

HIGHLIGHTS

Food Pipeline

Looking Precarious

There may be a global break in the pipeline after February. For March, less than 40% of cereal requirements are covered.

Findings Point Towards Potential for Recovery from Drought

A window is open for a potentially good recovery from the drought; however, the situation in many pocket areas and the lowlands is still thought to be very fragile. Large numbers of people remain extremely food insecure, yet current analysis indicate that the number of people requiring food assistance is expected to reduce in the coming year.

Status of Livestock in Somali Region and Borena

Rainfall has replenished the water table and made new pastures available. Camels and goats have withstood the drought better than cattle and sheep.

Non-Food Review in Bale and Borena

A joint DPPC, UNICEF, WHO and UN-EUE mission assesses the shortcomings of ongoing interventions, fills information gaps focusing on the non-food sector.

Focus on Tigray

International and national NGOs work together for relief and recovery in war affected border areas.



22 December 2000

NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Ethiopia and Eritrea Sign Agreement to End Two Year Border Conflict

Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a comprehensive peace agreement on 12 December, ending the two-year border conflict that claimed 100,000 lives and displaced more than 600,000 people in both countries. The agreement establishes commissions to mark the 620-mile line across a largely uninhabited semi-desert area based on the colonial treaties of 1900, 1902 and 1908, and addresses the exchange of prisoners, return of displaced people and hearing of claims for compensation for war damages. The signing was attended by different diplomats including UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Kofi Annan, at the ceremony, described the signing of the peace agreement as a great lesson not only for the Horn of Africa but also for all of Africa to show that "wars can end, people can cooperate for a better future, and governments can join forces with the international community to work for lasting development and peace". Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki expressed their commitment to the implementation of the agreement.

Land and Air Routes Opened

UNMEE has opened three land routes through the borders separating the forces of Eritrea and Ethiopia, and ensured frontline access in all three areas of the mission following the call on 21 November by the UN Security Council for this and other "confidence building measures". Subsequently, UNMEE opened air access routes on 18 December in each of the three mission areas, and helicopters have for the first time flown across the frontlines between the two countries.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, in a briefing to the Security Council highlighted the agreement between the two parties to open the first land access route on 28 November as a positive development. Annan also informed the council of the first meeting of UNMEE's Military Coordination Commission (MCC), established in accordance with the Ethio-Eritrean cessation of hostilities agreement, signed in Algiers in June. The MCC meeting was held in Nairobi, Kenya on 2 December, and was chaired by the force commander of UNMEE, Major General Patrick Cammaert. It was opened with statements from Ambassador Legwaila J. Legwaila, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, representatives of Eritrean and Ethiopian military delegations as well as the OAU representative to the MCC, Brigadier General Peter Augustive Blay, who was appointed by the OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim on 23 November. At the meeting both parties agreed to improve freedom of movement for UNMEE personnel specifically to open two additional land routes. They also agreed to provide information on known and suspected mine fields, as well as on a formula for the redeployment and rearrangement of forces

Netherlands Approve Contributions To UN Agencies for IDPs

The Netherlands Embassy confirmed a contribution of US\$ 4.9 to support the non-food component of the August UN Country Team appeal for IDPs. US\$ 1.7 million of this funding will be channeled through FAO for agriculture and livestock activities to support the rehabilitation and recovery of the IDPs, while US\$ 3 million will be contributed to UNICEF for health and nutrition programs, water and sanitation activities and special protection for women and children. Additionally, UNAIDs will receive US\$115,000 for awareness and prevention and OCHA US\$25,000 for monitoring and reporting.

on both sides. Both parties have further agreed to provide notification of live fire exercises and troop rotations to UNMEE.

More peacekeepers will soon be arriving in the mission area, and by early new year UNMEE's force will build to its Security Council authorized-strength of 4,200 troops. This includes the 200 military observers.

World Bank Confirms Loans to Ethiopia

The World Bank board of directors approved on 5 December 2000 two credits totaling US\$ 400.6 million to assist the Government of Ethiopia with its post-war recovery program. The program includes the demobilization and reintegration of 150,000 veterans of the conflict with Eritrea, emergency humanitarian needs and rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure, as well as stabilizing the economy. Out of the total proposed program, a US\$ 170.6 million credit will be used to reduce war-induced poverty by freeing up additional national resources for investment in social and economic sectors, thereby expediting economic recovery. The demobilization project will also address the special needs of disabled veterans and include transitional subsistence support for reinsertion of ex-soldiers into communities and economic reintegration. A US\$ 230 million credit for a emergency recovery project will address the immediate needs of an estimated 620,000 war-affected people and help the country restart its economy through: the rehabilitation of households and community infrastructure; HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support; support for demining activities; and reconstruction. The Humanitarian Mine Action component a budget of US\$ 30 million.

