



SITUATION REPORT FOR ETHIOPIA September-October 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

- ❑ Following joint government/donor assessment missions an upward revision of those needing food relief assistance was announced by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission on October 15. The additional needs identified in Amhara, Oromiya, parts of SNNPR and Somali puts the total number of relief beneficiaries at about 7 million. Due to the increased beneficiary numbers, the DPPC is seeking currently seeking additional food aid pledges of 74,000 MT.
- ❑ Agricultural activities ahead of the upcoming *meher* harvest continue normally though the repercussions of the failed *belg* season continue to be felt. While the main season rains have been generally favourable, the delayed start has led to a switch to short-cycle, lower yielding crops.
- ❑ Livelihood indicators and nutritional status surveys suggest that food security in many parts of the country remains precarious. Relief food rations are reported in some areas as inadequate and despite continuous relief distributions since June, poor levels of nutritional status persist. NGOs continue to monitor nutrition and food security indicators in drought affected weredas of Ethiopia.

General Events and Developments

Election campaigns begin with party registration: The Ethiopian National Electoral Board has reported that 11 political parties have so far officially announced their participation in the national elections due to take place in May 2000. In addition to parties within the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front - EPRDF (out of 56 certified parties, 23 are EPRDF affiliates), the Oromo Abo Liberation Front and the Western Somalia Democratic Organisation have formally announced their intention to participate in the elections. The recently formed Gambella People's Congress and United Oromo Peoples Liberation Front as well as the older Ethiopian Democratic Union have also expressed similar intentions verbally. The All Amhara People's Organisation and the Oromo National Congress have not declared their intentions. *(Seven days Update, September 20)*

Sudan offers Ethiopia use of its Red Sea port facilities: Sudan, which has established a 26-square kilometre free zone along its Red Sea coast, has invited Ethiopia to use Port Sudan. The port is qualified to host infrastructure investment projects, export processing industries, banking and insurance activities, warehousing and other related activities, according to a report by the economic magazine "The Capital". Ethiopian Trade and Industry Minister Kassahun Ayele said that the Ethiopian government was interested in using alternative ports in neighbouring countries and suggested that given improved political relations with Sudan, Ethiopia would consider using Sudanese ports along with Kenya's port of Mombassa and Berbera port in Somaliland. According to Sudanese officials, the industrial, commercial and service investment projects approved in the Sudanese free zone will enjoy exemptions from all customs taxes except service charges.

Conference deliberates draft proclamation to strengthen Sharia courts: Ethiopian Muslims have met to discuss the creation of a judicial system to administer Sharia, or Islamic law. About 300 delegates, a fifth of them young women, discussed a draft proclamation establishing the system. Parliament is expected to approve the delegates' recommendation. The proposed system will have federal courts, a high court and a supreme court. The courts will hear cases on marriage, divorce, family support and inheritance. According to the draft proclamation the Islamic courts will only hear cases with the consent of both contesting parties. Otherwise the case will go to a secular court. The proclamation for the Moslem clerics (Kadi) court was

issued for the first time in 1942 and then amended in 1944. According to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia constitution's article 78 (5), full recognition is bestowed on customary and religious courts of law and their legal guarantee is ensured. (AP, October 4; *Walta Information Centre, October 4*)

Malaysian firm says it will invest \$6 billion: According to local media and TV reports, a Malaysian company has signed a six-billion US dollar project agreement with Ethiopia for urbanisation projects including, it is said, the construction of 200,000 residential houses and modernisation of the Addis Ababa central market. The General Manager of the Ethiopian Investment Authority, Tadesse Haile said that the US \$6 billion investment agreement had been signed between Adorna Shebele (one of Malaysia's Adorna Investment Groups) and the Addis Ababa City Administration. The agreement apparently came after the visit of a high level Ethiopian delegation to Malaysia in September which included representatives of Addis Ababa Administration and the Ministry of Transport and Communication. According to the agreement, Adorna Shebele will erect a satellite city on a sixty-four square kilometer plot of land and redevelop Merkato, one of the biggest markets in Africa. It is claimed the city development project will consist of residential quarters, industrial and recreational areas, hotels, hospitals, shopping malls, schools and modern infrastructure which includes under-ground storm water drainage and internal transport system. (*Xinhua, September 26; Addis Tribune September 24*)

