



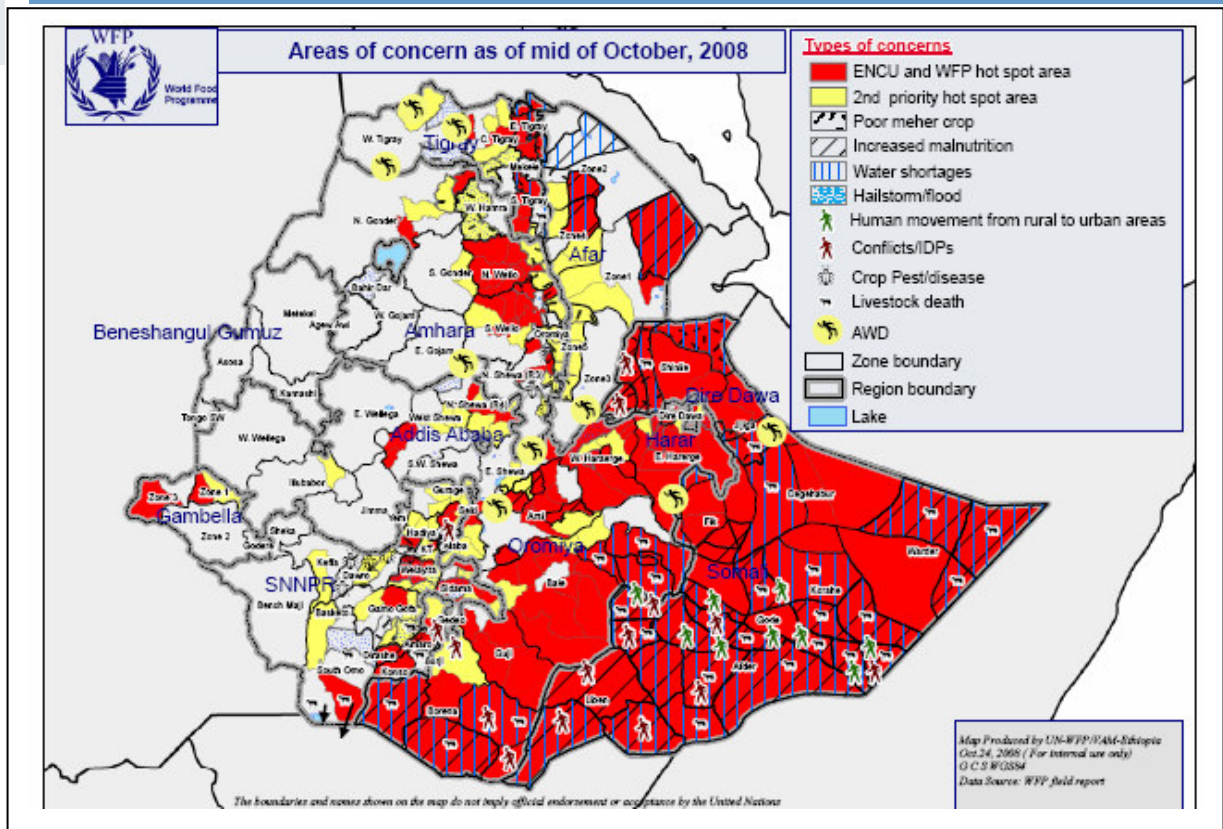
Ethiopia Country Office Food Security Update

25th October 2008

WFP Ethiopia

Overview/
Highlights

Livestock
pasture and
water



Overview/
Highlights

Health and
Nutrition

Weather,
Migratory
Pests and

Issues of Focus

Regional
Summary

Food Security: The Government issued an updated Humanitarian Requirement Document in mid October and estimated the total emergency beneficiaries for the remainder of the year (September – December 2008) at 6.4 million people, an increase from 4.6 million in June. According to the document, the net food requirement for meeting relief needs of the updated caseload during the last 4 months of the year stands at 270,245 Mt. The humanitarian situation in Somali Region remains of great concern despite the scattered deyr rainfall that has been received and the on going food and non food interventions by the Government and different humanitarian actors. Food security continued to deteriorate in the region as manifested by reported malnutrition in some areas of the region; cases of mortality; escalating food prices; declining livestock prices; high levels of livestock deaths; and increased migrations of entire households from rural to urban areas. The recently started deyr rains have eased the serious water shortages in parts of the region. General improvement in nutritional situation is being observed mainly in SNNPR and parts of Oromiya although there are still areas that are reporting deteriorations. Food and nutrition interventions and improved access to food due to fresh harvest account for the improvement.

