

# **ETHIOPIA**

## **NATIONAL INFORMATION ON DISASTER REDUCTION**

### **REPORT FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION**

**(Kobe-Hyogo, Japan, 18-22 January 2005)**

**Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
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## **Abbreviations**

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
CS-CAFE	Civil Society- Coalition against Famine in Ethiopia
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DPPC	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission
EBCS	Ethiopian Building Code Standard
EFSR	Emergency Food Security Reserve
EFSRA	Emergency Food Security Reserve Administration
EGS	Employment Generation Scheme
EGTE	Ethiopian Grain trade Enterprise
ENCU	Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit
EPSP	Emergency Preparedness Strengthening Program
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning System
EWVG	Early Warning Working Group
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System
FSCB	Food Security Coordination Bureau
ISP	Institutional Support Program
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NCEW	National Committee for Early Warning
NCFS	New Coalition on Food Security
NCMG	National Crisis Management Group
NDPPF	National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund
NPDPM	National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper
RCEW	Committee for Early Warning
RCMG	Crisis Management Group
RDPPC	Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee
RFO	Relief Food Outlet
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
SC	Save The children
SDMT	Strategic Disaster Management Team (of UN in Ethiopia)
SNNPR	Southern Nations Nationality and Peoples Region
SWC	Soil and Water Conservation
UNDP	United Nations development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International development
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment Mapping
WCEW	Committee for Early Warning
WCMG	Woreda Crisis Management Group
WDPPC	Woreda Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee
WFP	World Food Program
ZCEW	Committee for Early Warning
ZCMG	Crisis Management Group
ZDPPC	Zonal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee

## **Background**

Different hazards have been recorded in Ethiopia. There have been area specific crises caused by different kinds of events/hazards at different time and in varying degree and magnitude. Flooding has affected people and their property particularly in the low land areas; there were times when disease epidemics caused serious famine, migratory pest infestation has been a serious problem in parts of the country; earthquake destroyed public property and caused the loss of lives; bush fire occurred and depleted forest and wildlife resources; people have been internally displaced due to conflicts of different nature; and in recent years, HIV/AIDS has reached to the level of disaster.

However, hydro-meteorological hazard, particularly drought has remained the leading cause of disaster and human suffering in Ethiopia in terms of frequency, area coverage and the number of people affected. Although drought is a natural phenomenon that occurs in many countries, it does not necessarily lead to disaster by itself. It usually develops into disaster only in vulnerable societies. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world and therefore vulnerable to shocks. Under the Ethiopian context drought is more or less synonymous with disaster.

The history of drought in Ethiopia goes back to 250 BC and there had been many national and localized droughts even before that of the 1970s for which international support was sought for the first time, which were managed mainly by communities' own coping mechanisms. However, the magnitude, frequency and the effects of the droughts have increased since mid 70s. The area coverage extended from the northern and eastern to almost all parts of the country. According to USAID study (*Planning for the Next Drought: Ethiopia Case Study, USAID, March 2003*), the frequency of nation-wide droughts that cause severe food shortage increased from once in 10 years (in 70s and 80s) to once in about three years now; and between 1970 and 1996 drought and the resultant food shortages have affected millions and killed a significant number of people in Ethiopia.

As a result, the then RRC (now DPPC) was established in 1973 to manage the effects of drought in the country. Since then, the primary focus of disaster management has been to avert drought-induced famine and the main theme of the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management that was ratified in 1993 has been around drought and food insecurity. Thus, this country information therefore should be seen in light with this context.

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- WFP
- USAID/FEWS-NET
- EU
- Different departments within DPPC.

## **1. Political Commitment and Institutional Aspects**

- 1.1. Are there national policy, strategy and legislation addressing disaster risk reduction? If yes, please describe to what extent current national efforts and main priority areas of the policy, and mechanisms to enforce the implementation of the policy and legislation are applied (attach any relevant documentation)**

A National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM), and its detailed Directives have been in place since 1993. The NPDPM defines its objectives and basic principles. It describes the link between preparedness and prevention; sectoral integration; how the early warning information could trigger declaration of disaster; the development of a relief plan; the role of Emergency Food Security Reserve; the role of National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund; and other preparedness and logistic procedures. It also indicates how the disaster management institutions should be structured at different levels and what the duties and responsibilities of each structure would be. Details of the policy implementation procedures, the different management structures and the duties and responsibilities of all stakeholders are also given in the Policy Directives document.

The Policy addresses all phases of disaster (prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation/recovery). It focuses on multi-sectoral approach and involves all relevant ministries.

The main priority areas of the Policy have been saving human lives and their livelihoods; protecting the quality of life in the affected areas from deteriorating on the account of disaster; ensuring best use of natural resources endowment; and overcoming the root causes of vulnerability to disaster through provision of relief in the short-term and promoting sustainable development in the longer-term.

Efforts have been made to implement the Policy and there are success stories in terms of having some of the standing preparedness components in place. Though drought-induced food shortage is still recurring, it has not reached to the scale of famine since the ratification of the Policy and this is a success in relation to the short-term objective.

Currently there is strong political will of the Government to overcome the root causes of food insecurity within 3-5 years period with the support of partners including donors, NGOs and UN systems. A 'New Coalition for food Security' with these partners is formed and strategies are agreed. Strategies like intensive water harvesting, safety net, alternative income generation activities and resettlement of people from vulnerable to fertile locations are some of the main areas of focus aimed to reduce disaster risk in sustainable manner. Social mobilization is also a key component to move New Coalition on Food Security (NCFS).

However, implementation of the NPDPM in its full sense, particularly in addressing the root causes of food shortage still remains a key challenge. In spite of the intensive familiarization of the policy and the associated training programs, some of the policy components are not yet fully put into practice. Out of the many preparedness modalities/strategies stated in the Policy Directives, the establishment of seed reserve, the livestock preservation strategy, the initiation of Relief Plan at woreda<sup>1</sup> level and the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Woreda' is equivalent to 'district'

allocation of resources based on Relief Plan as well as the declaration of disaster using decentralized EWS information are examples of strategies that are not adequately realized.

The main reason for this, in addition to the chronic capacity problem that exists mainly at woreda level, is lack of legislation to enforce the implementation of the Policy. Major stakeholders particularly key line departments do not seem to accept the main policy strategy - the Employment Generation Scheme (a mechanism to link relief and development) as part of their mandates. The link between responsibility, authority and accountability is not clearly understood and observed, which became an impediment to the policy implementation.

The Government, being committed to ensure disaster risk reduction measures, is well aware that the Policy requires revision taking into account the lessons learnt during the past implementation period. Thus, to re-visit and filling missing gaps in the existing Policy and strategies is one of the priorities of the Government.