Norway and WHO to Restore Health Programs in War Affected Areas

World Health Organization and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation have signed a 3 million birr (an estimated US\$ 361,881) agreement towards the implementation of health system rehabilitation initiative in war affected areas in northern Tigray and Afar regions. The programme is intended to assist Regional Health Bureaux in the reestablishment of 300,000 internally displaced persons to their places of origin and resume their economic activity. An estimated thirty per cent of these are now reported by the government to be in the process of re-establishing their presence in their places of origin.

WFP Extends Operation to Assist IDPs to June 2001

WFP has been assisting Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Tigray Region since April 1999 under EMOP 6080 and subsequently, EMOP 6080.01. Recent indications of donor interest suggest that there will be sufficient resources to extend the operation to end June 2001 and a Budget Revision is being processed to reflect this. With average monthly distributions of approximately 5,000 mt, this will bring the total requirements under EMOP 6080.01 to over 75,000 mt, covering the period April 2000 to June 2001.

Working with the Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and the DPPC, food aid was originally provided to 272,000 beneficiaries. In mid 2000, this figure was increased by 15,500 to take into account newly displaced in Western Tigray, resulting from the renewal of hostilities in May 2000. Provision has also been made to support Ethiopians who have returned from Eritrea, most of whom have remained in Tigray Region. Discussions are taking place with government partners to develop modalities of distribution to this group. At this stage, it is difficult to quantify the numbers requiring assistance and while it was originally expected to be as high as 65,000 people, WFP has decreased this to 35,000.

FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment

Mission Report Due by End December

A FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission took place in Ethiopia from 14 November to 8 December 2000. The Mission assessed the 2000 main season crops and estimated production and food supply for the main season harvest and coming short season (*belg*). The mission consulted with national authorities and other relevant agencies to collect information, and took field trips to crop producing areas in every region of the country. The six field teams consisted of agriculturalists, agronomists and nutritionists. For the first time the annual assessment also comprehensively covered the lowland pastoral areas in Ethiopia and included a rapid aerial survey of livestock numbers. Final conclusions are expected to be available in a Crop Food Supply Assessment Report by the end of December 2000.

Meeting on Emergency Agriculture and Livestock Relief and Rehabilitation Needs

A tripartite consultative meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO and donor community was held on December 11, 2000 in Addis Ababa on the upcoming years' emergency agriculture and livestock relief and rehabilitation needs of drought and conflict affected areas of the country. Some 40 participants from FAO, MOA, UN agencies and donor community participated.

The objectives of the meeting were to create awareness and to attain a common perception among stakeholders on the need for specific agricultural recovery and rehabilitation interventions in the aftermath of drought and man made conflict. In addition, donors were briefed on the upcoming season's sectoral relief requirements and encouraged to respond to the emergency agriculture and livestock relief needs.

During the meeting, the low response by the donor community to the non-food components was highlighted and the need to meet post-emergency relief and recovery requirements, which will be the main challenge of the year 2001, was stressed. It was also noted that although the drought threat is vanishing and a better *meher* harvest is expected, a certain portion of drought-affected farmers (*belg* dependent farmers and low land pastoralists) are still in emergency situations and face complex recovery problems. Similarly, the conflict affected Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in northern Ethiopia who lost their household assets need to be supported with seeds, tools, oxen and relevant inputs.

In this regard, the FAO Emergency Coordination Office introduced to the donor community their proposed sectoral interventions contained in 12 agricultural and four livestock project profiles. The projects upon implementation would address the minimum and most urgent needs for up to 550,000 disaster-affected farmers, help to re-capitalize household assets, resume previous agricultural activities and production and finally contribute towards the exit from continuous food aid dependency. Those projects will be included in the January 2001 UN Consolidated Appeal and would be implemented during the coming year, provided that the estimated amount of up to US\$ 21 million is pledged by the donor community in a timely manner.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

UNICEF Reviews the Landmine Awareness Programme

In the last year, Rehabilitation and Development Organization's (RaDO) landmine awareness programme (LMA) had an important impact on displaced populations through the recognition of the dangers of mines. Cases were reported of people keeping mines in homes, even using them as work implements and among children, as objects of curiosity. These attitudes have changed in the target areas. Civilian casualties increased in the period immediately following the cessation of hostilities agreement, as people were moving into areas in some cases announced or understood as being "demined". With the movement of IDPs back to their villages, the LMA strategy has changed. The project is now placing greater emphasis on schools, with extensive use of drama, poetry and discussion groups. A radio programme, which gives up-to-date information and discusses mine related issues, is broadcast once a week on Saturday, together with poetry and songs of the school programme. RaDO and UNICEF have recently prepared the project's first "Tigray Mine and UXO Victim Report". The report will be issued monthly and can be obtained through either RaDO or UNICEF. This first issue includes a summary of the total number of

recorded victims since the beginning of the year (149), an outline of the number of victims by month and an analysis of the most vulnerable groups.

