FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA
Special Issue 8 April 2011

HIGHLIGHTS

- The food security situation is deteriorating in areas dependent on Gu/Genna (March-May) rainy season in Afar, the eastern and southeastern pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Oromia, Somali, and the southern lowlands of SNNPR.

- Poor sweet potato harvest due to Belg moisture stress negatively affects the food security situation in the SNNPR as sweet potatoes are essential to bridge food gaps until the next season’s planting (July).

- Belg rains (Feb-May) delayed and performing poorly in major Belg growing areas in Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, and Tigray – delaying planting by at least a month.

- Chronic water shortages in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Somali, Oromia, and SNNPR. Shortages are now spreading to Afar, and Belg rain receiving areas of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray.

- Prices of major staple cereals - maize, sorghum, wheat, and teff - continuing to rise since end of 2010. A sudden rise of maize prices in SNNPR during March 2011.

- Regional requests for relief food assistance from Somali and Oromia increase following the deteriorating food security situation.

Food Security Situation Overview in the Horn of Africa:
WFP on high alert over impact of March to May long rains in the Horn.

Since November 2010, East African countries have registered serious dry conditions that are likely to worsen in the coming months. According to the World Meteorological Organization, these conditions are largely due to the La Niña weather effect. La Niña is the name given to the cooling of the surface of the central and eastern Pacific Ocean that occurs every two to five years. The impact of La Niña on weather keep East Africa drier than usual, creating food security concerns in areas lacking irrigation, including parts of Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania. Due to the La Niña effect, WFP is now on high alert over the impact of the March to May long rains.

The current dry conditions began with the failure of the October to December short rains in 2010 in eastern parts of the Horn of Africa. The number in need of relief assistance may increase further if the current long rains – from March to May – are poor. The outlook for the rains in eastern parts of the Horn is worrying, especially combined with rising food and fuel prices and conflict. If the latest meteorological forecasts of below-normal long rains in the eastern Horn are correct, the crisis will worsen in those areas and more people will go hungry.

Food prices have started rising in areas that rely on the short rains for most food production. Cereal prices in the region over the next six months are expected to increase by 40 to 50 percent. Rising international food and fuel prices are compounding the pressure on the poorest, many of whom hadn’t yet fully recovered from the brutal 2007 to 2009 regional drought in the Horn.

Consequently, the number of people in need of relief food assistance in the Horn of Africa is growing.

Seasonal Calendar  (source: FEWSNET)
Food Security Hazards and Shocks in Ethiopia
February-March 2011

Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards/shocks, Feb/March 2011</th>
<th>Acute Food insecurity ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✳ Increased school dropout/School closure</td>
<td>Priority 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔵 Water trucking underway</td>
<td>Priority 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⬇ Water shortages for human consumption</td>
<td>Priority 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴 Increased livestock mortality</td>
<td>Region Boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🐐 Water/Pasture Shortages</td>
<td>Zone Boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✖ Acute Malnutrition</td>
<td>Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴 Malaria outbreak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴 ▲ Measles outbreak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴 🔵 Livestock influx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Highlights

Somali Region
Due to the failure of the last Deyr rains (October-December) and the current poor Gu rains, the food security situation in the pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of southern Somali Region is highly affected and is deteriorating further. Most water sources have dried up and pastures are exhausted. Government, UNICEF and NGOs are providing water trucking. However rapid increase in the magnitude of the problem has resulted in shortfalls in ability to cover needs. High price of imported food, very low price of livestock, and restriction of trade is also aggravating the situation.
Generally, the above conditions have resulted in:
- Significant out-migrations of the pastoralists with their livestock in search of pasture and water within the Somali region and to neighbouring zones of the Oromia region;
- Deaths of livestock especially cattle and sheep and goats in all zones;
- Deteriorating nutritional status of vulnerable groups- due to absence of livestock products and reduced food intake;
- Ethnic conflicts between and around the Somali and Oromia border due to pasture and water stress; and
- Dropouts of students from schools and the closure of several schools in the region.
Consequently, the Somali region’s request for relief food assistance has increased for the second round by about 300,000 from the Humanitarian Requirements Document figures.