**1.2. *Is there a national body for multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration in disaster risk reduction, which includes ministries in charge of water resource management, agricultural/land use and planning, health, environment, education, development planning and finance? If yes, please give detailed information (name, structure and function). Attach any relevant documentation to indicate source of information.***

At the apex of the disaster management structure is the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC). This Committee is the highest decision-making body ensuring the coordination of all matters regarding disaster prevention and management, using Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) as its Secretariat. The composition of the National Committee as described in the Policy document includes the Prime Minister (chair) (currently chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister), Ministers of Agriculture, Finance, Health, Defense, Planning and Economic Development, External Economic Cooperation, Chairpersons of Regional Councils and the DPPC (Secretariat). However, situations have changed since 1993. Government structures have been changed, including names and mandates of some of the member agencies. In the recent proclamation (No. 383/2004) to amend the DPPC establishment, it is stated that "Members of the Committee including the chairperson shall be designated by the Government, and their numbers shall be determined as necessary". It is hoped that the revision of the policy document will come with clear number and names of the National Committee members.

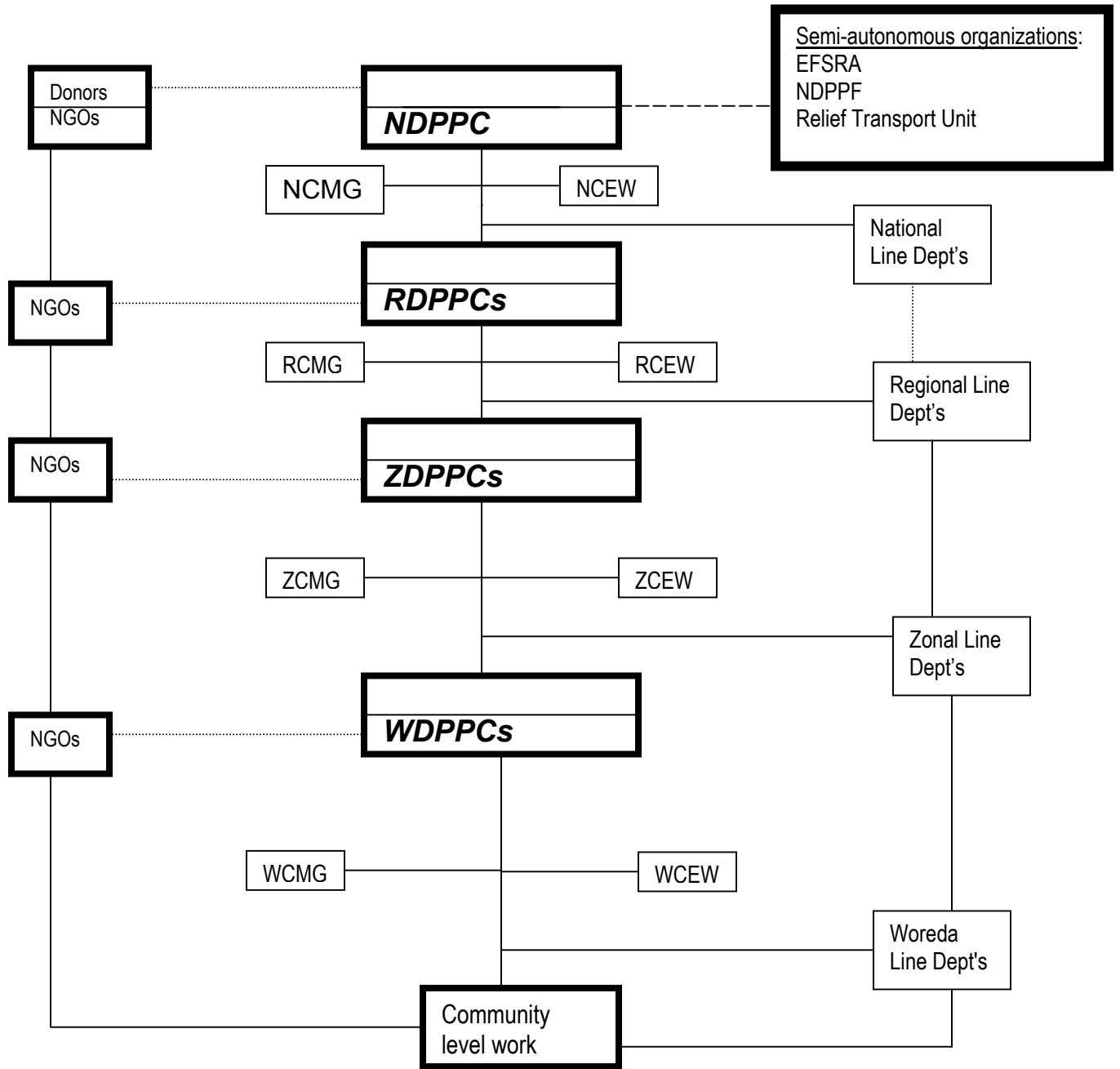
While the National Committee issues policy directions and oversees the overall disaster management activities, the coordination of all matters pertaining to disaster management rests on the Secretariat, the DPPC. Its functions, as described in the Policy Directives, include coordination of overall food delivery and preparation of action plan; prescribing and notifying guidelines for different forms of interventions; soliciting, securing and maintaining adequate resources and pre-positioning of the same as necessary; facilitating and providing logistics support to all actors engaged in disaster management; appraising relief plans; reviewing activities of NGOs and determining priority areas; consulting with line departments and reviewing measures; and preparing and submitting periodic reports on the status of the policy implementation and the impact of the interventions to the National Committee and other stakeholders. The Coordinating

body discharges its responsibilities through the Crisis Management Groups, the different sectoral task forces and Early Warning Working Group (EWWG).

Recently, the coordination role of DPPC regarding employment generation scheme is reassigned to a newly structured 'Food Security Coordination Bureau' (FSCB). The Federal DPPC will coordinate the emergency assistance of acutely affected population while the FSCB will be responsible for implementing the "safety net" programs in chronically food insecure areas. DPPC and FSCB will continue as separate bodies at federal level, but it is envisaged that the Commission's functions and the existing Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureaus will be combined with those of the Food Security Coordination Bureaus at the regional and woreda levels.

The disaster management structure that has been in place so far can be presented schematically as follows. It should be noted, however, that this will be modified with the envisaged Policy revision in the near future.

**Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Disaster Management Structures in Ethiopia**



- 1.3. Are there sectoral plans or initiatives that incorporate risk reduction concepts into each respective development area (such as water resource management, poverty alleviation, climate change adoption, education and development planning)? If yes, please indicate some examples and challenges/limitations encountered. If no, does your government have any plans for integrating disaster risk reduction into development sectors? If no, please also specify the major difficulties.**

The National Policy for Disaster Prevention and Management clearly stipulates the inter-sectoral integration approach of disaster risk reduction. Statements in the Policy paper like "...Line departments will dovetail relief projects into their long-term plans and bring congruence of approach, strategy and techniques"; "As part of the long-term development effort, appropriate prevention plans and programs shall be devised for disaster prone areas in order to eliminate the root causes of their vulnerability"; and sectoral line departments "Incorporate prevention and preparedness aspects within their normal activities and scrutinize development plans and relief programs to ensure that these aspects are built into them in so far as they relate to disaster prone areas" indicate the political will of the government to integrate risk reduction concepts into development programs.

