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Zonal “Emergency Partners’ Coordination Forums” Established in SNNPR

Lack of fertilizer for wheat, inefficient relief food targeting, malaria and livestock epidemics remain key problems

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1 Introduction and background

The objective of the mission was to initiate and facilitate the establishment of *Emergency Partners’ Coordination Forum* meetings in Hadiya, Kambata-Tambaro, Dawuro, Silte, and Gurage Zones and Alaba Special Woreda. The forums are meant to institutionalize effective coordination structures in information exchange and decision-making on the current humanitarian situation, involving relevant partners from the government line departments, NGOs, and UN agencies from the UN Country Team Support Office (UNCT SO) in Awassa.

The *Emergency Partners’ Coordination Forums* were established as an extension of the initiative at regional level. The two main agendas of the meetings were (a) establishment of the forum and (b) overall emergency situation updates based on the checklist of activities in the reporting format. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Desk (DPPD) or the Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk (ANRCDD) of the respective zones with UNICEF Field Monitor support took minutes of the meetings, both in Amharic and English. The minutes are being distributed to all participants and relevant offices in the region and the woredas.

2 Establishment of Zonal Emergency Partners’ Coordination Meetings & emergency response reporting

2.1 Hadiya Zone

2.1.1 Hadiya Zone Emergency Partners’ Coordination Forum established

The ‘*Hadiya Zone Emergency Partners’ Coordination Meeting*’ was established on 23rd July 2003. The meeting was chaired by a representative of the Head of the Zonal Rural Development Main Department (ZRDCD) and facilitated by a representative of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Support Office from Awassa. There were 10 participants in the meeting — five from relevant government offices, three from NGOs operating in the zone (World Vision, Ethiopian Catholic Church, and Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), and two from UNCT Support Office, i.e. from OCHA and UNICEF.

2.1.2 Lack of fertilizer for wheat, inefficient relief food targeting, malaria and livestock epidemics are key problems

The Zonal Agricultural and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk (ZANRCDD) reported the erratic nature of *belg* rain, pest (stalk-borer) infestation on maize, outbreak of livestock epidemics (Lumpyskin and African Horse Sickness), problems of flooding (in Shashogo Woreda), and hailstorms that destroyed crops in parts of the zone. Lack of fertilizer was pointed out as the most serious constraint, especially at a time of sowing wheat (a major crop of the zone). The cost of 100 kg of fertilizer at the local traders is 400 ETB. Improved seeds supplied by NGOs, FAO, and USAID were distributed to farmers. Since wheat does not yield well without fertilizer, there will be an inevitable higher production failure on forthcoming *meher* harvest.

Relief food targeting still is a problem though there have been some improvements. Grain market prices in the area remain high (e.g. 100 kg maize costs 160 ETB). Population pressure and resource imbalance is considered a key problem in the area. The zone planned to resettle 33,000 households from all its seven woredas to other parts of the region. The resettlement operation will begin next year and now preparations are underway.

Malaria outbreak is still prevailing in many parts of the zone, especially in 35 kebeles of Badawacho Woreda, 19 kebeles of Soro Woreda, most kebeles of Shashogo Woreda, and in the lowland areas of Misha and Duna Woredas. Vaccination for measles was undertaken.

Most parts of the zone lack access to potable water. The average potable water coverage is reported to be 20.4% based on 2001 inventory of water points. Financial constraints did not allow to carry out a new inventory and updating the data.

World Vision, Ethiopian Catholic Church, Kale Hiwot Church, and EECMY are among the major NGOs operating in the zone in relief and development interventions in the zone.

2.1.3 Key problems for Hadiya Zone

During the meeting, the following key problems were identified:

- Critical shortage of fertilizer,
- Targeting relief food,
- DPP desk staff shortage,
- Malaria outbreak,
- Livestock epidemics,
- Limited access to potable water.

2.2 Kambata-Tambaro Zone

2.2.1 Kambata-Tambaro Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum established

The '*Kambata-Tambaro Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Meeting*' was established on 24th July 2003. The meeting was chaired by the Head of the ZRDCD and facilitated by the representative of the UNCT Support Office. There were eleven participants in the meeting — seven from relevant government offices, two NGOs from those operating in the zone (World Vision and EECMY), and two from UNCT Support Office (OCHA & UNICEF).

