

PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : ERITREA

Compilation of the information available in the Global IDP
Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council

(as of 6 August, 2004)

Also available at <http://www.idpproject.org>

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
PROFILE SUMMARY	7
SUMMARY	7
ERITREA'S IDP CRISIS PROLONGED BY DROUGHT AND UNDERFUNDING	7
CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT	11
MAIN CAUSES FOR DISPLACEMENT	11
ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA CAUSED SUBSTANTIAL INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT, MAY 1998 - JUNE 2000	11
DROUGHT IS SERIOUSLY WORSENING THE SITUATION OF IDPs AND MAY CAUSE NEW DISPLACEMENTS (JUNE 2003)	12
BACKGROUND OF THE CONFLICT	13
BACKGROUND TO THE 1998 BORDER DISPUTE	13
BOTH ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA USED MASS DEPORTATIONS AS A WEAPON OF WAR, 1998-2002	16
CHRONOLOGY OF THE MILITARY CONFRONTATIONS IN BORDER AREAS BETWEEN ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA, MAY 1998 – DECEMBER 2000	19
CONTINUOUS GRUMBLING TENSIONS BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA (MARCH 2003)	22
PEACE EFFORTS	23
UN SC AND SG URGES ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA TO PROVIDE FULL AND PROMPT COOPERATION TO BOUNDARY COMMISSION (JULY 2004)	23
THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA (UNMEE) AND THE TEMPORARY SECURITY ZONE, 2000-2004	23
UNMEE AND THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION, 2000-2004	25
END OF WAR AFTER SIGNING OF CEASE-FIRE IN JUNE 2000 AND PEACE AGREEMENT IN DECEMBER 2000	26
DEMINEING REMAINS A CRUCIAL ISSUE TO FINALISE DEMARCATION (JUNE 2003)	30
GENERAL DETERIORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA (MARCH 2003)	32
POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES	33
TOTAL NATIONAL FIGURES	33
TOTAL INTERNALLY DISPLACED POPULATION IN ERITREA: 58,953 PERSONS (MAY 2004)	33
58,180 PERSONS REMAIN DISPLACED - FEAR OF INCREASING NUMBERS AS EFFECT OF DROUGHT WORSENS (JUNE 2003)	33
USCR: 75,000 REMAIN DISPLACED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY (JUNE 2003)	37
DEPORTEES FROM ETHIOPIA OF ERITREAN ORIGIN RESETTLED TEMPORARILY IN IDP CAMPS (JUNE 2003)	37

BETWEEN 50,000-70,000 PEOPLE REMAINED INTERNALLY DISPLACED IN 2001 (DECEMBER 2001)	38
MAJOR DECREASE OF IDP NUMBERS DURING 2000: FROM 900,000 TO 308,000 BY END-2000 (NOVEMBER 2001)	40
THE IDP POPULATION ESTIMATED TO AMOUNT TO 266,200 BY THE END OF 1999 (JANUARY 2000)	42
A TOTAL OF 100,000 IDPS REPORTED BY THE END OF 1998 (DECEMBER 1999)	43
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION	43
REMAINING IDPS UNABLE TO RETURN TWO YEARS AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE LOCATED IN GASH BARKA, DEBUB AND NORTHERN RED SEA (NOVEMBER 2002)	43
IDPS UNABLE TO RETURN RELOCATED IN TEMPORARY/TRANSITORY CAMPS (DECEMBER 2001)	44
SELECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT IDP POPULATIONS BY END-2000 (FEBRUARY 2001)	47
<u>PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT</u>	49
GENERAL	49
IDPS MOVE OUT OF CAMPS AND CLOSER TO HOME AREAS (FEBRUARY 2001)	49
PEOPLE SEEKING REFUGEE IN SECURE LOCATIONS OUTSIDE THE REACH OF ETHIOPIAN FORCES (SEPTEMBER 2000)	50
<u>PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT</u>	52
FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT	52
IDPS UNABLE TO RETURN AND EXPELLEES RESETTLED DUE TO RISK FROM MINES AND UXOX (JULY 2004)	52
BOUNDARY DEMARCATION WILL ENTAIL EXCHANGE OF PEOPLE AS WELL AS LAND (OCTOBER 2002)	52
LANDMINES REMAIN THE MAIN DANGER FOR PEOPLE IN THE TEMPORARY SECURITY ZONE (JUNE 2002)	53
PHYSICAL SECURITY	54
BOMB BLAST RAISE CONCERN OVER SECURITY IN GASH BARKA (JUNE 2004)	54
STRONG COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY ENSURES PROTECTION OF DISPLACED/UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN (OCTOBER 2000)	55
SEVERAL IDP CAMPS REMAINED WITHIN ETHIOPIAN HELD AREAS AFTER MAY 2000 OFFENSIVE (SEPTEMBER 2000)	56
12 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS EXPRESS CONCERN (MAY 2003)	57
<u>SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)</u>	58
GENERAL	58
RETURNING REFUGEES FROM SUDAN IN NEED OF BASIC FACILITIES FOR REINTEGRATION (MAY 2004)	58
IDPS IN NEED OF RELIEF ASSISTANCE (APRIL 2004)	58
IDPS AND OTHER VULNERABLE POPULATIONS SEVERELY AFFECTED BY DROUGHT AND SLOW PACE OF POST-CONFLICT RECOVERY (NOVEMBER 2002)	60
HEALTH	61
HEALTH AND NUTRITION SITUATION SERIOUSLY DETERIORATING (JUNE 2003)	61

LARGE-SCALE POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND WAR-RELATED HUMAN DISLOCATION ARE CONDITIONS PARTICULARLY CONDUCTIVE TO THE SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS AND STDs (NOVEMBER 2002)	62
DISPLACED CHILDREN NEEDED PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSISTANCE (FEBRUARY 2001)	63
NUTRITION AND FOOD	64
WFP: RAINS NEEDED FROM JULY - SEPTEMBER TO SECURE ADEQUATE HARVEST (JULY 2003)	64
KEY GRAIN PRODUCING AREAS SEVERELY AFFECTED IN FOURTH YEAR OF DROUGHT (JUNE 2003)	65
ICRC DELIVERS SEEDS AND FOOD TO DISPLACED RETURNEES (JUNE 2003)	67
MAIN RETURNEE AREAS DEBUB AND GASH BARKA TRADITIONALLY GENERATED MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF ANNUAL PRODUCTION (JUNE 2003)	67
EC PROVIDES EXTRA AID AS WARNING IS ISSUED OVER FOOD CRISIS (MAY 2003)	68
UNICEF: CHILDREN AND WOMEN ARE OVERWHELMINGLY VICTIMS IN THE ONGOING DROUGHT (MAY 2003)	68
DROUGHT SERIOUSLY AFFECTING THE COUNTRY (APRIL 2003)	70
IDPs OUTSIDE CAMPS LIVE WITH FOOD RATIONS 40% BELOW THE MINIMUM DAILY REQUIREMENTS (NOVEMBER 2002)	72
NUTRITIONAL SURVEILLANCE DATA COLLECTED IN THE IDP CAMPS AND SUB-ZONES BY SC UK (APRIL 2002)	74
SEVERAL STUDIES INDICATING BETTER NUTRITION STATUS AMONG IDPs THAN THE GENERAL WAR-AFFECTED POPULATION (AUGUST 2001)	75
WATER AND SANITATION	77
IDP RETURNEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES FACE CRITICAL WATER AND SANITATION PROBLEM DUE TO HARSH DROUGHT (JUNE 2004)	77
LACK OF FUNDING FOR WATER AND SANITATION REDUCED ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER (JUNE 2003)	78
CHALLENGING WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION NEEDS IN AN ENVIRONMENT PLAGUED BY DROUGHT AND MINES (NOVEMBER 2002)	79
ESTIMATED THAT ONLY 44% OF THE URBAN AND 16 % OF THE RURAL POPULATION HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE WATER (FEBRUARY 2001)	81
SHELTER	82
SHELTER SITUATION OF IDPs AND EXPELLEES IN CAMPS IS VERY CRITICAL (JUNE 2004)	82
KEY OBJECTIVE TO ASSIST IN REINTEGRATION AND RECOVERY OF IDPs (JUNE 2003)	83
IDPs IN HOST COMMUNITIES OR TO BE RETURNED DURING 2003 NEED ASSISTANCE IN SHELTER AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS (NOVEMBER 2002)	84
SHELTER REHABILITATION PROJECT FOR RETURNED DISPLACED POPULATIONS THROUGH POWER PROGRAMME (JUNE 2002)	84
MOST URGENT SHELTER NEEDS MET BY THE END OF 2000 (FEBRUARY 2001)	86
<u>ACCESS TO EDUCATION</u>	<u>87</u>
GENERAL	87
EDUCATION PROJECTS STRAINED BY LIMITED RESOURCES (JUNE 2003)	87
1998-2000 CONFLICT ERODED ACHIEVEMENTS MADE IN THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR SINCE INDEPENDENCE (SEPTEMBER 2001)	87
<u>ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u>	<u>90</u>
DISRUPTION OF COPING MECHANISMS	90

MAJOR OBSTACLES TO RECOVERY AND SELF-RELIANCE REMAIN UNCHANGED (NOVEMBER 2002)	90
DISPLACEMENT FROM HIGHLY FERTILE GASH BARKA AND DEBUB REGIONS LED TO MAJOR DISRUPTIONS IN FOOD AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION (OCTOBER 2001)	92
WAR HAS ADDED A HEAVY BURDEN ON WOMEN AND YOUNG GIRLS (JANUARY 2001)	94
ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE	95
GENERAL	95
CURRENT DROUGHT COMPOUNDS POST-CONFLICT REQUIREMENTS IN SOCIAL SECTOR (MAY 2003)	95
SEPARATED CHILDREN RECEIVED ADEQUATE CARE BECAUSE OF STRONG FAMILY BONDS (SEPTEMBER 2000)	95
PROPERTY ISSUES	97
GENERAL	97
MOST HOUSES IN BORDER TOWN TSORONA DAMAGED DURING ETHIOPIAN OFFENSIVE (JUNE 2001)	97
DAMAGE IN FORMERLY OCCUPIED AREAS TARGETED TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND BUILDINGS (MAY 2001)	97
PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT	100
GENERAL	100
ERITREANS WAIT TO RESETTLE BORDER SO AS TO RETURN HOME (JULY 2004)	100
RETURNING REFUGEES FROM SUDAN AND ETHIOPIA NEED ASSISTANCE FOR REINTEGRATION (JULY 2004)	100
2003/2004 SCENARIO: A CONTINUATION OF STATUS QUO (JUNE 2003)	102
URGENCY SUBSISTS TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR DEMOBILIZATION, DEMINING, AND TERRITORIAL DEMARCATION TO FACILITATE RETURN OF IDPS (NOVEMBER 2002)	103
UNHCR TERMINATES ERITREANS' REFUGEE STATUS BY DECEMBER 2002 AND PLANS TO RETURN UP TO 90,000 REFUGEES (AUGUST 2002)	105
IDP RELOCATIONS (JUNE 2002)	106
MAJORITY OF THE DISPLACED HAD RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES FOUR MONTHS AFTER ORGANISED RETURN STARTED IN APRIL 2001 (SEPTEMBER 2001)	107
INCREASED IDP RETURN AS SECURITY SITUATION IMPROVED (JANUARY 2001)	109
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS	111
GENERAL	111
MANY COMMUNITIES IN THE BORDER AREAS REMAIN INACCESSIBLE TO THE HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY (NOVEMBER 2002)	111
UP TO 50,000 ERITREANS RESIDING IN THE OCCUPIED SENAFA TERRITORY WERE OUT OF REACH FOR HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES (JANUARY 2001)	111
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES	112

NATIONAL RESPONSE	112
ERITREAN AUTHORITIES STRUGGLE TO RESTORE SERVICES WHILE RESTRICTING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES (JUNE 2003)	112
THE ERITREAN RELIEF AND REFUGEE COMMISSION (ERREC) IS IN CHARGE OF COORDINATING BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE (JANUARY 2001)	112
TWO THIRDS OF THE HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION PROGRAMME WAS TERMINATED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ERITREA (SEPTEMBER 2002)	114
ERREC SURVEY OF HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES IN ERITREA (SEPTEMBER 2001)	115
INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS	116
UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR SUPPORTED BY OCHA TO COORDINATE UN RESPONSE (APRIL 2001)	116
DIVISION OF SECTORAL AREAS BETWEEN UN AGENCIES (JULY 2000)	118
DONOR RESPONSE	119
CAP 2004 MID YEAR REVIEW FOR ERITREA REVEALS THAT LOW FUNDING COULD DISRUPT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS FOR IDPs (JUNE 2004)	119
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2003	120
WARNING OF WIDESPREAD STARVATION UNLESS DONORS RESPOND (JULY 2003)	120
UN SG APPOINTS NEW UN SPECIAL ENVOY TO HORN OF AFRICA AS HUMANITARIAN CRISIS DEEPENS (JULY 2003)	121
USAID RESPONSE (JULY 2003)	123
IMF AND ECHO EXTEND AID TO ERITREA, BUT CALL FOR STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (JULY 2003)	123
UN STRATEGY 2003: CAP MID-YEAR REVIEW (JUNE 2003)	125
UN DEPUTY EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR VISITS ERITREA (JUNE 2003)	128
ICRC DELIVERS SEEDS AND FOOD TO 10,000 DISPLACED FAMILIES IN DEBUB (JUNE 2003)	130
UNICEF: MALNUTRITION A PRIORITY CHALLENGE AS MORE THAN 15% OF CHILDREN ARE MALNOURISHED (MAY 2003)	130
OVERALL UN STRATEGY: CAP 2003 RE-ITERATES URGENCY TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR DEMOBILIZATION, DEMINING, AND TERRITORIAL DEMARCATION TO FACILITATE IDP RETURN (NOVEMBER 2002)	131
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2002	134
MID-TERM REVIEW OF 2002 CAP HIGHLIGHTED MOST PRIORITIES HAD NOT CHANGED NEITHER MATERIALIZED (NOVEMBRE 2002)	134
WFP APPEAL FOR FUNDING EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE IN 2002 RECEIVED ONLY 23.3% OF FUNDS PLEDGED (NOVEMBER 2002)	137
EMERGENCY HEALTH RESPONSE FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL REHABILITATION CURTAILED DUE TO UNDER-FUNDING (MAY 2002)	137
RESPONSE TO WATER AND SANITATION SECTORS UNICEF (NOVEMBER 2001)	138
RESPONSE TO SHELTER NEEDS OF IDPs, RETURNEES, DEPORTEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES UNDP (NOVEMBER 2001)	139
RESPONSE IN AREAS OF SEXUAL HEALTH (NOVEMBER 2001)	140
JOINT GOVERNMENT-UNICEF PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE AND COUNSELING FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN IDPs DELAYED AND RE-DESIGNED DUE TO LATE FUNDING (NOVEMBER 2001)	141
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2001	141
RESPONSE TO THE 2001 APPEAL (NOVEMBER 2001)	142
HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY FOCUSING ACTIVITIES ON EMERGENCY AND RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE FOR THE RETURNEES (SEPTEMBER 2001)	143
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2000	144
MINE-CLEARANCE OPERATIONS ONGOING SINCE 1993 (MAY 2002)	144
SHIFT FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF TOWARDS REHABILITATION WAS THE HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY ALREADY PROPOSED IN 2000 (FEBRUARY 2001)	146

EVALUATION CONCLUDES THAT ACTUAL RESOURCE COMMITMENTS DID NOT MATCH UNHCR'S HIGH AMBITION FOR IDP SUPPORT IN ERITREA (FEBRUARY 2001)	148
UNHCR IDP-RELATED ASSISTANCE TO BE PHASED OUT EARLIER THAN PLANNED (MAY 2001)	150
UNHCR FOCUSING ITS ASSISTANCE ON IDPs IN THE GASH BARKA ZONE (AUGUST 2000)	151
RESPONSE BY NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS	151
ICRC PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO IDPs (MAY 2004)	151
ICRC PROVIDING NON-FOOD ITEMS TO IDP (MAY 2002)	153
ACT APPEAL FOR IDP SHELTER NEEDS (MAY 2002)	153
MSF PROVIDING IDPs WITH BASIC HEALTH CARE, EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE, NUTRITION, VACCINATION AND WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES (DECEMBER 2001)	154
DANChurch Aid (DCA) TO TRAIN MOBILE MINE ACTION TEAMS TO FACILITATE IDP RETURN (MAY 2001)	155
ASSISTANCE TO IDPs BY NGOS WITHIN THE INTERACTION COALITION (MARCH 2001)	155
MOBILE MSF TEAMS REACHING IDPs IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES (AUGUST 2000)	158
REFERENCE TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT	158
KNOWN REFERENCES TO THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT (AS OF AUGUST 2004)	158
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	160
<u>LIST OF SOURCES USED</u>	<u>161</u>

PROFILE SUMMARY

Summary

Eritrea's IDP crisis prolonged by drought and underfunding

Eritrea: deadlock in demarcation process delays IDP return

At the height of the (1998-2000) border war with Ethiopia there were 1.1 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Eritrea. This number has fallen but there are still 60,000 people who cannot return home because of the tensions that persist around the border demarcation process. The physical marking out of the frontier, originally scheduled to start in May 2003, has been delayed indefinitely. Ethiopia has refused to accept the ruling by an independent Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission set up under the peace deal, and its call for yet more talks has been rejected by Eritrea until demarcation takes place. The resulting stalemate is perpetuating the plight of the IDPs, as well as that of people expelled from Ethiopia and refugees returning from Sudan. Furthermore, delays in de-mining and rehabilitation activities are hampering the return of IDPs. The displaced are also facing the severe consequences of four consecutive years of drought in the Horn of Africa. They are located in the frontier zones in Debub, Gash-Barka, Southern Red Sea and Northern Red Sea regions. Moreover, Eritrea's declining capacity to cope, and underfunding of reintegration and reconstruction programmes, are limiting relief and rehabilitation efforts. As a consequence, the humanitarian situation for the drought- and war-affected populations is worsening. Only a breakthrough in the demarcation process will allow the resumption of rehabilitation activities, the return and permanent settlement of IDPs.

Eritrean IDP crisis a result of border conflict

Internal displacement in Eritrea stems from a combination of war and drought. The conflict with Ethiopia has quietened down since the Algiers Peace Agreement was signed in 2000. However, Eritrea continues to face the residual effects of war due to the current stalemate in the border demarcation process, compounded by recurring droughts that are having devastating effects on reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts (OCHA, 15 June 2004).

Internal displacement in Eritrea started in May 1998, when fighting broke out between the two countries over disputed frontier zones in Debub, Gash-Barka and Northern Red Sea districts (IFRC, 1 January 2002). Eritrea was formally annexed by Ethiopia in 1962; as a consequence, an armed struggle against Ethiopian rule began. Ethiopian forces were finally expelled after a 30-year struggle; in 1993, and following a referendum, Eritrea became an independent state. At this time, the Ethiopian-Eritrean border was that which Italian colonialists had established in 1890. However, the establishment of administrative boundaries by Ethiopia in 1962 muddled the colonial demarcation, and this has remained the subject of discord ever since (HRW, 30 January 2003).

The June 2000 ceasefire which halted the war and the Algiers Peace Agreement that followed six months later facilitated the return of many IDPs. A demilitarised Temporary Security Zone was established along the 1,000-km Eritrea-Ethiopia frontier in April 2001, and 5,000 peacekeeping troops were deployed under the auspices of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea to monitor the ceasefire.

Out of a population of 3.5 million people, some 19,000 fighters and an unknown number of civilians were killed, while more than 1 million were forced to flee their homes during the ferocious border conflict with Ethiopia. A large number of the displaced rapidly returned to the regions of Gash-Barka, Debub and the Southern Red Sea following the June 2000 ceasefire and the partial withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from border areas. By the end of the year 2000, the total number of IDPs had fallen from 1.1 million at the height of the crisis, to about 210,000 (USCR 2001, p.77). The number of IDPs declined further and has remained fairly stable since 2001. As of May 2004, just under 60,000 persons remain displaced, out of which 51,000 live in camps in Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea, and the rest outside camps in Gash Barka and Southern Red Sea (OCHA, 31 May 2004, p.12).

In addition to IDPs, there are other categories of people to be reintegrated and whose livelihoods need to be reconstructed. Among the highly vulnerable groups, that is those requiring humanitarian assistance, are 17,000 people expelled from Ethiopia, 185,000 who have returned to their homes and at least 125,000 refugees repatriated from Sudan; during 2004, another 35,000 are expected to be repatriated (OCHA, 31 May 2004, p.12, 15 June 2004).

The decision of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) on the location of the border between the two countries was released in April 2002 in The Hague. The physical demarcation, however, which was first due to start in May 2003, and then postponed several times, has now been indefinitely delayed. Ethiopia is still contesting elements of the independent EEBC ruling, such as the decision to place the symbolic town of Badme – where the conflict flared up – in Eritrea. It has called for talks to resolve the dispute, but the Eritrean government has rejected this until demarcation takes place.

Obstacles to return

Deadlock in the demarcation process

The political tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia that brought uncertainty over the border demarcation have had humanitarian implications for IDPs in Eritrea. They are unlikely to return home until the status of the border areas is clarified, the frontier properly demarcated and peace fully established.

As the border demarcation is supposed to involve de-mining and transfer of territory as well as movement of people, the current deadlock blocks any incentive for IDPs to return. Their physical security is threatened by the prevalence of landmines within their areas of origin in the border zones. Indeed, the initial conclusions of the Landmine Impact Survey's Draft Report show that 20 per cent of IDPs' places of origin are impacted by landmines and more than two-thirds of recent landmine victims were engaged in herding or farming at the time (OCHA, 16 July 2004). Some IDPs' home areas remain inaccessible due to the presence of unexploded ordnance, worsened by the drought. The Eritrean De-mining Authority (EDA) is now operational and has effective teams clearing mines. However, the low number of teams will further delay the safe return of refugees and IDPs (OCHA, 15 June 2004).

Lack of post-conflict recovery in IDPs' areas of origin

The widespread destruction of businesses, homes, water and transportation systems within the border areas, the absence of basic health care and education services in war-destroyed villages have also prevented the return of the internally displaced in Eritrea (USCR, May 2004). Recovery efforts are also stalled by Eritrea's limited pool of skilled labour in return areas and the presence of relatively few local and international development agencies. The main return areas of Debub and Gash Barka zones had traditionally generated more than 70 per cent of Eritrea's annual food production, but the aftermath of war and water shortages severely reduced crop yields. In areas of the Gash Barka zone, malnutrition rates exceeded 27 per cent. Some 90 per cent of households in Debub zone had no access to potable water during 2003 (USCR, May 2004).

Damaged infrastructures need to be rehabilitated and the pace of de-mining accelerated before all the vulnerable groups, including IDPs, refugees repatriated from Sudan, and those expelled from Ethiopia, can safely move in (OCHA, 31 May 2004, p.16, 15 June 2004).

Declining capacity

Eritrea's capacity to cope with the situation has declined, with more than half of the total population threatened by hunger and extreme poverty. Consequently, Eritrea faces the challenge of meeting the immediate needs of emergency humanitarian assistance and at the same time rebuilding infrastructure damaged during the war and assisting displaced populations living in and outside camps. In the short term there are few prospects of any socio-economic programmes helping returning IDPs resume their economic activities or the reintegration of repatriated refugees. Drought is also having a significant impact on the humanitarian situation of IDPs. Insufficient rainfall has left dams dry and wells empty (USCR, May 2004). Since the beginning of 2004, out of 1.9 million persons who needed food assistance, only 1.3 million have received aid, covering only 60 per cent of their minimum needs (OCHA, 17 June 2004, 31 May 2004, pp.12-13). Deepening poverty and receding prospects for socio-economic improvement keep Eritrea in need of humanitarian help for the affected population, including IDPs.

Humanitarian situation

The humanitarian conditions of all internally displaced people remain critical as many of their emergency needs remain unaddressed. In order to rebuild and re-establish their livelihoods, shelter is one of the basic needs for IDPs, those expelled and people who have returned to their homes – mainly families headed by women and without any income support. Indeed, IDPs continue to live in adverse conditions in makeshift settlements in camps and with host communities. For instance, an assessment carried out by the OCHA Field Office at Koronko Camp in Gash Barka revealed that at least 6,750 IDPs who had fled their homes in Badme, Deda, Anbors and Tsebra, were now sheltering under worn-out tents and surviving entirely on relief rations (OCHA, 2 April 2004). It has been reported that emergency shelter is also needed in IDP camps in Bimbina and Shambuko, where out of a total of 19,699 households, 14,357 require urgent tent replacement, while 1,048 tents are in need of reinforcement (OCHA, 23 April 2004). All IDPs and those expelled will continue to remain in adverse conditions inside and outside camps unless their shelter needs are properly addressed by the humanitarian community (OCHA, 15 June 2004).

Serious water shortages are also a cause of concern; people have to spend hours a day to collect a few litres of water. The sanitary conditions are fairly poor since the camps possess no functional latrines (OCHA, 2 April 2004).

Another group whose situation is a matter of concern are refugees repatriated from Sudan. Most of those who have returned are in communities located near Goluj, Haykota, Tesseney and Barentu in the regions of Gash Barka and Northern Red Sea, areas suffering both severe drought and the consequences of war (OCHA, 17 June 2004, 2 July 2004). As part of their reintegration package, tents and other supplies are required for this group to allow them to resume their livelihoods (OCHA, 23 April 2004).

A few agencies, such as the UN's World Food Programme and refugee body UNHCR, are providing food assistance to returnee households until they are able to obtain their first successful harvest. Nevertheless, urgent funding is needed to continue the provision of reintegration assistance to returnees and support necessary to boost receiving communities' absorption capacity (OCHA, 23 April 2004; USCR, 24 May 2004).

Underfunding undermines post-war rehabilitation

The Eritrean government has played an important role in coordinating humanitarian operations through the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) although their activities are restricted by limited

resources. For instance, ERREC was able to maintain normal food rations for IDPs in camps despite an overall shrinking of the food ration to the majority of food aid recipients (OCHA, 17 June 2004).

