

Ethiopian Early Warning System

Special EWS Report

Impact of the *Belg* Harvest And Rains in Pastoral Areas On Food Availability

August 2003



Disaster Prevention and
Preparedness Commission
DPPC

Introduction

This Early Warning Special Report brings together and summarizes the findings from the recently concluded DPPC-led multi-agency *Belg* pre-harvest and pastoral area emergency needs assessment that took place from mid June to mid July. The objective of the assessment was to provide information regarding the food security status of agricultural, pastoral and agro-pastoral populations affected by drought and flooding. The conclusions of the assessment teams are based on the systematic analysis of established process indicators such as weather and its effects on crop and livestock production as a major source of income and food in the region, market conditions, secondary sources of income such as wage labor, petty trade and commodity production and outcome indicators such as nutrition and health.

In terms of overall production, *Belg* rains occurring this time of year in crop dependent areas (*Belg*) contribute less than 10% to national production. However, these rains are significant to maize and sorghum crops, which amount to nearly half of the national cereals produced in the country, annual food crops, flowering and seed setting of the coffee crop (the cash of which covers over 60% of national foreign exchange earnings), regeneration of chat and land preparation for the main agricultural growing season. Rains in pastoral areas during a similar time period, called by their local names of *Gu*, *Sugum* or *Ganna*, are also crucial for livestock to replenish pasture and water. Livestock and their products are one of the major sources of food in Ethiopia. In the absence of these rains, shortages of pasture and water significantly diminish the productive capacity of livestock, creating food shortages and high levels of vulnerability to malnutrition.

Summary of Findings

Crop Areas

In most of the *Belg* producing areas of Southern Tigray Zone in **Tigray** Region and in North Wollo and Oromiya zones, Dessie Zuria and Tenta woredas of South Wollo and eastern parts of North Shewa zones in **Amhara** Region, the onset of *Belg* 2003 was earlier than normal and considered untimely. In the remaining parts of both regions the season started on time. The overall performance of the rain is considered better than last year though there were big differences in specific localities regarding the amount and distribution. During the season there were occurrences of long and frequent dry spells and other adverse weather conditions. In most places the rains ceased close to their normal cessation time. In Southern Tigray Zone in Tigray Region and in Amhara Region, planting of *Belg* crops was undertaken in two periods. The first one occurred using the untimely rains that came in December while the second and the main planting took place in February. The total land area planted this year compared to last year in Tigray was higher, though considerable area of land (32% of the total planted area) was re-ploughed. On the other hand, in Amhara Region planted area remained the same as the long-term average. Overall in the current year, crop production in Southern Tigray Zone in Tigray Region and Amhara regions increased by 31% and 37% respectively compared to last year. In **Oromiya** Region the onset of the season's rains was timely in North and East Shewa and Bale zones, while in the rest of the region it was late by two to four weeks. The amount of rain was insufficient and distribution erratic in most parts of the region and the rain ceased earlier than normal in Arsi, North Shewa, East and West Hararghe zones. Due to the late onset of the rains and the prevalence of a dry spell, land preparation activities and planting were reported to overlap particularly in East and West Hararghe and Arsi. This resulted in a delay in planting and reduced area planted. In *Belg* producing areas, shortage of seed and lack of oxen also contributed to the reduction in area planted. As a result, the overall production of crops is expected to decrease significantly (50%-80%) in most areas of the region. In Southern Nations Nationalities People's Region (**SNNPR**) the performance of rains was mixed. The onset of the rains was late by two to four weeks in most of the zones and special *woredas*, except in Dawro and Gamo Gofa zones, and Konso and Alaba, special *woredas*. Dry spells were prolonged during the first half of the season in many areas of the region. Good rains were received only starting early April and lasting through mid May. However, excessive rains, hailstorms and flooding during this time caused serious damage. Though planted area compared to normal is even higher in some places of SNNPR, planting was late by two to six weeks in those areas where the onset of the rains was delayed. Due to the poor performance of the rains 20% to 60% lower than average production is expected in Wolayta, Hadiya, Dawro and Sidama zones and Burji special *woreda*. Normal to above normal production is expected in Gamo Gofa, Gedio, and KT zones and Amaro and Derashe special *woredas*.

Pastoral Areas

This year *Sugum* rains (March – April 2003) in **Afar** were rated as poor although it was a bit better than last year in a few *woredas* of the region. The *Sugum* rain was timely in onset and cessation, but below normal in amount and erratic in distribution. In general, the *Sugum* rain had no notable impact on the availability of pasture, except for some pocket areas where "browse" regenerated and was used by goats and camels. Most *woredas* in Afar are still under water rationing since July 2002, and were still reported inadequate. Livestock are weak and the calving rate is very low this season. Milk production is also negligible. The terms of trade deteriorated in most places particularly for cattle and sheep.

The performance of this year's *Gu* rains in **Somali** Region were good in Fik Afder and Liban zones, near normal to normal in parts of Gode, Jijiga and Warder, poor in parts of Korahe, Dagahabur and Warder, and very poor throughout Shinile zones. As a result of the poor *Gu* rains, pasture remains critical in Shinile Zone, part of Korahe, pocket areas in Jijiga Zone, most of Warder Zone and some parts of Degahbour Zone. Acute and chronic water shortage was an adverse effect of the drought in this year. Shinile Zone still remains the most affected and current water supply in most of the zone is poor. The second most affected zone is Warder. Other areas already facing water shortage are parts of Jijiga, Korahe, parts of Fik and Gode zones. According to the multi-agency assessment team report, over 300,000 people in the above noted *woredas* require emergency water interventions. Livestock conditions in Shinile Zone severely deteriorated with the exception of goats. Livestock conditions in the other zones gradually recovered, but milk production remains below normal except in Gode, Liban and Afder zones. There are increasing signs of malnutrition in some parts of the region particularly in Shinile, Degahbour and parts of Jijiga zones and in IDP settlements in the region.

