

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Ethiopia: Floods

Emergency Appeal MDRET004

GLIDE no. FL-2007-000145-ETH

28 September 2007

Operations Update no. 1

**Period covered:** 15 September to 21 September.

**Appeal target:** CHF 941,088 (USD 782,284 or EUR 572,438).

**Financial information will be made available in the next operations update.**

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**CHF 99,654 (USD 82,769 or EUR 60,396) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to initiate an immediate response to the Acute Watery Diarrhoea outbreak in Oromia Region.**

**Summary:** A recent situation report released by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in September 2007, indicates that approximately 186,000 people have been affected and 41,000 displaced by floods in Ethiopia. As regards Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD), the number of cases is on the increase – according to other reports<sup>1</sup>. Cases are being registered in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, Southern Nations and Nationalities People's Region (SNNPR) and Gambella, considered as AWD hotspot areas. There is fear that the current flooding could aggravate the transmission of AWD.

The Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) has so far supplied three case treatment centres (CTCs) in Bale, Borena/Guji and Arsi zones in Oromia Region with 1,000 units of Ringer Lactate, 1,000 pieces of soap, 1,000 units of Water Guard (water treatment liquid), PUR water treatment tablets and general medical supplies (cotton roll, gauze and bandages). Additionally, transport arrangements are complete for the dispatch of four cholera kits to Afar, Arsi, South West Shoa and East Harerge zones in Oromia Region (one kit per zone).

## Background

Torrential rains which began in June 2007 in Ethiopia caused rivers and lakes to overflow, resulting in extensive flooding. Several human lives have been claimed while livestock deaths and destruction to crops and food stocks have been recorded. Recent reports from OCHA indicate that the widespread flooding has affected approximately 186,000 people across Ethiopia, with 8,200 families forced to vacate their houses and seek shelter in safer and higher areas.

A flood alert that was released by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) at the beginning of July 2007 indicated that a number of areas were likely to be affected by flooding during the 2007 main rainy season in Ethiopia. This year, the rains started earlier than the normal period in many parts of the country.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Health Partners Forum of 18 September 2007. Members of the forum include the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, UN agencies and international humanitarian agencies.

Initially, the most affected regions were SNNPR and Gambella, located on the south and west of Addis Ababa respectively. Information received by the Gambella regional branch of ERCS in early September indicated that more than 40,000 people had been affected by floods in the area, with over 8,000 displaced. Based on latest reports from the ERCS, however, it is emerging that new areas have been affected since mid-July 2007. The areas affected include Kouwara, Dembia, Libo-Kemkem, Kobo, Kemisse and Gemza-Antsokia (in Amhara Region), Awassa, Wolaita and Bench-Maji (in SNNPR), Itang, Lare and Gambella (in Gambella Region) and Kirkos and Gullele sub-cities in Addis Ababa. Gamo Gofa has also been hit by flash floods, with approximately 1,116 people affected. The Afar Regional Government has reported that so far, at least 1,200 households from the region have been displaced.

**Table 1: Flood affected populations in 5 regions as at 20 September 2007**

Region	Woreda	No. of affected people
Amhara	Libo-Kemkem	2,700
	Gemza-Antsokia	1,300
	Kemisse	3,170
SNNPR	Awassa	400
Gambella	Gambella, Lare and Itang	20,000
Addis Ababa	-	2,520
Afar	Bure and Malaito	6,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>36,090</b>

Source: Ethiopian Red Cross Society

A recent situation report released by OCHA indicates that approximately 186,000 people have been affected countrywide by the floods (up from an earlier figure of 138,000) and 41,000 displaced. On the other hand, according to other reports, cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) are on the increase, with Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, SNNPR and Gambella regions – considered as AWD hotspot areas – registering cases. There is fear that the current flooding could aggravate the transmission of AWD.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Federation's [Emergency Appeal](#) for Ethiopia was launched on 14 September 2007 for CHF 941,088 (USD 782,284 or EUR 572,438) to assist 42,200 beneficiaries for 6 months.

### Objectives, progress, impact and challenges

**Goal:** The humanitarian needs of communities affected by floods and Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) are addressed.

#### Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective 1:** To replenish Ethiopian Red Cross Society's non-food items stocks for 5,000 households in order to allow for timely and adequate response to future potential disasters.

