

AFAR PASTORALIST DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION QAFAR DACARSITTO DADALIH EGLA

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APDA's Drought Assessment Statement and Appeal:

March 26th, 2006

1. Background to assessment

1.1 The rain

After an average main rain season from July to September in 2005 (rain of this season showed shortcoming in the August rainfall as pointed out by FAO), the December winter rains failed. Now nearing the end of the first month of the short rainy season, there have only been 4 storms in Zone 1 and 4 (affecting parts of Uwa, Awra and Teeru in Zone 4 and the southern kebele of Eli Daar and 2 kebeles in Mille Woreda.) These brief storms do not yet indicate that the short – rains have in fact begun. Thirst that was first registered in February worsens daily.

1.2 Dubte and Eli Daar woreda assessments

Having had no response to government (ETV) – quoted drought information in early March, the DPPB – led meeting on March 16th took the decision to send 3 rapid – assessment teams to drought – affected areas as follows: first team led by UNICEF water section to Zones 2 and 4; a team led by APDA to Dubte and Eli Daar Woredas in Zone 1 and a third team led by Action Contre le Faim to Chefa in Amhara Region and parts where Afar cattle have migrated to.

APDA - led team (Bureau of Health, Agriculture and Livestock Bureau and DPPB) undertook a 7 – day assessment from March 17th to 23rd as follows:

In Eli Daar woreda: Amaad between Manda and Boore, people displaced from the Eritrean border (Daabu) living on the northern outskirts for the town, Su'ula, Esseylu, Abaqa, Doobi, Lafoffli, Goowah, Paradizo, Hullelee,

Dubte woreda: from Sardo as far as 140 kilometers on the Sardo to Afdeera Road and off - road for 30 kilometers to Musle and on to Lubak Daa.

2. Statement of drought condition as found

(Please note: beyond the drought assessment team, information is also taken from APDA's 43 field coordinators meeting from March 23rd to 26th)

2.1 Thirst and household stress in collecting water

Thirst was the foremost evident drought problem in all visited districts, along with household exhaustion and stress incurred in collecting water.

In Eli Daar town, around 100 camels are coming daily from the surrounding countryside as far away as 30 kilometers to collect household water. With only 2

functional pumps in the Eli Daar dry river, people are waiting up to 2 days to fill one jerrican.

In Amaad, northern Eli Daar 13 children died of thirst over the past 7 months according to a local person. Again he claimed 15 goats had died in the district over the past 6 days from tick infestation. Water transport camels are too weak to make the entire 12 hours round – trip journey to fetch water and have to be backed up with a relief – camel part way.

Schools and clinics in the rural areas are fast becoming non-functional due to lack of water. In Guyah 60 kilometers from roadside Sardo, 25 liter jerrican is selling for 10:00.

Two vehicles hired to deliver water in the Guluble Af (74 kilometers from Sardo) and Guyah appear to have a haphazard schedule each car delivering water no more than twice weekly. In Guluble Af, water is rationed to 3 to 4 LITERS per household per delivery – aside from the 100 – household settlement, people are coming from the surrounding areas to try and get water in Guluble Af. Beyond this supply, people walk a 24 – hour round trip to beyond Ta’asuli to collect water. In northern Eli Daar, Boore water again is sold for 2 to 3:00 per jerrican. Merchants bringing water from Su’ula borehole, 35 kilometers south are selling a 13,000 liter load for 500:00 ETB.

2.2 Pasture condition/ animal diseases

Almost all districts visited have dry grazing pasture that is exacerbated by the fact that where pasture is found, water is not available. In most cases, animals are fed from tree/ shrub pods or cut branches. This stress is added while animals are walked vast distances to water and is resulting in extensive animal death in Amaad, Me’edola, Aba’a, Beda, Aminto, Garbori all in Eli Daar wereda and Uduhtum, Ta’asuli, Guluble af, Guyah and Musle of Dubte wereda. The observed prevalent diseases show the same symptoms in all visited kebeles, some of them CCPP, diarrhea, respiratory infection, mange and so on. Beyond the fact that cattle and goats are dying, Afar are describing the status of animal health by saying the camels are too weak to be used as transport animals.

2.3 Household food availability

In all districts, the team found the community dependant on relief grain: milk in the community is all but zero, butter in most communities has not been produced in 2 years, meat is not slaughtered for fear of animal diseases. While wereda officials in Eli Daar described the normal 15 kilograms per household distribution, the reality found was one sack per 2 households. In Guluble Af, the situation found was one sack per 3 households. While no real assessment was made, the team described child malnutrition as ‘evident’ There is no food in the community suiting weaning children. Again, it is clear that the current situation is a continuation of the declining household food security situation evidenced in the 2004/05 drought. APDA’s Gaawane field coordinator reported that 8 women died in the Gaawane district in the first week after childbirth – all with swelling the community relate to anaemia.

2.4 Human health

Several districts through the drought assessment team and through APDA coordinators reported pockets where the recent January/ February measles

vaccination did not reach and there are still active child cases. Remarkable reports came from Dabal kebele in Dubte Woreda where a large range of pastoralists has congregated to graze the cotton residue. There some 20 children have recently died of measles. Again, in Awra, according to APDA coordinators, measles is evident in un-reached kebeles as well as whooping cough. Guyah in north - west Dubte woreda also is still battling measles. Whooping cough, influenza and rubella are still evident in many districts. Contaminated water is causing havoc in areas drinking the last of water sources.

3. APDA's appeal

In view of the above and APDA's experience record, the organization is appealing for resource to assist the pastoral community as follows:

- a) Immediate water tankering to overcome thirst. APDA wishes to target Eli Daar and Dubte thirst areas. The organization needs to hire 8 vehicles daily: 4 in Dubte woreda and 4 in Eli Daar assisting 34,600 people with 3 liters daily.
- b) Resource to utilize health workers in health/ nutrition assessment and treatment
- c) Animal treatment to stop disease spread
- d) Animal feed/ fodder for particular communities/ targeted households in those communities to feed household milking animals (goats/ cattle)
- e) Food for work – construction of ponds/ roads and school – feeding (APDA has some 8,000 odd students – this quarter there was a phenomenal school drop out).

Project proposals and any other additional information regarding the above needs are available on request.

This statement is APDA's. Following the March 27th meeting, APDA will again send out the then government – agreed government statement.