The *Ganna* rains were generally favorable in most pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Bale, Borena and Guji zones in **Oromiya** Region. As a result, pasture regenerated in abundance and water is sufficiently available

for human and livestock consumption. Livestock is in good condition and the breeding cycle is normal. The milk supply and the terms of trade in the three zones improved substantially as a result.

Unlike the previous months, *Belg* season rains in South Omo in **SNNPR** were also below normal in quantity and not uniform in distribution. Rains had a negative impact on crop producing *woredas* particularly in Selamago, Hamaer and Kuraz *woredas*.

A summary of revised needs in both *Belg* cropping areas and pastoral areas is highlighted below. Overall, an addition of 1.8 million people need an extension of assistance from August to December and an additional 600,000 people are classified as new beneficiaries, bringing the total additional population needing assistance to 2.4 million. This raises the total needy population in the country from 12.6 million to 13.2million.

Table 1: Analysis of Needy Population from August to December 2003

Monthly Average Population needing assistance from August – December 2003	
• As per April update	4.3 million
• As per current estimate	6.7 million
• Difference or additional population needing assistance	2.4 million
➤ Out of which population needing an extension of assistance from Aug-Dec	1.8 million
➤ New additional beneficiaries	600,000
Total needy population in 2003	
• As per April update	12.6 million
• As per current estimate	13.2 million
• Additional new needy population	600,000
Food Requirement from Aug. to Dec. 2003 (Cereal, supplementary food, pulses and oil)*	
• As per April 2003 update	358,297 MT
• As per current estimate	617,647 MT
• Additional need	259,350 MT

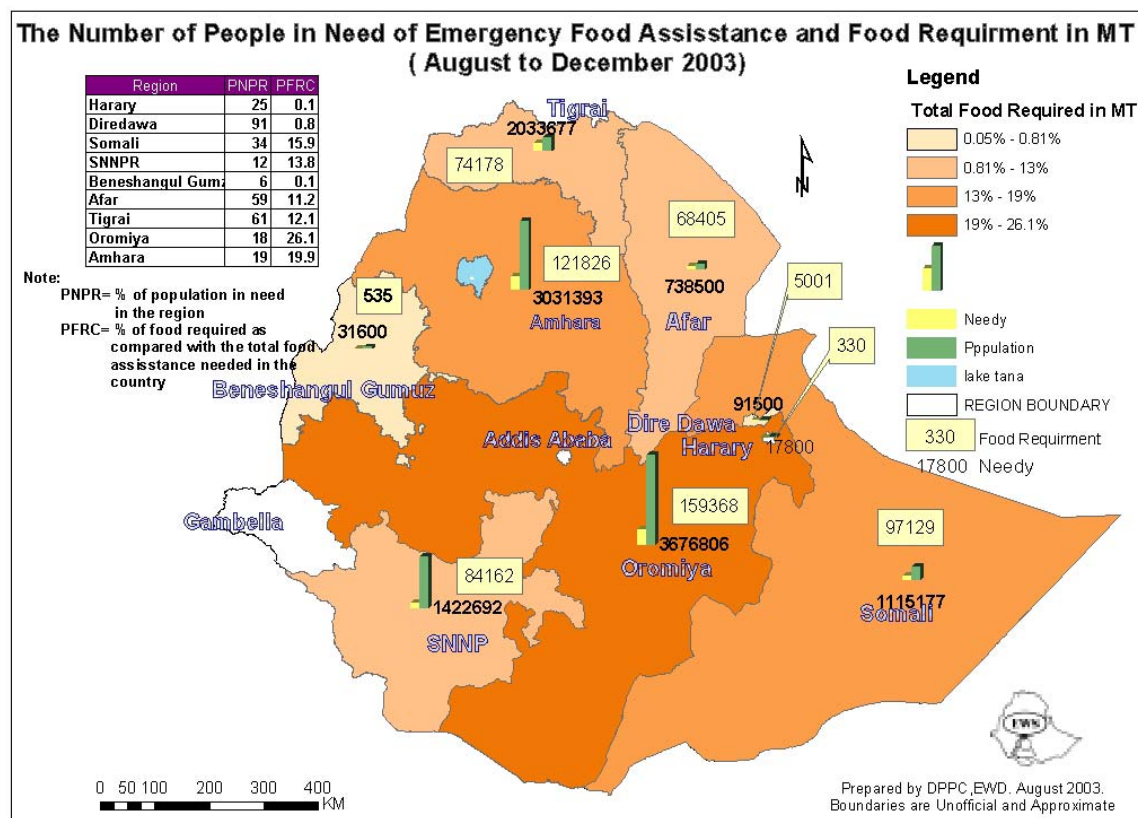
* This does not include Targeted Supplementary Food as part of UNICEF supported programme for mothers and their severely or moderately malnourished children. These estimates are forthcoming (1st week of August) from additional ongoing non-food assessments

The food requirement is estimated at a monthly full ration of 17 kg of cereal, pulses and oil which will provide about 2000 kilo calories (kcal/person/day). The composition of the ration is 15 kg cereal, 1.5 kg pulses and 0.5 kg vegetable oil. Additional supplementary food is also considered only for 35% of the most severely affected part of the population (children, lactating mothers and the elderly) in 258 *woredas* out of the total 347 *woredas* needing food assistance from August to December.

