

HIGHLIGHTS

[Year 2000 Crop and Pastoral Area Food Needs Assessment Commences](#)

The first of 22 teams departed for the field in early November.

[FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission](#)

The annual mission to assess the 2000 *meher* crops and estimate production and food need requirements for 2000/2001 began on 14 November.

[No Active Transmission of Rift Valley Fever in Ethiopia](#)

A team of experts from the Ministries of Health and Agriculture announced that the Rift Valley Fever disease is not present in the country.

[Refugees](#)

Up to 6,000 Somali Refugees have returned home and the voluntary repatriation of Ethiopian refugees from Sudan and Kenyan refugees from Moyale has begun.

[Humanitarian Mine Action](#)

A donor briefing focusing on the current status of mine action programs was held to provide a brief overview of humanitarian mine related programs underway in Ethiopia or planned for the near future.

[Crop Pests](#)

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is reporting that crops, pasture and bush under attack by sorghum chafer are estimated at 92,294 hectares. Control operations are also underway to manage red-billed quelea bird attacks.



23 November 2000

NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Government Issues Appeal for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) issued an appeal on 14 November for "Relief Assistance Requirements for Internally Displaced People and Deportees". The new DPPC appeal requests a total of 112.6 million birr (approximately US\$ 13.6 million) for non-food emergency assistance and a total of 113,561 MT of food aid. See feature article [Government Appeal for the Internally Displaced Persons](#).

Ethio-Eritrea Peace Talks

A second meeting aimed at turning June's Cessation of Hostilities agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea into a comprehensive peace accord held in Algiers in late October ended without significant progress on the issues of compensation and delimitation of the border. The Ethiopian and Eritrean Foreign Ministers attended the seven-day meeting, which was held under the auspicious of the OAU and hosted by the government of Algeria. The USA as well as the UN and the EU attended the meeting. Following this latest meeting, mediators from Algeria and the USA began a round of shuttle diplomacy between Asmara and Addis Ababa to continue the peace process.

The 2nd African Development Forum to Focus on HIV/AIDS

The 2nd African Development Forum (ADF 2000) will be held from 3 to 7 December 2000 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Addis Ababa. This year's Forum focuses on bringing leaders together from all levels and sectors of society to establish an African led agenda on an issue of paramount importance across the continent: "AIDS – the Greatest Leadership Challenge". The Forum is designed to serve as a starting point for new levels of commitment and joint action against HIV/AIDS by those who hold positions of leadership and influence in Africa. The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, heads of states, heads of UN agencies, inter governmental organizations, regional economic communities, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and civil society organizations will attend the Forum.

UN Country Team in Ethiopia to Issue Humanitarian Strategy Paper

As part of the worldwide UN Consolidated Appeal Process, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Ethiopia will issue a humanitarian Strategy Paper on 28/29 November 2000 outlining the UN's plans and priorities for interventions in 2001. The document will act as a precursor to a detailed UNCT appeal planned for January 2001.

UNMEE Promises to Direct All Resources to Peace Process

UNMEE Special Representative of the Secretary General, Legweila Joseph Legweila, held a press conference in Addis Ababa on 15 November. At the press conference, he promised "to direct all of UNMEE's resources and capabilities towards keeping the peace process on track, making it stronger and more

DPPC Receives Award from ISDR

The UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) awarded a Certificate of Distinction to the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission on 11 October 2000 for their efforts in addressing the root causes of disasters and communities' vulnerability to disasters. Also acknowledged was the government's innovative approach with the introduction of small-scale irrigation programmes at the national level, the distribution of improved drought-seed varieties and the establishment of soil and water conservation programmes.

UN Mine Action Mission Visits Ethiopia

An inter-agency mission on Humanitarian Mine Action composed of representatives from UNDP (Emergency Response Division), United Nations Mine Action Services (UNMAS), UNICEF and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) visited Ethiopia between 6 and 11 November to discuss various aspects of mine action in Ethiopia and explore the scope for UN support in the immediate future.

salient". He also expressed his strong hope for the success of the mission and said he was optimistic as long as meetings and discussions between the two countries continue. He added that since the cessation of hostilities has held so far, it augurs well for the peace process. Legweila has also gone to Asmara to continue the discussions.

