

Ethiopia Drought: Fact Sheet – May 2017

Situation

- After *El Niño*-driven weather caused one of the worst droughts in many parts of Ethiopia in 2015/2016, lowland areas across the Horn of Africa are experiencing **alarming drought conditions** due to the negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). In Ethiopia, the south and south eastern areas are most affected, with the failure of the 2016 *deyr* rains (December) and delayed *Gu* rains (March) affecting nine out of 11 zones in Somali region; four zones in Oromia; and three zones in SNNP.
- With the arrival of seasonal rains to most areas, water for domestic use and livestock will increase as well as the regeneration of pasture. However, the immediate impact of the rains is harmful. Weak and emaciated livestock often die due to the cold, change of weather and increase in diseases. The rains also increase the risk of water borne diseases, including acute watery diarrhoea (AWD).
- In neighbouring country Somalia, refugees are crossing the border to Ethiopia, **escaping conflict exacerbated by food insecurity**, brought on by the drought. The majority of these arrivals are women and children.
- The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) reports that the current number of food beneficiaries has reached 7.6 million, an increase by 2 million from the 5.6 million beneficiaries estimated at the beginning of the year. The upcoming *Belg/Gu* seasonal assessment will verify this estimated increase. An additional 9.2 million people are in need of WASH interventions, including access to safe water and response to water/vector borne diseases.
- **Malnutrition levels are higher than previous years** – over 303, 000 children will be treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in 2017, an increase from the 250,000 cases that UNICEF prepares for in a normal year. An additional 2.7 million children under five and pregnant and lactating mothers will be treated for moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).
- **Other humanitarian shocks:** Drought, floods and local conflict may displace up to 376,000 people¹ in the country. The protracted drought could lead pastoralists to move in search of food, water and pasture from one region to another. This may trigger tensions between groups in some regions, as it has between Oromo and Somali ethnic groups. Additionally, Ethiopia hosts the second largest refugee population in Africa, a further strain on host communities and resources.

Causes

- Ethiopia is highly vulnerable to **climatic hazards – particularly drought and floods**. Such hazards and associated disasters are not unique to Ethiopia, however the scale of their impact in terms of the high population affected by food insecurity and the damage to properties, livelihoods and the national economy is highly significant.

2017 Emergency Facts and Figures at a Glance¹

People in need of emergency food assistance	7.6 million
Children under five and pregnant and lactating women who will benefit from MAM treatment	2.7 million
Children under five who will benefit from SAM treatment	303,000
School-age children needing assistance to access quality education due to drought	2 million
People who require access to safe drinking water and basic latrine facilities	9.2 million
People in need of protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence	590,000
Number of refugees in the country ²	829,925

¹ 2017 Ethiopia Humanitarian Requirements Document

² UNHCR, April 2017

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Implications on Children

- At a time when Ethiopia had made progress for its children across multiple fronts, **protracted drought conditions threaten to diminish gains** made in nutrition, health, child protection and education for millions of children across drought and flood-affected areas. Between 2000 and 2016, children under-five mortality rates were cut by 40 per cent in Ethiopia and stunting rates were reduced dramatically from 58 per cent to 38 per cent. However, if the effects of weather phenomena are not mitigated, millions of children stand to lose out on their health, education, wellbeing and future.
- Children with SAM are eight times more likely to die than children who are not malnourished. Untreated or repeat episodes of acute malnutrition can lead to stunting in children, with long term risks. Children who suffer from undernutrition are more likely to achieve lower educational levels than healthy children.
- Women and girls, as well as children from vulnerable families are more susceptible to gender-based violence, child labour, child marriage and other violations because of the drought and floods. In some areas, there have been increased levels of child migration, engagement of children in dangerous works and higher risk of child marriage which are used as coping mechanisms in the drought/flood affected *woredas* (districts).

Funding Appeal

- Throughout 2017, the level of humanitarian need in Ethiopia is expected to increase from initial January estimates, requiring sustained response from the Government, humanitarian agencies and donors. We, therefore, urge the international community to continue their support to those in need of emergency assistance in Ethiopia, with the added objective of building resilience to save lives.
- **The UNICEF 2017 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for Ethiopia is US\$110.5 million.** US\$93.1 million will be used to respond to the drought situation and the remaining allocated to refugee response. The HAC appeal is currently 53 per cent funded while the drought response is 63 per cent funded.

Humanitarian Strategy: Partnerships and Prepositioning

- The **Government of Ethiopia (GoE) is leading the humanitarian response**, supported by partners including OCHA, UNICEF, WFP, NGO partners and donors.
- In line with its Core Commitments for Children in humanitarian action, UNICEF is supporting the Government in scaling-up its response to mitigate the impact of the current drought and floods on children and women and working closely with the Government and partners to ensure **that children have access to health and nutrition care, education, safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, and protection support during emergencies.**
- UNICEF commends the GoE for **building the resilience** of its nation to mitigate the shock of food insecurity, drought and floods as well as its efforts to host and provide a safe place for refugees from South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea.
- **Prepositioned supplies** - UNICEF has prepositioned stocks in Addis Ababa and at two regional hubs to address the needs of 120,000 people in the event of any rapid onset of crisis. These stocks include essential supplies such as emergency drug kits, water treatment/purification chemicals, ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), school-in-a-bag kits, tents and non-food items. These supplies are being used to provide immediate assistance to drought and flood affected populations based on requests from the regional governments and other partners.
- **Refugee response:** UNICEF supports UNHCR and the Government's Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) to spearhead emergency response coordination. The partnership is based on a new Memorandum of Understanding which was signed in 2016 between the two sister agencies and a tripartite agreement signed in 2007 with ARRA and UNHCR to establish a framework of collaboration for the delivery of services and assistance to refugees.