Table 2: Affected Population and Food Requirement as of August 2003

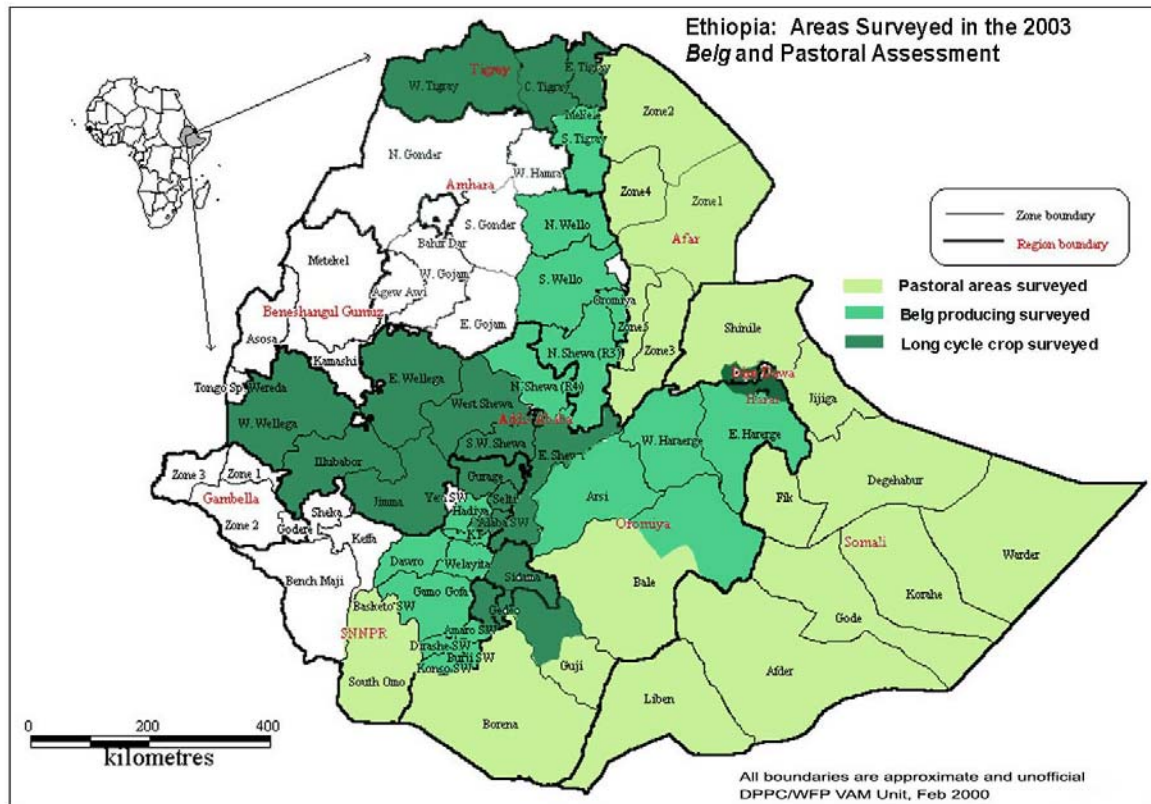
Region	Total Beneficiaries Jan-Dec 2003	Total Beneficiaries* Aug-Dec 2003			Food Requirement in MT. Aug. to Dec. 2003				
		Male	Female	Total	Cereal	Famix	Pulses	Oil	Total
Afar	804,500	42,981	315,519	738,500	55,388	5816	5,539	1,662	68,405
Amhara	3,283,429	1,532,620	1,498,773	3,031,393	100,675	8063	10,068	3,020	121,826
Dire Dawa	91,500	47,580	43,920	91,500	4,118	347	412	124	5,001
Gambella	58,361	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Harari	20,000	9,078	8,722	17,800	267	28	27	8	330
Oromiya	3,999,681	1,931,990	1,854,716	3,786,706	136,378	12,566	13,046	4,091	166,081
SNNPR	1,620,452	709,266	713,426	1,422,692	68,451	6812	6,845	2,054	84,162
Somali	1,242,472	607,812	507,365	1,115,177	79,988	6742	7,999	2,400	97,129
Tigray	2,033,777	1,009,724	1,023,953	2,033,677	60,318	6018	6,032	1,810	74,178
Ben. Gumuz	31,600	16,100	15,500	31,600	474	-	47	14	535
Total	13,184,772	6,287,151	5,981,894	12,269,043	506,057	46,391	50,015	15,182	617,647

* Male and female population calculated based on CSA proportion.



Methodologies and Approach

All *Belg* dependent areas, areas with *Meher* long-cycle crops and pastoral areas were covered under the 2003 multi-agency *Belg* Harvest and Pastoral Area Assessment. A total of fourteen teams were deployed to six regions in the country to conduct the assessment. Team members were drawn from experts within different agencies/organizations including government donors, NGOs and the UN system. The approach of the assessment was predominantly qualitative. The teams used rapid rural assessment techniques such as interviews with key informants at different levels and visual/physical inspection of crops, livestock, pests,



pasture and market conditions wherever situations permitted in an effort to substantiate the information provided by zonal/woreda officials. Teams briefed and debriefed at the Federal, regional and zonal level. Interviews were conducted at the woreda level with local officials, household and community level.

Food Security Indicators

Assessment teams evaluated the main food insecurity indicators during the assessment period. The following indicators provided signs of food insecurity problems: poor weather conditions; the negative effect from 2002 *Meher* production and market conditions; the absence of other income sources, lost wage labor opportunities and low purchasing power; decreased production and loss of livestock; decreased or total failure of income from cash crop production such as coffee and chat; shortage or lack of water and pasture; little or no livestock or milk production; abnormal migration movements; and absence of recession agriculture.

Performance of the *Belg* Season and Food Prospects in Cropping Areas

Amhara Region- Beneficiary number remains at the same level of April 2003 projection

Weather Conditions: Parts of Amhara experienced untimely rains that began in December, one month earlier than normal. However, *Belg* rains were received in other areas in February. In most parts of South Wollo, eastern parts of North Shewa and in areas that are adjacent to the Cheffa Valley of Oromiya Zone, the distribution of the *Belg* rain was even and adequate in amount. In the remaining *Belg* benefiting areas, the distribution was erratic, uneven and insufficient in amount. In general, *Belg* rains ceased at their normal time. Yet, the withdrawal of rains in South Wollo was earlier for crops planted in January and February and therefore production losses are expected.

Agriculture Activities and Crop Production: During the *Belg* season, crops are planted either during the December to January or February to March. Those crops planted earlier escaped the moisture stress that occurred in crops planted in March. The total area covered with *Belg* crops this year was 199,971 ha, which is very similar to the long-term average. Even though the area coverage at the regional level was normal, there was a decline in North Shewa Zone where planting reached only 66% of the long-term average. Crop production projections indicate 1.2 million quintals (Qt) are expected this season, which is 137% of last year's production of 925,505 Qt and 119% of the long-term average of 1 million Qt. Despite these promising figures, 380,989 Qt will be lost this year due to moisture stress, pest infestations and weather related hazards such as hailstorms and excessive rains.