2.2.2 *Lack of fertilizer, poor relief food targeting, malnutrition and malaria outbreak are among main concerns*

The Zonal Agricultural and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk (ZANRCDD) reported *belg* rain failure, infestation of enset (*Ensete ventricosum*) by bacterial wilt and *gay qinqin* (local name of the pest), and hailstorm problems in some areas. The current rainfall and its distribution are reported good and expected to have positive impact on main season (*meher*) crops if it proceeds without disruption. Improved seeds supplied by NGOs, FAO, and USAID were distributed to farmers. However, similarly to Hadiya Zone the lack of fertilizer is critical. The cost of 100 kg of fertilizer at the local market is the same as in Hadiya Zone (400 ETB). It was noted that farmers were selling their livestock to buy fertilizer from local traders, which will have adverse consequences on the households' assets.

Two Therapeutic Feeding Centers (TFCs) opened in the zone at Taza (Kadida-Gamela Woreda) and Mudula (Omo-Sheleko Woreda) and operated by Catholic Church and World Vision respectively. In the first TFC, a total of 110 children were admitted, out of which 49 have been discharged, 3 died, and 58 are still being treated. In the latter TFC, a total of 104 children were admitted, out of which 15 were going to be discharged on the date of the zonal meeting, 4 died, 2 referred for further treatment, and 83 are getting treatment. World Vision has planned to open a second TFC in Omo-Sheleko Woreda in a place called Tunto.

Food aid targeting till remains a serious problem despite noticeable improvements. Grain prices were very high (100 kg maize costs 180 ETB). Land shortage and population pressure is a critical problem of the zone. There is a plan to resettle a number of families out of the zone within the region. The plan for next year alone is to resettle 5,600 households and preparations are in progress.

Malaria outbreak is critical, especially in Omo-Sheleko and in the lowland areas of all other woredas. Water-borne diseases were pointed out to be very high due to shortage of potable water. The average potable water coverage in zone is only 21%. Sources of drinking water are continuously decreasing. Some springs dried up and others decreased their discharge rate. Similarly, the water level in many wells is reduced and some even dried up.

Major NGOs operating in the area are World Vision, Ethiopian Catholic Church, Kale Hiwot Church, and EECMY. They are engaged in relief and development activities.

2.2.3 *Key problems for Kambata-Tambaro Zone*

The following key problems were identified during the meeting:

- Critical shortage of fertilizer,
- Targeting relief food problems,
- Shortfall of allocated food aid for June 2003 in Omo-Sheleko (1,799 quintals) and Angacha (223 quintals) Woredas,
- Problems in relief food dispatch recordings,
- Staff shortage in DPP desk,
- Deteriorating conditions of children discharged from TFC,
- Shortage of warehouses and distribution points,
- Malaria outbreak,

- Livestock epidemics, and
- Limited access to potable water.

2.3 Alaba Special Woreda

2.3.1 Alaba Special Woreda Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum established

The 'Alaba Special Woreda Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum' was established on 25th July 2003. The meeting was chaired by a representative of the Head of the Special Woreda Rural Development Coordination Office and facilitated by the representative of the UNCT Support Office from Awassa. There were eight participants in the meeting — five from relevant government offices, one from NGO, and two from the UNCT Support Office (OCHA & UNICEF).

2.3.2 Lack of fertilizer, food aid targeting problems and malaria outbreak are of main concern

The Special Woreda Agricultural and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk (SWANRCDD) highlighted the effects of last season's rain failure in this purely *meher* harvest dependent woreda. The current rainfall and its distribution are good. If the rains continue, the crop performance will be good. Significant amount of seed is being provided to farmers through the support of FAO. However, the lack of fertilizer is also critical like in the other two visited zones. The cost of 100 kg fertilizer (DAP) from local traders in Alaba is 420 ETB.

Food aid targeting remains problematic. The distribution of wheat to the mainly maize consuming Alaba population is seen as inappropriate. Some relief food beneficiaries have been selling wheat in exchange for maize. The DPP desk complained about serious staff shortage to run its activities in this very large special woreda comprising of 79 kebeles. Only two staff members are assigned to perform all the necessary tasks.

