



Ethiopian Early Warning System

February Monthly Report

25 MARCH 2003

AREAS OF PRIORITY ACTION

HIGHLIGHTS

Re-assessment being carried out Due to additional Food need

Due to escalating food insecurity and increasing demand for additional food assistances (grain and supplementary food) , re-assessment of food security conditions are being carried out by eight DPPC led multy-agency assessment teams in 80 woredas of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNPR Regions. The mission will focus on food security situation of the woredas in general and drought affected people who are under emergency relief assistance and people under close monitoring in particular. The results of the re-assessment will likely increase the number of needy people .

Kwashiorkor Detected in Some Regions

Woreda level regular monthly reports conducted during January 2003 from cropper areas, which is yet to be verified at field level, indicated that cases of visible malnutrition (kwashiorkor and marasmus) was detected in some woredas of Central Tigray, Southern Tigray, East Haraghe and Gambella. Survey results(table 1.Page 3) in Marko and Meskan, Lanfero, Dalocha, Embese Sarmider, Tach Gaynet Woredas and West Hararghe Zone, indicate poor to serious nutritional status coupled with aggravating factors.

Critical shortage of water prevails

Increasingly critical shortage of water for human and animals consumption was reported from woredas of SNNPR and Woredas in Oromia Region.

More

Hailstorm and Heavey Rains Damage crops

Heavy rain associated with flash flooding destroy large hectars of crop field and resulted in animal deaths in Oromiya Region. *More*

Malaria and Meningitis outbreak reported

Due to the current drought and poor disease protection ,Menin- gitis and malaria outbreak are reported in verious parts of the county. *More*

Climate Outlook given by DMCN for the period March to May 2003

DMCN indicated that there is an increased likelihood of a near normal to above normal rainfall in most parts of Ethiopia.

More

Unseasonal rain favours Land Preparation

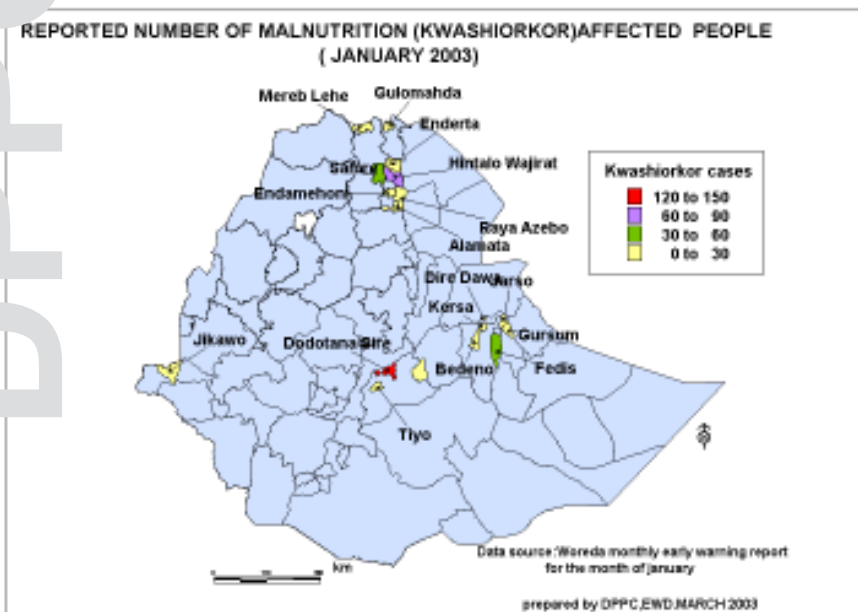
Unseasonal rains realized during the months of December 2002 and January 2003 in most *Belg* growing areas favored land preparation for *Belg* crops.

More

Early Warning System Monthly Report is prepared by the Early Warning Department of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to coordinate and disseminate early warning and food security information.