UN activities have been coordinated by OCHA, supported by a joint government/UN Information and Coordination Centre. Within the framework of the 2004 UN Consolidated Appeal for Eritrea, UN agencies in collaboration with the government requested the revised sum of \$118m. However, the delay in providing humanitarian aid could be characterised as one of the major obstacles to post-war recovery, as substantial funding and international commitment is urgently required to assist those IDPs still unable to go home. As of July 2004, 28 per cent of the pledges had been received, compared to 41 per cent at that time in 2003. As a consequence, the UN estimated that there has been little progress in addressing the priority needs for vulnerable groups in Eritrea, including IDPs. The lack of donors' response in sectors such as shelter, health, water and sanitation implies that needs were not met (OCHA, 15 June 2004). Particularly serious concerns have been expressed at the low funding level in the non-food sector which by mid-June has received only 23 per cent of the pledges (OCHA, 18 June 2004).

Underfunding may cause deeper long-term damage to the fabric of Eritrean society, as the return of IDPs and refugees is taking place in the context of serious poverty and major water shortages. By and large, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction programmes will depend on the progress made in the physical demarcation of the boundary and the level of food and non-food aid received to implement the different programmes conceived for the vulnerable groups, including IDPs, in Eritrea.

(Updated August 2004)

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

Main causes for displacement

Armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia caused substantial internal displacement, May 1998 - June 2000

- 50,000 people relocated from the border area after war started in May 1998
- Areas up to 50 kilometres along the length of the border had become closed military zones by May 1999
- Reported that the Ethiopian advance into western Eritrea in May 2000 immediately forced half a million people on the move
- People were evacuated from the conflict areas in an organised manner or fled spontaneously after artillery and aerial bombardments

"The war has [by August 1999] displaced 200,000 Eritreans, including 44,000 children under 5 years old. Displacement occurred in two waves. When the war began in May 1998, the Eritrean government moved 50,000 people away from the border area. The re-location was orderly, and most people stayed with local families. In February 1999 heavy fighting forced a further 150,000 people to flee without warning. Initially it was hoped that people could again stay with host families, but it was soon clear that needs were too great and 20 refugee camps were set up." (SCF August 1999)

"Up to 600,000 people, mainly small farmers and nomads have been displaced on both sides of the border as a result of the fighting and areas up to 50 kilometres along the length of the border becoming closed military zones. Ethiopia has alleged that civilians have been tortured and forced to flee from their homes in the Badme area since Eritrea took control of the area in May 1998 and that Eritrea systematically destroyed property and looted churches in the disputed areas[...]. UN agencies estimate that over 300,000 people have been displaced in Tigray province as a result of the conflict and 245,000 people have been displaced inside Eritrea." (AI 21 May 1999, sect. 2.2)

"[In July 2000, the UN stated that the] situation in Eritrea has changed dramatically since the January 2000 United Nations Country Team Appeal (UNCTA) was launched. The renewed border war from 12 May to 18 June [2000] between Eritrea and Ethiopia was fierce. Violent military clashes resulted in a rapid mass exodus of populations away from the war zone. The Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) reported that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other war-affected persons rose from 371,910 in January to an estimated figure of more than 1.1 million in June 2000." (UN July 2000, pp.1, 6-8)

"The affected civilian populations either were evacuated from the conflict areas or fled from artillery and aerial bombardments. The displaced populations (IDPs), scattered in various locations, continue to look for safer areas to take refuge." (UNICEF 20 June 2000)

"Humanitarian sources said people affected by the advance included war-affected displaced Eritreans living in temporary camps and Eritreans expelled by the Ethiopian government from northern Ethiopia over the past two years. Save the Children Fund (SCF) said the fighting threatened 15,000 children among the 80,000 inhabitants of camps for the displaced in the Gash Barka region, west of Asmara, AFP reported." (IRIN 18 May 2000)



Map source: BBC 23 May 2000

"The local administration has assisted evacuees with trucks. Displaced local administration officials have arrived in centres with their village populations. Some people who fled areas under attack told IRIN that the military and local administration told them to leave and organised transport for them; others left areas on their own initiative as they witnessed Eritrean troops pulling back." (IRIN 29 May 2000)

See the "population-" and the "return" sections for information about how the IDP situation has changed since the large influx in May/June 2000.

Drought is seriously worsening the situation of IDPs and may cause new displacements (June 2003)

- A continuation of status quo, and a worsening of the humanitarian situation
- Migration due to drought

"In 2002, below-average minor season rains (March through May) severely hindered land preparation for the main planting season (June through September). Additionally, main season rains, which are crucial to crop production in the drought-prone Anseba, Northern Red Sea, and Southern Red Sea zones, as well as the breadbasket zones of Gash Barka, Debub, and Maekel, were sporadic and insufficient. In response, the Government of the State of Eritrea's (GSE) Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) issued an appeal in August 2002 to the humanitarian community for a timely response to the drought situation. The GSE identified a food production deficit of nearly 300,000 metric tons (MT) and significant humanitarian needs in the health and water/sanitation sectors." (USAID, 30 April 2003)

"The most likely scenario for the remainder of 2003 would be a continuation of the status quo with the effects of the drought becoming more widespread and further displacement of population, old caseloads remaining in current sites and possible resumption of the repatriation programme. With regard to the response required to cover humanitarian needs, the Government and the UNCT remain hopeful that contributions to both food and non-food requirements will increase.

[...]

The outlook for 2004 does not seem favourable. If the coming rainy season is below normal, there will undoubtedly be a continued need for assistance. Continued food and water shortages will have a devastating impact on the people. Even if the rains are unexpectedly good, it is likely that emergency assistance will be needed, as asset bases have been drastically eroded and water resources are unlikely to recover within one short rainy season. This is in view of the impact to date of the drought on a) the asset base of most of the affected population; b) the nutritional status of children and women; c) lack of labour;

and d) the number of IDPs who are unable to return to normal lives in their home villages and farming fields.

Delays in demarcation means IDPs will not be going home for another year. Prolonged displacement and the maintenance of IDPs, as they wait for their return, will become much more problematic for humanitarian agencies. Even if demarcation takes place soon, the emergency situation will still continue and there will be additional needs. However, consolidation of peace, following demarcation, is the best promise for rehabilitation of social services such as health, education, water and sanitation.

There is a risk that reconstruction, rehabilitation and development needs will be neglected because of the effects of the drought and limited resources. The expected rehabilitation of destroyed houses and other social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and water sources will be delayed. The devastation caused by the war is vast and the transition from emergency to recovery will consequently require a protracted response. Until such a transition has been achieved, the CAP will remain an important instrument. The actors and the stakeholders in the humanitarian community believe that the huge caseload of IDPs, the return of refugees and IDPs, the reintegration of expellees and widespread food insecurity due to the combined effects of war and drought necessitate the continuation of the CAP into 2004. Humanitarian programmes should therefore be linked to longer-term development initiatives as reflected in the Integrated Recovery Programme." (UN, 3 June 2003)

Migration due to drought

"[...] villagers in Gash Barka have begun to migrate to neighbouring areas in search of day labour in order to survive. ICC field officers in their mission from 24 March to 14 April 2003 to Debub have also observed migration of households specifically from villages in Mai-Mine and Areza sub zone (70 households) to urban area such as to Mendefera and towns nearby in search of employment.

Similarly, villagers have noted that food security problems have been compounded in recent months by limited purchasing power. In Anseba region the price of available food has nearly doubled. It has been reported in the Debub region, that coping mechanisms have stretched to collecting roots of the wild trees.

Water shortages continued to worsen in many parts of the country and severe water shortages are feared during the coming months. The lack of available fodder and water is having critical effects on livestock across the country.

As regards to livestock condition, ICC Field Officer on 14 April reported that Farmers in Mai-Mine sub zone are losing their livestock due to drought. In two villages of the sub zone alone villagers have lost 117 livestock. Similar incident had been reported from Anseba where 14, 362 livestock died in five Local Administrations namely: Aget, Gulbub, Kelhamet, Camchewa and Naro in Afabet sub-zone. New reports are being received of sudden increases of deaths from nearly all areas of the country." (ICC, 18 April 2003)

Background of the conflict

Background to the 1998 border dispute

- In 1991 the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) overthrew Colonel Mengistu Haile Mairiam and took Addis Ababa and Asmara
- Eritrea nationhood was proclaimed in 1993 by 99percent votes in favour of independence and with Ethiopian approval

- Given the excellent relations between Eritrean-Ethiopian government in early 90s, contentious issues of border-delimitation, citizenship and commerce were left unsettled and became source of conflict
- Public resentment grew against people of Eritrean and Tigrean origin for their prominence in business and politics and the underrepresentation of ethnic Oromo, Amhara and Somali
- After Eritrea's independence in 1993, Ethiopia became landlocked and economic relations between the two countries were further strained by the adoption of Eritrea's own currency
- Border between Eritrea and Ethiopia never clearly demarcated
- Claims by Eritrea in 1997 that Ethiopian troops occupied an area within eastern Eritrea

"The political parties now in government in Ethiopia and Eritrea share a joint history of armed opposition to the former regime in Ethiopia: a brutal military dictatorship known as the Derg, led by Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. The Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) dominated the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance of ethnically-based liberation fronts, which fought the Derg to obtain more autonomy for their respective regions.

[...]

The TPLF started in 1975 as a national liberation front, with the political goal of establishing a "Democratic Republic of Tigray." It naturally turned to Eritrean liberation fronts for assistance, and ultimately formed a close alliance with the EPLF. The relationship between the two fronts was marked from the onset by significant differences over ideology and military strategy, but pragmatism prevailed as both fronts confronted a ruthless common enemy in the Derg. As the TPLF gained increasing control over territory, it also forged the broader Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance with other Ethiopian liberation fronts based on Ethiopia's various "nationalities."

In May 1991, the anti-Derg alliance between the EPLF and the EPRDF finally gained control; first the EPRDF took Addis Ababa, then, a few days later, the EPLF won control of Asmara. Following the fall of the Derg, the EPRDF in July put in place a transitional government that was to have led Ethiopia towards democracy. [...] The EPLF in late May named a provisional Eritrean government to guide the newly liberated Eritrea to formal independence two years later.

Eritrean Independence and Cooperation Between Ethiopia and Eritrea (1991-1998)

The Ethiopian Transitional Government pledged to uphold the right of self-determination for all of Ethiopia's peoples.[...] In early July 1991, the new government approved the plan put forward by the Eritrean provisional government to hold a referendum to determine Eritrea's status.

[...]

Around the world, over one million people in more than forty countries took part in the referendum.[...] More than 99 percent of voters opted for Eritrea to separate from Ethiopia and become an independent state. [...] The vote was certified as free and fair by U.N. observers as well as by the Ethiopian government. [...] When Eritrea declared its independence, Ethiopia was among the first countries to recognize the new state.

[...]

The Short-lived Partnership

The newly-established Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and newly-independent Eritrea initially became close partners. A 1993 agreement between the ministries of internal affairs of the two countries confirmed an earlier agreement to exempt citizens of the other country from entry visa requirements. [...] This provision was intended "to promote and further consolidate the historical and cultural relationships long cherished by the peoples of the two countries, further strengthen the affinity and bonds of friendship between them."

[...]

So close were relations between the two countries that in June 1996 President Issayas Afewerki of Eritrea told an Addis Ababa newspaper that the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia was becoming "meaningless."

[...]

Tensions (1994-1998)

Perhaps because the new governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea came to power as allies against a common enemy and therefore felt a great deal of trust for each other, certain aspects of their bilateral relationship—including how to define the citizenship of people of Eritrean origin living in Ethiopia after Eritrea's independence, and the delineation of their common border—were never resolved in formal agreements. These unresolved issues as well as economic issues gradually led to tensions and hostility between the two countries.

[...]

For many, the establishment of an Eritrean provisional government and the promulgation of new laws by both this *de facto* authority and the new Ethiopian government raised immediate questions over the status of people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia. Public resentment over the role of people of Eritrean origin in business and government after 1991 coincided with protests at the dominant role of Tigrean leaders in the new government. This criticism was fueled by protests that even as the new Ethiopian leaders restructured the state based on what it defined as its constituent nations and nationalities, the Oromo, Amhara, Somali, and others were underrepresented and marginalized, while the Tigrean nationality dominated. Indignation over the standing of those of Eritrean origin, however, was from Eritrea's independence in 1993 readily transformed into a questioning of the loyalties—and ultimately the right to remain as citizens—of members of the Eritrean minority within the new Ethiopia.

[...]

Even as tentative steps were made to sort out the nationality issues in the two states, with due regard for the wishes of the people involved, a vocal minority in Ethiopia was voicing growing mistrust of people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia. This group complained that people of Eritrean origin in the country controlled important segments of the Ethiopian economy and were working against Ethiopia's interests and on behalf of the Eritrean government. These critics did not deny that these people still had standing as Ethiopian citizens, but opposed this on strictly chauvinistic grounds. They complained that those of Eritrean origin had yet to be obliged to choose between the one or the other country, and they pressed for the Ethiopian government to declare people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia to be aliens under the law.[...] As the tensions grew in 1997, the rhetoric grew increasingly shrill. [...]

[...]

Controversy over the delineation of the 620-mile common border further exacerbated tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Upon becoming an independent nation in 1993, Eritrea succeeded to 1902 colonization treaty between Italy and Ethiopia, which defined the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia. However, Eritrea's annexation by Ethiopia in 1962 had muddled the demarcation of the border since the colonial boundaries between the two formerly separate states were replaced by administrative boundaries within Ethiopia, some of which had shifted slightly over time. After 1993, both Eritrea and Ethiopia claimed sovereignty over three areas where administrative borders had changed: Badme, in the west of the border region, Tsorona-Zalambessa in the central border region, and Bure in the eastern border region.

[...]

In May 1998 the simmering border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia exploded in a military confrontation in the Badme area when Eritrea sent its army to expel Ethiopian troops stationed there and claimed the area as Eritrean. Weeks of skirmishes followed, and by early June the two former allies were at war." (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.11-17)

"Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia in 1991. This followed the overthrow of the regime of Mengistu Haile-Mariam in 1991 by an alliance of the two liberation movements, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), who formed new provisional governments in Eritrea and Ethiopia respectively [...]. Eritrea officially became a separate internationally recognized state in 1993, following a referendum in which more than 95% of Eritreans voted for independence from Ethiopia.

Eritrea's *de facto* border in 1991 was that of the Italian colony of Eritrea established in 1890. In line with the OAU principles on the integrity of colonial borders, this border was agreed to be a starting point, but

both sides agreed that it was inconclusive and that some details needed to be clarified. The border had never been clearly demarcated and Italy had made several claims on Ethiopian territory prior to its full-scale invasion of Ethiopia in 1936 and five year occupation. There was no border demarcation throughout the subsequent British military administration in Eritrea, the 1952 federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia, or after the removal of Eritrea's federal status in 1962, which set off the Eritrean liberation struggle. In 1991 both Ethiopia and Eritrea accepted that there were inconsistencies in the border but full demarcation was not regarded as a high priority. After an incident in July 1997, in which Eritrea claims that Ethiopian troops occupied Adi Murang, in Bada, eastern Eritrea, a bilateral border commission was set up to address problems as they arose.

[...]

Generally, relations between the two countries were good. There were large numbers of each other's citizens working in each country, who were treated the same as nationals and there was almost free movement of people across the borders. Special arrangements were in place for the use of Assab port, now on Eritrean soil, by Ethiopia (now land-locked) through which most of Ethiopia's imports and exports came. Both countries used the Ethiopian *birr* as a common currency, until 1997 when Eritrea introduced the *nakfa*. The introduction of the *nakfa* and subsequent switch to hard currency transactions between the two countries brought other economic policy differences to the fore and strained relations.

[...]

Ethiopia has a sizeable minority of people of Eritrean origin who, while voting for the independence of Eritrea in the referendum, retained their Ethiopian citizenship and considered themselves Ethiopian[...]. Many people of Eritrean origin worked in the Ethiopian civil service, in sensitive jobs in the telecommunications and aviation sectors, and were also prominent in business, particularly in Addis Ababa." (AI 21 May 1999, sect.1.2)

Both Eritrea and Ethiopia used mass deportations as a weapon of war, 1998-2002

- Ethiopia deported an estimated 75,000 people of Eritrean origin to Eritrea from June 1998
- Eritrea deported an estimated 70,000 people of Ethiopian origin back to Ethiopia during from August 2000
- People deported from Ethiopia on ethnic discriminatory grounds were denied return and often separated from their own children
- Many people from Eritrean origin were forced to leave Tigray rural areas
- Many were told by Ethiopian authorities they were being deported for having voted in the referendum for Eritrean independence
- Before 2000 Eritrea supported voluntary repatriation of people of Ethiopian origins assisted by ICRC, afterwards it did not inform ICRC prior to deportation
- Many deportees from Ethiopia of Eritrean origin were registered as refugees and attended by the ERREC
- Peace deal signed in December 2000 failed to solve the plight of the deportees

"Denied return to Ethiopia, families like that of B.H. were separated on the discriminatory grounds of ethnic or national origin. Children were either left behind with relatives without Eritrean heritage, or more commonly, even though Ethiopian-born, expelled with their parents and denied the Ethiopian nationality that was their birthright under Ethiopian law. Although the authorities of independent Eritrea extended the option of Eritrean nationality to those with ties to that country, most of the uprooted retained the hope that they could return to their homes and families in Ethiopia. Reduced to the status of refugees, they confronted the specter of statelessness.

[...]

In Eritrea, a campaign of roundups, detention, and ultimately expulsion of civilians based on ethnicity and nationality paralleled the concerted nation-wide campaign that began in June 1998 in Ethiopia, but began

considerably later. Even before authorities began a program of arrest, detention, and expulsion, ordinary Ethiopians living and working in Eritrea's towns and cities were attacked by mobs, sometimes with police participation, in apparent retaliation for Ethiopia's air attacks and battlefield advances. Thousands were subsequently interned in harsh conditions prior to expulsion.

[...]

Hundreds of thousands were internally displaced and over one million became refugees in the course of the war. Many fled or were deported to other countries in the region as both countries used mass population transfers as a weapon of war. The negotiated end of the war, agreed on December 12, 2000, stopped the fighting—but it failed to resolve the plight of those uprooted from their homes and cut off from their livelihood in both countries, in particular those deported from their own country and stripped of their nationality.

While Ethiopia and Eritrea both now appear to be conforming with the requirements of the peace agreement, the settlement deals primarily with the formal separation of the belligerents' forces, the demarcation of the border, and competing claims for compensation. The issue of the wartime expulsion of tens of thousands of people on grounds of their purported nationality or national origin garnered surprisingly little attention from the international community during the war and remains largely overlooked in the war's aftermath.

The Deportations

The Ethiopian government is known to have forcibly expelled an estimated 75,000 people of Eritrean origin during the war. The Eritrean government forcibly expelled or took part in the voluntary repatriation of an estimated 70,000 Ethiopians, notwithstanding persistent Eritrean government claims that it had no expulsion policy comparable to Ethiopia's.

Ethiopia's Campaign of Deportations

Ethiopian authorities launched a vast campaign to round up and expel people of Eritrean origin from Ethiopia in June 1998. Most had been born in Ethiopia when Eritrea was still held to be a part of that country—and had no other recognized citizenship other than Ethiopian. Most adults had spent all or most of their working lives in Ethiopia, outside of Eritrea. Ethiopian authorities in June 1998 announced the planned expulsion of residents who posed a security risk to the state, to include members of Eritrean political and community organizations, and former or current members of the Eritrean liberation front.

The Ethiopian authorities moved almost immediately to carry out arrests and to expel Eritreans and those of Eritrean origin in a manner that became increasingly indiscriminate over time. No meaningful steps were made to determine "risk" on a case-by-case basis—or to distinguish between those who had formally assumed Eritrean nationality and Ethiopian nationals distinguished only by their Eritrean origin.

The first wave of arrests and deportations began on June 12, 1998, targeting people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia who were prominent in business, politics, or community organizations. In conjunction with this campaign, the Ethiopian government revoked business licenses and ordered the freezing of assets of thousands of individuals of Eritrean origin. Those with bank accounts were informed that their accounts had been frozen and were inaccessible. The government provided no avenue for affected individuals to challenge these actions. The main targets of the deportation campaign after June 1998 were tens of thousands of ordinary people who were deported and dispossessed on the sole basis of their national origin.

[...]

The expulsion of people from Ethiopia's urban areas generally conformed to a common pattern, with almost all detained and interned prior to being deported—often under very harsh conditions. The majority of the deportees were held for days or weeks, although some were held for as long as several months. A "processing committee" of policemen, security agents, and political officials from the ruling party normally interrogated detainees on their identity, suspected links to Eritrean institutions—and their ownership of property. During the interrogation, the detainees were not given a meaningful opportunity to refute the allegation that they were Eritrean nationals (or security risks), and were denied access to the courts to challenge the legality of their detention or denationalization.

While the detainees were in custody at police stations, officials searched for and confiscated their Ethiopian identification documents, including identity cards, passports, work papers, and driving licenses.

[...]

Individuals of Eritrean origin who lived in rural areas of Ethiopia were also subject to summary deportation or expulsion. Individuals from those rural villages inhabited predominantly by people of Eritrean origins, mostly in the northern Tigray region, typically had to travel on foot from their villages into Eritrea. They were generally not allowed to take personal possessions with them and some were forced to abandon thousands of livestock.

The Ethiopian government arrested, detained, and deported approximately 75,000 people of Eritrean origin without due process of law. Most were told they were detained because they had voted in the referendum regarding Eritrea's independence—with this cited as evidence they were "Eritreans." Self-identity with others of the same national origin within Ethiopia's multi-ethnic, multi-national state, the essential criterion for voting in the referendum, was reinterpreted as having been an affirmation of citizenship. Membership in Eritrean cultural, social, or political community organizations was also cited as evidence that people of Eritrean ethnicity had lost their Ethiopian nationality. Classification as "Eritrean" and decisions to deport appeared to have been determined by the processing committees even before most individuals were called in for questioning—with a space on forms identifying nationality routinely filled in as "Eritrean" in advance. The Ethiopian government also forced deportees to sign away their property rights—by demanding deportees sign powers of attorney under threat.

Eritrea's Policy of Internment and Deportation

Eritrea pledged at the outbreak of war that Ethiopian residents would not be penalized for the war, and that they were welcome to stay in the country and to keep their jobs, while offering the option of voluntary repatriation to those wishing to depart. There was no evidence during the first phase of the conflict that Eritrea had a policy to expel Ethiopian residents, although Ethiopian residents suffered considerable abuse. As the conflict dragged on, Eritrea's policy toward Ethiopian residents became increasingly harsh. Thousands had left the country early in the conflict due to economic hardships related to the war and out of concern for their own safety. Increasingly, large numbers of residents were interned and expelled by the Eritrean authorities.

From August 1998 to January 1999, a period of relative calm on the war front, some 21,000 Ethiopian residents of Eritrea left for Ethiopia with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). While Eritrean authorities insisted that these departures were voluntary, a measure of coercion was involved in a number of cases. Indeed, many individuals in this first wave complained upon arrival to Ethiopia of beatings, rape, and the confiscation of their property.

[...]

Eritrean authorities started expelling larger numbers of Ethiopian residents in earnest in July and August 2000, in several instances without prior information to the ICRC to ensure the safety of deportees as they crossed front lines.

[...]

Overlooking these issues will have grave consequences for thousands of war refugees and displaced persons, many of whom are still living in makeshift settlements and relying for their survival on relief handouts. The peace process has ended the bitter conflict between the two nations. However, the issue of the resettlement or return and the compensation of deportees must be addressed squarely. In particular, the nationality status of those whose citizenship was revoked during the expulsion process must be resolved if lasting peace and reconciliation is to return to the Horn of Africa so that the international peacekeepers can return home." (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp. 3-7)

"Eritrean government registered the deportees from Ethiopia with the ERREC Educated deportees from urban background were easily integrated while the fate of those of rural origin was less fortunate. Deportations from Ethiopia were reported as recently as March 2002 mainly from Tigray and Addis Ababa. "The Eritrean government mobilized quickly to assist the deportees. The government-run Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (ERREC) was put in charge of assisting the deportees and facilitating their

resettlement in Eritrea. A month after the arrival of the first deportees, the ERREC had set up reception centers for them near the main border crossings with Ethiopia. In addition to offering the deportees emergency aid and counseling, the ERREC registered them as refugees.

[...]

The first waves of expellees from Ethiopia, largely made up of urban professionals and business people, resettled in Eritrea relatively quickly and easily. Jobs and government services were much harder to come by for those expelled from Ethiopia in later stages of the expulsion campaign because of the strain on Eritrea's economy of both the war and the influx of newcomers.

Rural deportees, many of whom are poor and uneducated and have little employment experience beyond farming, have generally fared less well once in Eritrea. Their stay in the temporary resettlement camp was meant to be brief: refugees were required to relocate to areas of Eritrea they had ties, however distant.

[...]

Expulsions from Ethiopia After the December 2000 Peace Agreement

Expulsions from Ethiopia continued after its devastating May 2000 incursion in Eritrea, but gradually decreased over time. During 2000, 911 Eritrean nationals were returned to Eritrea under the auspices of the ICRC delegation in Eritrea. [...] The U.N. secretary-general and the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea strongly protested the forced expulsion in June 2001 of 704 longtime residents of Eritrean origin from Tigray region to Eritrea. Both expressed concerns about the circumstances in which the expulsions took place, and reminded the Ethiopian government that such actions should be carried out only in accordance with international humanitarian law.

[...]

Ethiopia deported another 312 people of Eritrean origin in November 2001. The group consisted of residents of Addis Ababa who sought "voluntary" deportation to join relatives deported in earlier groups. [...] A group of one hundred people of Eritrean origin were later deported on March 16, 2002, ninety-two of them from the region of Tigray, and eight from Addis Ababa and the surrounding area. [...] Members of the groups deported told human rights investigators of the U.N. peacekeeping mission that they were fleeing discrimination in access to employment and services or seeking to join relatives who had been deported before them. [...] (HRW, 30 June 2003, pp.28-9;35-6).

"In addition, as a result of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, an estimated 60,000 people deported from Eritrea to drought-affected Tigray still live in difficult circumstances." (UNICEF, 14 March 2003)

"During 2001, an estimated 25,000 persons of Ethiopian descent voluntarily returned to Ethiopia from Eritrea. Most had lived for many years in and around Asmara, the Eritrean capital. Several thousand of the returnees received transportation and border-crossing assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Ethiopian government accepted "full responsibility for their transport and relocation within Ethiopia," a UN report declared.