Joint UNICEF/WFP Mission visits Fafan IDP Communities

The Fafan settlements (four on the Babile side of the Fafan river and four on the Jijiga side) receive assistance from the Society of International Missionaries, which has a food aid distribution programme in the Fafan valley, and by the Mother and Child Development Organization (MCDO), a Jijiga-based NGO, which runs a mobile clinic. MCDO also runs a therapeutic feeding centre with 150 children and a supplementary feeding centre with 380 children, an additional 280 children receive dry take-home rations on a weekly basis. The objective was to better understand the situation in that area and specifically of children, as the SIM and MCDO are planning to phase out from the area. They found that the condition of children has improved substantially and the number of IDPs has been reduced. Follow up meetings are taking place in Jijiga to discuss the return of IDPs, to their areas of origin.

UNICEF Polio Vaccination Campaign in Gode Targets 68,000

The UNICEF supported polio vaccination campaign targeting over 68,000 children under five was completed in Gode zone on 3 December 2000. The campaign, which included a large effort in terms of social mobilization included new videos and songs broadcast on local stations, and covered Gode zone in 13 days on a house to house basis. NGOs working in the area, namely Oxfam GB, CCM, OWDA, OWS, Guardian, Ethiopian Red Cross, World Vision, and SC-USA, provided technical and logistic support. Health workers also carried vaccines by camel, donkey or walked long distances to reach remote locations. In most districts the campaign had over 100 percent coverage with more children being vaccinated than originally targeted.

Denan Children Suffer from Lack of Milk

MSF Belgium briefed the UN/NGOs Nutrition taskforce on the results of a qualitative study conducted in Denan. The study aimed at collecting information for a better understanding of the malnutrition problem and the way it is perceived by IDPs and residents in Denan. The results indicate that loss of livestock, lack of shelter and of food are the main problems people are facing in addition to the lack of a balanced diet that contains the "vitamins" found in dairy products. It is perceived that children suffer most from the lack of milk and butter and they therefore become weak and get easily sick. Most people are agro-pastoralist and in normal times have a mixed diet that includes animal products and grains. Lactating mothers and infants/small children have access to fresh milk, butter, porridge and sugar and are fed up to four meals a day. If a child is malnourished or sick, she will receive extra care and milk. Interviewees reported that if the wheat distributed through the food rations is only boiled with no oil, it is difficult to digest especially for the elderly and children. The PREMIX distributed by the supplementary feeding programme is shared by all family members. Malnutrition is only perceived and acknowledged at an advanced stage when children have evident signs of weakness, have big bellies, do not play and have difficulties sleeping.

RELIEF FOOD AND PLEDGES

In-country stocks

The Emergency Food Security Reserve's (EFSR) uncommitted stocks as at 18 December were 178,676 MT with a further 35,418 MT under withdrawal. This brings the total physical stock of the EFSR by the end of the year to 214,094 MT. As of 18 December, outstanding loans to the EFSR totaled 183,630 MT.

From January to end November 2000, EFSR borrowings amounted to 558,453 MT. This clearly demonstrates the importance of the EFSR mechanism.

EFSR borrowings 2000 - breakdown per debtor (MT)	
WFP	280,168*
EU	228,073
USAID	25,000
DFID	21,698
CIDA/CFGB	3,263
Germany/MKC	251
Total	558,453

* Result of recent borrowings made at the request of DPPC

Pipeline

Next year's monthly requirements have not yet been accurately determined, pending the outcome of the needs assessment exercise. The current pipeline is based upon mid-case scenarios for all groups (pastoralists, belg-dependent and meher-dependent). The requirements will be updated as soon as the assessment results are ready.

On the basis of current calculations, there will be a break in the food pipeline after February. For March, less than 40% of the cereal requirements are covered. Before end March 2001, WFP expects to receive approx. 111,000 MT cereals, however close to 90,000 MT will be reimbursements to the EFSR stocks. There will also be a pipeline break for other commodities - e.g. there are no forthcoming contributions for blended food.

The newly approved WFP budget revision for the drought relief operation of 76,518 MT provides a funding channel for the first quarter of 2001.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Good Potential for Recovery from Drought

Recent reports from NGOs, Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) and UN field officers indicate the strong possibility of a good main season harvest due to an improvement in the rainfall pattern. FEWS reported that "continued rainfall beyond the normal end of the season has promoted near normal crop performance in some locations, the benefits of the rainfall in supporting late planted crops far out weighed the disadvantages. Rainfall in the pastoral areas has improved pasture conditions, and while there are some patchy areas of dryness, conditions in the pastoral region are good."