#### Progress

The Ethiopian Red Cross Society has started the process of local procurement of non-food items (NFI) as part of its strategy to pre-position contingency stocks at the branches. The pre-positioning will allow the National Society to respond timely to future potential disasters and to avoid delays in transporting the items to affected locations. As the procurement process proceeds, the National Society, in collaboration with the International Federation's Horn of Africa sub-zone, continues to respond to the needs of people affected by flooding in some of the affected places.

The ERCS has so far distributed food and non-food items to 19,090 people (approximately 3,818 families) in Addis Ababa, Afar, Amhara, Gambella and SNNPR (as shown in tables 2 and 3 below). The National Society plans to scale up its response efforts to reach more of the 32,920 flood affected people from these regions.

**Table 2: Non-food items distributed to affected populations as at 20 September 2007**

Kinds of NFI	Afar	Amhara	Addis Ababa	Gambella	SNNPR	Total NFI
	6,000 assisted	7,170 assisted	2,520 assisted	3,000 assisted	400 assisted	
Blankets	2,600	3,644	1,008	-	160	7,412
Tarpaulins/plastic sheeting	13 rolls	1,952	-	600	80	2,645
Jerry cans	-	1,000	504	-	-	1,504
Sleeping mats	1,300	260	-	-	-	1,560
Plastic cups	-	3,460	-	1,800	-	5,260
Plastic plates	-	3,460	-	1,800	-	5,260
Cooking pots	-	-	-	600	-	600
Tea pots	-	-	-	600	-	600
Soap	6,500	6,760	2,520	3,000	-	18,780
Water guard	-	1,000	-	1,200	-	2,200
Mosquito nets	2,600	-	-	1,200	-	3,800

**Table 3: Food items distributed to affected populations as at 20 September 2007**

Food item	Afar	Amhara	Addis Ababa	Gambella	SNNPR	Total
Wheat flour (tonnes)	-	26.3	-	-	4	30.3
High energy biscuits (tonnes)	-	8.2	-	-	-	8.2
Cooking oil (,000 litres)	-	0.3	-	-	-	0.3

## Health and hygiene promotion

**Objective 2: To control and mitigate the spread of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) in eight zones of Oromia Region.**

### Progress

The health department of the ERCS has defined a set of criteria for selecting the case treatment centres (CTCs) to be supported by the Red Cross. In close cooperation with Oromia Health Bureau and the Red Cross regional and zonal branches, the National Society has identified three CTCs in Bale, Borena/Guji and Arsi zones in Oromia Region that are in dire need of medical supplies and medical personnel.

Other criteria which were considered include the following:

- High incidence of AWD;
- Escalating incidence of AWD;
- High mortality rates;
- Most vulnerable communities;
- Acknowledgement of AWD problem by the regional government;
- High incidence of AWD amongst children aged under five years and females;
- Confirmed gaps in medical supplies.

The National Society has also supplied the three CTCs with 1,000 units of Ringer Lactate, 1,000 pieces of soap, 1,000 units of Water Guard (water treatment liquid), PUR water treatment tablets, and general medical supplies (cotton roll, gauze and bandages). Additionally, transport arrangements are complete for the dispatch of four cholera kits to Afar, Arsi, South West Shoa and East Harerge zones in Oromia Region (one per zone).

In collaboration with the regional health bureaus, the Red Cross regional and zonal branches continue to monitor the AWD trend in the country. The latest statistics obtained from the Oromia Health Bureau (table 4) indicate a 7.2 per cent decrease in cases registered in the region (from 3,680 as at 21 August 2007 to 3,414 as at 2 September 2007). The number of deaths rose from 63 to 68 (an increase of 7.9 percent) during the same period.

**Table 4: AWD statistics in Oromia Region (25 June to 2 September 2007)**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Affected Woredas</b>	<b>Affected Kebeles</b>	<b>Cumulative number of cases</b>	<b>Cumulative number of deaths</b>
Arsi	10	80	668	7
Bale	5	30	118	9
Borena	5	38	646	8
Guji	3	36	683	7
East Shoa	3	42	331	1
East Harerge	13	59	470	18
West Harerge	1	11	146	3
South West Shoa	4	27	352	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>3,414</b>	<b>68</b>

Source: Oromia Regional Government Health Bureau

The health department of the ERCS, in close cooperation with the Amhara Health Bureau and with the regional and zonal branches reported 2,114 cases and 22 deaths from AWD as at 15 August 2007 (as shown in table 5 below). Current statistics obtained from SNNPR Health Bureau show that 96 AWD cases and 4 deaths have been recorded in Hadiya zone. The Zonal Health Bureau has now requested for medical supplies, drugs and manpower.

