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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 #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2010

October 30, 2009

Note: The last situation report was dated September 17, 2009.

BACKGROUND

Consecutive seasons of failed rains, combined with a rapidly growing population, increased inflation, endemic poverty, and limited government capacity, have led to chronic food insecurity and water shortages in large areas of Ethiopia, including Somali Region and areas of Oromiya, Afar, Tigray, Amhara, and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions. The USAID-supported Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) anticipates that the delayed onset and poor performance of the June to September *kiremt* rains, combined with the widespread failure of the previous four rains, will result in a below-normal October to January *meher* harvest in crop-producing areas of Ethiopia. Populations in many areas of the country confront significant humanitarian challenges, including conflict, malnutrition, and delayed food deliveries. 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 October 22, 2009, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (GFDRE) released the Humanitarian Requirements Document outlining the results of a June and July 2009 multi-agency assessment and identifying humanitarian needs for the coming months. According to the results, an estimated 6.2 million people will continue to require emergency food assistance between October and December 2009. In addition, an estimated 7.5 million chronically food-insecure beneficiaries currently receive assistance from the GFDRE-managed Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) through employment opportunities or food assistance and cash transfers.

On October 5, 2009, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., Tulinabo Mushingi reissued a disaster declaration in response to the ongoing complex emergency in Ethiopia. In FY 2009 and FY 2010 to date, the U.S. Government (USG) has provided more than \$430 million for logistics, relief commodities, refugee assistance, emergency food assistance, and humanitarian coordination and information management, as well as nutrition, economic recovery and market systems, and agriculture and food security programs throughout Ethiopia.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	SOURCE	
GFDRE PSNP Beneficiary Caseload	7.5 million	GFDRE MOARD ¹ – January 2009
Population Requiring Emergency Food Assistance	6.2 million	GFDRE MOARD – October 2009

FY 2010 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED TO DATE

USAID/FFP² Assistance to Ethiopia\$75,000,000
Total USG Humanitarian Assistance to Ethiopia\$75,000,000

CURRENT SITUATION

The October to December *deyr* rains have commenced in southern and southeastern areas of Ethiopia and produced normal rainfall to date. Due to the presence of an El Niño weather phenomenon, normal to above-normal rainfall is expected to continue through November and December, potentially improving water and pasture availability for pastoral communities. While heavy rainfall resulting from the El Niño event has the potential to cause flooding in the southeastern lowlands of Ethiopia, FEWS NET reported on October 30 that significant flooding remains unlikely.

Despite the potential for increased rainfall and resulting improvements in water and pasture availability, FEWS NET expects food security conditions to deteriorate throughout Ethiopia in early 2010 due to projections of a below-normal September to February *meher* harvest, which typically provides more than 90 percent of Ethiopia's total annual cereal crop production.

On October 22, the GFDRE released the revised Humanitarian Requirements Document based on a joint assessment conducted in June and July 2009 and

¹ GFDRE Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD)

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

subsequent monitoring results. According to the GFDRE, an estimated 6.2 million people will continue to require emergency food assistance in Ethiopia between October and December 2009.

USAID/OFDA supports established rapid response programs throughout Ethiopia that can flexibly address identified humanitarian needs. In addition, staff are closely monitoring the situation for early indicators of a deteriorating humanitarian situation.

Agriculture and Food Security

Poor performance of the 2009 February to May *belg* and June to September *kiremt* rains, combined with several previous seasons of below-average rainfall, has resulted in water shortages, decreased pasture availability, and significantly reduced coping mechanisms. In addition, FEWS NET projects a below-normal September to February *meher* harvest, which accounts for 90 percent of the total annual cereal crop production in Ethiopia. As a result, humanitarian agencies report the potential for a significant deterioration in food security in Ethiopia beginning in early 2010.

Coping strategies adopted in response to multiple seasons of poor or failed rains have further reduced crop production prospects and food security in Ethiopia. According to FEWS NET, the poor performance of the *belg* rains led farmers to plant short-cycle, lower-yield crops during the June to October *kiremt* rainy season. By planting crops that mature quickly, such as wheat, barley, peas, beans, and flax, farmers are able to quickly replenish depleted food stocks. However, the strategy reduces the supply of long-cycle crops, such as maize and sorghum, which normally constitute approximately 50 percent of Ethiopia's total cereal production.

Consecutive seasons of failed or poor rains and resulting water and pasture shortages have also resulted in reduced livestock assets and a further erosion of coping mechanisms among pastoral communities. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), regional water shortages have resulted in abnormal livestock migration patterns within Somali and Oromiya regions, as well as across international borders, further increasing the risk of livestock disease transmission and competition over scarce resources.

