



Ethiopian Early Warning System

Monthly Report :October /November 2005

November 30, 2005

AREAS OF PRIORITY ACTION

APre-harvest crop assessment under way

The 2006 emergency need assessment led by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency is under way as of 19 November throughout the country. In the assessment work 20 teams drawn from the government and other agencies including UN agencies, Donors and NGOs were dispatched to their respective areas of assignment after briefing given by Federal DPPA on methods and procedure of the assessment. The assessment will be completed by 19 December 2005.

Omo River Flood Not as Reportedly Serious

Omo River flood that was reported by DPPB of South Omo Zone was assessed by a team of experts during October 2005. The damage caused by the flood, however, was not as reportedly serious. No death of persons confirmed; the said damaged granaries were found intact; physical condition of livestock was good and only carcass of three animals was seen floating.

Fear of "Bird Flu " Pandemic in East Africa

Avian Influenza, the disease commonly known as "Bird Flu", is feared to spread to East Africa. The disease which affects migratory birds (waterfowl), particularly wild ducks and chickens and then transmitted to human beings who further transmit it among themselves has so far been reported from Asia where it has killed over 160 persons in recent years.

Performance in the Pastoral Areas

The onset of "Deyr" rain in Somali Region was late by about one to two weeks and its amount was inadequate in most zones during October/November particularly in the eastern and southern parts of the Region. The northern parts that benefit from the Karan rain particularly Shinile and Jijiga zones on the other hand are performing better as compared to the other parts of the Region. In Afar Region pasture condition was declining in some parts due to inadequate rains of the past Karma season and over grazing. Below normal rainfall was observed over parts of Borena and South Omo zones, which could have negative impact on the availability of pasture and water. In South Omo Zone, with exception of Bako Gazer Woreda where the rain improved pasture and water, light rains were reported during 1st half of October 2005.

Signs of malnutrition in Berhale Woreda of Afar

Signs of malnutrition was reported from some areas of Berhale Woreda of Zone 2 in Afar Region. Survey was conducted in the woreda by GOAL Ethiopia during 16-20 October 2005. The survey indicates GAM (Global Acute Malnutrition) as 19% and SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition) 2% which is rated serious. But it is necessary to thoroughly consider the matter through examining relevant information to identify what actions should be taken.

HIGHLIGHTS

Millions of Quelea Quelea Birds Killed

16.3 million Quelea Quelea birds of which 96% killed were reported in different parts of Somali, Oromiya and SNNP Regions during 2-25 October 2005.

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Weather Performance

During the third dekad of October 2005 normal to above normal rainfall was reported from western, southwestern and parts of southern Ethiopia while dry weather situation occurred in some parts of Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya and SNNPR.

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Agricultural Activities and Crop Performances

Good performance of crops was reported in most parts of Meher growing areas during the month of October 2005.

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Situation in Pastoral Areas

Pasture condition was declining in some parts of Afar Region due to inadequate rains of the past Karema season and over grazing.

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Early Warning System Monthly Report is prepared by the Early Warning Department of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to coordinate and disseminate early warning and food security information.





Disaster Occurrence

Omo River flood not as reportedly serious.

The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA, which is the former DPPC) received report from Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional Government Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau on damage caused by Omo River flood around its mouth before Rudolf Lake on October 17, 2005. The flood damage was reportedly death of two persons; unidentified population encircled by water without any outlet; unknown situation of people who escaped at initial state of the flood; distraction of crops over farm land and granary at home; washing away of 78 animals; shortage of pasture that prevailed for over 20 days. Thus, the DPPB requested for food food aid including supplementary food, medicine and other items.

Upon receiving report of flood disaster in South Omo Zone of SNNPR the DPPA conducted a rapid disaster area assessment to verify the situation on site apart from supply of one month emergency assistance sent to the area based on the request. However, the finding of the assessment revealed that the damage caused by the flood was insignificant.

Physical condition of livestock was good in spite of the report that pasture was covered by flood water; no information was obtained from the community about loss of human life; and only carcass of three animals was seen floating. On the other hand, sorghum crops sown by the community well ahead of the said flood were in good condition at the size of about nearly a meter high. And the people including those who returned back to their settlement areas were seen engaged with planting and sowing.