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Disaster Occurrences

Hailstorms and Fire Reported

Hailstorm and Heavy Rains Damage crops

Reports from Beherete Aeltie Woreda of North Shoa Zone of Oromiya Region stated that an hour long strong wind associated with hailstorm and heavy rains caused flash flooding that highly affected 15 hectares of planted crops and killed six animals.

Heavy rains associated with flash flooding has also destroyed 12 houses, a property estimated at 15,000 ETB and claimed the lives of five people and 25-animals in three woredas of East Shoa Zone of Oromiya Region. Reports from the region have stated that Emergency relief assistance has been sent to the affected households.

Fire Destroyed crop and properties

Fire destroyed 100 quintals of grain, nine houses and a property estimated at about 25,160 ETB, and killed many domestic animals in Wadla Woreda of North Wollo Zone of Amhara Region.

Water shortage remains a problem in many parts of the country.

Due to the prolonged drought, incidence of unusual water shortage for human and animal consumption was reported in various parts of the country including West and East Hararghe, North Shewa South Tigray and Arsi zones, SNNPR and in some part of Somali and Afar region during the month of February. Water shortage is reported to be serious in all the lowland (Kolla) woredas of West Hararghe and in Babile, Fedis, Gursume, Kersa, Melka Belo, Meiso and Golo Odo Woredas of East Hararghe Zones in Oromia Region, the shortage is said to have highly affected the livelihoods of many households and its occupants.

Increasingly critical shortage of water for human and animals consumption was reported from Sidama, Borecha, Dale, Awassa Zuria, Wolayta, Damote Woyde, Siltie, Lanfero and Dalocha Woredas from SNNPR; and in Robe Woreda of Arsi Zone in Oromia Region. In Gohatseyon town of North Shewa Zone water shortage is also becoming apparent and has affected 5,583 people.

Malaria and Meningitis outbreak reported

Malarial disease outbreaks were reported from various parts of the country following the current drought and poor immunity of the people (caused due to poor nutritional status). Many people in Boke, Darolebu, Chiro, Meiso Woredas of West Hararghe; Gelana, Teltele, and Arero Woredas of Borena and TiroAfeta and Sekoro Woredas of Jimma Zones of Oromiya Region are reported to be suffering from the disease that also resulted in school drop out around Gelgel Gebe Bridge. Moreover, Meningitis outbreak was reported in Babele Woreda of East Hararghe Zone.

The respective Zonal Health departments have been taking preventive measures. However, due to shortage of drugs the Malaria and Meningitis epidemics have not yet been successfully arrested.



Heavy Rains Destroys Properties and claimed Lives

Heavy rains associated with flash flooding destroyed houses, properties and claimed the lives of five people and 25-animals in three woredas of East Shoa Zone of Oromiya Region.



Unusual water shortage in many parts of the country is affecting the livelihoods of many households.



Nutrition surveys show serious deterioration of nutritional status

Following the current food crisis situation signs of malnutrition were reported in many parts of the country.

A nutrition survey team composed of the Federal and Region DPPC, UN organizations and NGOs was conducted in different parts of the country in January and February.

Surveys conducted in Wolayita, Guraghe and Siltie Zones that covered all the Rural Peasant Associations of the multiple woredas showed the presence of poor nutritional status situations. Nevertheless, the situation in some pocket areas was found to be serious, for instance, the malnutrition rate for Mareko Woreda of Gurage Zone was estimated at 14.8 % and 3.3 % of GAM and SAM respectively .

The condition was aggravated by malarial attack, poor household food availability, unusually high market prices of cereals, low vaccination coverage and low Vitamin A supplementation, measles epidemic (in Lanfero Woreda of Silte Zone) and inadequate water supply and poor health facilities in many parts of the surveyed areas. A Nutrition surveys in Sidama Zone is also ongoing.

Similarly nutrition survey result in Tach Gaynet Woreda of South Gonder Zone and in Enebse Sare Mider Woreda of East Gojam zone showed a significant deterioration and serious nutritional status situation among the under five children.

The result in West Harage Zone showed a slight improvement in the lowland areas when compared with the previous survey results.