Grain and livestock prices have increased. For instance, according to the DDP desk, the price comparison between 2002 and 2003 based on June market prices was noted as follows:

Crops and livestock	Price in ETB	
	June 2002	June 2003
Maize (100 kg)	95	155
Teff (100 kg)	180	255
Wheat (100 kg)	125	185
Sorghum (100 kg)	95	155
Finger millet (100 kg)	85	140
Hot pepper (19 kg)	600	1100
Ox	700	1090
Cow	400	650
Sheep	135	190

Malaria outbreak has been a serious problem in the woreda. DDT meant for spraying is still pending because there is no money to carry out the spraying. Similarly the health office lacks financial means to undertake health situation assessments. 77,393 children were vaccinated against measles in July. The total health service coverage in the woreda is 30% including Kulito town (administrative center), but only 8% for the rural kebeles.

Potable water is a prevalent structural problem. There are 13 boreholes. 4 serve the Alaba town while 9 serve rural kebeles. The water desk faces serious monitoring limitations. *Water Action* is a local NGO engaged in a number of potable water provision schemes in the area.

2.3.3 Key problems for Alaba Special Woreda

The following key problems were identified during the meeting:

- Critical shortage of fertilizer,
- Targeting relief food problems,
- Problems in relief food dispatch recordings,
- Staff shortage in DPP desk,
- Malaria outbreak and capacity limitation for DDT spraying and further health assessments,
- Limited access to potable water, and
- Capacity limitation of the desk to update the situation.

2.4 Dawuro Zone

2.4.1 Dawuro Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum established

The *Dawuro Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum* was established on 29th July 2003. The meeting was chaired by the Chief Administrator of the Zone and facilitated by a representative of the UNCT Support Office from Awassa. There were 10 participants: nine from relevant government offices (including two from Looma and Isra woredas) and one from OCHA.

2.4.2 Inaccessibility and malaria outbreak are serious problems

The Zonal ZANRCD desk reported extended rain failure in Looma and Genna Bossa woredas of the zone. Parts of these woredas are located along the inaccessible rugged gorges of the Omo River. Maize production is expected to suffer. 110 quintals of maize and 150 quintals of haricot bean seeds were distributed to farmers in the affected areas. The livestock is affected by trypanosomiasis, aggravated by shortage of pasture and water. Many of the affected households lack traction animals (oxen).

There is a serious problem in relief food distribution. Due to lack of warehouse facilities school classrooms are being used for storage of relief food. However, unless storage facilities are being put in place, schools and teaching will be affected when schools reopen at the beginning of the new school year in September.

The rains have seriously affected accessibility to the area. Gojeb and Omo Rivers encircle the zone. The only route is the Sodo-Chida road, which crosses the zone. The 17 km dry weather road opened to transport relief supplies to Genna Bossa is no more passable. Hence, the beneficiaries from the woreda receive their rations from Gessa, located in the nearby Looma Woreda along the main road. As repeatedly reported in former reports, they are forced to share around 1/3 of their ration with those transporters using pack animals. Lack of timely and efficient distribution was noted and hence many beneficiaries are exposed to miseries and pneumonia spending days in harsh circumstances.

Malaria outbreak has been prevalent in the affected woredas. Spraying DDT was in progress. The Health desk reported that many children are affected due to severe malnutrition. He stressed that many of the patients have swollen spleen and developed *splenomegaly* because of persistent malaria. Diseases such as typhoid are common because of unsafe water. Only 4% of the population in the zone has access to piped water, which includes the two towns (Waka and Tercha). Some woredas such as Isra have no access to safe water at all.

The only NGO, which has been operating in the area but is planning to leave the area is Action Aid. The local officials stressed their strong need for NGO to come and work in their area. They also pointed out how they tried to persuade and maintain the stated only NGO to extend its presence for further period.

2.4.3 Key problems for Dawuro Zone

During the meeting, the following key problems were identified:

- Inaccessibility to the affected areas,
- Targeting relief food,
- Logistical problems (warehouses),
- Malaria outbreak,
- Livestock epidemics,
- Lack of access to potable water

2.5 Silte Zone

2.5.1 Silte Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum established

The *Silte Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum* was established on 31st July 2003. The meeting was chaired by the Head of the ZRDCD with the facilitation of the representative of UNCT Support Office. There were seven participants: six from relevant government offices and one from UNCT Support Office (OCHA).

2.5.2 Lack of fertilizer, malnutrition, and malaria are serious concerns

The ZANRCD desk reported rain failure in 12 kebeles of Silte and Lanforo Woredas and possible yield reduction is expected on meher harvest. The performance of maize is noted ever-decreasing due to replacement of local seeds by hybrid varieties. Although seeds are distributed to farmers, shortage of fertilizer was pointed out to be critical problem.

