

RESETTLEMENT WORKING GROUP TO UNDERTAKE INITIAL RAPID ASSESSMENT

The UN/Donor/World Bank resettlement working group, which is facilitated by OCHA, has developed a joint monitoring framework for the resettlement program in conformance with the Government of Ethiopia's Concept Note on a Monitoring and Evaluation System for the Food Security Program. The group has agreed to undertake an initial rapid assessment of the resettlement situation to test the framework and to ascertain the current situation of the resettlement process. The initial assessment would also help to inform on best practices that can be applied in next phases of the process and avenues for constructive engagement with the Government by donors, UN agencies and the World Bank concerning the resettlement process. The working group will be undertaking the assessment mission in four resettlement regions (SNNPR, Amhara, Oromiya and Tigray) starting 15 March.

PASTORALISTS ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS FINALIZED: FOOD AID NEEDS ADJUSTED DOWNWARDS

Results of the pastoral areas assessment have been finalized for Afar and Somali regions, as well as lowland parts of Oromiya and Southern Nations Nationalities and People's regions. Weather conditions have been generally better than were forecast in late-2003. Thus the 2004 relief food requirements have been revised downwards in these areas, and overall requirements are now under 900,000 tonnes. This comprises 695,000 tonnes of cereals, 85,000 tonnes of micronutrient-fortified blended food, 69,000 tonnes of pulses, 23,000 tonnes of vegetable oil and 1,300 tonnes of iodized salt (this includes 14,000 tonnes of commodities for emergency school feeding). Carryover stocks, 2003 carryover contributions and 2004 confirmed contributions currently total 486,000 tonnes; these can cover relief food requirements through to early June. The un-resourced food requirement for 2004 stands at 387,000 tonnes. With outstanding 2004 cereal and blended food requirements of over 350,000 tonnes, there is scope for local purchases to cover part of the shortfall. The recently-issued joint "Cereal Availability Study" estimated the amount of maize, wheat and sorghum available for local purchase for humanitarian operations in 2004 between 300,000 - 350,000 tonnes.

UNICEF EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN SOMALI REGION

UNICEF's response to the emergency situation in Somali Region over the last two months has been on several fronts. Mobile emergency clinics have been organized with the Health Bureau to reach remote vulnerable communities in Warder, Korahe, Degahbour, Fik and Gode zones. In Warder zone, supplies and funds have been provided to Mother and Child Development Organization (MCDO), a local NGO, to support targeted supplementary feeding for 3,000 moderately malnourished children. The regional Government recently allocated 1.5 million Birr for emergency water tankering for internally displaced persons in Fafan and Hartsheik. UNICEF will provide supplies for the extension of the pipeline in Fafan and will continue to tanker a minimum of 4,000 litres of clean water per week to the children admitted in the Hartsheik Therapeutic Feeding Center, which has been technically and financially supported by UNICEF for the last two years. In the Education sector, 50 MT of BP5 biscuits have been delivered by UNICEF to 55 schools to help retain about 18,000 students in formal education, 1,600 full uniform sets for girls are being locally tailored by the Education Bureau with UNICEF funding as part of the activities to increase girls' enrolment & retention and the construction of separate latrines for boys and girls have been funded in nine schools in Jijiga and Shinile zones. In the water sector, funds have been released to the Water Bureau for the purchase of emergency fuel for water pumping in seven zones, while ARAN Welfare and Development Society and Ogaden Women's Development Association (OWDA) received financial support for hand dug wells in Korahe and Gode zones. UNICEF has also delivered therapeutic & supplementary food, non-food and shelter items, water pumps, generators and other emergency water supplies to different partners in the region as a preparedness measure.

UNICEF EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY TO HARAR TOWN

Responding to the acute water shortage in Harar town and the request for assistance from the Harari Regional President, the Harari Regional Water Bureau and UNICEF have reprogrammed water and sanitation financial assistance to provide emergency water to the town. Five water tankers began intense emergency water tankering operations on 23 February, transporting water to the town dwellers from distant available sources. This operation will continue for four months, which is the anticipated period of critical need. UNICEF will also supply five de-watering pumps and 33 Roto-tanks of different capacity for emergency water storage in Harar schools and town kebeles.