Crop Production Prospects: Meher harvest prospects are generally promising especially in the western half of the country although concerns are now beginning to be received from some areas regarding the likelihood of significant yield losses unless some more rains come in October/early November to allow some of the late planted crops to reach maturity. On the contrary, crop production prospect in the eastern half, particularly in the lowlands, is very poor due to poor belg and kiremt rains. Near total crop failure has been reported in the lowland areas of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, Dire Dawa, Harar and northern Somali regions and there is little or no possibility for recovery even if more rains come in coming few days and weeks.

Markets: Decrease in food prices have been observed in some isolated markets as the new harvest comes into the market, but prices still remain very high and unaffordable to the poor.

Seasonal Forecast: If the forecast issued by NMA holds and the rains in the coming 2-3 months turn out to be below normal in the eastern half of the country, it could worsen further the already deteriorating food security situation in the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas.

Seasonal assessments: The joint seasonal assessment now termed Emergency Needs Assessment involving multi sector and multi agency, is tentatively scheduled to start in early November for Tigray region and from mid November in all other regions except Somali. The Somali assessment is likely to commence from 1st week of December.



1.1. Weather Related

- Hailstorms have caused some damages to crops in Mieso and Habro woredas of West Harerghe zone; and Gursum, Bedeno and Meta woredas of East Harerghe zone in Oromiya region; nearly all woredas in Wag Himra zone, Achefer and Tselemt woredas in Amhara region; Degua Tembein, Hawzen, and Laelay Aiyabo woredas in Tigray region; and Yirgachefe, Shebedino and Aleta Wondo in Sidama zone and nearly all woredas in Wolayita in SNNPR;. Isolated pockets have also experienced flash floods and landslides.
- Mini floods precipitated by the recent Deyr rains affected seven kebeles in Mustahil but there were no casualties. Some 450 households were temporarily displaced.
- According to a joint Ministry of Health (MOH) and World Health Organization (WHO) mission that visited the Gambella region in early September, floods from swelling rivers affected most woredas in the region and the number of people affected by the floods has gone up to about 90,000 of whom 35,000 were temporarily displaced. Crops, property and infrastructure have been damaged.

1.2 Migratory Pests

- A large swarm of quelea bird affected crops in parts of Kewot woreda in North Shewa zone. Aerial spraying was undertaken to control the infestation.
- Infestation of an insect known as sorghum chaffer was observed in the eastern lowland woredas of Kewot and Ankober in North Shewa zone where over 712 ha of sorghum was infested.

1.3. Refugee and Conflict

- The total number of refugees assisted by WFP in Ethiopia stood at 79,033 by the end of September 2008. The breakdown by region is as follows: 26,492 Sudanese refugees in Gambella and Benishangul Gumuz; 11,340 Eritrean refugees in Tigray; 5,942 Eritrean refugees in Afar; 29,600 Somali refugees in Somali; and 3,104 Kenyan refugees in Oromiya. The number of refugees in Tigray went down from an earlier figure of around 18,000 to the current level of 11,000 following a recent validation exercise undertaken by the Government and UNHCR.
- The chronic dispute over land between the Alabas and the Arsi Oromos resurfaced in early October and resulted in burning down of more than 1000 houses, 4 deaths, 8 serious injuries, with a total displaced population of 17,606.
- Renewed conflict that erupted between the Gujis on one side and the Burgis and the Amaros on the other has increased tensions in parts of Borena zone, and Amaro and Burji woredas.
- A border conflict between the Oromos and the neighbouring Somalis was reported in Bale zone in Medawolabu and Lagahida woredas.