The Situation in Tigray Region is another major concern area. The malnutrition level in Wukro has deteriorated to a serious level. Situation in Saesi Tseadamba and Atsibi Womberta indicated poor level of malnutrition. Field reports from the region also indicated an increasing level of malnutrition in many parts of the region.

Despite the fact that significant improvement is observed in the nutritional status of children in most parts of Affar, there are still some localities where critical problem is reported. Survey conducted recently in Asayita Woreda of Zone One indicated a critical level of malnutrition. In addition to the ongoing emergency relief assistance the current situation in Asayita requires urgent improvement of general ration as well as blanket supplementary feeding programs.

Detail nutritional status information will be issued through the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCUC) quarterly report.



Nutrition Situation

Signs of malnutrition were reported in many Parts of the country with increasing numbers of severely malnourished children.



Food Security

Table 1. Recent nutrition survey conducted in January and February 2003.

Region	Zone	Woreda/Survey area	GAM in %	SAM in %
Afar	Zone One	Asayita	21.36%	8.45%
		Afambo	9.98%	0.32%
		Dubti	10.33%	1.54%
SNNPR	Guraghe	Mareko and Meskan	9.2%	1.5%
		Silte	9.4%	1.5%
		Hadiya	8.9%	1.1%
		Wolayita	12.5%	3.3%
		Gamo Goffa	8.8%	2.5%
Amhara	Oromiya	Artuma Fursi	6.8%	1.1%
		E. Gojjam	12.6%	1.3%
		S. Gondar	10.8%	0.7%
Oromiya	W. Hararghe	High and wet land of Chiro, Gobakoricha, Habro, Darolobo and Kuni	7.7%	1%
		Meiso and low and dry mid land of Gobakoricha, Habro, Darolebu and Boke	11.2%	0.9%
Tigray	E. Tigray	Saesi T. Amba	8.2%	2.8%
		Wukro	13.9%	1.9%
		A. Wenberta	9%	0.6%

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Food Security

Grain Prices Substantially Higher

Grain prices have shown sharp and steep increases, since June 2002. In January 2003 grain prices in most parts of the country were substantially higher than prices in last year, January 2002, and increased slightly from previous months (November/December 2002) (graph 1 and 2). High grain prices were witnessed particularly in the hard-hit areas including East Gojjam, South and North Gonder Zons in Amhara, Eastern and Central zones in Tigray, East and West Hararghe and Arsi Zones in Oromia and Silti and Guraghe in SNNPR.

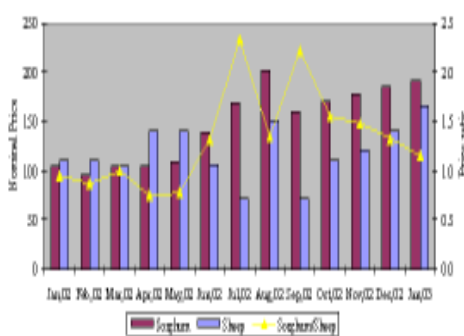
Terms of trade were unfavourable as livestock prices either declined or remained stable while grain prices are increasing continuously (graph 2). But there are also some areas where slight improvement of terms of trade from the previous month reported due to the on-going relief food distribution, and anticipation of good Belg rains performance. .

Sorghum price in North Showa has shown continues increases as of April 2, (graph 3). Grain prices in January increased by 23%, over prices from January 2002. The price of livestock has been more or less stable up to November 2002, but started to decline from December 2002. The terms of trade has also been deteriorating as of December 2002. Maize price in Eastern Hararghe has been increasing from August 2002 to January 2003, (graph 4), but price of livestock has declined. The terms of trade has been deteriorating starting from August 2002. The grain price in January 2003 increased by 63% from January 2002 levels.

