

**Minutes of the 30th Technical Information Management Exchange Forum (TIME)
Meeting February 26, 2004 10:00 hrs.
DPPC conference room**

Chairperson: Ato Getachew Tesfaye

Agenda

- NMSA, Ato Tesfaye
- MoA, Mathewos Hunde
- MoWR, Tamene Gossaye
- MoH
- EFSR, Ato Getachew Tesfaye
- AOB

Meteorology

Ato Tesfaye

Weather Update on the month of February

NMSA - National Metrological Service Agency reported that the month of February has exhibited week rains in most *Belg* growing areas. The agency reported that except for 4.2 mm of rainfall on February 21 and 3.2 on February 22 in Adawa, *Belg* growing areas have not received rains. Rains are reported to be confined to non-*Belg* growing areas, such as Debretabour at 11 mm and Bahir Dar at 19.6 mm. Meteorology has reported that the dry spell is expected to change by the end of February.

Agriculture Task Force

Ato Mathewos Hunde

Weather and agriculture update

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) reported that during the second and third dekads of February, dry weather conditions are reported to have prevailed over most *Belg* rains benefiting areas of the country. However, signs of improvements in rainfall performance have been observed over some areas of the country since early days of the third dekad of February. Nevertheless the overall negative effects of dry spells on agricultural activities in general and growth and development of earlier planted crops in particular are so far reported to be insignificant.

However, disruption of *Belg* crops sowing in many areas, wilting and a near total failure of earlier planted crops in some low-lying areas, e.g. Rayaazebo and Alamata woredas of Southern Tigray were reported. MoA indicated that such incidents are likely to occur in other parts of the country if the rainfall condition does not show a further improvement both in terms of amount as well as spatial and temporal distribution.

In response to inquiries if these areas could plant again, the MoA stated that if these areas receive rains soon they can replant damaged fields with either short or long maturing crops.

Crop pest and animal disease outbreaks situation

According to field reports and results of surveys conducted in different areas of the country, there has been a calm crop pest situation during the month of February. No animal disease outbreaks were reported during the month.

Update on agricultural requirements and responses to date:

In the donors' consultative meeting held at the DPPC on 13 February 2004, the government has expressed its concern on the delay in the responses to the joint humanitarian appeal for 2004. It was also underlined that there were no responses to the agricultural requirements Qts up until then except

for the FAO US\$ 399,651 allocation for emergency seed supply program in SNNPR, which is currently being finalized. Following the discussion on the issue, U.K. and U.S.A. have announced non-food pledges. However, sectoral specific allocations are yet to be indicated.

It should be noted that a total of US\$ 6,300,200 is required to address natural calamities induced seed shortfalls in eight Regions for 2004 *Belg* and *Meher* planting seasons. Similarly, it was noted that US\$ 5,750,000 is needed for livestock emergency intervention and US\$ 1,100,000 for enhancing capacities in the areas of coordination, early warning, monitoring and evaluation.

Although the supply of seed for *belg* growing areas is already too late efforts aimed at speeding up fund allocations and provision of emergency seeds for *meher*, including long cycle crops planting are very crucial. Similarly, it was pointed out that due attention should be given to responding to the emergency needs of the livestock sub sector.

Water Task Force

Ato Tamene

The MoWR reported that WATSAN- Water and Sanitation - Task Force meeting was conducted on February 10, 2004. The meeting exchanged information with regards to emergency interventions by various stakeholders. WATSAN has agreed to meet on monthly basis (The next meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2004 at the MoWR conference hall).

The Water Task Force has also participated in the donor consultative meeting conducted by DPPC and has reported that donors contribution to the 2004 appeal is not encouraging so far.

It was pointed out that the major supports by UNICEF are Water Tankering activities in Afar (Yallo, Ereht, and Berhale) through DPPB planned to last till the month of May 2004, on going water and sanitation interventions in Afar, Amhara, Somali, SNNP, Oromiya and Tigray Regions with 2003 funds. MoWR also reported that UNICEF has recently transferred 3 million Birr to Somali Region mainly for water tankering and rehabilitation activities in Warder, Denan, shilabo areas. Moreover it was reported that shallow well drilling is on-going in SNNPR by local NGOs and private agencies and new drilling rigs are procured for Afar and SNNP Regions. They and are expected to arrive in the month of April 2004.