Pharmaceutical factory opens: A pharmaceutical factory with a daily production capacity of 1,360,000 capsules of human and animal medicines has begun operations in Addis Ababa. Producing veterinary and human medicines of 26 different kinds, the factory was built at a cost of US \$1.44 million by East African Pharmaceutical, a joint Anglo-Sudanese concern. Chairman of the Board of East African Pharmaceutical, Abdelrahim Hashim, said the plant will produce a "high variety" of medicines that are in demand in Ethiopia. He said that since Ethiopia hosts the largest number of cattle and other domesticated animals in Africa, the plant plans to produce a range of pharmaceutical products in veterinary medicine for local consumption and export to other African countries. (*PANA, September 22*)

Export earnings decline by 14.8 Percent: During fiscal year 1998-1999, which ended in June, Ethiopia earned over 3.5 billion birr (about US \$442.5 million) from the export of various commodities according to reports in the government press. The report said Ethiopia's export earnings during the year had declined by 14.8 percent as compared with the preceding financial year and recent yearly averages of nearly \$600 million annually. The decline was attributed to the slump in the price of coffee on the world market, which the report says was caused when Brazil flooded the market with its coffee bean surpluses. Ethiopia earned about 2.12 billion birr from the export of 101,000 tonnes of coffee, some 270 million birr from pulses, over 242.5 million birr from hides and skins and about 102 million birr from cereals. Other exports during the year included minerals such as tantau, floral products, spices, fruits and vegetables. (*PANA, 5 October*)

World Bank - NGO consultations held: The NGO Working Group on the World Bank/Africa Region held its sixth annual consultation from September 12-17 in Addis Ababa with two days of joint consultations between African NGOs and the World Bank's Africa Region, including the Africa Region Vice President Jean-Louis Serbia. The Addis Ababa meeting is part of the World Bank's global initiative to obtain the input of civil society in the drafting of its annual World Development Report. Previous consultations have included meetings in Asia and Latin America and two consultations have been held in Africa, in Johannesburg in January 1999 and Dakar in April 1999. The discussions have recommended a continued dialogue with African institutions and the World Bank drafting team in order to inject, as much as possible, an authentic civil society voice into the 2000/2001 World Bank Development Report. Every 10 years the World Development Report focuses on poverty reduction and the next WDR 2000/1 focuses on poverty reduction as follow-up to the 1990 WDR on the same theme. (*Working Papers for Sixth Africa Regional Consultation of the NGO Working Group on the World Bank and Joint Consultation with the World Bank, Inter Africa Group*)

Agriculture and Weather

Belg Rain Failure; wider implication and prolonged impact...

Poor rains in April and May 1999 have not only resulted in the failure of *belg* crops but affected the production of long cycle crops (maize and sorghum) in all parts of the country. In a normal year a portion of these crops are available for early consumption in September and October. The failure of the *belg* rains have

also impacted negatively on the production of lean season food items, (such as potato and cabbage, in Gondar, and green maize, haricot bean and barley in Tigray) normally used to augment food supply during August to October.)

In some areas, farmers have faced difficulties planting their *meher* crops due to the limited availability of seeds and a lack of plough animals which were decimated by the drought or sold in order to cope with it. Rather unusually, farmers in some *belg*-dependent areas of northeast Amhara planted barley for harvest in November/December, but excess rains in mid-August coupled with hail and frost has affected the condition of the crop and a favourable harvest is now unlikely.

Pest control problems...