On the contrary, health issue was identified as more serious because of eventual water borne diseases, malaria infestation as well as the risk of other transmittable diseases to animals as they were gathered at a limited area as a result of fear of the flood. It is, therefore, recommended that there needs to be close monitoring and subsequent action taken by concerned bodies at zonal or woreda level.

Fear of “Bird Flu” Pandemic in East Africa

Avian Influenza, the disease commonly known as “Bird Flu” probably named in reference to bird species affected by the disease, is feared to spread to East Africa. The disease which affects migratory birds (waterfowl), particularly wild ducks and chickens and then transmitted to human beings who further pass it among themselves has so far been reported from Asia where it has killed over 160 persons in recent years.

It has recently become an international issue with big forums organized to discuss it and countries taking different measures to curb spread of the virus as well as to assist poor countries likely to be affected. France has pledged for financial aid to countries in East Africa while the United States allocated 7 billion USD to contain spread of the disease to that country.



It is estimated that among population around the lakes region as much as 25% could be affected if the birds migrating to the lakes settle in the habitat.



Disaster Occurrence

The virus that is scientifically referred to as “H5N1” has high probability of spreading to East Africa by virtue of its hosting migratory birds.

As a result, Ethiopia has banned poultry imports from countries hit by the disease. Uganda and Kenya had taken similar measure ahead of Ethiopia. Both Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoH and MoARD) have prepared contingency plan amounting to 65 million USD to contain the spread of the disease.

With respect to anticipated magnitude of the disease, it is estimated that among population around the lakes region as much as 25% could be affected if the birds that transmit the disease (wild ducks) migrating to the lakes possibly from Europe or probably Asia settle in the habitat. Fund has already been allocated for action however small it may be and Ministry of Agriculture has deployed its staff, according to reports.

Migratory and non-migratory pest Quelea Quelea infestation

Plant Protection Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development reported Quelea Quelea infestation around lake Ziway during September against which control measure was taken using an aircraft as reported by Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA). DLCO-EA elaborates that two Quelea Quelea roosts (resting place during night) covering 20 hectares were located on acacia trees in two localities with 3.5 million and 2.5 million estimated number of birds during fourth week of September. In a similar development, 10 Quelea Quelea roosts were located in different parts of Somali, Oromiya and SNNP regions during 2-25 October 2005 with estimated population of 16.3 million. In the action taken against the birds 925 liters of Queleatox was sprayed killing 96% of the birds as indicated by the report.

Insect damage

Rust infestation was witnessed with sorghum and haricot bean in Meta Woreda of East Hararghe Zone of Oromiya Region the extent of the damage not yet known, according to Regional DPPB report. Asosa reported slight crop damage on teff and nug due to insect infestation; Dolo Mena and Fiche reported slight insect damage on teff and beans respectively while in the latter maize was also damaged. Limu Genet and Bedelle had slight wilting due to moisture stress on cereal crop like teff and millet as well as oil crop like nug, according to NMSA report.

At international level, control measures against locust were undertaken in some parts of Darfur in the Sudan but hoppers were also seen in inaccessible areas near a place called Karnoi while in Yemen small-scale breeding continued to occur during September and control actions were taken according to recent report (September and October 2005) of DLCO-EA. In accordance with forecast made until mid-December a limited number of small adult groups including perhaps a few small swarms could emerge in Darfur, the report states.

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Food Security

Pre-harvest crop assessment under way

Pre-harvest Meher season assessment led by the DPPA is under way throughout the country. Assessment teams drawn from Federal DPPA and regional offices and other multi agency groups including UN agencies, Donors and NGOs were dispatched on November 19, 2005 following briefing by the federal DPPA on the methodology and modality of the assessment.

A separate program was arranged to those teams that are assigned to the SNNPR to conduct the assessment with briefing given at Awassa, the regional capital on a newly developed livelihood approach on November 18, 2005. According to the briefing the objectives of the assessment are to evaluate condition of Meher crops in the cropping areas and performance of the second rainy season in the pastoral areas; consider any adversities be it weather, flood damage, pest infestation etc.; review the overall food security situation; and come up with an estimate of needy population and duration for which the assistance is needed.

During the assessment different sources of income will be considered along with major decline if any and stress/famine indicators. Plausibility of woreda level assessment should also be evaluated. Finally, report on assessment findings is expected as the groups return back. All regions though not all zones are planned to be covered by the assessment under different programs until 19 December 2005. 20 teams of 130 participants (76 from government institutions) are dispatched .