The number of relief beneficiaries increased from 116,800 to 140,400 as of May 2003. Usually, June, July, and August were food deficit months. Hence, the current drought aggravated the already critical structural situation. A problem of incompatibility between eligible beneficiaries and relief supplies is prevalent. Targeting has been problematic in the past but has improved thanks to concerted efforts of the local authorities.

Sankura, Silte, Lanforo, and Dalocha woredas are short of food. The TFC in Dalocha is far for those coming from Lanforo Woreda and hence an additional TFC is needed in Lanforo. Project Mercy (NGO) operates the existing TFC. Out of the 72 children admitted to the TFC, 2 referred to Butajira hospital, 57 discharged after recovering, and 13 were still under treatment.

Malaria is reported to be endemic to the four affected woredas as noted earlier. Measles outbreak has occurred in 7 kebeles of Lanforo Woreda. WHO has vaccinated children for measles. Water born diseases are prevalent. Lack of skilled personnel and spare-parts are critical problems in the motorized-water scheme.

2.5.3 *Key problems for Silte Zone*

The following key problems were identified during the meeting:

- Shortage of fertilizer,
- Targeting relief food problems,
- Problems of spare-parts and skilled personnel for motorized water schemes,
- TFC at Dalocha is very far for those coming from Lanforo,
- Incompatibility of increased beneficiaries and shortage of relief supplies,
- Prevalence of malaria endemic to the area, and
- Limited access to potable water.

2.6 **Gurage Zone**

2.6.1 *Gurage Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum established*

The *Gurage Zone Emergency Partners' Coordination Forum* was established on 1st August 2003. The meeting was chaired by a representative of the Head of the ZANRCD desk and facilitated by the representative of the UNCT Support Office from Awassa. There were 37 participants in the meeting: thirty-two from relevant government offices (including twenty-nine representatives from eleven woredas¹), four from NGOs (World Vision, Project Mercy, EECMY, and Community Water Development Project) and two from the UNCT Support Office (OCHA & UNICEF).

2.6.2 *Shortage of fertilizer, weak hygiene and sanitation in the TFCs & WFCs, inefficient response to emergencies are key problems*

The worst affected woredas of the zone are Meskan, Mareqo, and Sodo. In those areas, crop production will suffer. However, since the last week of May the rainfall situation has improved and now its amount and distribution in most parts of the area is good. Armyworm infestation in certain areas is now under control. Only 40% of the fertilizer needs were delivered. Significant amount of seeds were distributed to farmers. Due to shortage of pasture and water livestock is still weak. Grain and livestock are offered on the market. Prices for both commodities have increased. Although the availability of water has improved after the rains, women in the highlands still have to travel up to eight hours to fetch it.

Food aid targeting still is of concern even though efforts were made to improve the process. 252 malnourished children were admitted to the TFC assisted by Project Mercy. Out of the admitted children, 162 have so far been discharged, 6 have been withdrawn, 15 died (11 in hospital and 4 in the center), and the remaining 75 are still under treatment. In the SFCs established, the recovery rate was 91% while those not recovering are admitted to the TFC. However, the hygiene and sanitation conditions both in the TFC and SFCs are

¹ Eleven out of twelve woredas participated: Abeshege, Kabena, Cheha, Enemor & Ener, Engegagn, Gumer, Ecza, Mihur & Aklil, Kokir, Sodo, Meskan, and Mareqo.

poor and therefore have to be improved. Measles vaccination was provided in those affected woredas. Spraying DDT was conducted in Malaria infested areas.

Participants from three woredas stressed lack of efficient and immediate response in times of emergencies. For instance, they reported the sufferings of many families due to complete destruction of their homes by fire but there was no immediate response except a visit from the Region three months after the incident has happened.

2.6.3 Key problems of Gurage Zone

The following key problems were identified during the meeting:

- Shortage of fertilizer,
- Poor hygiene and sanitation in TFCs and WFCs,
- Increasing dependency syndrome on relief food,
- Limited access to potable water,
- Weak coordination among partners,
- Eucalyptus trees sucking the ground water soil nutrients,
- Prevalence of malaria,
- Capacity and logistical limitation for closer monitoring and regular updating situations.

