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**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

Ethiopia – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #5, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

March 10, 2009

Note: The last situation report was dated February 6, 2009.

BACKGROUND

Consecutive seasons of failed rains, exacerbated by a rapidly growing population, increased inflation, endemic poverty, and limited government capacity, have led to chronic food insecurity and water shortages in Ethiopia. The delayed onset and poor performance of the March to May 2008 *belg* rains, combined with the widespread failure of the previous two consecutive rains, have resulted in below-normal harvests and diminished pasture throughout Somali Region and large areas of Oromiya, Afar, Tigray, Amhara, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions. Significant humanitarian challenges, including flooding, conflict, malnutrition, delayed food deliveries, and locust and armyworm infestations, confront populations in many areas of the country. In Somali Region, insurgent activity and security operations have disrupted trade networks, and restrictions on the movement of people and livestock combined with the failure of past rains have exacerbated food insecurity.

On January 30, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GFDRE) released the Humanitarian Requirements Document identifying the estimated humanitarian requirements in Ethiopia for 2009. Based on a November and December 2008 assessment, the GFDRE expects 4.9 million people to require emergency food assistance between January and June 2009, including nearly 1.6 million people in Somali Region. In addition, an estimated 7.2 million beneficiaries currently receive food or cash assistance from the GFDRE-managed Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP).

On October 6, 2008, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Deborah R. Malac reissued a disaster declaration in response to humanitarian conditions in Ethiopia. To date in FY 2009, the U.S. Government (USG) has provided more than \$80 million for logistics, relief commodities, and emergency food assistance, as well as nutrition, refugee assistance, and agriculture and food security programs throughout Ethiopia.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	SOURCE	
GFDRE PSNP Caseload	7.2 million	GFDRE Food Security Coordination Bureau – September 2008
PSNP Caseload Requiring Emergency Food Assistance	5.6 million	GFDRE MOARD ¹ – September 2008
Additional Population Requiring Emergency Food Assistance	4.9 million	GFDRE MOARD – January 2009

FY 2009 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Ethiopia.....	\$1,348,130
USAID/FFP² Assistance to Ethiopia	\$76,245,000
State/PRM³ Assistance to Ethiopia	\$2,650,000
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Ethiopia	\$80,243,130

CURRENT SITUATION

Food security continues to deteriorate in eastern Ethiopia, as well as among pastoral and agro-pastoral populations in the northeast, south, and southeast regions, as a result of high food prices, previous droughts, limited water and pasture availability, and below-average crop production caused by failed or poor 2008 seasonal rains.

On January 31, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) released results of the November and December Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM), which indicated below-average crop production in eastern regions of Ethiopia and above-average production in western regions. Based on the CFSAM

¹ GFDRE Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD). As of August 8 2008, the responsibilities of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) were officially transferred to the MOARD Disaster Management and Food Security Sector (DMFSS) as part of a planned restructuring process.

² USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

³ U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

results, WFP and FAO estimated a 10 percent increase in the total October 2008 to January 2009 *meher* season production compared to the previous season. However, the USAID-supported Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS NET) indicates that between January and June 2009, food security is likely to deteriorate in eastern crop-dependent areas as a result of depleted food stocks from the below-average *meher* production.

To address recurrent emergencies and promote sustainable solutions in Ethiopia, USAID/OFDA and USAID/Ethiopia have developed a relief-to-development transition strategy focused on livelihoods rehabilitation activities and disaster risk reduction. In addition, USAID/OFDA staff continue to monitor health, nutrition, and food security throughout Ethiopia.

Agriculture and Food Security

Consecutive seasons of failed or poor rains, poor livestock conditions, limited water and pasture availability, and rising food prices continue to contribute to high food insecurity in eastern Ethiopia, including Afar, Oromiya, and Somali regions, as well as parts of SNNP and Amhara regions.

On February 16, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that malnutrition and food insecurity will likely further deteriorate in Somali Region during the January to mid-April *jilaal* dry season due to the effects of previous droughts, commercial trade restrictions, high livestock mortality, increasing food prices, and delayed food distributions.