Water, Pasture and Livestock conditions: The *Belg* rains have positively contributed to the availability of pasture and drinking water for livestock. As a result, livestock conditions have shown considerable improvements in assessed areas. Another encouraging sign is that no reports have been received of unusual disease outbreaks or abnormal herd movements during the season. Additionally, the number of migrants in the Cheffa Valley of Oromiya Zone has decreased from an estimated 250,000 last year to 100,000 this year.

Human Health Situation: The only major disease outbreak reported in the region was malaria. Woreda officials in Moretina Jiru woreda of North Shewa Zone observed signs of malnutrition in children in the lowlands.

Food Security Prospects: As for market conditions, both crops and livestock prices increased in *Belg* producing areas with the exception of North Wollo where the price of cattle fell. However, the food security situation in general is stable and remains at the same level of projection in April 2003. Accordingly, a total of 3 million people need food assistance as of August 2003, amounting to 121,826 MT for the August to December 2003 period.

Oromiya Region- 609,000 Additional Beneficiaries

Weather Conditions: Onset of the *Belg* rain in 2003 was timely in North and East Shoa and Bale zones, and yet was late in Arsi, Guji, and in East and West Haraghe zones by two to four weeks. In those zones where the rains were late, the amount and distribution was inadequate and erratic. A dry spell occurred from March through May in North and East Shoa, Arsi and East and West Hararghe zones and the rains ceased early in all but East Shoa. Flooding also occurred in April in East and West Hararghe.

Agriculture Activities and Crop Production: Consistent with other parts of the country, land preparation and planting of long-cycle crops are carried out during the *Belg*. Due to the late onset of the 2003 *Belg* rains, land preparation and planting were delayed in Arsi and East and West Hararghe. In *Belg* producing areas, shortage of seed and lack of oxen contributed to the decrease in area planted for *Belg* and *Meher* long-cycle crops in central and eastern parts of the region. The overall production prospects are anticipated to decrease significantly in East and North Shoa, Arsi, Bale and Guji zones. In East and West Hararghe, the irregularity of *Belg* rain, accompanied by the prolonged dry spell, not only caused poor performance of *Belg* production but also affected the growth stage of *Meher* long-cycle crops, especially severe in the lowlands.

In the lowlands of East and West Hararghe, farmers reported that the planting of long cycle crops, particularly sorghum and maize, was undertaken very late. Late-planted crops are not expected to perform well due to the unlikely continuation of rains until end October. Crops most affected during the *Belg* season are barley, wheat and oats in the highlands and early maturing varieties of maize in the lowlands. The production deficit of *Belg* crops is estimated to range from 50% to 80% compared to the long-term average.

In general the zones that are most severely affected are East and North Shoa, East and West Hararghe, Arsi and parts of Bale and Guji zones.

Cash crops (chat and coffee) were also affected by late arrival and poor performance of *Belg* rains and a dry spell during April to May. These adverse weather conditions contributed to significant decline in production in East and West Hararghe. Although chat is slowly recovering, the complete absence of coffee production will not allow households to purchase staple crops.

Water, Pasture and Livestock conditions: Pasture and water availability were severely depleted in central and eastern parts of the region due to delayed and poor performance of the *Belg* rains especially in the lowlands of Arsi, East Shoa, Bale and East and West Hararghe zones. These scarcities have induced severe physical deterioration and even death. The problem still persists in the lowland areas of the above mentioned zones but is improving in mid and highland areas.

Human Health Situation: No reports were received at the regional level of major outbreaks of human disease or any marked increase in mortality rates. Malaria was reported from the lowlands of East and West Hararghe, East Shoa and Arsi zones along with moderate to severe malnutrition attributed to food stress at the household level.

Food Security Prospects: Wheat and barley production in Arsi, East Shoa, West and East Hararghe zones will show significant decreases due to poor *Belg* performance and pocket areas in the lowlands will continue to experience food deficits. The food insecurity will also be aggravated due to very slow recovery of livestock. This year the problem is not only isolated in the lowlands, but pocket areas in both the midlands and highlands are also affected.

Grain prices in May/June in most of the central half and eastern part of the region have escalated unusually, while only the price of oxen showed slight improvement due to cross boarder trade with Djibouti and Somalia. However, this price improvement will only favor households in mid and highland areas as lowlanders' livestock are in poor physical condition.

In general, some areas of the central half and eastern part of the region are still vulnerable to food insecurity. The problem is intense in households who did not receive relief assistance in 2003 and whose *Belg* crops were reported to be a failure. Accordingly, an additional 609,000 people need food assistance as of August 2003, which brings the total number of beneficiaries to 3.8 million people needing relief assistance of 166,081 MT for the August to December 2003 period.

SNNPR Region- 1.4 million people need an extension of assistance as of August 2003

Weather Conditions: The performance of the 2003 *Belg* rainy season has been mixed in SNNPR. The onset of *Belg* rains has been late by about two to four weeks in most of the zones and special *woredas* except in Dawro and Gamo Gofa zones, and Konso and Alaba special *woredas* where the rains started on time. There were three to six weeks of dry spells during the first half of the season (February and March) which created serious moisture stress on the planted crops in many areas of the region, particularly on maize and sorghum crops. Good rains were delayed until early April. The amount and distribution of rains from April until mid May was favourable for planted crops. However, excessive rains, flooding and hailstorms in April damaged crops that survived the dry conditions in February/March and forced farmers to replant using short maturing crop varieties. The season also ceased earlier than normal in Hadiya zone, and Amaro and Burji special *woredas*. In general, the poor *Belg* rains were characterized by late onset and erratic nature, low in amount, unevenly distributed showers, long dry spells with early cessation and excessive rains resulting in floods and hailstorms in many parts of the region.