**Table 5: AWD statistics in Amhara Region (as at 15 August 2007)**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Affected Woredas</b>	<b>Cumulative number of cases</b>	<b>Cumulative number of deaths</b>
Oromia	6	430	7
North Gondar	10	791	15
North Wollo*	2	859	0
Bahir Dar town	1	5	0
South Wollo	1	21	0
West Gojjam	1	2	0
South Gondar	1	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2,114</b>	<b>22</b>

Source: Amhara Regional Government Health Bureau

### **Constraints**

Information sharing on AWD in other regions was found to be a major challenge. To address this, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society is closely coordinating with other humanitarian agencies working on the ground.

**Objective 3: To contribute towards improving the health status and hygiene awareness among the flood affected population in Oromia Region.**

On 3 September 2007, the ERCS organized a one-day orientation for 10 health professionals drawn from local health authorities and humanitarian agencies in South West Shoa and Hadama. The professionals will serve as trainers of trainers at the branch level. During the reporting period, the National Society's health department conducted AWD outbreak assessments in East Hararghe, Bale and Borena/Guji zones (Oromia Region).

The East Hararghe Red Cross branch has provided logistical and technical assistance and 20 volunteers have been given trainings of trainers on identification of AWD cases, sensitizing communities to prevention and control of the disease, oral rehydration therapy, provision of assistance to mild cases and referral of severe cases to CTCs. Similar trainings have also been conducted in Bale and Borena/Guji zones for a total 20 Red Cross volunteers. Each of these two groups of trainees has in turn trained 300 and 400 community volunteers respectively.

A team from the ERCS carried out a field assessment in Afar from 5 to 9 September 2007. The assessment findings indicate that the flood situation is dire. The flooding has caused the destruction of sanitation facilities (latrines) and two health clinics while lack of access to the flood affected population has hindered the local health authority's plans to set up satellite clinics in this area. However, the AWD situation is under control, with assistance from humanitarian agencies. The ERCS is preparing an intermediate intervention in Afar with water and sanitation software component, which is linked to the National Society's longer-term public health, and water and sanitation programme.

**Objective 4: To reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases by providing safe water and adequate sanitation facilities.**

**Progress and challenges**

The recent heavy rains have resulted in flooding in many parts of the country, leading to delays in the planned needs assessment of sanitation facilities. Nonetheless, this activity will take place as soon as the weather conditions permit. The ERCS is developing a plan for collaborating with the WatSan unit of the Federation's Eastern Zone Office in participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) training activities under this objective.

**Coordination and partnerships**

The International Federation's Horn of Africa sub-zone office assigned a team comprising of the programme delegate and finance delegate to provide support to the National Society during the initial stages of the emergency operation. Additional technical support has also been provided through health, WatSan, and reporting and planning units of the Federation's Eastern Africa Zone office. In close collaboration with the Zone WatSan unit, The National Society is currently planning the implementation of its WatSan software component in October 2007. Two additional cholera kits have been received from the Geneva Secretariat.

Meetings – for information sharing – have been convened regularly with Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners in Addis Ababa. The partners include the Danish, Spanish and American Red Cross delegates who are running bilateral operations in Ethiopia, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

**Red Cross Red Crescent Movement - Principles and initiatives**

Promoting the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement within the target areas continues to be addressed alongside the capacity building endeavour within the operation. The principles will also be promoted during provision of trainings and awareness sessions to the volunteers and the affected community respectively.

## Communications- Advocacy and public information

The ERCS has a well established and experienced communication and information department which was mobilized immediately the disaster struck. Photographers/cameramen have been deployed to the field in order to gather material (films and photographs) on the ERCS response; the materials will be used to advocate for support to the National Society via the national and regional media. The ERCS will give particular attention to providing accurate and timely reports and news stories. Related documents will be published on the ERCS and Federation websites.

### How we work

*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the National Society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

**The International Federation's activities are carried out under its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".**

#### **Global Agenda Goals:**

- **Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.**
- **Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.**
- **Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.**
- **Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.**

### Contact information

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