In the coffee producing weredas of East Hararghe, below normal coffee production is expected due to Coffee Berry Disease (CBD). Meanwhile, in parts of Amhara region, Oromiya and Afar National Regional State the production of sorghum is threatened by localised infestations of the black beetle pest "Sorghum Chafer" (*Pachnoda interrupta*). First observed 3 years ago in Afar region, the pest which originally fed on cotton is now attacking sorghum fields in the lowlands of Afar and Oromiya with reported sightings indicating its movement to highland farms of North Shewa and South Welo. The beetle, which has so far not responded to any pesticide, is reported to have destroyed over 1,000 hectares of sorghum in two months and infested up to 25,000 hectares. FAO has reported that Ethiopian researchers are currently working on ways to effectively control the pest. No serious outbreaks of animal disease was reported in this period except blackleg in Tenta Wereda of Welo, Amhara Region and Trypanosomiasis in some weredas of Jimma zone. The poor condition of sheep and goats in the Somali region has also reportedly led to high levels of parasite infestation and increased mortality.

Weather Assessment

In the first dekad of September a decrease in rainfall amount was observed over most parts of northern half of the country as compared with previous dekads. Even so, Tigray, some parts of Amhara and the northern tip of Benishangul Gumuz region received estimated rainfall ranging from 60–150 mm. Most parts of Afar, Gambella, Benishangul Gumuz, some areas of Amhara, northern Somali, Oromiya, and northern parts of SNNPR received below normal rainfall with weather stations reporting cumulative figures ranging from 7–30 mm.

In the second and third dekads of September, normal *kiremt* rains fell over western Tigray, much of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, western Oromiya, Gambella, central Ethiopia, SNNPR, eastern Oromiya, Arsi, Harari and Dire Dawa and the northern highlands of Somali. Normal *kiremt* rains were also recorded for Borena and the southern lowlands of Somali. Heavy falls ranging from 30-50 mm in one day were recorded in Ayira, Shambu, Gimbi, Humera, Alge, Shire and Gonder, in western and north-western Ethiopia, giving rise to fears of local flooding in low-lying areas and water logging in areas where the soil type is clay.

The normal to above normal rainfall in the second and third dekad has favoured the further development of main season *meher* crops as well as the late sown short-cycle crops and crops to be sown in October like chickpea and lentils. The start of apparently normal rainfall activity over Borena, Bale and the lowlands of Somali is also likely to improve the overall availability of pasture and drinking water. On the other hand, heavy rainfall in parts of Wellega and SNNPR resulted in localised crop damage. Though in general most *meher* growing areas received normal to above normal rainfall during September, the National Meteorological Services Agency reports that South Tigray and Eastern Hararghe have continued to receive below normal rainfall.

The continuation of the main *kiremt* rains into October, with heavy rains reported from some *meher* growing highland areas, concerns are being raised over the possible negative impact on production if the season extends too long. Even late planted crops are now nearing maturity and dry, sunny weather becomes critical during the last few weeks prior to harvesting in November/December.

Last Quarter 1999 Relief Needs Updated

On October 15, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission released a special early warning report that announced a significant increase in the numbers of people requiring relief food assistance, up from the previous figure of 5.3 million to nearly 7 million. The new figures are the result of several rapid assessments conducted since July in the Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya, SNNPR and Somali regions. The assessments, conducted jointly by the DPPC and donor representatives or by the federal DPPC working closely with the regional relief bureaus, were undertaken in response to reports from these regions suggesting a deteriorating food security situation. Areas where significant increases were identified include parts of Tigray, North Welo, North and South Gondar, Borena, Arsi, Shewa, Guraghe, and the Somali region. In the case of most highland areas, the increased numbers were largely ascribed to the failure of the *belg* rains and the subsequent late planting of this year's *meher* crop. The switch to short-cycle varieties was also identified as a factor as was the loss of livestock and other assets. In the mainly pastoral Borena Zone, the food supply situation has deteriorated due to the failure of both the 1998 small rains and this year's main season (March-May). In many areas, surface water sources have dried-up and grazing has been exhausted leading to poor livestock condition and widespread death of calves, milking cows and weak animals. Avoidance of a major crisis now depends on the performance of the current small rains. In the Somali region, this year's main rains (March – May) were regarded as poor and the worst in the last three years.