Food Shortage and Signs of Malnutrition

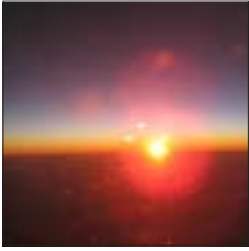
Signs of malnutrition were reported from some areas of Berhale Woreda of Zone 2 in Afar Region. Survey was conducted in the Woreda by GOAL Ethiopia during 16-20 October 2005. Methodology used was 30x30 cluster sampling. Final result of the overall survey indicates GAM (Global Acute Malnutrition) as 19% and SAM (Severe Acute Malnutrition) 2%, implying alarming situation. Factors attributing to this condition were mainly poor access to clean water and lack of health facilities. A rapid assessment conducted in the chronically food deficit areas of Angacha and Kedida Gamela Woredas of Kembata Timbaro Zone during October 14-29, 2005 indicated food shortage in the two woredas, although the problem was not very serious.

Immediate cause of the food shortage was failure of the last Belg season resulting in production shortfall of maize and root crops as a result of which food aid was requested and sufficient amount was sent for one month.

Rapid assessment conducted in Sude, Robe and Limu Bilbilo woredas of Arsi also confirmed severe food shortage. The main reason was poor harvest due to lack of rain for four consecutive years. Besides, weather adversities like hailstorm and wind destroyed crops on farm land particularly in 7 kebeles of Sude Woreda and 4 kebeles of Limu Bilbilo woreda depleting their asset base. In Robe Woreda with the exception of one highland kebele the situation is worrisome as 2004/2005 Meher crops have been severely damaged by frost. In response, food aid had been delivered by the DPPA. The result of the assessment recommended to continue food aid supply for about 19,600 people until end of December 2005.



Survey conducted by GOAL Ethiopia shows signs of malnutrition in Berhale Woreda of Afar Region.



Weather Conditions

Weather Performance

(Partly summarized from NMSA report)

Normal to above normal rainfall had been observed over different parts of the country during the first ten days of October 2005. These parts of the country include western Tigray, most parts of western half of Amhara, northern and eastern Benishangul Gumuz, western, southern and central Oromiya and Gambela regions. Similarly, normal to above normal rainfall was observed over northwestern and western Ethiopia. On the contrary, heavy falls (greater than 50 mm in a rainy day) in some pocket areas like Pawe, Chagni and Nekemte were recorded.

On the other hand, dry spell was observed over eastern Amhara (areas like Amba Mariam, Mehal Meda, Chefa, Were Illu and Sirinka), central Oromiya (Abomsa, Adama, Kulumsa, Kofele and Ziway) and northeastern SNNPR (Hosaina). Again below normal rainfall was recorded over southeastern and southern parts of Ethiopia. This situation continued over most parts of the country during the second ten days (dekad) that is during the second and third weeks of October 2005.

Western, southwestern and parts of southern Ethiopia exhibited normal to above normal rainfall during the third dekad (that is 20-31) of October 2005. On the other hand, dry weather situation occurred over eastern Amhara and Tigray, central and eastern Oromiya including northeastern SNNPR during the same period.

Weather adversities

Heavy rain caused damage to crop and livestock during the second week of October in Hula woreda of Sidama Zone and Amaro special Woreda. During third week of the month too heavy rain damaged crops and dwelling houses, the regional report indicated. Similarly, hailstorm damaged crop in Darimu and Borecha woredas of Illubabor Zone. During the third week, out of maize, sorghum and sesame over 36,752 ha of land 95% was destroyed by strong wind in Hawa Wolel and Lalo Kile woredas of West Wellega Zone, according to reports.

In Tigray Region too occurrence of hailstorm in most woredas of Central Zone and some woredas of Eastern, Northwestern and Southern Zone that damaged crops the extent of which varies 5% - 100% is feared to decrease production as the regional report indicated.

In a similar development, NMSA indicates that Shambu reported slight hail damage on wheat crop; Assosa reported slight damage on teff and Nug (nigger bean); Limu Genet reported wilting of nug and millet due to water stress. Some pocket areas of western Oromiya and northwestern Amhara exhibited 30-54 mm of heavy rainfall in a rainy day during the first ten days of the month as a result of which some areas like Limu Genet reported crop damage.

