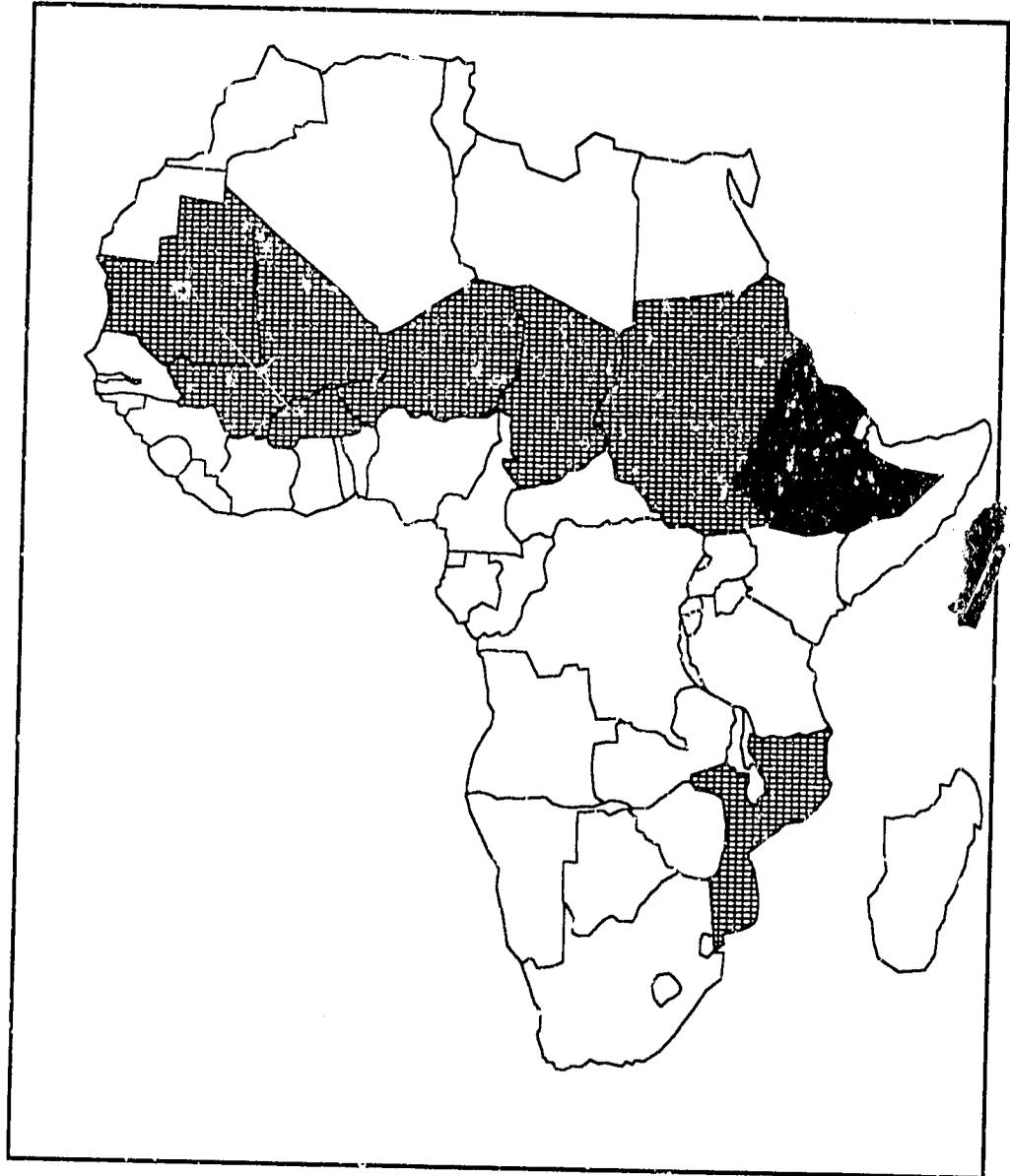


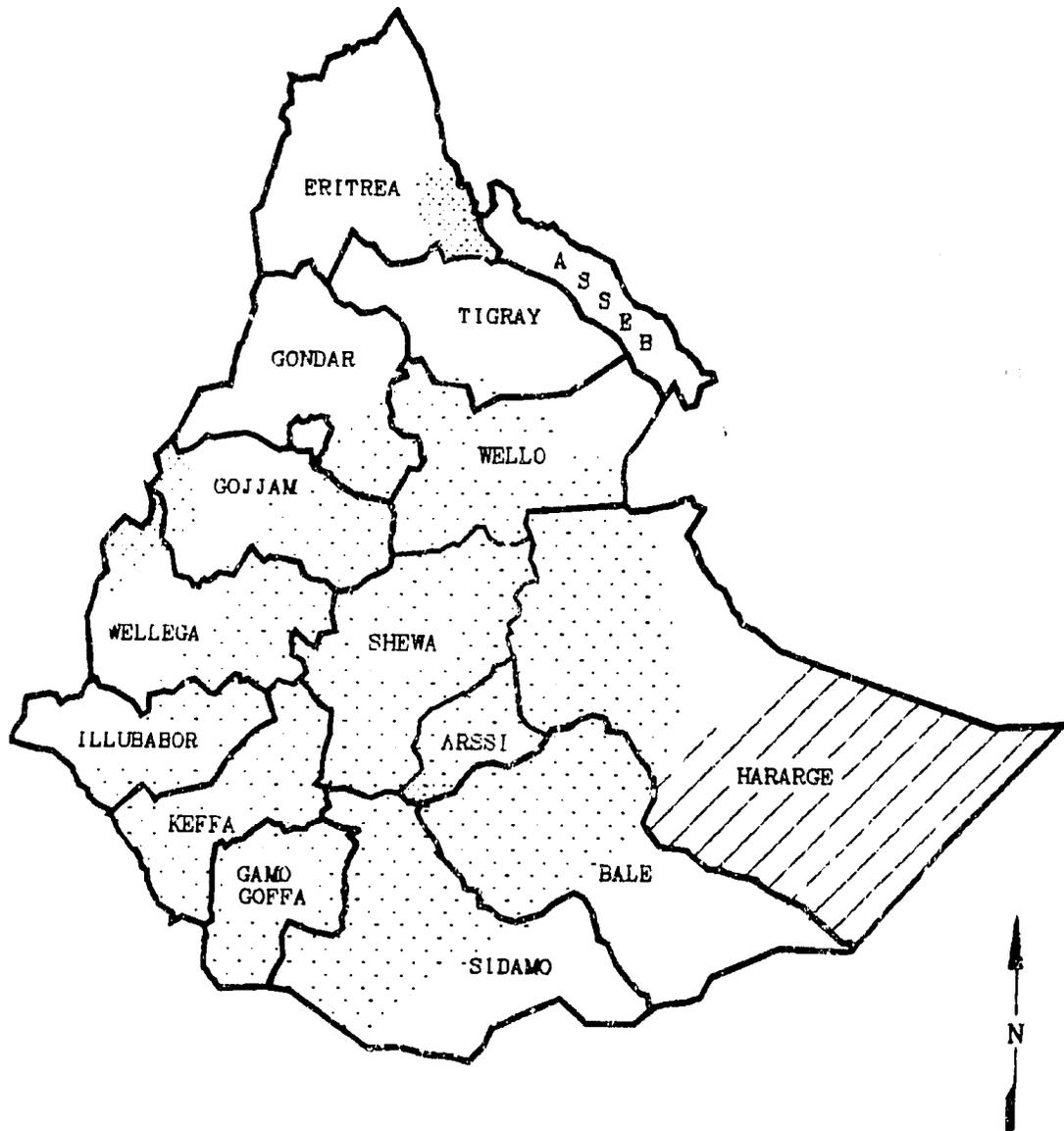
Report Number 12
June 1987

FEWS Country Report ETHIOPIA



Africa Bureau
U.S. Agency
for International
Development

Summary Map



-  Favorable moisture conditions through March 15
-  The Ogaden-329,000 at-risk from effects of drought
-  Dry spells of several weeks duration

ETHIOPIA

Bright Belg Prospects Despite Drought In The Ogaden

Prepared for the
Africa Bureau of the
U.S. Agency for
International Development

Prepared by
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INTRODUCTION

This is the twelfth in a series of monthly reports on Ethiopia issued by the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS). It is designed to provide decisionmakers with current information and analysis on existing and potential nutrition emergency situations. Each situation identified is described in terms of geographical extent and the number of people involved, or at-risk, and the proximate causes insofar as they have been discerned.

Use of the term "at-risk" to identify vulnerable populations is problematical since no generally agreed upon definition exists. Yet it is necessary to identify or "target" populations in-need or "at-risk" in order to determine appropriate forms and levels of intervention. Thus for the present, until a better usage can be found, FEWS reports will employ the term "at-risk" to mean...

...those persons lacking sufficient food, or resources to acquire sufficient food, to avert a nutritional crisis (i.e., a progressive deterioration in their health or nutritional condition below the status quo), and who, as a result, require specific intervention to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Perhaps of most importance to decisionmakers, the process underlying the deteriorating situation is highlighted by the FEWS effort, hopefully with enough specificity and forewarning to permit alternative intervention strategies to be examined and implemented. Food assistance strategies are key to famine avoidance. However, other types of intervention can be of major importance both in the short-term and in the long run, including medical, transport, storage, economic development policy change, etc.

