



Health Update

With the end of the *kiremt* (June to October) rains, the number of new cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) reported is decreasing. Over the past two weeks, 66 cases have been reported, according to the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI), including 27 cases (none fatal) between 27 and 3 October in Amhara (Jiletumuga woreda, Oromia zone), Oromia (Gorodolla and Shakiso woredas, Guji zone) and SNNPR (Dilla Zuria and Yirgachefe woredas, Gedeo zone; Dera woreda, Sidama zone; and Dilla town). The corrected case figure for the week of 20 to 26 September is 39 cases reported from Dire Dawa, Oromia and SNNPR.

Meanwhile, there have been no reports of AWD cases associated with the Gishen Mariam religious ceremony, which was celebrated in Amhara on 1 October. Ahead of the celebration, a committee including the regional and zonal health bureaus, WHO, UNICEF, OCHA, Oxfam and Save the Children UK provided technical and financial support in AWD outbreak prevention and control, and other health emergency response in, Amabasel (Gishen Mariam), Dessie, Tehulledere, Kutaber (Teleyaye) and Kombolcha woredas. In addition, WHO and UNICEF conducted an AWD outbreak investigation assessment in Oromia zone (Amhara), concluding that preventive and control measures have been put in place and case management has been good. A committee has been established to study the cross border implications and other causes of the disease in the surrounding areas. EHNRI provided drugs, medical supplies and technical support to the Dire Dawa city administration, and UNICEF supported the training of 34 case treatment center (CTC) staff on surveillance, case management, CTC establishment and management in the Administration. CARE distributed 312,480 sachets of PUR to 5,208 households in Kurfa Chele woreda (East Hararghe zone, Oromia) and IRC provided 1,600 bottles of water guard in Gedeo zone (SNNPR) sufficient for an equivalent number of families for one month. The Ethiopian Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, with funding from WHO, is supporting the implementation of AWD prevention activities in Guji zone (Oromia) and Gedeo zone (SNNPR).

A large number of new measles cases was reported again in the past week, with 823 cases (six deaths) in Oromia (38 cases), SNNPR (779 cases and six deaths) and Addis Ababa (six cases) between 27 September and 3 October. Affected woredas include Agarfa, Dawa Sara, Ginir and Goro (Oromia) and Aroresa, Bensa, Male, Benatsemay, South Ari and North Ari (SNNPR) and Addis Ababa. WHO supported a training of trainers on measles supplementary immunization activities (SIAs) for zonal supervisors as part of the pre-vaccination campaign preparation. The vaccination campaign is scheduled from 22 to 25 October in SNNPR. For more information, contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int & kmcdonald@unicef.org

Nutrition Update

The government's Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) reports that the nutrition situation at the national level continues to be stable, based on the August Therapeutic Feeding Programme (TFP) reports and nutrition surveys. Some 16,868 severely malnourished children were admitted at 5,126 TFP sites in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali, and Tigray during the month, with an average reporting rate of 71.2 per cent. The TFP admission trend continued to be relatively stable over the last four months (May-August) – during the traditional hunger season between June and August. Regional admissions rates in Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray indicated a slight decrease compared to the July figures, with a reporting rate over 83 per cent. The nutrition situation is anticipated to remain stable or improve further in most parts of the country, following good *belg* harvests and promising *meher* prospects. However, there are some pocket areas where survey results indicate serious nutritional situation, including in Delanta woreda (Amhara), where nutrition interventions are expected to begin shortly. Nutrition partners have also been mobilized to strengthen nutrition interventions in flood-affected woredas in Afar, Amhara and Somali regions to manage and mitigate the likely deterioration of the nutrition situation.

In terms of response, coverage of the 196 'priority one' woredas with either therapeutic feeding programme (TFP), targeted supplementary feeding (TSF) or a combination of both interventions is about 90 per cent. Coverage of nutrition interventions with the combination of TFP and TSF increased slightly from 53 to 54 per cent in 'priority one' woredas during the month of August, while the corresponding overall coverage for priority 1, 2 and 3 woredas (360 woredas) stands at 47 per cent. General food distribution decreased from 87 per cent in July to 73 per cent in August, mainly due to delayed distribution of August relief food in SNNPR. Meanwhile, in support of the ongoing TFP activities, UNICEF provided 675 MT of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) in the third quarter of 2010, enough to treat 67,500 children with severe acute malnutrition for one month. For more information, contact: isaackm@dppc.gov.et & kmcdonald@unicef.org

Agriculture Update

FAO reports that a yellow wheat rust epidemic has reached most wheat-growing areas of the country, including Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, and surrounding areas of Addis Ababa. According to Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) estimates, as of 4 October, 413,725 hectares of farmland had been infested, while control activities had been undertaken in only one fourth of the affected areas. FAO plans to organize emergency response activities, including procurement, airlifting, distribution and spraying of fungicides. FAO is also preparing a medium-term intervention that will help reduce the risk in the near future and build the country's capacity for early warning and forecast of this fungal disease.

The Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA) has confirmed a locust outbreak in the Berak area of Shinile zone (Somali Region). According to the DLCO-EA, a mix of African Migratory Locust and Desert Locust has been detected in the area, and that a localized irrigated 15 hectares of land has been protected from locusts. FAO is closely monitoring the situation. For more information, contact: dorelyn.jose@fao.org