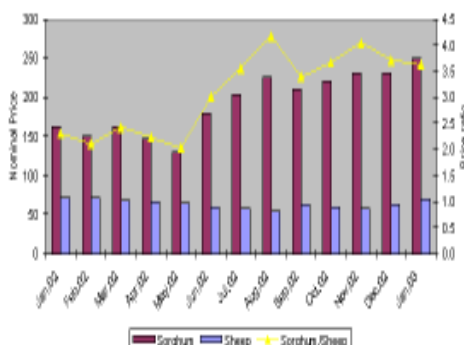


Grain prices in most parts of the country were substantially higher than last year.

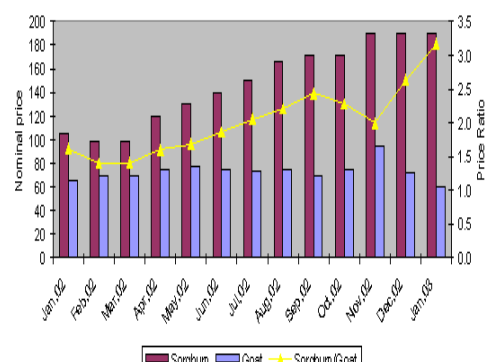
Graph 1. Terms of Trade in Haralo Wajirat (Tigray)



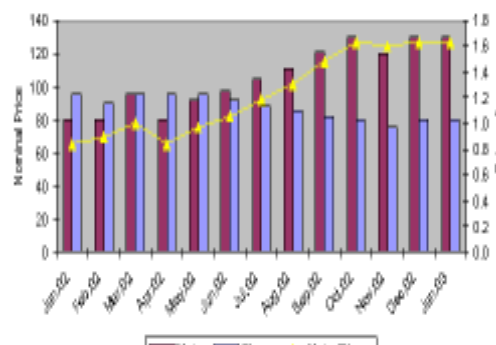
Graph 2. Terms of Trade in Dire Dawa



Graph 3. Terms of Trade in Tamaber (North Sewa)



Graph 4. Terms of Trade in Babile (East Hararghe)



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Weather Conditions

Weather Performance for February

The Belg, short rainy season, from mid February to May, started in the month of February in most *Belg* growing areas. However, field reports from different parts of the country indicated that except some shower of rain in some pocket areas of North *Shewa* and *Borena* Zones of *Oromiya* Region, rainfall was not reported during the first and second dekad. However, the spatial distribution of the rain increased during the third dekad with better rainfall in northern *SNNPR*, *Arsi* Zone and western parts of *Oromiya*, eastern half of *Amhara*, and central *Ethiopia*. Generally, it was reported that the rainfall situation realized during the month was low in amount, and uneven in spatial and temporal distribution.

According to the National Metrological Service Agency (NMSA) monthly report normal to above normal rainfall in *Gambella*, *Benishangul Gumuz*, *Tigray*, northern half of *Afar*, most parts of *Amhara*, northern *SNNPR*, western and central *Oromiya* was received during the month of February, while the rest of the country experienced below normal rainfall. Similarly, the satellite imageries show that apart from the southern *SNNPR* the rest of the country experienced normal to above normal rainfall during the month.

Adverse Weather Condition:

No significant prevalence of weather related adversities in the country were reported. However, during the first dekad of February, hailstorms in one peasant association of North Showa and flooding in three woredas of East Showa zones of *Oromiya* were reported during the third dekad of February.

Climate Outlook for the Coming Belg Season 2003

The main El Niño indicators are showing further signs of weakening.

The climate outlook obtained from National Meteorological Service Agency (NMSA) for the period February-May and the Drought Monitoring Center Nairobi (DMCN) outlook for the period March-May indicated that sea surface temperature anomalies are decreasing over most of the tropical, central and eastern Pacific beginning early January 2003. The cloudiness, trade winds, sea oscillation index and other indicators of El Niño events are also coming back to the normal pattern. Out of the commonly known 11 forecasting models, nine of them have reportedly predicted that eastern Pacific conditions will continue to favor neutral situations.