Where possible, estimates of food needs are included in the FEWS reports. It is important to understand, however, that no direct relation exists between numbers of persons at-risk and the quantity of food assistance needed. This is because famines are the culmination of slow-onset disaster processes which can be complex in the extreme. The food needs of individual populations at-risk depend upon when in the disaster process identification is made and the extent of its cumulative impact on the individuals concerned. Further, the amount of food assistance required, whether from internal or external

The food needs of individual populations at-risk depend upon when in the disaster process identification is made and the extent of its cumulative impact on the individuals concerned. Further, the amount of food assistance required, whether from internal or external sources, depends upon a host of considerations. Thus the food needs estimates presented periodically in FEWS reports should not be interpreted to mean food aid needs, e.g., as under PL480 or other donor programs.

FEWS depends on a variety of US Government agencies, private voluntary organizations (PVO's), international relief agencies, foreign press and host government reports as sources of information used in the country reports. In particular, a debt of gratitude is owed to many individuals within various offices of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) who routinely provide valuable information: especially, the USAID Mission in Addis Ababa; the Office Of Emergency Operations (OEO); the offices of Food For Peace and Voluntary Assistance (FVA/FFP); and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). Special acknowledgement is also given to the Climate Assessment Branch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA/NESDIS/AISC) for meteorological information which has made it possible to monitor the progression of the agricultural season in Ethiopia. Additional useful information is also provided by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) and the World Food Programme.