According to the DPPC report, food relief needs are expected to remain high until at least the end of 1999, while a considerable proportion of the current population in need will continue to require assistance through the year 2000. Faced with rising food needs in a number of regions, the Government has been scaling up relief operations since September. While peaking at just under 7 million, the number of needy people is expected to decline during the last quarter of the year as the main season harvest commences. Table I gives the breakdown. The total food requirement for this three month period is estimated at 274,023 MT, but with total resources already available for the period, including undelivered food by WFP from development to emergency operations, of approximately 200,000 MT, the actual deficit requiring an urgent donor response is just over 74,000 MT. Of the total number of beneficiaries for the last quarter, just under a million are believed to be children under the age of five years. For these, there is an additional requirement for supplementary food amounting to 4,400 MT.

Table I: Needy Population and Food Relief Requirement, October – December 1999

Region	Monthly Beneficiary Numbers			Food Requirement
	October	November	December	
Tigray ¹	998,429	980,308	514,996	37,287 MT
Amhara	2,763,583	2,736,495	1,808,709	109,958 MT
Oromiya	1,524,239	1,523,885	1,167,526	63,121 MT
Somali	837,100	837,100	837,100	37,674 MT
Afar ¹	158,578	29,278	29,278	3,257 MT
SNNPR	645,292	645,292	204,390	20,964 MT
Others ²	57,681	57,681	1,981	1,762 MT
Totals	6,984,902	6,810,039	4,563,980	274,023 MT

Source: DPPC (15/10/99)

Notes

¹ Includes war-affected idps

² Harari, Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa (idps)

2000 Relief Needs Appeal

In a letter to major donors, the Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission has indicated its decision to launch the 2000 relief needs appeal several weeks later than the normal release date of mid-December. This is to enable a comprehensive assessment of both *meher* crop and pastoral production ahead of the main appeal which is expected to be launched before the end of January 2000.

In order to avoid delays in the mobilisation of food aid resources that might otherwise result from this change in scheduling and to ensure immediate food assistance requirements are met, the DPPC is currently preparing a bridging appeal to be issued to donors by mid-November. Based on an analysis of current and projected needs, this document is expected to highlight low carry-over stocks into 2000 and a substantial rollover of needs into at least the first quarter of the new year.

Food Aid and Logistics

Of the total 414,803 MT of relief cereals and pulses pledged by donors during the year to date, 66,994 MT (16%), had been delivered as at October 12, 1999. This does not accurately reflect the actual food availability picture, however, as there has been heavy borrowing from the Emergency Food Security Reserve during the year (see below). As of October 12, confirmed donor pledges amounted to 414,803 MT, more than 90 percent of the requirement until the most recent increase in needs for the last quarter. The WFP requirement for war-displaced civilians from April-December of 49,572 MT, however, remains seriously under-resourced with an urgent need for additional donor contributions amounting to 16,206 MT.

Table II: Status of pledges against 1999 Food Aid Requirements - Cereals & Pulses
(Covering the Period, January 1 to October 12, 1999)

1999 Pledges	Relief (MT)	Regular (MT)	Monetisation (MT)	EFSR (MT)	TOTAL (MT)
USA	128,110	28,613	44,500	-	201,223
EC	94,629	-	-	50,000	144,629
WFP	137,471	87,918	-	-	225,389
GOE	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Italy	-	-	13,173	-	13,173
France	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
Netherlands	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
UK	9,000	-	-	-	9,000
Norway	4,143	850	-	-	4,993
Canada	2,400	3,145	-	-	5,545
Denmark	9,050	2,750	-	-	11,800
Total	414,803	123,276	67,673	50,000	655,752
Deliveries as of 12/10/99	66,994	70,233	34,673	-	171,900

Source: WFP (12/10/99)

Port operations/logistics

With more than 300,000 MT of food aid scheduled to arrive during the final quarter of 1999, serious concerns have again arisen regarding the possibility of serious congestion at the port of Djibouti. The sudden increase in the volume of imports (the expected arrival of 40,000 MT of fertiliser is an additional complication) comes after a relatively quiet period during August and September. With the almost simultaneous arrival of several large consignments in early October, WFP reported the early signs of problems at the port, with delays of 4-5 days in berthing of vessels as well as delays in vessel offloading due to concurrent deliveries of food aid, commercial and general cargo. The insistence of some consignees on direct delivery (vessel to truck) rather than partial storage of commodities appears to also be a factor in delaying the discharge of some vessels.