Agricultural Activities and Crop Production: Though the area planted is similar or even above average, planting was late by two to six weeks in areas with delayed rains. Due to the poor performance of the *Belg* rains, 20-60% lower than average production is expected in Welayita, Hadiya, Dawro and Sidama zones, and Burji special wereda. Normal to above normal production is expected in Gamo Gofa, Gedio and Kembata/Tembaro zones and Amro and Derashe special *woredas*. However, areas like Alaba, Konso and even some parts of KT have mixed conditions due to the uncertainty of the standing crops - it was too early to estimate crop production during the time of the assessment as crops were at growing and flowering stages. Low water levels on the Omo River resulted in cultivable land left fallow. In Hadiya Zone, enset is the main staple crop both in highlands and midlands, while maize is the major food crop in the lowlands. Due to consecutive years of drought and pest infestation, enset has been seriously affected. Enset planted is not yet ready to be used, as the crop needs over five years to mature before consumption.

Gurage and Silti zones are *Meher* dependent areas. The long-cycle crops (maize and sorghum) are normally planted using *Belg* season rains. Maize is the dominant long-cycle crop (85% of the total long cycle crop production). *Belg* season rains this year have performed poorly damaging a significant portion of the planted maize crops. Meskan, Mareko and Sodo from Gurage Zone and Lanfro, Dalocha and Silti from Silti Zone are the most affected *woredas* due to adverse weather conditions during the *Belg* season. These *woredas* are the main maize producing areas and lost a large portion of their planted crops. Emergency seed assistance has already been distributed for desperate farmers living in the most affected *woredas* of the zones.

Water, Pasture and Livestock Conditions: The poor performance of the *Belg* rains has also affected availability of water and pasture in the most affected areas of the region and has resulted in loss of weight in cattle and reduction of livestock products mainly in Sidama Zone. Considerable change was not observed in the quantity of livestock in many parts of the region. Lump Skin disease and Trypanosomiasis in Kembata/Tembaro and Hadiya zones, and Trypanosomiasis and CCPP in Derashe special *woreda* were reported as uncontrolled outbreaks of animal diseases. Moreover, out migration of animals in search of pasture and water was reported from densely populated areas. On the other hand, availability of pasture and drinking water has reportedly improved in Kembata/Tembaro, Hadiya, Gedio and Welayita zones, and Konso, Derashe, Burji, Amro and Alaba special *woredas*. As a result the physical condition of livestock has shown considerable improvement in these areas. Animal products have also increased due to the favourable conditions for livestock.

Human Health Situation: There have been no major outbreaks of human diseases. However, endemic malaria in some areas became chronic and has shown a significant expansion this year in low and mid-land areas of the visited zones and special *woredas* except Konso and Derashe special *woredas*. Moderate to severe malnutrition problems were reported in children under five from most food insecure *woredas* in Hadiya, KT, Sidama and Wolayita zones and Burji special *woreda*. Children from Hadiya, KT, Sidama and Wolayita zones were admitted to therapeutic feeding centres in their respective health centres. Cases of kwashiorkor and marasmus are reported from Sidama Zone and Burji and Konso *woredas* respectively. Both the food shortage and the incidence of malaria at household level have negatively affected the availability of labor to perform agricultural activity. As a result it will have implication on the productivity of agricultural products in general and yield reduction at household level in particular.

Food Security Prospects: Food prices are reportedly increasing except in Gamo Gofa Zone and people are struggling to fill their food gaps by maximizing and expanding any available coping mechanisms. Although the physical condition of livestock has shown slight improvements, in most of the zones the price is decreasing, leading to deterioration of terms of trade. The current food distribution has helped to alleviate and stabilise the food security situation to some extent in food deficit areas of the region. However, there are still signs of food shortages in low and mid land areas of Hadiya, KT, Wolayita, S.Omo, GamoGofa, Sidama, Dawro zones and Burji, Amaro and Derashe special *woredas* due to the current discouraging weather conditions, population pressure, malaria risk and problems related with soil erosion on top of the chronic nature of their food insecurity.

Accordingly, a total of 1.4 million people need food assistance as of August 2003, amounting to 83,256 MT for the August to December period. The relief food will have to be provided with supplementary food for children under five who show signs of malnutrition due to shortage of food. The needy population will certainly decrease considerably starting from the month of October particularly in *Meher* producing areas because of the green harvest of maize and other crops if the rain performance is normal in the coming months.

Tigray Region- 22,000 Additional Beneficiaries

South Tigray Zone is the only *Belg* producing zone in Tigray Region and was therefore the only zone assessed in Tigray Region.

Weather Conditions: This year's *Belg* rainfall in South Tigray Zone was characterized by an untimely start of the season in mid-December in most areas followed by long dry spells. Once restarted, the rain distribution was sporadic.

Agriculture Activities and Crop Production: *Belg* crop planting was undertaken in two periods: the first planting used the untimely rains in December while the second and main planting took place during the normal time period for *Belg* rains. Total area planted in the zone this year was 23,468 ha, higher than last year by 18,000 ha. Of the total area planted in the zone, 7,410 ha were re-plowed due to the long dry spell. Overall crop production this year is slightly better than last year and is estimated to be 55,444 quintals (31% above last year, which was almost nil).

Water, Pasture and Livestock conditions: Although livestock was generally weakened by last year's poor *Meher* conditions, *Belg* rainfall greatly contributed to the improvement of water and pasture availability in *Belg* producing *woredas* of the zone. Farmers also harvested a significant amount of crop residue creating favorable conditions for reduced cattle migrations. On the other hand, in the non-*Belg* producing *woredas* on the western edge of the Southern Zone, livestock conditions are far worse than normal.

Human Health Situation: No unusual or serious health problems were reported in most *woredas* of the zone except for meningitis outbreaks in April.

Food Security Prospects: Of particular significance in affecting overall food security situation in the zone, was last year's *Meher* and low livestock production. The market was also affected by the large supply of cattle with limited demand, although it has to some extent recovered. On the other hand, crop prices are slightly higher as compared to last year mainly due to poor *Meher* production last year and to a lesser degree the rising demand for seeds. Accordingly, an additional 22,000 people need food assistance as of August 2003, which brings the total number of beneficiaries to 2 million people needing relief assistance of 74,177 MT for the August to December 2003 period.

