



UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCIES UNIT FOR ETHIOPIA

MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT FOR ETHIOPIA - AUGUST 1995

Prepared by the Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia from information provided by UN agencies and NGOs

OVERVIEW

Emergency operations

The long (*kiremt*) rains, which had a positive start at the beginning of the main cropping season, have continued favourably over most *meher*-dependent areas of the country. Conditions for the planting and initial growth of long cycle crops of maize and sorghum have therefore been generally good. The pastoral areas in the south and south-east have also received good rains and should be able to maintain adequate water supplies during the coming dry season.

Relief distributions, however, will need to continue, particularly in parts of South Welo, North Welo and North Shewa, where the 1994/95 *meher* harvest was reduced and several weredas experienced a poor *belg* harvest. In South Welo, several weredas in the southern parts of the zone experienced severe flooding during July and August. According to reports received from the zonal authorities, the four weredas of Kelala, Legambo, Debre Sina and Albuko have been affected as a result of the floods. The extent of the damage is not known however, and assessments are underway by a team of early warning experts. The traditionally food deficit areas of Tigray and vulnerable groups around the country will also require close monitoring and assistance in the coming months.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Establishment of the Federal Government of Ethiopia

The Council of Representatives of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia transferred power to the elected Council of Peoples' Representatives on 18 August, the former having completed its tenure in accordance with the charter of the transition programme. Following this process, the inaugural session of the Council of Peoples' Representatives and the Federal Council opened on 21 August and elected their speakers. Both speakers were nominated by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which occupies the majority of seats in the Council of Representatives. At a joint meeting, the two councils elected Dr. Negaso Gidada, former Minister of Information in the Transitional Government and Central Committee member of the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO), as the new Head of State and elected Meles Zenawi as the Prime Minister.

The inaugural address of the new Prime Minister emphasised on the need for mobilisation of resources for the implementation of the five year development, peace and democracy programme of the EPRDF and the full implementation of regional development programmes, identifying capacity building as the first agenda item of the federal government. It was also stated that a new law has been presented to reduce government expenditure by integrating several related ministries and therefore reducing the former 20 ministries to a total of 15.

Under the new law, the former independent ministries of Trade, Industry, Culture and Sports, Information and the Ministry of External Economic Co-operation have now become

ministries of Trade and Industry, Information and Culture, and Economic Development and Co-operation. Similarly, the ministries of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection, State Farms, Coffee and Tea Development as well as Internal Affairs have either been shut down or incorporated in other related ministries. The Water Development Office, which was under the Ministry of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection, has been established as the Ministry of Water Resources. Natural Resources Protection and Security Affairs will be set up at authority levels while Sports are to be organised under a commission. The Council also approved the proclamations on the establishment of the Federal Revenue Administration Board, National Security Authority, Science and Technology Commission, Federal Civil Service Commission, Environmental Protection Authority, Tourism Commission and Sports Commission.

At the same time, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) has been tentatively renamed as the Commission for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness (CDPP), expanding its mandate and scope of activities in line with its role as the Secretariat and co-ordinating body for the National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management.

The federal legislature also approved the appointment of the Council of Ministers as submitted by the Prime Minister. They include 14 Ministers, one Deputy Prime Minister who is also Minister of Defense, another Deputy Prime Minister and the Director of the newly established Federal Revenue Administration Board. Its national composition comprises four Amharas, four Oromos and two Guraghes while the Tigray, Somali, Harari, Hadiya, Kambata and Wolayita people have one member each. The cabinet also includes members of other political parties who have adopted the EPRDF five year strategy as well as independent representatives with the required qualifications for certain posts. (A list of ministries and corresponding ministers is annexed to this report).

With the establishment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the appointment of the ministerial cabinet, the Council of Representatives completed its work for the remainder of the Ethiopian year (1987) and will resume sessions in October 1995.

