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**CONTINUED DROUGHT AND CONFLICT AFFECT CROP AND FOOD SUPPLY
PROSPECTS IN HORN OF AFRICA**

Despite recent beneficial rains in parts of the Horn of Africa, the food situation remains precarious due to lingering effects of drought, coupled with the effects of civil strife and war in some countries. Currently nearly 19 million people need emergency food assistance. The food shortages are expected to persist well into 2001. In addition, pastoralists in Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Djibouti will be seriously affected by the recent ban (19 September) on imports of livestock from these countries imposed by the major importing countries along the Arabian Peninsula, on account of Rift Valley fever scare. A similar year-long ban in 1998 seriously affected the economy of the exporting countries of the Horn.

The food situation is particularly serious in Kenya, Eritrea and Ethiopia, where large volumes of cereal imports, mostly in the form of food aid, are still needed to stave off starvation. In Kenya, the drought-induced food shortages still persist with nearly 3.3 million people estimated to be in need of urgent food assistance. The severe scarcity of water and pasture in northern and eastern parts resulted in large livestock losses. In Eritrea, the mass displacement of farmers from the agriculturally rich regions of Gash Barka and Debub, accounting for more than 70 percent of the country's cereal production, has jeopardised this year's cropping season. The food supply situation of the more than 1.5 million war-displaced people gives cause for serious concern. In Ethiopia, despite recent beneficial rains, the overall food supply situation remains highly precarious. An estimated 10 million people are in need of food assistance. In Somalia, a good main ("Gu") harvest preceded by a satisfactory secondary ("Deyr") season harvest in parts of the south has improved the overall food supply situation. However, high malnutrition rates are increasingly reported, reflecting loss of livelihoods due to recurrent droughts, and longer-term effects of years of insecurity and lack of investment in the economy. In Sudan, overall prospects for the 2000 food production are mixed. The food situation in some pockets in southern Sudan is alarming due to the effect of drought and instability. In Uganda, the overall food supply situation is satisfactory. However, the situation remains precarious in the north-east, mainly due to last season's poor harvest and loss of cattle due to raids.

Situation by Country

DJIBOUTI

The agriculture sector in Djibouti accounts for less than 3 percent of the gross domestic product. The population is mostly urban and is concentrated in the capital. Agriculture production is marginal and most of the food is imported. The economy of the country is dominated by trade based on port and airport infrastructure.

A severe drought since last year has put large number of people at risk of starvation. A UN Inter-Agency Appeal was launched on 6 June 2000, for US\$378 million to assist some 13.4

million drought affected people in the Horn of Africa, including nearly 150 000 people, nearly one-fifth of Djibouti's population.

ERITREA

Despite favourable rains in September and October prospects for 2000 main season cereal and pulse crops, for harvest from November are bleak due mainly to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of farmers following an upsurge in the war with neighbouring Ethiopia in May/June 2000. Gash Barka and Debub administrative zones (Zobas), which are the country's main grain producing areas and normally supply more than 75 percent of Eritrea's cereal production, have been at the centre of the recent clashes and may have little or no harvest in 2000. As the next harvest is only expected in November/December 2001, these regions known as "the bread basket of Eritrea" together with other parts will depend on emergency relief food for at least the next 18 months.

The food situation of more than 1.5 million people displaced by war gives cause for serious concern. The failure of two successive rainy seasons in Anseba, North Red Sea and South Red Sea administrative zones has also severely affected nearly 340 000 people. In June 2000, FAO and WFP jointly approved a revised Emergency Operation for a total of 151 000 tonnes to assist 750 000 people for a period of 12 months.

ETHIOPIA

Good rains in September and October in several parts of the country have helped maturing crops in important cereal producing areas of central, northern and western parts of the country. However, cereal production in eastern and southern parts of the country has been affected by continued drought conditions. The 2000 secondary "Belg" crop, normally harvested from June, has also failed due to continued drought. Although production during this season accounts for only 8 to 10 percent of total cereal production, it is important in several areas where it provides the bulk of annual food supplies. An FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission is planned to visit the country from mid-November to assess the main "Meher" season production and estimate food assistance requirements in 2001.

With the failure of the secondary season, the number of people in need of assistance has increased to more than 10 million, including 400 000 displaced by the border war with Eritrea. Consequently, the overall food aid requirement in 2000 estimated earlier at 836 000 tonnes has been revised upwards to 1.2 million tonnes.

KENYA

Harvesting of the 2000 main "long rains" cereal crops is complete in the main growing areas of the Rift Valley. The main rainy season (March-May), which normally accounts for 80 percent of total annual food production, has largely failed due to a severe drought. As a result, the country will need to import an estimated 1.4 million tonnes of cereals in 2000/2001 marketing year (October-September) to maintain normal consumption requirements. Nearly 3.3 million people, mostly pastoralists in the northern and eastern parts of the country, need emergency food assistance. The severe scarcity of water and pasture has resulted in the loss of large numbers of their livestock. With limited foreign exchange resources, the country needs substantial international assistance to cope with the emergency.

Prospects for the 2000/2001 "short rains" cereal crops in the bi-modal areas of the Western, Central and Eastern provinces, for harvest in February/March, are uncertain despite some recent good rains.

In June 2000 UN agencies appealed for US \$146 million to assist Kenya. The response has been favourable, but more is needed.

SOMALIA

Harvest of the main season ("Gu") crops, recently completed, is satisfactory. Cereal production, estimated at 214 000 tonnes, is about 22 percent above the post-war (1993-1999) average. Widespread rains in April/May and good "Hagay" rains at the beginning of July helped developing crops in Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Hiran Bay, Bakool and parts of Lower Juba. Improved security conditions have also encouraged some households to return to their farms and facilitated farming activities. However, poor harvests are anticipated in some pockets of Gedo, Lower Juba and Middle Juba Regions due to erratic and insufficient rains.

Despite some improvement in the overall food supply situation in parts of southern Somalia, serious malnutrition rates are increasingly reported reflecting shocks in livelihoods due to recent drought conditions and longer-term effects of years of insecurity and lack of investment in the economy.

Elsewhere, in north-western Somalia (Somaliland) the food situation is precarious in some agro-pastoral areas in Togdheer, Awdal and Sanag where successive below-normal rains have severely affected crop and livestock production. With community support waning, migration of people and livestock to Ethiopia and other regions is reported.

A UN Inter-Agency appeal which was launched in July 2000, for about US\$15.6 million to assist some 750 000 vulnerable people in Somalia.

SUDAN

A recent FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to southern Sudan indicated an overall deficit in cereal production, particularly in North Bahr el Ghazal, Bahr el Jebel, East Equatoria, Jonglei and Juba. However, some surplus production was noted in West Equatoria, Lakes and west Bahr el Ghazal.

In central and northern Sudan, harvesting of the 2000 main season cereal crops is about to start. Despite delayed start of rainfall, overall harvest prospects have improved with prolonged rains. An FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission is planned to visit the northern parts of the country from mid-November to appraise the 2000 main season food production and estimate commercial imports/exports and food aid requirements in 2001.

UGANDA

Harvesting of the 2000 main season cereal crop is complete. In some districts, including Kumi, Lira and Soroti, late and erratic rains have affected yields. Pasture and livestock

conditions in pastoral areas in the north-east were reported to be adequate due to recent beneficial rains.

Prospects for the 2000 second season food crops, to be harvested from next January, have improved with recent good rains. The overall food supply situation is satisfactory. However, the situation remains precarious in the north-east, mainly due to last season's poor harvest and loss of cattle due to raids. Food assistance continues to be needed for an estimated 600 000 people due to due to the effects of drought and/or civil conflict.