2. Livestock, Pasture and Water conditions

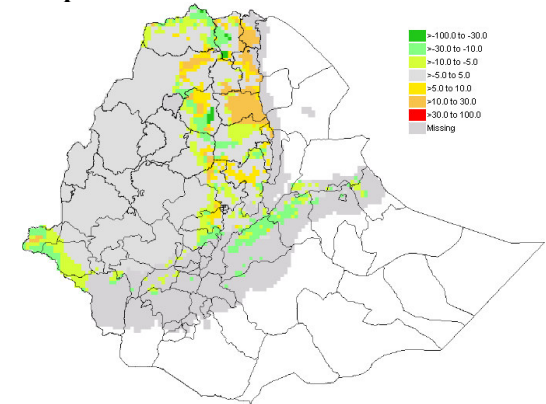
- Condition of livestock in Amhara, SNNPR, and most of Tigray and Oromiya regions is good as current availability of water and pasture is normal. Nonetheless, livestock condition is poor in most of Afar, several easterly woredas of Tigray, eastern and southeastern lowlands of Oromiya, and Dire Dawa due to the combined effect of the 2008 failed Belg/Genna/Segem rains and the recent poor Kiremt rains. Water and pasture shortages have been reported from these areas.
- In Tigray, livestock are in poor shape particularly in Raya Azebo, Hintalo Wajirat, Atsbi Wonberta, Erob and Tanqua Abergele woredas where significant cattle deaths have occurred and unusual migrations of herds within and outside the region have taken place for pasture.
- In Afar, livestock are below average in Zone 2; the northern parts of zone 1 and Teru woreda. The recent kiremt rains could not adequately replenish water and regenerate pasture particularly in the northern and northeastern parts of the region. Thus, water shortages are critical in Elidar, Korrie, Bidu, Erebt and Berhale woredas.
- The condition in the eastern lowland areas, especially in lowlands of Bale, Guji and Borena is worryingly very poor. Over 11,000 heads of livestock were reported to have died during the year in Borena alone.
- The situation in Somali region is rather alarming. All livestock types are weak and severely emaciated and have continued dying in large numbers. The deaths have emanated from scarcity of pasture and water as well as related diseases as a result of the protracted drought in the region that has continued since end of 2007. Even camels, known for their drought resistance, have started dying in significant numbers in recent months. Loss on cattle is estimated at 60-80% in many of the worst affected woredas. This together with increased sales and slaughters are eating into the asset base of the pastoral and agro-pastoral populations. Water shortage is one of the most pressing problems in the region. Even if emergency water interventions are underway, the gaps still remain big. The Deyr rains that started September and early October have temporarily alleviated the serious water shortages in most zones of the region.



3. Crop Conditions and Harvest Prospects

- Harvesting of some of the early maturing crops such as maize, haricot beans, teff and barley has started in the lowlands and some mid altitude areas. However, most crops including sorghum are currently between vegetative and grain filling stages and thus require some moderate rains to reach maturity.
- Considering a significant shift from long-cycle and high-yielding crops to short-cycle and low-yielding crops due to the poor Belg rains; late start and poor performance of the kiremt rains; reduced utilization of fertilizers due to the soaring prices; and occurrences of pests like armyworm, stock borer and sorghum chaffer, Meher harvest prospect in the eastern half of the country particularly in Southern and Eastern Tigray, eastern Amhara, eastern Oromiya, and the agro-pastoral areas of northern Somali is likely to be poor and worse than last year. In these areas, crops are now under water stress and some of them have totally dried up. In the remaining areas of the country, harvest prospect is generally promising and is likely to be similar to the 2007 good harvest provided that some rainfall occurs in October and early November (see Yield estimate for maize).

