



Interview with  
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Head of Early  
Warning Department

### **What are the current situations in Belg growing areas?**

As I reported in the TIME (Technical Information Management Exchange) meeting the results of the multi - agency Belg and pastoral area assessment show that there will be production shortfalls in most Belg growing areas particularly in the north and south Wollo, East and West Hararghe and South Tigray. In some of these areas production failure reaches up to 99% while in other areas 50% production failure is expected. In the case of the pastoral areas the GU rains in most of these areas has totally failed.

### **What are the impacts of the failure of the Belg?**

Failure of the Belg will not only affect the food security of Belg producing areas but it also has affected in some cases the planting of Meher season crops, particularly in the production of long cycle crops such as maize and sorghum. The production prospect of these long cycle crops particularly in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the country, including areas along the rift valley is very poor. In some areas Meher prospects already seems poor as the rains are late by 2 to 4 weeks, in these areas if the rains do not extend beyond the usually cessation of the rain the seeds will face moisture stress and will not perform well. However in areas where the Meher rain has arrived late there is a possibility of planting short cycle crops.

### **How is the situation in Pastoral areas?**

In most pastoral areas the main rainy season, the Gu rains was a failure. The rain stopped end of April, a month earlier than usual resulting in extended Hageya, dry season that followed the GU rains. Therefore, particularly in Somalia region water condition is very poor and is expected to get worse in the coming long dry season. I strongly believe that Somalia region needs close follow up in the coming months. Failure of the GU rain also adds pressure on Dire rain (a short wet season of about two weeks in October) for pasture re-generation and water availability.

### **Has the failure of the rain affect the livestock condition?**

Currently in the pastoral areas the livestock condition is relatively good [as compared to human condition] as a result of unseasonable rain received in the month of January which had improved the water availability and pasture condition. However in Moyale reports have stated that lack of water and pasture has resulted in livestock migration causing over grazing in some areas. In the cropper areas livestock are being feed the wilted failed crops. Therefore it can be said that the livestock condition in general is fairly good currently.

### **Are there possibilities of unseasonable rains during the Hageya, dry season?**

The Ministry of Metrology has not reported such possibilities. And no we are not expecting such rains.

### **Will the findings of the assessment team affect the number of beneficiary figures as indicated in the 2004 appeal?**

As the Belg has failed in almost all Belg producing areas and as a result of the failure of the GU rain there will be additional number of beneficiaries from the months of June to December. When the appeal was prepared in December 2003 it had produced figures of beneficiary number that considered the best and worst case scenario, however the number of beneficiary figure we are expecting is more that what we projected in the worse case scenario.

### **Are there incidents of crop pest in the country? What are the main one?**

No significant outbreak is yet reported except for sweet potato butterfly which has had a significant damage in SNNPR.

### **On a personal level what is your main motivation to work for the DPPC?**

Working in the area of early warning to fight against disaster on human, animals and propieties gives me great pleasure. I work along with the early warning team in saving lives by fulfilling emergency needs. We always try to be the first to know and act in response to humanitarian disasters.