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

UN support to the revitalisation of IGADD

The UN Steering Committee and its Technical Working Group met with representatives of the donor community on 25 August to discuss various issues regarding the progress leading to the revitalisation of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), including the possible areas of support from the donors community and the United Nations system. Among the points arising from these discussions was the probable postponement of the meeting of the IGADD Council of Ministers, initially scheduled for September but which would now take place in early November.¹

In regard to the UN support to the revitalisation process, the general consensus of the meeting was that any framework or guidelines that may be proposed to the IGADD Secretariat for eventual submission to the member states should aim at eliciting the main objectives and priority areas of common concern and common themes from the member states. Further to endorsing the UN's continued support to the IGADD Secretariat on technical matters and the commitment of the member states in carrying out the current process, interest was also expressed by the donors regarding the challenges faced by the international partners on how to best participate in the selected priority interventions of IGADD.

¹ There are no firm dates available as yet for this event.

Workshop on Employment Generation Schemes

A one day workshop on Employment Generation Schemes was organised on 7 August by the EGS Workgroup set up at the Commission for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness (formerly the RRC), in order to build a common understanding on the role of EGS and the differences between Employment Generation Schemes, Employment-Based Safety Nets and Food For Work activities. The one day forum also addressed the issues of inter-agency and multi-sectoral co-ordination and the use of EGS as an instrument for linking relief to development. A number of case studies were presented and reviewed during panel discussions on the experience of the government and NGOs in implementing EGS.

Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund

The Government of Ethiopia and UNDP signed an agreement of 18 August confirming \$4.75 million to the Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund (ESRDF), a component of the national programme on Economic Recovery and Reconstruction, which both UNDP and other donors have been invited to support. The ESRDF is to be implemented nationally with a total budget of \$251 million over the next five years. Of this amount, \$120 million has been made available as credit by the International Development Association.

The ESRDF has been designed within the framework of the Ethiopian National Development Strategy and its related sectoral development priorities with the overall objective of providing the poor, mainly rural communities, with the basic services and assets needed to improve their economic and social well-being and self reliance. The Fund will also support small-scale income generating activities and finance small-scale projects mainly in the rural areas of the country with a strong emphasis on community participation and ownership.

UNDP's assistance to the programme will particularly focus on strengthening the offices of the Fund in carrying out adequate project promotion, implementation and appraisal at the regional level. The capacity of benefiting communities will also be strengthened in order to assure sustainability. An agreement is expected to be finalised in September for the incorporation of an additional contribution from the government of Norway towards the capacity building component of the ESRDF, to be administered by UNDP.

Area-based development in vulnerable regions

A multi-sectoral team accompanied by a UNDP consultant visited the three weredas of Bolloso, Kindo Koisha and Konso in North Omo zone to carry out a community needs assessment using participatory rural appraisal techniques. The identified priority needs of target communities are to be integrated into a regional plan for the implementation of an area-based integrated development programme, which will be funded by UNDP under the National Programme on Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation, and aims at contributing to reduce the vulnerability of affected populations. The final proposal for this action plan will take into account other UN and NGO activities in the area in order to achieve complementarity in the support provided to vulnerable communities.

Conference on the legal status of refugee and internally displaced women

A four day conference was jointly organised in Addis Ababa by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) the UN Development Fund for Women and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on the legal status of refugee and internally displaced women in Africa. The objective of the meeting was to review the situation of refugee and internally displaced women in the continent and make recommendations to guarantee their full human rights.

AGRICULTURE

Weather update

The onset of the *kiremt* (main) rainy season this year was on time in most *meher*-producing regions, starting in June and gradually spreading through most of the country. The *kiremt* rains have continued well into August, with significant amount and coverage over northern, north-eastern and north-western Ethiopia. According to the National Meteorological Services Agency (NMSA) some areas of southern Ethiopia, including parts of North Omo zone (Southern Region), the southern lowland areas of Arsi zone (Ormiya Region), the south-eastern lowlands of the Somali Region and the lowlands of West Hararghe (Oromiya Region) did not receive adequate rains during the month of August. Tigray, an area with little rainfall during the first few months of the *kiremt* season, however, is reported to have received normal rains during August.

1995 belg harvest assessments and meher season prospects

Recent assessments by the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) indicate that the 1995 *belg* season² was generally favourable, with much better rainfall distribution than the previous year. According to FAO, the total land area covered with 1995 *belg* crops is estimated at 498,555 hectares in comparison to the 1994 land area of 318,936 hectares, with a corresponding harvest increase. The exception to this positive trend are pocket areas along the western highland escarpment of North and South Welo, North Shewa and North Omo, where a number of weredas have experienced another poor harvest.

