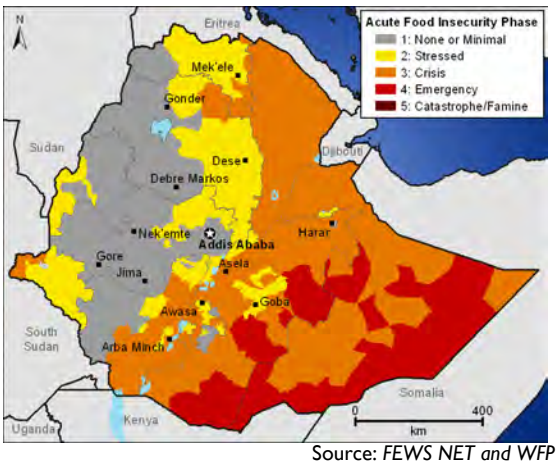
ETHIOPIA Food Security Update July 25, 2011

Current food security outcomes and classification

- The south and southeastern pastoral and agropastoral parts of the country faced two consecutive seasons of very poor rains. The combined dryness of the total failure of the *Deyr* rains (October to December) in 2010 and the poor *Gu* (April to June) rains in 2011 was the worst since 1950 in the Moyale-Wayamo pastoral and Borena-Guji cattle pastoral livelihood zone and the second-worst in Lowland Hawd pastoral and Fitu-Dolo pastoral livelihood zones. Poor and very poor households in the most severely drought-affected woredas, as well as those where drought is compounded by limited market access problems, are currently facing Humanitarian Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

Figure 1. Current food security outcomes, July 2011



Source: *FEWS NET and WFP*

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

- The northeastern pastoral and agro-pastoral region of Afar and the northern two zones of Sozmali region received little to no rain since the end of their main rainy season (K*arma/Karran rain*s) in September 2010. Performance of their secondary rainy season, *Sugum/Belg* (March to May), this year was extremely poor in leading to rapid deterioration of pasture and water. Livestock have migrated to highlands in neighboring Amhara and Oromia regions. There is severe water shortage in some of these areas. In Aiysha woreda of Shinile zone for example, water trucking has been ongoing for seven months since January this year. These areas are currently at Crisis (IPC Phase 3) level.

- In the *Belg*-dependent parts of SNNPR, sweet potato that is typically consumed during the lean season between February and May failed this year due to poor performance of the belg (February to May) rains. *Belg* season planting was also carried out late this year due to the late start of the season, and the area planted was reduced. The *Belg* harvest, which typically takes place in June/July, is expected to be poor and also take place towards the end of August/beginning of September, extending the lean season. The *Belg*-producing parts of the SNNPR are therefore at Crisis (IPC Phase 3) level of food insecurity.

Crop conditions and harvest prospects

- In the *belg* crop-producing parts of the country -- notably the southern special woredas (Konso, Derashe, Burji and Amaro) that depend on the *belg* season for up to 80 percent of their total annual production -- the delayed onset and erratic performance of the *belg* rains is expected to lead to poor *belg* harvest this year, a total failure in some areas. The harvest, which typically takes place between June and July, is also expected towards the end of August/beginning of September during the *Kiremt* rains.

- *Meher* season is the main season in Ethiopia contributing 90 to 95 percent of total annual production. Performance of the rains to date has been below average in the southern parts of Afar region and northern parts of Somali region as well as the northwestern and northeastern parts of the country. This would decrease the *meher* production in some areas.

- No harvest is expected from the agro-pastoral areas in the southern and southeastern parts of the country due to drought.

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Pastoral conditions

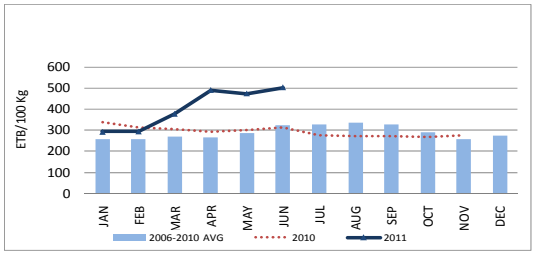
- Two consecutive poor performances of seasonal rains led to scarcity of pasture and water. There was loss of livestock in March and April in many of the south and southeastern pastoral woredas. Milk availability is low due to limited births compared to normal. For example, in Liben agro pastoral livelihood zone (LHZ), milk yield has reduced by 45 percent for camel, 50 to 60 percent for cattle and 80 percent for shoats compared to 2004/05 (the baseline year). Milk prices are 60-70 percent higher than the baseline. Physical condition of livestock is poor because pasture has not sufficiently regenerated. Water availability continues to be scare and is not expected to last until the next rainy season begins in October.

Food availability, market functioning, and trade

- In the cropping parts of the country, prices are very high. For example, the nominal retail price of white maize in June in Addis Ababa is 56 percent higher than the five-year average and 61 percent higher than that of last year (Figure 2). Although prices are very high, markets are functioning as usual, and food is available in the markets for those who can afford to buy.

- In parts of the southeastern pastoral area, especially in parts of southern Somali region, there is market access problem which make food availability scarce in these parts of Somali region.

Figure 2. Nominal retail price of white maize in Addis Ababa



Source : *EGTE and FEWS NET*

Food prices and Terms of Trade (ToT)

- Cereal prices in most parts of the country are still moving upward but with slightly lower rates comparing to the level of increase over the last three months (Figure 2). The changes are even lower in areas where food distributions through relief and PSNP programs are ongoing. However, while they are still much higher than the last five year average prices, the level of increase are close to the trends in 2008 for maize even higher for wheat.

