

28 September 2015

Key Issues

- In August 2015, TFP² admission rates in selected hotspot priority two *woredas* were similar to admission rates in priority one *woredas*, highlighting the swift deterioration of food and nutritional security.
- In the last quarter of 2015, more than 700,000 moderately malnourished (MAM) children under-5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women - double the number of cases in 2014 - are expected to need assistance.
- Analysis of past El Niño episodes point to a likely doubling of relief food beneficiaries in 2016, which is the El Niño impact year.
- The Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team (EHCT) calls for a dual track approach that responds to 2015 needs and plans for anticipated 2016 needs.
- At least US\$151 million urgently required to meet food (\$92.7 million) and non-food (\$58.7 million) needs for the remainder of 2015.
- At least \$237 million is required no later than mid-October 2015 to procure and pre-position relief items in Ethiopia to cover **2016 first quarter needs**.

A developing natural disaster: The 2015 spring/*belg* (mid-February-May) rains failed, with devastating impact on food security and malnutrition. In August 2015, reported relief food needs increased by 55 per cent from 2.9 million to 4.5 million people; and the areas needing urgent nutrition support tripled. The scale of humanitarian needs quickly outpaced response capacity, with at least **US\$151 million** urgently required to meet food (\$92.7 million) and non-food (\$58.7 million) needs for the remainder of 2015.

A greater disaster is occurring. On the heels of the failed *belg* and the corresponding dismal food security situation, the El Niño weakened the summer/*kiremt* (June-September) rains, significantly impacting the October harvest that feeds 75-80 per cent of Ethiopians. Based on the analysis of previous El Niño episodes in Ethiopia and current needs, there is a high probability that relief food needs and malnutrition rates will double in 2016. The impact of El Niño is already felt and the level of human suffering reached frightening proportions. In July 2015, the number of severely malnourished (SAM) children under-5 requiring therapeutic feeding was 49.5 per cent higher than in July last year, and was similar to the July admission rates registered during the 2011 Horn of Africa drought. The Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team (EHCT) calls for funds to respond to anticipated 2016 needs and mitigate the worst humanitarian impact and safeguard development gains. At least **\$237 million** is required no later than mid-October 2015 to procure and pre-position relief items in Ethiopia to cover 2016 first quarter needs. On average, the procurement and transportation lead-time for relief food is three months; and for SAM supplies four to five months.

Needs exceeded the 55% jump seen in 18 August mid-year review

The findings of the 16-25 September Government-led multi-agency and multi-sector rapid assessment are being compiled, and the final report is expected this week. Since mid-August 2015, the number of people assisted with relief food is believed to be closer to 5 million, including the 4.5 million HRD¹ beneficiaries and at least 400,000 ad hoc relief beneficiaries in Afar, Amhara, Oromia and Somali and Dire Dawa. The September assessment report is expected to point to a significant increase in humanitarian needs.

The food and nutritional situation is deteriorating rapidly. During the third quarter of 2015, WPF assisted some 374,000 moderately malnourished children under-5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women (MAM) with targeted supplementary feeding. This was 54 per cent higher compared to the same time last year. In the last quarter of 2015, more than 700,000 MAM cases are expected to need assistance, twice the number of cases seen the same time last year.

In a normal year, the *belg* (June-September) harvest marks the beginning of a decline in therapeutic feeding program (TFP) admissions. However this year, admissions of severely malnourished children under-5 to therapeutic feeding programs continued to increase since February 2015. The July 2015 national TFP admission rate was similar to the July admission rates registered during the major drought in 2011. Once complete, the national August admission report is expected to show that the rates have surpassed that of August 2011.

For more information, contact ocha-eth@un.org

¹ Humanitarian Requirements Document
² Therapeutic Feeding Program

Donors are urgently requested to:

- Provide additional funding to address current (2015) needs
- Bring forward 2016 funds now
- Review options to re-programme existing development funding for priority humanitarian response
- Seek additional resources
- Support country-level pooled funds (OCHA's Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) and the emergency funds managed by USAID and ECHO)