Efforts have been made towards these ends. During emergency, sectoral task forces (Agricultural Task Force, Food aid Task Force, Water and Sanitation Task Force, Health and Nutrition Task Force, and Logistics Task Force) have contributed to avert lives and livelihoods. Linkage between sectoral development and disaster risk reduction measures through implementing EGS and food/cash-for-work has shown some successes.

Some of the sectoral policies like Agricultural Policy, Health Policy, Environmental Policy, Water Resources Policy, etc. have elements of disaster risk reduction. Since the water sector is a key issue in disaster reduction, the Water Resources Policy can be specifically mentioned as an example. The National Water Resources Management Policy (NWRMP)<sup>2</sup> was ratified in July 2000 and outlines the framework for defining the basis for more specific strategies and policies. It sets out proper application of policy/strategies, water resources development, management and utilization, promotion of private sector participation, and defines the rights and obligations of the actors in water resource development endeavors. The strategies envisaged in the Policy are important for disaster reduction. Water harvesting, the expansion of potable water supply to urban and rural areas and expanding irrigation schemes are some of the key components of NWRMP. Irrigation and water harvesting reduces the dependency on rain fed agriculture. Improvement in potable water reduces the risk of health hazards.

- 1.4. Is disaster risk reduction incorporated into your national plan for the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), National Adoption Plans of Action, National Environmental Action Plans and WSSD (World Summit on Sustainable Development) Johannesburg Plan of Implementation? If yes to any of these, who are the main contacts for these initiatives?**

As indicated in 1.3 above there is a policy framework to incorporate disaster risk reduction into sectoral plans. The sectoral plans constitute the national development plan, which takes the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into account. The revised mandate of the FSCB is meant to

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<sup>2</sup> Proclamation No.41/93 empowered regional governments to develop their own policies regarding the development and utilization of water resources within the framework of NWRMP.

mainstream disaster risk reduction activities into the national development programs. The recent initiative on forming a “New Coalition for Food Security” that involves other partners is a fresh beginning for incorporating risk reduction concepts into national development programs under the country context.

The linkage between the food security program and the PRSP can be established through looking into the objectives of the New Food Security Coalition and the direction of the PRSP.

The following four objectives of the New Food Security Coalition would indicate how drought-induced disaster risk reduction is integrated into national development plan:

2. Increasing availability of food by increasing food crops and livestock production/productivity through improving moisture conservation and utilization; promotion of soil conservation, crop diversification/intensification/specialization measures; improving feed and water availability; and strengthening extension services for crop and livestock production.
3. Increasing access to food by improving agriculture and non-agriculture incomes through enhancing safety net program; promotion of household income diversification; enhancing market effectiveness; improving knowledge, attitude, and skill/practices; and strengthening appropriate micro-finance institutions.
4. Promoting preventive and curative health care through improving preventive and curative health services
5. Providing access to land through resettlement program

On the other hand, the main trusts of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper are:

- Concentration on agriculture as it is source of growth of other sectors of the economy
- Strengthening private sector growth especially in industry, to promote off-farm employment
- Rapid export growth, including high value agricultural products and export oriented manufacturing sectors
- Investment in education and enhanced efforts to build capacity
- Deepening decentralization to shift decision-making closer to grassroots, to improve accountability, responsiveness and service delivery
- Improvement in governance to empower the poor
- Strong focus on agricultural research, water harvesting, and small-scale irrigation
- Increased water resource utilization to ensure food security

It is easy to observe the synergy between poverty reduction strategy (which is basically a national development plan) and the food security strategy (which is primarily a drought-induced disaster risk reduction plan). Therefore, in short disaster reduction has become an integral part of the national development plan.

**1.5. Does your country have building codes of practice and standards in place, which takes into account seismic risk? If yes, since when? Which are the main difficulties in keeping with the compliances of the codes?**

Building codes of practices and standards that takes into account earthquake have been developed by the Ministry of Works and Urban Development in 1995. The Code on

seismic risks is known as EBCS-8 (Ethiopian Building Code of Standard and Design for Structures for Earthquake Resistance). However, this has not been yet made public and currently construction permission, particularly for less than five floors, does not require to have structural design.

**1.6. Do you have an annual budget for disaster risk reduction? If yes, is this commitment represented as part of the national budget or project based? Through which institution/s? If no, what other financing mechanisms for risk reduction initiatives are available?**

There is annual Government budget allocated to institutions that are mandated to coordinate disaster risk reduction. For example for federal level coordination an annual average of 375 (the last five years average) million Birr - equivalent to USD 43.6 million-budget has been allocated for the DPPC alone. Regional States also have budgetary allocations for the coordination of disaster management/ reduction activities. The Government also allocate annual budget to cover the custom duty of commodities that are imported by NGOs and other partners for disaster reduction purposes. Depending on the situation of each year, Government allocates additional budget as necessary. However, no fixed percentage of the national budget as such is set for disaster risk reduction.

In addition to the annual Government budget allocation, there are contingency financial and material resources that could be drawn down on loan basis. The Emergency Food Security Reserve, which currently maintains some 407,000MT of cereals and the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund with a target of USD 55 million are the two main sources of readily available food and financial sources respectively. Though not yet fully functional, the National Non-Food Emergency Contingency Stock has been housed within EFSRA to provide immediate assistance in case of fast-onset disasters.

During emergency, the bulk of financial and material resources come from the international donor community and they are channeled through the UN systems, NGOs and the DPPC. While humanitarian aid (except the non-food component) is more or less adequately committed for disaster response, development aid to address the root causes of vulnerability hardly exists and hence disaster prevention measures are poorly resourced.

**1.7. Are the private sector, civil society, NGOs, academia and media participating in disaster risk reduction efforts? If yes, how? Indicate existing coordination or joint programming between government and civil society efforts in disaster risk reduction, or major difficulties and constraints for this to be effective.**

NGOs (members of wider civil society group) are involved in disaster risk reduction efforts. They work at grass root levels and implement localized projects with different approaches. Out of the NGOs that have operational agreement with DPPC, only around 350 are actively engaged and yet not all are engaged in disaster risk reduction activities. Many of them contribute to the effort of saving lives and some provide support in protecting livelihoods. Some NGOs undertake food security, safety net, income generation, saving and credit, and food/cash for work programs to reduce vulnerability. Some have developed capacity in water resources and are also good in SWC works, which contribute to the reduction of effects of drought. Nonetheless NGOs have limited resources and operate in limited geographic areas and sectors of their organizational

competence. Their engagement is far from adequate in view of the magnitude of the problem that needs to be addressed. Only a few NGOs have capacity to respond and to serve relatively wider area and population.