This opens a window for a potentially good recovery from the drought; however, the situation in many pocket areas and the lowlands is still thought to be very fragile. Although there should be a grain surplus in some central, western and north western cropping areas, there will likely be a deficit in others. Even though overall national production may come close to balancing requirements this coming year, current projections indicate that there will still be several million people without sufficient purchasing power or access to food in 2001 and significant food and emergency agriculture assistance will still be needed. However, while confirming that "large numbers of people remain extremely food insecure, particularly in the eastern half of the country, from Tigray Region in the north to Somali Region in the south, FEWS reports "that preliminary findings from the various teams involved in the national food needs assessment indicate that

Continued High Levels of Food Assistance Needed in Ethiopia

The annual Government led Emergency Needs Assessment was carried between 12 November and mid December 2000. This involved 22 teams (comprising DPPC, WFP and other UN Agencies, NGOs and Donors) visiting 61 out of 67 zones in the country and a high proportion of the food deficit *weredas*.

Preliminary observations suggest that populations affected by several years of cumulative drought, consequent crop failure, extensive livestock death and failure of coping mechanisms due to asset depletion over time have not regained self-sufficiency. Even with satisfactory cereal production in country, household destitution due to adverse conditions over extended periods of time has dramatically decreased access to markets. Food aid requirements will remain high in 2001, as the food security situation will remain precarious for vulnerable populations for the foreseeable future.

The groups that require food assistance are: Pastoral populations in the northeast, south and south east of the country. Belg-dependent populations some of whom experienced their fourth consecutive failure of crop production this year. The next potential *belg* harvest begins in June 2001. Meher-dependent populations because of late *meher* rains in pocket areas some farmers experienced failure of crops during flowering and grain filling stages. IDPs as the result of man made and natural causes in north and southeast.

the number of people requiring food aid assistance is expected to reduce in the coming year." Many *belg* dependent areas in Ethiopia suffering from consecutive failure during the past three years will not have the potential for a harvest until June 2001 and therefore, will need assistance until that time. If there is again a failure of the next *belg*, those areas will also require support after June.

Due to improved overall national production, local purchase of commodities may be a viable option for donors in the coming year. To meet food aid needs in 2001, the European Union has already pledged 110,000 MT of cereals through NGOs and according to market availability would envisage purchasing a portion of this locally.

The failure of the rains during the flowering of coffee plants in February and March 2000 and the spread of Coffee Berry Disease had a damaging effect on the coffee crop with production from both plantation and peasant farmers reduced by 20% to 50% over the past two to three years. This will affect national income, as coffee comprises 80% of Ethiopia's agricultural export earnings.

Field reports indicate grain market prices are lower this year than the same time last year. Prices are currently 50% lower for maize, which is a good indication of a well-supplied market. The teff price is not much lower as a result of the late harvest and threshing and the traditional gradual release of supplies to the market. The normally low sorghum price has also not declined yet also as a result of the expected late harvest. Cereal prices are dropping and are attributed to better than expected production and farmers' selling their stocks.

Additionally, there seems to be a consensus that there is a long period needed for drought-affected pastoralists to recover, though conditions are currently good for livestock breeding. The rains in October and November 2000 helped to replenish water sources and grazing is now good. While livestock are in reasonable condition in most places in the pastoral areas, the drought has caused heavy losses especially among cattle. Although the situation is encouraging, it is still estimated that it will take three to five years for herd sizes to recover.

Pastoralists will also be affected by the renewed import ban imposed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on livestock from the Horn of Africa. While this may also affect the long-standing livestock trade with other Gulf States, the Saudi restriction could have far-reaching implications on the economic situation for the Ethiopian Somali Region. Some of the immediate effects of the current ban include: decrease in the purchasing power of pastoralists, increase in prices of commodities in the local markets with negative consequences on domestic trade, cattle is sold for the same price as sheep, unavailability of veterinary drugs & supply in local markets leading to deteriorating situation in livestock health with a resultant effect of reduced food security in the region. Following successive seasons of drought, pastoralists are much less resilient to the economic impact of the export ban than they were in 1998. This ban is likely to remain in place for quite some time and therefore affect the live animal export trade for an unknown period of time. Action is needed to improve animal disease surveillance and health certification in the pastoral areas of Ethiopia.

Status of Livestock in Somali Region and Borena

A FAO national consultant, visited Somali National Regional State and Borena zone of Oromiya National Regional State from 27 November to 1 December 2000 to assess the effects of the drought on livestock and give interpretations of the present status.