Oromia Region
The general food security situation remains stable in most of Oromia (as well as East and West Harerger, Hareri region and the Dire Dawa Administrative Council). This is due to the good harvest in 2010 in addition to the generally stable food grain prices.
However, the food security situation in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Oromia is becoming volatile. Adversities reported are as follows:
- Water and pasture shortages are reported in lowlands of East and West Harerger (Burka Dimtu, Hawwi Gudina, Miesso, Doba, Darolebu, Boke, Fedis, Gole Oda, Meyu Muluke, Chinaksen, Gursum, Kumbi and Habro), Bale, Guji and Borena zones;
- Livestock are emaciated and their condition is deteriorating further with animal deaths reported in some lowland areas of Borena, Bale, and Guji;
- Malnutrition reported in most lowland woredas of Borena; and
- Drastic fall in livestock prices, especially cattle prices in drought affected parts in East and West Harerger, Dire Dawa and Hareri and decline in the supply of livestock in lowlands of Bale, Borena and Guji.
 Further, the Belg rains that are usually received from February-May are late with below average amount and distribution. This has delayed planting of Belg crops by over six weeks. Consequently, Oromia region’s request for relief food assistance has increased for the second round by about 300,000 higher than the Humanitarian Requirements Document figures.

Amhara, Tigray and Afar Regions
The overall food security situation is stable in these areas attributed to last year’s Meher (in Amhara and Tigray) and Karma (Afar) rains. Generally, livestock conditions and the availability of pasture and water is normal. Market supply and prices of both cereals and livestock is generally normal.
However the current Belg rains that are used for planting major staple crops in Tigray and Amhara are performing poorly. Hence, long cycle crop planting is significantly delayed. In Amhara, only 13 percent of the prepared area is so far planted. In Afar, the chronically water insecure areas are experiencing serious water shortages. If the coming Sugum are poor as predicted, deteriorations in pastoral conditions seem to be likely until the main (Karma) rains are received. As livestock will have little respite from the impact of the current long dry season, their physical conditions will deteriorate, milk supplies will decline and long distance migrations in search of water and pasture could ensue. Abnormal migrations could in some cases trigger tribal conflicts along some border areas with Amhara as had been the case in the past.
Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR)

The overall food security situation is volatile in many areas of the region. The situation is likely to get more critical in the coming months as the hunger period progresses (April-June). Although the performance of the Sapia rains (December/January) was generally close to normal, inadequate moisture in the current Belg season has led to a near total failure of the sweet potato crop that is normally harvested beginning March.

In Kembata Tembaro Zone, the harvest loss is estimated to be 70-80 percent. A complete failure is reported in the different zones. The sweet potato crop highly affects the food security situation as it is an important transitional crop during the hunger months between April and June. Other factors that contributed for the volatile food security situation in the region are as follows:

- During March, the price of maize increased in average by 43 percent in most markets in the region. In addition there are reports of falling supply of staple foods in most rural markets.
- The serious shortages of pasture and water resulting in the deterioration of livestock body condition (particularly that of cattle) and the decline of livestock products and price.

Furthermore, nutritional status is declining in the region with: increased rates of acute malnutrition reported among the under five; increased admissions in Outpatient Therapeutic Programmes (in Damot Pulasa and East Badewacho); and acute cases being admitted in Stabilization Centers such as in East Badewacho and in Kedida Gamila. More than 110 acute cases are registered and being assisted in Taza Stabilization Center - nearly all of them are with oedema.

The current Belg rain performance in SNNPR is below normal as compared to the long term average rainfall data and is also far below last year's rainfall performance. Hence, planting of Belg crops is not progressing in many areas across the region and overall crop production prospects are so far not promising. Based on field observation and key informants interview, virtually no harvest of maize as well as other Belg crops such as haricot beans and Irish potato is expected this year. The poor Belg rains have also affected the seasonal coffee flowering between the months of January and March; in some cases coffee plants have dried up completely due the severity of the drought.

Rainfall Patterns in the SNNPR

Climate forecasts have already indicated March – May rains, main rains for the areas, are likely to be poor this year. Most parts of the region remained dry and hot in the first week of March. The rainfall situation showed some improvement in the second week when most places of the region had close to normal precipitation. There was also light to moderate shower in highland and wet midland areas of Gurage, Silte, Hadiya, Wolayta, Dawro, Sidama, Bench Maji, Kefa and Sheka zones for 1-3 days around the beginning of third week of the month. Nevertheless, most parts of the region remained dry and extremely hot in the third week of March.
Market Trends in Areas of Concern
Nationally the average wholesale prices of maize, sorghum, wheat, and teff have continuously increased since end of 2010. The poor wheat harvest due to yellow rust is a major cause of local wheat price increases. Currently, the wholesale price of wheat stands at 48 percent above the long term average, and 15 percent above March 2010. As a result poorer consumers began shifting towards the cheapest and widely consumed staple maize. By March 2011, the average wholesale price of maize stood above that of the same month of 2008 and 2010; although still below the peak level of 2008. The national average price of maize in March 2011 was the highest since September 2009 standing at Birr 3.22/kg (see Figure 1 and 2) and the average wheat price stood at Birr 5.54/kg, the highest since February 2009.