It was also announced by UNMEE officials that Major General Patrick Cammaert, who was appointed as a Force Commander on 4 November, had traveled extensively in both countries to familiarize himself with conditions in the mission area.

Meanwhile, UNMEE has completed the second phase of its operation, with more than 130 observers deployed in forward positions between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The third phase of the mission's deployment was launched this month with more than 140 peacekeeping troops. The military observers and peacekeepers in the mission are from Asia, Africa, Europe, and North and South America. These military personnel will monitor the cessation of hostilities and the temporary security zone.

Update on Humanitarian Mine Action

A meeting that focused on the current status of land mine programs was organized by the UNCT on 30 October 2000. Representatives from different UN agencies, international organizations and NGOs participated and briefly described their ongoing activities in response to the threat posed by landmines/UXO. Humanitarian mine action covers surveys, marking, demining (including quality assurance), mine and ordnance disposal, mine awareness and the various aspects of victims assistance. The objective of the meeting was to provide a brief overview of some of the humanitarian mine related programs currently underway or planned for the near future. For the copy of the Key Points of the Briefing please access the EUE website at www.telecom.net.et/~undp-eue.

Mine Awareness Training in Tigray

In collaboration with UNICEF, the Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RaDO), a local NGO, is undertaking a "Mine Risk Awareness Education" program in Tigray Regional State. According to an assessment undertaken by RaDO, at the beginning of the project, Tahtai wereda in western, Gulomekeda and Erob weredas in the eastern and Ahferom and Merebleke weredas in the central zones of Tigray were identified as highly mine-contaminated and thus priorities were given to them. The number of people who attended the mine awareness sessions up to September 2000 was 32,729. The program, in addition to the trainings, uses promotional materials such as posters, leaflets, banners and T-shirts to raise awareness on mine risk. A weekly radio program is also transmitted on a popular local radio station.

Year 2000 Crop and Pastoral Area Food Needs Assessment Commences

The first of 22 teams taking part in the annual government-led Year 2000 Crop and Pastoral Area Food Needs Assessment left Addis Ababa for the field in early November. These assessments are organized by the Early Warning Department of the DPPC with participants from government line departments, UN agencies, NGOs and the donor community. The objectives of the assessment are 1) evaluate the likely outcome of the main season (*meher*) crop and its impact on food security, 2) evaluate livestock, other sources of income and food security situation in the pastoral areas, 3) evaluate the extent to which households cope with food shortage problems and 4) identify areas where relief assistance might be needed in 2001 and estimate the population needing relief assistance and the duration of assistance. The teams will travel by roads and air

Ministry of Health Takes Precautions to Prevent Ebola Outbreak

To prevent the spread of Ebola from the Gulu district in Uganda to Ethiopia, the Ministry of Health's Disease Control, Hygiene and Quarantine Department said that health officials were monitoring travelers from Uganda aboard Ethiopian Airlines flights and at border crossing points.

to different regions and cover all zones and special *weredas* throughout Ethiopia, briefing regional and zonal government officials, and will then undertake more detailed assessment in most affected *weredas* in their assigned areas. Teams will collect production data, interview households, groups or individuals, undertake field observations and form conclusions together with local officials. This year's assessment will use a methodology that incorporate slight modifications and improvements designed to better identify needs. Most assessment reports are expected to be submitted to the Early Warning Department in late December forming the basis for the annual Ethiopia relief appeal to be launched by the DPPC in mid January.

Experts Believe No Active Transmission of Rift Valley Fever in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Herald newspaper reported that following extensive studies by a team of experts from the ministries of health and agriculture undertaken in various regions throughout Ethiopia, the team announced that there is no evidence of the transmission of Rift Valley Fever in the country. Normally active transmission of RVF takes place during abnormal wet seasons, like La Niña in 1997/98. According to the report, the fact that the countries in the Horn of Africa have experienced drought over the past few years would support to ascertain that there is no active transmission of RVF at present in Ethiopia.

