

UPDATE ON RESETTLEMENT

Further discussions have been held between donors, government and United Nations agencies on humanitarian needs in some sites of the voluntary resettlement programme. While there are many examples of well-organized resettlement sites, some sites, especially those receiving whole families instead of just male heads of households, have been reported by the Oromiya regional government as urgently in need of blended food to supplement current rations of cereals, in order to prevent a deterioration in the nutritional status of children. Health kits and assistance with water supply improvements are also needed. The federal government has now designated the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to coordinate humanitarian response for resettlement areas. DPPC is currently leading an assessment of immediate humanitarian needs in resettlement sites in Oromiya and Amhara regions. This is a follow-up of last month's assessment by UN/Donor/World Bank resettlement working group teams. Several donors have agreed that their donations of blended food for the drought operations can be sent to the four resettlement sites currently most in need of supplementary food for children and pregnant and lactating women without delaying until the assessment is completed. WFP and DPPC have sent 194 tons of blended food donated through WFP, to cover one month's needs of approximately 45,000 beneficiaries at four locations in Illubabor and West Wellega zones of Oromiya Region. The DPPC has previously sent 50 tons of its own stocks of blended food to Chawaka site, Illubabor zone. Once the results of the DPPC-led assessment are known, a formal nutritional survey will take place in any area where this is required. Donors have expressed willingness to consider pledges to cover further humanitarian requirements, based on the DPPC assessment. Storage needs in resettlement areas are also being discussed with the DPPC. Many sites will be cut off during the main rainy season, two months from now, and preparations for storage of prepositioned stocks of food are required. For further information on resettlement contact UN OCHA-Eth, ocha-eth@un.org

JOINT TEAM TO CARRY OUT ASSESSMENT ON "BELG" RAINS AND STATUS OF CROPS

A separate mission made up of several teams is being fielded by DPPC with the participation of WFP and NGOs, to carry out an assessment of the short season "Belg" rains (currently falling in many parts of the country) and the state of "Belg" crops expected to be harvested in July. This annual "mid-Belg" assessment will also be looking at preparations for the main agricultural season, the Meher season. For further information contact DPPC, ewd@telecom.net.et

ICRC IMPLEMENTS LIVESTOCK TREATMENT AND DESTOCKING PROGRAMS IN SOMALI REGION

The ICRC carried out a livestock intervention in the Somali Regional State as a response to the insufficient Deyr rains last year that caused huge migration flows of pastoralists and livestock into the Gode Zone of the region. The intervention comprises two components. 1) Livestock treatment: in the Gode Zone to strengthen animal health and resistance which improves food security for the pastoralist. The treatment that took place from 7 February - 13 March 2004, was conducted in Gode, Adadley, Denan, Kelafo, Mustahil districts. 503,290 livestock were treated in 43 treatment sites. A similar livestock treatment intervention is taking place in the Degehabur Zone at 14 sites, addressing approximately 115,000 heads of livestock. 2) Destocking: weak animals that would probably not have survived the dry season were purchased and the meat of slaughtered livestock was distributed among needy people. Livestock owners could use the money for later restocking or covering immediate needs. The program was implemented from 29 January to 16 March 2004 in which the meat of 463 slaughtered livestock were distributed among 11,646 displaced families from the IDP settlement in Denan, Gode Zone. For further information contact ICRC, addis_ababa.add@icrc.org

MEASLES CAMPAIGNS CONTINUE IN SOMALI AND SNNP REGIONS

Measles vaccination and vitamin A supplementation campaigns will be conducted by the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) health bureau, in collaboration with UNICEF and WHO, in six zones (Gamugofa, Gedio, South Omo, Kaffa, Sheka and Bench Maji) and six special woredas (Amaro, Burji, Konso, Derashe, Basketo and Konta). The campaign, which is scheduled for seven to 10 days, begins on 26 April. A total of 2,051,357 children from six months to 14 years of age are targeted to be vaccinated with one dose of measles vaccine. 858,708 children from six months to four years of age are targeted to be supplemented with vitamin A capsules. Emergency measles vaccination and vitamin A supplementation in Warder, Koraha and Degehabur zones of Somali Region will begin on 29 April and continue for seven to 10 days. The campaign will be conducted by the regional health bureau with support from UNICEF and WHO. A total of 799,965 children from 6 months to 14 years of age are targeted to be vaccinated with one dose of measles vaccine and supplemented with vitamin A. For further information contact UNICEF, igetachew@unicef.org