MoWR also reported that the Norwegian Government has promised a six million birr contribution for the establishment of emergency unit.

Emergency situation in Harar

It was noted that Harar town is currently in a state of emergency. In response water interventions are ongoing; the DPPC sent two water tankers of 15,000 LT. capacity each and 10 water bladders of LT capacity each to Harar. UNICEF reported that in order to respond to the situation in the area, items that are stuck in the custom office need to be cleared. MoWR promised UNICEF that the items will be ready by early next week.

MoWR stated that it is planning to call on a meeting of donors and NGOs in order to discuss and respond to the situation facing Harar and to find lasting solution.

Health Task Force

Despite the calm and quite drought situations, the health response task force meeting was re-vitalized in order to prompt actions toward any unexpected crises that might occur. In its last two meetings the task force reviewed the 2004 appeal document, gave update on the current meningitis outbreak in some woredas and also discussed essential strategic points concerning measles vaccinations campaign in drought affected zones. Moreover discussions on how to respond to the sporadic **Meningitis** outbreak in Tigray, SNNPR, Amahara, Oromiyia, and Somali Regions were held.

The MoH stated that according to information received from the donors consultative meeting, fund required for measles vaccinations campaign in SNNP, Oromiya, Amahara, Afar and Somali Regions is secured. It was noted that all the donated money is transferred to UNICEF. It was also reported that according to the US Embassy report, a total of six Million USD grant will be committed to the assistance of non-food items in the country, of which 800,000 USD will go to UNICEF for measles vaccinations. In related development it was reported that a total of one million USD is promised by the Dutch government to support the current Meningitis outbreak control intervention activities. The fund is planned to be used for the purchase of vaccines and other essential antibiotics.

Nutrition situations

According to information obtained from UNICEF, up to six February a total of 1,410 beneficiaries were receiving nutrition support in 34 therapeutic feeding sites all over the country. Out of the total therapeutic feeding centers 56% are located in SNNP, 21% in Oromiya and 12% in Somali Regions. It was also reported that two TFCs were in Afar and two in Amahara region. Moreover three TFCs were operational in Amahara, Oromiya and SNNP Regions.

Data obtained from UNICEF show that from December 3 to January 9 total of 427 functional Supplementary Feeding Centers (SFC) with a total of 11,511 beneficiaries were operational in Afar, Amahara, Oromiya, SNNP, and Somali Regions. The performance indicators of these sites were 77.1 % recovery, 12.5 % defaulter, 2.5% transfer and 7.5% non-responder.

Meningitis outbreak

MoH reported that due to sporadic occurrences of meningitis a total of 914 cases and 56 deaths were reported since early September. The Ministry reported that in the past one-week 49 new cases and 3 deaths were reported from five regions.

In Oromiya Region the epidemic began in early September in Bule Hora woredas (with the highest cases) and Borena Zone. It was reported that to date 133 cases and 16 deaths are reported. The epidemic is also reported to have affected Borena and Guji zones.

The highest number of meningitis at 502 cases and 16 deaths were reported from Borecha, Awassa, Aleta Wondo, Hula, Badwecho and Wenago woredas in SNNPR. It was stated that from the total cases 177 cases were from Hula woredas.

The pattern of the spread was shown by the main road the route from Addis -Moyale and adjacent woredas and peasants association that neighbor to the Bole Hora woredas of Borena zones of Oromiya regions. A significant number cases were also reported from woredas in Tigray and Amahara Regions.

In response to the outbreak the FMOH and regional health authorities have vaccinated a total of 53,500 peoples against the diseases and affected populations were treated. The vaccination and treatment targeted high risk populations. It was noted that the region has received significant amount of assistant from the FMOH.

The cause for the outbreak is reported to be Neisseria Meningitides sero type A, which is reported to be a typical strain in causing epidemic in the country.