Other Regions

The situation in Dire Dawa is similar to that of the neighboring areas of Shinile Zone in Somali Region and East Hararghe in Oromiya Region. As a result, the beneficiary number increased by 18,000 while it remained the same in Gambella and Beneshangul Gumuz as reported in April 2003.

Performance of the Main Rainy Season And Food Prospects in Pastoral Areas

Afar Region- 738,500 people need an extension of assistance

Weather Conditions: Afar Region has two main rainy seasons, the *Sugum* and *Karema*. *Sugum* rains normally occur between March and April while the *Karema* rains begin in mid-June extending through mid-September. This year's *Sugum* rain was timely in onset and cessation but below normal in amount and erratic in distribution. The rains were however good in Chefra of Zone 1, Erebt of Zone 2, Argoba and Dulecha of Zone 3, Ewe, Aura and Golina of Zone 4 and partially Telalak, Dewe and Fursi *woredas* of Zone 5 compared to last year.

Pasture, Water and Livestock Conditions: Due to the failure of rains in previous years and poor *Sugum* rain this year in the region, pasture is critical in most *woredas*. Exceptions were observed in a few *woredas* of each zone where regeneration of pasture occurred. In most *woredas*, the *Sugum* rain had no notable impact on the availability of pasture, except for some pocket areas where browse regenerated and was used by goats and camels. *Sugum* rains also did not significantly improve water availability. The size of water sources has considerably reduced and water rationing still continues in many areas of all zones. Due to shortage of pasture and water in most parts of the region, movement of livestock to distant grazing areas started unusually early from some *woredas* of the region. Cattle from Dupti, Assayta, Afambo and Mlle *woredas* migrated to Chefra *woreda* and further to Zone 4. A big rangeland called "Halidage" in Amibara was observed without pasture and many cattle from this *woreda* have now moved to the Asabot hill in Oromiya Zone.

The poor physical condition of cattle in general has retarded the production of milk and oxen to attract a good market price. Market prices for goats are better than last year in Zone 1, 3 and 5 and no change was reported in Zone 2 and 4. Regarding livestock health, no disease outbreaks were reported. However, the prevalence of endemic diseases like CBPP, CAPP, Black leg and pastrolosis in most *woredas* were reported.

Crop performance and production prospects: *Sugum* rains are normally used for planting long cycle crops and for preparing fields for short maturing crops particularly in Argoba and Dulecha *woredas* of Zone 3. The fields for *Meher* planting were prepared using *Sugum* rains. But long cycle crops were not planted in April due to poor rainfall. Half of the population of Afambo, Assayita and Dupti were planting maize and cotton using the Awash River. But, for more than three years, it was totally hampered due to a change in its course in Afambo and Assaita, and in Dupti due to the reduced water level in the Awash River in March/April 2003.

Human Health Conditions: No wide spread disease outbreaks or severe malnutrition were observed or reported in the region. But common diseases such as Malaria, water borne diseases and upper respiratory tract diseases were reported in some *woredas* of the region. Officials reported that there is a shortage of medicine and health services to tackle the human health problems in the region.

Food Security Prospects: Generally market prices for grain are increasing due to low supply from neighboring region suppliers. Demand from pastoralists is reported to be low due to relief food distributions. In all zones, it was reported that the allocation and delivery/distribution of food was timely, yet inadequate in quantity. The current market price for livestock has been much lower than normal price due to the lengthy periods of drought and weak condition of animals, particularly cattle. Years of recurrent drought have hit hard people's main source of survival and caused massive deaths of livestock in 2002. On average, cattle deaths last year were estimated at 58%. Milk and other livestock production is expected to improve only if there is good performance of the *karema* rain. Therefore, on-going relief food and emergency water interventions should continue. Accordingly, a total of 738,500 people need food assistance as of August 2003, amounting to 68,404 MT for the August to December 2003 period.

Oromiya Region (Bale Zone)- Beneficiaries declined by 76,000

The teams assessed pastoral areas of Oromiya including Bale, and Borena zones.

Bale Zone

Weather conditions: The overall performance of the 2003 *Belg* season rains is considered normal particularly for the lowland *woredas* of Bale Zone. In this area the onset of the rain was late by two to three weeks, while most areas received a sufficient amount of rain with even distribution that extended for a period of nearly two weeks.

Water, Pasture and Livestock Conditions: Following the good performance of the rain, pasture has regenerated in abundance and water is sufficiently available for human and livestock consumption particularly in the lowlands. The physical condition of livestock is reported to be good in all *woredas*. Herd size, particularly small stocks, are increasing in the lowland areas and their contribution in terms of household food and cash income (from sales) is reported to be high. There were no livestock disease outbreaks except the occurrence of an unknown disease, which caused the loss of 128 oxen in Ginir Woerda.

Agricultural Activities and Crop Production: Farmers planted 15% more area than last year, with crops of teff, maize, sorghum and wheat. In general current crop production in the lowland *woredas* of the zone is reported to be good. However, in the mid and highland areas, crop production loss of up to 45% is anticipated due to lack/shortage of rains.

Health Situation: In general, the health situation has not deteriorated in the zone. The condition of children is reported to be good except for Bere Dimtu of Raytu and Melka Oda of Ginnir *woreda* where a few cases of Marasmus and Kashakor were reported.

Food Security Prospects: Livestock and cereal prices are high in all *woredas*. The agro-pastoralists and pastoralists in the lowland *woredas* are expected to benefit from trade. Price of livestock and cereal has significantly increased compared to last year, while the price of milk has dropped. The overall improvement in the physical condition of animals and the relatively favorable feed and water availability have contributed significantly to better prices and the availability of milk. Despite major food security indicators are showing positive trends during the season, the aftermath of the recurrent drought has left the pastoralists without any assets. Moreover, only a few farmers were provided with seed, which places other farmers with no seeds in dire straights. Accordingly, a total of 91,745 people need food assistance in Bale Zone as of August 2003 amounting to 7,497 MT for August to December 2003 period.