On September 28, OCHA reported that pastoralists from northern Kenya continue to move into Borena District in Ethiopia's Oromiya Region. According to FEWS NET, recent pastoralist migrations have resulted in resource-based conflict in the border area between Borena District, Oromiya Region, and Liben District, Somali Region.

Between September 28 and October 11, the GFDRE and humanitarian partners deployed teams throughout Ethiopia to perform a mid-*meher* assessment. According to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the GFDRE plans to release the assessment results in mid-November 2009. U.N. agencies continue to emphasize the need for

a timely release of the assessment results, noting that WFP and other humanitarian agencies plan to use the results to inform projected assistance programs for 2010. The humanitarian community also highlights the need for a final *meher* assessment, noting that the mid-*meher* assessment does not include areas currently receiving *deyr* rains, which have the potential to damage or benefit crop production and resulting food security conditions, depending on rainfall performance through the end of the year.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$11 million to support agriculture and food security programs in Ethiopia. The programs include initiatives funded through the USAID/OFDA Horn Food Price Crisis Response Strategy that are designed to protect, build, and diversify productive household assets as a means of strengthening resilience to shocks that negatively affect food security, such as below-normal crop production or food price increases.

Health and Nutrition

According to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), admission rates of severely malnourished children into therapeutic feeding programs (TFPs) have continuously increased since early April, particularly in SNNP, Oromiya, and Somali regions. Humanitarian agencies continue to note that low reporting by TFPs could potentially hinder an accurate assessment of the situation. OCHA partially attributes the increased admission rates to improved access and service coverage following implementation of the GFDRE's outpatient therapeutic programs, which provide children with therapeutic food in the household rather than requiring overnight stays at feeding centers.

On August 7, UNICEF estimated that 242,000 children under the age of five require treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) through the end of 2009, with an anticipated 270,000 children requiring treatment during 2010. In Somali Region, a joint nutrition survey conducted in late April and early May 2009 indicated global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates ranging from 14.5 to nearly 22 percent and SAM rates ranging from 0.8 to 2.3 percent, approaching or exceeding the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) emergency thresholds of 15 and 1 percent, respectively. However, USAID/OFDA field staff note that UNICEF uses a SAM emergency threshold of 2.2 percent in Ethiopia.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$13 million to support health and nutrition activities in Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP, Somali, and Tigray regions, including community-based management of acute malnutrition and a rapid response nutrition capacity.

Emergency Food Assistance

In early October, WFP reported an ongoing break in the relief food pipeline, which began in June, and the continued provision of reduced relief rations. According to WFP, the food pipeline break resulted from funding

shortages, as well as significant delays in the offloading and inland transport of food commodities from the Port of Djibouti. In response to the delays, WFP increased trucking capacity in August and has begun transporting some emergency food supplies through ports in Sudan and Berbera, Somalia. As a result, WFP reported improved food delivery in September. However, issues related to transport and port capacity continue to impact the timely delivery of food assistance.

As of October 19, WFP had commenced an additional round of food distributions targeting 6.2 million people. According to WFP, the distribution represents the seventh food aid distribution in Somali Region during 2009 and the sixth distribution in all other regions of Ethiopia. As of October 19, WFP had completed food distributions in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray regions.

In FY 2009 and FY 2010 to date, USAID/FFP has provided 536,010 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance to Ethiopia, valued at more than \$352 million. USAID/OFDA also provided \$10 million to WFP for the local purchase and distribution of food assistance in FY 2009.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Water shortages and poor sanitation and hygiene practices continue to result in the spread of waterborne diseases throughout drought-affected areas of Ethiopia. According to UNICEF, health officials reported more than 20,000 acute watery diarrhea (AWD) cases between January and mid-September 2009. However, WHO reports that the incidence of AWD cases continues to decline from a peak reached in late August 2009. From September 28 to October 4, OCHA reported 393 new cases and one related death in Afar, Amhara, Oromiya, and SNNP regions, as well as Addis Ababa.

In FY 2009, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$8 million to support water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities in Somali, SNNP, Oromiya, Gambella, Afar, and Amhara regions, including \$3 million for rapid-response programs. USAID/OFDA-funded WASH programs include the provision of safe drinking water, WASH education programs designed to mitigate the spread of waterborne diseases, AWD response and mitigation activities, and a rapid response WASH capacity.

USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA

FY 2010			
<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE¹			
CRS (on behalf of the consortium of private voluntary organizations implementing relief operations)	44,460 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$25,000,000
WFP	73,350 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$50,000,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP Relief			\$75,000,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA IN FY 2010			\$75,000,000

¹ Estimated value of food assistance.