The engagement of the private sector and civil society (outside of the NGOs) has been very limited so far. The private sector (through the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and other initiatives) supported emergency responses of national scale mainly when country-wide resources mobilization campaigns were launched. Transport companies tirelessly delivered relief commodities to the needy population by collaborating with National Transport Coordination Committee. Only a handful individual business men and companies have shown concern in terms of long-term engagement in disaster risk reduction works. Though the contribution of citizens in Ethiopia and at the Diaspora has been always significant, the civil society is largely weak and its contribution has been limited so far. However, the 2003 food shortage that affected over 13 million people has inspired individual citizens to contribute to disaster risk reduction through forming/strengthening vibrant civil societies. Currently formal and informal groups are discussing and getting organized around this theme. Few professional associations like 'Economic Association' and think-thank groups like 'Forum for Social Studies' are now engaged in public dialogue around disaster reduction and also carry out researches.

Similarly the academia has remained largely uninvolved except the contribution of few individuals from higher learning institutions. A very few number of university researchers showed interest and engaged in sponsored researches that are related to disaster and food security/insecurity issues. Recently there is an attempt to involve higher learning institutions in disaster management training. The Joint DPPC and SCF/UK-Canada 'Institutional Support Program' has initiated to institutionalize disaster management training.

The role of the media in disaster management is clearly stipulated in the Directives for Disaster Prevention and Management, although not fully realized. The media regularly informs the public about disasters in a form of news. There are times when the media supported disaster risk reduction efforts, but regular programs do not exist. The media gives good coverage on HIV/AIDS and tries to create awareness among the public, but comprehensive disaster risk reduction program is expected to be in place.

## **2. Risk Identification**

**2.1. *Has your country carried out hazard mapping assessment? If yes, please describe for which hazards, when they were updated and for what geographical scale they exist. Do they include characteristics, impacts, historical data, multi-hazards approach? Which institutions are using the results of the hazards assessment? To whom are they available? (attach any relevant documentation)***

As indicated earlier, the major hazard that has been causing disaster is drought. Drought prone areas are identified at national level using long-term meteorological data. Though almost the whole country in general is drought prone, drought hazard is more frequent with more negative impact in northern and eastern part of the country as well as in parts of the Rift Valley lowlands than in other parts (see the attached drought prone map). While the drought prone areas are identified and delineated on the multi-annual historical data and impacts observed, the Early Warning System undertakes hazard assessments periodically and yearly through monitoring different social, economic, cultural and physical indicators. The information is used more by humanitarian partners

and to certain extent by development and research agencies. WFP is also using it for developing the multi-hazard approach vulnerability mapping.

Flood hazard assessment had been carried out by DPPC and based on the assessment, areas where flood hazard is frequent and has impact on people and their livelihoods are identified at national level through analyzing historical records (see attached map on flood prone areas). The information is documented and in principle is available for all interested bodies.

In addition to these national level hazard mappings, local attempts have been made by some NGOs in their operational areas as part of their preparedness plans – usually for drought hazard. Some include impact and historical data and some of them share the information to other agencies usually on request.

**2.2. Have your country carried out vulnerability and capacity assessments? If yes, please describe the methods used and major social, economic, physical, environmental, political and cultural factors considered in the assessment(s). Who are the main contacts of these assessments (or attach any relevant documentation or contact information)**

Vulnerability assessments to food insecurity have been carried out in different parts of the country. Based on these different assessments 242 districts have been currently identified as most vulnerable and chronically food insecure. These woredas are identified using series of Early Warning System reports, and history of food aid. The Food Security Coordination Bureau is the focal and contact point for this information (see attached contact address)

The multi-agency Early Warning Working Group has significantly contributed to the development of vulnerability map, though its focus is limited to food insecurity related hazards. WFP, which is a member of the EWWG also provides input through its Vulnerability Assessment Mapping (VAM) exercise. The Food insecure areas at national level are identified using crop and livestock production data, drought risk and moisture information, market prices, health and other information. The vulnerability map initially developed in 1999 and revised in 2003, is being verified by the Early Warning Working Group.

With the intention of establishing baseline information to address the root causes of food insecurity, the ongoing DPPC and USAID Emergency Preparedness Strengthening Program (EPSP) have already analyzed the vulnerability of 16 districts in four regions. This is a research undertaken in collaboration with concerned regions that will take the responsibility of updating the information in the future.

In addition, multi-agency assessment teams make annual vulnerability assessments to determine the food need of the country. The teams make assessments using agreed methodology and PRA techniques with pre-designed checklists. Various factors including market, production, meteorological, social, physical and economic indicators as well as coping mechanisms of the people are monitored. The information is used to make annual appeals for the country.

Regarding capacity assessment various isolated attempts have been made. Recently the World Bank has undertaken capacity assessment of 'organizational associations of citizens' with the aim of capacity building and strengthen the participation of citizens.

**2.3. Does your country have any mechanisms for risk monitoring and risk mapping? If yes, who is responsible?**

N/A

**2.4. Is there a systematic socio-economic and environmental impact and loss analysis in your country after each major disaster? If yes, are the results available?**

N/A

**2.5. Are there early warning systems in place? If yes, for what hazards and for what geographical scope. Do you have any example when the system was activated lately? Which are the main institutions involved? Please indicate any relevant lessons-learnt from the use and public reaction to early warnings issued.**

The National Early Warning System (EWS) has been in place in Ethiopia since 1976. It is supported by a National Committee for Early Warning (NCEW) chaired by the Commissioner of the DPPC. Members of National Committee as stipulated in the 'Directives for Disaster Prevention and Management' document include senior staff member of Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Central Statistical Authority, Ethiopian Mapping Authority, National Meteorological Services Agency, Ethiopian Nutrition Institute, and the Head of the Early Warning Department of the DPPC. However, since Government structure has revised afterwards, the names of some of the agencies have changed. These changes will be officially incorporated in the documents when the policy documents are revised. Parallel early warning committees are established at regional, zonal and woreda levels and are collecting information and data on different indicators including crop, livestock, cash, market, social, demography, nutrition, health, and stress indicators and coping strategies.

The EWS "is a program established to monitor and warn the threat of disasters ahead of time to trigger timely, appropriate, and preventive measures". Despite this working definition of the EWS, the primary purpose and focus of the National Early Warning System is to monitor causal factors of food insecurity. Thus it has been monitoring the occurrence of drought hazards and other factors like rainfall, pest, and the out break of human and livestock diseases that negatively affect the availability of and access to food. Mechanisms for monitoring and warning the threat of disasters induced by flood, conflict, etc. have yet not been developed.

The National Early Warning System has tried to use different approaches and mechanisms to refine its information and has built up credibility. Key to this is the establishment of Early Warning Working Group in 1996 with the over all management coordinating early warning activities in the country. Its members are drawn from different relevant government agencies, donors, UN systems and NGOs. The technical contribution of the Group is exemplary, and the effective and efficient responses would have not been achieved without the success and transparency of the EWWG.

Though decisions are taken on the results of the National Early Warning System, there are also complementary warning systems that collect and analyze early warning information. The Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) of the USAID and the Vulnerability Assessment Mapping of WFP provide information on food situation in the

country. NGOs like CARE, World Vision, CRS and SC-UK collect information mainly within their operational areas and some even support regional EWS. With support from few NGOs, there is initiative to strengthen the EWS of the pastoral communities. The engagement of various agencies with different methodologies resulted in generating different information. In order ensure compatibility of information, the EWWG is providing technical support in harmonizing information and data collection methodologies at least at the federal level.