Borena and Guji zones – 11,000 Additional Beneficiaries

Weather Conditions: The *Ganna* (main rainy season) rain occurs between mid March and end of May in Guji Zone and mid February to mid May in Borena Zone. The contribution of *Ganna* rains to the annual precipitation is estimated as 70% in the lowlands of Borena Zone, 45% in the midlands and highlands of Shakisso, Adolla, Liben, Bore, Kercha and Uruga *woredas* of Guji Zone and 75% in the lowland areas of same zone. This year, the on-set was almost late by about a month in Liben, Wadera, Shakiso and Adola *woredas* of Guji Zone but once it started its amount and distribution were reported good in most *Belg* benefiting *woredas* of Guji Zone. There were also torrential rains in Liben and Wadera *woredas*. In Borena Zone, the onset was on time, with the exception of few pockets in Dire, Moyale and Yabello, where the onset was reported to be delayed by seven to ten days. The *Ganna* rains however ceased earlier from the normal pattern in Guji Zone (15-20 days earlier) and in some *woredas* of Borena Zone. Overall performance of this years rain was reported to be better than that of the last five similar seasons in both zones.

Water, Pasture and Livestock conditions: As a result of an improvement in the season's rain, water and pasture are available in sufficient amount. Ponds and ellas are reported broken and filled with silt due to the heavy torrential rain in some areas of Borena and few areas of Guji zones. More than twenty ponds and dams in Borena Zone and nine ponds in Liben *woreda* were reported washed away or broken. These need to be repaired before the arrival of the short rainy season in October/November.

The herd size also increased in both zones. Milk production during the season increased considerably due to high calving rates mainly in Borena Zone. The price of milk has also decreased from same period last year. The terms of trade have improved significantly with increased livestock prices.

There were no reports of animal diseases at epidemic level except endemic diseases such as LSD, CCPP and black leg in Borena Zone.

Agricultural activities and crop production: In general, the current season crop production prospects of Hagere Mariam, midlands of Abaya, Gelana and Teletle is good. Regarding the remaining *woredas*, early withdrawal of *Ganna* rains and absence of sorrow rains have seriously affected long cycle crops. In both zones, the highlands and midland *woredas* are mainly crop dependent areas and crops produced during the *Belg* season form 60% - 75% of the annual food supply of these areas. The area planted this year and the performance of the crop stand at vegetative and flowering stage were reported to be normal all over the zone, except for the long cycle crops, which were affected due to early withdrawal of the *Ganna* rains. 50% crop loss is expected from long cycle crops mainly in Wadera *woreda* of Guji Zone. Some lowland Pas were

affected by moisture stress and absence of *Sorrow* (small) rains. On the other hand, 800 hectares of maize and Sorghum were reported washed away in Liben woreda due to heavy/ torrential rains.

Food Security Prospects: The terms of trade in the lowlands of Borena and Guji zones was favorable for pastoralists. Prices of livestock and cereal supply increased. The cross border market in Borena Zone is also open and pastoralists are able to sell their livestock at adequate prices compared to last three years. Overall improvement in the physical condition of animals and the relatively favorable circumstances in the cross-border livestock trade have contributed to the improved terms of trade in the zones. Although all major food security indicators show positive trends, early cessation of *Ganna* rains and absence of sorrow are expected to reduce production in a few pocket areas of Borena Zone by about 35%. In Moyale, Yabello and Dire woredas 65% production loss is expected on long cycle crops. Additionally, the aftermath of the year 2000 drought left many pastoralists extremely poor.

Relief food assistance is planned for 24,500 people as of August/2003 for five months. In Guji Zone, early withdrawal of rainfall has seriously affected the major *Belg* crops and in the lowlands, particularly in Wadera wereda. Torrential rains also destroyed planted crops in Liben Zone. Relief food assistance will be required for 3,000 people in this zone. The total food requirement is estimated at 2,238 MT in Borena and 254 MT in Guji zones.

Somali Region- 1.1 million people need an extension of assistance

Weather Conditions: The main rainy season in Somali Region is the *Gu* (late March to late May) and *Deyr* (mid-October to November). Exceptions are the highlands of Jijiga and Shinile zones, which normally receive *Gu* rains from April to May, and *Karan* rains from late July to early September.

In general, the 2003 *Gu* rainfall was rated as good in most parts of Afder, Liban and Fik zones, near normal to normal in some woredas of Jijiga, Gode and Warder zones, poor in some areas in Korahe, Degahabor and Warder zones very poor throughout Shinile Zone.

There was widespread flooding of Wabi shabelle River in Mustahil, Kelafo, East Irni and Ferfer woredas of Gode Zone in April causing livestock deaths and destroying clinics, schools and household property, temporarily displacing approximately 90,000 people.

Water, Pasture and Livestock Conditions: Shinile Zone still remains the most affected and current water supply in most of the zone is poor. Many people and livestock in the zone are already facing critical water shortages, despite continuation of water tankering since last year. The water situation will further deteriorate to unpredictable levels if the expected *Karan* rain also fails. The second most affected zone is Warder. Berkas in these woredas are reported empty. Other areas already facing critical water shortage include parts of: Jijiga, Korahe, Fik and Gode zones. Areas needing water tankering & sanitation are listed below.

Zone	Woreda	Number of affected people	Remarks
Warder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geladin • Boh 	17 kabeles (50,000)	Tankering needed from July until next Dayr rains
Korahe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Kebridehar • Shilabo woreda (Higloley, Ceel-ogaden, and Jiracle) 	20,000	Areas most affected are berkads dependent areas and needed from July-Dayr rains.
Jijiga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awbare (Gogti kabele) • Hartasheil IDPs 	35,000 14,000	Tankering on-going in this areas with DPPB/UNICEF support.
Gode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denan • Gudhis (E.Emi) • Todob (Adadle) • Mutshail 	20,000 7,000 6,000 10,000	Tankering on going in Denan but all areas need as of July up to October 2003. Mustahil town water scheme not functioning & needs urgent maintenance.

