



**World Health
Organization**

EMERGENCY AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION (EHA)

WEEKLY UPDATE – WHO COUNTRY OFFICE ETHIOPIA: (Week 18, 27 April – 03 May 2009)

HIGH LIGHTS:

According to official reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), no case of Influenza A H1N1 has been reported from Ethiopia and the situation is being monitored.

- A month delay in belg rains resulted in lower plantings in some areas. It is likely to reduce the minor mid-year harvest. Hence, the population in need of food could increase above the current level.
- According to official reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), 53 cases of AWD have been reported from Somali, Oromiya and SNNP Regions last week. Four Hundred Seventy Six cases of AWD and 13 deaths (CFR 2.7%) have been reported from Somali, Oromiya and SNNP Regions from 23rd March to 26th April 2009.

I. GENERAL SITUATION:

a) Political, social, security overview for the week

- The overall security situation in the country remained stable during this week. No major security incidents involving humanitarian staff members have been reported.

b) Main events of interest/ concern for health (displacements, conflicts, disease outbreaks, etc.)

Food security and malnutrition.

- Given the late start of belg and the approaching hunger season, food security and nutrition conditions may deteriorate rapidly in some parts of the country, like experienced already in several woredas of SNNPR, parts of Arsi, West Arsi, eastern parts in Oromiya, eastern parts of Amhara and East and West Harerge. Since the beginning of April, admission rates of malnourished children in OTPs and Stabilization Centers (SC) have increased rapidly and are alarmingly high in some areas.
- The food security and nutrition situation has rapidly deteriorated in Siraro, Shalla, Shashemene and Arsi Negele woredas of West Arsi. According to the Zonal DPPB, the situation is serious and needs immediate intervention. Screening is ongoing to assess the actual number of malnourished children. Over 1000 children have been admitted to OTPs in one week. Relief assistance to over 68,000 people has been dispatched, pending a rapid assessment of the current needs. Meanwhile, food stress indicators are being observed in woredas of Arsi including Munessa, Shirka, Aseko and Seru.
- The average price of cereals is still high and the price of livestock is increasing. This week, no rain fall reported from belg producing areas including Arsi, North Shoa, West Arsi, and Bale zones and pastoral areas of Borena except light showers in Yabello woreda. is the prospect of belg harvest is not promising due to inadequate land preparation and late planting due to erratic nature of the rain but meher land preparation activities are in progress.
- A serious malnutrition situation is emerging in Siraro, Shashemane, Shala, and Arsi Negelle woredas. In Siraro woreda some 27 severe cases have been reported. The situation needs further investigation. A significant number of highly malnourished children were being treated in Stabilisation Centres and OTPs in most of these woredas last year. Seru, Munesa, Aseko & Shirka woredas, not benefiting from

relief are now experiencing food shortage due to poor meher production last year. A recently deployed joint verification team reported that about 45,000 people are in need of food assistance in the woredas.

Acute watery Diarrhoea (AWD)

- According to official reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), 53 cases of AWD have been reported from Somali, Oromiya and SNNP Regions last week. Four Hundred Seventy Six cases of AWD and 13 deaths (CFR 2.7%) have been reported from Somali, Oromiya and SNNP Regions from 23rd March to 26th April 2009. One Hundred Fifty Eight cases and seven deaths from Moyale and Geladi woredas of Somali region, 155 cases and 4 deaths from Moyale and Dire woredas of Oromiya Region and 163 cases and 2 deaths from Konso special woreda of SNNPR. MSF Belgium continues to support case management in Oromia and Somali Regions. Other partners are providing support in prevention and control measures in both Regions.

H1N1

- According to official reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), no case of Influenza A H1N1 has been reported from Ethiopia. WHO country office is providing the technical lead for the UNCT in the preparation of a contingency plan for the influenza A H1N1 pandemic preparedness and response. In addition technical assistance is being provided to the FMOH for the development of a national contingency plan.
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II. ANALYSIS & HEALTH CONSEQUENCES: Health problems & Needs of affected populations.

Food insecurity and malnutrition

- While the overall national food security situation has improved compared to 2008, the nutrition and food security situation is gradually declining in several parts of the country including Sidama, Gedeo, Wolayita, KT, and Dawro zones in SNNPR; East and West Harerghe, Bale and Borena in eastern Oromiya; and parts of South Wello in Amhara and Somali regions. The food security of vulnerable population could worsen, if the current belg/gu season performs poorly.

Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD)

- The technical committee of the Emergency Health and Nutrition Task Force continues to meet with secretariat support from WHO. Reports from partners, Oromia and Somali RHBs reported AWD infection spreading to new districts. The identified gaps are poor case management, inadequate CTCs materials and drugs, poor water supply, inadequate human resources, poor hygiene and sanitation. High movement of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) is a major challenge for the control of the disease. The needs of affected people are drugs, water treatment chemicals, awareness creation and trained health staff to support proper case management. Government and partners are responding and mobilising more resource to support response.

III. ACTIONS (in relation or response to the issues mentioned above):

- a) **WHO activities (field trips, assessments, gap filling, coordination, information sharing, training, etc.) & needs (Human resources, material, and infrastructure) and other partners support.**

Food insecurity and malnutrition

- This week WHO has continued its technical support to regions in responding to food and nutrition crisis in Ethiopia. The nutritional survey in Somali Region has been started as of 12 April 2009 under the leadership of the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI). WHO is member of the Technical working group for the survey and has provided both financial and technical support to the survey.

Acute watery Diarrhoea (AWD)

- WHO continues to provide technical support to the affected regions of Somali and Oromia Regions through provisions of emergency drug kits, assessment and strengthening surveillance WHO is coordination health partners' support through weekly technical task force meetings in WHO office chaired by the FMOH.
- MSF-Belgium continue to support Somali and Oromia Regions in case management and running CTCs. IRC, Ethiopia Red Cross Society and other partners on the ground continue to provide support in community awareness, water and sanitation intervention. The Regional water bureau and partners are supporting water sanitation interventions..

H1N1

- WHO is leading the revision of the influenza contingency plan for the UN Country Team to facilitate the preparation of the pandemic response. Different task forces have started working on the document with the participation of all UNCT agencies. The preparatory work meeting is conducted on daily basis for the last one week chaired by WHO. In addition technical support is also given to the national Government to facilitate preparedness and response at national and regional levels. Current response activities of FMOH supported by WHO includes enhancing surveillance in all entry point including Bole International airport, distribution and orientation on standard case definition, public education on personal hygiene and advised to seek medical attention if they develop symptoms of influenza –like illness.

V. COORDINATION:

- This week, WHO actively participated in the technical officers/UNOCHA, WASH cluster/MoWR, Nutrition cluster and Ethiopian Humanitarian Country Team (EHCT)/UNDP meetings held in Addis Ababa.
- WHO is supporting and facilitating the coordination for the preparedness and response of influenza A by the UN country team.

VI. COMMENTS:

- With the current heavy rains in many parts of the country, there is high probability that the AWD outbreak will affect more regions. WHO is reflecting on how to work effectively in partnership with the FMOH, RHBs and partners in strengthening capacity of the federal and regions for better AWD response.
- It is necessary to step up food security monitoring in hot spot areas to ensure that responses are initiated in a timely manner.