Of particular concern is the sudden increase in the retail price of maize across monitored district markets in SNNPR. The retail price of maize increased on average by about 43 percent in the monitored markets of Dila, Meskan, Sodo, Hossaena, Awassa Zuriya and Sikle. This parallels the situation in 2008 where maize prices increased dramatically due to a failure of the SNNPR root crop harvest, followed by a failed Belg harvest coinciding with the global food and fuel price crisis of 2008. As global wheat and fuel prices are currently increasing, and the forecasts suggest a poor Belg performance in Ethiopia, the rapid rise in maize prices in SNNPR could be an indicator of expected contraction in food availability in Ethiopia. Maize from SNNPR typically supplies deficit areas of the country; hence price rises can be expected to transfer to other areas.

Update on Relief Interventions
The number of beneficiaries of relief food is established at federal level based on seasonal needs assessments. The Humanitarian Requirement Document of February, 2011 indicates that 2.8 million people would need food assistance in 2011. This includes an additional 27,570 Internally Displaced Persons (due to conflicts and natural disasters).

For the first round of relief allocations, a total amount of about 2.3 million relief beneficiaries have been assisted; out of which WFP and DRMFSS has assisted a total of 1.9 million with NGO Consortium Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP) covering the remaining.

With the current drought situation, the number of people in need of food assistance rose in the second round as a result of requests by the regional authorities. At present, the second round of relief allocation and dispatches has commenced and will reach about 2.6 million people. The main increase was an additional 200,000 beneficiaries in Somali Region. Following further assessment missions undertaken by DRMFSS it is likely that the third round relief allocation will reach a higher level of beneficiaries. For example, following the assessment in Oromia the region has requested assistance for an additional 250,000 people in Borena, Bale, and Gurgi zones. This would bring total relief requirements above the Humanitarian Requirements Document figure of 2.8 million.
## WFP Ethiopia Pipeline and Funding Status

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRRO 106650*</td>
<td>Relief</td>
<td>1,936,000</td>
<td>322,780</td>
<td>235,360,282</td>
<td>213,899</td>
<td>141,236,412</td>
<td>110,767</td>
<td>95,602,682</td>
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<td>PRRO 106650</td>
<td>Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)</td>
<td>1,356,173</td>
<td>153,863</td>
<td>106,032,394</td>
<td>59,634</td>
<td>31,339,985</td>
<td>94,230</td>
<td>74,692,402</td>
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<td>PRRO 106650**</td>
<td>Targeted Supplementary Food programme (TSF)</td>
<td>1,064,000</td>
<td>53,215</td>
<td>55,666,037</td>
<td>30,378</td>
<td>29,148,034</td>
<td>23,871</td>
<td>27,506,889</td>
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<td>PRRO 106650</td>
<td>Urban HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>164,000</td>
<td>27,151</td>
<td>20,529,356</td>
<td>20,172</td>
<td>10,851,308</td>
<td>6,979</td>
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<td>PRRO 106650 TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,243,333</td>
<td>557,009</td>
<td>417,588,069</td>
<td>324,083</td>
<td>212,575,739</td>
<td>235,846</td>
<td>207,480,026</td>
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<td>CP 10430</td>
<td>Activity 1 - MERET</td>
<td>610,000</td>
<td>37,134</td>
<td>23,020,914</td>
<td>28,312</td>
<td>17,569,241</td>
<td>8,817</td>
<td>5,451,673</td>
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<td>CP 10430</td>
<td>Activity 2 - Food For Education</td>
<td>625,881</td>
<td>22,193</td>
<td>22,360,281</td>
<td>12,863</td>
<td>13,330,357</td>
<td>7,999</td>
<td>7,756,048</td>
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<td>CP 10430 TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,235,881</td>
<td>59,287</td>
<td>45,381,195</td>
<td>41,179</td>
<td>30,899,594</td>
<td>16,776</td>
<td>13,207,721</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<td>PRRO 101273</td>
<td>Assistance to refugees</td>
<td>226,000</td>
<td>46,741</td>
<td>35,077,592</td>
<td>39,231</td>
<td>28,491,918</td>
<td>10,894</td>
<td>8,921,786</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>SO 107130</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Passenger Service for Somali Region</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2,676,818</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2,176,818</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP Ethiopia TOTAL 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,705,414</td>
<td>663,037</td>
<td>500,723,674</td>
<td>404,493</td>
<td>271,967,251</td>
<td>263,517</td>
<td>231,786,351</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Shortfalls include outstanding advance financing for Refugees ($2.3m) from previous years

**26% of TSF beneficiaries also benefit from Relief and PSNP. To avoid double-counting this percentage is deducted from the total beneficiary sum of the PRRO 106650.

Note: WFP is currently in the process of revising its budget in order to accommodate the expected increase in the number of relief beneficiaries.