An estimated 20,000 new Ethiopian returnees, however, remained internally displaced in northern Ethiopia at year's end. Nearly all of the displaced returnees struggled to survive on monthly WFP food rations." (USCR, 1 June 2002)

To access full 'Report on the Joint UNICEF/Women's Association of Tigray Study of Ethiopian Deportees/Returnees from Eritrea Living in Tigray by Buffoni Laura and Tadesse Ehetemariam , 31 December 2001, click here [External Link]

<http://www.telecom.net.et/~undp-eue/reports/deportees.pdf>

Chronology of the military confrontations in border areas between Eritrea and Ethiopia, May 1998 – December 2000

- Border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia in the Badame area escalated into a major military confrontation in May 1998
- The first battle took place between May and June 1998 over the three disputed fronts of BADme, Tsorona-Zalambessa and Bure
- The second battle took place between February 1999 and June 1999 and Ethiopia recaptured Badme from Eritrean troops
- In February 1999 waves of people were driven from their homes because of renewed aerial and artillery attacks in the border areas
- Significant clashes on the Zalambessa frontline area in early September 1999, and armed skirmish between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces took place on the border near Bure on 23 February 2000
- Ethiopia launched a major assault against Eritrea on 12 May 2000

"In May 1998 the simmering border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia exploded in a military confrontation in the Badme area when Eritrea sent its army to expel Ethiopian troops stationed there and claimed the area as Eritrean. Weeks of skirmishes followed, and by early June the two former allies were at war.

[...]

The two countries battled on three fronts over the three disputed areas of Badme, Tsorona-Zalambessa, and Bure. Fighting took place in cycles: short periods of pitched battle alternated with longer periods of relative lull in which only occasional skirmishes took place. The first period of major battle took place from May through June 1998—followed by seven months of relative quiet during which both belligerents rushed to train hastily assembled recruits and conscripts. During this period both countries also engaged in a flurry of new arms purchases. Eager international weapons suppliers supplied arms and military instruction, in often cases to both countries simultaneously." (HRW, 30 June 2003, p.17)

"In May 1998 a border dispute in the Badame area escalated into a major military confrontation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. By early June 1998, the conflict had grown worse and spread into the ZalaAmbesa and Alitena areas in the Debub Region and into the Bure area, west of Assab, in the Southern Red Sea Region. The international airport in Eritrea's capital, Asmara, was bombed, causing the international community to evacuate and the government to briefly close the airport. This conflict caused the first wave of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to flee their homes in search of safety." (UN, January 2000, p.1)

"When the fighting resumed in late February 1999, Ethiopia overran Eritrea's defensive lines and recaptured the Badme area, the original flashpoint of the conflict. The Eritreans then repelled an Ethiopian offensive against the southern border town of Tsorona, in the central front, a battle that cost both armies thousands of casualties. This second cycle of fighting came to an end with the approach of the rainy season in late June 1999.

After repeated attempts by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to negotiate a truce failed, the fighting reignited with even greater intensity in mid-May 2000 when Ethiopia launched an attack that reached deep into Eritrean territory. Eritrea, apparently hoping to secure a quick cease-fire, withdrew its forces from all contested border territories and redeployed them within uncontested Eritrean territory. After another round of OAU-sponsored negotiations in Algiers, Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a "cessation of hostilities" accord on June 18, 2000. Finally, the two parties signed a comprehensive peace agreement on December 12, 2000." (HRW, 30 June 2003, p.17-18).

"Intense fighting started up again in February 1999 along the Mereb-Setit front (Badame area) and quickly expanded to the Tsorona area, then spread again to the ZalaAmbesa and Alitena border areas. Aerial and artillery attacks upon civilians living nearby drove additional waves of people from their homes, to both rural and urban centers of the country, including the capital, Asmara, in greater numbers. The displaced people continue to stretch the capacity of existing public services, facilities, and infrastructure.

Adding to the humanitarian crisis, Ethiopia started, and is continuing, to deport people of Eritrean heritage. Over 67,000 deportees have been registered since the eruption of the conflict in May 1998 of whom over 28,000 are Rural Deportees." (UN January 2000, p.1)

"In the aftermath of the heavy fighting that took place in the Badme area during February, the month of March [1999] began relatively quietly amid calls for a ceasefire and an end to the hostilities. Hopes for a quick settlement were raised for a while following the announcement by Eritrea at the end of February that it had accepted the OAU Framework Agreement. Ethiopia later made clear it would not agree to any ceasefire nor engage in negotiations regarding the implementation of the OAU framework until Eritrea agreed to withdraw its troops from border areas around Egala and Zelambessa-Aiga, on the so-called central front, and Bada-Bure along the eastern border.

The relative lull ended on March 14 with reports that new fighting had erupted on the front line a little to the south of the strategically important town of Tsorona. According to international media reports, following an initial period of shelling using heavy artillery, fighting escalated quickly over a two-day period with the deployment of ground troops, armoured vehicles and warplanes. Given the apparent intensity and limited geographical focus of the fighting, there are concerns that heavy casualties were suffered. The focus later switched back to the western front close to the Mereb river where a series of skirmishes or clashes were reported by the media in the vicinity of the Eritrean town of Shembeko. This latest period of fighting appeared to come to a close with the Ethiopian government saying that it had successfully countered an Eritrean attempt to recapture territory it had lost around Badme during the earlier fighting in February. There have been no reports regarding the situation in the Bure border area, which is adjacent to the Eritrean Red Sea port of Assab." (UN CTE 14 April 1999, p.1)

"On February 23 [2000] an armed skirmish between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces took place on the border near Bure, some 70 kms from the Eritrean Red Sea port of Assab. The fighting was first reported by the Eritrean official media and later confirmed by the Office of the Ethiopian Spokesperson. The Ethiopian statement said that by attacking first and then blaming Ethiopia for initiating the engagement, the Eritrean government was attempting to deceive the international community. Eritrea claimed that Ethiopia was continuing a pattern of attacking whenever a peace envoy comes to the region.

The reports of fighting came after several months of quiet along the common border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The last significant clashes came on the Zelambessa frontline area in early September last year, and, according to Ethiopian radio reports, near the Jerbet river on the left flank of the Badme front in October. Even though there has been relative quiet along the border, the war of words between the two countries has continued unabated with Ethiopia pressing for the redeployment of Eritrean troops away from the remaining contested border areas and Eritrea accusing Ethiopia of preparing for yet another round of fighting. The enmity between the two governments became very evident during the UN General Assembly in October when the Foreign Ministers of the two countries made impassioned speeches condemning the other side and accusing the UN and international community of not doing enough to end the conflict." (UN CTE 10 March 2000)

"After two years of sporadic fighting followed by months of stalemate, Ethiopia launched a major assault against Eritrea on 12 May 2000. During this offensive, Ethiopia entered through the western flank and moved deep into Eritrea capturing Barentu, the strategic regional capital of Gash-Barka. A number of other towns in south and west of the country, including Shambiko and Tokombiya were also captured. Fighting then shifted to the central border town of Zalem Bessa. Although Eritrea has announced the withdrawal of its troops from this contested city as part of its acceptance of the OAU Peace Accord, fighting continues in areas around Senafe, another city to the north of Zalem Bessa." (UNICEF 20 June 2000)

See also the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation (EPCPT), "Ethiopia/Eritrea: End in sight to a devastating war?" (December 2000) or Amnesty International "Ethiopia and Eritrea. Human Rights Issues in a Year of Armed Conflict " (21 May 1999) for more detailed information about the dynamics of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Continuous grumbling tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea (March 2003)

"[...] The greatest threat to peace and security is the persistence of grumbling tensions with Ethiopia since the December 2000 Peace Agreement and the April 2002 decision of the independent Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Commission (EEBC). The latter, though accepted in advance as binding by both sides, now seems to be challenged by Ethiopia.

[...]

In December [2002] the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) delivered its detailed 1:25,000 map on which the border demarcation will be recorded, and the two parties duly submitted technical comments in January [2003]. However, Ethiopia's response, according to the UN, went far beyond the technical and amounted threat to reverse its adherence to the EEBC delimitation decision, and to the peace process in general, especially if its proposed "refinement" of the delimited boundary is not accepted – particularly in relation to the politically sensitive town of Badme.

The Eritrean President claimed in February that Ethiopia was amassing troops and increasing military activities at the border, and organizing a form of siege of Eritrea in its collaboration with Sudan and Yemen – activities which were seen as "a dangerous precedent, which cannot be tolerated". Ethiopia denied the claims and the UN monitoring force indicated no unusual troop deployments in the area.

The EEBC demarcation, which was due to begin in May, has reportedly been delayed until later this year and will probably begin in the less contentious eastern sector. Tensions can be expected to remain high until the exercise is complete. However, while border incidents seem likely to continue there does not seem to be any clear prospect of a resumption of major hostilities between the two countries during the interim period, or of any credible threat by opposition groups to topple the PFDK leadership by force.

Relations with Sudan remain volatile. Although Eritrea continued to participate in IGAD-led negotiations on ending the Sudanese civil war, which resumed in January in Kenya, its role has been denounced by Khartoum and its commitment to peace questioned. Tensions escalated in October 2002 with clashes near the border reportedly involving Eritrean troops. The African Union visited Khartoum in January in a continuing mediation effort, but was told the time was not opportune to visit Asmara. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees, from both the liberation war and the border dispute 1998-2000, remain in Sudan. The Eritrean Government suspects that, influenced by Islamicist thinking, they may be potential supporters of the rebel Eritrean Jihad movement.

[...]

Recent months have seen a spate of incidents in or near the UN-patrolled Temporary Security Zone. In December [2002] an Ethiopian herdsman was shot dead near Maichea in the central sector. The UN reports that between December and early February 9 civilians were killed and 34 injured by mines and unexploded ordnance. In February an Eritrean colonel and four militia members were killed when their jeep hit a mine. The UN voiced concern that some mines were newly laid, and reported increasing cross-border abductions.

Small opposition groups claimed to have engaged Eritrean military forces in clashes near the border. [...]

[...] Despite an increase of internal tensions and the severe repression the relations with Ethiopia are likely to remain the major threat to peace during the coming months." (Swisspeace, March 2003)

Peace Efforts

UN SC and SG urges Ethiopia and Eritrea to provide full and prompt cooperation to Boundary Commission (July 2004)

"[Members of the Council] called on the parties to speedily implement the decision of the Boundary Commission and to step up their cooperation with the Special Envoy in order to overcome the impasse in the peace process. They also called on the parties to enhance efforts to reach an effective and mutually acceptable political solution to the remaining problems.

Members of the Council recalled the commitment both parties had made through the Algiers Agreement to resolve their differences peacefully and to cooperate fully and promptly with the Boundary Commission." (UN SC, 15 July 2004)

Secretary-General's Report

"The peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea is unlikely to succeed if the parties remain unwilling to move forward and be accommodating. Four years have passed since the end of hostilities, and it would now be time for the parties to demonstrate extra flexibility. It is hoped that the two Governments will realize, and perhaps explain to their peoples, that sober choices will have to be made in order to end the current stalemate. Failure to do so could indeed bring into jeopardy the overall peace endeavours. On the other hand, an early conclusion of the peace process would inevitably allow both countries to reap the fruits of peace and concentrate on much-needed reconstruction and development." (UN SC, 7 July 2004)

Link to the full UN SC Progress Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea, 7 July 2004

The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the Temporary Security Zone, 2000-2004

- The Security Council authorized in September 2000 the deployment of an initial 4,200 troops for the UNMEE
- The Mission monitors the redeployment of troops from both sides and monitor the temporary security zone (TSZ)
- Technical assistance in the area of mine action
- Until the second quarter of 2001 the UNMEE did not have a human rights component in its mandate
- Deterioration in the relations between the Eritrean authorities and the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)
- UNMEE's mandate was extended until 15 September 2004

"The Security Council today [15 September 2000] authorized the deployment of 4,200 troops for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), with an initial six-month mandate to carry out a range of verification tasks, including monitoring the ceasefire between the two countries.

[...]

The newly authorized troops will be responsible for helping to ensure that the parties adhere to their security commitments. In a simultaneous effort, the Mission will monitor the redeployment of troops from both sides. Ethiopian troops will be redeployed from positions taken after 6 February 1999 which were not under Ethiopian administration before 6 May 1998, while Eritrean forces will redeploy in order to remain a distance of 25 kilometres from the position of the redeployed Ethiopian troops.

Also as part of its mandate, the Mission will monitor the temporary security zone, and provide technical assistance to mine action activities there and in adjacent areas. In addition, it will coordinate with the humanitarian and human rights work of others in the zone and adjacent areas." (UN DPI 15 September 2000)

"As at 11 June 2004, the total strength of the UNMEE military component stood at 3,951, comprising 3,626 troops, 107 headquarters staff officers and 218 military observers." (UN, 7 July 2004, p. 2)

"UNMEE's Human Rights Component

In a remarkable omission, the advance team dispatched by the U.N. in July 2000 to prepare for UNMEE did not include a representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. Furthermore, UNMEE's mandate as set forth in resolution 1320 (2000) also omitted the monitoring of ongoing human rights conditions. The persistence of reports of wide-scale human rights abuses by both parties, even after the cessation of hostilities, appeared to have led the U.N. secretary-general to announce, on September 18, 2000, that he intended to establish a "small" component within UNMEE to follow human rights issues. [...]

UNMEE's human rights component became operational during the second quarter of 2001. The mission's human rights officers were by then visiting the various sectors of the Temporary Security Zone and conducting investigations on the treatment of vulnerable groups of Ethiopians in Eritrea and of Eritreans in Ethiopia. The officers' assignment also included the monitoring of the return of displaced persons.[...] In particular, UNMEE's human rights workers interviewed persons repatriated or deported to both countries and documented their treatment. Their reporting as of June 2001 was included in the human rights section of the secretary-general's quarterly reports to the Security Council on the progress of the implementation of the peace agreement, providing the Security Council with an effective tool for pressing the two parties to afford humane treatment to each other's nationals. One factor contributing to the scaling down of deportations from both countries would thus appear to have been the combination of UNMEE's field monitoring and the periodic opportunity for the secretary-general to publicly disclose reported abuses of these vulnerable groups.[...]. (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.42-3)

The Temporary Security Zone

"The parties agreed in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601) to create a Temporary Security Zone, which would be a demilitarized area between the armed forces of both countries. The redeployment of Ethiopian forces from the future Temporary Security Zone was verified by UNMEE on 7 March 2001, and was followed by the rearrangement of the Eritrean forces, which was concluded on 16 April. This allowed my Special Representative, Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, to declare the formal establishment of the Temporary Security Zone on 18 April, which marked a milestone in the peace process. The declaration of the Zone gave an additional momentum to the peace process and has made possible the return of civilians seeking to resume their lives in their places of origin." (UN SC 19 June 2001, paras.2-3)

"On 21 and 22 June 2001, UNMEE presented its final map of the Temporary Security Zone to the Eritrean and Ethiopian authorities, respectively. My Special Representative, Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, urged the parties to accept the map despite their objections to some parts of the boundary of the Zone as established by UNMEE.

Following the establishment of the final map of the Temporary Security Zone, Ethiopia stated that the map was unacceptable because of two "errors". It asserted that an 8-kilometre-wide pocket at the eastern end of Sector East should be returned to Ethiopia; and that the Zone should be uniformly 25 kilometres wide, which is not the case in Sector Centre, north of the Irob area. For its part, Eritrea has indicated that it could not accept the map as it was a departure from the proposals originally presented to the parties on 30 January 2001. In particular, the Eritrean authorities have indicated that the Zone could not be considered as "fully established" until their concerns regarding the southern boundary of the Zone had been addressed. However, while neither party has formally accepted the map, so far they have in fact based their operations

on it, and have cooperated with UNMEE on the ground in the management of the Zone, in accordance with the parameters established in the map." (UN SC 5 September 2001, paras.1-3)

"Regrettably, there has been a deterioration in the relations between the Eritrean authorities and UNMEE in recent months. Despite demarches and appeals by my [the UN Secretary General] Special Representative, Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, and the Secretariat, a number of measures taken by the Government of Eritrea have made it difficult for UNMEE to conduct some aspects of its operations in an effective manner. The deterioration has manifested itself in a number of areas, including continuing restrictions on the Mission's freedom of movement, especially in the adjacent areas north of the Temporary Security Zone; the closure to UNMEE traffic by the Eritrean authorities of the main road from Asmara to Barentu, which constitutes the Mission's main supply route to its troops in Sector West; continuing detentions by the authorities of locally recruited United Nations staff; and a recent spate of public statements by some senior Eritrean officials attacking the peacekeeping operation and its staff." (UN SC, 7 July 2004, p. 4)

"Members of the Council [...] reiterated their full support for UNMEE's work. Members of the Council expressed their satisfaction that some restrictions to UNMEE's freedom of movement had recently decreased, but stressed that several other open questions such as direct flights between Addis and Asmara remained unresolved, which resulted in considerable additional costs. They called on both parties to continue to cooperate constructively with UNMEE to maintain stability and prevent incidents in the border area. Members of the Council also welcomed ongoing UNMEE efforts to streamline its operations." (UN SC, 15 July 2004)

"[The Security Council decided] to extend the mandate of UNMEE at the troop and military observer levels authorized by its resolution 1320 (2000) of 15 September 2000, until 15 September 2004" (UN SC, 12 March 2004)

The UNMEE Internet Site provides updated information about the operation.

UNMEE and the Boundary Commission, 2000-2004

- The Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) was established at the Algiers peace agreement of December 2002
- The Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission drew an internationally recognized and legally binding border between the two countries on 13 April 2002
- Physical demarcation of the border was due to start in July 2003 but is indefinitely delayed
- Ethiopia seemed to put in question the legally binding April 2002 ruling of the Boundary Commission and both countries claim Badme belongs with their countries
- Lack of progress in the demarcation process leads to the reduction of the activities of the Boundary Commission

The Boundary Commission:

"The Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) drew up the new, internationally-recognised border between both sides on 13 April last year. Its personnel will physically mark out the border.

The Algiers peace agreement of December 2000, which established the EEBC, followed a bloody two year war which flared up in the small and now-symbolic border town of Badme. Tens of thousands of lives were claimed.

Although demarcation of the contested 1,000 km border was scheduled by the commission to start in early July, observers say it now looks as if it will be further delayed." (IRIN, 24 June 2003)

"Demarcation Process

The physical demarcation of the 1000 km. long Eritrea-Ethiopia Border [was] set to take place in July 2003 and according to the agreement reached during a meeting in London in mid February 2003.

[...]

On November 11 2002, the EEBC told Ethiopia to comply with its July 17th 2002 ruling that Ethiopia removes its settlers from Eritrean territory who had encroached 400 metres into Dembe MenGul near Badme. The Commission reiterated that its April 13th 2002 decision is final and binding. The EEBC voiced concern in March 2003 that Ethiopia had constantly sought variations to the delimited borderline. The Commission submitted to the parties the completed map of the border map for technical comments in December 2002. Both parties continue to insist that the disputed town of Badme belong with their countries. In its eighth report, the EEBC cautioned that it appeared that Ethiopia was moving to reject the Commission's April 2002 decision if variations sought would not be granted, and indicated that any such variations can only be done with the mutual consent of both parties and not by the Commission. A March 4 2003 Ethiopian Ministry of Information statement expressed grave concerns about the EEBC's ruling on the government's comments on the map and the April 2002 border ruling. Both the UN Secretary General and the Security Council have urged continued cooperation with the EEBC as well as the UNMEE as the delicate demarcation process approaches." (OCHA, 31 March 2003, p.28-9)

"In April 2002, an independent border commission issued its decision on boundary delimitation between the two countries following their destructive border war from 1998-2000. According to the Algiers peace accord of December 2000, which officially ended the war, the sides agreed that any border ruling would be "final and binding". Both countries claim to have been awarded the now-symbolic village of Badme, where the conflict erupted in May 1998.

Physical demarcation of the contested 1,000 km border which was due to start in July 2003, and later in October 2003 is marked by Ethiopia's rejection of significant parts of the Boundary Commission's decision and its current lack of cooperation with the Boundary Commission.

"The core of the stalemate in the peace process remains the lack of progress in the demarcation of the border. As a result, the Boundary Commission has reduced the activities of its field offices to the minimum compatible with the ability to resume the work on the ground, if and when the parties allow it to do so. A report of the Commission, prepared by its President, is contained in annex I to the present report." (UN SC, 7 July 2004, p. 5)

End of war after signing of cease-fire in June 2000 and peace agreement in December 2000

- The US, European Union and UN provided substantial support to OAU's mediation efforts
- Already in 1998 the OAU proposed an eleven-point framework agreement to settle Eritrean-Ethiopian war
- June 2000 parties signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities
- Decision to deploy UN peacekeeping force in a buffer zone extending 26 km into Eritrea, under auspices of OAU
- 12 December 2000 Peace Agreement based on three issues: border demarcation, compensation and investigation on causes of the conflict
- The Agreement established a Boundary Commission and a Claims Commission

"Despite the mediators' increasing frustration, intense truce efforts continued unabated led by the OAU, the U.N., the United States and the E.U., as well as by several other bilateral mediators." (HRW, 30 June 2003, p.37)

"The OAU's Framework Agreement - November 1998

A high level delegation of African heads of state and government took over from the Rwandan-U.S. facilitators. [...] On November 8, 1998, the delegation proposed an eleven point framework agreement to Eritrea and Ethiopia for a peaceful settlement of their conflict. The OAU's framework agreement provided for the redeployment of "forces presently in Badme town and its environ" to be supervised by an OAU military observation mission supported by the U.N. It also offered general provisions to address the socioeconomic impact of the crisis on the civilian population.

Ethiopia accepted the OAU framework agreement shortly after it was tabled. Eritrea expressed a number of reservations and ultimately refused to withdraw its troops from Badme as called for under the agreement, saying that its withdrawal would be an acknowledgment of Ethiopia's sovereignty over Badme and other disputed territories. One of the main elements of the OAU document that Eritrea found contentious, according to Haile Woldensae, then Eritrea's foreign minister, was its position on the issue of human rights. The official said that the proposal must include a reference to the expulsion of citizens and specifically provide for the compensation of "illegally-expelled" Eritrean nationals.

[...]

Eritrea unexpectedly declared its acceptance of the OAU's framework agreement on February 27, 1999 after Ethiopia overran its defenses and recaptured the disputed Badme plains. However, differences of interpretation of the document kept the two countries at odds. Hostilities soon escalated, leading to a renewed escalation of the fighting in May and June 1999.

Modalities for the Implementation of the OAU's Framework Agreement - July 1999 [...]

While both countries declared their acceptance of the modalities, each continued to question the other's commitment to peace. The Eritrean insistence that people of Eritrean heritage expelled from Ethiopia be compensated appeared to add a precondition to acceptance since the modalities didn't address the issue.

[...]

Technical Arrangements for the Implementation of the OAU's Framework Agreement and its Modalities - August 1999

The OAU presented the two countries with detailed "technical arrangements" for the implementation of the OAU's framework agreement and its modalities in August 1999. Worked out by experts from OAU, the U.N., and the governments of Algeria and the U.S., the technical arrangements were presented as an integral and final part of the OAU settlement plan. The document mandated a peacekeeping mission, established under the authority of the U.N. Security Council, to monitor and assist with the implementation of the OAU's peace package. Paragraph 9 required the parties inter alia to commit themselves to the prohibition of displacement and deportation of civilian populations and to facilitate human rights monitoring. It also addressed the security needs of local populations in and returning to areas where the civilian administration was restored, and empowered the peacekeeping mission to establish as necessary, and in consultation with the parties, local liaison and grievance resolution mechanisms accessible to the population.

[...]

Eritrea immediately accepted the technical arrangements. Ethiopia first signaled its dissatisfaction with some of the document's provisions, and ultimately rejected it altogether, citing its failure to ensure Ethiopia's sovereignty as main reason.

[...]

Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities - June 2000

Ethiopia's major offensive of May 2000 was clearly meant to consolidate its negotiating position. Not only did the offensive lead to Eritrea's withdrawal from all disputed border territories, but it placed Ethiopian troops in undisputed Eritrean territories well inside Eritrea. Ethiopia gained considerable leverage as a result of this military advantage and the pressures resulting from the flight of at least a million Eritrean civilians ahead of the fighting.

Following these shifts, the OAU negotiators presented in early June a "revised, consolidated" peace proposal to representatives of the two parties. In the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities they finally

signed on June 18, 2000, the two parties reaffirm their "acceptance of the OAU Framework Agreement and the Modalities for its Implementation," signaling by omission that the technical arrangements were moot. The agreement required Ethiopia to withdraw to positions it controlled before the start of the war in 1998, but only after the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers in a 25 km wide buffer zone running along the border from which Eritrean troops would be withdrawn. The U.N. peacekeeping force would operate under the auspices of the OAU to monitor the parties' compliance with the agreement and allow the neutral demarcation of the border.

[...]

Comprehensive Peace Agreement - December 12, 2000

On December 12, 2000, the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a comprehensive peace agreement in Algiers in which they committed themselves to the full implementation of the provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, and to permanently terminate military hostilities between themselves. The agreement addressed the same three key issues as the OAU's Framework Agreement on which it was based: delimitation and demarcation of the border, compensation, and investigation of the origins of the conflict. The agreement provided for the establishment of a neutral boundary commission to "delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border"; established a neutral claims commission mandated to decide on all claims of loss, damage, or injury from either side; and set the ground for an independent and impartial investigation into the origin of the conflict. Article 2 of the December 12 agreement also provided for confidence building measures, such as the early release of prisoners of war and all other persons detained in connection to the conflict.

[...]

The claims commission

[...]

Immediately after signing the December agreement, Ethiopia invited any of its citizens, and foreign residents who had suffered material loss or whose human rights have been violated as a result of the war to present their claims to a National Committee for Collecting Compensation Claims. [...]

On January 26, 2001, Ethiopia and Eritrea met the first deadline established by the December 12 agreement by announcing their respective appointments to the neutral Boundary Commission and neutral Claims Commission. [...] One month later, the four arbitrators appointed by the parties to the Claims Commission selected a chairman for the commission. [...] The Claims Commission was to commence its work in The Hague within fifteen days of this formation. This brisk pace hit a snag when by mid May each side had rejected arbitrators nominated by the other. A May 14-15 informal meeting of the commission broke the impasse by agreeing to replace the contested nominees. [...] The commission later provided general information on the progress of its work for inclusion in the secretary-general's June 2001 report to the Security Council. [...] However, the three subsequent quarterly reports of the secretary-general did not annex updates from the Claims Commission.