FEWS is operated by AID's Office of Technical Resources in the Bureau for Africa (AFR/TR) in cooperation with numerous U.S. Government and other organizations. The FEWS Country Reports are working documents of AFR/TR and should not be construed as official pronouncements of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

SUMMARY

Most Belg crop areas in Ethiopia are expected to do well this year as a result of abundant Belg rains over the central and southwestern areas of the country. The Ogaden area in southeastern Ethiopia, meanwhile, suffered a severe drought during March and April, resulting in 334 human deaths. Although rains have now eased the acute water shortage, the nomadic peoples of that area will require extended assistance to cope with the heavy loss of their livestock, increased health risks and other residual effects of the drought. As would be expected, the populations of the lowland areas in Ethiopia are exposed to the greatest number of risk factors for vulnerability to food emergencies in 1987.

INDICATORS

- An independent estimate of Belg season production is expected from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in late June.
- New, higher estimates of 1987 populations at-risk in Ethiopia are due for release by the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission this month.
- Grain prices in Belg crop areas and in the capital city should drop sharply during June in anticipation of the Belg harvest.

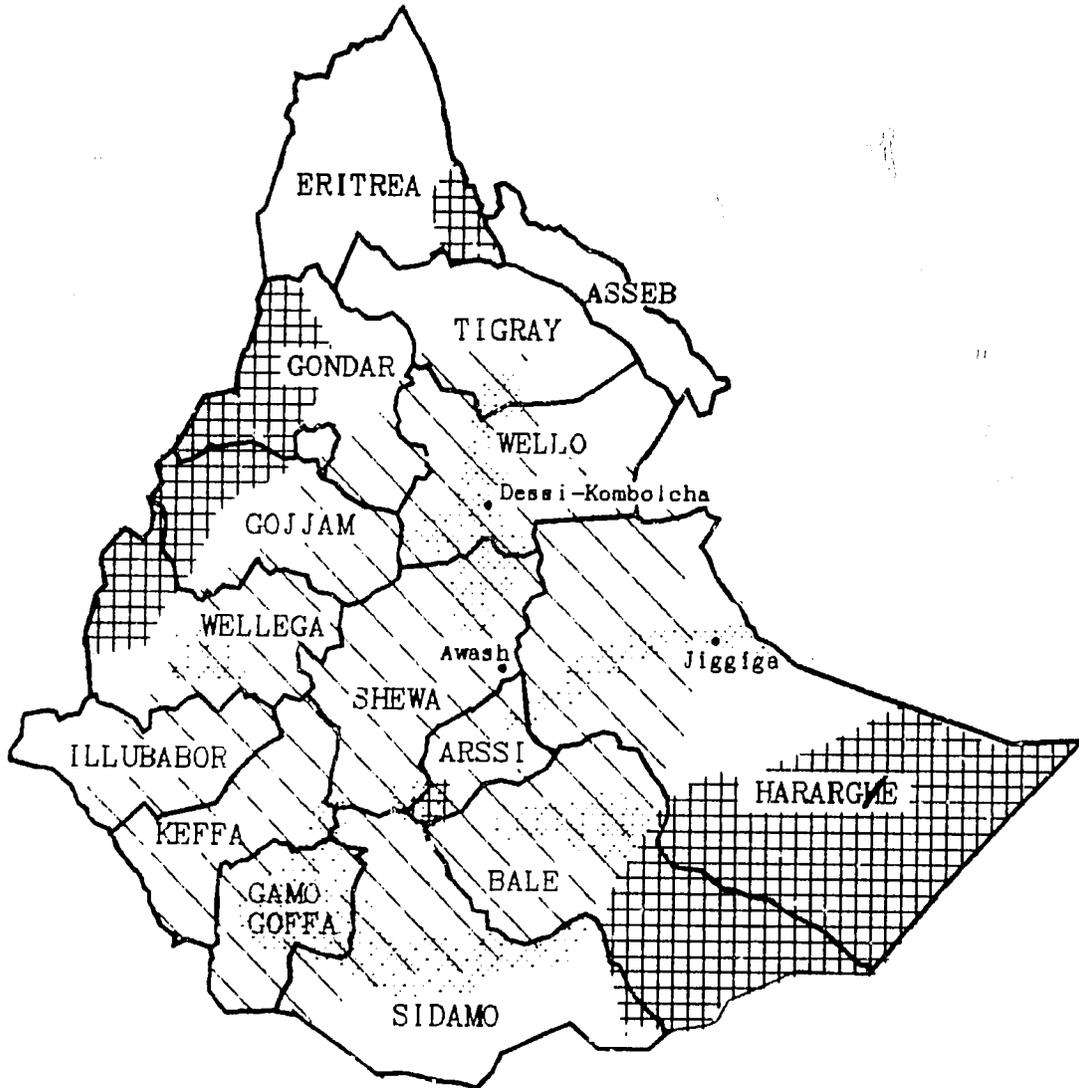
RAINFALL

While much of central and southwestern Ethiopia has received above normal rains for the Belg season (through mid-May), other areas of the country have experienced drought or near-drought conditions and are continuing to suffer from the effects. The most severely affected area is the Ogaden in southeastern Hararge, where human deaths and extensive loss of livestock have been attributed to lack of water. In addition, sections of the Rift Valley, the far western areas of the country, and smaller isolated pockets have experienced delayed rains or endured dry spells of several weeks in duration.

In sharp contrast to the situation in the Ogaden, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports favorable moisture conditions as of May 15th in much of Ethiopia (shown on Map 2), indicating "vegetation progress may be approximately three weeks ahead of 1986" in that area. Most Belg crops within this area should do well, with some possible exceptions.

