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UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM ETHIOPIA



Lack of Funding Threatens Thousands of Refugees in Ethiopia

The United Nations World Food Programme warned on 31 July that food aid for 130,000 refugees in Ethiopia would run out by October 2003 unless contributions from international donors were received in time. ▶

Needs Still Remain Despite Unprecedented Donor Response

Overview of the Current Humanitarian Situation in Ethiopia



Extraordinary levels of disaster and human tragedy in Ethiopia have been met by an unprecedented level of donor, NGO, Government of Ethiopia and United Nations support, yet much remains to be done to meet the needs of the crisis, alleviate the suffering of those most affected, and lay the path to recovery and development. Recent developments in the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia have led to improvement in the humanitarian response, however, needs in most sectors are still increasing and new emerging hot spots are still being reported.

In July, the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Mr. Martti Ahtisaari as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn of Africa focusing specifically on raising international awareness of the worsening drought crisis in Ethiopia and Eritrea and assist in mobilizing resources for urgent humanitarian needs. He travelled to Ethiopia in early July and met with the Prime Minister and the Commissioner of the government's

NEWS ▶

11.5 Million Children Targeted for Measles and Vitamin A Campaign

A new phase of the ongoing emergency Measles and Vitamin A campaign, coordinated jointly by the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF, was kicked off in July targeting nearly 2.2 million children between 6 months and 14 years. ▶

FAO Dispatch Assessment Team to SNNPR

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations dispatched a team of experts to SNNP region to assess the overall situation of livestock and crop production after the *Belg* rain and performance of crops during the *Meher*. According to the report from the team, 2003 *Belg* season crop harvest in most woredas is disappointing due to unfavorable weather conditions. ▶

Mr. William Garvelink Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's DCHA Visits Ethiopia

Mr. William Garvelink, Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's Bureau of Democracy Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance visited Ethiopia from 25 July - 3 August. ▶

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Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to discuss the current crisis and long-term strategies to alleviate the chronic food insecurity in parts of Ethiopia. His appointment followed the visit of Ms. Carolyn McAskie, United Nations Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator in the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), who travelled in June to Ethiopia to review the overall humanitarian situation and mobilize further support for emergency relief operations. Ms. McAskie's visit re-emphasized the need for addressing non-food issues and the need for further concentration on Southern Nations Nationalities People's Region (SNNPR).

The overwhelming response by the donor community to both the Joint Government-UN Appeal and the subsequent Addendum has provided, as of 30 July 2003, food aid pledges of 1.56 million tonnes towards April revised requirements of 1.54 million tonnes, amounting to coverage of over 100%. However when figures are adjusted to reflect new Belg requirements, detailed below, new total requirements are not fully covered. The food aid requirements for the period January to June 2003 were covered by 79% due to the use of the lower ration, and shortage and non-availability of blended food. More recently, however, the positive donor response has allowed the government to increase the cereal ration to the original planned 15 kg per person per month and the blended food and vegetable oil requirements are much better covered for the second half of the year. Over 700,000 tonnes of relief food were dispatched from Djibouti between January and June. A further 100,000 tonnes were procured locally.

On the non-food side, pledges amount to US\$ 75.9 million out of a requirement of US\$ 81.1 million leaving a shortfall of 6%. Non-food requirements were originally underestimated and are expected to increase significantly as non-food re-assessments are completed. The newly created non-food sectoral working groups are currently identifying these new requirements.

A 90-day study by the Feinstein International Famine Centre of Tufts University was commissioned by USAID on the early warning systems in Ethiopia and their ability to command an appropriate response to the current crisis, review donor strategies and response to humanitarian crisis and to make necessary recommendations. In mid-July the findings have been published in a 250-page document to the government and larger humanitarian community. Significantly, the team found that based on the number of famine definitions, Ethiopia is currently deep in the processes of famine (www.nutrition.tufts.edu/).

There are also those who believe this is an "economic famine". In addition to significant reductions of crop production associated with the 2002/2003 climatic shocks, households also lost access to labour opportunities; cash crops and those previously reliant on coffee continue to suffer from low prices and reduced yields. The combined effect of lost household production, inability to generate income and declining cash crops as well as increasing terms of trade has negatively affected household livelihoods.