Experts have identified that the Saudi strain is closely related to the strain present in the Horn of Africa in 1997/98. The fact that the outbreak in Saudi and Yemen has a multi-focal origin, points in the direction that RVF was introduced earlier, probably in 1997/98. It is known that infected eggs of certain mosquito species could survive a number of dry seasons in dried mud. They would hatch at the same time when weather conditions are favorable.

Although on the decrease, there are still reports of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in both humans and livestock in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It is therefore unlikely that Saudi Arabia will lift the ban on live animal imports from East Africa anytime in the near future. Saudi Arabia has lifted the ban on live animal import from the Sudan.

Somali Refugees Leave Ethiopia

Up to 6,000 Somali Refugees were repatriated to the self-proclaimed Somaliland Republic from the Dir Wanaje refugee camp in southeastern Ethiopia at the end of October.

Movement of Refugees from Sudan

Ethiopian refugees from Sudan will begin the process of voluntary repatriation on 24 November 2000. An Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) team of 15 protection officers has just returned from Khartoum, Sudan where they began the screening process. 12,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan have voluntarily registered to return home and according to UNHCR are expected to return home before the end of this year.

Kenyan Refugees Repatriating from Moyale

A first attempt was made in 1999 to repatriate Kenyan refugees from Moyale in Ethiopia, but was unsuccessful due to poor security. On 10 November these refugees once again began a voluntary repatriation process. Currently, out of a total caseload of 5,400 refugees, 1,666 have left Ethiopia for Wagir, Manderra, and Isiolo in Kenya. UNHCR plans to repatriate the entire group of refugees by end December 2000.

President Calls for Collaboration on HIV/AIDS

President Negaso Gidada has called for joint effort to mobilize the entire population in the fight against the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Speaking at the Second Assembly of the National HIV/AIDS Prevention Council, which he chairs, held, he also emphasized that "breaking the silence" on the disease would help bring a notable change of attitude on the spread of the virus. According to an estimate made by health officials, at least three million among Ethiopian's population of 62 million are believed to be infected by the HIV virus.

"Change Agents Review" Workshop in Borana Organized by SOS Sahel

SOS Sahel organized a four-day workshop from 17 to 20 October designed to bring together key relief and development actors from government, NGO's and bilateral institutions active in Borana. The objectives of the workshop were to both create a forum for debating relief and rehabilitation initiatives and to also act as precursor to joint planning. The agenda focused on early warning systems and linking relief to development, and concluded with the compilation of the next steps that should be taken. A follow-up report will be issued in mid December and will be available from SOS Sahel.

UN Task Force Issues Plan to Reduce Food Insecurity in the Horn

In April at the request of UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) was commissioned to investigate food shortages in the Horn of Africa. The report states, "It is unacceptable, at the beginning of the 21st century, that people should die of starvation". The Director-General of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, Jacques Diouf, HLTF, recommended that a new UN task force led by the World Bank should be created to mobilize resources. According to the recommendations of HLTF, The UN should aim to improve agricultural production, protect the most vulnerable and put into action political and economic reforms. Each country in the Greater Horn of Africa needs to prepare a program by mid-2001 aimed at elimination of famine and chronic hunger. The program should include large investment projects as well as small community-based programs. The focus should be on strengthening early warning systems, establishing strategic grain reserves, moving quickly from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development, and helping the elderly, handicapped and orphans through food-for-work or cash programs. Longer-term initiatives should center on improving technology and access to markets, credit, and water for poor small-scale farmers. In drier areas, drought resistant crops should be promoted. After the country programs are adopted the HLTF recommends that a regional conference should be held so that governments could commit and donors could pledge their support.

UNAIDS calls for Collaborative Effort to Fight HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is rapidly becoming the greatest challenge to development of the century. Out of the 34.3 million people living with the virus worldwide, two thirds are in Sub-Saharan Africa where many countries are affected by conflict and natural disaster. In response to the growing concern of the spread of the epidemic, UNAIDS has requested that the HIV/AIDS issue be urgently placed at the top of all agencies agendas. Furthermore, it has organized a mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea in collaboration with UNFPA and UNMEE as a response to the Security Council Resolution (1308), that underline the link between the spread of HIV/AIDS and its being strongly exacerbated by the conflict and its consequences. The mission aims at assessing the HIV transmission risk factors in conflict situations and amongst uniformed services including the peacekeepers through gathering information and experience available from all possible sources. During the mission's visit it met the group of consultants who are updating the national strategic framework and plan, to discuss its objective. It is hoped that updated framework and plan will incorporate the suggested appropriate preventive interventions for both conflict and immediate post conflict situations. A final report is expected from the mission by the beginning of December 2000.