The arid lowlands of southeastern Hararge Region experienced a severe drought during March and April. Like most nomadic populations in Ethiopia, the ethnic Somali nomads of this area are heavily dependent on Belg rains (March through May) for the growth of forage. Livestock in this

Moisture Conditions



-  Belg Crop Areas
-  Favorable Moisture Through May 15
-  Problem Areas

Source: CIAM/Nesdis with JAWF (USDA/NWS)
and CAC (NWS) and cables from USAID/Addis
FEWS/PWA, June 1987

area was already decimated by drought in recent years, but with 80% of the wells dry and the other 20% in poor condition, reports estimate that 25% to 30% of the remaining cattle, sheep, goats and camels have died this year. Furthermore, medical doctors with the World Univerity Service of Canada are attributing human deaths in Hararge specifically to lack of water. Ethiopian officials report 334 drought-related human deaths during March and April (see Populations At-Risk).

A steady rainfall beginning in the second week of May has ended the drought in most areas of the Ogaden, but in addition to increased health risks (contaminated water, heightened susceptibility to disease, etc.), a large part of the nomadic population in the area is now without the livestock required for survival. After May, rainfall normally ceases until October in many parts of the Ogaden. This season's growth period for the Ogaden's thorn savanna vegetation was reduced from three months to less than one (if the summer months are true to historical pattern). Existing shrubs and grasses may not provide adequate pasturage for the surviving livestock through the end of September. The nomadic lifestyle and the absence of regularly reporting rain stations in this area increase the difficulty of monitoring the situation.

A dry spell in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, has reportedly exacerbated the food shortage there. Although the rains were above normal in March, they dropped off sharply in mid-April, so that total precipitation for the month was less than 40% of normal. Rains did not resume until May 10th.

Although masked in the cumulative counts, there are pockets within the large area of good rains that have experienced dry spells of up to three weeks duration during late April and early May. Rain station reports from Dessi-Kombolcha in Wello Region and from Jiggiga in Hararge Region (see Map 2) indicate a dry spell lasting from roughly April 20th until May 6th. Depending upon when the Belg crops were actually planted there this year, this dry spell may have come at a critical stage of plant development. In Awash, Shewa Region, there was no measurable precipitation from April 14th until May 9th -- 25 days. Although not a Belg crop area, this dry spell in Awash supports reports of a rainfall shortage in the Belg crop areas of western Arssi Region, where there are no reporting rain stations.

The rainfall situation in the westernmost parts of the western Regions of Ethiopia is uncertain. The area of bountiful Belg rains apparently did not extend to the

western reaches of Gonder, Gojjam, Wellega and Illubabor. However, of these, only Wellega has a significant Belg production and the majority of its Belg crop areas appear to have received above average Belg rains, albeit with less than optimal distribution for crop development. Maize and sorghum are important crops in all four of these regions, and, as long-maturing crops, depend upon Belg rains for germination during May. Scattered reports indicate that plentiful rains during the second week of May have arrived in the west in time to ensure a healthy start for these maize and sorghum crops.

VULNERABILITY

The geographic lowlands of Ethiopia, according to a FEWS vulnerability analysis, are affected by the largest number of risk factors for a potential food emergency in 1987. For this analysis, the factors used to assess vulnerability include: 1986 grain production, 1987 rainfall to date, the threat from Desert locusts, the practice of pastoralism, problems of accessibility and traditional grain deficits.

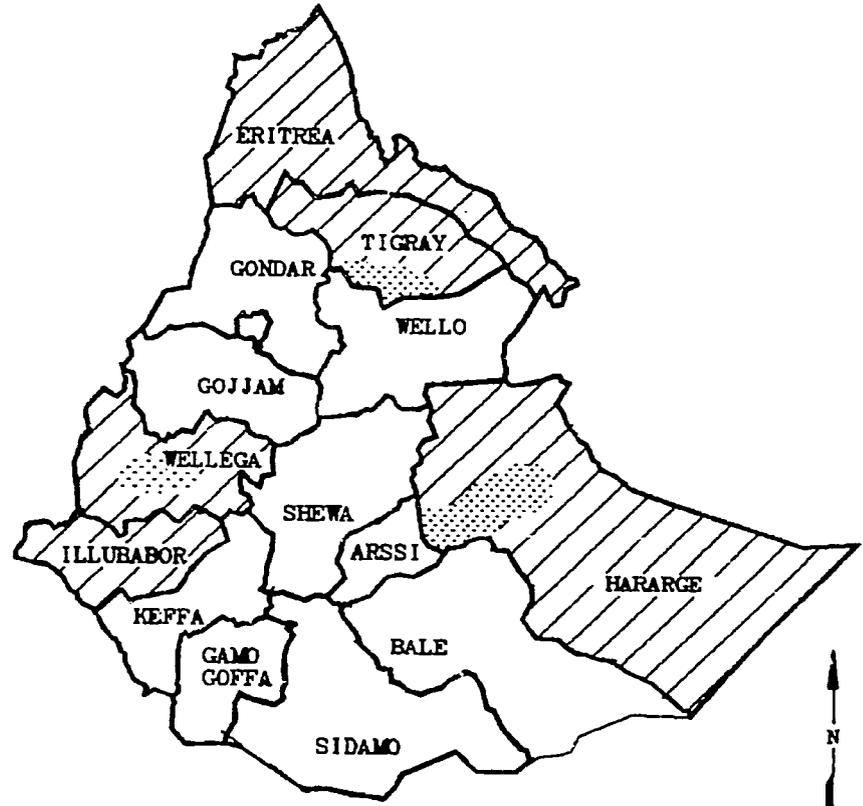
Agriculturalists in areas with poor harvests in 1986, could be vulnerable to a food emergency during 1987. Whether the food emergency actually comes to pass will depend upon additional intervening factors, but in general, food supplies should be expected to run lowest as the next harvest approaches; agriculturalists with no Belg crops (e.g., Eritrea, Illubabor and most of Tigray) will be most vulnerable, while areas with a fair 1986 Meher harvest (e.g., Shewa) and a successful 1987 Belg harvest would be least vulnerable to a food emergency. Map 3 shows those Regions in which 1986 production of cereals and pulses was less than 80% of "normal."