Another recent development includes the mid-July return of fourteen government-led multi-agency *Belg* (short season) assessments after assessing all *Belg* crop-producing areas of the country and pastoral areas in Afar and Somali Region. Overall, the assessment teams from some *Belg* producing areas have reported a considerable

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improvement in conditions since last year, while the highlands of East and West Hararghe, parts of Arsi, and East Shewa zone in Oromiya Region, parts of SNNPR and Wag Hamra and North and South Wello zones in Amhara Region and Eastern and Southern Tigray show a less promising picture of *Belg* production because both human and livestock conditions are reported to be in critical condition. Erratic rainfall and change in weather patterns have disrupted the planting patterns of *Belg* farmers when unusual rains arrived in December and there was a lack of rainfall during the usual planting season due to early cessation of the rains in some areas. This rainfall pattern, which arrived earlier than usual or later than usual for *Belg* farmers, is having a favourable impact on long cycle crops. With rains unpredictable and erratic, the farmers' strategy of planting and replanting has led to reported shortage of seeds in some regions. However, the preliminary analysis of needy population done by DPPC predicts that an additional 2.4 million people will need assistance from the period August to December 2003 above what was projected in the March 2003 Appeal Addendum. Of the 2.4 million, 1.8 million people have been receiving assistance, but were planned to be taken off the beneficiary roles at the end of July. 600,000 are new beneficiaries, who were not previously on the beneficiary lists. So this brings the total of beneficiaries from 12.6 to 13.2 total beneficiaries for 2003. A total of 190,179 tonnes of additional food (grains, supplementary food and oil) will be required for the period August - December 2003. While current pledges cover most of these additional needs, stocks will also be required to cover anticipated needs in early 2004.

Over the past several months, the humanitarian community has witnessed a dramatic humanitarian deterioration in many parts of southern Ethiopia, particularly in SNNPR. In response to the growing crisis in SNNPR, the UN has strengthened its presence by setting up a United Nations Country Team Support Office (UNCTSO) in the regional capital Awassa to help address the current crisis in a more coordinated manner across all sectors.

SNNPR is not the only area in the country that is suffering from high malnutrition levels. A total of 95 nutritional surveys have so far been conducted since 2002, which have provided a clearer picture of the areas of concern. UNICEF estimates countrywide that out of the original 15 million people affected, of which three million are children under five, 450,000 suffer from Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) affects approximately 60,000 children based on the above-mentioned nutritional surveys. The total number of Therapeutic Feeding Centres (TFCs) that are currently operational in the country has risen to 44 as compared to 33 in mid-June with 14 new sites planned.

With malnutrition levels so high, increasing numbers of people, especially children, are vulnerable to disease and sickness. This, compounded by inadequate public health services has meant the scale of the humanitarian crisis has grown and requires a more comprehensive response. Across the country, lack of both adequately trained and sufficient numbers of health workers to deliver basic health services, combined with weak disease surveillance, has compromised the ability to respond effectively and reach all the people in urgent need. At a regional level, failure to pre-position drug supplies and set up effective inventory systems to monitor drug stock and distribution has complicated the process of reaching the most vulnerable.

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The other challenge is to ensure that drugs remain free of charge for those in the most affected regions. Under pressure from the UN Country Team, letters from the Ministry of Health have been issued in Somali and SNNP Regions formally requiring all drugs to be given for free as part of health consultations. Continued monitoring is underway to ensure that this is practiced and people do not have to pay for these medicines.

Food requirements likely to be fully covered in 2003 but more efficient food aid targeting still needed in some areas

Despite sufficient supplies of food aid to cover current needs, poor targeting and badly managed food distributions remain a major concern of the overall relief operations in Ethiopia, particularly in SNNPR. Much work is needed in the form of workshops to train responsible government staff on current food aid targeting guidelines and correct relief food distribution methods. Currently, many children treated in TFCs and Supplementary Feeding Centres (SFCs) for the last three months are being discharged from these centres and therefore are referred to the general food distribution and should be receiving these monthly rations right after their release. Yet often they are not being included in the general food distribution lists and hence do not receive the needed relief food ration that should prevent them of becoming malnourished once more.