Normal to above normal rainfall had been observed over western Tigray, most parts of western half of Amhara, northern and eastern Benishangul Gumuz, western, southern and central Oromiya and Gambela regions.

Dry spell was observed over eastern Amhara, central Oromiya and northeastern SNNPR.



Crop Conditions

Agricultural Activities

Meher crops were at different phenological stages during October throughout the country. Accordingly, for instance, maize was at ripening stage in Jima, Illubabor, West and East Wellega zones of Oromiya. Horse bean and field peas were at vegetative and flowering stage in Hadiya Zone of SNNPR. In Konso special woreda Hageya (ratune of sorghum) crops were at good performance. Harvesting of maize and teff was under way in South Omo where as sowing of seasonal crops was in progress in Burji special woreda and Meher crops were at seedling stage. In Harari Region sorghum was at seed setting but moisture stress was reported from some lowland (Kolla) areas.

Similarly, in Chenakesen Woreda of East Hararghe Zone of Oromiya 95% of crop damage was reported due to shortage of rain. In Dega areas of Borena crops were at vegetative and maturing stage under good condition but in the Kolla areas of the zone planting of seasonal crops was delayed for almost a month due to the delay and erratic nature of Hageya rain. In some areas of the zone where heavy rainfall was experienced considerable production loss is anticipated due to adverse weather condition that destroyed crops, which were at flowering and maturing stage.

Crops which were at different phenological stages over different parts of the country benefited from normal to above normal rainfall during the first ten days of October 2005, according to NMSA bulletin. These parts of the country include western Tigray, most parts of western half of Amhara, northern and eastern Benishangul Gumuz, western, southern and central Oromiya and Gambela regions. In a similar development, crops which were at flowering and early maturity stages over northwestern and western Ethiopia could have favorable situation from the same pattern of rain. Yet pursuant to the crop phenological status harvest and post harvest activities were in progress in some areas of central and western parts of the country. For instance, harvest of maize and beans was under way in Bedelle and Kulumsa (Illubabor and Arsi zones) respectively.

Favorable condition for harvest and post harvest activities was created as the result of dry spell in areas where harvest and post harvest activities were under way. Areas that benefited from the dry spell were eastern Amhara (areas like Amba Mariam, Mehal Meda, Chefa, Were Ilu and Sirinka), central Oromiya (Abomsa, Adama, Kulumsa, Kofele and Ziway) and northeastern SNNPR (Hosaina).

In Tigray Region, better yield is expected as compared to the preceding three years in most parts except in areas where rains ceased early (Raya Azebo, lowlands of Hintalo Wajirat and Ahferm bordering Mereb vally), affecting both short and long cycle crops, the regional report stated. In Raya Azebo Woreda where rain ceased at the end of August most Meher crops dried up virtually some farmers chopping up the dried crop plants to feed their animals.



Favorable condition for harvest and post harvest activities was created as the result of dry spell in eastern Amhara, central Oromiya and northeastern SNNPR .



Crop Conditions

Below normal rainfall witnessed over most parts of the country during the second ten days (dekad) that is during the second and third weeks of October 2005 could negatively affect areas that normally supposed to get seasonal rainfall particularly southern and southeastern parts of Ethiopia at this time of the year. The deficient falls could also have negative influence on cereals and pulses, which were at different phenological stages over northeastern (Wegel Tena, Chefa, Kombolcha), southern (Sidama, Gedeo, Hadiya, Wolayita, Gamo Gofa, Silte, Sheka and Yirga Chefe) and eastern (Gelemso and Alemaya) areas.

Monthly report of the SNNPR Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau also indicated that most crops are found at various growth stages while peas and beans found at green harvest stage in the region. There were, however, areas that received less rain apparently negatively affecting crop plants as the result of which production reduction is expected, the report elaborated.

The normal to above normal rainfall during the third dekad (that is 20-31) of October 2005 over western, southwestern and parts of southern Ethiopia could have significant contribution to fulfill the water requirement of crops, which were below maturity stage. On the other hand, dry weather situation over eastern Amhara and Tigray, central and eastern Oromiya including northeastern SNNPR during the stated period could favor harvest and post harvest activities as harvest of maize and beans was under way in some areas of western Oromiya, eastern Amhara and some areas of northern SNNPR.

Generally, performance of crops was in a good shape in most parts of Meher growing areas during October 2005. Harvest and post harvest activities were under way in some areas of central, western and northeastern parts of the country.

