



Seasonal Update

The latest update from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Centre shows that sea surface temperatures (SST) in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean are increasingly below average reaching -0.6° Celsius in December 2012. Although *El Niño* Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are likely to remain neutral through the northern hemisphere spring 2013, close follow up is required over the coming weeks as further decreases in the SST would increase the chance of a *La Niña*-related impact on the upcoming February to June rainy season. The ENSO phenomenon contributes significantly to seasonal climate fluctuations, often with substantial implications for humans and their environment. While an *El Niño* normally leads to normal- to above-normal rains over the eastern Horn of Africa, *La Niña* conditions, which originate in below-normal water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean, generally result in below-normal rainfall.

Meanwhile, the National Meteorological Agency (NMA) has released its forecast for the 2013 *belg* (mid-February to May) rainy season, which indicates these *belg* rains are expected to perform better than 2012, with a likelihood of near-normal onset and cessation of the rains. Overall, the season's performance is expected to be normal to below normal over much of north-eastern Ethiopia; near-normal across central, eastern and southern parts of the country; and below-normal across south-eastern areas. Near- to above-normal rainfall is anticipated in north-western and western parts of the country, which do not normally receive rains in this period. According to NMA, the month of May 2013 should see an improvement in rainfall performance. Note: the *belg* are the major rains for the southern and south-eastern lowlands of Ethiopia and important for the production of short-cycle crops and preparation for planting of long-cycle crops in central highland areas. For more information, contact: FAO-Ethiopia@fao.org and infodrmfss@dppc.gov.et

Relief Food Update

As of 30 January, distribution of seventh round of 2012 relief food, which targeted 2.8 million people countrywide, reached 92 per cent. Dispatch of the "bridging" round (funded with 2012 resources for distribution in January/February 2012), which targets 1.5 million people in Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali and Harari Regions, reached 64 per cent as of the same date, including 87 per cent to areas covered by the Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS), 59 per cent to areas covered by the NGO consortium Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP) and 35 per cent to WFP-covered areas in the Somali Region. A shortage of pulses is delaying relief food dispatch in the WFP-covered areas. Overall, beneficiaries in areas covered by WFP and JEOP will receive a full basket and full ration, while those in areas covered by the DRMFSS will receive a half-ration of vegetable oil and full rations of all other commodities. For more information, contact wfp.addisababa@wfp.org

WASH Update

As the dry season sets in earnest, requests for water trucking are likely to increase in chronically water-insecure parts of the country over the coming weeks. The Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau (DPPB) in Somali has already reported critical water shortages in several parts of the region including in parts of Afder, Nogob, Shabelle, Siti, and Liben zones. Based on assessments conducted in Afder, Nogob and Siti zones to identify water trucking needs, the Regional DPPB, Regional Water Bureau and partners recommend water trucking start immediately in the most-affected *kebeles* that have no alternative coping mechanisms, including Dudun, Garily, Guled-Dhere and Harhoday *kebeles* of Barey *woreda*; Balaiad, Haro Nur, Boley, Galol Ali, Harobaton, Madale, Sara and Yaroto *kebeles* of Kersa Dula *woreda* and five *kebeles* of Guradamole *woreda* (Afder zone); Gurgur and Hariso *kebeles* of Hadagala *woreda* and Biyogara *kebele* of Ayisha *woreda* (Siti zone); Duudumaad, Simane, Danka, Qudamaydal and Hodanwayne *kebeles* of Fik *woreda*; Fokder, Dulgubey, Garada, Dabinka, Hijiji *kebeles* of Kubi *woreda*; Gasangas and Hardagah *kebeles* of Hamero *woreda* and 16 *kebeles* across Selehad, Legehida and Meyu Muluke *woredas* (Nogob zone). Water trucking needs assessments are also planned in Liben and Shabelle zones in the first and second weeks of February respectively.

Above and beyond the growing needs in Somali, more than 39 water trucks were requested nationwide, of which 14 are operational in Afar (three trucks in Elidar, two in Kori and one in Dubti *woredas* of zone 1; one trucks in Bidu and one in Erebtu *woredas* of zone 2; and one truck in Yalo *woreda* of zone 4), Oromia (one truck each in Kumbi *woreda* of East Harerge zone and Dawe Serer *woreda* of Bale zone) and Tigray (one truck each in Edaga Arbi *woreda* of Central, Erob *woreda* of Eastern and Raya Azebo *woreda* of Southern zones) Regions, leaving a gap of over 25 trucks. Meanwhile, rehabilitation of non-functional water schemes and construction of new ones continues. In SNNPR, 35 shallow wells in West Badawacho *woreda* of Hadiya, Humbo *woreda* of Walaita and Ezha, Gumer, and Muhur Akilil *woredas* of Gurage zones are being constructed with UNICEF support. As of last week, 11 of the planned 35 wells had become operational. For more information, contact awesterbeek@unicef.org