In Afar Region, livestock productivity has decreased and households continue to sell livestock to meet basic food needs, resulting in an estimated 40 percent decrease in livestock holdings in some areas of the region, according to FEWS NET. In addition, drought conditions have caused high livestock mortality, reducing household milk availability and exacerbating malnutrition.

On February 24, FEWS NET reported that following an estimated 60 percent reduction in coffee production, casual labor opportunities associated with coffee harvesting and processing have significantly decreased in Gedeo and Sidama zones, SNNP Region. In 2008, the number of coffee processing plants decreased by 49 percent, and the remaining plants employed 75 percent fewer laborers compared to 2007. Casual labor employment opportunities typically generate income for 20 to 45 percent of the poor population in SNNP Region.

In SNNP Region, FEWS NET also reported an estimated 50 percent reduction in sweet potato production, a generally reliable transition crop that provides critical food supplies between the cereal

harvest in December and the green maize harvest in June. Enset, a widely used staple food crop in most parts of SNNP Region, also declined by approximately 50 percent as a result of over-harvesting during previous seasons in order to meet food needs.

On February 23, OCHA reported that food security has stabilized and livestock conditions have normalized in most parts of Oromiya Region, as well as in Dire Dawa and Harar regions. In addition, on February 5, the National Meteorological Agency predicted normal February to May seasonal rains, possibly improving water and pasture availability in Afar Region, southern zones of Somali Region, and lowland areas of Oromiya Region.

Following declining prices in October and November 2008, food prices have increased since December 2008 and remain significantly above the five-year average. According to FEWS NET, the January 2009 average retail prices for maize, wheat, and sorghum increased 54 percent, 64 percent, and 103 percent respectively, compared to January 2008 prices. In Addis Ababa, the January 2009 retail price for white maize was 172 percent higher than the 2003–2007 average and 58 percent higher than the January 2008 price. In addition, the average price for wheat increased more than 8 percent between January and February 2009.

In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$2 million to support food security and agriculture programs, including the provision of livelihood supplies and materials for vulnerable populations. In addition, to help improve coping mechanisms among pastoral and agro-pastoral communities, Save the Children/UK (SC/UK) conducted agriculture and food security interventions for 127,000 vulnerable individuals in Fik Zone, Somali Region, and provided animal health care to more than 521,000 animals in FY 2008.

Health and Nutrition

Poor health and nutrition remain significant concerns throughout Ethiopia. On February 16, OCHA reported high admission rates in outpatient therapeutic programs and stabilization centers in Sidama, Gedeo, and Awassa zones, SNNP Region. According to the January 30 Humanitarian Requirements Document, the GFDRE estimates that more than 34,000 children under five years of age will require treatment for severe acute malnutrition in 2009.

The GFDRE Ministry of Health reported ten suspected measles cases in Amhara Region during the week of January 12. In response, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) allocated 1.6 million doses of vaccine to affected areas and is training medical staff in the region. In January, the GFDRE Afar Regional Health Bureau began a measles vaccination campaign in response to reported measles cases in Bidu and Kori

woredas, targeting 4,000 children under 15 years of age. According to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), health officials also continue to report measles cases in Boricha and Awassa Zuria woredas, SNNP Region.

Between February 23 and March 3, health officials reported 288 human rabies cases resulting in 19 deaths in Afder and Gode zones, Somali Region, as well as 477 animal rabies cases in Afder Zone. According to OCHA, the Somali Region Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau has mobilized relevant GFDRE partners in both zones to destroy affected domestic animals and conduct awareness campaigns.

In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$11 million to support health and nutrition activities in Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP, Somali, and Tigray regions. With USAID/OFDA support, Mercy Corps is conducting supplementary feeding programs for conflict-affected populations in Oromiya and Somali regions.

Emergency Food Assistance

On March 4, WFP reported a 372,000 metric tons (MT) total food aid shortfall for relief, PSNP, and supplementary feeding programs in 2009, valued at more than \$313 million. According to WFP, limited trucking availability at the Port of Djibouti has delayed food aid distributions to affected populations in Ethiopia. As of February 26, WFP reported more than 80,000 MT of food aid awaiting transport to Ethiopia from the port. According to WFP, the GFDRE continues to give government cargo priority, despite agreements to prioritize humanitarian aid.