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UNICEF Emergency Response

Child protection – supporting children at risk

- UNICEF co-leads the child protection/gender-based violence sub-cluster of which includes partners such as the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Ethiopian Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs, Child Fund, and Save the Children.
- The child protection in emergencies response includes psychosocial support through child friendly spaces, identification and referral of children at risk of or victims of abuse, violence and exploitation, and working with communities to prevent and/or respond to family separation, at-risk migration, child marriage, gender based violence and other protection issues.

Education – addressing disruption in learning

- UNICEF is a coordinating agency for the emergency education cluster, supporting the Ministry of Education to ensure that assistance across the most drought-affected regions are efficiently targeted and delivered, including school feeding. UNICEF deployed an education cluster coordinator to strengthen the Ministry of Education and regional education coordination capacity to respond to the emergency.
- UNICEF assists the regional education bureaus with the provision of primary school teaching and learning materials, WASH services to schools as well as support to offset the additional costs schools are bearing to stay open during drought. Further, communities hosting displaced families and their children have been provided with temporary learning facilities, attached to existing primary schools, in order to accommodate the school children.

Nutrition – building capacity to save lives

- UNICEF, as the global nutrition cluster lead, supports the GoE in coordinating the overall nutrition emergency response and provides nutrition supplies including ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), F-75 and F-100 therapeutic milk and drugs for the treatment of children with SAM.

UNICEF supports the treatment of malnourished children through the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), along with training, quality assurance (supervision) and coordination with other partners. These interventions are complemented by the ongoing support for countrywide, biannual vitamin A supplementation among children aged 6 to 59 months and deworming of children aged 24 to 59 months, as well as food fortification, including universal salt iodization efforts.

- Funds are secured to procure a total of 16,000 cartons of BP5 and 2,400 calories of high energy biscuits to support the nutritional status of AWD patients in Somali region.
- In April 2017, CMAM/ IYCF monitors provided training on CMAM to 229 health extension workers (HEWs), in two drought-affected zones (South Omo and Segen) in SNNP region.
- UNICEF dispatched to all regions, ready-to-use-therapeutic-food (RUTF), drugs and therapeutic milk to cover the needs of the first two quarters of the year. More than 102,000 cartons of RUTF were sent to the regions and will be enough for the treatment of an estimated 19,000 children with SAM per month, for six months.

Health – preventing and responding to disease outbreaks

- UNICEF and partners support the Ministry of Health and RHBs to maintain a minimum level of preparedness against increased health hazards from drought and flooding, to improve case management and to build the capacity of the health system to effectively respond to and recover from emergencies and ensure improved access to health care services.
- UNICEF provides financial support, supplies and technical assistance to the prevention of major causes of childhood illness and death such as AWD and vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, meningitis and scabies.
- AWD is still active in Afar, Oromia SNNP and especially in Somali region. AWD, measles, scabies and malaria remain major public health threats in drought-affected regions.

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- As part of the joint partners' AWD response in Somali region, UNICEF, with the World Health Organization, is deploying four multi-sectoral teams in four priority zones of Somali region.
- To reach pastoralist communities, UNICEF supports 49 MHNTs in Somali and Afar regions to provide medical consultations and essential life-saving interventions including for children under five and pregnant and lactating women.

WASH – providing access to water, sanitation and good hygiene

- UNICEF, as WASH cluster lead, supports the Government in the collection of real-time information on the status of water supply facilities in some of the most drought-affected communities.
- UNICEF works to increase access to improved water and sanitation facilities in schools and health facilities and to increase awareness of good hygiene and sanitation practices in communities, especially those affected by public health emergencies such as scabies and AWD. Improved water and sanitation in schools contributes to reducing the rate of school dropouts.
- Demand for water trucking is increasing due to the drought and the established AWD case treatment centres, however there are financial limitations. Currently, out of the total 736 water trucks needed in the country, only 437 trucks are deployed to 157 *woredas*.

Background of UNICEF in Ethiopia

UNICEF's cooperation with Ethiopia began in 1952 and the office was established in 1958. Since then, UNICEF Ethiopia has continued its work closely with the GoE and other partners in the realisation of the rights of the children and women in Ethiopia based on the programmes and projects developed and agreed upon by the GoE and UNICEF. UNICEF Ethiopia works in all regions of the country in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection and will continue this work under the new Country Programme (July 2016 – June 2020).

UNICEF and Partners

UNICEF Ethiopia works with partners including governments, UN agencies, NGOs and communities to provide emergency relief in line with the Core Commitments for Children in emergencies. Among its key donors and partners are the Governments of Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States, HRF, CERF, ECHO and EU among others, as well as UNICEF National Committees.

For further information:

Latest Humanitarian Situation Report available here: <http://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/emergency.html>
 Humanitarian Action for Children 2017 appeal for Ethiopia: <http://www.unicef.org/appeals/ethiopia.html>
 Humanitarian Requirements Document 2017: <http://uni.cf/2iAe3yi>

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