The international bureau of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which serves as the registry for the claims commission, announced that claims were submitted to the commission by the deadline of December 12, 2001. [...] Under the peace agreement, the commission is to endeavor to complete its work within three years of the deadline for filing claims." (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.39-43)

"The 15-point plan, brokered by the OAU in Algiers, provides for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in a buffer zone extending 26 km into Eritrea, and the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from areas occupied inside Eritrea since 6 February 1999. Demarcation of the border will follow later." (IRIN-CEA 19 June 2000)

Provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities:

"2. Under the Agreement, which was circulated on 19 June 2000 as a document of the Security Council (S/2000/601), the parties have committed themselves to:

(a) Resolving the present crisis and any other dispute between them through peaceful and legal means in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charters of OAU and the United Nations; (b) Rejecting the

use of force as a means of (c) Respecting the borders existing at independence, as stated in OAU resolution AHG/Res 16 (1), adopted in Cairo in 1964, and in this regard determining them on the basis of pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law, making use, to that end, of technical means to demarcate the borders and, in case of controversy, to resort to the appropriate means of arbitration.

3. The Agreement commits the parties to an immediate cessation of hostilities and stipulates that, starting from the signature of the Agreement, all air and land attacks are to cease. The parties have also reaffirmed their acceptance of the OAU Framework Agreement and the modalities for its implementation.

4. Under the Agreement, the parties called upon the United Nations, in cooperation with OAU, to establish a peacekeeping operation to assist in the implementation of the Agreement and guaranteed to ensure free movement and access for the peacekeeping mission and its supplies, as required, through their territories and to respect its members, installations and equipment.

5. Under the Agreement, Ethiopia shall submit to the peacekeeping mission redeployment plans for its troops from positions taken after 6 February 1999 which were not under Ethiopian administration before 6 May 1998. This redeployment is to take place within two weeks after the deployment of the peacekeeping mission and is to be verified by it. For its part, Eritrea is to maintain its forces at a distance of 25 kilometres (artillery range) from positions to which the Ethiopian forces are to redeploy. This zone of separation is to be referred to as the 'temporary security zone'. (SC 30 June 2000, paras. 2-5)

"Peace deal signed [18 June 2000]

Ethiopia and Eritrea on Sunday signed a peace agreement, raising hopes that the two year-old border dispute may be at an end. The 15-point plan, brokered by the OAU in Algiers, provides for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in a buffer zone extending 26 km into Eritrea, and the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from areas occupied inside Eritrea since 6 February 1999. Demarcation of the border will follow later. The accord was signed by the foreign ministers of the two countries. Eritrean Foreign Minister Haile Woldemariam said the agreement was the 'first step, but not the end of the process', Eritrean radio reported. He said the road to sustainable peace would be full of obstacles and complications, but stressed his government's commitment to the agreement. His comments were echoed by his Ethiopian counterpart, Seyoum Mesfin. Quoted by Tigray radio in Mekele, Seyoum however said the agreement had created a 'conducive environment for the next round of talks', and described it as a 'political victory' for Ethiopia.

[...]

ETHIOPIA: Troops pull out of Tesseney

Ethiopia said on Monday it had withdrawn troops from the western Eritrean town of Tesseney, which it captured last week. Speaking the day after Addis Ababa signed the peace deal with Asmara, the Ethiopian government spokeswoman Selome Tadesse said the troops had 'successfully completed their mission' and had withdrawn 'to positions from which they can defend themselves and liberated Ethiopian territories on the western front'. (IRIN-CEA 19 June 2000)

Provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities:

"2. Under the Agreement, which was circulated on 19 June 2000 as a document of the Security Council (S/2000/601), the parties have committed themselves to:

(a) Resolving the present crisis and any other dispute between them through peaceful and legal means in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charters of OAU and the United Nations; (b) Rejecting the use of force as a means of (c) Respecting the borders existing at independence, as stated in OAU resolution AHG/Res 16 (1), adopted in Cairo in 1964, and in this regard determining them on the basis of pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law, making use, to that end, of technical means to demarcate the borders and, in case of controversy, to resort to the appropriate means of arbitration.

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"[O]n 12 December 2000, I [the UN Secretary General] witnessed the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (A/55/686-S/2000/1183), at a ceremony hosted by President Bouteflika in Algiers. Also in attendance were the United States Secretary of State, Mrs. Madeleine Albright, the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the Representative of the President of the United States of America, Mr. Anthony Lake, and the Personal Envoy of the President of the European Union, Mr. Rino Serri. [...] The Agreement provides that the two parties shall permanently terminate military hostilities between themselves, shall refrain from the threat or use of force against each other, and shall respect and fully implement the provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 [...]. The 12 December Agreement also provides for the early release and repatriation of prisoners of war and all other persons detained as a result of the armed conflict. At the same time, the text calls for an investigation to be conducted by an independent and impartial body to determine the origins of the conflict. The Agreement further envisages the establishment, [...] of a neutral boundary commission which is mandated to delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border based on pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law. In addition, the Agreement further provides for the establishment of a neutral commission to decide on all claims for loss, damage or injury from either side." (UN SC 12 January 2001, para. 4)

Assessment of the situation in August 2001:

"The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea remains confident of the peace process, the head of UNMEE told AFP on Monday [27 August 2001], dismissing recent speculation of another war between the Horn of Africa neighbours.

[...]

'In our judgement the likelihood of another war at this point is almost nil,' UN special representative Legwaila Joseph Legwaila told AFP in an interview.

It has been nearly a year since UNMEE began operations here and there are now 3,865 peacekeepers monitoring a 25-kilometer (15-mile) wide buffer corridor, or Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), separating the Eritrean and Ethiopian armies.

'We have observed the positions of the redeployed forces. We know where they are, we know what they're doing, and one thing they are not doing is preparing for war. In fact the one thing they are doing is they are preparing for the demobilization of their forces,' said Legwaila. According to Legwaila, Ethiopia has to date demobilized 70,000 troops and is in the process of demobilizing 30,000 more." (AFP 27 August 2001)

Demining remains a crucial issue to finalise demarcation (June 2003)

- Delays in demining and demarcation makes return impossible
- Demobilisation programme delayed due to lack of funds
- Fear of newly laid mines

"The UN Security Council has renewed and bolstered the mandate of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to include assistance with demining for demarcation activities along the border. The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Eritrea and Ethiopia are finalising a joint plan of action to address humanitarian issues related to demarcation. The Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) has remained largely calm and stable, with the exception of isolated cases of confrontation between the peacekeepers and armed militiamen as well as pastoralists encroaching into the area in search of water and pasture.

The implications of the delays in demarcation, the possible transfer of territories as well as the continued threat of Mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to those living and working in and around the TSZ, have implied that a significant number of those affected by demarcation including the current caseload of IDPs and expellees are unable to return. They will remain where they are currently, needing full support, particularly food assistance and replacement of worn-out shelter.

The successful conclusion of the Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process is of critical importance not only to restore sustainable peace and security in the region but also to contribute to bolstering the economy as well as longer-term solutions to humanitarian challenges. The CAP 2003 indicated the demobilisation of 200,000 soldiers; however, the programme has been delayed with only a few soldiers so far demobilised. Already there is severe shortage of labour, which negatively affects the national economy and society. The demobilisation of these soldiers would free up much-needed human resources in the country as well as enhance the reintegration and rehabilitation of affected communities.

Since the closure of the Sudan-Eritrea border in October 2002 due to tensions between the two countries, the anticipated repatriation of returning refugees from Sudan to Eritrea has not been able to progress. At the time of writing, some 32,571 Eritrean refugees (plus an additional 4,000 undocumented applicants) in Sudan have registered to repatriate. Efforts are underway to allow the voluntary repatriation exercise to resume, and UNHCR expects the convoys to start up again shortly." (UN, 3 June 2003)

"Seven people have been killed by newly laid landmines in 2003 in the border region of Eritrea and Ethiopia, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), said on Thursday. Phil Lewis, who heads UNMEE's Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC), added that close to 30 people were injured.

On Sunday, an Eritrean militia truck hit a newly laid anti-tank mine, injuring the driver. UNMEE deminers who carried out a technical investigation into the incident, which occurred in the eastern border region, reported that there was clear evidence it had been planted very recently. "There was fresh soil about two metres away from the actual point of impact so it was pretty obvious that somebody has laid a mine, probably the night before," Lewis said.

Sunday's incident was the first involving a newly laid mine in Sector East, where border demarcation is expected to start in July. The mine exploded near the main road between the Red Sea port of Assab and the border town of Bure in the 25-km wide security buffer zone between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Two weeks ago, a newly laid mine exploded some 900 km away, in the western sector of the border region. These are the only two incidents of the sort since the beginning of March.

[...]

Lewis said there did not appear to be an increasing trend in planting mines, and that there was no "surge" in activity. In February there had been seven explosions of newly laid mines in the western sector of the 1,000-km long border region. Meanwhile, in another blast on Tuesday, a mine killed a 55-year-old man who was grazing his cattle in the security zone. UNMEE MACC said it was carrying out an investigation." (IRIN, 20 June 2003)

General deterioration of human rights in Eritrea (March 2003)

- High level of short-term political stability reflects the effectiveness of government repression
- Amnesty International criticizes the National Assembly of interfering with the independence of the judiciary
- 11 political dissidents were detained on grounds of "treason"
- Eritrea failed to hold parliamentary elections in December 2001
- European Parliament described Eritrean polity as being in an "authoritarian trend"
- Denmark announced it would cease bilateral aid after 2005

"The high level of short-term political stability reflects the effectiveness of government repression, justified in terms of external threat from Ethiopia, and the resulting climate of fear. The centralised and disciplined rule of the People's Front for Democracy & Justice (PFDJ), and the embodiment as a ruling party of the EPLF, has become increasingly repressive since imprisoning former ministers and other critics in 2001. Others have been detained, the private media banned and elections, first postponed because of war but promised by December 2001, were once again put off for another year.

Alongside accusations and criticisms leveled by the Eritrean government at the behavior of Ethiopia and opposition groups characterized as Ethiopian-inspired agents or mercenaries, restrictive actions include an unannounced ban in January of the playing of songs in Amharic, a major language in Ethiopia and the first language of many Eritreans, in bars and music shops. This is seen as a continuation in government curbs on civil liberties over the past two years. [...]" (Swisspeace, March 2003)

"International human rights organisations have recently criticised what they describe as the worsening situation in Eritrea. Amnesty International said the resolutions of last month's long-awaited National Assembly session "seriously undermine the rule of law and the protection of human rights". It voiced concern over the detention of 11 prominent dissidents, accusing the National Assembly of "blatantly interfering with the independence of the judiciary" by proclaiming that the 11 had committed treason. The government, it said, had "unleashed an unprecedented campaign of oppression against its critics". The sentiments were echoed by Human Rights Watch which wrote of "shrinking liberties" in Eritrea.

More importantly, the European Parliament dealt a serious blow to Eritrea's image, accusing it of human rights violations and expressing concern over the "authoritarian trend" in the country. In a resolution, passed early in February, it highlighted the arrests of the dissidents, the ban on the private press, the non-implementation of the constitution, last year's expulsion of the Italian ambassador and the failure to hold parliamentary elections in December 2001.

Eritrea strongly criticised the resolution as "replete with gross misrepresentation of facts", saying it was "unfair and unjustified". But the European Union is Eritrea's leading development partner and the resolution could have far-reaching implications. Denmark has already announced it will not provide further bilateral development aid after 2005.

Independent observers say it is important for Eritreans "to know they're known outside their own borders, that what they do in the 'privacy' of their own country is being watched...and will have lasting effects on the way their country is handled in the future". But, they add, there has to be some balance and an attempt to place events in an "Eritrean context". (IRIN 22 February 2002)

POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

Total national figures

Total internally displaced population in Eritrea: 58,953 persons (May 2004)

- 50,777 IDPs reside in camps in Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea
- 8,176 IDPs located outside camps in Gash Barka and Southern Red Sea with host communities

"According to recent ICC Field Liaison assessment, there has been no movement of IDPs to and from the camps." (UN OCHA, 17 June 2004)

"The number and locations of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has not changed. According to ICC's recent assessment, currently there are 50,777 IDPs in camps and 8,176 out side camps with host communities in Eritrea." (ICC, 29 February 2004)

IDPs in Camps		
Region	Sub Zone	Estimated number of IDPs
Gash Barka	Gogne	15,782
	Shambuko	9,823
	Molki	2,594
Debub	Senafe	12,252
	Tsorona	8,618
	Adi Quala	1,149
	Mai Aini	109
Northern Red Sea	Ghindae	450
Sub-total		50,777
IDPs Outside Camps		
Gash Barka	Goluj	6,862
	Tessenei	826
Southern Red Sea	Debai Sima	488
Sub-total		8,176
Total IDPs		58,953

Source: UN OCHA, 31 May 2004, p. 12.

58,180 persons remain displaced - fear of increasing numbers as effect of drought worsens (June 2003)

- UN OCHA Eritrea reports 67,935 IDPs as per May 2003
- Approximately 47,492 IDPs still unable to go home remain in camps and require substantial humanitarian support as they have no access to income-generating opportunities
- The return of 10,688 IDPs outside camps/in host communities is pending upon improvements in the security situation
- 2001 saw the return of 15,569 IDPs bringing the total returnee number at 185,569

- 58,180 IDPs continue to be unable to return to their home areas due to landmines and lack of infrastructural rehabilitation

"The current number of IDPs totals 58,180, which is expected to remain constant until the demarcation process allows IDPs to return to their villages." (USAID, 18 March 2003)

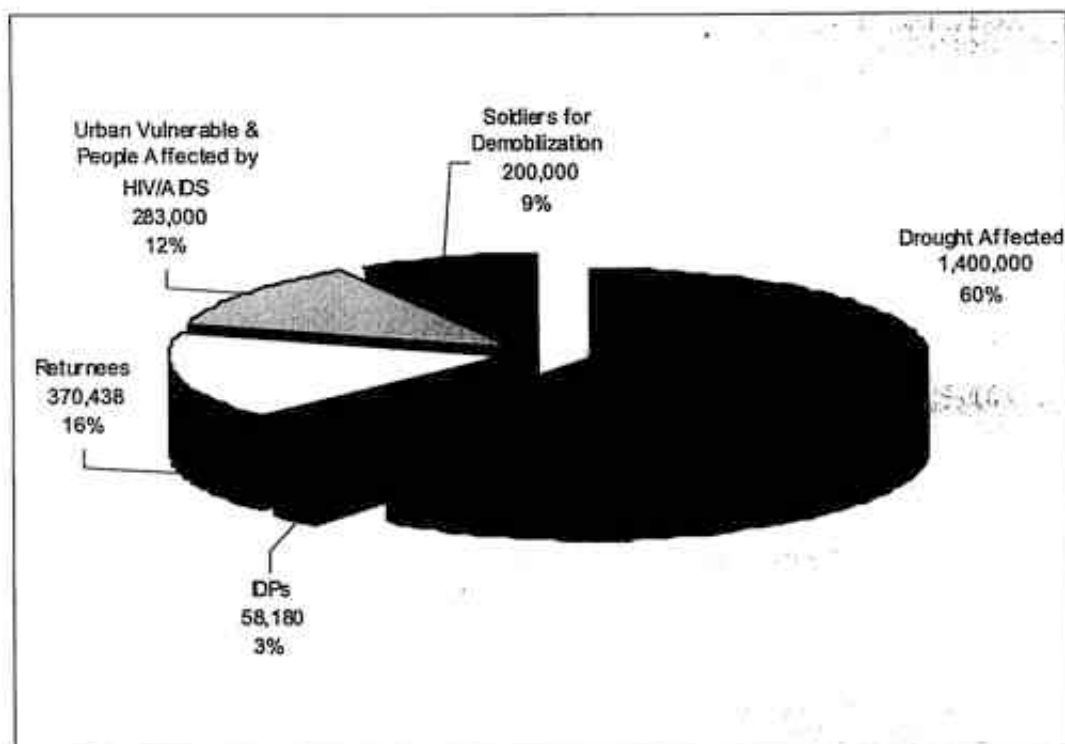
War Affected Population (WB, 19 June 2003)

Vulnerable Population at end 2001	Population at end 2002	Population	Population	Change
IDPs		73,749	58,180	- 15,569
Returned Refugees			83,991	103,000 + 19,009
Returned IDPs		170,000	185,569	+ 15,569
Refugees in Eritrea			1,922	3,058 + 1,136
Expellees / Deportees		13,694	16,811	+ 3,117
Soldiers to be Demobilised			200,000	195,000 -5,000
Total		543,356	561,618	+ 18,262

Source: UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal: Eritrea, 2003

Populations of Concern in 2003 (IASC-WG, 12-13 March 2003)

- Total Estimated Population: 3.29 million
- Total Population of Concern: 2.31 million



Population in Need of Food Assistance 2003 (WB, 19 June 2003)

Administrative Zone	Drought Victims	IDPs/Returnee IDPs/Expellees	Returnee refugees	Other Vulnerable*	Expected returnees
Anseba	250,000	16	895	55,000	305,911
Debub	430,000	110,000	255	90,000	630,255
Gash Barka	340,000		140,000	49,261	60,000
Maekel	102,000	0	147	260,000	362,147
North Red Sea	280,000	425	1,141	13,000	294,566
South Red Sea	48,000	955	5	3,000	51,960
Expected returnees)					100,000
Total	1,450,000	251,396	51,704	481,000	100,000

2,334,100

*Includes soldiers to be demobilized and urban vulnerable population

Source: ERREC

Numbers of IDPs as per May 2003 (UN OCHA)

IDPs in camps, Debub: 22,335
 IDPs in camps, Gash Barka: 35,948
 IDPs in camps, Northern Red sea: 450
 Grand total of IDPs in camps: 58,733

IDPs outside camps, Debub: 443
 IDPs outside camps, Gash Barka: 7,781
 IDPs outside camps, Southern Red sea: 978
 Grand total of IDPs outside camps: 9,202

TOTAL: 67,935

(UN OCHA, 4 August 2003 per e-mail)

"The issue of IDPs, a consequence of war, has not been completely solved and may not be until peace is fully established and the country returns to normalcy. The current number of IDPs totals 58,180. These will continue to require emergency relief assistance, including both food and non-food aid in 2003.[...]

➤ IDPs in camps

In 2000 and 2001, there was a large-scale return of IDPs to areas in Gash-Barka and Debub. Improvements in the security situation allowed many to begin to rebuild their lives and communities in previously inaccessible areas. However, the home areas of 47,492 IDPs, originally from areas now within the TSZ, remained inaccessible due to the presence of land mines, overall insecurity and the failure of demarcation. These IDPs have been accommodated mainly in camps in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub. The remaining group, still largely unable to conduct income-generating activities will continue to require significant humanitarian support in all sectors.

➤ IDPs outside camps/host communities

In addition to IDPs still in camps, 10,688 IDPs are living with host communities and in scattered groups, complementing their livelihoods with their own very limited resources, in the Guluj, Tebeldia, Gergef, and

Sabunait areas of Gash-Barka. Originally, from the Omhajer area, this population is waiting for improvements in the security situation before returning to their homes.

[...]

➤ **IDPs Returning to Home Areas**

Since November 2001, an additional 15,569 IDPs have returned spontaneously." (UN, November 2002, p.13-14)

"In 2001, 15,569 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) returned to their home areas bringing the total number of returnees to 185,569. The remaining 58,180 IDPs have been unable to return to their home areas due to the presence of landmines, unexploded ordnances (UXOs), insecurity or the fact that the infrastructure has been completely destroyed. A further 16, 811 rural expellees are also accommodated in camps, awaiting reintegration." (UN, November 2002, p.1)

TOTAL AFFECTED POPULATION (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003)

Refugees	3,572
IDPs	58,180
TOTAL	61,752

IDPs in Camps

Region	Sub Zone	Estimated number of IDPs
Gash Barka	Gogne	16,054
	Shambuko	8,186
	Molki	2,241
Debub	Senafe	11,046
	Tsorona	8,133
	Adi Quala	1,002
	Mai Aini	380
Northern Red Sea	Ghindae	450
Sub-total		47,492

IDPs Outside Camps

Gash Barka	Goluj	8,828
	Shambuko/Binbina	1,372
Southern Red Sea	Debai Sima	488
Sub-total		10,688
TOTAL IDPs		58,180

OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Soldiers for Demobilization	200,000
Returning IDPs	185,569
Returning Refugees	103,000
Drought Affected	1,400,000
Host Families	15,000
Urban Vulnerables	213,000
HIV/AIDS	70,000

Expellees in Camps	16,811
TOTAL	2,203,380

USCR: 75,000 remain displaced throughout the country (June 2003)

- Landmines, destruction of infrastructure, absence of basic services and food shortages among factors which impede return
- Two-thirds of IDPs in camps in urgent need of adequate shelter
-

"Approximately 75,000 war-uprooted Eritreans remained displaced throughout the country at year's end.

The prevalence of landmines, poor security, and the widespread destruction of businesses, homes, and water and transportation systems within the Temporary Security Zone prevented the return of tens of thousands of internally displaced Eritreans.

The absence of basic health care and education services in war-destroyed villages also impeded large-scale return.

Nearly 50,000 internally displaced persons continued to live in some 20 camps in western Eritrea's Gash Barka and Debub Zones. An additional 10,000 resided in makeshift camps and host communities. Eritrea's displaced population also included some 15,000 people of Eritrean descent who were deported from Ethiopia during the war.

Severe drought, food shortages, and Eritrea's depressed economy compounded the already difficult lives of the country's displaced population. Most lacked alternative sources of income and relied exclusively on relief organizations for their daily needs, including WFP food rations.

The two-thirds of internally displaced Eritreans who resided in camps were in urgent need of adequate shelter, according to UN relief agencies. Displaced families living outside of camps struggled to survive on only 60 percent of the minimum daily food requirement, according to health workers. Insufficient rain caused near total crop failure for displaced persons who had access to farmland. The continued presence of UN peacekeepers along the border enabled more than 15,000 displaced Eritreans to return to their villages of origin during 2002." (USCR, 2003)

Deportees from Ethiopia of Eritrean origin resettled temporarily in IDP camps (June 2003)

"A total of 8,700 Eritreans expelled from Ethiopia in 1998, and who have been homeless ever since, have been given farmland by the Eritrean government. The 2,870 families, who have each been given one hectare of land, have been relocated in trucks from Shelab camp - shared by internally displaced people and expellees - in the northwestern region of Gash Barka to three other localities: Gherenfit East, Gherenfit West and Wedi Emmi.

Gherenfit was chosen for its suitability for farming, in an attempt to end the families' dependency on relief. They are being given seeds and farming implements by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), although experts say cultivation may not be possible this season due to an ongoing drought.

Nevertheless, Simon Nhongo, UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator in Eritrea, described the move as "a major breakthrough" for the families, after over four years of waiting. "The difference between them and the other camp occupants was that they had no original place to return to," he said.

He said the land had been cleared of bushes and obstacles to farming, roads had been opened to make the areas accessible, and water was being pumped to them from the Gash river. School facilities had also been moved from Shelab camp to Gherenfit. "One factor which has been critical in getting them accepted by the host communities are these additional benefits that come to the local communities - in the form of a water supply and schooling, which were nonexistent before," said Nhongo.

After between 75,000 and 80,000 Eritreans were expelled from Ethiopia in 1998, 16,000 rural expellees ended up living in camps, in the hope of being allocated farmland. The rest dispersed into Eritrean communities. The Eritrean government and UNDP hope to be in a position to resettle the remaining 7,300 who are still in camps, within the next two months. First, however, basic water and sanitation facilities, as well as schools, need to be provided on the site around Ugumu village, between Gherenfit and Awgaro. Before that, however, funding has to be found to provide these facilities. "The timing is absolutely essential," said Nhongo. "We need to get them there in time for the schooling, also the beginning of the planting season is very critical."

If the facilities were not in place, the expellees would have to remain where they were for another year, Nhongo told IRIN. At the moment, they are only receiving 60 percent of normal food rations, due to a lack of funding for food aid. While some of them had livestock and cattle, and others small businesses, others were going hungry every day, he said." (IRIN, 16 June 2003)

"In addition to IDPs and returnees, almost 14,000 persons out of the 75,000 expellees from Ethiopia are in camps." (OCHA, August 2002, pp.11-13)

"The border with Ethiopia was closed in 1998 due to the outbreak of war, although Eritreans deported from Ethiopia crossed the border and were allowed to resettle in the country. As many as 75,000 Eritreans or Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were deported from Ethiopia. The deportees, if they wished, were placed in villages with friends or family. Those who no longer had connections in Eritrea were placed temporarily in camps with IDPs before being settled among the general population. To facilitate the deportees' integration into society, the Government provided them with documentation that was valid for 6 months and identified them as deportees. If, during that time, the deportees could find three Eritrean witnesses willing to testify to their Eritrean ties, the Government issued them documentation of Eritrean nationality and considered them to be permanent citizens. For the small minority of deportees who could not demonstrate Eritrean ties, the Government granted them identity documents that specified that they were Ethiopian but permitted them to stay in the country." (USDOS 4 March 2002)

Between 50,000-70,000 people remained internally displaced in 2001 (December 2001)

- Three previously unreported IDP camps in Gem'e (993 IDPs), Endabastifanos (1,972 IDPs) and Adi-Nefas (1,300 IDPs) brings the total number of IDPs to 48,877
- By November 2001 73,749 IDPs required emergency relief assistance By November 2001 an estimated 23,510 IDPs lived outside camps
- By November 2001 an estimated 170,000 IDPs have returned
- During first quarter 2001 about 208,000 IDPs accommodated in 19 camps in Gash Barka, Dedub and North Red Sea zones
- IDPs unable to return have been sheltered in temporary camps

"There has been no reported IDP movement recently. Nevertheless, the ICC field unit in a recent field mission has reported three IDP camps which were not included in the previous ICC issues. These are: Gem'e (993 IDPs) and Endabastifanos (1,972 IDPs) in Debub zone, and Adi-Nefas (1,300 IDPs) in Northern Red Sea zone. This brings the total number of IDP in camps to 48,877." (ICC, 28 December 2001)

Disaggregated IDP numbers by need-groups by November 2001:

"As a result of the combined effects of war and drought 73,749 IDPs will continue to require emergency relief assistance, including both food and non-food aid in 2002.

[...]

IDPs in camps

As described above, 2001 saw the large-scale return of IDPs to areas in Gash-Barka and Debub. Improvements in the security situation allowed many to begin to rebuild their lives and communities in previously inaccessible areas. However, the home areas of 50,239 IDPs, originally from areas now within the TSZ, remain inaccessible. These IDPs are accommodated in camps in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub.

[...]

IDPs in host communities

Of the total IDP population, 14,199 displaced live with host families in the regions of Maakel, Anseba, Debub, South Red Sea, and North Red Sea.

[...]

IDPs outside camps/host communities

In addition to IDPs still in camps and those living with host communities, an estimated 9,311 IDPs are living in scattered groups, relying on their own very limited recourses, in the Guluj, Tebeldia, Gergef, and Sabunait areas of Gash-Barka. Originally, from the Omhajer area, this population is *waiting for improvements in the security situation before returning to their homes.*

[...]