Desert locusts are not likely to be a major threat to Ethiopian agriculture during the summer breeding season, due to an active treatment program pursued by the Desert Locust Control Organization (DLCO) and the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) over the winter months.

Weather conditions through mid-May in southeastern, northwestern and far western Ethiopia (see Map 4) may have increased the vulnerability of those populations to food emergencies (see sections on Rainfall and At-Risk Populations). This assessment is based on rain station data (with some necessary generalization) combined with cabled reports from the USAID/Addis Mission. Normal rainfall is based on 10 to 30 year averages.

MAP 3: ETHIOPIA

Potential Vulnerability Low 1986 Production



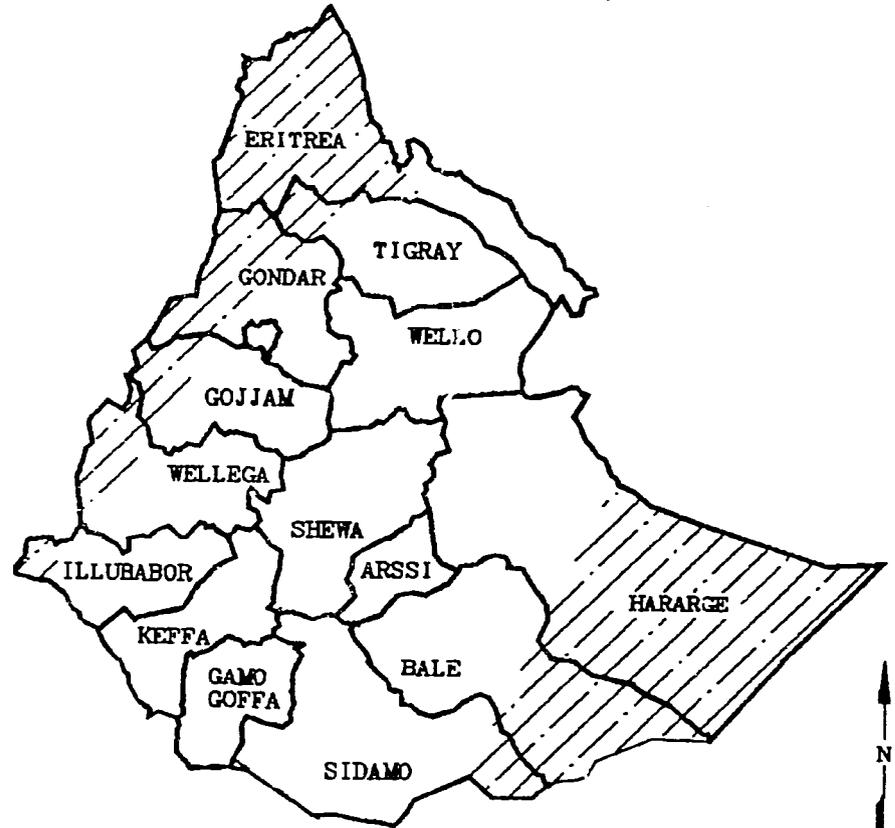
 Regions in which main harvest of cereals and pulses was 80% of "normal" (1980-1985)
 Belg crop areas

Source: D. Atwood and J. Pagano, "1987 Food Needs Assessment for Ethiopia", Table 9, Feb. 1987.

FEWS/PWA, June 1987

MAP 4: ETHIOPIA

Potential Vulnerability Low 1986 Rainfall



 1987 rainfall below normal or uncertain through May 15

Source: NOAA/Nesdis and USAID/Addis FEWS/PWA, June 1987

Pastoralists in Ethiopia are still in the process of recovering from the 1983-1984 drought, in which a large portion of their livestock perished (see FEWS Report 11). Since many pastoralists rely totally on their herds for survival, they cannot regain self-sufficiency until their herds have been rebuilt to minimum levels. After a period of severe drought, cattle are generally unable to produce offspring or milk for 6 months to a year after moisture conditions have improved; it can take up to 5 years to completely rebuild a herd. Most of the pastoralists in Ethiopia this year have, at best, a tenuous hold on self-sufficiency. For this reason, the pastoral areas of southern Sidamo, Hararge, Eritrea and eastern Wello (shown on Map 5) are highly vulnerable to food emergencies in 1987. Indeed, the lack of rainfall in south-eastern Hararge has already put the ethnic Somali nomads there at risk. While agriculturalists also suffer from a shortage of draught animals in many parts of the country, they are often able to share animals with neighbors and can also use hoes; their dependence on livestock is not as complete as that of the pastoralists.

Accessibility to markets and foodstuffs has been severely curtailed in Eritrea and Tigray (Map 6) for many years as the result of hostilities between government and rebel forces. Yet, as traditional grain deficit areas, supplemental food supplies are always required there. The government of Ethiopia has undisputed control over the major towns and highways, but rebels claim control over most of the rural areas. The ability of the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) to deliver food aid targeted for drought victims in these areas is thus a subject of debate.