The peak of livestock mortality at the end of May has now passed, due to the improvement in the livestock feed, rain and water situation. The usual mortality associated with the onset of the rains was observed in all localities of Somali Region affected by the drought. Though the main season *Gu* rain was short, rainfall was heavy enough to rebuild the water table and make new pasture available. The short *deyr* season rains, usually seen in October and November, have also fallen in most parts of the region. Pastures in Somali Region currently available should be sufficient to support livestock for the coming months and herders are not expected to face major problems. In Borena, the districts of Dirre and Moyale received less rain compared to the others but distribution of rainfall improved during the short rainy season in Liben, Arero, Yabello and some parts of Teltele.

Camels and goats have withstood the adverse conditions better than cattle and sheep, which suffered from severe losses as a result of the drought. The Somali Region Bureau of Agriculture estimates livestock mortality due to the drought between November 1999 and May 2000 in Somali Region, although difficult to confirm at some 41% of the total population of cattle, 5% of the total population of sheep and goats, and 8% out of the total population of camels. The Liben Zone Agricultural Development Office estimates that livestock mortality due to the drought for all livestock in Borena Zone since August 1999 is some 15%.

Livestock numbers have now stabilized and body conditions are recovering in most of the areas in Borena, though still poor in Moyale, Dirre and Teltele. Livestock, which conceived will not give birth and resume producing milk before January. The market price for livestock, which plummeted during the drought, is now steadily improving.

Non-Food Review-Bale and Borena

A joint DPPC, UNICEF, WHO and UN-Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia mission took place from 3 to 10 December 2000 to verify and understand opportunities and shortcomings of current and planned interventions in the non-food sectors. Below are findings in the areas of logistics and infrastructure, health education and training, and HIV/AIDS although the mission also addressed essential medicals supplies, disease surveillance, nutrition, reproductive health education and special protection. For the full mission report contact the UN Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UN-EUE).

Results from the mission indicate that general logistics and infrastructure in place in these areas lack basic standards. In the lowland pastoralist areas, health infrastructures are unevenly distributed and often in many areas there are still no health facilities whatsoever in place. In other areas, buildings are in place, but are not functional because basic medical installations, drugs and personnel are unavailable. Often there is only one hospital for one administrative zone. Furthermore, telecommunication is difficult or non-existent, roads are bad and at times lowland pastoral areas are completely cut off from the rest of their zone or region. The mission recommends that in the short run, more health workers be assigned to understaffed health posts/stations in the lowlands and the feasibility of mobile health teams for pastoral lowland areas be studied. One of the strategies being discussed is the establishment of health facilities around common water points in pastoral areas. The mission also recommends that communication facilities be upgraded to facilitate disease surveillance and epidemic control.

The general policy in the health sector concerning education and training is to train as many health workers as possible in the shortest time possible, because it is felt that the general lack of health personnel is one of the biggest constraints that hamper the development of the health sector in Ethiopia. This leaves poorly prepared junior health workers to run clinics by themselves. This also does not help the problem of the lack of senior health personnel all over the country. To counteract this, the mission recommends incentive schemes for health workers being assigned in lowland areas, such as hardship allowances in a way to make those working places more attractive to properly qualified health professionals.

With the exception of some awareness campaigns, much remains to be done concerning the fight against the AIDS epidemic in rural Ethiopia especially at zonal and other lower administrative levels. On a positive note, a Regional AIDS Council is being established in Oromiya and the establishment of Zonal HIV/AIDS Secretariat is also being discussed, and in Bale Zone the Zonal Health Department organised awareness raising events on this year's World AIDS day. There are only two HIV/AIDS testing centres, one in Bale and one in Borena Zone. There is no trained counselor in Borena Zone, while in Bale Zone there are only two. Added to the erratic supply of test kits, this makes voluntary testing and counseling a difficult task. In both zones school AIDS clubs exist, yet for more effective campaigning they lack educational equipment and IEC materials. There is a general feeling that these school AIDS clubs are an effective mobilisation strategy. Additionally, demobilised soldiers are now coming back to their homes. It is well known that the Army Medical Command had conducted intensive HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, however, it is difficult to judge the effect of demobilisation on the epidemic. Additionally, there are still not many NGOs active in HIV/AIDS campaigning.

The mission recommends that multisectoral HIV/AIDS committees be established immediately at all administrative levels, as the guidelines being prepared at federal and regional level will take some time to be published and distributed. Every NGO should have at least one programme or project component focused on HIV/AIDS activities. As the health sector with its government institutions will serve as the major resource centre for most humanitarian and development organisations dealing with HIV/AIDS, its capacity will have to be strengthened significantly through training and capacity building activities and measures. To improve the capacity for testing, HIV/AIDS counsellors should be trained and HIV/AIDS testing kits made more regularly available at the national level.

