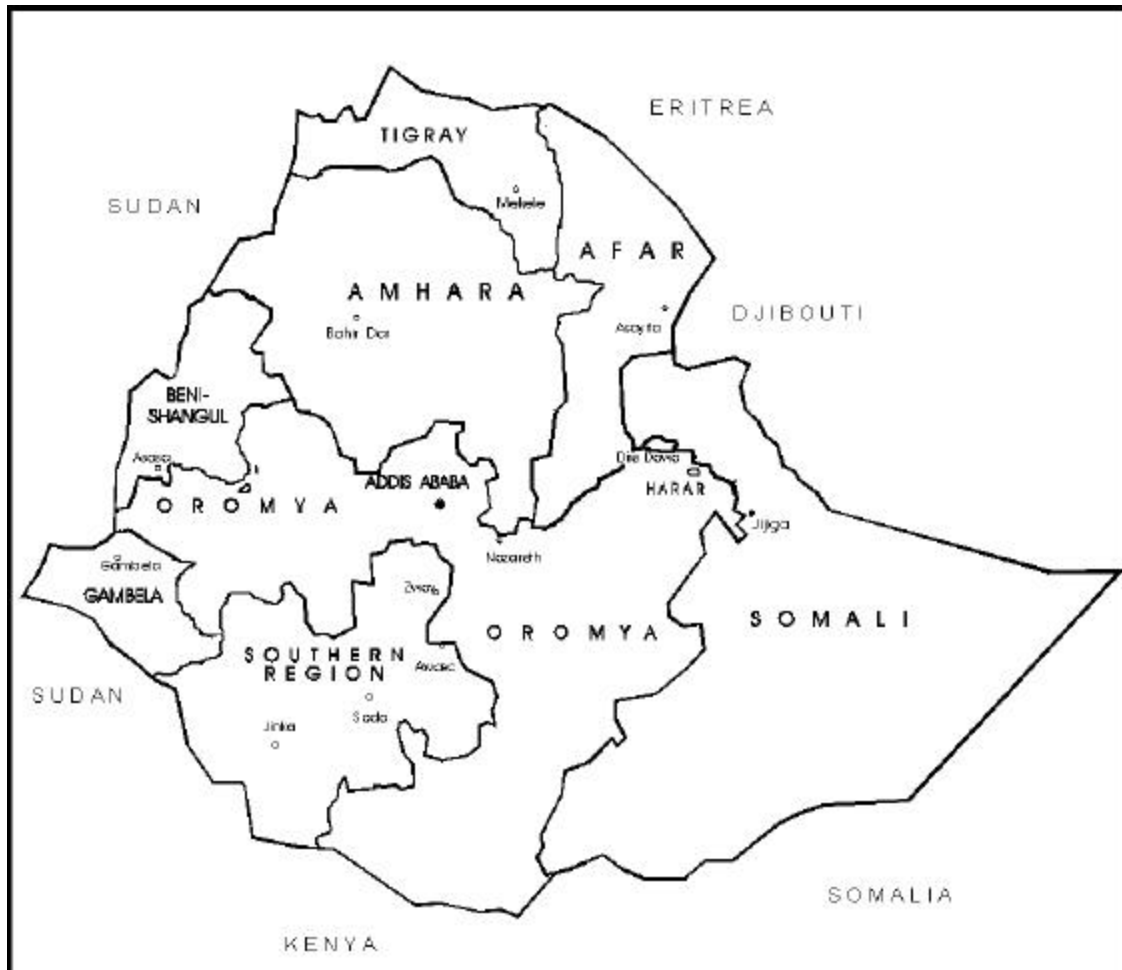
Aisha	15,290
Camaboker	28,590
Daror	33,985
Darwanaji	27,006
Hartsheikh	33,248
Kebribeyah	11,621
Rabasso	16,814
Teferiber	30,435

Addis Ababa - Various Nationalities: 478

TOTAL:

274,983

Administrative Map of Ethiopia



SOURCES:

UNCT Relief Action Plan and Appeal for severely Drought Affected Areas of Ethiopia; UNDP-EUE field reports; Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC); FEWS; National Meteorological Services Agency (NMSA); UNICEF; UNHCR; WFP; WHO. Save the Children Fund/UK Nutritional Surveillance Programme-Ethiopia, CONCERN, Afar Pastoralis Development Association. Also media sources: The Ethiopian Herald; AFP; Walta Information Centre; ENA.

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