Update on the status of food aid movement

Reported by Ato Belete

The relief food allocation and delivery for the months of January and February 2004 has been made on priority basis with the relief resources carried-over from 2003. JEOP member NGOs, have also allocated relief food to all their operational areas, as of January.

It was reported that needs for SNNP and Somali Regions have been covered fully during February 2004. Planning is under-way to address the total relief requirement for March.

EFSR

Ato Getachew

Stock at hand	353,432 MT
Outstanding loan	23,848 MT
Under withdrawal	27, 724 MT

AOB

Somali

ICRC reported that livestock treatment against ecto parasites, endo parasites, bacterial diseases and tick born disease have been on going in Degehabour and Gode zones in Somali region. The treatment that targeted 340,000 cattle, camel, sheep and goat in a total of 39 treatment sites that employed local veterinarian assistants is nearing completion. ICRC indicated that according to local pastoralistes the animals are reported to be recovering very well.

Critical water shortages were also reports in Aware area, Dagehabour zone. The area has not been receiving rain. Meeting participants warned that the area should be given attention, as it might develop to state of hot spot.

TFCs

UNICEF stated that reports received, on February 15, from the field have stated that there are about 10 TFCs in SNNP and Somali Regions with a total number of 311 beneficiaries. UNICEF reported that most of the TFCs are in their closing stage as the number of children being treated is very insignificant. It was noted that the TFCs are supported by NGOs such as GOAL, Oxfam, World Vision and Save the Children- UK.

In response to inquires if the TFCs are attached to health centers, UNICEF reported that only two TFCs are attached to Supplementary Feeding Centers, Malgano were 1,234 Children are under Supplementary Feeding and 986 in Gerja.

DPPC and MoH are requested to check if the TFCs are necessary to have in these areas.

Nutrition Info

Concern reported GAM 10% malnutrition rate in Desse Zuria and South Wollo due to a break in food aid distribution. Reports also indicated food shortage and malnutrition in parts of east Harerge. The MoH has promised to come up with a clear picture of the situation in the areas.

It was noted that ENCU should participate in the health task force meetings.

WFP report on the pipeline

WFP reported that the carryover stocks from 2003 and the 156, 200 mt of food aid from the USA can cover relief food requirements through to the end of May. WFP also reported that the UK government has announced a US\$ 9 million cash aid for emergency cash-for-work and local purchase of emergency food aid. WFP noted that agencies should encourage donors for cash transfer, in order to buy cereal from local farmers to keep prices stable. Total marketable surplus available is estimated to be over 300,000 MT.

WFP also announced its plan to resource up to one third of the overall relief food requirements.

EURN AID

WFP warned that EU is still waiting for confirmation from its headquarter on the 16,000 MT of food that was planned for March. Therefore WFP asked DPPC to consider covering the allotted amount until EU receives the food. DPPC informed that action have been and will be taken to reach the needy in Euron Aid "supported" areas.

Resettlement

UNICEF indicated that as observed from the fields in some of the resettlement areas, even though distribution of dry food is on going supplementary food is not being distributed. Therefore, it was noted that in these areas there is a deteriorating health condition. Meanwhile it was commented that the issue should be taken to the Food Security Unit. In order to solve the problem participants suggested that loan provisions are initiated by the regional authorities.

WFP pointed out that resettlement programs are being implemented successfully in many areas. It was pointed out that the humanitarian community should not generalize the situation in the resettlement areas.

Gambella

Joint Government and UN mission is planning to have a field visit to Gambella.

Food Security in Pastoralist Areas

Food security specialist Dr Stephen Devereux delivered a presentation on 16th February focusing on pastoral communities in Somali region following a visit to the area. Dr Devereux's addressed themes including the paradox of relative wealth and absolute vulnerability, the dangers of food aid dependency and gender dimensions of vulnerability. He reviewed pastoralism and smallholder agriculture in Ethiopia, and argued that alternative visions are needed.

TIME Meeting

Meeting participants suggested that the TIME Meeting should have meeting agenda that is sent out prior to the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00.

Next TIME meeting will take place on March 25, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.

Attendance by more participants is expected.