Help Age International Supports the Elderly

Help Age International (HAI) is a global network of 63 not-for-profit organisations with a mission to work with and for disadvantaged older people worldwide to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives. They have over 20 years of experience working with elderly in emergencies and currently has interventions in Mozambique, Croatia, Northern Iraq and India.

HAI has been working in Ethiopia since 1992, where over 4.2 million people over 55, representing nearly 7% of the total population are found. They are mainly involved in supporting local NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs), and working with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to carry out advocacy and practical programmes to address the needs of older persons. HAI also supports government eye care services for the elders. They are currently working with over 25 NGOs, CBOs and government partners throughout the country.

So far, the main activity has been advocacy activities, however, a relief interventions together with ZOA is being carried out for IDPs in Dessie and two interventions have been planned, pending funding, for supplementary feeding for older persons in Werder, Somali region and Borena.

Recently, a workshop was organised in Addis Ababa from 22 to 24 November, 2000 for heads of agencies and nutritionists. Country coordinators and programme managers participated on the first day of the workshop, focusing on policy issues in Ethiopia and an overview of nutritional issues related to older people in emergencies.

The workshop was a first step in beginning to collate recent experiences, to documenting lessons learnt so far and to begin to further develop a strategy to better address the nutritional needs of older people. Mechanisms that could further contribute and facilitate this learning process were also identified. The workshop focused on practical case studies from different agencies, plenary and working group discussions as well as presentations of recent research and preliminary recommendations.

For further information contact HelpAge International by email: hai@telecom.net.et or Tel: 251-1-611580.

FOCUS ON TIGRAY

Overview

Tigray, the northernmost region in Ethiopia, covers some 80,000 square km with mountains reaching to 3500 meters sloping down to dry lowlands in the west and northwest. Most of the population in Tigray is concentrated in the highlands.

There is a chronic problem of malnutrition and a great concern for food security in the region as Tigray suffers from chronic drought, poor access to adequate food, land degradation, low soil fertility and crop pest infestation. Food production and supply varies throughout the region. Parts of western and southern Tigray normally produce surplus crops, while eastern and central parts are food deficit. As with many other regions, Tigray experienced localized drought across the region in 1998, and failure of the belg rains in 1999 and in 2000.

In January 2000, the Ethiopian government estimated that more than 300,000 people were displaced from the conflict area in the northern regions of Tigray. Most were integrated into host communities, but where local populations were not able to bear the burden of hosting large numbers of displaced, people were settled in camp-like settlements, makeshift shelters and caves.

The signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement changed the situation for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Ethiopia significantly. For the IDPs in Tigray Region, there was now an opportunity to move back to their places of origin and resume their economic activities. Most people who were displaced however lost all of their possessions and in order to make their return viable, they needed assistance in practically all sectors.

The most critical obstacle to safe return and resumption of normal life is the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) along the border area. Many villages, roads, pathways and hectares of farmland were planted with landmines or exposed to UXOs, and many people returning to their homes or farmland have already been injured or killed. The Government has already undertaken demining operations in the conflict zones and an Emergency



Landmines/UXO Survey, funded by the British Government (DFID), was initiated to respond to the current mine threat. This survey, conducted by the Ethiopia Demining Project together with The HALO Trust, identifies existing landmine fields and records this information according to UN/international standards.

The health, water and education infrastructure in the conflict zone was destroyed or damaged during the war, and needs replacement or rehabilitation. In addition, the regional, zonal, wereda (district), and local administrations need assistance to re-establish social services within the areas of return. Such assistance includes provision of medicine and vaccination supplies, equipment, educational materials, and training of staff within the respective line departments. In areas of return, agricultural and livestock support is needed to help people resume their economic activities so that they are eventually not dependent upon relief food.

REST Aims To Improve Food Security

The Relief Society of Tigray (REST), a local NGO, is carrying out large-scale relief operations in Tigray covering over 75% percent of the region. REST has 26 distribution centers and a storage capacity of over 59,000 MT. Their primary goal over the next five years is improved food security at the household level, to be achieved through five strategic objectives: increased and diversified farm and off farm household income sources, improved health and nutritional status, increased productivity of the agricultural sector while protecting natural resources, reducing the effects of disasters and to expand women's opportunities. A cornerstone of REST's approach is to use community participation and empowerment to allow the people to be involved in their own development process.