Parts East and West Hararghe zones (Oromiya Region) have also been adversely affected by the prolonged dry spell between the *belg* and *kiremt* seasons, resulting in moisture stress on long cycle maize and sorghum crops which are considered to be quite important for the food security of the population in these areas. A recent mid-season crop assessment carried out by CARE, indicates an overall satisfactory growth of crops in their operational areas in East Shewa, East and West Hararghe in the Oromiya Region. However, CARE reports that the success of this years crops in some parts of the visited zones is heavily dependent on the extension of the rains.

While it is still early to predict the outcome of the *meher* season, and reports from different operational agencies vary, preliminary mid-season assessments indicate that prospects for the main *meher* harvest are relatively good. In most regions, the area under cultivation has been slightly higher than last year, and pest infestations and climatic changes have not been a major threat to the yield. If rains continue through September, it is anticipated that this year's harvest in the main *meher*-producing areas will show an improvement over that of 1994.

² The *belg* season in Ethiopia normally falls between February and May in most *belg*-dependent areas.

Grain prices are also stable, in comparison to the market level this time last year, where steep and irregular prices were a cause for concern throughout the main urban and rural markets. This could also suggest reasonable optimism about the availability of cereals in the coming months.³

Fertiliser situation

Fertiliser procurement for the 1995 cropping season has now been completed, with the remaining amount transported to central warehouses and market distributions centres. As at the beginning of August, fertiliser sales to both the peasant and state sectors by the Agricultural Input Supplies Corporation (AISCO) and Amalgamated amount to 214,712 tons or 70% of the sales target for the agricultural season.

FOOD AID AND LOGISTICS

Food aid status

As at 29 August, pledges against the 1995 total requirement of 1,032,000 tons amount to 639,287 tons of food aid including commercial, programme and relief/regular categories. The overall pledging situation for the 1995 relief and regular requirements has been very positive, with 426,414 tons pledged out of the total requirements of 427,000 tons. This leaves a shortfall of only 586 tons for relief and regular programmes. However, no pledges have been made by donors against the government's appeal to monetise 80,000 tons of grain to support ongoing employment generation schemes, and a pledging shortfall of 162,127 tons still remains for this year programme food requirements. According to WFP, no commercial imports have so far been registered against the commercial cereal import requirements of 150,000 tons that were recommended by the November 1994 FAO/WFP Food and Crop Needs Assessment Mission.

The resource situation for the WFP emergency operation (EMOP) appears to be improving as several donors have indicated pledges against the resourcing target of 60,900 tons of grain still required for the 1995 relief operation. Indicative cereal pledges for the EMOP now amount to 60,000 tons but only the US pledge of 15,000 has so far been confirmed. The expeditious conversion of proposed donor pledges into confirmed commitments is needed to allow commodities to be drawn from the Emergency Food Security Reserve.

Total deliveries to Ethiopia by the end of August stand at 148,413 tons or 35% of the pledged quantity against the 1995 relief and regular requirements, whereas food aid distribution to beneficiaries of relief and regular programmes between January and July 1995 stands at approximately 181,000 tons. This distribution figure is relatively higher than deliveries to date, as it includes 1994 carry over stocks and loans from the EFSR against shipments arriving later in the year.

Emergency Food Security Reserve

The Emergency Food Security Reserve has had a significant role in the successful implementation of relief operations in 1995, as loans from the EFSR have enabled the Government and NGOs to sustain relief distributions despite the late arrival of shipments, mostly scheduled in the second half of the year. A loan of 25,000 tons was recently approved by the EFSR Board of Trustees for the WFP EMOP, providing the programme with adequate resources to continue until the arrival of expected pledges. The Reserve currently has physical stocks of 56,000 tons of grain, excluding outstanding loans.

³

Source: Famine Early Warning Systems

Refugee and returnee operations

The new phase of the WFP refugee and returnee project, which started at the beginning of July 1995, currently has a case load of approximately 350,000 refugees receiving a monthly WFP ration. About 88,000 Ethiopian refugees returning from neighbouring countries in the next 18 months are also expected to be assisted and provided with six months reintegration packages upon arrival. The resource situation for this programme remains precarious however, as there are no confirmed pledges for the project, and a recent loan of 12,000 tons from the EFSR will only sustain the project until the end of October.

