Conflict and climatic shocks contribute to elevated emergency needs and population displacement in Ethiopia, according to the country’s 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO). Nationwide, about 8.4 million people may require humanitarian assistance during the year, with violence, erratic rainfall, pest infestations, and disease outbreaks negatively affecting the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people.

**SITUATION**

- Favorable mid-2019 rainfall is likely facilitating average October-to-January national crop yields, increasing food availability among farming households and in markets. Meanwhile, above-average late-2019 rainfall in southern pastoral areas will likely augment water availability, pasture generation, and livestock and milk production, leading to improved food security conditions for many animal-raising households, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).

- However, some farmers will collect below-average harvests due to localized desert locust infestations and irregular precipitation. Ongoing intercommunal violence is also hampering livelihoods activities and driving displacement, undermining food security in some areas. In addition, recent flooding in parts of Somali Region caused crop losses, displacement, and thousands of livestock deaths. As a result, Stressed (IPC 2) levels of acute food insecurity may persist in much of eastern Ethiopia through May, with Crisis (IPC 3) outcomes likely in parts of Afar; Amhara; Oromiya; Somali; Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP); and Tigray regions, FEWS NET reports.*

- The HNO notes that about 3.2 million Ethiopians were internally displaced due to conflict and climatic shocks as of early 2019; by May, however, the Government of Ethiopia had returned 2.1 million displaced people to prior areas of residence. As of November 2019, relief partners estimated that 2 million people were internally displaced in Ethiopia. Ethiopia also hosts 735,000 refugees from nearby nations, such as South Sudan and Somalia.

*The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a standardized tool that aims to classify the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries, ranges from Minimal (IPC 1) to Famine (IPC 5).

**RESPONSE**

- In partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Food for the Hungry, Relief Society of Tigray, and World Vision, USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (FFP) conducts long-term development interventions through the Government of Ethiopia-led Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), which aims to reduce chronic food insecurity. FFP activities help address the basic needs of vulnerable Ethiopians through regular transfers of in-kind food and cash resources, while supporting the creation of assets, like beehives and water catchments, that generate economic benefit for the participating community.

- FFP partners with a CRS-led consortium to provide emergency food assistance to Ethiopians affected by conflict and other shocks, and with the UN World Food Program (WFP) to distribute food assistance to refugees and Ethiopians facing acute food insecurity. FFP also provides specialized nutrition commodities for the treatment of acute malnutrition to WFP, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Additionally, IRC leads a rapid response mechanism jointly funded by FFP and USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Photo: In Oromiya, participants in an FFP-supported development food security activity implemented by World Vision prepare improved animal feed to bolster livestock production and income generation.