REST estimates the total food needs for the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) for 2001 at 62,650 MT. Currently, REST in coordination with WFP, is providing food assistance to the (IDPs) in Tigray and in November, REST/WFP distributed over 5,300 MT of wheat, lentils, vegetable oil and blended food to a total of some 287,501 beneficiaries. They also assisted through the provision of non-food items including blankets, plastic sheets, clothes and household utensils.

REST is also involved with utilizing food aid as a tool for development by linking food distribution to community work. They target the poorest and most drought-affected with the aim of using 80% of the relief food received from this food-for-recovery or employment generation schemes program (EGS) and 20% for free-distribution to the most vulnerable who are unable to participate. In 2000, REST received approximately 70,000 MT of food from various donors for this purpose, with most of the food resources used for the implementation of EGS activities such as terracing, reforestation and road construction. REST's EGS approach assists in mitigating and stabilizing the effects of severe drought on household food security, while at the same time building public assets and ensuring the continuation of farmers' productivity. The provision of agricultural inputs on a credit basis to drought and resource poor farmers is also used to assist the recovery process and strengthen agricultural productivity.

Another priority for REST is the strengthening of Early Warning Systems. Together with the community, the DPPC, and other concerned partners, REST is focusing on coping mechanisms, market analysis, food supply status, population mobility, nutritional data and other relevant indicators to develop an effective early warning information network.

REST also has launched a reunification program for children who were originally staying in IDP shelter areas with their families but were unable to stay due to

poverty and uncomfortable life situations. Together with the Zonal staff from the Bureau of Social and Labour Affairs, and with financial support from SCF-Sweden, REST conducted the tracing of these families.

WFP Assistance to Natural Disaster in Tigray

The total cereal requirements for Tigray Region for year 2000 are 125,000 MT. There is a strong NGO presence in Tigray, and 73,000 MT or 58% of the requirements have been channeled through various NGOs. WFP has contributed some 20,000 MT through DPPC.

In September 2000, WFP and DPPC entered into a tripartite agreement with World Vision Ethiopia in support of female-headed households in Eastern Tigray. Through this agreement, WFP donated 750 MT of wheat and 45 MT CSB to a project aimed at improving women's living conditions. The objective is to increase female-headed households' participation in food for work and employment generation schemes, and to provide supplementary food and day care to children in female-headed households. WVE is working in two weredas in Eastern Tigray: Atsbi- Wemberta and Saese Tsaeda Emba. The beneficiaries are approximately 5,000 women and their 15,000 children.

ICRC Supports Mine Awareness

ICRC is working in Tigray including the former conflict zones.

A major concern for ICRC is mine awareness. They are working with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) in Tigray Region on a mine awareness program as ERCS has a network of 1400 volunteers that could be mobilized for mine awareness initiatives. To support this program, ICRC has appointed a mine awareness specialist.

Additionally, ICRC assists the Prosthetics Orthotics Centre (POC) in Mekele by reimbursing the centre for all costs relating to the finding of prosthesis and patient transport, food and accommodation and also provides medical supplies and training to four health posts. To facilitate their health activities, ICRC has appointed a Prothesist.

The ICRC delegates with the assistance of volunteers from both Eritrean and Ethiopian Red Cross have been supporting the safe passage of repatriated persons between both countries. The safe passage has been across the Mereb river near Rama.

RaDO Implements Rehabilitation and Mine Awareness Projects

The Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RaDO) is a national humanitarian NGO established in 1997 to work in physical rehabilitation with the aim of preventing disability and rehabilitating the disabled in different hospitals throughout the country. RaDO strives to improve the quality of life of the population in target areas by increasing access to basic services and facilities, and integrating rehabilitation services with development programs. Currently, RaDO's projects include the establishment of physiotherapy and orthopedic facilities in thirteen hospitals throughout the country, the provision of physical rehabilitation services for the Somali and Sudanese refugees and mine risk awareness education program (supported by UNICEF) in the Northern parts of Ethiopia.

As a response to the danger posed by landmines in northern Ethiopia, RaDO is currently running two projects in Tigray in collaboration with Handicap International. The first is for the establishment of a physical rehabilitation unit, in

which a physiotherapy unit and an orthopaedic workshop was constructed in Maychew and Axum hospitals. The project has different components including the training of nurses for the physiotherapy unit and general technicians for the orthopaedic workshop, and the provision of equipment such as machinery and consumable material. The physiotherapy and orthopaedic units from each hospital treat 20 patients on average per month. Now that the 18-month founding process is finalized the hospitals are self-sustaining while RaDO has limited their assistance to quarterly supervision and follow up.

