

### Key Issues

- The Fall Armyworm infestation continues to destroy *meher* crops across 233 *woredas* in six regions, and it is spreading at an alarming rate.
- First quarter Therapeutic Feeding Program admissions exceeded HRD projections.
- The number of irregular Ethiopian migrants returning from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has reached 35,000 (of an estimated 750,000 irregular Ethiopians residing in KSA) as the Amnesty period ends this week. Government of Ethiopia is negotiating for an extension to the amnesty period.

Following poor performing spring rains, the number of people receiving humanitarian assistance has increased from 5.6 million to 7.8 million in the first quarter of the year, and is expected to heighten further in the second half of the year. Increased funding is needed urgently, in particular to address immediate requirements for food and nutrition, as well as clean drinking water, much of which is being delivered long distances by truck as regular wells have dried up.

#### Fall Armyworm threaten to destroy up to 2 million hectares of *meher* crops across Ethiopia

The Fall Armyworm infestation continues to destroy *meher* crops across 233 *woredas* in six regions, and it is spreading at an alarming rate. The pest has already affected more than 145,000 hectares of maize cropland, mostly in traditionally surplus producing and densely populated areas. With the current pace, up to 2 million hectares of *meher* cropland are at risk, leading to between 3 to 4 million metric tons of grain loss. The implication of this loss is multi-layered, impacting household food security and national grain reserve as well as potentially impacting grain exports.



The Government, with support from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and other partners, is taking several measures to curb the spread of the infestations, but the need exceeds the ongoing response. Between US\$3.1 and 4.5 million is required to address the crisis for the next six months alone and \$6.2 million for the entire year. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource, the Government of Ethiopia has allocated ETB 45 million to purchase chemicals and more than 100,000 liters of chemical have been distributed to the affected areas. The Ministry noted that the traditional means of control (handpicking of the worms) has brought better results, allowing to clear 43 per cent of the infested area from the pest. \$600,000 was committed by FAO. But given the magnitude of the potential damage it could cause, more needs to be done and urgently. Recently, the Government of Ethiopia urged all stakeholders, including the army, students and teachers as well as the public to contribute in the fight against this threat. The current Fall Armyworm crisis is the first of its kind in the country and the Government and other development partners did not take this into account though they have plans for other kinds of pests.

#### Therapeutic Feeding Program admissions in exceeded HRD projections

According to the Nutrition Cluster, at least 108,989 severely malnourished children under-5 were treated in therapeutic feeding program (TFP) sites across all affected areas between January and April 2017. This exceeds the projected severe acute malnutrition (SAM) caseload for the first quarter of the year (based on an annual projected caseload of 303,822 in the 2017 Humanitarian Requirements Document). Compared to the first quarter intakes from 2011 to 2017, only 2016 presented a higher intake during this period.

Meanwhile, national TFP admissions decreased by 11 per cent, from 27,711 cases in April (88.5 per cent reporting) to 31,066 cases in March (92 per cent reporting). April 2017 admissions remain high and show a significant increase of 125 per cent compared to the same month in 2016. Somali region continues to report the highest SAM rates with 6,795 new admissions in April (83 per cent reporting). Rising admissions are mainly reported in Doolo, Jarar, Shabelle and lower Fafan zones and parts of Koraha zones. *Woredas* most affected include, Danot and Warder of Doolo zone; Babile and Kebribeyah of Fafan zone; Gashamo and Gunagado of Jarar zone; Kebridehar, Shilabo, Dobowayn and Marsin of Koraha zone; Dolo Ado of Liben and Kelafo, Mustehil and Ferfer *woredas* of Shabelle zone and Moyale of Daawa zone.

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