However, UN field monitors, particularly food monitors from WFP, are taking part in an initiative by the federal DPPC and the regional government of SNNPR, to train local level officials in better targeting of food aid. The objective of the series of workshops, which are taking place in the regional capital of Awassa, is to tackle the main targeting problems in many districts of the region, especially in Sidama zone. In Sidama, significant amounts of food aid have been distributed over recent months, yet the malnutrition rates among children remain high. The problems identified during UN and other monitoring missions in SNNPR in recent months were errors of inclusion and exclusion (food given to those not eligible, while those eligible are sometimes neglected), the forced sharing or dilution of rations, and food given in turn to different families, rotating the beneficiary list every month. Participants are being made familiar with the new government Targeting Guidelines, and through group discussion are looking at sources of errors in food aid targeting, selecting localized criteria, the role of women in targeting and targeting methods and monitoring mechanisms. District level officials face problems of capacity, a lack of commitment to solving the challenge of targeting, pressure from local officials to distribute to all in their communities, late arrival of food, and other constraints. The UN and donors have resources to support identified initiatives arising from the workshops, to improve targeting.

Malaria currently on the rise threatening hundreds of thousand Ethiopians

Malaria currently represents the largest single cause of morbidity and the number of people affected is increasing due to the onset of the main rains in many parts of the country. MSF-Switzerland found that 60% of the children screened for supplementary and therapeutic feeding from their centres in SNNPR had malaria (mostly *falciparum*). Malaria is the main cause for most out-patient consultations and the largest cause of hospitalisation in the country, stretching already inadequate services. In SNNPR alone, a region highly affected by the current drought, more than 150,000 people

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have been treated for malaria in the last 3 months, according to the Regional Health Bureau (RHB). To respond, an emergency task force has been set up composed of the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, WHO and USAID. Assessments are underway and a meeting has been held with the regional health bureaus to develop immediate plans to combat the disease including increased spraying of breeding sites, and homesteads, health education, early diagnosis, mass treatment and distribution of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs).

MSF-Switzerland reported that besides the growing number of malaria cases, a growing number of children being screened in their TFCs and SFCs have tuberculosis (TB). Both malaria and TB coincide with the recent onset of the rains and the climate change to colder and more humid weather conditions that put one more strain on the already weakened malnourished people.

With immunization levels already low at only 51% across the country, measles in drought-affected areas pose a serious threat to children. An on-going 4th round of the measles and vitamin A campaign is targeting over 2 million children between 6 months and 14 years of age (see also previous *'Focus on Ethiopia'*, i.e. March, April and May issues). So far approximately 9 million children have been vaccinated against measles and another 10.8 million are targeted by the end of the year.

In response to the high numbers of severely malnourished children, therapeutic feeding centres have been and are opening as quickly as possible in areas of most need. Currently countrywide a total of 44 TFCs are operational (24 in SNNPR, 10 in Oromiya, 6 in Somali, 3 in Amhara and 1 in Harar) and 16 TFCs are at a planning stage opening soon (9 in Oromiya, 4 in Afar, 2 in Somali and 1 in SNNPR). To ensure that children are diagnosed and treated properly, 'National Standards for Management of Acute Malnutrition' were adopted under the guidance of UNICEF. The adoption of this step-by-step guideline for the identification and management of severe malnutrition and training of over 700 health workers in the use of the protocol has directly saved lives as mortality in the feeding centres has fallen to less than 5%. Current estimates are showing a further mortality downward trend as of 30 June data from 55% of all the TFCs in Ethiopia show mortality has fallen to 3%. In addition, efforts to distribute supplementary food to children and pregnant and lactating women have increased. UNICEF is currently targeting 146,661 children and pregnant and lactating women.

To respond effectively to the urgent overall health needs, the Ministry of Health, UN agencies and NGOs are jointly coordinating a rapid health and nutritional assessment. The assessment in the drought-affected regions of Somali, Oromiya, Amhara and SNNPR will collect relevant health and nutritional data and information to rapidly identify the existence and magnitude of health and nutritional problems, existing response capacities to these potential problems and to prioritise the basic needs that require immediate response. The assessment consists of data gathering at regional, zonal, woreda and health facility levels, including focus group discussions with concerned groups such as community elders and women. The assessment will provide useful information about the non-food situation in the worst-affected areas of Ethiopia and will, with important inputs from NGOs, provide a basis to update emergency health needs to the end of 2003.

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In order to strengthen the emergency response, especially in epidemic preparedness and control activities, and disease surveillance, WHO is working with the Ministry of Health to increase the technical skill of health workers. WHO has procured 325 health kits and UNICEF has provided 150 with another 647 in the pipeline (each kit can service 10,000 people for three months).