Annual FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission

A FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission plans to visit Ethiopia from 14 November to 8 December 2000. The Mission will assess the 2000 *meher* crops and estimate production and food need requirements for 2000/2001, including import requirements. The mission will consult with national authorities and other relevant agencies to collect information. Following their consultations six teams will depart on field trips to crop producing areas. The mission will conclude by debriefing government officials, donor representatives and international agencies on their findings and recommendations.

AGRICULTURE SITUATION AND WEATHER REPORT

Unseasonable Rainfall in Cropping Areas

The rain during the month of October has favored late-planted crops especially in the eastern parts of the country. As reported by the National Meteorological Service Agency (NMSA) at a workshop held on 12 October 2000, the western part of the country has received 25 to 28 days of rain per month during the months of June, July August and September 2000. Generally, the *Kiremt* rainfall receiving areas have received normal to above normal rainfall except eastern and southern parts of the country.

According to NMSA forecast, the coming *Bega* (dry) season 2000/2001 will continue to remain under the influence of La Niña from October to December and would be close to normal in the month of January. Occasional rainfall is expected during the *Bega* season (November and December), which would have negative impact on crops ready for harvest.

Impact of the Rains in the Pastoral Areas (excerpt from FEWS 10 Nov. Report)

For the pastoral areas of southern and southeastern regions, including most of the Somali Region, Borena Zone of Oromiya Region and South Omo Zone of the SNNPR, the rains began on time but weakened toward the end of October 2000. The continuation of these rains through November is extremely important to sustain the livelihoods of the pastoralists, as these short rains recharge water sources and replenish pasture. The analysis of daily satellite pictures of weather systems indicates that, while normal seasonal weather systems have retreated, there are successive waves of cold fronts passing over the country from the northwest. These events may yield rainfall over the pastoral areas.

Low Sales of Fertilizer

The fertilizer demand forecast for 2000, including a 20 percent buffer stock, was 422,000 MT with a sales target of 337,600 MT. However, the National Fertilizer Industry Agency report that the total fertilizer stock available in the country for the year 2000 was 393,000 MT and of this, total sales during the year (*belg* and *meher* seasons) was 290,017 MT (192,493 of DAP and 98,524 of Urea) or 85.9 percent of the sales target. Overall, fertilizer consumption in the year 2000 is almost equivalent to that of 1999, which was 290,264 MT. A decrease in sales of fertilizer in 2000 compared to 1999 was observed in Oromia and Southern Nations Nationalities People's (SNNP) regions. The problems associated with low sales of fertilizer compared with the sales target were mainly due to an increase in retail prices as a result of the depreciation of the Birr and an increase in internal transport costs.

Fertilizer demand forecast for year 2001, including a 25 percent buffer stock, is 460,000 MT. (293,000 MT of DAP and 167,000 MT of Urea). With the carry over stock of 103,000 MT from the year 2000, import requirement for the year 2001 would be 357,000 MT.

RELIEF FOOD AND PLEDGES

In-country stocks

Uncommitted stocks in the Emergency Food Security Reserve's (EFSR) as at 17 November were 137,984 MT with a further 87,684 MT under withdrawal. This brings the total physical stock of the EFSR to 225,668 MT. Outstanding loans amount to 171,059 MT.

Stock at hand by location

Kombolcha	36,455 MT
Mekelle	16,322 MT
Nazereth	48,434 MT
Shashemene	25,389MT
W-Sodo	11,404 MT
Sub-total	137,948 MT
Under withdrawal	87,684 MT

Pipeline

Since January 2000, Ethiopia has received a total of 1,231,233 MT of food aid of which about 76% arrived through Djibouti port, 7% through Berbera port, 17% was purchased locally and 0.3% was delivered by air. The majority of food aid (80%) is for relief operations, the rest being divided for regular development programs, refugee programs, monetization programs and EFSR repayments.