Finally, some regions of the country are never self-sufficient in grain production, but must supplement their food supply with other crops or purchases from the proceeds of cash crops. As shown in Map 7, the regions which traditionally experience a grain deficit, to a greater or lesser degree, include Eritrea, Tigray, Hararge, Wello, Keffa, Gamo Gofa and Sidamo. The deficits in Gamo Gofa and Sidamo are largely offset by the cultivation of enset and potatoes in these areas and cash incomes from coffee production. In Hararge and Wello, the trend toward increasing cultivation of the less productive lowlands can be expected to result in even larger normal deficits over time. Eritrea and Tigray have the largest deficits; at least 50% of food supplies have to be imported, even in normal years. The disruption of some normal trading patterns should continue to severely affect these regions.

MAP 5: ETHIOPIA

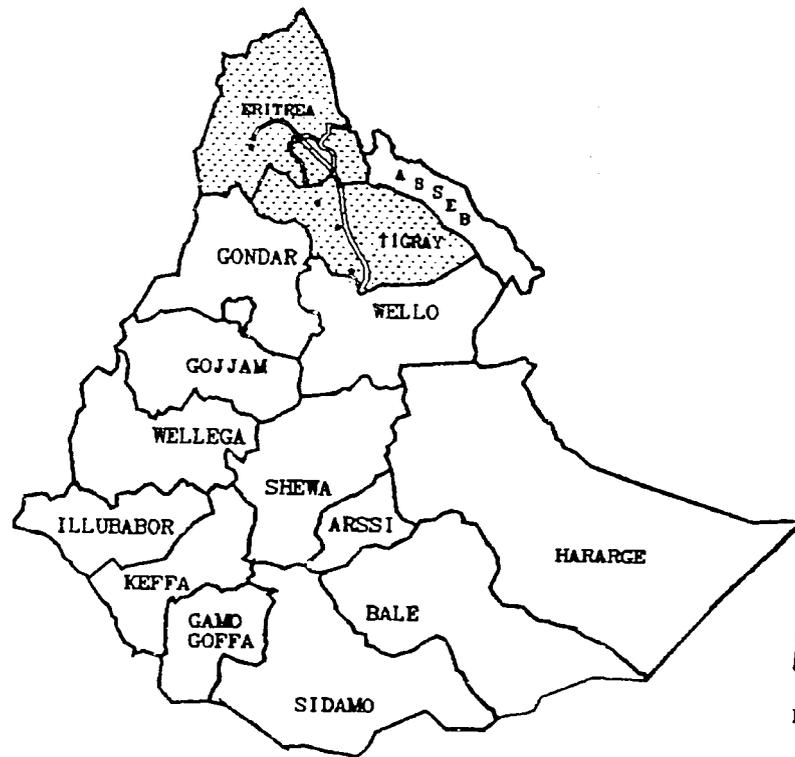
Potential Vulnerability Pastoralism



 Pastoral Areas

MAP 6: ETHIOPIA

Potential Vulnerability Access



 Access to RRC disputed
|| Highways
• Towns

Potential Vulnerability Grain Deficit



Source: "1986 Emergency Food Need Assessment"
T. Worrick, AFR/TR/ARD, Feb. 1986.
FEWS/PWA, June 1987

The confluence of risk factors is shown in Map 8. The factors chosen tend to emphasize agricultural production, but are otherwise unweighted. Thus, the darker areas on the map do not indicate a necessarily greater intensity of risk in those areas, but only vulnerability to a greater number of factors. As evident from Maps 3 -7, data were available at the sub-regional level only for some factors, while only regional statistics were available for other factors. The pattern of vulnerability shown in Map 8 corresponds closely to geographic lowland areas, as would be expected. The lowlands are characterized by lower yields and less dependable rains. The pattern of vulnerability in 1987 is also very similar to the map of historical famine areas (see Map 9). The most notable divergence between these maps is in the Rift Valley in the central part of the country. It would appear that this area is in a relatively better situation this year than in many past years. It is likely, however, that the vulnerability of this chronic problem area in 1987 was simply masked by the necessity to use data at the region level for some determinants.

FOOD AID

An analysis of the port situation in late April showed a total of 48,442 metric tons (MT) of food aid (emergency and non-emergency not differentiated) currently at the wharves. Some 40,298 MT were at Assab and the remainder at Djibouti; no food aid stocks were reported at Massawa.

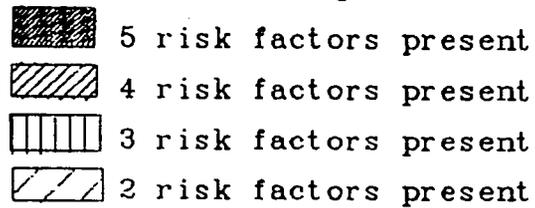
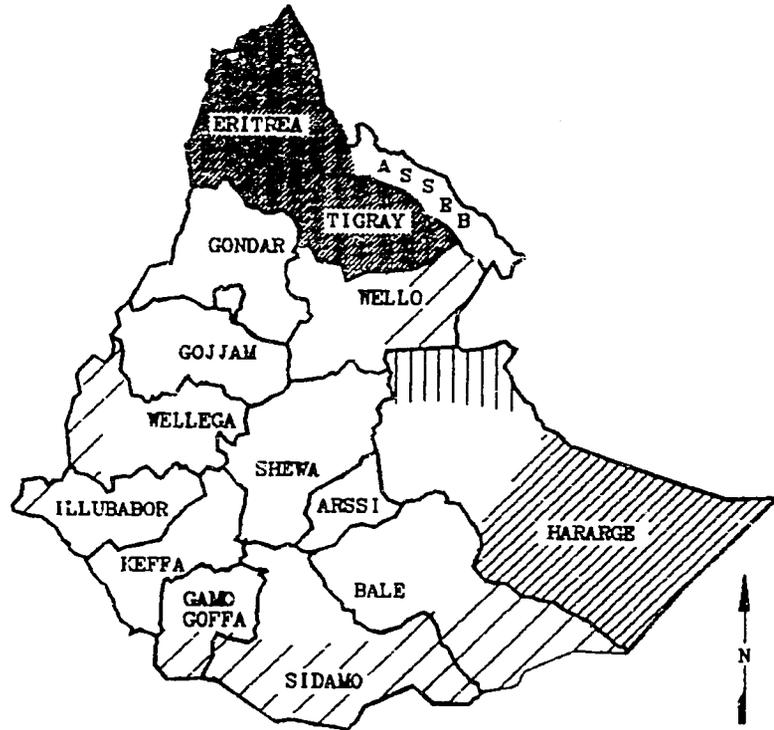
One scheduled 7,500 MT shipment of emergency food aid was diverted from Ethiopia to Mozambique, and will not be replaced. As of mid-May, the known 1987 donor pledges totaled 78,000 MT.