Due to the recurrence of drought-induced food shortage in the country, the system has increasingly become effective and efficient. It has successfully predicted and issued warning reports on major food crisis in the past decades, and similarly identified the scale of the recent unprecedented 2002/03 large scale emergency in which over 13 million people were affected. This year too, it is through the system that the current 7 million affected people have been identified and are being assisted.

The lesson learnt so far is the importance of gaining credibility among the public and the donor community. The system has involved all stakeholders (the government at all levels, UN bodies, donors and NGOs) in multi-agency assessment teams to verify the information gathered through the system and this has created confidence and transparency at federal level among the donor community, as reflected in the 2003 exceptional response to the emergency appeal that prevented famine.

However, there are always different opinions on the number of people identified to be at risk. In many cases districts complain that the figures are dawn played, though this view is challenged by experts running the system on account of lack of clarity (at district level) on the methodology applied and the target population (only acutely food insecure) considered. In spite of this argument, beneficiary figures have been always contested at different levels and by agencies working at grassroots level. The lack of baseline data to serve as benchmark for early warning information; poor understanding of the local economy to detect localized problems; lack of coordination in information collection except at the Federal level; poor infrastructure and communication system for timely information flow; and inadequate institutional capacity to analyze information at woreda level constitute its weaknesses. Hence, there is always different information between woreda and federal as well as among other agencies regarding number of affected population.

### **3. Knowledge Management**

**3.1. Does your country have disaster risk information management systems (governmental and/or non-governmental)? If yes, what kind of information on disaster reduction is available? How is it collected, how is the information disseminated and who are the main users? (Indicate relevant sources of information, if applicable)**

Sectoral ministries and agencies have their own information management systems. Health, Agriculture and Water Resource Ministries, Meteorological Service Agency, the Addis Ababa University Geo-observatory and others manage information related to their specific mandates, but have relevance to disaster risk reduction. However, a central system that manages all disaster risk reduction information was lacking. To overcome this shortcoming, an Information Management Center project supported by WFP USAID and UN/OCHA, is recently established in the DPPC to provide timely, reliable and

adequate information for humanitarian interventions. The information to be managed in the Center include port status, shipment and logistics, pledges and delivery of aid by donors, number of people in need of food aid, status of EFSR stock, NGOs annual plan of operation, and other sector related information. The information is collected from different agencies, mainly from EWS, EFSRA, WFP, donors, Government offices and NGOs and then analyzed and disseminated to relevant partners including UN specialized bodies, Donors, NGOs, researchers and also the media.

The project intends to “provide ‘one-stop-shopping’ information services by establishing an Information and Documentation Center (Walk-in Center) where humanitarian agencies and individuals can access information freely. Information is also disseminated through different media including e-mails, web sites, diskettes, hard copies, etc. whichever appropriate to the users”. Currently the project is developing prototype data applications for critical humanitarian data including contact database, project information, network, humanitarian resource tracking, affected population tracking and humanitarian data dictionary.’

In addition to Government agencies and the DPPC managed Information Center, different humanitarian and development agencies gather and maintain various pieces of information primarily for their own uses. WFP has a database particularly on port and shipment status, logistics, and food pledges and delivery. UNOCHA also has database useful for disaster management that are documented from secondary sources and from primary data of field assessment reports. CRDA has also database that include NGOs’ profile, consultant database and other relevant information, which is also posted on its website.

**3.2. Are the academic and research communities in the country linked to national or local institutions dealing with disaster reduction? If yes, please describe the mechanisms for information sharing and indicate any example of usefulness and effectiveness. Which are the main research and academic institutions dealing with disaster reduction related issues (please list, if available, and indicate how their research work is related to the country’s disaster risk reduction needs.)**

N/A

**3.3. Are there educational programs related to disaster risk reduction in your public school system? If yes, for what age-range? Do you have any education material developed to support the teachers in this area? (Please attach any relevant documentation)**

N/A

**3.4. Are there any training programs available? If yes, please list (if available indicate scope and target audiences of the courses). Do you have any indication on how these courses have been useful to change any practices at local or national scale?**

Discussions and arrangements are underway to institutionalize disaster risk management training.

Though there is no institutionalized training program currently, disaster management related trainings are provided periodically by different agencies including DPPC, CRDA and other NGOs. The content of the trainings include:

- Concepts and management of disaster
- Targeting of people at risk
- Early warning

- Planning and implementation of EGS projects that are implemented during emergency to promote development through relief resources
- Advocacy
- Project cycle management

These courses are generally found to be useful. For example targeting of food aid has been a major problem in many parts of the country. The Government, in collaboration with donor and NGO partners, developed ‘Targeting Guidelines’. The familiarization of the Guidelines and the associated training have resulted in significant improvement in identifying eligible beneficiaries in many parts of the country. Another example is the improvement in the planning and implementation of employment generation schemes. Relevant line departments at woreda level are expected to prepare labor intensive development projects that would be implemented using emergency food resources in order to reduce future vulnerability. As a result of training on EGS project planning and implementation, many line department staffs in many of the woredas are now capable planning and implementing such schemes. However, staff turnover has affected the impact of the training to certain extent.

**3.5. *What kind of traditional indigenous knowledge and wisdom is used in disaster-related practices or training programs on disaster risk reduction in your country?***

Though many of them are not documented properly, NGOs and some literatures indicate the existence of various traditional and indigenous knowledge and wisdom that are used in disaster-related practices. The following are only few examples that can be cited:

- Some pastoralists have drought coping mechanisms to preserve the most essential animals by eliminating non-essential stocks and thereby reducing the pressure on scarce water and pasture resources
- In areas where there is potential for production farmers keep part of their food produce stock for bad years
- Traditional means of storage pest control is widely applied through out the rural farming community
- Integrated pest management that focuses on non-chemical fertilizers and pesticides is practiced
- Traditional association known as ‘Idir’<sup>3</sup> is currently used to enhance development activities in some areas
- Use various traditional indicators to predict the condition of rainfall and some of these are used to complement early warning information.

**3.6. *Do you have any national public awareness programs or campaigns on disaster risk reduction? If available, who are the main players for raising public awareness? How are the mass media and schools involved? Who are the targeted groups and how do you evaluate the programs?***

N/A

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<sup>3</sup> Idir is a traditional association of community to provide financial support and funeral services during death of family members

#### **4. Risk Management Application/Instruments**

- 4.1. Are there any good examples of linking environmental management and risk reduction practices in your country** (key areas of environmental management may include coastal zone, wetland and watershed management, reforestation and agricultural practices, amongst others)? If yes, please indicate in what areas. (Attach any relevant documentation or references)

It is well recognized that environmental and ecological crises have contributed to food insecurity and worsened the poverty situation of the population. To curtail this problem, the 1997 environmental policy encompasses several objectives, which preserve ecological processes and biodiversity, ensure the sustainable and renewable usage of natural resources and check processes that escalate pollution. The policy also seeks to develop and apply new technologies and techniques that are environment-friendly and renewable, and improve environmental quality of life in human settlements. Thus, the Environmental Policy is consciously design to meet the purpose of disaster risk reduction and all humanitarian and development measures are planned to protect and rehabilitate the environment.