Amounts by Recipient

WFP	500,263 MT	39%*
DPPC	246,866 MT	21%
NGOs	463,352 MT	35%
EFSR	36,286 MT	3%
EGTE	19,507 MT	2%
TOTAL	1,266,274 MT	100%

* of which 349,165 MT or 68% was consigned to DPPC

EMOP 6218 Relief Food Assistance to Victims of Natural Disaster:

An agreement was reached with the Ministry of Agriculture and DPPC to use 33,000 MT of relief food aid under EMOP 6218 for Employment Generation Schemes (EGS) in 33 chronically vulnerable woredas in 4 regions of the country.

A budget revision for emergency operation (EMOP) 6218 has been prepared and sent to WFP HQ. This budget revision will give WFP Ethiopia a funding channel for the first quarter of 2001. A new EMOP will be prepared following the government appeal expected to be released in January 2001.

Internally Displaced due to Border Conflict (Tigray/Afar Regions)

The WFP Country Office is awaiting final approval of the budget revision submitted for EMOP 6080.01 to increase the tonnage by 12,020 MT, for 352,500 beneficiaries and to extend the duration until the end of January 2001.

The Country Office is currently preparing a new EMOP proposal for assistance to conflict affected persons for next year (February - December 2001). The caseload for this EMOP is projected to be 322,500 persons, down slightly from that outlined in the budget revision, as people are able to return home and gradually able to become more self-sufficient.

The WFP mission left for Tigray on 15 November to gather information on where the deportees from Eritrea have returned to, and to verify the number of IDPs who returned to their place of origin.

UNICEF/WFP mission to South Omo Zone, SNNPR

A joint UNICEF/WFP team traveled to South Omo in order to review the present drought situation. Of major concern to the mission was a rumored of an anthrax

outbreak, reported to have cost both animal and human lives. The nutritional status of women and children was observed to be satisfactory. Apparently, traditional coping mechanisms, including the feeding of children with milk and cattle blood, prevented widespread severe malnutrition. The distribution of food rations has also improved compared to six months ago, as communities have been receiving food from different sources. However, extremely low Extended Programme of Immunization (EPI) coverage (6-8%) and charges for health services that affects the poorer rural groups, represent major challenges in improving overall health. Implementation of UNICEF-supported emergency activities was found to be constrained in some areas: the recent measles/vitamin a campaign still needs to achieve an additional 20.7% coverage, and some water activities are behind schedule. The participants in the mission concluded that South Omo would remain fragile in terms of availability of food until there is a return to regular rainfall patterns.

EPI Integration in Kebridehar Hospital, Somali Region

A UNICEF public health consultant reviewing the Maternal Child Health (MCH) unit in Kebridehar hospital, found that EPI activities were not integrated, and a lack of documentation of activity reports as well as documentation on drug stocks. UNICEF public health consultant worked together with the hospital's management in integrating EPI with MCH services, provided training on keeping inventory of stocks, and developed a format for recording MCH activities on a daily and weekly basis.

Health and Nutrition Situation in Hargele (Afder zone)

UNICEF public health staff currently based in Hargele noted that although the health and nutrition situation in Afder zone is better than in Gode zone earlier this year, no international organizations and very few NGOs had thus far intervened in the area. The new hospital building in Hargele is neither equipped, nor staffed, nor has a permanent water supply.

UNICEF's Water Development Activities in Borena Zone

In October the UNICEF WES consultant for Bale, Borana and South Omo visited several locations in the lowland areas of Borana for hydrological assessment and geophysical investigation for recommending drilling sites and to provide technical support for activities that have already started. A total of 10 wells, out of the 20 planned in the area for the communities and the schools, are being drilled by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus with UNICEF support. Two have been completed in Galana Abya and one in Yabello *wereda*, however, of the three-drilled wells, two are dry. Given the characteristics of the area – erratic rain and prevalence of basement rock - it has been necessary to select optional sites to replace those where water is not found. At some sites, the process of hydro-geological and geophysical investigation and drilling has had to be repeated several times before productive wells are constructed. The consultant also observed that due to recent favourable rains in Yabello, Teltelle, parts of Dire, Arero and Moyale, many ponds and birkas (lined ponds) are now filled with water, and both the water availability and the pasture conditions have improved.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Government Appeal for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The Government, in collaboration with the World Bank, is currently organizing a longer-term reconstruction and rehabilitation programme for IDPs and deportees. As this program will take up to two years, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) issued an appeal on 14 November for "Relief Assistance Requirements for Internally Displaced People and Deportees", so that