The implication of dying El Niño for Belg

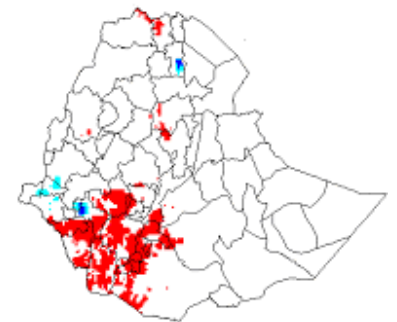
According to NMSA outlook Ethiopia would benefit from the dying El Niño in the period of February to May 2003 :

- Most of global and regional parameters are favoring *Belg* rains
- Normal onset as well as normal cessation of *Belg* rains
- Cumulative of *Belg* rainfall is anticipated to tend towards the wetter side over *Belg* growing areas.
- Rains would be more stable and dry spells are anticipated to be shortening during the season.

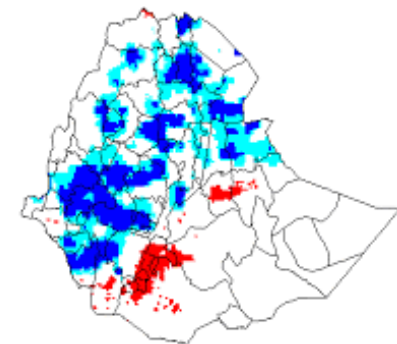
10 daily Difference in Rainfall Estimate (RFE) for the Month of February 2002



1st Dekads

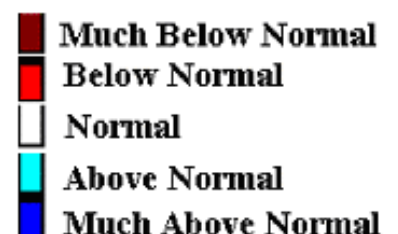


2nd Dekads



3rd Dekads

RFE Difference Legend





Weather Conditions

Climate Outlook given by DMCN for the period March to May 2003

The statement forwarded by the DMCN during the out look forum for the greater Horn of Africa from 3 – 5 March 2003 in Entebbe, Uganda, indicated that there is an increased likelihood of a near normal to above normal rainfall in most parts of Ethiopia except in northwestern and southern parts that are shaded by yellow color in the map below.

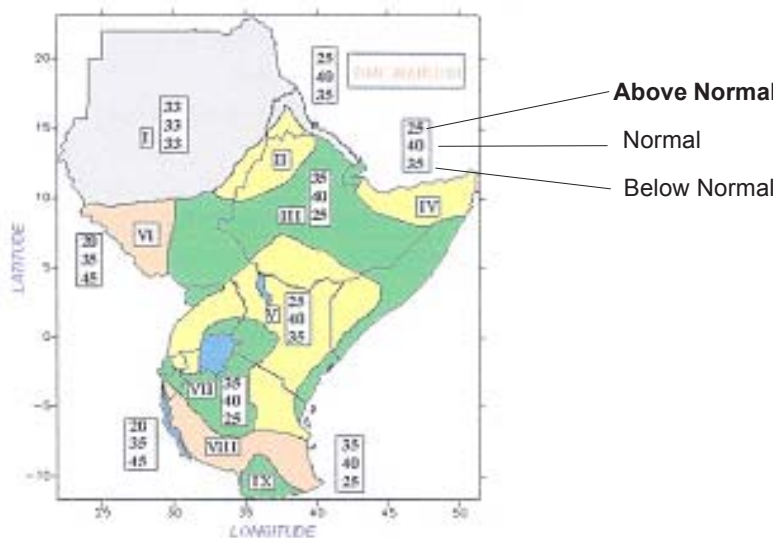
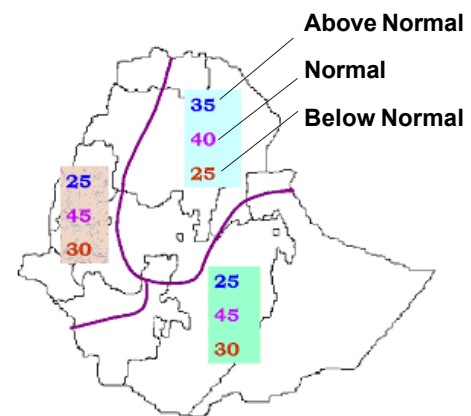
Possible Impacts of the Rainy Season

