



Food Security Update

The latest FEWS-NET/WFP food security outlook indicates that food security has improved in *meher* (long cycle crops)-producing parts of the country with the start of the harvest in October and anticipates favorable conditions from October to March in most parts of the country. According to the report, prices of staple foods have reduced and household purchasing power has increased due to improvements in physical conditions of livestock. However, the report also indicates that food security conditions are likely to deteriorate in eastern parts of SNNPR starting in February/March, as below-average *sapie* (January to mid February) rains are expected and may lead to below-normal production of transitional crops, including sweet potato. Food security conditions in flood-affected areas of Southern Tigray zone, North Wello, South Wello and Oromia zones (Amhara), and in the highlands of East and West Hararghe zones (Oromia) also require close monitoring, as livestock have been lost, crops damaged and household assets destroyed. Moreover, water availability is expected to deteriorate in the southern zones of Somali Region, neighboring lowlands of Bale, Borena and Guji zones (Oromia) and South Omo zone (SNNPR) due to the anticipated below normal pastoral rains from October to December. For more information, contact: ethiopia@fewsn.net & wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Update

UNICEF reports serious water shortages in the chronically water-insecure areas of Afder, Degehabur, Gode and Fik zones in Somali Region due to the delayed / below-normal performance of the *deyr* (October to December) rains. The Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Bureau (DPPB) has started emergency water trucking in most affected woredas. UNICEF is supporting the deployment of 21 water tankers for a period of one month to Afder (Bare, Chereti, Hargele and West Imi), Degehabur (Degehmadaw, Aware and Gunagado), Gode (Adadle) and Fik (Garbo and Segeg). Water shortages have also been reported in the lowland areas of Bale zone (Dawe Serer and Dawe Kechene) in Oromia. The Regional Water Resources Bureau mobilized two trucks to start emergency trucking operations in the affected woredas. The situation could deteriorate further if the pastoral rains are further delayed and/or rainfall performance is poor, which is likely given the prevailing *La Niña* effect. *La Niña* typically brings below-average rains over the eastern Horn of Africa. For more information, contact: kmcdonald@unicef.org

Agriculture Update

FAO reports that control and mitigation efforts are ongoing to contain the outbreak of yellow rust disease that has affected some 410,000 hectares of wheat in Oromia (parts of Arsi, West Arsi, Bale, Horogudru, Jimma, North and West Shewa), Amhara (North Shewa, South Gondar, East Gojam, North and South Wollo) and SNNP (Gurage, Siltie, Hadya and Halaba Special Woreda). The severity of the infestation in some cases is reported to be as high as 90 per cent. The extent of the damage varies and will to be captured by the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) and the seasonal *meher* assessment, scheduled for November and December. Government-supported spraying has protected some 110,000 hectares; FAO, with funding from the Humanitarian Response Fund and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and regional bureaus of agriculture, is planning to support some 65,000 affected households in SNNP, Oromia and Amhara regions in spraying of fungicides. For more information, contact: dorelyn.jose@fao.org

Health Update

The Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI) reported a total of 108 new cases of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) – none fatal – from Oromia (Shakiso and Urga woredas, Guji zone) and SNNP (Dara and Bona woredas, Sidama zone, and Dilla Zuria and Dilla town, Gedeo zone) between 18 and 24 October 2010. UNICEF dispatched two essential drug kits to mitigate the impact of any possible AWD outbreak in the upcoming religious gathering (*Dire Shek Hussein*) in Bale zone, Oromia region, which is expected to draw half a million people in November. Each kit contains drugs and medical supplies adequate to treat 2,500 people for three months.

During the same week, 267 new cases of measles were reported from SNNP (Male, Benatsemay and North Ari woredas in South Omo zone) and Amhara regions. Zonal and woreda health departments are conducting mass vaccination campaigns and strengthening case management and prevention activities in affected woredas. The national measles vaccination campaign, targeting some 7.7 million children, was conducted between 23 and 27 October in all regions, except Benishangul Gumuz, Afar and Gambella where it is planned for February 2011.

Malaria epidemic prevention and control activities, including indoor residual spraying and environmental management through community involvement, are progressing. WHO, in collaboration with the Oromia Regional Health Bureau (RHB), conducted malaria prevention and epidemic preparedness activities in Jimma, Kelem Wollega, West Wollega, East Wollega, West Shewa and Ilubabur zones. Moreover, zonal and woreda health facilities have been assessed on malaria epidemic preparedness and surveillance. WHO is supporting these areas in epidemic preparedness, surveillance, supervision and prepositioning of anti-malarial drugs. Additionally, the Somali Regional Health Bureau sent medical teams with drugs and diagnostic supplies to Kebridehar and Dollo Ado woredas to assess the overall situation and provide the necessary technical support in view of the reported increasing cases of malaria. For more information, contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int & kmcdonald@unicef.org