relief assistance is ensured for the victims until they can be self supporting, and to encourage them to return to their villages to participate in the rehabilitation programme. The relief package includes food, shelter material, clothing, health services, household utensils, educational material and transport expenses to return the victims to their own villages. The breakdown of the requirements for the estimated 396,901 beneficiaries through the end of 2002 is as follows:

Summary of Emergency Assistance Requirements

Description	In Kind	Estimate in US\$*
Food Aid		
Cereals	96,158 MT	-
Pulses	7,692 MT	-
Oil	3,846 MT	-
Salt	962 MT	-
Famix	4,903 MT	-
Non-Food		-
Food Aid Total	113,561 MT	-
Non-Food		
Shelter		
Family size tents	16,116 pcs	3,027,488
Plastic sheets	3,437 rolls	728,972
Total Shelter		3,756,460
Clothing		4,329,179
Health services		2,215,953
Education Assistance		1,620,410
Household Utensils		741,910
Transportaion costs		989,191
Non-Food Total		13,653,103

* Estimate is using an 8.251 exchange rate, the current UN exchange rate at the time of publication of the Humanitarian Update.

The above calculations consider a change in beneficiary numbers from the first to the second year. The appeal states that "for the first year of the rehabilitation program, 100% of the displaced (363,901) would need relief food assistance, while in the second year only 40% (145,560) will continue to seek similar assistance. This assumes that 60% of the beneficiaries will be assisted to be self-supporting at the end of the first year".

Sorghum Chafer and Quelea Birds: Principal Pests this Year

Armyworm, desert locust and quelea birds are a major threat to crops in the country. Unless closely monitored and controlled on time, thousands of hectares of crops and pastures could be damaged. Since 1993, sorghum chafer has also become chronic problem in Ethiopia. The current status of these major pests situation in the country is shown below.

Armyworm

Historically, the primary outbreak of armyworm originates in Tanzania sometime in December. Successive generations of adult moths move northwards with the prevailing winds arriving in the southern part of Ethiopia in April or May. According to a Desert Locust Control Organisation for East Africa (DLCO-EA) report and information received from the Crop Production and Protection Department and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), there has not been an outbreak of armyworm reported in Tanzania, Kenya or Ethiopia yet this year.

Locust

Ethiopia is currently free of desert locusts.

Quelea Birds

Quelea birds (*Quelea quelea L.*) in roosts and colonies were first identified in the southern part of the country in the special weredas of Konso, Derashe and Arbaminch wereda in the Southern Nations Nationalities People's Region (SNNP) and Teltele wereda in Borena Zone of Oromia region. The quelea birds move in large flocks, even up to a million birds, causing great damage to sorghum, teff, wheat, barley, and millet crops. Each quelea bird eats between three and four grams a day and can cause the loss of another six grams that falls on the ground while eating.



Quelea Bird
(*Quelea quelea L.*)

According to a report received from DLCO-EA, in the middle of July 2000 some 248 hectares teff, sorghum barley and other crops of quelea infestation were treated by a DLCO-EA aircraft in Konso special wereda with 496 liters of pesticides. It is estimated that 90 - 98 percent of the birds were killed. This report also noted that towards the end of July, quelea roosts were controlled over seven sites in Konso, Derashe and Arbaminch weredas. Additionally, in October 2000, a DLCO-EA aircraft controlled some 16.7 million red-billed quelea birds over 475 hectares of roosts and colonies in Gebile, Hora, Wonji and Sire Robi with 1,175 liters of pesticides resulting in some 75 - 98 percent killed. At the end of October 2000, approximately 8 million quelea birds over four roosting sites around Debine, Bombas, Bisidimo and Farem in the eastern parts of the country using 280 liters were controlled. Then, in early November 2000, 2.6 million quelea birds around Umerkule and Fedis were controlled using 60 liters. A control operation is currently under way in North Shewa Zone in Amhara region. The pattern of migration from Southern Rift Valley areas to Northern Rift Valley areas is seen as typical.