IDPs Returning to Home Areas

Dramatic improvements in the security situation that followed the signing of the Algiers Peace Agreement in December 2000, the deployment of UNMEE and the establishment of the TSZ, made possible the return of approximately 170,000 IDPs to areas previously inaccessible. These IDPs are currently rebuilding their lives and communities, often in areas ravaged by war. Assistance to this group will invariably include reintegration-, rehabilitation-, and reconstruction-related interventions." (UN, November 2001, pp. 14-15)

"Following the signing of the Algiers Peace Agreement in December 2000, the Government, assisted by the humanitarian community, was able to stabilise the humanitarian situation during the first quarter of 2001. At that time, a total of 208,000 [figure from ERREC...] IDPs were accommodated in 19 camps in Gash Barka, Debub and North Red Sea zones and a further 71,073 IDPs were living outside camps throughout the country. As the guns fell silent, and confidence mounted, the populations started to return voluntarily to accessible home villages as early as March 2001. As the peace process continued to hold and the United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) announced the establishment of the TSZ on 18 April 2001, the Government conducted organised repatriations of IDPs from camps to give returnees an opportunity to cultivate their lands during the 2001 agriculture season (however, due to a lack of seeds, tools, and draught animals, some were unable to take full advantage of this year's planting season).

IDP population outside camps

A large part of the 170,000 IDPs that have returned to date were moved during the rainy season; others returned spontaneously. However, a total of 73,759 persons remain in or outside camps, and with host communities as their home areas remain inaccessible due to various factors including contamination by mines and UXOs, insecurity caused by the close proximity of villages to the border, or the fact that several villages are located in areas currently under Ethiopian administration. This population continues to require food aid and non-food assistance. In May 2001, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) together with the Government initiated the repatriation of Eritrean refugees from Sudan. About 21,000 refugees were repatriated by September 2001; another 41,000 are expected to be repatriated by the end of 2001." (UN, November 2001, p.8)

"An estimated 44,387 Eritrean internally displaced persons (IDPs) remain in eight camps in Gash-Barka and Debub provinces, the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) said in a press briefing on 9 November. In addition to these, another 9,311 IDPs are living outside the camps, in locations around Gulu, Gergef, and Sabunaite in Gash-Barka Province, according to the Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (ERREC), UNMEE said. These IDPs are mainly from the Om Hager area and are awaiting the restoration of social services and the completion of the mine-clearance work in the area, said UNMEE." (IRIN 12 November 2001)

"While most of the internally displaced had returned to their villages in and around the Temporary Security Zone, some 50,000 civilians were unable to return because of uncleared land mines or the presence of Ethiopian troops in some areas, Ibrahim told AFP. These people have been moved to seven temporary camps located as close as possible to their places of origin." (IRIN 25 July 2001)

"There has been no major IDPs movement recently. About 70,000 IDPs including expellees are not able to return home and are accommodated in 10 camps in Gash Barka and Debub zones. The figures for IDPs who returned to their home areas stands still at 170,000 persons." (ICC 16 August 2001)

"To date [5 September 2001], a total of 170,000 such persons have returned to their villages in the Zone, with the assistance of the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Committee and international humanitarian agencies.

However, a total of 70,000 persons still live in consolidated or newly established temporary camps, as their home areas remain inaccessible owing to the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance, insecurity caused by the close proximity of villages to the southern boundary of the Temporary Security Zone, or the fact that some villages are located in areas currently under Ethiopian administration. With regard to the latter, the Ethiopian authorities have agreed in principle that Eritrean internally displaced persons can return to those villages. However, the details and procedures for their return still need to be defined." (UN SC 5 September 2001, paras.23-24)

"According to the recent ANA findings, approximately 53% of the war-affected population is female. Moreover, as a result of the recent crisis, there has been a significant increase in the number of female-headed households. Women head approximately 20% of households and there are also a significant number of children-headed households, particularly in IDP camps, which face exceptional hardships as a result of the war." (WFP May 2001, para. 14)

Major decrease of IDP numbers during 2000: from 900,000 to 308,000 by end-2000 (November 2001)

- Claimed that IDP population exceeded one million by July 2000
- Number of IDPs in camps reported to be 390,000 by beginning of July 2000
- Estimated that 100,000 IDPs were living outside camps by November 2000
- Estimated in July 2000 that up to 600,000 IDPs had sought refugee other places than the camps
- Reported in January 2001 that 208,000 IDPs were remaining in camps

Target Population Description	Target Population Number	Type of Assistance
Drought-Affected	738,450*	Food Aid: 1.76 Million
IDPs in Camps (including Deportees in Camps)	208,163	
Rural War-Affected, including: • IDPs Outside Camps • Host Community Population • Returnee IDPs/Refugees • Eritreans under occupation (43,000 to 50,000) • Rural Deportees not in camps	708,241	Non-Food Aid: Smaller sub-sets of the 1.76 Million in need of food.
Returnees from Sudan**	62,000	
Deportees/Expellees**	45,000	
Total	1,761,854	
Urban Vulnerable Population	154,510***	Non-Food Aid

*Figure includes drought-affected in the following regions: 288,835 in Anseba; 255,842 in Northern Red Sea; 134,133 in Southern Red Sea; and 79,640 in Maekel.

**Provisional planning figures. Regarding returnees from Sudan, the planning figure used by WFP and UNHCR is 62,000. The Government uses 65,000.

*** A higher Governmental figure (298,312) includes food and non-food beneficiaries.

(Source: GOE/UN February 2001, p. 17)

"The war left tens of thousands of soldiers dead on both sides and pushed an estimated 1.5 million Eritreans and Ethiopians from their homes. At the end of July, approximately 900,000 Eritreans were internally displaced and about 90,000 were new refugees in neighboring countries." (USCR August 2000)

"As of July 12, the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) reported that an estimated 390,000 Eritrean internally displaced persons (IDPs) are currently residing in camps and temporary settlements. According to government and UN estimates, up to 600,000 IDPs are either living with host communities or grouped informally in areas close to streams or bushes with no access to basic necessities." (USAID 21 July 2000)

The IDP population grew rapidly from initially 500,000 to more than 1 million between May and June 2000:

"Our first estimates were that 500,000 Eritreans had been displaced, but the ongoing fighting has forced us to reevaluate the figure to nearly 750,000 people," Trevor Rowe, WFP spokesman told AFP here." (AFP 6 June 2000)

"The conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea has generated over one million IDPs in Eritrea. They are, for the most part, located in areas that are expected to receive the majority of returnees in the anticipated large-scale repatriation movement. Many of the current IDPs were, at some point, refugees in Sudan." (UNHCR July 2000, p. 5)

As fast as they fled people returned home:

"In addition to the 202,000 IDPs in 24 recognised camps, there are an estimated 100,000 IDPs living outside camps." (ICC 6 November 2000)

"According to the latest Government estimates, approximately 600,000 people have returned to their areas of origin since 18 June 2000. However, more than 200,000 people remain accommodated in camps. These Eritreans currently can not return to their original home areas due to security concerns, the presence of landmines or their inability to re-establish their lives in areas where destruction to personal assets and communal services has been substantial. In addition, it is estimated that there are currently still over 100,000 IDPs outside camps, the majority of whom are accommodated in host communities. Furthermore, there are approximately 76,000, mostly rural, deportees who are not likely to be able to return to their home areas in the near future." (UN November 2000, p.1)

"There are currently 24 organized camps in the three zobas of Debub, Gash-Barka and Northern Red Sea. The 208,163 camp residents are living in tents or under plastic sheeting and are almost completely dependent on ERREC and the humanitarian community for emergency relief. Some 80% have lived in camps for more than two years [...]." (GOE/UN February 2001, p. 14)

"There have been no major IDP movements during recent weeks [mid-January 2001]. As noted in previous Updates, 8,000 rural refugees in Jejah have moved to Shelab and Dembe Doran has emptied with its 4,000 residents relocating to Jejah. Therefore there are a total of 24 camps in Eritrea presently." (ICC 22 January 2001)

"The third round of fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia that raged in May and June 2000 led to large-scale displacement of the civilian population in Eritrea. More than one million persons fled from the fighting and disputed border areas and were displaced to locations both within and outside Eritrea. By December 2000, there were 208,163 IDPs in 24 camps inside Eritrea; an estimated 95,000 fled to Sudan. 708,241 persons were either IDPs outside camps, accommodated by host communities, civilians living in occupied territories, or deportees not living in camps. A total of 75,000 persons were expelled from Ethiopia. As most of the fighting took place in the fertile Gash-Barka and Debub regions, where 70% of the national grain output is produced, fighting in and displacement from these areas led to a major disruption of agriculture production, resulting in severe food shortages in the country. The protracted drought that affected much of the Horn of Africa also impacted four regions in Eritrea affecting an estimated 738,450 people." (UN November 2001, pp. 11)

The IDP population estimated to amount to 266,200 by the end of 1999 (January 2000)

- 127,850 living in 30 camps while 138,350 stay with host communities
- 28,000 Eritreans deported from Ethiopia treated as IDPs

"There are currently a total of 266,200 IDPs, of which 127,850 are living in 30 camps while 138,350 are living with Host Communities outside camps. The IDPs are almost equally divided between Gash-Barka Region, close to the Badame area in the southwest lowlands, and Debub Region, south of Asmara in the highlands. There are also some 7,000 IDPs in the Assab area of the Southern Red Sea Region." (UN January 2000, pp.2-3)

Categories of War-affected Populations	Individuals
IDPs in camps	
Gash-Barka	47,530
Debub	80,320
Sub-total	127,850
IDPs outside camps	
Gash-Barka	42,110
Debub	89,240
Southern Red Sea	7,000
Sub-total	138,350
TOTAL IDPs	266,200
Rural Deportees in camps	
Gash-Barka	15,820
Sub-total	15,820
Rural Deportees outside camps	
Gash-Barka	1,520

Debub	11,010
Sub-total	12,530
TOTAL RURAL DEPORTEES	28,350

(UN January 2000, table 2)

"Of the 67,000 people of Eritrean heritage who have been deported from Ethiopia, some 39,000 urban deportees have been left to fend for themselves, after token initial support from the Government. On the other hand, about 28,000 Rural Deportees are treated the same as IDPs. More than half of the latter, 15,820, are sheltered in camps while the rest are staying in Host Communities." (UN January 2000, pp.2-3)

A total of 100,000 IDPs reported by the end of 1998 (December 1999)

"The war forced an estimated 100,000 or more Eritreans to flee their homes near the border. Most were farmers and herders.

Local communities provided shelter, but "the disruption and displacement...due to the conflict have put the displaced and receiving communities at very serious risk," UN relief officials stated in September. "There is little chance that the displaced will be able to return to their homes in the immediate future."

In addition to the displaced populations, the war affected 150,000 people, hampering their ability to farm, closing school and health facilities, and forcing impoverished communities to share their limited resources with displaced families. UN agencies reported that they needed nearly \$9 million to provide humanitarian assistance to areas of Eritrea affected by the war." (USCR 1999, p.64)

Geographical distribution

Remaining IDPs unable to return two years after the cease-fire located in Gash Barka., Debub and Northern Red Sea (November 2002)

- Between 6000-7000 IDPs from Korokon camp relocated to Shambiko and Kotobia following acute water shortages (July 2002)

"UNMEE Military Observers have reported that on 29 and 30 June, the Deputy Administrator in Shambiko confirmed that between 6,000 and 7,000 of the 15,000 IDPs in Korokon IDP camp were relocated to Shambiko and Kotobia, because of the acute water shortages in Korokon." (UNMEE, 5 July 2002)

IDPs in camps and near village of origin

Zoba	Sub Zoba	Camp (Village)	No. ICC
Gash Barka		Adi Kesli*	16054
		Korokon	6442
		Shambuko	1744
		Dembedoran	2241
			26481

Debub	Senafe	Afoina	1021
		Auli'e Habaile	4143
		Metera	5882
	Tsorona	Mai Wurrui	5003
		Endabastifanos**	909
		Tsorona	1101
		Gema'e	1120
	Adi Quala	Mai Alba	1002
	Mai Aini	Una Watot	380
			20561
Northern Red Sea Zone		Denden	450
			47492
*Camps			
**Settlement areas			

Gash Barka	Place of Origin	Settlement area	No of Individuals
	Omhaier	Guluj	8828
	Girme/Elala	Shambuko/Binbina	1372
Southern Red Sea	Musa Ali	Debai Sima	488
			10,688

Source: OCHA, November 2002

IDPs unable to return relocated in temporary/transitory camps (December 2001)

- Three previously unreported IDP camps in Gem'e, Endabastifanos and Adi-Nefas brings the total number of IDPs in camps to 48,877 (end 2001)
- IDPs in camps located in Gash-Barka and Debub while those outside camps are located in Guluj, Geref and Sabunaite (November 2001)
- Approximately 50% of the pre-war populations resided in Senafe sub zone, in Monokiseito and Ruba-Natsa villages by May 2001
- In the TSZ the population of 6 out of 7 villages had not returned by May 2001
- Return movements slowed down by end-July 2001
- New camps established in Tsorona sub zone for IDPs unable to return

"There has been no reported IDP movement recently. Nevertheless, the ICC field unit in a recent field mission has reported three IDP camps which were not included in the previous ICC issues. These are: Gem'e (993 IDPs) and Endabastifanos (1,972 IDPs) in Debub zone, and Adi-Nefas (1,300 IDPs) in Northern Red Sea zone. This brings the total number of IDP in camps to 48,877." (ICC, 28 December 2001)

"An estimated 44,387 Eritrean internally displaced persons (IDPs) remain in eight camps in Gash-Barka and Debub provinces, the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) said in a press briefing on 9 November. In addition to these, another 9,311 IDPs are living outside the camps, in locations around Guluj, Geref, and Sabunaite in Gash-Barka Province, according to the Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (ERREC), UNMEE said. These IDPs are mainly from the Om Hajer area and are awaiting the

restoration of social services and the completion of the mine-clearance work in the area, said UNMEE." (IRIN 12 November 2001)

"The population of Senafe sub zone is currently estimated to be approximately 50% of its pre-war level. Only one of the villages visited in the sub zone, Serha, was completely empty. For the most part, the people presently residing in their home villages are those who remained there throughout the entire conflict. The Assessment Team noted exceptions, however, in Monokiseito and Ruba-Natsa, among others, where the entire village population was displaced and between 50% and 75% of the pre-war population have now returned." (ICC 2 May 2001b)

"The population of 6 villages out of 7 identified in the TSZ areas of Adi-quala and Mai-Aini sub-zones have not returned to their respective villages. Except Fiqechokomte Kebabi Adi (Adi Mekeda is one of village in this Kebabi Adi) located north of the TSZ the rest of the population are still living in IDP camps. However, since the announcement of peace between the two countries and subsequent withdrawal of troops, local residents in these villages are visiting their properties/homes and preparing for the return. The assessment team noted frequent movements between the camps and their home villages. Despite the risk of mines and UXOs, populations with livestock are grazing their traditional grazing areas near their villages." (ICC 2 May 2001)

"ICC field team visited three newly established camps in Tsorona sub zone from 31 July to 2 August 2001. The objective of the visit was to monitor population movement and prevailing humanitarian situation in the newly established camps. Major highlights from the report are as follows:

Tsorona Camp- accommodates 4,152 population originally from areas of Sarda, Maichena, and Gobe in Tsorona sub zone who were relocated from Alba camp. The reason they could not return to their original villages is due to landmine problem. In the camp basic services are provided except sanitation facilities.

Maiwura Camp- is located approximately 8km north east of Tsorona town. The camp accommodates 4,812 originally from Hadish Adi, Knin and Sebo villages. The reason for not returning is because of security concerns. 107 new tents and 270 plastic sheets were distributed but shelter remains a major problem for the camp.

Aiba camp- is located about 15 km northwest of Tsorona town. It has 3545 people who are originally from village administrations of Dibi and Endabastifanos. The problem, which hindered them from returning to their villages, is the existence of landmine and UXOs." (ICC 16 August 2001)

"Return movement of IDPs to their home areas by ERREC has slowed down in the past weeks [end July 2001] as majority has returned home. Organized return brought back home some 170,000 IDPs.

IDPs in camps				
Zone	Sub-Zone	Camp	Village of origin	Population
Gash-barka	Laelay Gash	Adi-Keshi	Mai-Kokah	1106
			Shilalo	4552
			Sheshebit	2828
			Adi-Hakin	1565

			Mukuti	2183
			Adi-Tsetser	4368
			Adi-Maelel	143
	Shambuko	Korokon	Tsirha	3396
			Deda	4476
			Badime	4526
			Ambori	2734
	Molki	Dembe-Doran	Sifra-Genet	126
			Faulina	1275
	Mensura	Shelab	deportees	7766
	Sub-total			41044
Debab	Senafe	Metera	Ambesete	2217
			Geleba	
			Zalambesa	3914
			Lahio	509
		Auli'e La Haila	Dogogolo	205
			Golo	892
			Telha Ner'e	36
			Adi-Ageb	897
			Tisha	1161
			Endeli	52
		Afoma	MeshalAkran	917
	Tsorona	Mai-Wurray	Hadish Adi	2080
			Kinin	1424
			Sebo	1308
		Tsorona	Tsorona Town	5622

			Sarda	1409
			Maichena	981
			Gobebe	1762
		Aiba	Dibi	1480
			Indaba-estifanos	2065
	Sub-total			28,931
Grand total				69,975

However about 69,975 are still not able to return home and are staying in either existing or newly established camps (See the table above). In Gash Barka 41,044 IDPs are in the camps of Adi-Keshi, Korokon, Shelab and Dembe-Doran. In Debub 28,931 IDPs are in temporary camps in Senafe and Tsorona sub-zones." (ICC 30 July 2001)

Selected geographical information about IDP populations by end-2000 (February 2001)

- Estimated in November 2000 that 1,359 IDP households remained outside camps in the Anseba region
- About 80,000 IDPs in camps in Debub region by end-2000
- Approximately 3,000 separated children remain in the Debub IDP camps
- About 86,000 IDPs in camps in Gash-Barka region by end-2000
- About 17,900 IDPs living outside camps in Maakel region by end-2000
- A total of 47,541 IDPs in camps in Northern Red Sea region by end-2000

Geographical distribution of new IDPs by end-May 2000:

"After the western city of Barentu fell and the city of Agordat was abandoned, hundreds of thousands of Eritreans reportedly have fled in eastwards to the city of Keren and towards the Sudanese border in the West. There are 17,000 refugees in and around the Sudanese border town of Kassala. MSF teams are present to assess the situation, which is not urgent so far.

In Eritrea itself, MSF is trying to get an overview of the stream of refugees in the West. According to unconfirmed reports, there are up to 100,000 refugees located around Teseney and Gulluj. They are without shelter and access to healthcare. An MSF team is travelling to the area and will supply them with jerrycans, plastic sheeting and medicine." (MSF 30 May 2000)

Geographical distribution by June 2000:

"The areas where most IDPs originate include Shambuko, Tokombiya, Molki, Hayakota, Lalay Gash and Barentu, Senafe, Adi Keyh and Adi Quala. One camp at Debaat, some 30 kilometres from Keren, hosts 35,000 displaced people and numbers have been increasing day by day. Other displaced populations are sheltering in the valleys of the Barka river around Akrodat and surrounding areas, and in the south in Dubarwa and Maihabar. IDP population areas also include Akrodat, Tessney and Gulluj. There are reports of about 25,000 displaced people have crossed over to Sudan. About 70 per cent of the IDPs are children, 25 per cent women and 5 per cent elderly men. This conflict has wiped out the next harvest in Eritrea's

main food producing areas and the effects of the food shortage will be felt well beyond the battle zone." (UNICEF 20 June 2000)

"Anseba is a semi-arid region in the north-central part of Eritrea.

[...]

Thousands of IDPs have sought refuge with relatives in various parts of Anseba. Many having been displaced from the highly war-affected regions of Gash Barka and Debub. Since the beginning of the crisis, ERREC, assisted by its humanitarian partners, has provided food and shelter to groups of these IDPs and their host communities. However, due to the difficulties related to identifying all IDPs outside of camps the exact number is not known (there are no IDP camps in Anseba and most are living with host communities). ERREC had initially registered 1,129 households and started distributing tents in October 2000. This figure was revised in November 2000 and now stands at 1,359 households. Most of these IDPs are living in Keren, Elabered and Hagaz." (GOE/UN February 2001, p.30)

"There are 10 camps in Debub with a total population of about 80,000 (16,000 households). The number of separated children in the IDP camps is approximately 3,000. The IDPs are originally from Tsorona and Senafe - areas that are still under Ethiopian occupation. Most of this population group have been displaced for more than two and a half years and have moved numerous times. For the majority of these IDPs, it is no longer a short-term emergency situation. Some IDPs, like those from Tsorona, had time to take some of their belonging with them in 1998 when they first fled. As a result, they have not been provided with the same bundle of household items. Most assessed families stated that the household items and clothing they had are now worn out or were lost during the last offensive. They are not currently in a financial position to acquire any new goods. (GOE/UN February 2001, p.38)

"The IDPs in [Gash Barka] camps (mainly at Adi Keshi, Korokon, Tologanya, Kotobia, and Jejeh camps) were displaced due to the military offensives in February 1999 and May 2000. Most are displaced from the villages either under Ethiopian occupation or very near to the front lines. The IDP population in camps is estimated to be 85,898 (17,179 households). 59% of this IDP population are women; children under 5 are estimated at 18%. Women head a total of 56% of the IDP households. (GOE/UN February 2001, p.44)

"The problems of crop failure and livestock loss, due to drought, was compounded by the war as many household breadwinners involved in national service were unable to work on the land or unable to do casual labor. This impacts IDPs living outside camps (ca. 17,900 persons) [in the Maakel region]." (GOE/UN February 2001, p. 51)

"The approximately 7,000 IDPs residing outside of camps in Northern Red Sea are mainly located in Bada Administrative area in Ghelalo sub-zone. Bada Administrative zone is comprised of 4 villages located near the Ethiopian border. Laimbada and Bolali villages with a total IDP population of 4,000 persons are under Eritrean control while Adimurug and Erimile with 2,900 IDPs are in the occupied areas. The population of Bada comprises about 60% farmers, 30% pastoralist and 10% traders. The Rigale river, the main source of irrigation, is located on the frontline, with roughly half of the population of Bada on either riverbank. Farming activities using the river's flood waters have largely halted due to the war, affecting the local sorghum and maize crops. ERREC has distributed food aid to the population on the Eritrean side. The health center moved from Bada to Ghelalo which is at a 115 km distance and mobile health workers visit the area regularly.

[...]

There are three IDP camps in the Northern Red Sea zone area: Harena, Mekete, and Denden. They accommodate a total of 47,541 displaced persons." (GOE/UN February 2001, pp. 59-60)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

IDPs move out of camps and closer to home areas (February 2001)

- IDPs outside camps trying to stay close to their homes in order to carry agricultural activities
- Some IDPs have left camps to be closer to their villages, but remain in an IDPs situation in the Debub region
- IDPs moving outside camps to progressively move closer to their home communities and access school facilities
- Patterns of movements closer to home areas observed rather to home areas further away from the Eritrean/Ethiopian border

"[IDPs outside Camps] lives in rural host communities, in towns or in areas close to their own homes or villages (many displaced have chosen to remain as close as possible to their homes in order to continue their agricultural activities). They either rent rooms or a home with relatives or friends scattered across Eritrea. Generally, it is very difficult to identify member of this group as they are inevitably linked to their host communities and share the same resources, services and economic hardships. Their return to their home areas is dependent on the establishment of the TSZ, progress made in peace process, and the marking/clearance of landmines and UXOs in the TSZ." (GOE/UN February 2001, pp.14-15)

"In most cases, IDPs outside camps [in the Debub region] were previously, at one point, resident in camps and left those camps to be closer to their villages. One motive frequently sighted was the desire to be closer to their home communities in order to take advantage of facilities such as schools for their children. These IDPs are now sharing scarce resources with their host communities. There is no separate census or calculation as to the numbers in this group as they are included with the returnee population figures, but they nonetheless share many of the same needs. The most urgent needs of this group are to be found in the food sector (supplementary feeding) and the shelter and household items sector." (GOE/UN February 2001, p. 36)

"The dire situation that prevailed in May and June of 2000 has been largely stabilised due to the combined efforts of the humanitarian community. The majority of the IDPs have now returned to their home communities, though many have not yet been able to return to their actual homes. Insecurity, the presence of landmines, lack of access, a severely disrupted economy and very weak social services are deterrents to return for many others and impede the resumption of normal, income-producing activities such as agriculture and small businesses." (UN February 2001, pp. 8-9)

"A clear relationship exists between the proximity of villages to the border and the levels of displacement and return movements. In Tsorona town itself, and villages close-by (including Mai Agam and Kudo Waida), the entire populations have been displaced and no return has taken place to date. North of the trench lines from the third offensive, some temporary return has taken place, mainly to assess the situation, to prepare for the planting season, and to graze cattle. Most of the IDPs from this area are currently residing in the camp at Alba.

Much work needs to be done to prepare for the return of IDPs to Tsorona and villages in the area. The reconstruction of Tsorona and restoration of basic infrastructure and services is the key to return to the

southern cluster of villages. Both Mai Agam and Kudo Waida rely on Tserona for most basic services (such as water, health, and education). Tserona is also the centre of economic activity (market, shops, etc.).

A major obstacle to return in this area is the presence of large quantities of mines and UXOs. Mine/UXO clearance and marking must be completed for the entire sub-zone before any serious return movements can begin. This is due to the fact that a large portion of the population relies on livestock rearing and must move cattle throughout the area in search of pasture and water." (ICC 1 May 2001)

People seeking refugee in secure locations outside the reach of Ethiopian forces (September 2000)

- Concern that over-stretching of host communities may cause new IDP flow toward camps (August 2000)
- IDPs from eight sub-regions in Debub being hosted by four that remain "safe"

"ERREC note a number of IDPs from the hosting communities in the Quatit and Tserona sub-regions moving to Alba camp. Alba camp currently has approximately 14,000 residents. It has a capacity for 20,000, however, there are concerns about the provision of shelter and blankets for the new arrivals. Given the number of IDPs living in host communities and the overstretching of host community resources, there is concern that this sort of movement may develop into a trend." (ICC 19 August 2000)

"With the outbreak of conflict 12 May 2000 (third offensive) there were large-scale population movements. Once again IDPs were mainly from the Gash-Barka and Debub Zones as these were the areas most affected by the conflict. Initially, IDPs were from the areas close to the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, from insecure areas and those occupied by Ethiopian forces. As Ethiopian forces pushed further inland new displacements occurred as far north as Tessenai and Barantu. For many, they were displaced for the second time, leaving one camp for a new one in a safer location, generally further north. New camps were established in Gash-Barka and Debub Zones and for the first time the Northern Red Sea Zone. In addition to the camps officially established by the Eritrean Government, a number of temporary settlements sprung up where people congregated close to water sources in secure locations. Over recent months, these have either been relocated to official camps or have become official camps in their own right. People also fled to remote areas and an estimated 50,000 fled the border to Sudan to the safety of three refugee camps there (Lafa, Gulusa and Shegreb)." (ICC 25 September 2000)

Movement patterns immediately before the cease-fire started on 18 June 2000:

"Debub:

[...]