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WATER

Malaria Epidemic

Although no cases of malaria epidemic were reported officially during the month of August, it is currently the height of the seasonal transmission period of the epidemic. Therefore, precautions are required as the long rains are usually quite favourable for the breeding of mosquitoes. The following provides baseline information from the WHO regional emergency office on the trend of the epidemic and control measures normally undertaken by the Ministry of Health:

In Ethiopia, malaria causes clinical illness, often very severe, in over 300,000 people every year and threatens twice this number, undermining the health and welfare of families, debilitating the active population and straining their resources. The incidence of "seasonal epidemic" malaria extends from August through December, the main transmission season, and occurs in throughout the country but particularly in the lower altitudes of North Welo, North and South Gonder, West Gojjam and North Shewa zones of the Amhara Region as well as in the periphery of Jimma and Nazareth in Oromo zone. "Endemic" cases occur mostly in the lowlands, such as in Gambella. Repeated epidemics in the highlands are usually due to degraded environment and inter-regional migrations, at the time of the year when agricultural work is at its height, subsequently affecting the working capacity of local communities.

The campaign to control the epidemic in Ethiopia is ongoing through the Control Programme initiated by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation, following the four basic elements of malaria control strategy, namely: a) to provide early diagnosis and prompt treatment; b) to plan and implement sustainable preventive measure, including vector control; c) to detect early epidemics, contain and prevent them; and d) to strengthen local capacities in research to permit and promote the regular assessment of the malaria situation. However, until the full promulgation and effective implementation of the control strategy, affected areas of Ethiopia will continue to need technical support as well as drugs and clinical supplies.

Support to health services

A joint mission comprised of high level officials from the Commission for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness (previously the RRC) and the Ministry of Agriculture, accompanied by personnel from the UNICEF Emergency Section, visited Pawe wereda in the Amhara Region at the end of August, to review and assess the validity of incoming reports of mass starvation in the area. According to the wereda authorities, a total of 14,178 people have been drastically affected by disease and malnutrition, resulting in a mortality rate of 128 between May and August. Visits within the community confirmed the reports of extreme conditions faced by the local inhabitants. In most households visited, the people were found to be seriously sick and emaciated, with most suffering from anaemia and fever. A severe shortage of anti-malaria drugs was also noted in the visited area.

As a result of the mission, the Commission for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness (CDPP) has made arrangements for the immediate dispatch of food aid to the area. In addition, adequate supplies of anti-malaria drugs are to be provided by the Ministry of Health whereas UNICEF will assist with the provision of Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) and intravenous fluids for the affected population.

During August, UNICEF Emergency Officers also carried out visits to Kurmu and Gizen weredas (Benishangul Region), Dubo area in North Omo zone (SEPAR) and Gursum and Babile weredas of East Hararghe zone (Oromiya Region). The aim of the missions to the two regions of Benishangul and SEPAR was to assess the general situation in the regions and subsequently develop a plan of action for UNICEF intervention. As a result of recommendations, UNICEF will undertake integrated emergency rehabilitation projects in the selected weredas of both regions. The project in the two selected weredas of Benishangul Region will be carried out with funding support from the Norwegian Government to cover requirements in the areas of health, water, basic education, agriculture and economic activities of women; the contribution of the Australian Government in North Omo zone will assist the wereda integrated projects in the areas of health and nutrition, water, education, agriculture and disaster preparedness.

In addition to the regular monitoring of emergency activities throughout the country, UNICEF provided supplies of supplementary feeding and non-food equipment to projects sites in South Welo, North Welo and South Gonder zones (Amhara Region), East and West Hararghe zones (Oromiya Region) North Omo zone (SEPAR) and Assossa (Benishangul Region), in support of implementing agencies operating in these emergency-prone areas.

Emergency water supply

The construction of water boreholes in East Hararghe zone, in part of a UNICEF-assisted water project currently under implementation by CISP, an Italian NGO. So far in Babile, 13 boreholes have been completed and are being used by the local community. Water-user committees have been formed and caretakers have been trained for all completed sites by the zonal Bureau of Natural Resources Development. Similarly in Gursum, construction work on five wells has ended satisfactorily.

