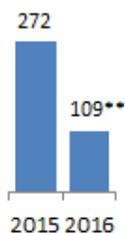


22 February 2016

Key Issues

- The Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team is planning a joint fundraising campaign with the Ethiopian government to urgently raise funds to meet rising needs, protect livelihoods and safeguard Ethiopia's development gains.
- Fund mobilization and intervention planning should take into account procurement and transportation lead times. It takes 120 days on average for relief commodities to reach people in need.
- Of the \$1.4 billion required for humanitarian interventions in 2016, 48 per cent was funded as of mid-February. Humanitarian partners are appealing for additional funding to address most urgent, time-bound gaps.

Government contribution to the drought response in million USD



Total: \$381 million

Ethiopia is responding to an El Niño-caused drought emergency: The El Niño global climactic event has wreaked havoc on Ethiopia's summer rains. This comes on the heels of failed spring rains, and has driven food insecurity, malnutrition and water shortages in affected areas of the country. A well-coordinated response is already underway and expanding rapidly, although the scale of the developing emergency exceeds resources available to date. Given the lead times necessary for the procurement of relief items, the Government and its international partners have called for early action to this slow onset natural disaster.

Addressing logistical challenges for timely food assistance

The Government and humanitarian partners are taking various measures to address logistical challenges to speed-up the delivery of food assistance to 10.2 million people in need. The prioritization of humanitarian cargo movements has improved uplift from the Port of Djibouti. WFP's use of alternate routes, starting with the Port of Berbera in Somaliland, has proved successful. To date, more than 40,000 Metric Tons of cereals were transported through this corridor and will go towards meeting emergency relief needs.

The Government is also seeking ways to quicken the offloading of trucks at strategic warehouses across the country, including three warehouses managed by the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) in Adama, Dire Dawa and Kombolcha. Seven additional warehouses in Adama, Kombolcha, Mekelle, Shashemene, Shenile, Sodo and Werota are managed by the Strategic Grain Reserve Agency. Unconfirmed reports indicate up to one

week delay in offloading cargos at some warehouses. The lead time needed to mobilize food, from procurement on international markets to arrival at final distribution point, is approximately 120 days, which requires funding to be provided well ahead of time.

Weather is not showing any significant improvement

According to field reports, poor rain received in January and February in most northern and eastern parts of the country was insufficient to replenish water sources and rejuvenate pasture. Drought-affected areas continue to report deepening water and browse shortage. In East Hararge zone (Oromia region) for example, 31 water trucks (of 35 requested) are providing water to affected communities. Zonal authorities are preparing to request for

Critical Gaps

- \$228 million needed by 29 February to prevent a pipeline break of food assistance;
- \$17 million needed by 29 February for supplementary foods to treat 2.2 million moderately malnourished;
- \$5 million needed for specialty foods for a projected 450,000 severely malnourished children by 1 June;
- \$15 million needed for seeds and fertilizer to more than 5.6 million farmers by end of March, before the next planting window closes;
- \$3 million immediately needed to deliver emergency potable water and prevent mass migration to already overwhelmed water sources.

water trucking support for additional *woredas*. The humanitarian situation is expected to further deteriorate if the rainfall performance does not improve in the coming week. Seasonal prediction systems from the UK Met Office and from the European Center for Medium range Weather Forecasting (ECMWF)¹ suggest an increase in the probability of above-average *belg*/spring rainfall across southern and eastern Ethiopia. Predictions for the northern parts of the country are more uncertain; both systems have very weak signals.

Investing in fodder bank

The Afar Regional Government allocated 700 hectares of land from Tendaho Sugar Cane Factory for use as an irrigated fodder bank; 150 hectares of planting is now completed. In pastoralist areas, water and pasture shortages resulted in emaciated livestock, including deaths. In agrarian communities, weakened livestock are unable to till the land in preparation for the next planting season. Farmers usually prepare the land for the next planting season in January and February. For more information, contact: ocha-eth@un.org

¹ Go to <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ethiopia> or https://twitter.com/OCHA_Ethiopia