United Kingdom	17,000
World Food Programme	36,000
Australia	10,000
Fed Rep of Germany	15,000
	78,000 MT

The estimate of minimum food aid available for distribution in Ethiopia during 1987 should thus be adjusted from 340,738 MT (including only shipments already delivered or scheduled -- see FEWS Report 10) to 411,238 MT. While shipping schedules maintained by the World Food Programme (WFP) had earlier shown no food aid shipments after April, deliveries are reportedly now expected from May onward, and a new schedule is under preparation.

MAP 8: ETHIOPIA

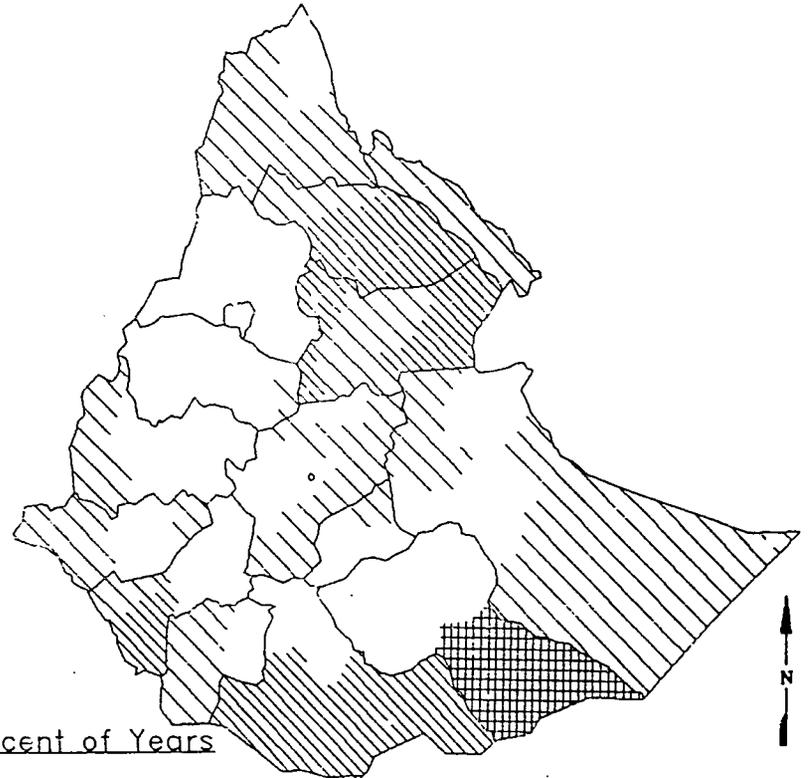
Vulnerability 1987



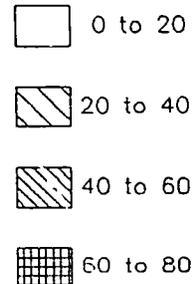
FEWS/PWA, June 1987

MAP 9: ETHIOPIA

Historical Famine Areas 1958-1977



Percent of Years



FEWS/PWA, June 1987

AT-RISK POPULATIONS

As expected, the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) is revising upward its estimate of the population requiring emergency food aid in 1987. Thus far, the total has been increased from 2.5 million to 3 million. These increases are attributed to an additional 300,000 people affected by lack of water in Eritrea and approximately 210,000 additional people also affected by an acute water shortage in southeastern Hararge Region. The RRC is expected to issue a new appeal for food aid during June, showing higher figures for people at-risk during 1987.