1. Good performance of Belg crop cultivation, pasture and water for livestock is expected in areas where the rain is likely to be near normal to above normal. However, if the rain is heavy in the aforementioned areas, landslide in highland and flooding in the lowlands are likely to happen.
2. Poor Belg rain would negatively affect land preparation and planting of long cycle crops in northwestern and southern parts of the country.
3. High temperature together with deficient rainfall expected over southern and northwestern lowlands might have a negative impact on pasture and water availability on both human and livestock health.
4. The food security prospect is expected to show an improvement as normal, Belg crop performance and improved milk productions are expected in areas with near normal to above normal rainfall. However, over the lowlands of northwestern and lowland southern parts, the situation might be worsened if rainfall should be below normal. Therefore serious follow up is necessary in these areas.



An increased likelihood of a near normal to above normal rainfall expected in most parts of the country.

percentage of probability



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Crop Performance

Agricultural Activities and Crop Performances

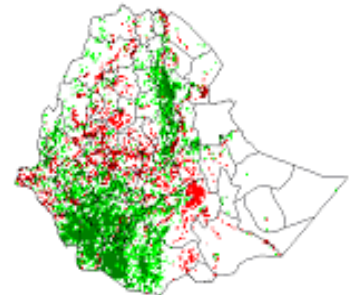
The *Belg* season rains are normally used for *Belg* crop cultivation usually harvested in June/July in Northeastern, Central and southern mid and highlands, for land preparation and planting of long cycle crops (Maize and Sorghum) in all crop-growing areas and for pasture and water regeneration for livestock in the country as a whole and pastoral areas in particular.

The unseasonal rain realized during the months of December 2002 and January 2003 in most *Belg* growing areas favored land preparation for *Belg* crops. Some farmers were able to plant *Belg* crops using these rains. However the dry spell persisted in the first and second dekads of February 2003 hampered the growth of these crops. However, the good rainfall performance in the last dekad of the month is expected to improve the situation and it will further create favorable condition for land preparation for long cycle crops.

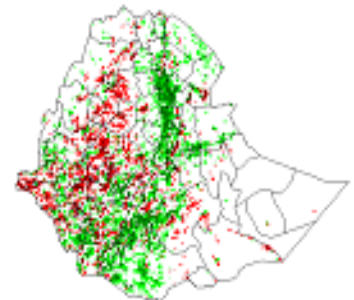
No Crop Diseases And Pest Situation Reported

No crop disease and pest prevalence is reported during the month of February. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Desert Locust Bulletin No. 293 indicated that no locusts were seen during the surveys carried out between Dire Dawa and Jijiga in the month of February. It is also forecasted that no significant development is likely to occur for the month of March.

10 Daily Difference in Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) Satellite Images for the Month of February.



1st Dekads



2nd Dekads



3rd Dekads

NDVI Difference legend

- Clouds
- Worse
- Slightly Worse
- Same
- Slightly Better
- Better

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Livestock Condition

Serious Shortage of Pasture

Due to the failure of 2002 Belg and inadequate rains in Meher season, there have been acute shortages of pasture as of July 2002 in most lowland areas of the country.

According to field reports livestock feeds shortages have not improved in most places including most low-lying areas of North Shoa, Oromiya, North Wello and Wag Himra Zones of Amhara, West Harerghe, East Shoa and Arsi Zones of Oromiya, Southern, Eastern and Central Zones of Tigray, Silti and Guraghe Zones of SNNPR.

In most low-lying areas of West Harerghe livestock were reported to have migrated to bordering Zones and Region (Bale Zone and Somali Region). Shortage of water has significantly reduced milk production in most affected areas.

No epidemic animal disease outbreak is reported, except for the high prevalence of endemic diseases including Black leg, internal and external parasites.