Almost the entire population of Adi Keih has left the town, and the population of Halai village has doubled (to between 4,000 - 6,000 est.) as people from the Adi Keih area have been absorbed. Host communities are overwhelmed and their already meager resources inadequate to meet the crisis confronting them. Eight of the zone's twelve sub-regions are affected, leaving 4 to host the entire population. Setimi is reported to be hosting over 30,000 IDPs from the Tserona area alone.

Hailai serves as the distribution site for a group of twenty two villages in the area which house an estimated 14,000 IDPs. A five day supply of food has been distributed and the next distribution is expected in the coming days.

Gash Barka:

Recent reoccupation of the Tessenei and Guluj areas by Ethiopian forces has again caused large IDP movement towards Adi Gebrai, Telata Asher and the Sudanese border. IDPs have also been reported moving to larger urban areas in the Anseba and Mackel regions of the country, such as Adi Tekelezan, Halhal, Asmat and cities such as Keren and Asmara, thus putting further strain on already overstressed host

communities. Approximately 150,000 people had previously been in the 'hovering zone' along the border between Ghirmaika, Tessenei and Omhajer." (ICC 17 June 2000)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Freedom of movement

IDPs unable to return and expellees resettled due to risk from mines and UXOs (July 2004)

- 20 % of IDPs places of origin impacted by landmines
- A Research team welcomed to develop an analysis of mine action to be integrated into humanitarian and economic development strategies
- The manual clearance teams from Eritrean Demining Operation needed to allow resettlement of displaced population

"The Landmine Impact Survey's (LIS) Draft Report has undergone review by the Survey Action Centre (SAC) in Washington, and is now being reviewed by the Government of Eritrea and other concerned groups before it is sent back to SAC to be finalized. Initial conclusions from the LIS show that 20% of IDP's places of origin are impacted by landmines, and more than two thirds of recent victims were engaged in herding or farming at the time of their accidents.

The Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) has welcomed a research team from the international financial firm PricewaterhouseCoopers to Eritrea, who will be in country from the beginning of July until mid-August. Their research project entails developing a cost-benefit analysis of mine action activities in the country, creating a methodology for the EDA's post-clearance impact assessment (PCIA) teams, and examining how mine action should be integrated into humanitarian and economic development strategies in the country.

The manual clearance teams from Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) continue to work on their new tasks in the villages of Emba Derho and Karibosa in Senafe and Grat Mariam in Shilalo, which will allow for the resettlement of displaced populations. RONCO mine detection dog teams have also been tasked by the EDA to work in Shilalo. Between 18 and 30 June these teams together cleared 159,962 sq meters of land and destroyed 23 anti-personnel mines and 21 UXOs.

Training for new EDO manual clearance and technical survey teams commenced in mid-June and will be completed by the 18 July 2004. Once training is complete the teams will travel to Shilalo, where they must complete an accreditation process based on International Mine Action Standards before they may commence operations. It is expected that these new deminers will form two 20-person teams, and the EDA is now preparing tasks for them to undertake in Shilalo. The only factor that may delay the accreditation and deployment of these teams is the shortage of equipment and protective gear available." (UN OCHA, 16 July 2004)

Boundary demarcation will entail exchange of people as well as land (October 2002)

- Local inhabitants must be given the choice to stay or leave their lands

"Q: I think when you say there will be some demarcation according to the decision from the Border Commission, there will be an exchange of people, not only land. Some people to Eritrea and some other

people to Ethiopia. So if there is any problem involving this issue, how are you making yourself ready to solve such problems?

A: Someone asked me that two weeks ago and I think I said that is something that has to be discussed with both Parties. This not something UNMEE undertakes on its own. The SRSG is certainly thinking about it very seriously as we are moving closer to that phase and I'm sure it will soon be taken up with the Parties. (As implied by Security Council resolution 1434 operative paragraph 2)" (UNMEE, 18 October 2002)

"The peace process is in good hands. Following the historic decision of the Boundary Commission, the process is moving forward. Often we feel it is too slow, but this is a complicated business, and we are moving forward. An important, and most likely difficult time lies ahead: implementing the decision of the Boundary Commission will entail both the demarcation of the final boundary, as well as those transfers of territory required under the decision. Local inhabitants must, pursuant to international human rights law, be given the choice to stay on their land, or move. The United Nations, which is already responsible for ensuring the continuance of the security commitments of the two parties, has also been tasked with facilitating the resolution of these kinds of problems, likely to affect individual lives.

I wish, in this regard, to make one final plea that local institutions need to be established to facilitate contact, communication, incident-response and incident management, problem-solving, and other key aspects of inter-community relations at the local level in the border areas. None of the arguments presented to date are strong enough to delay such meetings of concerned Eritrean and Ethiopian administrators, village elders, and security representatives any longer." (UNMEE, 31 October 2002)

Landmines remain the main danger for people in the Temporary Security Zone (June 2002)

- Mine accidents peaked in mid-2001 due to increased IDP return movements
- Efforts to clear mines following independence in 1993 ended as new war started in 1998
- Thousands of new mines laid during the 1998-2000 war

"Question from Addis: Do the incidents and injuries that we have seen over the last few weeks represent an increase in the number of people injured in mine incidents? Is it a normal situation where each week a couple of people get injured in mines? Is there a sudden increase in this area?

Dave Edwards: It peaks and troughs, and there seems to be no rhyme or reason to it. There was last year, a definite peak in mid-year, and that was due to the IDP returns and a number of other issues." (UNMEE, 28 June 2002)

"Eritrea's mine problem is substantial. According to Government estimates, between 500,000 and 1,000,000 mines were laid in Eritrea during the war for independence and the subsequent border conflict with Ethiopia. The already serious mine-related problems are exacerbated by the presence of a further 3 million UXOs resulting from the wars of the past decades.

Efforts made by the Government to clear mines following independence in 1993 were aggravated by the use of thousands of new mines during the 1998-2000 war with Ethiopia. During the latter period, the displacement of populations within Eritrea exposed large groups to the immediate threat of mines, especially as they attempted to return to their homes following the signing Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in June 2000. Although information on areas that remain under Ethiopian occupation is generally scarce, and little is known about the condition of groups that remained in these areas, it is safe to say that many have indeed been exposed to the highly mined areas adjacent to the border." (GOE/UN February 2001, p. 23)

"Regarding displacement, a similar pattern is distinguishable. In villages south of the trench lines and close to the southern boundary of the TSZ, no permanent residents remain due to security and mine-related concerns (although a number of herders could be seen grazing livestock in the area). Although most villagers from locations north of the trench lines still reside in IDP camps such as Alba, many have been able to make trips to their largely intact villages in order to appraise the situation. A large number of such temporary returnees were encountered in Gensebo, Mai Wurai, and Beatshemati and it is assumed that large-scale return to these locations will commence shortly.

In terms of urgent needs observed, mine/UXO-related interventions are considered of the highest priority. Although the mine risk may be lower in areas north of the trench lines, it should be noted that as many villagers in the area rely on livestock-rearing, herds are moved throughout the area in search of pasture and water. Urgent mine awareness and clearance/markings campaigns will be necessary to ensure the safety of returning populations. As large numbers of mines and UXOs remain in southern areas, interventions of this nature will also be necessary before work can be done to prepare abandoned villages for the return of populations." (ICC 1 May 2001)

"Even at this stage, however, it is clear that the mine/unexploded ordnance threat in the Temporary Security Zone, and in adjacent areas, is very real. It places UNMEE troops at risk, as evidenced by the two separate landmine strikes involving Canadian contingent armoured vehicles in March, as well as an earlier explosion affecting a HALO survey team vehicle on 20 February. The threat to the civilian population is far greater. Mine and unexploded ordnance accidents are increasing, currently being reported at the rate of about one per day within the Temporary Security Zone. The real figure, taking into account unreported accidents, may be significantly higher.

[...]

Although internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia, who have largely returned to their home areas, appear to recognize landmine and unexploded ordnance dangers, as mentioned above, the presence of mines still presents a significant threat to life and an obstacle to the full restoration of livelihoods along a significant portion of the border zone. Growing pressure to cultivate, collect firewood and graze animals is expected to result in a gradual increase in casualties. Realizing that the actual removal of mines in the former conflict zones is going to take many years — even with the significant World Bank loan being used for demining — the need for expanding and improving mine-awareness training among affected communities has become more urgent. Current constraints in Ethiopia include the lack of complete information on the location and composition of minefields, insufficient funding for technical assistance/capacity-building and mine-awareness training." (UN SC 19 June 2001, paras. 25, 27)

"Landmines remain a major threat in the Temporary Security Zone and in areas adjacent to it. While the number of officially reported mine and unexploded ordnance incidents was lower than expected, particularly in view of the large number of internally displaced persons returning to the Zone in recent months, it still remains high. From 1 June to 31 August 2001, eight civilians were killed and 24 were injured in mine and unexploded ordnance incidents in the Zone and adjacent areas." (UN SC 5 September 2001, para.15)

Physical security

Bomb blast raise concern over security in Gash Barka (June 2004)

There are at least 35,887 IDPs leaving in Gash Barka that need of continuous humanitarian assistance.

"Due to the bomb blast incident in Barentu on the 25 May 2004, the issue of security has become of concern in Gash Barka. The Field Security Coordination Officer (FSCO)-Mr. Brian Drayner visited Barentu and met with the governor and other local government authorities. He later met with staffs of UN

agencies on 27 May 2004 and briefed them on the official report from the governor's office on the number of deaths and injuries sustained as a result of the 25th bomb blast in Barentu. Consequently, emphasis was placed on MOSS compliances and Mine Awareness Training for each and every UN staff, in particular drivers. Agencies were also advised to use at least two vehicles for the routes leading to Shambuko and Gerenfit.

At the monthly humanitarian coordination meeting held under the auspices of OCHA on 2 June 2004, agencies reported the resumption of visits to project sites and the distribution of relief items." (UN OCHA, 17 June 2004)

Strong community solidarity ensures protection of displaced/unaccompanied children (October 2000)

- Inter-agency missions concludes that physical protection of IDPs is not a major concern
- Survey that included 25% of the total IDP population found that separated children in IDP camps receive adequate protection
- Separated children given professional care in the camps in addition to adult caregivers

"Physical protection of internally displaced persons was found not to be a major concern. [...] Partners in the field (both NGOs and UN) are encouraged to apply a 'protection lens' to their observations of conditions of return, as outlined in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, especially concerning the basic welfare of women and children." (OCHA 25 October 2000, p.6)

"A sample of six camps (out of a total of 31) in the regions of Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea were selected to provide geographical and situational comparison. The population in the selected six camps represent 25% of the total IDP population.

[...]

The findings reveal that separated children are identified at the point of general registration, and followed up by the local administrators in the camps, who ensure they have access to shelter and basic assistance, and where possible identify neighbors or other adults to help look after them. The assessment team observed that these officials have a real sense of, and commitment to, social work which ensures that separated children are monitored closely and professionally. They were able to easily identify the most vulnerable children by name and they could locate their tents.

[...]

Virtually all children stated they trusted their adult caregivers, and that the security arrangements at the camps were adequate and that they personally felt safe. However, several children expressed serious concern about the safety of their parents and siblings that were left behind in the Ethiopian occupied territories.

[...]

During the testing of the assessment tools it soon became clear that even the concept of an "unaccompanied child" was alien to people, since any child would automatically be taken in by someone. Once the discussion continued and it was explained that the team wanted to gain an understanding of children separated from their usual care-givers, it transpired that there were, in some camps, a considerable number of cases.

In the IDP sites people described how everyone would help each other while fleeing their villages. One woman in Salina camp looking after her own baby plus two of her relatives' children walked for two weeks to reach the site. She talked of how people would offer food to her and the children on their journey.

In Dighe camp, during a focus group discussion with five older women, one woman said: "when we find children on their own we take care of them until they find their parents because we feel that they are all our children".

[...]

Although this study has focused on separated children, the team was also requested to highlight wider child protection issues in the IDP sites. In the various one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions, a number of clear protection issues arose, particularly affecting separated children but also relevant to the wider child population.

Virtually all children stated that they trusted their adult caregivers, that the security arrangements at the camps were adequate and that they personally felt safe. However, some interviews indicated that some girls had experienced or were fearful of sexual exploitation and abuse.

[...]

There are certain areas, particularly in the occupied territories of Debub where the assessment team noticed an increase of very young children who are forced to leave their homes by their families who fear for the safety of their children should they remain with them." (MLHF/UNICEF/SCF September 2000, pp. 4, 5, 26, 30, 33)

Several IDP camps remained within Ethiopian held areas after May 2000 offensive (September 2000)

- Reported that eight IDP camps were inside areas occupied by Ethiopia by September 2000
- Lack of information about conditions of Eritreans behind front lines (July-September 2000)
- Reports that expulsion of Eritreans from border areas continued by July 2000

"A very disturbing development is not only the continuing expulsion of "ethnic" Eritreans from Ethiopia but also the large-scale expulsion of Eritreans from uncontested Eritrean territory, such as the Upper Gash region and parts of Debub zone. Conservative estimates run around 15,000, with about 150 arriving at Adi Keshi camp per day. In 2000, a total of 500 Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean descent have been expelled from Ethiopia, including 150 this week from Addis Ababa.

Eritreans behind front lines are an additional serious concern, particularly in the Senafe sub-region. Exact numbers are unknown, but are estimated well in the thousands. The condition of these people is unknown though IDPs who have escaped and are now located in Zula camp report food shortages and acts of torture and rape. Although Ethiopia has said that any interested aid organizations are welcome to check on these people, to date no one has done this." (ICC 1 July 2000)

"It should be noted that IDP camps may still exist in the Senafe sub-region. However, since Senafe is an occupied area that the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) does not have access to, the existence of camps, number of inhabitants and conditions are unknown. ERREC estimate that eight camps in existence prior to 12 May 2000 fall into this situation." (ICC 25 September 2000)

Table prepared by ICC (25 September 2000) indicating IDP camps located within Debub areas occupied by Ethiopia:

Zone	Sub-zone	Camp	Population January	Current Status	Population 23.09.00
Debub	Senafe	Weratele (Erob)	9,820	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Rokhoyto/Anbeset Geleba	2,139	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Rokhoyto/Meshel Akren	1,687	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Rokhoyto/Lahavo	3,555	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Zigfet (Meneksevo)	3,075	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Tisha (Malters)	4,410	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Tisha (Ruba-Natsa)	4,248	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Keskese (Bihel)	2,023	IDPs fled to Soyra & Halei	
Debub	Senafe	Adma (Nedve)	2,219	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Senafe	Giascha (Mezba)	1,883	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Adi Keih	Emba-Sease (Forte)	1,676	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Tsorona	Sivraso (Sheket)	5,684	IDPs fled to Soyra & Halei	
Debub	Tsorona	Mai Wursay	5,772	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Tsorona	Mai Chena	6,580	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Mai Aini	Fulho	1,614	Occupied	Unknown
Debub	Mai Aini	Deda	3,471	In existence	3,471
Debub	Mai Aini	Adi Gulqo (Cuna Wirtta)	1,491	In existence as Adi Netri	
Debub	Adi Kala	Midfao-Walla	1,517	In existence	1,729
Debub	Adi Kala	Agra 1 (Enda-Gerdish)	13,107	In existence as one camp, moved Aug due to malaria	
Debub	Adi Kala	Agra 2 (Adi Burkut)	5,500		
Debub	Mai Mine	Mai Saale	2,203	In existence	7,703
Debub	Mai Mine	Adi Katina	4,717	Evicted all IDPs returned	
Total 22			88,401		

Figures by ERREC

Prepared by ICC

12 years of independence, human rights organisations express concern (May 2003)

"Although the war [between Eritrea and Ethiopia 1998-2000] was ended by a peace agreement, signed by both sides in December 2000, Asmara has remained jittery and this has led to a tough government policy, which some say amounts to a crackdown on political dissent.

"The war has so deeply scarred Eritrea that it seems no longer able to define itself except in relation to its opposition to Ethiopia," said one political observer. But the Eritrean government rejects this view. It insists it is acting to preserve its territorial security and to keep its borders safe. To this end, it defends the arrest of 11 prominent politicians and the closure of the private press in 2001 on the grounds of "national security", and denies that people are arrested for expressing their views.

"People are free to write whatever they want, they are free to express their opinions," acting Information Minister Ali Abdu Ahmed told IRIN.

However, human rights organisations have expressed concern about the growing number of detainees in Eritrea's jails, saying that very often they are held incommunicado for long periods of time, without charge and with no recourse to an independent court. According to the US State Department, Eritrea's "poor" human rights record worsened still further last year." (IRIN, 16 July 2003)

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

General

Returning refugees from Sudan in need of basic facilities for reintegration (May 2004)

- Since 2000, at least 119,000 Eritreans have returned home from Sudan

"Since the beginning of 2004, 7,779 Eritreans have returned home bringing the total of those that have returned since 2000 to a total of some 119,000 people. Although WFP is providing assistance to returnee households until they are able to obtain their first harvest, most of the refugees are returning to communities in Gash Barka, a region that is severely affected by the war and drought leaving the population in desperate need of basic facilities. At the same time, there is also a critical need to provide reintegration assistance to returnees and to support communities' absorption capacities. The target number of Eritrean returnees from the Sudan for 2004 is 35,000." (UNOCHA, 31 May 2004, p. 13)

"UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 367 Eritrean refugees from Sudan on 2 and 10 July 2004, the last organised repatriation operations before the onset of the long rainy season. The total number of assisted Eritrean returnees for the first six months of 2004 stands at 8,275 people. Since 2000, UNHCR together with ERREC have assisted 119,903 people return to Eritrea in safety and dignity. The voluntary repatriation operation will resume in October 2004 once roads become accessible after the rains. Large-scale organised voluntary repatriation will phase out on 31 December 2004 as the process nears full term. From 2005 UNHCR, will continue to help those wishing to return on an individual basis." (UN OCHA, 16 July 2004)

IDPs in need of relief assistance (April 2004)

- Among the vulnerable groups are 185, 569 IDPs returnees and 16,845 rural expellees in camps and other settlement areas
- Basic needs such as food, water, health, shelter and education are yet to be met to avoid deterioration of the situation
- Damaged infrastructure in areas of origin of IDPs need to be rehabilitated
- At Koronko camp 6,750 IDPs shelter under worn out tents, limited access to water with insufficient relief rations
- Failure in rain in 2003 and delays in pledges and receipt of funds worsen the humanitarian situation of the vulnerable groups

"About two-thirds of the population live below the poverty line, and in some small rural towns the figure leaps up to 80 percent due to the dislocation of the population and the return of hundreds of thousands of Eritreans from Sudan. Most of them had been there for years, after they fled during Eritrea's 30-year liberation war which broke out in 196." (IRIN, 17 March 2004)

"The recent border war with Ethiopia and the tension that still exists between the two countries continues to perpetuate the presence of IDPs, and deportees from Ethiopia. The country also has many people who have returned from Sudan but are still living in IDP camps and are all in need of relief assistance." (ACT, January 2004)

"IDPs continue to suffer the consequences of war and drought. Some 58,953 internally displaced people still present in Eritrea, inside and outside camps, remain unable to return to their places of origin. Although much has been accomplished to assist these IDPs, many basic needs - food, water, health, shelter, and education - are not yet fully met. A continuous effort is required to avoid a deterioration of the situation. The UN and partners would welcome a return of IDPs to their home villages. However, this confronts reality on the ground where demarcation of the contested border is yet to take place, damaged infrastructure has to be rehabilitated, and the pace of demining has to be accelerated. With the launch of the 2004 Consolidated appeal in November 2003, this year will hopefully see the development of new projects/activities in areas affected by war. In addition to IDPs, there are still about 16,845 rural expellees in these camps and other settlement areas. (UNOCHA, 31 January 2004)

"A recent assessment carried out by the OCHA Field Office at Koronko Camp in Gash Barka revealed dire conditions facing the 6,750 IDPs there. The population totalling 2001 households, fled their homes in Badme, Deda, Anbors and Tsebra and were now sheltering under worn out tents and surviving entirely on relief rations mainly wheat (15kg), oil (900mg) and beans (1200mg) per person per month. According to the OCHA report, the camp has limited access to water with four drills not working. The sanitary conditions were described as fairly poor with the camp possessing no functional latrines and people having to spend 4-5 hours a day to collect 10 litres of water. The IDPs also need kerosene, firewood and jerry cans. The report also examined the educational prospects within the camp, which has an Elementary and Junior High School. While there is little difference in enrolment for male and female in grades 1-3, the report noted a significant decrease in female enrolment from grade 4-8. There was also a decrease in male enrolment from grade 6-8. Both the Elementary School and the Junior High face shortages of textbooks. There is no school feeding programme and no teacher's residence. The report concludes that despite the support received over the years, the IDPs are caught in a cycle of insufficient relief rations, poor sanitary conditions, worn out tents and poor access to water. In order to meet basic humanitarian needs, these issues must be addressed says the report." (UN OCHA, 2 April 2004)

"About 1.9 million war-affected Eritreans, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their hosts, returning refugees and expellees, need humanitarian assistance this year, Simon Nhongo, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Eritrea said.

The main requirement, Nhongo added, was food assistance following the recent arrival of the delayed short rains which did not have a significant impact. Presently, only 22 percent of the country's annual 612,000 mt of cereal requirements was available.

"Due mainly to failure in rain in 2003, Eritrea [will be] heavily dependent on timely and adequate food aid in 2004," he said. "Unless responses come forth quickly and in adequate quantities, a difficult condition is anticipated to set in early in 2004."

[...]

...although a major famine crisis had been averted in Eritrea last year, the momentum needed to be maintained through a timely and increased response to the UN's 2004 consolidated appeal, some two-thirds of which was for basic food needs.

In 2003, Eritrea received 75.6 percent of the requested \$160 million. However, Nhongo said, delays in pledges and receipt of funds had had impact negatively on the timely delivery of aid.

At the Geneva meeting, the World Food Programme said its current in-country stocks would cover only three months of food needs and were expected to run out in March. It called for early commitment from donors, saying it took a minimum of two months to transport food stocks from Europe and three from North America.

Nhongo said several in-country efforts focusing on moving Eritrea out of its current emergency were being developed. These included an Integrated Recovery Programme based on medium- and long-term needs,

which was awaiting government approval, a Food Security Strategy, an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and a proposal targeting IDPs and host countries affected by the Eritrea/Ethiopia border demarcation." (IRIN, 22 January 2004)

"Although the town of Adi Quala benefits from three water points, Mai Alba IDP camp continues to suffer from acute water shortages. IDPs walk long distances every day to fetch clean water. Others collect water from unprotected sources. The nearest clinic and hospital are in Adi Quala. Consequently, only very small children get carried to the health facilities while sick older children remain at home and make do with drugs obtained by their parents from pharmacies when they are able to get to the town. Access to education is also constrained by the long distance of the school from the camp. Children below 10 years are therefore not allowed to make the long journey to school.

[...]

Living conditions for these camp dwellers is as difficult as the road leading to their camp. The need for increased access to safe water, transportation for food distribution to save the IDPs the long journey to the town for their rations and access to milling centres cannot be overestimated." (UNOCHA, 31 January 2004)

IDPs and other vulnerable populations severely affected by drought and slow pace of post-conflict recovery (November 2002)

- UN re-iterates in CAP 2003 the urgency to support demobilization, demining, and territorial demarcation if the remaining IDPs are to return in their home areas
- General increase in water-related diseases and malnutrition together with crop failure is damaging long-term asset bases
- Both annual rains as well as shorter spring rains have failed and Eritrea risks serious famine

"The current humanitarian context is defined by the effect of the drought, which now threatens the country with widespread crop failures and shortage of water, in addition to the continuing effects of war, generalized poverty, the imperative of creating a safe environment for the return of thousands of IDPs, expellees and returning refugees and their reintegration in many parts of the country. The urgency of demobilization, demining, and territorial demarcation to consolidate peace and stability remains as strong as ever." (UN, November 2002, p.10)

"The annual rains from November to March which cover Eritrea's coastal plains and eastern escarpment completely failed this year, adversely affecting crop production and pastoral conditions in the region. The March to June rains also failed. This is expected to lead to the failure of long-term crop production cycles." (IRIN 8 October 2002)

"It pointed out that the 'Azmera' or spring rains are not only important for the growth of long cycle crops, but also for the pasture that provides fodder and water for livestock.

"Now that the planting season is almost coming to an end, without farmers planting the long duration crops, Eritrea expects to reap virtually little crop harvest this agricultural year," ERREC said. "The entirety of Eritrea's farming population will thus face the threat of a serious famine disaster." (IRIN 25 July 2002)

"Addressing a joint donor briefing in the Eritrean capital Asmara, the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) and UN agencies said the figure included over 524,000 people directly affected by drought in 2002. Other vulnerable people comprised tens of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs), returning refugees and demobilised soldiers.

The total population of Eritrea is about 3.7 million.

Key concerns, according to the briefing, were an increase in water-related diseases, an increase in malnutrition, destabilisation of returnees, livestock deaths, crop failure and long-term damage to the asset base of families."(IRIN 31 July 2002)

Health

Health and nutrition situation seriously deteriorating (June 2003)

- Global acute malnutrition as high as 30%
- Malnutrition in Eritrea is 2-3 times higher than in countries with similar humanitarian crisis in Southern Africa
- Funding of the health and nutrition sector remains slow and delayed increasing morbidity and mortality

"The overall objective of the Health and Nutrition Sector is to reduce mortality and morbidity due to malnutrition and prevent deterioration in Health of drought-affected populations. This will be achieved by providing supplementary and therapeutic feeding, carrying out vaccination campaigns, provision of micronutrients, strengthening of health and nutrition surveillance, training of health workers, community mobilisation and programme monitoring and coordination. The UN will now strive to implement blanket supplementary feeding to all under five children (431,156) making up 13.5% of the population, and pregnant and lactating women (159,688) who comprise about 5% of the population. A total of 5,174 children under the age of five will be targeted for therapeutic feeding on a monthly basis. A total of 1.3million children aged between 9 months to 14 years will be targeted for measles and vitamin A campaigns in September 2003.