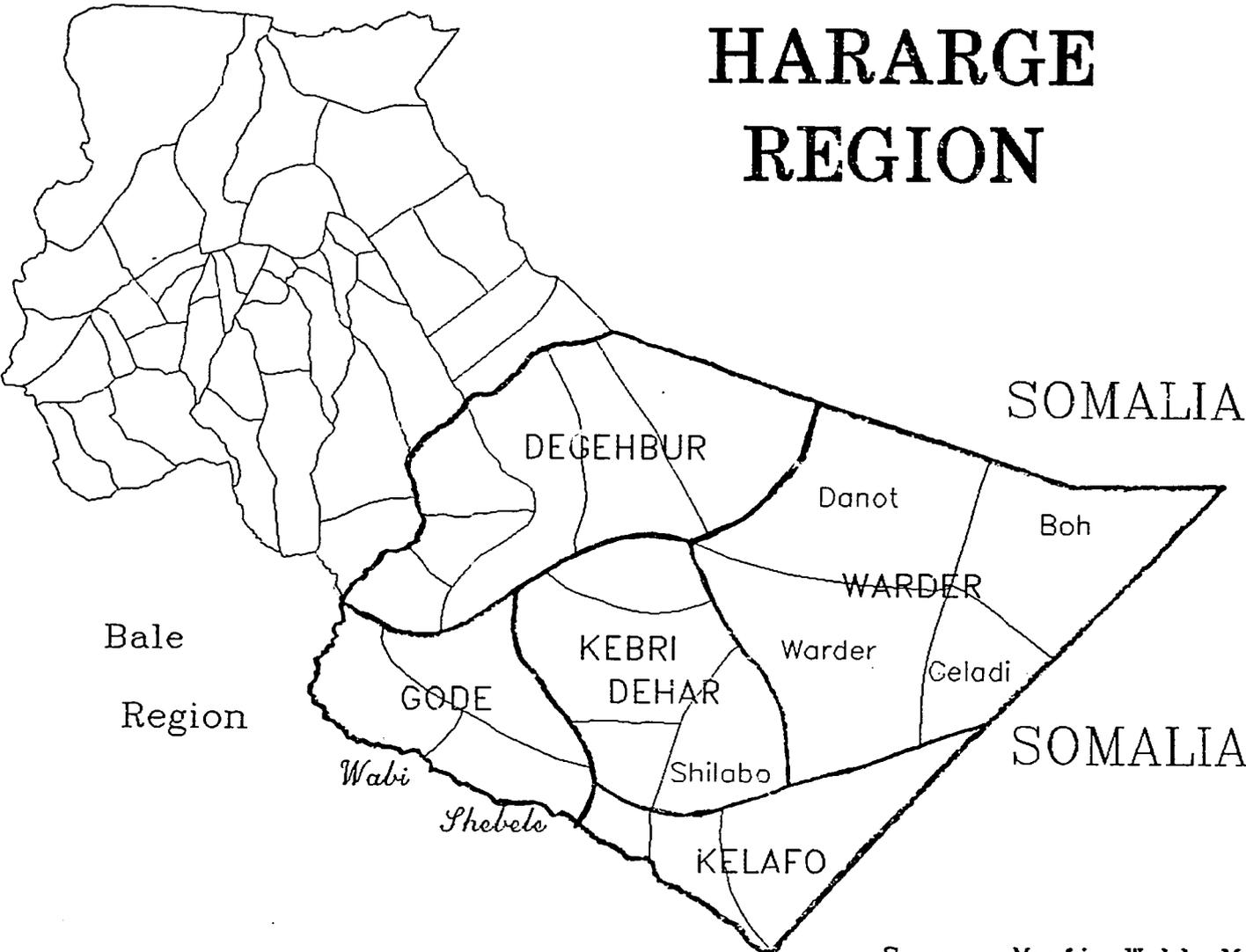
The Ogaden

The five southernmost awrajas of Hararge Region (Degebur, Kebri Dehar, Gode, Kelafo and Warder) are in the area known as the Ogaden, which suffered an acute water shortage this year, with 334 human deaths (mostly children) reported during March and April. Approximately a third of the population of the Ogaden has been affected by the drought. Most of those affected are said to be ethnic Somali nomads who regularly cross the border from Somalia to reach traditional grazing lands. Local officials believe a large percentage of the affected population is composed of returnees from Somalia who had been recipients of a United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) feeding program until the end of March. These people have been unable to rebuild their herds since the last drought and the resources of the clans, who traditionally provide support to their weakened members, are severely strained.

Nutrition surveys performed in Degebur and Warder Awrajas (see Map 10) by Save The Children Federation (SCF), show 17 to 18% of the children surveyed to be suffering from severe malnutrition (less than 80% weight for height). When compared to data collected during the same season in Shilabo (in neighboring Kebri Dehar Awraja), these results show a significant decline in general nutritional status. SCF will continue performing spot surveys to monitor nutritional status of the affected nomadic populations.

The acute water shortage has been eased by steady rainfall in many areas of the Ogaden (one exception being the area around Boh, which has received only a few light showers) during the middle of May, but health officials are now concerned over the health risks from contaminated surface water. Water is being trucked to some communities at their request. As the rains continue, there is an increased risk of epidemic diseases among the weakened population. An increased incidence of diarrhea has already been reported in some areas.

HARARGE REGION



Source: Mesfin Wolde-Mariam
FEWS/PWA, June 1987

As nomads, the people of this area depend completely on their livestock for their livelihood. The large loss of livestock has left many without a means of survival. Milk dependent children will especially suffer. While figures on livestock losses are still being collected, an estimated 25 to 30% of the livestock in the Ogaden is believed to have perished in this drought, with losses in some localities going much higher. The figures for two of the most severely affected awrajas are provided below.

LIVESTOCK LOSSES

	Warder Awraja		Kebri Dehar Awraja	
	Total	Losses	Total	Losses
Camels	150,000	71,648	97,000	22,000
Cattle	200,000	89,712	85,000	47,000
Sheep and Goats	1,318,000	368,560	1,541,000	66,924
Donkeys and Horses	1,500	300		

It is evident that extensive assistance will be needed in the Ogaden for an extended period. The RRC is providing assistance in Warder and Degeh Bur Awrajas. Water will continue to be trucked in for the next three months, until the health risks from contaminated water are past. Transport and operational funding are needed. Relief groups are alert to the need for regular monitoring and reassessment of the situation as the affected population continues to move about.