The 200 students from Awassa and Yirgalim nursing schools that have been deployed as nutrition assistants to 19 UNICEF-supported TFCs in SNNPR are now effectively assisting professional staff at the TFCs in admitting children, preparing and supervising the feeding of children, carrying out basic medical services including diagnosing and treating common childhood illnesses, and promoting personal and environmental hygiene. The 9 UNICEF field monitors that have been deployed at zonal level in SNNPR are assisting regional authorities and humanitarian agencies in monitoring the evolving humanitarian situation in their respective zones so as to trigger rapid responses to rising needs.

Important contributions to cover seed requirements might be too late to make a difference

Both Belg and Meher rains in 2002 were generally unsatisfactory in parts of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR, Somali and Afar, resulting in a serious livestock crisis and lack of seeds for the cropping season of 2003. The Belg rains earlier this year showed a mixed pattern, favouring crop and fodder production in some areas but aggravating the situation in other areas. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the international community have combined efforts to push donors to provide funds for seed purchase. According to calculations made and information available from MoA and FAO, the contributions are now covering approximately 90% of the seed requirements for 2003 (an estimated total of 40,900 tonnes) but with big regional differences such as Oromiya having received more than 200% compared to Amhara that received only 50% of the original 'meher' seed requirement estimates. Nevertheless, FAO received new funds for distribution of late planting crop seeds that will cover part of the gap in Amhara Region. However, some of the seed contributions have been rather late. In addition, disappointing *belg* rains have further deteriorated the situation in some parts of the country, also in Oromiya, justifying more assistance for the region than originally planned for. In Hararghe for example, a recent UN OCHA-EUE assessment concluded that the biggest constraint farmers are currently still facing is lack of seeds. Since the planting date, even for late planted crops, is expected to be over by the end of August, it is very unlikely that the remaining requirements of 2,000 tonnes will be met. However, the shortfall will be partly met by the provision of sweet potato cutting and vegetable seeds, distributed by FAO and World Vision that will be planted starting from October.

In Afar, and parts of Somali, Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya Regions water scarcity led to high livestock mortality (up to about 20 % in Afar region in 2002), significantly reduced milk production, and led to a critical animal health situation. Although small amounts of rain were received earlier this year, the situation remained unchanged. Livestock emergency interventions so far implemented were mainly dealing with animal health (45%) and water trucking (32%). Funding for livestock emergency feed, although crucial in most parts of the drought-affected areas, was very disappointing. For the upcoming months, livestock emergency interventions should simultaneously focus on disease control, the provision of supplementary feed (most

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efficiently by fodder bank development) and water and emergency slaughtering of weak animals.

Emergency water interventions slowed down due to onset of long rains

The total number of people in need of emergency water supply is still estimated to be 4.2 million. Recently a new emergency water needs assessment has been conducted in the most affected regions in Ethiopia. Once compiled, this assessment will supply important data and information on the number of needy people for the period July to December 2003 and will be an integrated part of the joint UN-Government updated appeal that will be elaborated in the coming month. Furthermore, the Water Resources Departments and UNICEF are finalizing an 'Emergency Plan of Action' for each of the six most affected regions for immediate implementation. Right now emergency water intervention activities struggle with constraints related to the onset of the long rains. A typical constraint is the withdrawing of the drilling rigs during the rainy season because it becomes difficult to move the machines from one site to another. The machines are returned to the workshops for repair and servicing. Hence, drilling activities have come to a virtual stand still and therefore no new water sources will be available in the immediate future. On the other hand, ground water is not yet recovering because it takes time for the surface water to penetrate the soil and replenish ground water sources. Of course surface water is plenty but bears danger for drinking and is a serious source for water born diseases. In Southern Tigray, in the East of Amhara Region and the Western part of Afar, rains were below long-term average and will negatively impact the water availability for the coming dry season.

HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention messages transmitted through emergency intervention activities

UNICEF has been encouraging NGOs active in the response to the drought, to address HIV/AIDS as part of emergency activities. It is recognized that emergency feeding, water and other interventions are opportunities to reach large groups of people with awareness and prevention messages. SNNPR has taken the lead at the regional level to foster the systematic integration of HIV/AIDS prevention and other health interventions within feeding sites in collaboration with the Regional Health Bureau, the Regional HIV/AIDS Council Secretariat and NGOs. A meeting was held in Awassa in southern Ethiopia in early July that brought government officials, NGO representatives and donors together to formulate a specific action plan.

Emergency education funding extremely poor

In spite of the enormous need in the education sector in all drought-affected regions, extremely poor funding of emergency activities has crippled the response capacity to these critical needs. UNICEF has however been able to recruit one Emergency Education Officer for a complete assessment of the educational situation and the critical needs, and to provide support to the Regional Education Bureaus. UNICEF plans to recruit four more Education Officers for regional support to education needs and for a better coverage of large regions.

