

# Alert

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## Ethiopia

# Title: Response to El Niño-caused Drought Emergency

Geneva, 13 January 2016

### 1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

The current food insecurity crisis in Ethiopia appear to be a result of a combination of factors that includes the pre-El Niño failure of the spring rains and the El Niño induced late onset, erratic and early cessation of the main summer rains. With the exception of some unseasonal rains, the northern half of Ethiopia faces a period of between five (eastern highlands agriculture zone) to eight months (western highlands agriculture zone) without rain.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), more than 10 million people in Ethiopia are at risk of hunger following the worst drought in 30 years. The Ethiopian Government says more than 400 rural districts (Woredas) are affected and 10.1 million people, including nearly 6 million children (among which 0.4 million severely acute malnourished and 1.7 million moderately acute malnourished), will require urgent food assistance programmes among other interventions in January 2016 due to drought. It was also reported that the drought caused death of over 400 thousand livestock and displacement of 0.8 people. It estimated that the country will need 1.4 billion to respond to the emergency.

The major humanitarian needs include: lives of millions of people at risk due to lack of food, water and disease outbreaks. Livelihoods have been destroyed due to livestock death and poor health and remain precarious due to limited access to seeds and other agricultural inputs for the coming year. Flooding and other drought or conflict-related displacement will lead to more humanitarian needs such as shelter and non-food items.

### 2. Why is an ACT response needed?

The government of Ethiopia continues with efforts to address the needs of the affected populations. However, due to the overwhelming needs of the emergency, the government has appealed to donors and partners to scale-up support hence the need for an ACT response. The government recommends that in 2016, as humanitarian needs spike, international support at least in the short term, must tilt towards more humanitarian assistance to ensure that Ethiopia's development gains of the past decade are preserved.

High level as well as community level church leaders have also repeatedly appealed to their respective ACT forum member organizations to respond to the emergency through an ACT appeal. It is important for an ACT response due to the worsening situation an Alliance-wide appeal is now necessary as bilateral is not sufficient.

The drought is affecting the development programmes that ACT members are engaged in affected areas and ensuring that timely emergency as well as mitigation intervention will help to preserve the development programme gains.

### **3. National and international response**

The government of Ethiopia is leading the emergency response to the current drought and has provided over US\$200 million of emergency support in 2015. Furthermore, the Government of Ethiopia has committed a first instalment of US\$97 million to support food distribution in early 2016. So far, in 2015, 862,978 people (468,924 children under five and 394,054 pregnant and breastfeeding women) benefited from targeted supplementary feeding (TSF) interventions in Afar, Amhara, Gambella, Oromia, SNNP, Somali, and Tigray regions, with 18,226 MT of food (16,008 Mt of CSB+ and 2,218 MT vegetable oil).

On WASH, with support from the NGOs Islamic relief and Action for Integrated Sustainable Development Association (AISDA) are supporting 29 water trucks, leaving a gap of nine trucks. Similarly in Oromia region, 27 water trucks are providing water to affected communities, leaving a gap of 15 tracks. At least 695,931 people are accessing safe drinking water as a result.

The Government of Ethiopia has led consecutive multi-agency assessments and together with partners is mobilizing additional resources to cover shortfalls for the next phase of round relief food ration for 10.2 million people and other sectors. The monthly food commodity requirements for 10.2 million relief food beneficiaries identified for 2016 is some 173,595 metric tons. Of the 10.2 million, the National Disaster Risk Management Coordination Commission (NDRMCC) will cover 5.7 million people, Joint Emergency Operation Plan (JEOP) will cover 2.6 million people, and WFP will cover 1.6 million people.

### **4. ACT Alliance response**

ACT forum members are on bilateral base and in a small scale. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus Development And Social Services Commission (EECMY DASSC) has responded to drought affected areas in Asaita, in Afar Regional state in cooperation with Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH), and in North Wollo, Kobo District in Amhara Regional State, with the support of Dan Church Aid (DCA). LWF has also responded in Mekit Woreda in Amhara region with a distribution of fast-maturing seeds to farmers with the support of DCA.

Besides, the EECMY DASSC launched a new emergency response project in Bale Zone, in three districts, namely Sewena, Rayitu and Dawe Serar Woredas, supported by ICCO (The Netherlands).

Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and DKH also support the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC) to implement emergency WASH initiative in North Showa zone of Amhara region. IOCC has allocated resources from its International Emergency Relief Fund to respond to this emergency based on the recommendations of a rapid needs assessment performed by IOCC and EOC-DICAC. The first intervention will target villagers from Kewet Woreda and include animal feed and water distribution and further will consider nutrition program support.

## 5. Planned activities

A total of 165,714 drought affected individuals in 8 districts of Afar, Amhara and Oromia regional states directly targeted by LWF, EECMY-DASSC and IOCC/EOC-DICAC emergency response project to benefit from food aid, cash for work program and livestock related supports and other supports during and post crises phases. A total of 750 households will be provided with 5 shallow wells for drinking water and a WASH related training will be provided for 1500 households with EECMY-DASSC project.

Through the ACT Appeal, requesting members target to raise up to \$5 million. So far, no indications of available funds have been recorded.

## 6. Constraints

To date, only limited numbers of actors are responding to the emergency due to lack of adequate resources. However, the potential constrain could be coordination of this large scale emergency response once large number of actors become operational.

### **Member Contact Information:**

Frehiwot Abebe, Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator; International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) Email: [fabebe@iocc.org](mailto:fabebe@iocc.org) Phone +251-911-125-688

**Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel ([Line.Hempel@actalliance.org](mailto:Line.Hempel@actalliance.org)).**

### **For further information please contact:**

ACT Regional Representative, Gezahegn Gebrehana ([Gezahegn.Gebrahana@actalliance.org](mailto:Gezahegn.Gebrahana@actalliance.org))

ACT Regional Programme Officer, Arnold Ambundo ([Arnold.Ambundo@actalliance.org](mailto:Arnold.Ambundo@actalliance.org))

ACT Web Site address: <http://www.actalliance.org>