The nutrition situation among children under the age of five in Eritrea has seriously deteriorated since 2001. Global acute malnutrition reaching as high as 30% in the past months - but averaging at 15-20% of under five year old children, was recorded in some sub-zobas (regions). In urban areas where little or no attention is currently given, malnutrition rates of up to 14% have been recorded. Global Malnutrition in Eritrea is 2-3 times higher than in countries with similar humanitarian crisis in Southern Africa. Malnourished children are 56% more likely to die from common childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea, anaemia, Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), measles or malaria. There is therefore an urgent need to control especially malnutrition and the vaccine preventable diseases like measles.

25 Therapeutic Feeding Centres have been established in all regions, treating nearly 500 severely malnourished children per month. 700 MTs of DMK/BP5 have been mobilised for the supplementary feeding of children, pregnant and lactating women. 81% of under-five children have been given Vitamin A supplement. In the fight against malaria, 65,000 cases have been treated at health facilities and 49,000 bed nets provided. The Health and Nutrition sector has been constrained by limited resources, lack of effective screening programme for children and lack of highly skilled workers. The lack of a national nutrition information system and the understaffing of the MoH nutrition unit make it very difficult, however, to determine the overall nutrition situation in the country.

No contributions have been received to address the reproductive health needs of the target populations. Nevertheless, some activities planned within the framework of the CAP 2002, have continued in 2003. This has included renovation of 9 health facilities in Debub and Gash Barka as well as the construction of a temporary hospital in Senafe. All construction and renovation work is expected to be finalised during the first half year of 2003. Further, contracts for temporary health workers have been extended for 2003,

refresher courses have been carried out for TBAs (Traditional Birth Attendant) and community health workers and sensitisation workshops on safe motherhood have been conducted in communities.

[...]

Funding of the health and nutrition sector remains slow and delayed, resulting in a precarious situation for drought victims, especially women and children - increased morbidity and mortality is expected without immediate support. Due to lack of funding plans to set up emergency obstetric services and blood banks for anaemic drought affected women and children were not implemented. Surveillance systems responsible for the collection, analysis of health-related and nutritional data, and monitoring of health situations remain weak. Communicable diseases like TB, measles and diarrhoeal diseases are rising putting a greater burden on the already strained health system." (UN, 3 June 2003)

Large-scale population movements and war-related human dislocation are conditions particularly conducive to the spread of HIV/AIDS and STDs (November 2002)

- Potential rapid spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic in Eritrea is cause of serious concern as neighbouring Ethiopia hosts 3rd highest HIV population rate worldwide
- War-induced massive population movements between Eritrea and Ethiopia, family dislocation, uprooting and conscription in the armed forces are all factors conducive to the spread of HIV/AIDS
- HIV/AIDS cases in Eritrea rose from 8 in 1988 to over 13,500 cases in 2001
- Cultural and status considerations often prevent many women to initiate discussions on safer sex
- 90% of households in IDP camps are headed by women
- No maternal health facilities are available in temporary IDP camps

"Neighbouring Ethiopia is host to the 3rd highest HIV population rate in the world. Contrasted with the 70% illiteracy rate in Eritrea, there is real danger of an easy spread across the border once relations between the two countries normalize. 3% of Eritrea's population is HIV-infected, including 22.8% of female sex workers and 4.6% of the armed forces. WFP is providing food to 10,000 HIV affected families in the country and Denmark has give a \$350,000 grant to UNFPA and the MOH to manage the spread of the disease in 2002." (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.14)

"With increasing mobility of returnees, IDPs, and soon to be demobilised soldiers, threats in increasing STD and HIV infections will be high contributing to other opportunistic infections [...]. Although the HIV infection rate in Eritrea is still relatively low, the prevailing complex emergency threatens to accelerate the spread of the infection in the country." (UN, November 2002, p.25)

"There are concerns about the increase in the spread of HIV/AIDS, which rose from 8 in 1988 to over 13,500 cases in 2001. It is estimated that approximately 60,000-70,000 Eritreans are currently infected with HIV, which could increase significantly [...] with demobilisation and increased cross border movement." (UN November 2002, pp.10-11)

"The HIV/AIDS epidemic is perhaps the gravest health threat faced by Eritrea. The recent border conflict with Ethiopia (1998-2002) and the recurrent drought have resulted in large-scale population movements that included internal displacement, influx of deportees from Ethiopia and returnees from Sudan. Mobilisation of young men and women to the military has also contributed by creating a social and economic environment that is conducive for the spread of HIV/AIDS. Intertwined with this is violence against women, including rape and other physical trauma that can be experienced during conflict and displacement." (UN, November 2002, p.27)

"Social and cultural norms put girls and young women at greater risk to HIV infection than boys and men, as they lack control over economic resources and retain lower social and educational status. Fear of physical violence limits their control over sexual encounters. The threat of rape, domestic violence, and occasional abandonment create difficulties for women trying to initiate or sustain discussions on safe sex and condom use. In addition, many women, who are in monogamous relationship, do not suspect that they are at risk of infection and thus do not take the necessary precautions." (UN, November 2002, p.27)

"Women head an estimated 90% of households in IDP camps, and the majority of them had to leave their properties behind. Now, while returning to their places of origin, they have little, if any, incomes on which they can rely in order to re-establish themselves. Social services have become an all-important element in their lives. Their already poor health status is further compromised by insufficient health services and a low awareness of basic Reproductive Health (RH) information and issues such as danger signs during pregnancy and risks associated with poor hygiene and STI. Temporary camps have been established where there are no maternity services or trained staff. Some displaced families live in host communities, further straining the ability of a fragile health system to provide adequate RH services – especially maternal and emergency obstetric care." (UN November 2001, p.63)

Displaced children need psychosocial assistance (February 2001)

- Women and children constitute an average of 26% and 67% respectively of the total number of war-affected populations
- Traditional coping mechanisms and safety nets have been stretched to the limit
- Women and adolescent girls from occupied territories might have become victims of physical and psychological violence
- Displaced children exposed to considerable psychosocial distress (July 2000)

"Women and children, especially adolescent girls are among the most affected victims of the recent war in Eritrea. Women and children constitute an average of 26% and 67% respectively of the total number of war-affected populations. Traditionally, Eritrean women and girls from an early age assume the responsibilities of caring for their families and fulfilling domestic duties. During times of hardship and during emergencies their obligations and responsibilities increase. At the same time, the disruption of normal life, through displacement, deportation, family separation and the loss of property, home and land has severely affected these target groups psychologically, economically, socially and emotionally. Moreover, traditional coping mechanisms and safety nets have been stretched to the limit, making it increasingly difficult for the majority of the women and girl-headed households to adequately provide for the protection and care of their families without external assistance. With little capacity to support each other and little or no income of their own, women and girl-headed households will most likely continue to be dependent on specific assistance (e.g. income generating activities) well into 2001.

In the past, emergency assessments and appeals have been primarily concerned with the psychosocial care of vulnerable and traumatised children affected by the war. Assistance to women was largely confined to capacity development and provision of income generating activities. However, according to recent reports, some women and adolescent girls from occupied territories might have become victims of physical and psychological violence and trauma. Some of these women and girl children may require medical treatment for complications during pregnancies and STDs contracted through unprotected sex. Moreover, they may be suffering from psychological problems and possible discrimination or stigmatisation by members within their community. As the main national organisation responsible for issues regarding women, NUEW should be supported to increase its technical capacity to effectively assist these women and adolescent girls." (UN February 2001, p.27)

WFP's current resourcing levels is USD 14 million for PRRO 10192 and USD 27 million for EMOP 10261, which represents 58 percent of the overall requirements for both operations. [...]" (WFP, July 2003)

"Although rainfall has commenced in some areas of the country, it is still scattered and inconsistent. Heavy rains in the Northern Red Sea region have resulted in floods in some areas, while in the main agricultural areas of Debub and Gash Barka, rainfall remains below average. According to the Ministry of Agriculture preparation of land in Debub region for the current agricultural season has been very slow. Lack of draft animals, seeds, and the minimal availability of tractors have made it difficult for farmers to plough their lands.

A donation of 4,850 tons of wheat grain valued at USD 1,400,000 arrived in the country during the week to support the people of Eritrea through the PRRO. The donation will be targeted at 120,000 internally displaced persons residing in camps, plus returnees and expellees. This contribution will cover their cereal needs for a period of 70 days.

Overall confirmed pledges for EMOP 10261 amount to approximately USD 29,193,610 (58% of the total requirements), which is equivalent to 75,812 tons. A total of USD 14,237,277 (about 31,315 tons) representing 30 percent of the total requirement has been resourced for the PRRO. Some shipments have arrived in the country, and a reduced EMOP caseload of 600,000 persons plus a reduced PRRO caseload of 125,000 persons can be supplied with food until the end of the year. The resourcing of the shortfall of 126,250 tons (for both EMOP 10261 and PRRO 10192) is considered critical to avoid a pipeline break towards the end of the year and widespread malnutrition and starvation in Eritrea." (WFP, 25 July 2003)

Key grain producing areas severely affected in fourth year of drought (June 2003)

- 2.3 million people affected by food insecurity
- Cereal production only 20% of national ten-year average
- Funding shortfalls and shipping difficulties due to Middle East focus
- Slow pace of demining – agricultural activity delayed
- Government of Eritrea: Drought Committee for Coordination and Follow-Up

"Eritrea entered its fourth year of drought in 2002, with key grain producing areas severely affected. The food security situation has deteriorated during the reporting period, with over 2.3 million people now affected by food insecurity. Donor response has been slow; with only 3.6% response to a \$ 163 million November appeal sourced this far. Humanitarian agencies are now warning that unless something is done quickly, the situation will unfold into an unprecedented humanitarian disaster. President Aferworki has lamented that donors are tying aid to the country's much criticized political and human rights record at the expense of saving lives. Agencies are cautioning against the pegging of further, much needed assistance to governance considerations. Furthermore, the dire situation in neighbouring Ethiopia, as well as in Southern Africa have consigned Eritrea to the background more so because many remain unfamiliar with the situation in the country. Only 25% of required food assistance has been received since the government appealed for assistance in 2002. Only partial food distributions have been possible, and only as from the first fortnight of March. Food supplies are expected to run out by the end of April. Current food distributions have already been reduced to 60% of the normal and are likely to be further reduced.

Cereal production was just 20 percent of the national ten-year average in 2002, and will cover less than 10 percent of the annual national cereal requirements in 2003. Malnutrition rates are increasingly on a worrying trend and children have begun to die, with acute global malnutrition at an unacceptably high of over 20 percent of all children. 10,000 children in Eritrea are already seriously malnourished. The southern region of Debub is worst affected with the nutritional situation rapidly deteriorating. The Ministry of Health

is extending a therapeutic feeding programme to as many hospitals in the region with the assistance of WFP.

Funding shortfalls have meant that WFP cannot distribute the recommended level of relief food rations, and communities are running out of food before the next food distribution is due. Only about one-quarter of WFP's appeal to feed 1.4 million people in Eritrea has been met, leaving US\$77 million dollars worth of desperately needed food assistance unmet. Even if food aid pledges are released now, they will take time to be transported to the country. Furthermore, the continuing preoccupation with the situation in the Middle East will further serve to disrupt shipping in the red sea and increased insurance costs pose additional problems, especially in the aftermath of the war in Iraq.

The water problem in Eritrea has assumed a critical state of shortage. The effect of rains in late 2002 that served to recharge many wells and reservoirs has passed as the 2003 dry season sets in. Anseba, Northern Red Sea, Southern Red Sea and northern part of Gash Barka and Debub zones, which have received poor rainfall for the past four to five years are the worst affected areas, with the water table down to 10 metres and falling. Lack of water has and continues to aggravate the general problem with families walking an average of 4-5 kilometers in search of water in hostile conditions. In some areas, regular water points have dried up while in others the water tables are increasingly low, threatening the lives of both people and livestock, with a third of the latter at risk of death due to lack of water and fodder. Water prices have doubled in the first two months of 2003 in urban areas. In the Northern Red Sea area, thousands of livestock have died as a result of lack of water, pasture and fodder and distress livestock sales have risen and prices drop.

The slow pace of demining the heavily mined frontier between Ethiopia and Eritrea has meant that the resumption of agricultural activities in these areas will be delayed while the task is completed. Consequently a complementary approach to accelerate demining of the border territories of Gash Barka and Debub (accounting for 70% of national cereal production), that will allow for the return of farmers is required to speed up sustainable recovery from the current food crisis affecting the country.

The government of Eritrea formed a Drought Committee for Coordination and Follow-Up in the face of the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the country at the end of January 2003. Humanitarian organizations have stepped up their resource mobilization and advocacy activities to drum up further and immediate food and non-food assistance to stem the effects of the crisis. In January 2003, a donors meeting was held in Geneva. In Mid March 2003, the UNCT took its plea for further assistance to donors in New York, Washington and Ottawa, warning that inaction will spell doom for 2.3 million Eritreans." (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003)

"Despite the ongoing efforts of the international community to meet the emergency needs of Eritreans left vulnerable by drought and the lingering effects of war, malnutrition rates among Eritrean children are rising. The World Food Programme reports that the rate of malnutrition in Eritrean children has risen to an alarming 21.7% per cent.

Ms. Carolyn McAskie, the United Nations Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, arrived in Asmara today to get a first hand look at the humanitarian situation, and to encourage support for the 2003 United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Eritrea. To date, humanitarian agencies have received 43% of US\$ 157 million required under the appeal, leaving a shortfall of some \$90 million.

Ms. McAskie's mission comes at a time when the most severe effects of the drought in Eritrea are increasingly evident, particularly in the traditional cereal producing areas of Gash Barka and in Debub, where she will visit tomorrow. The drought shows little sign of improvement and the spring rains have not been sufficient. The United Nations will step up water trucking programs in the next three months in an attempt to alleviate some of the most urgent needs of the 1.7 million Eritreans facing water shortages due to the drought.

Reports of global acute malnutrition rates reaching as high as 30% in some areas are of great concern as malnourished children are far more likely to die from common childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea, anaemia, acute respiratory infections (ARI), measles or malaria. The United Nations and its humanitarian partners in Eritrea are therefore seeking to address those issues by targeting children for measles inoculation and Vitamin A campaigns in 2003. More than 5,000 under 5 children will be targeted for therapeutic feeding each month.

The funding shortfall is having serious consequences. The World Food Programme, for example, has had to reduce the size of the rations it provides because only roughly half the amount it requires to help 1.4 million of Eritrea's 3.4 million people has been received. Though 225,000 metric tonnes (MT) of food out of the 476,000 MT required have been pledged, only 90,000 MT have actually reached Eritrea. Shortfalls in contributions to water sector activities have increased caloric expenditure in children- responsible for gathering water - when they can least afford it. They also mean that programs that aim to combat food insecurity in the long term-funded at just 27% in the appeal--have not been implemented as agencies focus on short-term emergency needs." (UN OCHA, 10 June 2003)

ICRC delivers seeds and food to displaced returnees (June 2003)

- 10,000 families returned but face difficult conditions
- Providing seeds will encourage self-sufficiency

"The ICRC has completed its seed and food distributions in the region of Debub, Eritrea. Some 10,000 farming families displaced during the border war with Ethiopia were able to return recently, but were facing difficult conditions. Together, they have received 250 tonnes of cereal seed and almost 640 tonnes of food.

ICRC trucks delivered the supplies to ten distribution points, located inside or close to the Temporary Security Zone, a buffer zone along the Ethiopian-Eritrean border. People were delighted to get the seed before the sowing season started, and the food will keep them going until harvest time. In the village of Una Watot (in Mai Aini), the women ululated to express their joy. "We would not have known what to do if there had been no assistance," a villager told the ICRC delegate.

In the region of Gash-Barka, distributions are continuing. Since early May, the ICRC has delivered 137 tonnes of sorghum seed and 842 tonnes of food. "War and drought made the people here dependent on assistance. With the seed you are providing, and some rain, we hope to become independent again," said a local administrator in Adi Keshi during the relief operation there.

The ICRC drought response in Eritrea focuses on families displaced during the border war with Ethiopia. In total, 20,000 households in Debub and Gash-Barka (100,000 people) are receiving 457 tonnes of seed and 1,915 tonnes of food, consisting of wheat grain, split peas, oil, sugar and salt. Providing seed will encourage drought-affected farmers to grow their own crops and become self-sufficient again." (ICRC, 12 June 2003)

Main returnee areas Debub and Gash Barka traditionally generated more than 70 per cent of annual production (June 2003)

"The government's actions effectively stopped the removal of tens of thousands of landmines from Eritrea's prime agricultural areas and adversely affected the return of thousands of refugees and internally

displaced Eritreans. Recovery efforts were further stalled by Eritrea's limited skilled labor pool in returnee areas and the presence of relatively few local and international development agencies.

The main returnee areas of Debub and Gash Barka Zones had traditionally generated more than 70 percent of Eritrea's annual food production, but the aftermath of war, fear of landmines, and water shortages severely curtailed crop yields during the year.

Agricultural output during 2002 sank to its lowest level in a decade. Poor crop yields forced nearly half of the population to rely on humanitarian agencies for food. Approximately 60 percent of Eritreans were chronically malnourished, according to WFP. Nearly 100,000 livestock animals died during the last six months of the year because of drought, according to the government.

"The country faces a humanitarian crisis of serious proportions in terms of food supply and essential inputs for recovery for food protection," the UN reported in November." (USCR, 2003)

EC provides extra aid as warning is issued over food crisis (May 2003)

"The European Commission is to provide an extra €11 million to alleviate the effects of the drought and improve the food security situation in Eritrea. In a statement, it said this pledge brings to nearly €50 million the total contribution of the European Union to Eritrea, including the Commission and EU member states.

Out of the new pledge, €5 million will be allocated to the World Food Programme to provide supplementary feeding and €6 million for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to implement activities focusing on South Red Sea, North Red Sea and Anseba provinces. The announcement follows a visit to Eritrea by a team from the EC's Food Security Unit.

"The mission was also informed by the Eritrean authorities on the state of preparation of the National Food Security Strategy," the statement said. "The EC is keen to continue discussions about the strategy and the structural causes of the humanitarian crisis in Eritrea, besides the effects of the war and erratic rainfall, in view of a possible financial support."

Meanwhile, a food security watchdog has warned that serious and widespread food insecurity persists in Eritrea. The US government's Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS) said immediate improvements in food security would depend primarily on increased deliveries of relief food.

"While significant food aid pledges have occurred in the last couple of months, the rate of food deliveries to Eritrea has been very slow," it noted. "This has led to a reduction in both ration levels and the numbers of people receiving food. Therefore, expediting deliveries between now and late October, the main hunger period, is critical."

It stated that immediate priorities for further donor pledges would include supplementary foods, to be targeted to the malnourished and vulnerable under fives; and oils and pulses to provide a nutritionally balanced general ration. "Given the limited food resources, efficient and improved geographic targeting is essential," it stressed." (IRIN, 23 May 2003)

UNICEF: Children and women are overwhelmingly victims in the ongoing drought (May 2003)

- One out of five children moderately malnourished, 10,000 severely
- 600,000 out of the 2 million people affected by drought out of reach of food supply systems
- 30 % of drought-affected children receive no food at all

- Only 22 % of Eritreans have access to potable water, and number falling

"The humanitarian situation in Eritrea has continued to worsen over recent years due to ongoing drought and poverty. Children and women are overwhelmingly the victims of this crisis. Levels of malnutrition, already high by international standards, have risen even further in the past six months. In Anseba province, there has been an increase in malnutrition from 16% to 20% between October 2002 and March 2003.

Overall, UNICEF estimates that one out of five children in most parts of the country (or 80,000 children) are moderately malnourished, and out of these 10,000 children are severely malnourished. Compounding this risk are large shortfalls in the complementary and supplementary food currently being provided. UNICEF is promoting blanket supplementary feeding for all children in the country, which will require 20,000 MT of special foods. The current shortage of supplementary food is preventing malnourished children from receiving the assistance they need. While chronically high levels of malnutrition have been common in Eritrea for many years, the current household food shortages could over-stretch coping mechanisms and cause a nutritional disaster in a short period. UNICEF is advocating for preventive measures now to avoid such a crisis.

[...]

An estimated two million people are affected by drought in Eritrea, but only 1.4 million people can be reached by existing food supply networks, leaving 600,000 vulnerable to the effects of the drought. The total 2003 food requirement for Eritrea was determined as 476,000 MT, of which 195,540 MT have been pledged. But pledges have been late and only some 68,360 MT have actually reached port as of mid-May. The current shortfall according to the Eritrean Refugee and Relief Commission is 280,000 MT of food. Of serious concern is that diet variation is absent - most pledges are for wheat only. Oil and pulses, vital for child nutrition - are often missing. Only 44% of the drought-affected children in need are receiving a full food basket, and about 30% receive nothing at all.

Food security is highly threatened at this time. In 2002, the price of grain nearly doubled in Eritrea, while livestock prices fell by a similar rate. While prices have remained at these levels over the last few months, the purchasing power of the poor remains highly disadvantaged. Distress migration - both between rural areas and to towns - has begun as people move in attempts to find food and water. In the southern provinces, there are reports of increased urbanisation and migration.

[...]

Access to potable water

Adding to the food crisis, the level of water access and supply is becoming even more critical due to irregular and inadequate rains in the past two months. A water assessment conducted jointly by the Government of Eritrea (GSE) and UNICEF in March/April 2003 in 920 villages, covering 46% of the rural population, concluded that a rapid deterioration in water supply has occurred in much of the country. In good times, only 22% of the rural population in Eritrea have access to potable water. As water sources dry out, even fewer people have access to this precious resource. Water tables are falling to the point where pumps are burning out. The survey found that on average the daily water consumption is 13 litres per person per day, below international standards. As the water table lowers, contamination is more likely to occur; testing of water sources in four zones found contamination levels ranging from 41-94%.

The water shortage has huge implications on the livelihood and health of the people of Eritrea. As water supplies are depleted, irrigation projects and agriculture suffers; hygiene and sanitation deteriorates, resulting in a higher risk of disease; and lack of water and fodder for livestock results in increased animal deaths. New reports are being received of sudden increases of livestock deaths in nearly all areas of the country. For example, Anseba Province has recently reported the loss of 14,362 animals in five sub zones. To make matters worse, there does not appear to be any relief in sight from this crippling drought.

Meteorological reports confirm that the agricultural outlook for the country is not encouraging, and that even this year's "Azmara rains" may be affected." (UNICEF, 28 May 2003)

Drought seriously affecting the country (April 2003)

- UN Standing Committee on Nutrition warns of humanitarian catastrophe

"More than one million people are estimated to be in need of food aid, because of the drought. The RNIS has not received any new information on the nutrition situation. The last results of nutrition surveys showed, however, a precarious situation (see RNIS 40) which will probably worsen until the next agricultural season in October 2003. The normal coping mechanisms are already almost totally exhausted (OCHA, 21/03/03). Donor's response to the humanitarian appeal has been very low so far; only 25% of the food requirements have been received and of the non-food requirements only 3% have been funded (OCHA, 10/03/03). Food aid rations were only 60% of the assessed needs in February 2003 (FEWS, 10/03/03) and WFP was expecting a pipeline break in April 2003 if they do not receive further contributions (WFP, 13/03/03). WFP was also considering distributing food to only half of the droughtaffected population because of the scarce resources. In this case, the food pipeline would last until the end of July (WFP, 21/03/03). Funding is urgently needed to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe." (UN RNIS, April 2003)

"Eritrea continues to remain a drought-prone and food insecure country. The most severe effects of the drought are now being increasingly evident in all regions, particularly the traditional cereal producing areas of Gash Barka and Debub where the coping mechanism of the people is already becoming seriously challenged. The deteriorating drought conditions are creating new priorities for the humanitarian community. Of particular concern are acute food and water shortages and the increasingly high rate of malnutrition (on average 15-20% of under fives with acute malnutrition in most of the country) and drought-related diseases countrywide. Loss of livestock is also severely affecting food security, livelihood and the asset base of many families. The provision of agricultural inputs and shelter also require urgent attention. Resources are required as a matter of urgency to implement projects and programmes that address these priorities and avoid unnecessary suffering.

[...]

The food security situation of the country remained grim during the first quarter of 2003. With only about 11% of expected crop production realised during the 2002 cropping season, the prospects of impending food shortages on a nation-wide scale looked real. As a result, food aid remained a top priority. Also, due to the crop failure, local sources of seeds were depleted and for some crops, like wheat and barley in some areas, it is estimated that the total amount harvested is below the seed required for a normal planting season. This situation, combined with the fact that external seed sources have proved limited with regard to suitable varieties, makes seed distribution a main priority to re-establish domestic food production and break food aid dependency. Currently, efforts are still ongoing to close the seed availability gap of about 7,000 MTs.

It is important to note the ongoing and planned response by FAO and by NGOs in the provision of seeds, fertilisers, animal feed, veterinary drugs and poultry. These activities are proving decisive in assisting many farmers to prepare for the 2003-cropping season. FAO and NGO responses to food security include the provision of seeds and tools to 42,000 and 128,000 households respectively.

Following the launching by MoA of a package of proposals to mitigate the effects of the drought on agriculture, NGOs displayed a significant response to the MoA appeal and have to date taken up a number of these projects. The total budget of the MoA proposals is US\$ 36.5 million of which US\$ 11.5 million, or just over 31.5% has so far been contributed by NGOs, outside the framework of the CAP. Examples of these projects are provision of inputs, soil and water conservation activities, provision of poultry and farmer

training, repair of dams, animal de-stocking and livestock feeding. Most of these interventions are being executed in an integrated manner.

[...]

ERREC reports that the humanitarian response to the emergency food aid appeal has so far been very low, compared to the needs. Of the Government appeal of 476,797 MTs, the total confirmed and indicated food aid pledges, including what has so far been delivered, stands at 209,488 MTs and constitutes 43.9%.

Since March 2003, ERREC has attempted to reach as many people in need as possible, using reduced food rations. At present there are 1.3 million beneficiaries in the six administrative zones receiving food aid at 60% of the standard rations. Of this, 590,000 beneficiaries receive only 10 kg of cereals per month, the rest receive additional pulses and oil. The stock of food aid at hand is very small. Unless deliveries of the outstanding pledges are speeded up, current level of food distribution based on 1.4 million beneficiaries will not continue beyond July. The up-coming eight months are critical in terms of food availability and unless the commitments are increased and current pledges in the current pipeline arrive on time, a worsening nutritional situation will occur. Both cereal and Food Aid requirements show a shortfall of some 267,309 MTs including cereals, pulses, oil and supplementary items. Most of the pledges received to date do not have indicative or confirmed date of arrival.