Among the 11 priority works proposed for EGS interventions (listed in the Directives for Disaster Prevention and Management), environmental protection and improvement; prevention of land degradation; improvement in land capabilities; and improvement of moisture retention are the top four priorities. Thus many projects of NGOs, the Government and WFP have components that deal with natural resources management and environmental protection. Watershed management focusing on soil and water conservation activities has become an integral part of disaster prevention activities. The food for work projects undertaken in collaboration with WFP and NGOs have shown valuable results in this respect.

Afforestation programs, gully treatment works, area enclosure, hillside and farm land terracing, introduction of integrated pest management as alternative to chemical use, the current initiative of environmentally friendly organic farming and vertisol management to overcome the problem of water logging are examples of linking environmental management and risk reduction practices.

- 4.2. Are financial instruments utilized in your country as a measure to reduce the impact of disasters** (e.g. insurance/reinsurance, calamity funds, catastrophe bonds, micro-credit finance, community funds, etc.)?

Within the framework of the NPDPM, a National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund (NDPPF) that provides resources for carrying out relief measures has been established as a kind of emergency fund since the past few years. Its target is to maintain a cash reserve of USD55 million to be built up through contribution from national budget and donations. The minimum amount set for the Fund is USD16 million. The Fund is owned at federal level and is managed by a National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund Administration (NDPPFA). The Fund, which is managed by the over all guidance of a Board of Directors and with technical involvement of major donors, intends to provide readily available financial resources for agencies involved in disaster reduction in a form of loan.

The NDPPFA is relatively new and young institution and has not yet managed to reach even the minimum amount. However, it has become operational and supported relief measures in three instances in 2003. When the Fund meets its target size, it is hoped to

contribute to the improvement of relief measures through provision of loan until agencies' financial pledges arrive.

Micro-finance institutes are providing credit to small producers to create assets and reduce their vulnerability to disaster. Most of the micro-credit services are provided by institutions supported by NGOs and donors.

Insurance schemes are available in urban areas. Although they are not necessarily measures to reduce the impact of conventional disasters, they are designed to avoid risks associated with isolated accidents.

**4.3. Please identify specific examples of technical measures or programs on disaster risk reduction that have been carried out in your country**

Since disaster in Ethiopia is mainly related to food insecurity, disaster risk reduction program is very closely linked with poverty reduction measures. Thus, disaster reduction programs are designed to address the causes of poverty, which in turn is the underlying cause of vulnerability to disaster. In this respect development programs, particularly those designed to realize the food security strategy, are the core programs for disaster risk reduction. Programs to increase crop and livestock production and productivity of vulnerable population through moisture retention, soil and water conservation (SWC), water harvesting and pasture development activities and improvement of extension services; programs that improve the access of poor people to food in chronically food insecure areas through implementing diversified income generating and cash based safety net, provision of credit and skill training; programs that improve health and nutrition including water and sanitation, nutrition education, and preventive health activities; and resettlement program to provide access to land to the land less and/or to those who are settled in agriculturally marginal areas are all consciously designed to reduce disaster risk.

In line with physical and biological measures of SWC (check dam, soil and stone bund, cut-off drain and artificial water ways, farm and hillside terracing, etc, ) that are practiced under the watershed management through out the country have minimized soil erosion, protected gully formation, prevented flash flood, and supported crop and pasture production. Area enclosure measures particularly in northern part of the country contributed to environmental rehabilitation and helped the regeneration of indigenous plant genetic species and conservation of wild life. Most of these activities are done mainly through EGS, which is a mechanism to link relief and development and considered as one of the modalities for vulnerability reduction.

Though the overall impact has not yet been evaluate and established, the promotion of small-scale irrigation and surface water harvesting through pond construction as disaster risk reduction measures gave clear indication that the country has the opportunity to break the vicious cycle of food crisis by overcoming the dependency on rain fed agriculture.

## **5. Preparedness and Contingency Planning**

- 5.1. Do you have disaster contingency plans in place? Are they prepared for both national and community levels? If yes, please describe their main components, who is responsible for activating the plan(s)? Are the plan(s) updated on annual basis? Have you ever used the contingency plan(s) that was or were developed? If yes, what was the result?**

. The most common practice in the past had been to prepare appeal document to mobilize resources immediately after reliable early warning information is received. This is so because adequate in-country resources are not available and the bulk of assistance comes from outside. While the resource mobilization process continues, an “Emergency Plan” is prepared to guide emergency responses.

In recent years, particularly since 2002, country-wide contingency plans have been prepared. Contingency planning is found to be an effective and useful tool for improving emergency response in Ethiopia. Especially in 2002 and 2003, national level contingency planning has facilitated early and more comprehensive action by the Government, donors, UN agencies and NGOs. Also in 2003/04 contingency scenario and resource planning at national level has been worked out. Most probable and worst case scenarios are developed; regional food security outlook was analyzed; food requirements are estimated; non-food requirements (for water sanitation, health, agriculture, livestock) are calculated; and response strategies and main issues are discussed.

Currently two contingency planning that would involve food and non-food sectors, consider the effects of food crises like increased incidence of diseases, and that would consider mitigation and recovery interventions to ensure the continued development of a more robust emergency response system is in process.

Some agencies working in Ethiopia have contingency plans for their own operations. For example Oxfam international has a drafted contingency plan for humanitarian operation in Ethiopia. There are also contingency plans of agencies for specific areas like the contingency plan for Somali Region that was initiated by a multi-agency team working in the Region and supported by UNDP in 1997.

Components of the contingency plans slightly differ, but the principles are similar. Looking into the contents of the Somali Region Contingency Plan for example, it discusses scenarios and assumptions for activating the plan. It describes the over all policy objectives (priorities and goals). It deals in length with sector objectives, strategic options, activities and resources. Under this main body water, relief food, health and nutrition, livestock, agro-pastoralists, refuges, logistics, management and coordination and capacity are addressed. For each of the above sectors situation analysis of the sector, objective of the sectoral contingency plan, strategic options, activities and tasks (also defining the responsible agencies and time frame) and resources required for the identified tasks of the sector are discussed. Moreover, the contingency plan also deals with concerns and possible solutions, monitoring and follow-up, existing agencies/structures in the region and their possible roles, standby resources that could be accessed. It also deals with early warning indicators that signal imminent disaster.

The responsibility for activating the plan rests on the Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau of that time. Information is not available (for the purpose of this report) whether this contingency plan is being updated or not.