Six water wells, built to alleviate water problems in the lowland weredas of Borena zone (Oromiya Region) became operational during the month. A total of five ponds, with a holding capacity of 16,000 cubic metres each, have also become operational in the zone over the past five months, assisted by UNICEF and CARE.

REFUGEES AND RETURNEES

Sudanese refugees

The refugee population reached 58,619 at the end of August with the following breakdown: Bonga 15,529, Fugnido 32,850 and Dimma 10,240.

Somali refugees

The total listed Somali beneficiaries in the eastern camps stands at 275,189 with the following breakdown: Hartisheik 58,675, Kebribeyah 10,106, Darwanaji 43,008, Teferiber 46,369, Camaboker 31,920, Rabasso 24,865, Daror 44,964 and Aisha 15,282. So far, the influx that started as a result of the November 1994 fighting remains at 90,289.

REPATRIATION

Repatriation from Djibouti

During August, four train convoys with a total of 4,201 Ethiopia refugees from Djibouti arrived in Dire Dawa, where the returnees were provided with reintegration packages consisting of supplies of cereals, pulses and oil prior to departure to their home areas. This brings the number of refugees that have repatriated from Djibouti in the third phase of the operation to a total of 7,446 since the first movement on 17 July. If the current rate continues, it is anticipated that the final phase of the repatriation operation will be concluded by the end of October.

Repatriation from Kenya

The UNHCR Regional Liaison Office in Ethiopia is currently preparing for the arrival of approximately 2,500 Ethiopian refugees from Kenya, who have been registered for voluntary repatriation. To this end, UNHCR officials, in co-operation with representatives of the Ethiopian Embassy in Nairobi, are laying the groundwork for the screening of the refugees pending their actual movement.

Individual repatriation

A total of 28 individuals were repatriated by air from the following countries: Chad 1; Kenya 24; Swaziland 1; Ukraine 1; and Zimbabwe 1. The returnees were received in Addis Ababa and provided with necessary assistance packages.

DISCLAIMER

The designations used above may refer to old regional or awraja names for the sake of familiarity. However, 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 delimitations of its frontiers or boundaries.

Information in this report has been obtained from specialised UN agencies and NGO reports. Reference is made to any other source of information as necessary.

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UN-EUE
P.O Box 5580,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel.: (251) (1) 51-10-28/29
Fax: (251) (1) 51-12-92
Email: UNEUE@padis.gn.apc.org

List of the senior officials of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE)

Name and New Post	Ministry
<i>President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia</i> <i>Nagaso Gidada (Oromo)</i>	
<i>Prime Minister of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia</i> <i>Meles Zenawi (Tigray)</i>	
1. Tamirat Layne (Amhara) , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense	Prime Minister's Office Ministry of Defense
2. Kassu Ilala (Guraghe), Deputy Prime Minister and Head of Economic Affairs in the Prime Minister's Office	Prime Minister's Office
3. Seyoum Mesfin (Tigray), Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
4. Mahteme Solomon (Amhara), Minister	Ministry of Justice
5. Sufian Ahmed (Oromo), Minister	Ministry of Finance
6. Girma Birru (Oromo), Minister	Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation
7. Kassahun Ayele (Amhara), Minister	Ministry of Trade and Industry
8. Teketel Forsido (Kambata), Minister	Ministry of Agriculture
9. Shiferaw Jarso (Oromo), Minister	Ministry of Water Resources Development
10. Haile Asegide (Guraghe), Minister	Ministry of Works and Development
11. Abdulmejid Hussein (Somali), Minister	Ministry of Transport and Communications
12. Ezedin Ali (Harari), Minister	Ministry of Mines and Energy
13. Genet Zewdie (Amhara), Minister	Ministry of Education
14. Adem Ibrahim (Oromo), Minister	Ministry of Health
15. Woldemichael Chamo (Oromo),	Ministry of Information and Culture
16. Hassen Abdella (Afar),	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
17. Desta Amare (Hadya), Director	Board for the Administration of Federal Revenues.