On March 2, WHO reported that February relief allocations were hampered due to limited in-country food stocks. According to WFP, malnutrition among children under five years of age will likely increase without adequate and timely food distributions, particularly in the highland regions of Tigray, Amhara, SNNP, and Oromiya regions, where the hunger season begins in June. As a result, WFP is exploring alternative transportation options.

USAID staff and humanitarian agencies note that distributions have significantly increased to Gode and Degehabur zones of Somali Region, under the WFP hubs-and-spokes system. As of January 31, WFP reported delivery of 76 percent of the October to December food allocation to Somali Region. Despite improvements, WFP continues to encounter difficulties in Fik and Korahe zones of Somali Region due to conflict, lack of military escorts, and the absence of new zonal hubs. In addition, the GFDRE recently denied WFP access to parts of Warder and Degehabur zones to monitor food distributions.

In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/FFP has provided 806,830 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance to Ethiopia, valued at more than \$621 million. To date in FY 2009, USAID/FFP has also provided 19,820 MT of food assistance, valued at more than \$16 million, to a GFDRE-managed pilot safety net program targeting pastoralist populations in Ethiopia. USAID/OFDA has provided \$3.9 million to WFP for the local purchase and distribution of food assistance in FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

According to WHO, the GFDRE Regional Health Bureau reported two new cases of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) on February 8. Priority interventions include providing adequate access to healthcare, sanitation, and safe drinking water, as well as improved hygiene education. WHO continues to provide technical support to strengthen AWD surveillance and early warning systems.

According to the January 30 Humanitarian Requirements Document, the GFDRE estimates that \$6.2 million is required to support water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions for approximately 1.8 million people through June 2009. The GFDRE estimate includes nearly \$1.3 million for the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing water systems and nearly \$1 million for the construction of new water supply systems, as well as additional support for technical assistance and the provision of safe drinking water.

In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$4.7 million to support water, sanitation, and hygiene activities throughout Ethiopia, including rehabilitation of wells, school reservoirs, and livestock water troughs in SNNP, Oromiya, Tigray, and Amhara regions.

Refugees

Refugees fleeing escalating violence in neighboring Somalia continue to arrive in Dolo Odo Woreda, Somali Region. According to U.S. Embassy staff, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began registering refugees on February 23. Between February 23 and March 3, officials had registered nearly 900 refugees. However, estimates of new refugee flows vary greatly across non-governmental organizations and U.N. agencies visiting the area. According to UNHCR, all registered individuals are being transferred to a transit center until UNCHR completes construction of Boqolmyo Camp in Dolo Odo, scheduled to open on March 16.

UNHCR restarted refugee repatriation assistance for 35,000 remaining Sudanese refugees on February 14 after suspending operations in May 2008 due to the

rainy season. As of February 23, UNHCR had assisted with the repatriation of approximately 160 refugees to Sudan from Sherkole camp, Benishangul Gumuz Region. According to OCHA, UNHCR expects to assist with the repatriation of approximately 6,000 Sudanese refugees from Fugnido camp, Gambella

Region, prior to the onset of the rainy season in May.

To meet the needs of refugees and conflict-affected populations in Ethiopia, State/PRM has provided nearly \$2.7 million to UNHCR in FY 2009 to support protection and assistance programs.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA

FY 2009			
<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
Mercy Corps	Nutrition, Agriculture and Food Security, Logistics and Relief Commodities	Oromiya and Somali Regions	\$822,975
	Administrative Support	Countrywide	\$525,155
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$1,348,130
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE²			
WFP	71,690 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$59,699,400
SC/UK	6,050 MT of PSNP Pastoral Pilot Food Assistance	Afar Region	\$4,257,800
SC/US	12,420 MT of PSNP Pastoral Pilot Food Assistance	Oromiya and Somali Regions	\$11,083,400
CARE	1,350 MT of PSNP Pastoral Pilot Food Assistance	Afar Region	\$1,204,400
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$76,245,000
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
UNHCR	Refugee Assistance	Countrywide	\$2,650,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM			\$2,650,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA IN FY 2009			\$80,243,130

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of March 10, 2009.

² Estimated value of food assistance.