Expected End of Season Maize Yield Reduction compared to Normal

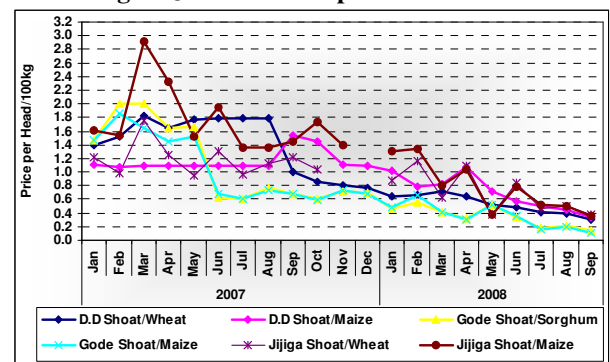


Source: WFP LEAP

4. Markets and Prices

- As of September 2008, general inflation based on the monthly moving average stood at 37.2%; food inflation at 51.8%; and non-food inflation at 17.0%. The increase is attributed to the increase in; food consumer price index (CPI) by 81.0%, of which cereals increased by 157.0% and non-food by 27.5%.
- The local and import price of grain show a slight decrease. The decrease in local prices is due to the cumulative effect of urban price stabilization program by government, the green harvest that has now started to be available in the markets and intervention of food aid programmes.
- The domestic price of grain has however remained above import parity price across all markets. For instance, during September 2008, the local price was above the import parity price by 42.4% for maize; 68.5% for Wheat; and 166.3 % for sorghum.
- The cumulative effects of poor body condition of livestock coupled with skyrocketing price of cereals has resulted in the continued deteriorating terms of trade (ToT) in most parts of the Somali region. Between March to September 2008, the terms of trade between a shoat and one quintal of grain has decreased significantly in Gode market from 42kgs to 11kgs of maize per shoat, a 72.6% decrease compared to March 2008; in Jijiga from 81kgs to 35kgs of maize per shoat, a 56.6% decrease; and in Dire-Dawa from 83kgs to 35kgs, a 58.2% decrease.

Terms of Trade for Livestock and Cereals in the Somali region Jan 2006 to Sep 2008