Shortage of livestock feed and water remains in most low-lying areas of the country. As size of rivers and streams also decreased considerably livestock are migrating in search of good pasture.

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Situation in Pastoral Areas

Afar Region

AFAR Region normally receives its main rain (Sugum) from mid-July to September, and its short (Karema) from April to May and some showers of rains, not more than five days, between October and November. However, according to recent field reports, there were unseasonal rains in December and January. Most woredas of Zone 1, western half of Zone 2, Gewani, Awash-Fentale and Dulecha Woredas in Zone 3 and most woredas in Zone 5 received some rains (two – five days) in December, 2002. A relatively better rain between December, 2002 and January, 2003 was reported in most woredas of Zone 4.

These unseasonal rains were insufficient for the full regeneration of pasture and replenishment of water in most of the above noted areas, but did improve pasture and browse areas in Chifera Woreda in Zone 1 and some woredas in Zone 4 and Zone 5.

Livestock movement from Zone-1 to Chifera and some woredas in zone 4 was reported following the improvement on pasture.

However, except for some browse, pasture is still critical for grazers (cattle and Sheep) in all zones particularly in Zone 1 and Zone 3 and in Semurobi Woreda of Zone-5.

Water trucking is still underway in most woredas in Zone-1 and has been underway in Gewani in Zone-3 and in three villages in Semorobi Woredas in Zone-5. Shortage of pasture and water will become very severe if the next rainy season resumes late or fails (mid- March to May).

The physical condition of livestock particularly camels and goats has shown some improvements in Chifra Woreada of Zone 1 and Zone 4 where there were better rains, however their condition is still reported to be below average. On the other hand, weak condition of livestock was reported from Dalol and Erebiti Woredas in Zone-2 and Buremudayitu and Argoba Woredas in Zone 3. These areas received little or no rains in December 2002 and January 2003.

Milk production is almost non-existent in most areas except for Zone-4, where some indications of milk availability have been reported.

There was no report of unusual animal disease outbreaks, but endemic diseases including black leg and lump skin have been reported from Zones 2 and 4. Lump skin disease was reported to be unusually wide spreading in Zone 2. No control measures have been taken so far due to lack of veterinary drugs.

Relief food distributions are underway in all woredas in the Region. Field reports have indicated that distributions were more or less timely in most woredas, and have helped in minimizing the food shortage problem and in improving the terms of trade to some extent.

Somali Region

The Region is now in its normal dry season (Jilaal Season) and rains are not anticipated until mid March. According to SC-UK report (Janury 2003), the food security situation is very severe in Shinile Zone, poor and deteriorating in Fik Zone, Korahei, Gode and Afder zones and better in Liban, Warder, Degahbur and Jijiga zones.



Pasture reported critical

Pasture still critical for cattle and Sheep in all zones particularly in Zone 1 and Zone 3 and in Semurobi Wereda of Zone-5.



Endemic diseases black leg and lump skin are reported from Zones 2 and 4



Situation in Pastoral Areas

Shinle Zone

According to DPPC's field assessment report (February 2003) and SC UK's food security report (January 2003), the food security situation in Shinile Zone is in an emergency state, particularly, in Shinile and Ayisha Woredas. The situation in Arer Woreda is reported to be serious although the unseasonal rains in January, 2003 around Arer Gota areas brought some relief for camels and goats. Dembel Woreda has also received some rains in December and January, which contributed to the better supply of pasture and water within the wereda. Likewise, some pockets in the western parts of Afdem and Meisso received three days of rains in January, which to some extent contributed to improved conditions of goats and camels

Water and pasture have been deteriorating in most parts of the Zone as of July, 2002 due to the failure of short rainy season /'GU' rains (mid March – May) and inadequate Karen rains (mid July to September) in 2002. Movement of livestock, although normal during the dry/jilaal season (January to April), abnormally longer distances to different direction of the zone was reported this year.