3 Conclusions and recommendations

UN OCHA Emergencies Unit for Ethiopia helped to establish all Emergency Partners' Coordination Forums in Dawuro, Kambata-Tambaro, Hadiya, Silte, and Gurage Zones and Alaba Special Woreda in SNNPR. The partners of the forums are relevant government offices, NGOs, and representatives of UNCT Support Office in Awassa. The forums aim at institutionalizing effective coordination structures in information exchange and decisions making on the current humanitarian situation updates.

During the meetings, overall highlights of the humanitarian situation updates in the respective Zones and Special Woreda were presented and heated discussions and views exchanged. The key problems identified in the process were shared among participants for possible taking of actions and follow up. The updates on those identified problems will be presented on the next meetings.

The feedback from the participants to the establishment of the forum was very positive in all the zones, including Alaba Special Woreda. Some commented it as a good beginning to work in partnership by exchanging information on interventions, gaps and constraints. Finally, dates were fixed for the next meetings as stated below

- Hadiya Zone on *Tuesday 12th August 2003 (9:30 am)*,
- Kambaata-Tambaro Zone on *Wednesday 13th August 2003 (9:30 am)*,
- Alaba Special Woreda on *Friday 15th August 2003 (9:00 am)*,
- Dawuro Zone on *Tuesday 19th August 2003 (9:30 am)*,
- Gurage Zone on *Thursday 21st August 2003 (9:30 am)*, and
- Silte Zone on *Friday 22nd August 2003 (9:30 am)*.

As already noted, these forums are important venues intended for effective and efficient coordination and monitoring the current humanitarian situation. Therefore, strengthening capacity and the structures for information exchange and decision-making is essential. The provision of the necessary human and financial resources and a close follow-up are essential for a successful implementation.

DISCLAIMER

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4 Annex

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANRCDD	Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk
DPPD	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Desk
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SWANRCDD	Special Woreda Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk
TFC	Therapeutic Feeding Center
UNCT-SO	United Nations Country Team Support Office
SFC	Supplementary Feeding Center
ZANRCDD	Zonal Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation and Development Desk
ZRDCD	Zonal Rural Development Coordination Department

**Zonal & Special Woreda Emergency Partners' Coordination Forums
Information Sheet**

ZONE/ SPECIAL WEREDA	DATE OF FIRST MEETING	VENUE	DATES OF FORTNIGHTLY MEETINGS	ZONE/SW ADMINISTRATION CONTACT	UNICEF FIELD MONITOR CONTACT
Welayita	15 June 2003	Rural Development Coordination Department	July - 10; 24 August - 7; 21	Ato Bizuneh– 512456 Ato Endrias- 513017	Merara Ejetta Deployed 7/7/03 c/o Ato Endrias 513017
Sidama	7 July 2003	Rural Development Coordination Department	July - 18; 31 August - 1; 15	Dawit Belete – 206101	Samuel Negassa Deployed 18/7/03 c/o Dr. Kebede 204679
Hadiya	23 rd July 2003	Rural ZRDMD/ RDCO Meeting Hall	August - 12		Maheteme Tora Deployed 22/7/03 c/o Dr. Deela 552081
Kembata Tembaro	24 th July 2003	Rural ZRDMD	August - 13		Musse Asfaw Deployed 7/7/03 c/o Ato Desta 550010/25
Alaba SW	25 th July 2003	SWRDCO	July- 25 August- 15		Same as above, Musse Asfaw covers both KT & Alaba SW
Dawro	29 th July		August- 19		Teferi H/Michael Deployed 8/8/03
Selti	31 st July	Rural Development Department	August- 22	Ato Osma Surul 06552195 ;Tadesse Kifle Rural Dev Food Security;Dr. Rahmato Abeba 551649;Jemal Hassen 552194	<i>Silte Field Monitor not designated/posted yet</i>
Konso SW	1 st August	Dept Rural Developmnt/ Farm Africa Conference Room	August- 1; 15	Ato Urmale Ato Solomon 812365	Covering Konso and S.Omo – Dawit Haile Deployed 8/8/03
Gurage	1 st August				Habtu Tesfaye Deployed 7/7/03 c/o Ato Nuredidid 300140
G/Goffa	15 th July	Rural Development Department	August- 2nd (postponed)	Ato Mulugeta 810175 810203 201935 (Awassa)	Demeke Feyissa Deployed 20/7/03 Direct Line 810173
Gedeo	TBC				N/A
Dirashe SW	TBC				N/A
Burji SW	TBC				N/A
Amaro SW	TBC				N/A