Sorghum Chafer

The sorghum chafer, *Pachnoda interrupta*, lays its eggs on the ground where hatching larvae consume cattle dung and decaying organic matter. After pupating in the soil, dark brown to black beetles with red and yellow spots emerge and consume the developing grain of sorghum and millet at the milky stage.



Sorghum Chafer
(*Pachnoda interrupta*)

The first outbreak of the pest in Ethiopia was in 1993. Since then, a number of field surveys have been made by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in collaboration with the Ethiopian Research Organization and Agriculture Bureaus of Amhara and Afar regions. In spite of all the efforts made thus far, the life cycle of the pest is not clearly understood and no effective control measures have been found. In recent years, the problem has intensified and new areas have been invaded by the pest. Sorghum chafer has now become a chronic problem for farmers especially in the eastern part of Amhara, Oromia and Afar regions.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) reports that crops, pasture and bush currently under attack are estimated at 92,294 hectares, while the control operations have covered 49,328 hectares using chemicals and 13,844 hectares using traditional methods.

A Workshop entitled "Development of Monitoring and Control Strategy for Sorghum Chafer" organized by the MOA was held from 28 February to 2 March 2000 in Addis Ababa to share the experiences of other countries on control measures for Sorghum Chafer and to suggest priority areas for further research work to come up with sustainable control strategies against the pest. Two

resource persons from Israel and crop protection experts from the Federal Government and Regional Bureau of Agriculture were among the participants at the workshop. FAO contributed by funding part of the workshop.

FOCUS ON KONSO

Overview

Since 1996/97 Konso Special Wereda, located in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) about 600 km south of Addis Ababa, has faced severe food insecurity due to unfavorable climatic conditions. Erratic rain, crop pests, human and animal diseases have been the main contributing factors to the crisis. Historically, Konso has suffered repeated episodes of drought and famine, and was devastated by the droughts in 1973/74 and 1983/84. Konso, a *belg* dependent area, has more recently experienced five consecutive poor to totally failed harvests. Despite the failure of the *belg* harvest this year. The coordinated efforts of various governmental and non governmental organizations in Konso have made a significant contribution to stabilizing the situation.



The terrain in Konso ranges from 500m to 2500m. The landscape is characterized by terracing and the network of intersecting valleys that support a range of different crops and vegetation. Konso is classified as being in a semi-arid ecological zone with erratic rainfall and poor soil fertility despite the traditional soil and water conservation measures practiced there. The climate is notorious for its long dry spells punctuated by unreliable and poor quality rains occurring predominantly during March, April and May. Due to the shortage of land, most Konso farmers continuously cultivate their land resulting in a steady decline of soil infertility.

The failure of the last *belg* harvest has had a devastating effect on sorghum crops. In June 2000, the harvest from the primary planting of sorghum failed in the majority of areas. The secondary sorghum harvest, which is expected in December, is generated from the cut stalks from the primary harvest. As the June primary harvest was very poor, it is very likely that the second harvest will fail. Compounding the situation, those few sorghum and maize crops in the lowlands that did survive the poor *belg* were destroyed by a crop pest (maize stalk borer).

On a positive note, the current *belg* harvest in North Omo Zone flooded the markets in Konso with maize, reducing the price to 45-60 birr per quintal.

The *hagaya* rains, light showers in October/November, stopped early in the first week of November and are unlikely to start again. It is expected that whatever crops were planted in June and July will now perish as they are currently at vegetative growth stage and dependent upon the continuation of these rains. If the *hagaya* rains are indeed over, the next possible harvest is not until June/July 2001.