The second RaDO project involves the implementation of a "Mine Risk Awareness Education" program in Tigray Regional State in collaboration with UNICEF. The program began with a regional workshop in October 1999 in Mekele and spread to other weredas identified as highly mined (Gulomekeda and Erob weredas in the eastern and Tahtai Adiabo, Laelay Adiabo and Kefta Humera weredas in western, and Ahferom and Merebleke weredas in the central zones). More than 50,000 people have attended the mine awareness sessions intensively, while short-term sensitization sessions were given for around 30,000 people in eastern and central zones as of October 2000. The programs were designed so that participants would later share information with their communities. In addition, RaDO has organized a community-based task force consisting of local administration, community leaders, youth, women, farmers and teachers who raise awareness on *wereda* and zonal levels.

Oxfam GB Assisting 150,000 IDPs

Oxfam GB is a British charity working to relieve poverty and suffering in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern America and Eastern Europe. It was one of the first foreign humanitarian agencies to work in Ethiopia. Since the 1960's Oxfam has been involved in ,emergency, rehabilitation and development activities to support the efforts of the poor in Ethiopia, improve their quality of life and be self-reliant.

Oxfam has been working in Tigray since the early 90's on different relief and development interventions in partnership with REST. Since the end of the civil war, Oxfam has concentrated on funding REST's integrated agricultural development program, which is being implemented in ten districts of central Tigray.

In 1995, Oxfam started the first phase of its *wereda* level food security program, in Kola Temben, in the central zone where, jointly with Novib, it is providing funding support to an integrated agricultural development project in 12 *tabias* in the *wereda*. The current second phase of the project was commenced in 1998, and will continue until April 2001. The project has benefited 12,000 -13,000 households.

Until last February Oxfam GB was also assisting the Tigray Integrated Food Security Project, a one year project covering six districts. The project is implemented by REST using EU food and financial resources channeled through a consortium of four international NGOs including Oxfam GB.

Currently, Oxfam UK has a project focusing on internally displaced persons (IDPs) implemented in collaboration with REST. The project has two phases. The first phase from July to August 1999, focused on assisting 150,000 beneficiaries (IDPs) all along the Ethio-Eritrea border. This phase had the objective of providing shelter materials, access to water, sanitation facilities and hygiene education for 119, 000 IDPs in eastern and central part of Tigray. The second phase of the project from November to December, 2000 has included the distribution of blankets, plastic sheets and clothes for children, benefiting up to

31,000 IDPs in western Tigray particularly Kafta humera and Tahtay Adi Abo *wereda*.

CISP Provides Non-food Assistance

Currently, CISP, under a grant from the Netherlands and in close partnership with REST, is undertaking emergency activities for the IDPs in Tigray including eastern, central and western parts. The fund was granted in July 2000 and activities are to end in March 2001. The bulk of relief activities have already been completed while others are under implementation (shallow wells and kitchen utensils).

As part of this program, non-food items already distributed amount to 9,000 individual plastic sheets, 4,000 blankets, 8,000 jerry cans, 8,000 jugs and 220 family size tents. These items were distributed very timely before the rainy season. This program also includes a pledge of 1,500 mosquito nets.

The family kitchen utensil sets containing a plastic bucket, cooking vats, ladle, tray and water cups are currently being distributed in eastern and central Tigray and are expected to be fully distributed by end December. Total sets to be distributed amount to 486 sets in eastern, 162 sets in central and 162 sets in western Tigray benefiting a total of 810 households, approximately 4,050 people. Additionally, wells are being constructed in the areas with a higher concentration of IDPs.

As part of CISP's emergency rural water supply program, CISP will construct a total of 13 wells, six for the eastern zone and seven for the central zone.

Survey Team Obtains Accurate Information on Mine Situation

The HALO Trust is an international, humanitarian mine clearance NGO based in the United Kingdom. Founded in 1988, The HALO Trust was not only the first mine clearance organization in the world, but is currently the largest. The HALO Trust conducts mine clearance operations in Cambodia, Afghanistan, Georgia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kosovo, Angola, Mozambique, Somaliland and Eritrea.

783 km of trenches on the Ethiopian side between the Sudanese and Djibouti borders were closely surveyed by the Ethiopian Demining Program and a team composed of two members of The HALO Trust. The team was tasked by UNDP to conduct a detailed survey of the mined areas along the Ethiopia/Eritrea border, south of the proposed UN Temporary Security Zone, from September to December 2000. Traveling in a specially rigged Land Rover, the team spent the entire time living in the open, and over the three month operation were able to obtain an accurate picture of the mine situation along the border and its possible impact on returning IDPs. It is hoped that much of the information gathered will soon go towards assisting the safer deployment of UNMEE peacekeeping troops. Based on the results of the survey, The HALO Trust is hoping to obtain the permission of the Ethiopian Government to establish a mine clearance program in Tigray Province in 2001, in order to help alleviate the suffering of returning IDPs to the region.