Source: WFP Sub Offices

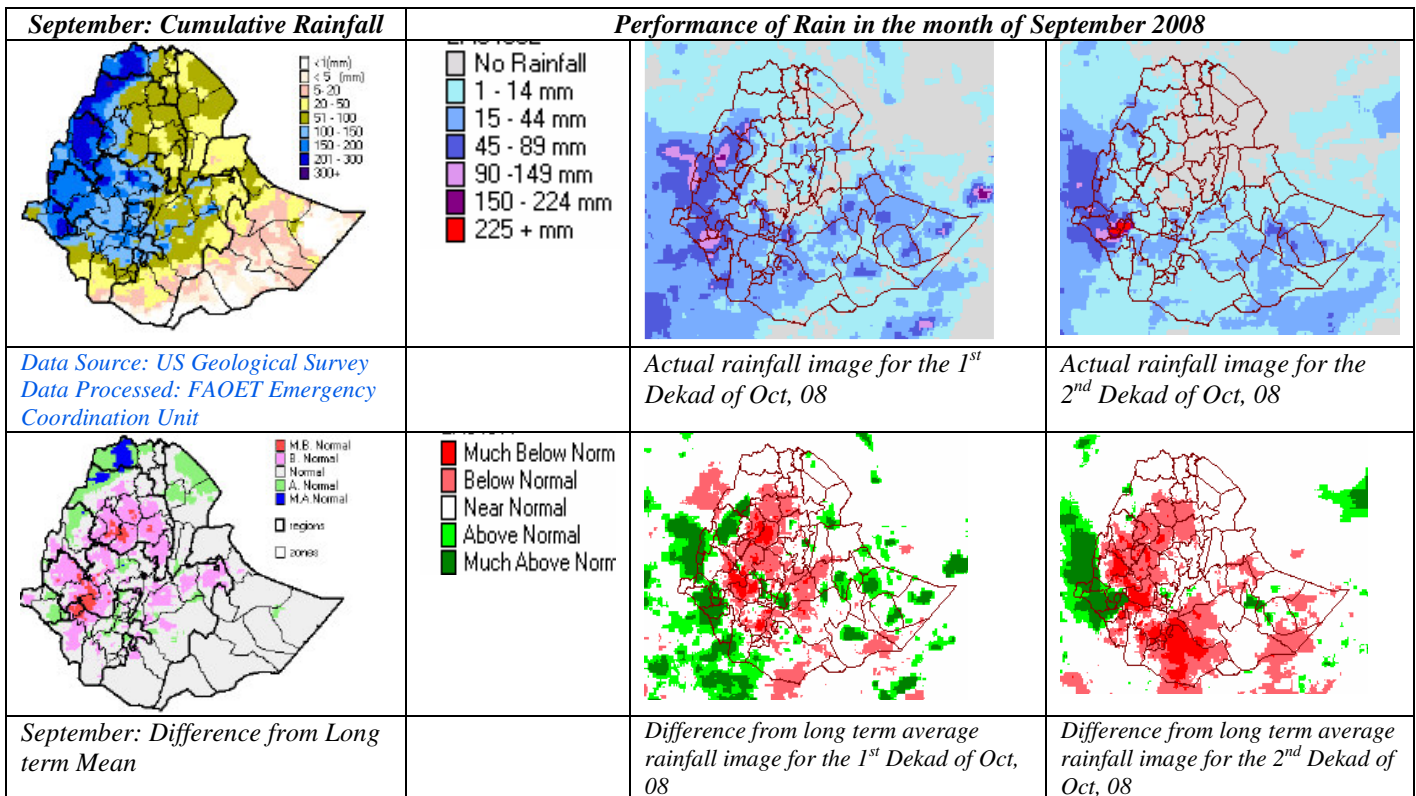
5. Health and Nutrition

- There was no major human disease outbreak during the reporting month despite prevalence of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) that is being reported after a relatively long period of calm. This month, at least 13 woredas have reported cases of AWD. These are Minjat and Shebel Berrenta in Amhara; Amibara, and Awash Fantale in Afar; East Badowacho in SNNPR; Taetay Maichew, Taetay Koraro, Asgede Tsimbila, Tsegede and Taetay Adiyabo in Tigray region; Ziway Dugda and Limu Bilbilo in Oromiya region; and Kebribeyah and Lagahida in Somali region. In Tigray stabilization centers have been set up to minimize the spread of the disease and to expedite recovery.
- In Somali, increased incidence of diarrhoea is widely reported in areas of the region that are water insecure. Kebribeyah woreda in Jijiga zone has reported some human deaths in connection with the increased incidence of diarrhoea.
- A general improvement in the nutritional situation has been reported in most of SNNPR and lowland parts of West Arsi. This is manifested in the declining trend of admission rates of malnourished children into Outreach Therapeutic Programme (OTPs) and Stabilization Centers (SCs). In Hadiya, Wolayita and Sidama zones, for example, admission rates have declined by up to 50% in September compared with August. The improvement is linked with the impact of the various food and nutrition support programs and the start of fresh harvest. Similarly, there is some decline in prevalence of malnutrition in Dire Dawa, East and West Harergeh.
- Rising malnutrition is reported in Derashe, Burji, Amaro, West Abaya and Genna Bossa in SNNPR; Kunni woreda and several woredas in Arsi and Borena zones in Oromiya region. Malnutrition is also widely reported in Somali region. According to a recent report by the regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB), child mortality from malnutrition and associated causes are becoming common in the region.
- In Afar, nutritional problems are observed in Bidu and Berhale woredas in Zone 2; Kore and Elidar woredas in Zone 1; with severe cases reported in Teru and Gulina woredas in Zone 4; and Erebtu in Zone 2. As a result, Government, UNICEF and other humanitarian agencies are now doing nutrition interventions.



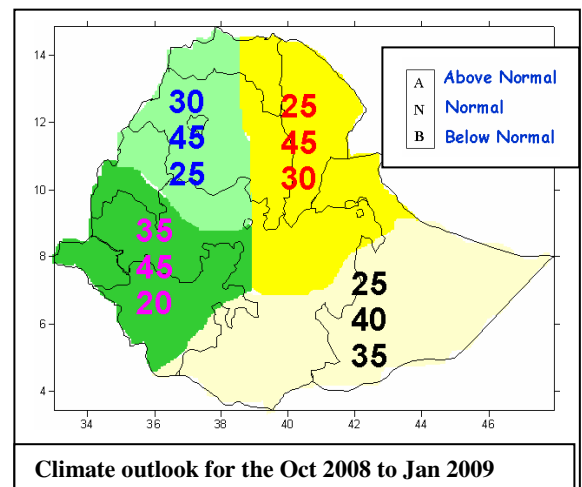
5. Performance of the Meher Rainfall Season

- Most crop producing areas of the country had a timely start of the kiremt rains this year. However, areas like East and South Tigray, parts of eastern Amhara, eastern Oromiya (including Arsi and East Shewa); and northern Somali experienced up to a one month delay in the onset of the rains. The rains performed generally well in July and August and even in the first half of September except incidences of heavy rainfall, hailstorms, flash floods and erratic precipitations in pocket areas. There have been little or no rainfall since mid September causing depletion of soil moistures and limiting full development of late planted crops
- A recent rapid mission (EC, UADA, FEWS_NET and WFP) to some parts of the country witnessed farmers' concern over the early withdrawal of the kiremt rain from mid September.
- In most zones of Somali and the lowlands of Bale, Guji and Borena as well as in South Omo, the small season Deyr/Hageya rains started falling from end of September/early October and the geographic coverage appears some what good. They have positively impacted water availability and slightly helped for some regeneration of pasture in isolated pockets (refer rainfall maps below)



7. Forecast and possible impact of the September-December 2008 rainy season

- A seasonal forecast given by the National Meteorological Agency (NMA) in early October strongly confirms with a similar forecast issued by the Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum two months earlier. According to NMA, the western half of the country will have normal to above normal rainfall while the eastern half is likely to experience below normal to normal rainfall condition during the period September 2008 to January 2009 (see map).
- If the forecast comes true, it could have adverse implications on food security in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of the country. For these areas it would mean at least four poor rainy seasons in succession, which would be a serious threat not only to livelihoods but also lives. The rains in the western half, on the other hand, could well be useful for immature crops but devastating to the mature ones. The rains will also be beneficial for improving water and pasture availability.