Child labour a growing problem

An assessment that reviewed UNICEF's Child Protection Core Corporate Commitments, reported an increased incidence of child labour as some parents were 'renting' their children to work for money or food. It was noted that the way children are perceived

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within the family, and the value accorded to them, dramatically affects children's prospects for survival. Currently, child-focused indicators in early warning systems and assessments are being developed to better understand the situation of children, especially in emergency situations, to document best practice on child issues and child protection in emergencies in Ethiopia and to improve the targeting of beneficiaries.

Significant emergency coordination efforts under way but important institutional constraints remain

UN OCHA Office in Ethiopia recently initiated discussions on ways how to improve the non-food sector strategy, approach and methodology with donor, government, UN agency, ICRC and NGO representatives. The immediate outcome of these discussions was the formation of four sectoral working groups that are examining strategies, approaches and methodologies for non-food needs assessment and emergency programmes in general. The Ministries of Water Resources and Agriculture have committed themselves to active participation, as have representatives of the Ministry of Health who are participating in the nutrition and health working groups respectively.

The UN has strengthened its presence in SNNPR over the last months by setting up a United Nations Country Team Support Office in Awassa and deployment of staff throughout the region to help address the current crisis in a more coordinated manner across all sectors. The office acts as centre for the gathering and dissemination of information from the field and sharing of resources in the actual crisis management. Staff are deployed from UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, WFP and UN OCHA. Field officers attached to this office are locating and investigating potential new hotspots and are supplementing other actors active in the region. One of the most important tasks is initiating and establishing emergency coordination structures at zonal and subsequently also at woreda level in the most affected areas in SNNPR. Effectiveness and performance of these coordination structures varies and the effort from the UNCT Support Office for institutional assistance needs to be continued in the coming months so as to institutionalise these information exchange and decision making structures. The performance of the various coordination structures being put in place very much depends on the dedication and precedent experience of the chairpersons and the members. Much progress and effective action in terms of reacting to and filling in gaps can be observed where the coordination structures have been established successfully such as for example for Wolyita Zone, one of the hardest hit areas of SNNPR.

Efforts still need to be pursued at federal and at regional levels to make these coordination structures effective information exchange forums where action and interventions are formulated and decided. Many emergency coordination meetings still tend to be mere reporting platforms where members find it difficult to analyse and to react to problems and constraints to mitigate human suffering.

The government committed to achieve major turn-around of food insecurity situation within a three-year time frame

A meeting hosted by the government in mid-June which included the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, President of Regions, donors, ambassadors, heads of development co-operation agencies and the UN system, acted as a turning point in the country's

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efforts to find a lasting solution to the issue of chronic food insecurity.

There was a remarkable consistency and convergence of views on the next steps needed to draw up and implement a critical package of programmes, in addition to ongoing efforts, to address the chronic vulnerabilities and food security challenges of this country. The meeting concluded with the idea that this initiative would be baptized as a new “Coalition for Food Security in Ethiopia” with a vision to achieve major turn-around of the food insecurity situation within a three-year time frame. The coalition would work to put in place a strategic framework of urgent, well targeted and scaled up programmes, with stringent timelines/actions and to proceed with key start-up steps immediately and within the next six months.

This is a significant new development, coming at a time when the government’s commitment to long-term food security and that of other stakeholders requires a new generation of efforts, given the repeated cycles of food appeals and the increasing frequency of droughts.

As a follow-up to the above-mentioned meeting, a technical group was formed to synthesize and compile a package of urgent food security actions. With direct reporting under the auspices of the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the group will make a quick diagnosis of the food security situation and delineate feasible goals and make a quick stocktaking of relevant food security interventions and analyse relevance and cost effectiveness of the interventions and develop an investment path of interventions that tackle the root causes of food security.

NEWS ►

Lack of Funding Threatens Thousands of Refugees in Ethiopia

The United Nations World Food Programme warned on 31 July that food aid for 130,000 refugees in Ethiopia would run out by October 2003 unless contributions from international donors were received in time. The refugees - mostly from southern Sudan and Somalia - live in camps in eastern and western Ethiopia. WFP urgently requires US\$5.3 million to continue feeding the refugees up to March 2004. They are normally supplied with cereals, blended food, pulses, sugar, salt and cooking oil. According to a joint assessment conducted this month by WFP, UNHCR, the Ethiopian Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) and the United States Bureau of Refugees, Migration and Population, the refugees will be unable to cope should their monthly food ration be reduced. To date, WFP has received donations totaling US\$12.6 million for its refugee operation.