- Prices of livestock as well as prices of staples have risen compared to the baseline year in southern pastoral and agro pastoral areas however the rate of increase in price of staples is much higher. For example in Liben agro pastoral livelihood zone (LHZ), the price of a shoat was 90 to 120 birr in the baseline year (2004/05) and it is currently 300 to 400 birr showing an increase of 218 percent. The price of a quintal (100 Kgs) of maize on the other hand, was 140 birr and it is now 780 birr which is an increase of 436 percent leading to poor livestock to cereal terms of trade.

Health and Nutrition

- According to the recently released Humanitarian Requirement Document (HRD) about 20 million USD is required for water, sanitation and hygiene interventions among an estimated 4 million people across the country. The need for water trucking will be high compared to normal in southern Somali; Borena and Guji of Oromia region due to the extended dry season preceded two poor seasonal rains.

- There is a growing concerns for outbreak of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) with the start of the *Kiremt* rains and potential for flooding in the flood prone areas;

Response

- On the most recent, fourth round, distribution carried out in June, out of the planned 4 million beneficiaries, emergency food aid was allocated for about 3.2 million people throughout the country. According to the Early Warning and Reponses Analysis report of DRMFSS for July, the fourth round relief food dispatches have been completed to all regions except Somali. In Somali region, . In Somali region food aid distributions by WFP has been suspended for about two months due to security concerns However, the national relief pipeline for oil, pulses and CSB is low beginning in July for the 5th round allocation. A break in the cereal pipeline is also expected beginning in September 2011. According to OCHA, only 24 percent of the consolidated appeal requirement is met for the period July to December 2011.

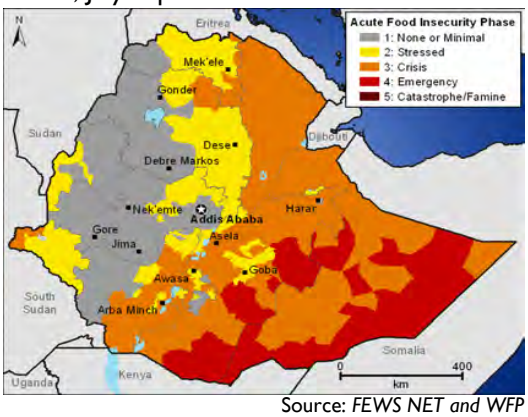
- Major gaps in nutrition responses (Targeted Supplementary Feeding -TSF, Therapeutic Feeding Units -TFU and Out-patient Therapeutic Programs- OTP) have been reported in many drought-affected woredas.

Most-likely scenario

- Further excess animal mortality is expected towards the end of the current dry season and the beginning of the *Deyr* rains as pasture and water have not regenerated sufficiently and are expected to deplete before the start of the rains in October. The month of September this year is expected to be particularly harsh. Assuming that the rains will be average, availability of water and browse will improve, and staple food prices will decline following the inflow of the new *meher* harvest from the crop-producing parts of the country. Terms of trade will impove with reduction in cereal prices and improvement in physical condition of livestock. Spending on water will also decline while milk availability (camel and goats) will slightly improve.. After the rains begin in October, level of food insecurity is therefore expected to improve to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) level (Figure 5).

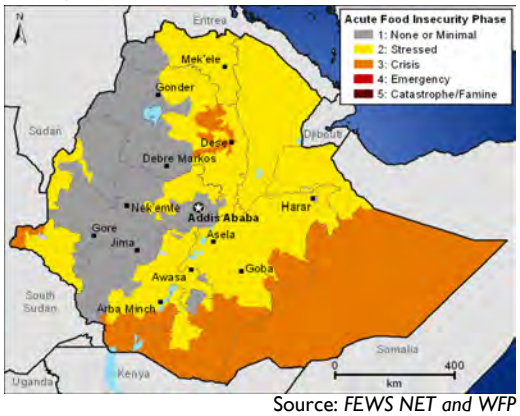
- In the northeastern pastoral and agro pastoral region of Afar and the northern two zones of Somali region, although the *Karma/Karran* rains to date have been below average, based on the forecast of the National Metrology Agency, the rains are expected to be improve in the remainder of the season. The period July to September is the season for the main rains in these areas of focus. These rains are expected to bring about improvement in pasture and water availability as well as close to average harvest are likely in the agro pastoral parts. This will improve milk availability and the price of livestock is also expected to improve with improvement in physical condition. Prices of staples are expected to decline with the start of the *meher* harvest beginning in October, leading to improvement in livestock to cereal terms of trade. Food security in these parts is therefore expected to improve to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) level.

Figure 3. Estimated most likely food security outcomes, July-September 2011



Source: *FEWS NET and WFP*

Figure 4. Estimated most likely food security outcomes, October - December 2011



Source: *FEWS NET and WFP*

- The *belg* producing parts of the country are expected to have the belg harvest towards the end of August and beginning of September. This is expected to improve their level of food insecurity to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) except for the southern special woredas which continue to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) where the little expected harvest is unlikely to improve food security.

Key information gaps

- Data on malnutrition, figures on animal death due to the draught, prices (cereal and livestock) particularly in parts of Somali where access is limited and food aid distribution figures are difficult to obtain.

Data sources

- FEWS NET field monitoring, Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector of the Government of Ethiopia, OCHA and WFP