Livestock, mainly cattle and sheep from Meisso and Afdem Woredas, migrated to areas bordering Afar and Oromiya Regions, Asebot hills and Gedamayitu areas but reported to have faced poor rains similar to the previous season. Livestock from Ayisha and Shinile Woredas reported to have migrated to Dembel Woredas and abnormally to Awadel Region of Northwest Somalia in December and January 2003. Significant deaths of cattle and shoats were reported particularly from livestock that migrated from Shinile Zone. Likewise, some cattle and camels from Arer Woreda particularly from Aydora and Asbuli areas were moved into Arer Gota areas within the wereda and to the western foothills of Meisso and areas bordering to Afar Region. Most livestock from Shinile Woreda have already migrated to Dembel Woredas and Jijiga areas within the Region, to Harerghe highlands in Oromiya and to areas bordering Afar Regions and Somalia.

Most water sources (boreholes and hand pumps) are reportedly malfunctioning due to lack of maintenance and the considerable decreases of ground water level. Reports also indicate that water trucking is still underway in all Woredas of the Zone. The physical condition of livestock including browsers is reported to be below average and still weak in most areas.

There were no reports of unusual animal health problems at epidemic level, but for the endemic problems vaccinations and treatments are underway.

The ongoing relief food distributions and water trucking have greatly mitigated the food and water shortage problems in all woredas. Relief food provisions have been increasing as of January 2003.

Fik Zone

According to the January 2003 SC-UK's report, the food security situation in the Zone has started to deteriorate considerably earlier than normal. Pasture and water conditions are reported to become very poor due to large influx of cattle from neighboring zones. The problem is particularly severe in chronic water deficit areas.



Significant deaths of cattle and shoats were reported particularly from livestock that migrated from Shinile Zone.



Situation in Pastoral Areas

Gode Zone

The food security situation in Gode Zone is reported to be below normal. The most affected include agro-pastoralists and Riverine groups in Kalafo, Mustahil and East Imey Woredas. Due to shortage of pasture, migration of livestock has been reported from Kelafo to Gode Woreda and Elbarde and Bako Regions of Somalia. Water problem is reported to be severe particularly in water deficit areas including Todo of Addle, Gudis in E.Imey, Danan town and Bukayar and Har-gududo in Kelafo Woredas.

Afder Zone

The food security situation was reported to be poor to below normal particularly in Riverine and rain-fed farming areas in W.Imey, Elkare and Gorobaqsa Woredas. Many areas including Gorobaqsa, some localities in Hargelle, Dolobay and W.Imey have already experienced critical water shortages.

Other Zones

According to SC-UK's report, the overall food security situation is better in Liben, Jijjiga, Degahabur and Warder Zones. However, wider incidences of malaria are reported in Moyale and Dolo Woredas.

Borena and Bale Lowlands

According to information from Borena and Bale Woredas, the food security situation in Borena Zone is more or less stable. However, it will deteriorate fast if the expected "Ganna" main rainy season rain becomes insufficient or fails. Water is already a problem in Teltele and Arero Woredas of the Zone. On the other hand, the situation in Bale Zone is reported to be very critical particularly in the lowlands of Meda Welabu, Beltu, Sewena, Rayitu, Goro, Ginir, Goro Damole and Menna Angetu Woredas. Livestock in these woredas are weak due to serious shortages of water and pasture.

South Omo Zone

No serious shortage of pasture and water was reported; physical condition of Livestock also reported to be good.

Dire Dawa

The regional monthly report (February 2003) indicated that pasture is very critical particularly in the agro-pastoral and pastoral villages. The livestock's physical condition, including those that migrated to neighboring zones, is reported to be weak, below average for camels and shoats and significantly below average for cattle. No animal disease outbreaks were reported, but the endemic problems such as external parasites and ticks reported to be significant.



Situations in most pastoral areas is getting worse and is expected to continue to deteriorate if the expected rains resumes late or becomes below average. Below average rainfall could trigger abnormal migration and livestock deaths in areas where the situation is already severe.

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