Through improved coordination, careful scheduling of arrivals and efficient use of available trucking and warehouse capacity, it is hoped that any significant backlog of cargo will be avoided. To handle the expected

incoming shipments, however, port operations have to function at maximum efficiency; any significant disruption at the port will almost certainly result in the delayed delivery of food aid consignments to warehouses and distribution points upcountry.

Local Purchases.

During the current year, the European Union and Euron-Aid had tendered locally for the purchase of 94,000 MT of grains destined for the Emergency Food Security Reserve as a contribution to increase the size of the reserve to its mid-term target of 307,000 MT and as repayments for previous loans. Out of the total purchase amount, 59,000 MT was tendered by the European Union and 35,000 MT by Euron-Aid. Out of these quantities, 42,304 MT has been so far supplied on contracts issued by the European Union and 23,5000 MT from Euron-Aid, bringing total deliveries to from local purchases to 65,804 MT.

Ethiopia Food Security Reserve Update

As of October 4, physical stocks held by the Emergency Food Security Reserve was 82,022 MT, a figure which included the balance of agreed loans (52,745 MT) still under withdrawal. During the third quarter of 1999, DPPC, NGOs and WFP made considerable use of the EFSR, taking out loans of wheat and sorghum amounting to a total of 112,649 MT. Due to high levels of loan provisions in the past nine months and relatively low levels of repayments, uncommitted stocks held in reserve have remained close to or below the minimum level. Even with substantial repayments scheduled to arrive during the fourth quarter, given the continued high level of demand for loans, the physical holdings of the reserve are expected to remain very low.

In an effort to build up its storage capacity, the EFSRA is currently constructing 17 warehouses with a total capacity of 79,500 MT. Nine warehouses are to be located in Woreta (South Gondar Zone) with a total capacity of 38,300 MT and eight warehouses are being completed in Wolayita Sodo (North Omo Zone) with a total capacity of 41,200 MT. The new warehouse locations will increase the number of EFSR strategic site locations to seven. With this added storage space EFSR's total warehouse capacity will be 291,500 MT.

Refugees and Returnees

Some 4,000 Kenyan refugees (mainly Somali-speaking Digodians) from camps around the southern Ethiopian town of Moyale are to repatriated back home soon, according to a new released issued by UNHCR in Nairobi. The refugees, who have been in Ethiopia since May 1993, will travel back to their home areas in Isiolo, Wajir and Mandera districts of northern and northeastern Kenya. UNHCR report the first voluntary repatriation of some 600 refugees to Isiolo town and neighbouring areas is scheduled for October 27. Most of the refugees were victims of drought, cattle-rustling and banditry as well as ethnic clashes which ravaged parts of Kenya's Rift Valley Province in recent years.

Refugee Statistics as at 31 August 1999

West (Sudanese)

Bonga		13,140
Fugnido	29,965	
Dimma		8,464
Shirkole		16,411
Sub-total		67,980

South (Kenyans/Somalis)

Moyale		4,780
Dolo*		8,000
Sub-total		12,780

East (Somalis)

Hartisheik (A & B)	29,535
Aisha	15,283
Kebribeyah	11,622
Teferiber	30,444
Derwenaji	27,017
Camaboker	28,590
Rabasso	16,811
Daror	33,950
Sub-total	193,252