11.5 Million Children Targeted for Measles and Vitamin A Campaign

A new phase of the ongoing emergency Measles and Vitamin A campaign, coordinated jointly by the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF, was kicked off in July targeting nearly 2.2 million children between 6 months and 14 years. The latest immunizations are covering the zones of Kembatta/Tambaro, Alaba, Dawro and Hadya

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(SNNPR) and East Shoa (Oromia Region). Since the beginning of the campaign in December 2002 nearly 11.5 million children have been targeted with average immunization coverage of 95.7 percent during the first phases. The campaign, expected to reach nearly 22.3 million children by the end of 2003, is part of a larger battle to reduce child mortality and protect children against preventable diseases. Measles is one of the greatest current threats to children in Ethiopia, and the spread is exacerbated by drought and the children's weakened conditions. 1.45 million measles cases are estimated to occur annually in Ethiopia and approximately 60,000-70,000 children die every year due to the disease. Ethiopia has been conducting supplementary immunization activities since 1998 in selected areas of the country. The Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF, WHO and partners are striving to reach the goal of 80 percent routine immunization coverage in every zone by 2006. This is feasible only through continued commitment by health workers, implementing partners and international donors.

German Agro Action Launched Emergency Seed Supply in Arsi

In cooperation with Oromo Self Help Organization (OSHO) and through co-financing of USAID / OFDA seeds of cereals and pulses are supplied for some 11,400 needy households to assure better local food production. The seed component is part of an integrated relief project. The target groups, identified through community targeting, are able to cultivate their fields during the current cropping season as a result of the distribution of 767 mts of appropriate seeds for the beneficiaries' staple food: teff (26%), haricot beans (34%) and wheat (40%). Each household received ~67 kg suitable varieties certified by a recognized inspection service. The distribution period started in mid-July in 27 kebeles and is almost accomplished. Due to favorable rains many fields show already promising germination and growth. The total finance volume allocated by USAID/OFDA is US\$ 351,724 including transport, handling etc. OSHO and GAA carried out joint relief projects in the Ziway-Dugda Woreda since 2000.

FAO Dispatch Assessment Team to SNNPR

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations dispatched a team of experts to SNNP region to assess the overall situation of livestock and crop production after the *Belg* rain and performance of crops during the *Meher*. According to the report from the team, 2003 *Belg* season crop harvest in most woredas is disappointing due to unfavorable weather conditions. In addition, some of the seeds distributed, with the exception of FAO, are of insufficient quality or the source of the seeds is unknown. Quality and suitability of seed supply has to be verified in order not to create more problems in the future. It is also suggested by the team that seed distribution should be accompanied by food aid assistance so that farmers do not consume the seed. Livestock condition and fodder availability seems to be improving in the South. Exceptions to this are hotspots in Hadiya, Kembata and Wollayta zones, where livestock diseases are prevailing. There is a lack of vaccines and drugs at the woreda level, which makes it difficult to control the disease outbreaks. FAO is distributing vaccines and drugs to the woreda to fill these gaps.

FAO dispatched a team of experts to SNNP region to assess the overall situation of livestock and crop production. The team reported 2003 Belg season crop harvest in most woredas is disappointing due to unfavorable weather conditions and some of the seeds distributed, with the exception of FAO, are of insufficient quality or the source of the seeds is unknown.

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Mr. William Garvelink Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's DCHA Visits Ethiopia

Mr. William Garvelink, Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's Bureau of Democracy Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance visited Ethiopia from 25 July - 3 August. He traveled to Ethiopia to participate in the Golden Spear meeting that brought together African leaders in a forum to discuss and plan for disaster response and relief activities. Following this meeting, he traveled to Arsi Zone of Oromiya and Sidama Zone of SNNPR to visit emergency relief activities and to assess drought conditions in these areas.

EFSR Update

Ethiopia Food Security Reserve (EFSR) reports stocks on hand as of 1 August are 140,321.82 mts, stock under withdrawal 78,710 mts and outstanding loans equal 185,973.01 mts.

Focus on Ethiopia is produced by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia (UN OCHA - EUE). For further information contact the Information Unit at un-eue@un.org. Tel.: 44 44 14 or 51 37 25 and visit our website: www.uneue.org