8. Issues that require special follow up in coming months

- Progress of the Deyr/Hageya/Dedea/Sapia rains in October – December
- Incidence of water borne diseases such as malaria and AWD
- Availability of some showers in late October/early November
- Occurrence of untimely rains during the Bega season (October to January)
- Impact of harvest on market supplies and food prices



8. Regional Summary of Food Security Situation in August 2008

Tigray

- Overall, crops in the region are performing well. But are poor in the eastern woredas of Southern and Eastern Tigray.
- Combination of heavy rains and hailstorms caused crop damages in D/ Tembien, Hawzen and Laelay Adiyabo woredas.
- Food aid distributions and the coming in of fresh harvest of some crops has helped stabilize the overall food security in the region

Oromiya

- Hageya rains have started in Hageya receiving areas and believed to have alleviated the serious water shortages in the areas.
- Crops performing very poorly in lowlands of East and West Harerghe, Arsi, Dire Dawa due to poor meher rains. They are doing generally well in remaining areas.
- Condition of livestock is good in mid and highland areas of eastern Oromiya and the entire central and western Oromiya. In the eastern lowlands, though, condition of livestock is very poor
- Increased malnutrition reported in Dire, Dillo and Teltele woredas (Borena); Jeju, Limu Bilbilo, Enkolo Wabe, Arsi Robe, Amigna and Hitosa (Arsi); Dodola and Gedeb Asasa (W. Arsi). However, nutritional problem in Sirao, Shala and Shashemene (W. Arsi) and woredas in most of East and West Harerghe has significantly declined due to food aid interventions and start of fresh harvest.
- Deterioration in food security situation continues in East and West Harerghe, Arsi, Borena, and Bale.

Somali:

- Karan rains in Jijiga and Shinnile zones have performed poorly during the season. On the other hand, the recently started Deyr rains have temporarily eased water shortages in many areas.
- All livestock types are weak and emaciated and have continued to die in large numbers
- Food prices have continued rising while livestock prices have been declining, thus eroding the purchasing power of pastoralists
- Increased movement of populations from rural to urban areas has continued
- Water shortage is one of the major problems in the region.
- Increased malnutrition is widely reported in the region and food security in the region has continued to decline despite various humanitarian interventions

Gambella

- Floods in August affected about 90,000 people and incurred damages to crops, property and infrastructures.

Amhara

- Meher crop prospect in the region is generally promising except low-lying parts of the eastern zones where kiremt rains have been poor and some infestations of pests occurred.
- Livestock conditions are generally good as availability of water and pasture is currently normal
- Prospect of food security in the eastern woredas including those in Wag Himra zone does not look promising.

Afar

- The just ended Kiremt rains have been poor across much of the region. Currently, water shortages are critical in Elidar, Korrie, Bidu, Erebt and Berhale woredas.
- Nutritional problems have been observed in Erebt, Berhale, Bidu, Korrie Elidar, Teru, and Gulina woredas. The problem is worse in Teru, Erebt and Gulina.
- Livestock conditions are about normal in most of the region but below average in most of Zone 2; Teru woreda in Zone 4 and the northern parts of Zone 1.
- Due to impact of PSNP and TSF food interventions, the food security situation in the region remains generally stable.

SN N PR:

- Heavy rains and hailstorms caused some damages to crops in several woredas of Wolayita, Gamo Gofa, Hadiya and Sidama zones. Pests and crop diseases have also incurred significant damages to crops in several woredas of Wolayita, and Dawro zones.
- The region has seen a significant decline in admission rates to OTPs and SCs, reflecting a general and steady improvement in nutritional situation. However, deterioration in nutritional situation observed in Derashe, W. Abaya, Burji, Amaro and Genna Bossa woredas.
- Availability of pasture and water has improved in the entire region including South Omo, Burji and Konso where there were serious shortages in previous months
- Although current levels are higher than those of past years, food prices are now steadily declining due to impact of food aid interventions and start of harvest in some areas