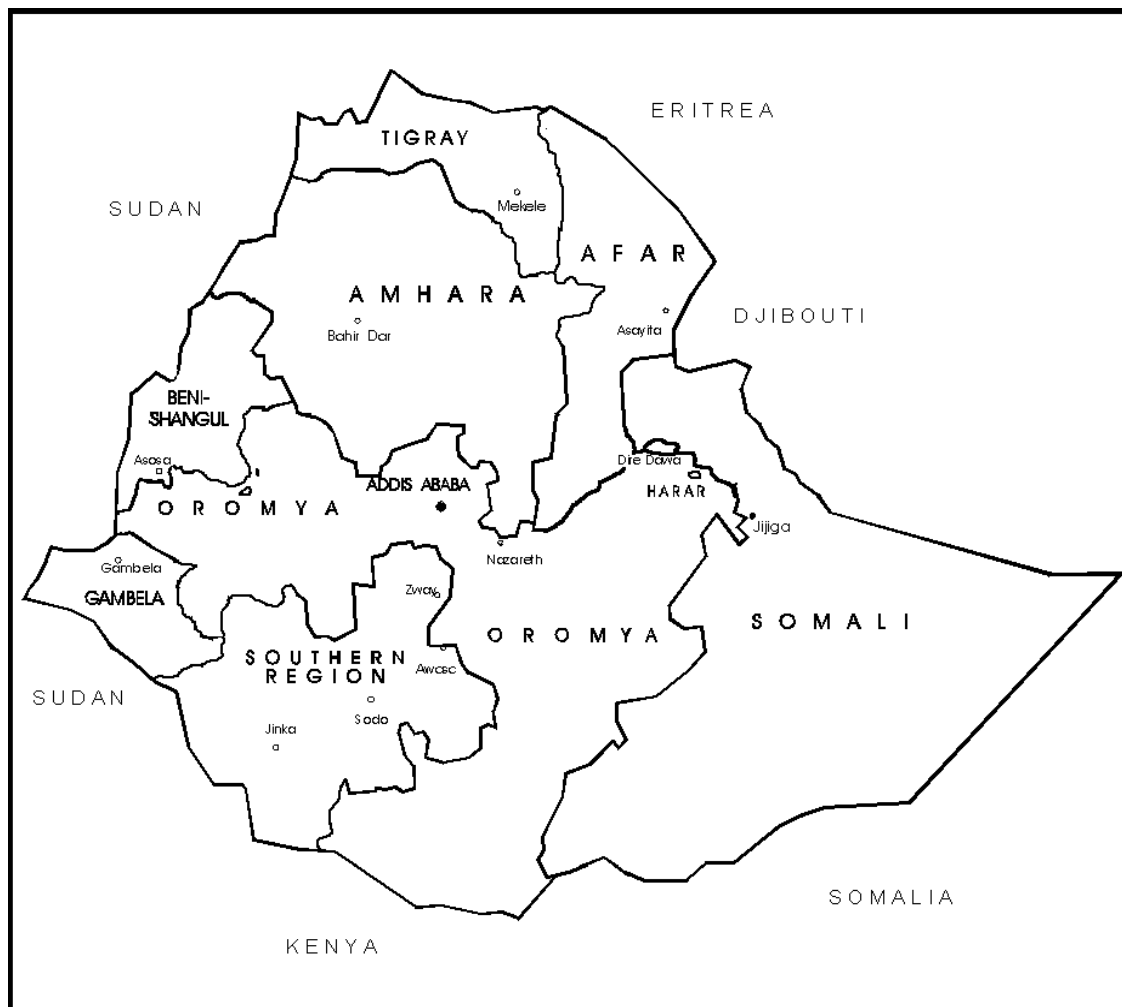
Addis Ababa (various) 470

Afar (Djiboutians) 1,099

GRAND TOTAL 275,581

*Not a formally recognised refugee settlement

Administrative Map of Ethiopia



SOURCES:

UN; Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC); FEWS-EC Food security Bulletin; National Meteorological Services Agency (NMSA); EFSRA Newsletter; UNHCR; WFP FAO; Also media sources: The Ethiopian Herald; AFP; Walta Information Centre; ENA.

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