Good performance of crops was observed in most parts of Meher growing areas during October 2005. Harvest and post harvest activities were under way in some areas of central, western and northeastern parts of the country.



Situation in Pastoral Areas

Somali Region

Onset of the current “Deyr” rain was late by about one to two weeks in most zones of the Somali National Regional State. Despite the delay the rain eased to some extent water shortage in some pocket areas that suffered seriously for one and a half months, according to the regional report. These areas include Denan Woreda, Haysufu in Filtu Zone, Shaygosh, areas in Korahé and Warder zones that depend on “Birka” (harnessed water on cemented ground or brought in from a distance by truck and kept as reservoir), Elkere, southern parts of Hergelle and some areas in Goro-Bakaksa.

The time, duration, amount and distribution of the rain during the month had significant variation across different zones of the region. Accordingly, some parts of Warder and Gode zones received moderate rain during the second week of October 2005. Pocket areas in Hudet and Filtu Woredas of Liben Zone also received moderate rain to slight showers during the same period. Some places in Korahé Zone had good rains at the beginning of the season, that is, during the second week of the month. Places that received rain during 15-18 October 2005 include Kebridehar town, eastern and western parts of the woreda, Shilabo and Sheygosh. In Dobo-weyn Woreda of the zone Deyr rain started on 13 October 2005 with a heavy fall that had negative impact to pastoralists in that area. Different parts of Afder Zone like Gura-Damole, and Goro-Bakaksa, Elkari, Hergelle and Barey received rains ranging from good to light showers during 13-17 October 2005. In Deghabur Zone, Aware Woreda and its surrounding and Deghabur town had rains varying from moderate to showers during first week of the month.

Given this background of the present Deyr rain, which has been insignificant and failure of the last Gu rain, food security situation in Liben Zone remains fragile. The zone had been experiencing serious pasture and water shortage in the last couple of months virtually requiring special attention, the regional report emphasizes.

Afar Region

Pasture condition was declining in some parts of Afar region (including Awura, Ewa, and Teru woredas of Zone 4 and Chifera Woreda of Zone 1) due to inadequate rains of the past Karma season and over grazing as the regional report indicates. Water shortage was also noted particularly in chronic water deficit areas of the region. These areas include Berhale, and Dalol woredas of Zone 2, Teru Woreda of Zone 4, Kumame area of Zone 5 and Guyah area in Dubti and Elidar woredas in Zone 1. Water trucking was under way in Berhale, Dalol and Teru Woredas at the time the report was compiled (October 2005).



Food security situation particularly in Liben Zone of Somali Region remains fragile as the zone had been experiencing serious pasture and water shortage in the last couple of months virtually requiring special attention, the regional report emphasizes.



Situation in Pastoral Areas

There were latest reports (towards end of October) on request for relief food intervention particularly from Zone 5 and Zone 3. The situation would be assessed during the current pastoral area assessment scheduled for November 26, 2005.

Borena (Lowlands) and South Omo Zones

Although highland areas of Borena Zone was reported to have received adequate rainfall and crops were at their maturing stage, in the lowlands Hagaya rain (October/November) started very late apparently pasture and water deteriorating in some parts of Moyale, Dire and Arero Woredas. Even then there was no report of unusual livestock migration. Similarly, there were no reports of human and animal epidemics in October.

Normal to above normal rainfall during the first ten days of October 2005, could have significant contribution for the availability of pasture and drinking water over pastoral areas of southern Oromiya (that is Borena), according to NMSA bulletin.

Again the observed below normal rainfall over parts of Borena and South Omo zones could have negative impact on the availability of pasture and drinking water, the NMSA report indicated. In South Omo Zone, light rains were reported during 1st half of October 2005. In Bako Gazer Woreda, however, the rains were very heavy. Apparently, pasture and water situation improved, according to the report.

The normal to above normal rainfall during the third dekad (that is 20-31) of October 2005 over Borena and South Omo Zones could have significant contribution to fulfill the water requirement of crops, which were below maturity stage. It could also favor perennial crops and the availability of pasture and drinking water particularly over the two zones.



Normal to above normal rainfall during the third dekad of October 2005 over Borena and South Omo Zones was expected to have significant contribution to fulfill the water requirement of crops, which were below maturity stage.

DRPC