In terms of policy framework there is emphasis to develop contingency plans. For example the Directive for Disaster Prevention and Management envisages the development of Contingency Agricultural Plan to alert farmers and extension machinery when dry spells are anticipated. The plan is expected to include provision of supplementary critical watering to crops; crash exploitation of ground water to save promising crops; use of drought resistant and/or short maturing crop varieties; replanting crops; preserving all precipitation on the farm; and adoption of moisture conservation practices to reduce evapo-transpiration and sustain crops. Of course these activities are normal farm management practices, but the contingency plan should be seen in terms of higher scale of operation. It is to expand the activities beyond the regular budgetary limit and act "abnormally" even diverting resources from other regular works. However little, if any, effort has been done so far in this regard in a systematic manner. Under their regular programs the agricultural offices have attempted to take some of these activities. But the measures have not been consciously and seriously planned and implemented as mitigation measures and to the required extent along the policy direction.

**5.2. *Has your government established emergency funds for disaster response and are there national or community storage facilities for emergency relief items – mainly food, medicine, tents/shelters? If yes, please provide some details.***

As described under 'Risk Management/Applications/Instruments' Section above (4.2), the 'National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund' has been established, though it has not reached its target size. Procedures and mechanisms for accessing and utilizing cash from the Fund have been agreed upon.

The DPPC has been given the responsibility of establishing decentralized storage and distribution facilities and appropriate logistics support for handling relief commodities. To this effect DPPC has developed detailed logistics master plan or 'Relief Transport and Logistics Guidelines' since December 2002. The Policy on Disaster Preparedness and Management also envisages the establishment of central and secondary warehouses. The community level storage facilities known as Relief-Food Outlets (RFOs) are being established so that affected population receive assistance within their vicinity.

The Government owned storage capacity (owned by EFSRA, EGTE and DPPC) throughout the country is around 1.7 million MT. Primary warehouses are placed in seven strategic locations and have 423,500MT capacity. However, the EGTE stores are not usually used for emergency commodities. At regional states level the total storage capacity is nearly 1.3 million MT. Thus, generally there is adequate primary and secondary storage capacity in the country.

On the other hand, due to the scale and magnitude of operation as well as the large geographic coverage of the recurring disaster, the number of storage facilities or RFOs so far built is negligible. Moreover, most of the drought prone areas are off the main roads and are hardly accessible. As a result the majority of the beneficiaries are still traveling long distances to collect their food rations. To establish community level storage capacity, it requires massive resources, which the country cannot afford.

Therefore during emergencies, it is a common practice to use schools and other public facilities for storing food as necessary.

Since the country has become land locked, the port off-take rate has been dependant on the efficiency of the port owners. However, transportation of relief food from ports to the primary warehouses has not caused a major problem so far although port congestions have been reported periodically. The country's total capacity for cargo uplift from the port to the primary warehouses is estimated at 3 million MT per year, while the capacity for secondary transport (from primary to secondary warehouses) is 1.45 million MT.

The DPPC has also institutionalized a Strategic Relief Fleet that provides transport services in areas that are not accessible by long-haul trucks. In addition to short-haul trucks the logistics plan is to mobilize pack animals to transport relief commodities.

**5.3. *Who is responsible for the coordination of disaster response preparedness and is the coordination body equipped with enough human and financial resources for the job? Please comment on the effectiveness of the coordination work done so far.***

Based on the Government Policy the only official coordinator for all matters regarding disaster management is the DPPC. Though recently the coordination of safety net (the prevention aspect) is designated to the Food Security Coordination Bureau, DPPC has been coordinating all disaster prevention, preparedness, responses and rehabilitation activities at country level. During emergencies the DPPC is mandated to bring representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies on board to form Crisis Management Groups (CMGs) that coordinate sectoral responses.

In recent years the DPPC forms thematic groups (task forces) composed of relevant government ministries, donors, UN bodies and NGOs to coordinate responses. The various task forces, most of them meet on bi-monthly basis, coordinate sectoral measures under the umbrella of the DPPC.

In addition to government coordination efforts, there are also networks and coordination bodies within the donors, UN and NGOs. The Food Security and Agriculture Committee under the leadership of the EU delegation meets regularly to share information and to some extent contribute to donors' coordination. The Office of UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia also organizes regular meetings with the UN Strategic Disaster Management Team (SDMT) to ensure effective coordination of humanitarian assistance and disaster reduction efforts. UN OCHA plays a vital role in following up the humanitarian coordination activities. On the NGO side, there are also thematic groups and forums under the umbrella organization, CRDA. There are also small coordination groups based on geographic and sectoral areas and other alliances like Save The Children (SC) alliance and Oxfams International that work on agreed action plans.

At regional and lower levels there are also similar government coordination bodies. Depending on the severity of the problem donors and NGOs also create coordination bodies at regional or woreda levels. Coordination at lower level remains weak due to lack of capacity and information gap.

DPPC has the basic organizational capacity, human and financial resources for the coordination. Key standing preparedness capacities, which are signs of strength for the coordinating body are already in place. The EWS has the ability to alert the Government

and the international community on time; the Emergency Food Security Reserve has the capacity to bridge the food gap between pledges and arrival of food aid; logistics capacity to transport and store relief commodities is by-and-large in place; the establishment of Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit (ENCU) at federal DPPC and in some regions harmonizes assessment methodologies and sets standards; the emergency Fund (NDPPF) and non-food stock (NNFCS) can also contribute to certain extent. Moreover, the existence of policy framework for disaster management, and the development of guidelines and manuals for major preparedness modalities (e.g. guidelines for targeting, Emergency Nutrition, EWS, EGS, EFSR, NDPPF and Donor relation and Resource Mobilization Strategy) are instruments for the coordination of disaster risk reduction.

On the other hand, taking into account the volume, the area coverage of the emergency and the number of actors involved in the country, DPPC requires further improving its capacity to lead and coordinate the response and preparedness activities of various actors more effectively. The capacity of regions and more importantly, that of the woredas to deliver and distribute relief commodities to eligible beneficiaries with increased efficiency remains inadequate.

The new FSCB will hopefully improve the coordination problems that existed in planning and implementing EGS to link relief and development particularly at woreda level. More importantly the capacity to mitigate the effect of drought through water harvesting and moisture retention techniques weakened to be further improved. While the Government leads and coordinates the program, the support and engagement of the international community in building the coordination capacity needs to be recognized.

## **6. Call for Good Practices in Disaster Risk Management**

*Based on the above analysis and information provided, please provide at least two examples of any successful implementation of disaster reduction activities in your country (could be local, national or regional scale); any project or community based experience, national policy, interaction between sectors, etc., would be welcome. Provide maximum one page on each example, including area of work, institutions and actors involved, duration, impact of activities, lesson-learnt and if the example have been replicated. You may also kindly direct us to relevant web-based information/organization.*

### **Best practice: Example 1: Emergency Food Security Reserve**

Cognizant of the country's chronic food deficiency and its extreme vulnerability to climatic variations that give rise to droughts, flooding and to pest outbreak, the Government decided to maintain a food buffer stock to ease the suffering of people during the initial stage of food crisis. It was estimated that food aid importation takes at least four months to reach affected beneficiaries and it was thus envisaged that the EFSR would cover the food gap during the four-month initial period of the emergency. With this intention in mind, the EFSR was started in 1982 as a project with support from FAO, WFP and CIDA.