As the harvests have been consecutively poor in Konso, almost the entire population of some 190,000 people is dependent on food assistance. Relief food is supplied by Farm Africa through Employment Generation Schemes (EGS), and free food distributions will only continue until the end of December 2000 and not into 2001 unless further funding is forthcoming from the donor community. Since there is no doubt of a continued food shortage in Konso, there is a definite need for food distribution until the next *belg* harvest in June and July.

MSF Holland Concludes Supplementary Feeding due to Improved Nutritional Status

Medicines Sans Frontiers - Holland (MSF-H) is an international organization that has been operational in Ethiopia since 1989, supporting people endangered by man-made or natural disasters.

Based on an August 1999 baseline nutritional study, MSF-H has been running emergency drought response programs that include nutrition, health and water components in Konso *wereda* since October 1999. The malnutrition rate according to the study was 20.2% of the acute global malnutrition. As a response to the deteriorating pattern of food security, MSF-H launched a dry Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) in October 1999 benefiting more than 10,000 women and children, targeting malnourished children under 5 years, lactating mothers and third trimester pregnant women. The program had 34 centers covering the entire *wereda*. In addition to the supplementary food distribution, the SFP team provided medical care, water, nutritional assessments and measles vaccination campaigns. The project concluded at the end of September 2000, as the malnutrition rate had declined to 10.9%.

Additionally, MSF-H began a treatment program in February 1999, as Konso is one of the endemic areas for *V. Leishmaniasis* disease, a vector borne disease, which is fatal if not treated. The program is orientated towards developing the capacity of the bureau of health, in terms of training, drug provision and laboratory supply and out-reach activities. So far, more than 100 patients have been treated. The program is planned to continue until February 2001.

Farm Africa's Emergency Relief Programme in Konso

Farm Africa is a British NGO established in 1985 with the goal of reducing poverty in Africa by enabling marginal African farmers and herders to make sustainable improvements to their well being through more effective management of their human and natural resources.

Farm Africa began working in Ethiopia in the late 1980's and since then has been actively involved in capacity building, agriculture research, provision of goats, land use and forestry management, and integrated community development programmes throughout many regions in Ethiopia.

They currently have two projects in Konso, one development project focusing on building the capacity in Konso by assisting in the planning and management of drought and the other project concentrating on emergency relief.

Farm Africa's emergency relief programme in Konso started in June 1999 after the recent drought in the *wereda*. At that time, there was a severe *belg* failure resulting in the loss of the entire harvest and forcing the population to resort to unusual wild foods and migration. In response to a request by the *wereda* and after assessments by the Government, UN and NGOs confirmed the poor situation in Konso, Farm Africa submitted proposals to the donor community highlighting the gravity of the crisis and requesting assistance to reduce stress, save lives and protect the assets of the people of Konso.

The EU responded immediately providing Farm Africa with some 12,694MT of cereals to assist at the beginning of the project in October 1999. DFID also responded by providing some 14,593MT starting from January 2000. These contributions from Farm Africa's major donors, as well smaller contributions from other sources will allow Farm Africa to assist some 167,000 beneficiaries in

Konso up until end December 2000. Further funding is dependent on continued donor assistance.

Farm Africa targets beneficiaries through community targeting mechanisms that identify those beneficiaries that are eligible for Employment Generating Schemes (EGS) and those for free-food distributions.

For 2001, Farm Africa estimates that food assistance will be required until June, when the next harvest is expected. Food assistance needs from June onwards will need to be reassessed at a later date.

EECMY in Konso

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is one of the oldest protestant churches in Ethiopia. It has been working for over 50 years in every aspect of social development and relief activities in almost every region of the country. Its areas of involvement include agriculture, water development, health, education and currently active in prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

EECMY's relief and rehabilitation activities commenced in Konso wereda as a response to the 1974/75 famine. Since this time there have been different kinds of relief interventions in the area. The Grey Zone Study Program is a new pilot project that aims to link relief to development. The program has different components including food for work programs, water development, human and livestock health care, the project also aims to provide the people with irrigation, trainings and provision of some agricultural materials. It also has a clinic, which has been operational since 1947. Recently, they have conducted nutritional survey, in conjunction with MSF-Holland, Farm Africa and Norwegian Church Aid are supporting food distribution programmes.