Fik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All feeding centers in Fik, Hamaro, Gasangas, Fik town, Bermilka, Bashiro, Bardey kabeles 	32,000	As of July up to Dayr rains
Shinile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All woredas 	120,000	Tankering should continue until water situation is reassessed in August.
Degahbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tantomi & Farsokebele in Degahamedo woreda 	1,000	Later of Hagga season in September, Gunagado needs water sanitation as people drink dirty water.
Zone	Woreda	Number of affected people	Remarks
Liban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filtu (Haysuftu) & Moyale 	7,000	Late Hagga season in September
Afder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alan, CeelGuio kabeles in Dolobay Gorabaqaso 	200	30km away from Weeb river and needs tinkering as of September. 50km away from Weeb river.

Water availability in other parts of the region is normal and will be sufficient for both livestock and human consumption until the next rainy season. There are areas that are already facing pasture shortage although enough pasture is expected to be available to sustain livestock in other zones until next rainy season. The livestock condition in Shinile Zone has severely deteriorated, particularly cattle. Goats and camels are in fair condition. The livestock have gradually recovered in most of the zones, but milk production remains below normal.

In Shinile Zone, most of the cattle have out migrated to Dakata, Fafan and neighboring Oromiya region, just three months after returning to the zone. There is increasing movement of livestock within the zone due to pasture shortages. Livestock have migrated into Gode Zone, particularly to Denan (from Shekosh and Kebridahar) and Ferter (from Somalia) *woredas*. These migrations are causing early depletion of pasture and water. Zonal officials reported no epidemic livestock diseases. However, concentration of livestock in pocket areas in Shinile Zone has created an atmosphere conducive for spread of disease.

Agricultural Activities and Crop Production: Crops are produced in some *woredas* in Jijiga, Gode, Degahabr and Afdar zones under rain fed conditions and along the Wabi Shabelle, Dawa and Genale Rivers. Farmers cultivated less land than in normal years due to delayed onset of the *Gu* rains and the poor quantity and uneven distribution. Prolonged dry conditions affected crops that were planted late. Crop conditions in most agro-pastoral areas of Jijiga Zone will not improve unless the expected *Karan* rains resume on time.

Overall crop performance in Gode is expected to be better than in the previous two years as a result of flood recession following the flooding of the Wabi Shabelle River.

Crop production in Dagahabor, Dagahmadow *woredas* and small pockets in Aware *woredas* is below normal due to the early cessation of the rains and pest infestation.

Human Health Situation: There are no disease outbreaks across the region at the moment, but there are increasing cases of measles in Jijiga Zone and in Kollo in Liban Zone. An immediate vaccination campaign is needed. There are also reports of increasing signs of malnutrition in some parts of the region. All *woredas* in Shinile Zone, Sahdaere and Shek-madowb Kabdes of Jijiga woreda, Degahbor, Degahamedo and Aware *woredas* (Gnagado Kabeles IDP) in Degahbor Zone and IDP camp in Danot woreda in warder Zone require nutrition surveys.

Food Security Prospects: The supply of local cereal is below normal to poor in the different *woredas* of the zone, and prices are above normal in most places due to insufficient crop production in agro-pastoral areas

of the zone during the last two harvest seasons. Concerning the livestock market, both supply and demand are below normal in most cases. In some places however the prices of livestock have slightly improved due to the improved physical condition of livestock. Livestock and their products are the main source of income for the majority of the Somali population. The recurrent shortage of rains and lack of market, due to the prolonged livestock ban (by Gulf states), significantly reduced income. Crop production from rain fed areas in the region is below normal. Due to the above-mentioned reasons, the food security situation in Shnile, Korahe, Warder, Degahabor, parts of Jijiga and parts of Gode is deteriorating. The situation is very serious in Shinile Zone particularly in Afdem and Aysha *Woredas*. Accordingly, a total of 1.1 million people will need food assistance as of August 2003, amounting to 97,129 MT for the August to December period.

SNNP Region (South Omo Zone)- 16,300 New Additional Beneficiaries

Pastoral areas of Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Region were assessed in South Omo Zone.

Weather Conditions: *Belg* season rain was below normal in quantity and was not uniform in distribution. The rain started timely in February but a few dry days occurred in March and April which had a negative impact on crop producing *woredas* of the zone, particularly Selamago, Hamaer and Kuraz *woredas*. Overflow of the Woito River in April caused destruction to crops and a canal. In addition, torrential rain in early June destroyed some crops.

The main rivers in the zone are used for both human and livestock water consumption. The decrease in water level of the Omo River had a serious impact for flood recession crop production in Kuraz *woreda*.

Below normal levels of *Belg* season rains and irregularities in its distribution affected the availability of pasture and water for livestock. This condition has created loss of weight in cattle and reduction of livestock products mainly in Kuraz and Hamer *woredas*. Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia (CCPP) and Black Leg were reported as uncontrolled outbreaks. The zonal agriculture desk has noted that measures were taken to control the situation. However, lack of vaccine is still a problem to fully protect goats from CCPP.

In general all the major *Belg* season crop producing areas are in good condition except in Bako Gazer *woreda* where crops were destroyed because of the overflow of the Reni river and low water levels on the Omo river in Kuraz *woreda*. Poor rains at Erbore in Hamer have also affected planted crops.

Grain and livestock market prices have shown a considerable change. The grain price increased almost by two fold as compared to normal periods and the livestock price declined significantly. Aggravating factors for the existing food insecurity in the affected *woredas* is the absence of cattle markets and remoteness of affected *woredas*.

Animal husbandry and crop production are the main sources of income in the zone. Traditional fishery activities along the main rivers, exchange of cattle with grain and sale of charcoal and firewood are additional sources of income when faced with food insecurity. The terms of trade have deteriorated. In response to the critical food shortage problem, the affected population is hunting, gathering wild fruits and roots, and fishing. These coping strategies are not enough to meet needs.

Accordingly, 16,300 people in the three hardest hit *woredas* need relief assistance amounting to 906 MT starting August 2003.