The project was later transformed to the present semi-autonomous body called the Emergency Food Security Reserve Administration (EFSRA) in 1993. It is managed by a Board of Directors composed of senior ministers. A strong multi-agency technical committee is structured to provide technical advices and recommendations on the

amount of food to be drawn. While WFP and the relevant government departments are permanent members of the committee, two other donors serve in the Committee as members on rotation. Since 1993 the establishment and maintenance of the Emergency Food Security Reserve has become an integral part of the country's disaster management policy.

One of the two objectives of the Reserve, as stated under the Council of Ministers Regulation No.67/2000 is "to provide adequate capacity to prevent disasters at the occurrence of slow and fast-onset-disasters, through loan provision, to the Commission and organizations engaged in relief activities until additional relief food can be mobilized through other mechanisms".

It was planned to start with a short term target size of 205,000MT to feed 4.2 million people for four months at the rate of 400gm (survival ration) of food grain per day per person. The mid-term target was to reach 307,000MT to feed the same 4.2 people for four months at the rate of 600 gm/day/person. However, because of the transparent management and the valuable contribution to emergency response, it has enjoyed the support of donors and currently it maintains 407,000 MT of food grain, stored in seven strategic locations. This target could feed about 6.8 million people for four months at the rate of 15kg/month/person.

The EFSR has successfully achieved its objectives. It has served all agencies that have been engaged in relief food distributions. Both the Board and the Technical Committee are discharging their responsibilities effectively with interest since the Reserve serves all stakeholders (government, UN and donor agencies, NGOs and the beneficiaries). Had it not been due to considerable role of the Reserve, there could have been severe humanitarian crisis for example in 2003 when the arrival of the pledges was delayed. Thus, the establishment of the EFSRA has proved to be one of the best practices in disaster risk reduction in the country.

The Report of a multi-disciplinary and independent external evaluation team<sup>4</sup> on 2002/2003 response has this to say on the EFSRA. "The Emergency Food Security Reserve Administration (EFSRA) has played an indispensable role in the emergency crisis of the past few years by making grain available for immediate dispatch to DPPC and NGOs once repayment is guaranteed by donors or government. This facility has operated with remarkable efficiency in the past two years. It has gained donors confidence because it is independent and professionally managed with donor and UN representation on the technical committee. Its operations provide an excellent model for other African countries". OCHA Draft 12.07.2004

### **Best practice: Example 2: Coordination of 2002/2003 Emergency**

The 2002/2003 food crisis was a result of the combined long-term underlying causes of vulnerability and the short-term triggering factors. Human and livestock pressures on the limited arable land, degraded and infertile soil with fragmented and small land holding, backward agricultural technology, poor infrastructure and market out let and depletion of assets due to successive droughts have made the people poor and/or chronically

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<sup>4</sup> The evaluation team was led by Peter Simkin, an external consultant and former UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia and include other international and national consultants as well as representatives of major donors, UN systems and NGOs

vulnerable. It is this vulnerability that created the condition for the 2002 erratic and inadequate rains to cause massive food gap in 2003.

The erratic weather pattern was widely spread in almost all parts of the country and the situation was speculated that its effect would exceed the 1984/85 famine. The number of affected population was more than 13 million people. This is the highest number of affected population in the history of the country. The situation was extraordinary and the assistance requirements (both food and non-food) were so huge that there was some doubt that the country would not have logistical capacity to manage. Despite such concerns, the operation was well managed and, as a result, famine was averted. Many factors contributed to the success of the operation including the effectiveness of the EWS, the commitment of the government and NGOs, efficiency of resource mobilization, the cooperation and generosity of donors, etc. But the coordination at federal level is found to be exemplary.

With the overall guidance of the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee and the coordination of the DPPC led Crisis Management Group, different sectoral task forces (Food and Logistics Task Force, Health and Nutrition Task Force, Agriculture Task Force, Water and Sanitation Task Force,) with members drawn from relevant government, UN systems, donors and NGOs were established and coordinated effectively and efficiently. Government ministries like Health, Water, and Agriculture were actively involved. UN specialized bodies and donors demonstrated exceptional collaboration. NGOs were highly involved. All of them participated in the bimonthly coordination meetings in each sectoral task force.

There is also a monthly coordination forum (Technical Information Management Exchange – TIME) that brings all of the task forces and other partners together. There was remarkable collaboration and coordination amongst all actors that have stake in the issue. Commitment, sharing of information and openness contributed to the success of the emergency response.

Quoting again from the multi-disciplinary evaluation team report, may give ideas on how successful the coordination in 2002/2003 was. “Coordination between NGOs, Government, and the UN system was exceptionally good. Regular systems for coordinating the food assistance and nutritional assessment programmes were established through task forces, while coordination on health, water, and agriculture were established during the emergency”.

## **7. *Priorities to be Addressed at World Conference on Disaster Reduction***

*What do you think are the priority topics to be agreed upon at the World Conference to enhance and strengthen national policy and practice to reduce risk and vulnerability to natural and technological hazards? Please list any other thematic areas or specific topics of discussion that you consider of importance to increase the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction for your country.*

*Please also indicate any particular experience or project that your country would like to exhibit or present at the conference.*

The nature of disaster in Ethiopia is challenging the conventional definition of disaster. For disaster to happen there must be a triggering factor or external shock on vulnerable community. In Ethiopia there is food related disaster even without drought or any other shock. Normally disasters have relatively short time frame. Disaster related to food

insecurity in Ethiopia has become a continuous and cyclical phenomenon. Every year there are people at risk at least in some pocket areas. There is a kind of “permanent” or perpetual disaster in the country year after year. This is not like flood or earthquake-induced disasters that require emergency response for some times and move to recovery. Ethiopia’s disaster is interlinked with poverty and destitution. Every drought contributes to further deepening of the abject poverty and aggravating the destitution. This cannot be overcome with a short-term and one time intervention. Such a disaster should be treated differently in the World Conference, as the nature of the event and the approach to reducing the risk is different.

Enhancing and strengthening the national policy and practices alone is not enough. Increased commitment of the international community to address the root causes of vulnerability (in terms of multi-annual resources commitment, national capacity building and supporting sustainable development programs) should be agreed in the Conference. The focus should be more on prevention than response and more on coordinated international interventions than individual efforts of poor countries.

Regarding the thematic areas and topics, Ethiopia feels that the proposed list of themes under the 5 major headings in the “Second Announcement for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction” and the various Johannesburg recommendations of 3 June 2004 are adequate and endorse all of them.

However, the discussions should give due attention to drought-induced food crisis (there is a tendency to focus on natural disasters like earthquake, flood, cyclone, etc.). Famine as a disaster has natural causes too and the disaster reduction strategy is interwoven with poverty reduction strategy. Currently there is a debate to distinguish between chronic (predictable) and acute (unpredictable) food insecurity. The strategy to address these is more or less clear – long-term development and safety net is meant for chronic and emergency preparedness and response for the acute food insecurity. But identifying the chronically affected population is found to be a challenge. Can there be inputs and guidance towards this!!?