As the humanitarian response became delayed and remained low, the government took measures to import 80,000 MTs of cereals, diverting funds from its meagre development programmes. This is serving to improve the availability of food through the market at affordable prices, for those who have the purchasing power. In addition, close to 40 million Nakfa (US\$ 3 million) has been raised by Eritreans, both in and outside the country. This has already been used to purchase wheat from the Eritrean Grain Board (EGB) and 10,360 MTs was distributed in the zones Debub, Gash Barka and Anseba. This distribution was complementary to the distributions carried out in March/April through the contributions from the international community. Lack of early and adequate response has forced WFP to sequentially review its programme of assistance. Instead of the targeted 900,000 drought-affected population and 580,700 war-affected, WFP is reaching only 400,000 (drought-affected) and a reduced caseload of 450,000 war-affected population.

FAO reports that the level of response to funding requests in the food security sector has been far less than required. This has led to very limited interventions. Of the US\$ 1,872,222 appealed for in the 2003 CAP, only about US\$ 522,307 has so far been received. While this is making it possible to address critical areas in livestock feeding, animal healthcare and provision of seeds, the partial funding allows only some components of those interventions to be addressed, while others are completely left out. A proposed water harvesting intervention, which has a potential for laying the grounds for longer term and sustainable basis for combating droughts, has not been addressed at all due to lack of funding. FAO in view of the urgent needs for the 2003 cropping season and the low response by donors to the CAP is contributing US\$ 397,343 for seed distribution. An urgent call is therefore made for increased donor assistance to ensure full coverage of the FAO portfolio of projects proposed for 2003." (UN, 3 June 2003)

The cessation of cross-border trade between Eritrea and its neighbouring countries has manifested a negative impact on the availability of food in the region, adding to the increase of cereal prices in some places." (UN, 3 June 2003)

"USAID/OFDA's Food Security and Agriculture specialist reports that the condition of livestock has visibly deteriorated since December 2002. The drought has led to a substantial reduction in pasture availability and water for livestock. In turn, animals and herdsman have been forced to migrate much further this year than in the past in search of water and fodder, particularly to the eastern escarpment. The increased grazing pressures will likely lead to rapid exhaustion of the land. An estimated 75 percent of the population of Eritrea depends on livestock production as part of their livelihood.

WFP reports that dry cultivation has begun in the Debub sub-regions of Mai Mine and Mendefera during February. Farmers are plowing their land in anticipation of the minor season rains. The lack of harvest from

last year has pushed cereal prices up by 22 percent in the markets of Mendefera and Decamhare in the past six months." (USAID, 18 March 2003)

IDPs outside camps live with food rations 40% below the minimum daily requirements (November 2002)

- Despite the need for rehabilitation and recovery, approximately 1.4 million Eritreans facing the worst drought in ten years and need food emergency assistance urgently
- Eritrea will meet just one third of the country's needs and the government appeals for 400,000 MTs of cereals to cover 2003 shortfall
- Livestock will suffer a 29% fodder shortage in 2003 which endangers the livelihood of many Eritreans
- Government estimated that during 2003 only 12% of the national grain requirement will be produced
- In some areas livestock loss has been estimated at up to 20%
- Agricultural production in 2002 the lowest since 1991 attributed to the slow pace of demining combined with severe drought
- Acute global malnutrition in the Anseba Zone stood at 19.2% of which 3% of children were severely malnourished (August 2002)

"In order to avoid famine, ERREC and OCHA officials say food aid will be needed until the end of the next seasonal harvest in December 2003.

"Given that we know the severity of the situation now, if in four or five months we begin to see grossly emaciated children, it will be a failure of the international community, the government and the diaspora to respond adequately," said Musa Bungudu, the UN's deputy humanitarian coordinator in Eritrea.

The annual rains from November to March which cover Eritrea's coastal plains and eastern escarpment completely failed this year, adversely affecting crop production and pastoral conditions in the region. The March to June rains also failed. This is expected to lead to the failure of long-term crop production cycles." (IRIN 8 October 2002)

"At a time when the country should be moving away from humanitarian relief towards rehabilitation and recovery, it is again faced with another year of severe drought following the failure of seasonal rains. This has resulted in the Government issuing an appeal for urgent humanitarian aid. The CA of Eritrea for the year 2002, published in November 2001, referred to the "looming effects of serious drought in the Anseba, Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea zones as a result of late and erratic rainfall". Climatic data analysis and the report from an assessment carried out in August 2002 by a technical task force confirmed the gravity of the situation, particularly in the breadbasket areas of Gash Barka and Debub. The report revealed that agricultural production in 2002 is the lowest since 1991. The report also calls for early humanitarian assistance to alleviate the effects of the drought to avoid unnecessary human suffering." (UN, November 2002, p.10)

"This group [drought affected] of over 1.4 million people is scattered in various areas throughout Eritrea's six regions." (UN November 2002, p.13)

"An estimated 2.3 million people are affected by drought and the effects of war, and still need emergency assistance" (UN, November 2002, p.1)

"As Eritrea faces an unusually large and deadly food deficit during 2003, early and substantial mobilisation of food assistance is the most pressing humanitarian need. The Government estimates 352,000 MTs of cereals, pulses and oil are needed to meet the nation's food needs, in the coming year. Additional cereal grain is also required to establish a two-month buffer stock. An estimated shortage of fodder of 3.68 million MTs is anticipated over the next 12 months, representing 29% of needs, this could put the health and lives of 1.6 to 2.3 million animals at risk." (UN, November 2002, p.10)

"Production, planned imports and food stocks are expected to meet just one third of the country's needs for the coming year and the government consequently launched an appeal on 28th August for 400,000 metric tons of cereal crops to meet the expected shortfall.

Another contributing factor to the poor harvest in 2002 is the presence of landmines along the southern border, which is frustrating the resettlement of internally displaced families and returning refugees." (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.27)

"Total food crop production in the 2002/2003 season will be low, possibly the lowest in the past ten years. [...]

On 28 August 2002, the Government of Eritrea issued a preliminary crop estimate for the 2002 harvest, indicating a total cereal production of only 70,000 MTs, 68% less than the total production in 2002 and only 12% of the national food grain requirement which is estimated to be close to 600,000 MTs in 2002. An FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission took place in late August 2002. Preliminary assessment was undertaken by the Government and the UN in October 2002. The findings of this survey indicate that out of 554,867 ha planned for cultivation only 309,260 ha (55.7%) of area was planted in 2002. The estimated production of crops is 54,358 MTs, which is only 11.1% of the anticipated production of 554,867 MTs. Based on the assessment and other factors, the Government reported the food requirements for 2003 to be 352,000 MTs of cereals [...].

Livestock, especially important for food security at the household level, has also suffered from the drought through lack of water and grazing. Traditional migration patterns have disrupted and new grazing areas sought putting extreme pressure on areas fortunate enough to have received some rainfall. In some areas loss of livestock has been significant, ranging from an estimated 10 to 20%. Surviving animals are considered to be predisposed to disease and the supply of fodder, especially crop residues, will be exhausted soon after crops are harvested." (UN November 2002, p.20)

"The slow pace of demining the heavily mined frontier between Ethiopia and Eritrea has meant that the resumption of agricultural activities in these areas will be delayed while the task is completed. Delays in the urgent exercise of demining the border territories of Gash Barka and Debub (accounting for 70% of national cereal production) to allow the return of farmers is a contributing factor to the current food crisis affecting the country.

IDPs settled outside camps and the drought affected are currently living with insufficient monthly food rations i.e. 60% of the minimum daily requirement of 2,100 kilo-calories per person. In addition, much work needs to be done to reintegrate former combatants and rehabilitate much of the land and infrastructure in war affected areas for crop production.

The Eritrea Relief and Refugee Emergency Commission (ERREC) and the United Nations alerted recently that many people will be faced with serious food shortage following the failure of the short rains and delays in the onset of long rains. Over 1 million people are estimated to be affected by drought caused by the complete failure of the vital *Azmera*, April-May rains, and the late onset of the June-July *Kremti* rains that mark the prime planting months, leaving in its wake an unprecedented dry spell. The *Azmera* or spring rains are not only important for the growth of long cycle crops, but also for the pasture that provides fodder and water for livestock." (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.12)

"A nutrition survey conducted in Anseba Zone by Concern in May revealed that low crop yields and the lack of sale of small animals at the household level contributed to malnutrition. The prevalence of global acute malnutrition in the zone stood at 19.2% of which 3% of children were severely malnourished.[...] The lack of a national nutrition information system and understaffing of the MoH nutrition unit make it very difficult, however, to determine the overall nutrition situation in the country. There are few NGOs experienced in nutrition surveys. The MoH has recently published nutrition surveillance guidelines but are still in need of assistance. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and implementing NGOs have already started this support through consultants and supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes. (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.13)

Nutritional surveillance data collected in the IDP camps and sub-zones by SC UK (April 2002)

- Caloric intake of IDPs fell steadily between July and October 2001 never reaching the minimum daily recommended
- At the peak of the hunger period in October 2001 energy consumption was as low as 1451 calories per person daily

"Daily energy intake and morbidity data based on monthly nutritional surveillance

Community areas included in SC UK surveillance were divided into a series of sub-zones. SC UK nutrition surveillance teams visited at least three villages in each sub-zone on a monthly basis. Five families were interviewed to obtain energy consumption data for the previous two weeks. The caloric value of all food consumed (including the WFP ration) was then calculated resulting in an estimate of average caloric intake for each family. From the average of the five families a village average value was generated. Results were then extrapolated to the whole sub-zone.

The tables below summarise monthly nutritional surveillance data collected in the IDP camps and sub-zones by SC UK. [during 2001]

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Shambuko					
Prevalence of fever	0.9%	3.5%	3.1%	14.0%	6.7%
Prevalence of ARI	3.2%	4.0%	4.7%	12.1%	7.5%
Malnutrition from Nutrition Surveillance (N.S.) Sites	8.5%	1.9%	5.3%	3.4%	0.8%
Calorie intake (Kcal/person/day)	2049	1991	1884	1451	1900
Lalai Gash					
Prevalence of fever	7.5%	14.9%	9.0%	3.2%	3.9%
Prevalence of ARI	7.7%	12.6%	5.5%	8.7%	7.0%
Malnutrition from N.S. sites	5.7%	4.3%	3.5%	6.5%	4.8%
Calorie intake (Kcal/person/day)	2004	1914	1837	1555	1654
Gonge					
Prevalence of fever	2.0%	3.1%	3.7%	8.7%	3.6%
Prevalence of ARI	3.9%	3.7%	2.8%	13.4%	5.0%
Malnutrition from N.S. sites	2.2%	1.9%	4.4%	5.2%	1.1%
Calorie intake (Kcal/person/day)	1799	1778	1698	1654	1801
The IDP camps (Ade Keshi, Korokon and Sheilab)					

Prevalence of fever	2.2%	2.5%	2.2%	4.7%	4.4%
Prevalence of ARI	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	4.0%	5.0%
Malnutrition from N.S. sites	3.2%	3.4%	5.2%	4.0%	4.0%
Calorie intake (Kcal/person/day)	1869	1955	1984	1661	2031
Calorie intake (Kcal/person/day)					
Shambuko	2049	1991	1884	1451	1900
Lalai Gash	2004	1914	1837	1555	1654
Gonge	1799	1778	1698	1654	1801
Monthly Average	1951	1894	1806	1553	1785

In all three sub-zones, caloric intake steadily fell throughout the pre-harvest period between July and October. During this time, calorific consumption never reached the recommended minimum of 2100 calories/person/day. In October (the peak of the hunger period), energy consumption declined to the lowest level, with average intake ranging between 1451 - 1654 calories per person per day. In terms of morbidity, prevalence of fever and acute respiratory infections peaked in October as the night temperatures usually drop significantly during this time and there were also "pockets" of malaria." (ENN 30 April 2002)

Several studies indicating better nutrition status among IDPs than the general war-affected population (August 2001)

- Findings of a malnutrition rate of 11.2 percent among IDPs in camps and of over 40 percent among the war-affected Host Population reported in January 2000
- Infectious diseases appear to have been kept under control in the camps
- All children in IDP camps under 15 have been vaccinated against measles
- Improvements of the nutritional status among the IDPs in camps related to a steady supply of food aid and generally speaking very effective humanitarian response
- Again revealed that the nutritional status of the displaced children was much better than that of the children of the host community

"A recent Ministry of Health/SCF-UK/UNICEF nutritional survey of 30 camps and Host Communities indicated a malnutrition rate of 11.2 percent among IDPs in camps and of over 40 percent among the war-affected Host Population. The report further indicated that, even though the nutritional status among the IDPs in camps has generally improved because of the steady supply of food aid (both general distribution and supplementary), their nutrition status will rapidly deteriorate if no further assistance is given. This is because, without a productive base, the IDPs are completely dependent on humanitarian assistance. The high rate of malnutrition in the Host Community points to the need to address the problem of malnutrition on a long-term basis. The nutritional status and physical condition of the IDPs would deteriorate rapidly if relief food is stopped." (UN January 2000, p.15)

"Nutritional surveys carried out by Médecins sans Frontières Holland in collaboration with the Ministry of Health have found children are bearing up surprisingly well to the difficult conditions.

Reporting findings of 9.9% moderate and 1.1% global malnutrition from the survey which encompassed several displacement areas, acting head of mission for MSF-Holland Jacqui Ryan said: "Given the number of people who have been displaced and the state of the camps, people's state of health is pretty good. [...]"

Infectious diseases appear to have been kept at bay in the camps so far, according to WHO's disease prevention and control officer Dr Debrezion Berhe. " (WHO 31 July 2000)

"The following data shows the nutritional status from the nutrition surveillance of the MoH from October 1999 to May 2001 in Gash Barka IDP camps:

Period in Quarters	Weight/height <80%	Weight/height <70%
Oct – Dec '99	7.5 – 9.6%	1.2 – 1.4%
Jan – Mar '00	5.5 – 6.5%	0.9 – 1.3%
Apr – Jun '00 *	3.0 – 5.5%	0.6 – 3.0%
Jul – Sept '00	6.3% - 8.5%	0.8 – 1.0%
Oct – Dec '00	4.6 – 8.0%	0.2 – 1.0%
Jan – Mar '01	2.3 – 3.4%	0.1- 0.2%
Apr – May '01	1.5 – 2.6%	0.1%
Average range	4.4 – 6.3%	

*No data was collected in May and only from 1 site in June.

This shows that the global malnutrition rate has never reached 10% in the IDP camps of Gash-Barka even during and after the conflict. The same <10% rate was prevailing in Debub region for the same period except that the global malnutrition rate was 10.7% in October 2000 and it came down to 9.9% in November and kept decreasing until it was only 3.9% in February 2001." (MoH & SCF August 2001, p.3)

"As people started moving to their areas of origin from the displaced camps at the beginning of June [2001], this survey was carried out as an assessment of the nutritional and health status of the returning communities as well as those who did not leave their areas. [A nutrition survey, funded by ECHO, was conducted by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Save the Children (UK), in Gash Barka. It covered Lalai Gash, Shambuko and (the southern part of) Gonge Sub-zones to identify the nutritional status of children under five for the returnees as well as those who have stayed within their community during the last three years of the conflict.]

[...]

Background:

Both Lalai Gash and Shambuko subzones border Ethiopia and they are the most affected by the border conflict where almost all of the population was displaced into camps. The estimated population figures of these subzones before the last conflict, were as follows:

Lalai Gash Subzone	45,293
Shambuko Subzone	22,998
Gonge Subzone	29,598
Total	97,88933

(Ministry of Local Governments Akordat, 14/08/2001.)

The population of the whole region of Gash Barka was estimated at 564,574, thus our area comprised 17.3% of the region population[...].

Current estimated population of Lalai Gash and Shambuko subzones are 33,510 and 17,030 respectively. These figures comprise returning IDPs and host community. It worth mentioning that there are still 19,356 in Ade Keshi camp to return to Lalai Gash subzone and 11,975 in Korokon camp from Shambuko subzone.

Number of people who have returned from Afabet, Ade Keshi and KTK camps to the three subzones was 46,269. There are 31,331 who still live in Ade Keshi and Korokon camps because they cannot return to their places, as there are still landmines to be cleared and water pore holes to be constructed. All these villages are near to the borders.

[...]

There were 341 families who have been displaced while 198 families did not leave their villages at all except may be for a few days during the conflict period. The malnutrition rate was found to be significantly different between the two groups, the nutritional status of the displaced children was much better than that of the children of the host community (p value = 0.006). This is certainly due to the complete package of services, (general food ration, supplementary feeding, health care, water and sanitation, education, etc.) that the IDPs used to get when they were in the camps. There were 566 children coming from displaced families out of whom 34 (6.0%) were malnourished while there were 348 children from families that did not leave their community out of whom 39 (11.2%) were malnourished.

[...]

The children from displaced families had better nutritional status than the children coming from the host community. This does not mean that displacement is encouraged, but it shows how properly the problems were managed. The collective efforts of all partners (Government, UN agencies, NGOs, and the community) worked together and the appropriate interventions were implemented both to prevent and treat the malnutrition. SC UK was running feeding programmes for the malnourished children and mothers in all IDPs in Gash Barka Region in addition to Afabet. ERREC/WFP general food ration distribution accompanied by adequate health services of the MoH played a very important role in prevention of malnutrition. SC UK closed down the feeding programme at the end of June where malnutrition was in the range of 2-3% in all the camps and the actual number of malnourished children per each centre did not exceed 20 children. A one month ration was given to every malnourished child and the health facilities were informed to take care of them. This was followed up throughout the month of July, and no deterioration was reported and the condition of these children remained stable if it did not improve.

Global malnutrition rate was found to be 8.0% (<2 SD weight for height) and severe malnutrition was 1.5% (<3 SD &/or oedema)." (MoH & SCF August 2001, pp. 1-3, 9, 13-14)

Water and sanitation

IDP returnees and host communities face critical water and sanitation problem due to harsh drought (June 2004)

- Poor performance of rains in March-May limited the level of the ground water
- Though IDPs well supplied, returnees and host communities still need water provision
- 30,000 people are provided emergency water but additional 54,000 of people require water projects and trucking
- Mai-Alba and Kolet in Debub are the regions mostly in need of an immediate and urgent interventions

"The ground water table did not replenish due to the poor performance of rains in March-May. Eritrea is therefore still under the grip of a harsh drought resulting in severe critical drinking water problems both for human and animals. The worst affected regions are Anseba, Southern Red Sea and Northern Red Sea.

The Water and Sanitation Sectoral Task Force in Eritrea has focused its activities to meet the urgent water and sanitation needs of the most affected communities impacted by war and drought, i.e. IDPs, Returnees, Expellees and host communities. Currently, around 30,000 people are provided emergency water by trucking. However, in terms of drought-affected communities, an estimated 54,000 of people require immediate support through accelerated water projects and water trucking. The needs of IDP's are mostly taken Dried up river bed- Monoxeito care of, except a few residual camps such as Denbedoran, Gash Barka and camps in Aromo, Mai-Alba and Kolet in Debub region where immediate and urgent interventions are needed.

The water and sanitation programme has been striving to ensure inter-sector linkages through full provision of water and sanitation facilities to schools and health centres. The provision of safe water is achieved through water transportation to drought affected areas, repair and rehabilitation of existing schemes as well as construction of new schemes.

The Consolidated Appeal requested some USD 4 million for the water sector, of which only some USD 1.8 million has been received to date. The urgent funding needs in the sector for 2004 are US \$ 2.2 million through the Consolidated Appeal (CAP)." (UN OCHA, 17 June 2004)

"Access to clean water and basic sanitation remains low as assistance declines for this sector. A drop in groundwater levels was observed as early as November/ December 2003 and WFP field staff reported severe shortages in many areas in the Anseba region, forcing villagers to walk increasingly long distances in search of water. In Debub and Northern and Southern Red Sea regions, more than 20 villages are currently dependant on trucked water.

The Water and Sanitation department has ensured water supply to drought victims, IDPs and returnees from Sudan. IDP camps have been well supplied and there have been no outbreaks of water-borne diseases from 2003 to date. Nevertheless, needs are likely to increase. Approximately 25% of returnee and host community settlement areas in Zoba Gash Barka will still require new water supply and distribution systems to ensure greater than 15L/person/day. The extreme water shortages have led to dependency on expensive water trucking mechanisms and makes water provision highly linked to aid provision. During the past five months, for example, *circa* 30,000 people have been assisted through water trucking." (UN OCHA, 31 May 2004, p. 15)

"Approximately 25% of returnee and host community settlement areas in Zoba Gash Barka will still require new water supply and distribution systems to ensure greater than 15L/person/day. Another 30% of returnee and host community areas are estimated to require rehabilitation and/or extension of existing water storage and distribution systems. Many returnee/host community schools and health stations also require water provisions." (UN OCHA, 23 April 2004)

Lack of funding for water and sanitation reduced access to drinking water (June 2003)

"A lack of adequate funding for water and sanitation has contributed to reduced access to drinking water, resulting in people walking as long as three to five hours in search of water, increased water contamination and resulting diseases, and eventual distress migration and internal displacement when coping is exhausted. This has also resulted in increased caloric expenditure in children- responsible for gathering water - when they can least afford it. UN and NGOs however, continue with the rehabilitation and maintenance of water sources. The provision of safe water and sanitation facilities in IDP camps has become a problem with water being trucked several kilometres to some camps. Other IDPs have had to be relocated from areas without sufficient water.

The water and sanitation project submitted by UNICEF within the CAP 2003 framework has to a large degree been funded if looking only at the project proposal developed in September last year. However, as the severity of the situation became clearer UNICEF shifted its priorities to mainly short-term emergencies as well as expanded the emergency interventions to also include urban areas like Mendefera. For that reason there is a need for more funds for alleviation of the drought. The additional project proposals, currently under consideration, do not cover all the country needs as limited implementation capacity has been taken into account.

[...]

Some progress has been made - improved access to safe water for 23,000 drought affected and other vulnerable persons and 6,000 returnees from Sudan with the provision of 20 litres of safe water per day.

Seven schools and some health facilities have already been provided with water and sanitation facilities. Fifty (50) boreholes and twelve (12) wells have been installed or rehabilitated. Campaigns on good hygiene and sanitation practices have been going on in rural areas and particularly in schools. However, the establishment of a surveillance system and the purchase of emergency supplies have been delayed.

Another major constraint for the timely fulfilment of the sectoral objectives has been the shortage of labour, especially skilled personnel. Furthermore, the relatively late allocation of funds from donors has to some degree delayed the response. **The preliminary figures for the population facing water shortages is 2.2 million of whom 1.7 million are facing water shortages due to the drought.** Provision of water supply and sanitation facilities remains a priority for the rest of the year. At the same time, facilities already installed need to be properly managed and maintained. Water trucking and similar measures will be required within the coming three months to alleviate some of the most urgent needs.

In recognition that the UN cannot meet all the needs in the water and sanitation sector, three new project proposals from NGOs active in the sector are being considered." (UN, 3 June 2003)

"USAID/OFDA's Water and Sanitation specialist reports that water shortages are becoming a serious problem as water tables have fallen more than 10 meters in some severely affected areas. Small villages with shallow, handdug wells are forced to travel longer distances to obtain water. As many small and remote villages are accustomed to chronic water shortages, they are already conserving water. In larger towns and cities, the impact of the drought is far more taxing as those populations are not as accustomed to water shortages. The reduced water availability could lead to deteriorating hygiene conditions in densely populated areas and, thus, elevate the potential for water related disease outbreaks." (USAID, 18 March 2003)

"The water problem in Eritrea has assumed a critical state of shortage. The effect of rains in late 2002 that served to recharge many wells and reservoirs has passed as the 2003 dry season sets in. Anseba, Northern Red Sea, Southern Red Sea and northern part of Gash Barka and Debub zones, which have received poor rainfall for the past four to five years are the worst affected areas, with the water table down to 10 metres and falling. Lack of water has and continues to aggravate the general problem with families walking an average of 4-5 kilometers in search of water in hostile conditions. In some areas, regular water points have dried up while in others the water tables are increasingly low, threatening the lives of both people and livestock, with a third of the latter at risk of death due to lack of water and fodder. Water prices have doubled in the first two months of 2003 in urban areas. In the Northern Red Sea area, thousands of livestock have died as a result of lack of water, pasture and fodder and distress livestock sales have risen and prices drop." (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003)

"Recent ICC field assessment to Debub zone reveals that the water situation is seriously bad. For instance in Senafe sub zone out of eight micro dams six have dried up rendering acute water supply problem to the communities and small irrigation activities. In addition, the field visit showed that similar water problem exists in other four sub zones visited namely: Areza, Maimine, Segeneiti and Debarwa. The water situation remains depressed in other parts of the country including in some IDP camps such as Dembe-Doran." (ICC, 18 April 2003)

Challenging water supply and sanitation needs in an environment plagued by drought and mines (November 2002)

- More than 2/3 of the population in Red Sea, northern parts of Anseba and Gash Barka regions might face water shortages in 2003
- 2500 IDPs in Dembedoran camp rely on water trucking from Bushuka water source which was nearly depleted as of September 2002
- Auli'e La Haila IDP camp needs latrines, bathrooms, garbage pits and cleaning tools

- War and drought considerably depleted water sources as a result women and children may spend most of their day walking to fetch water
- Most populations are forced to use water from unprotected sources
- Livestock which is an essential economic and food resource require considerable quantities of water
- Lack of health and sanitation awareness campaigns have not enabled to yield the benefits added through improved sanitation facilities in IDP camps

"During 2002 Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) interventions focused on providing water and environmental sanitation facilities to returning IDPs, refugees from Sudan and the drought-affected population. However, many vulnerable people still do not have access to safe and adequate water and sanitation facilities, especially in locations served by water trucks.

An assessment carried out in August 2002 indicated that due to the decreased rainfall many shallow water sources, mostly hand dug wells and temporary traditional dug holes in riverbeds, were drying up. Also, surface dams for major urban settlements like Massawas and Mendefera were drying up. In particular, the population in the Red Sea regions (approximately 550,000 people) and in the northern parts of Anseba and Gash Barka regions (approximately 300,000 people) was affected by the lack of rain, including areas where the population already faced serious water shortages. As previous years saw less rainfall than normal, it is feared that the present drought will severely deplete the ground water resources in many areas. The assessment report concluded that more than two third of the population might be facing water shortages in 2003." (UN, November 2002, p.23)

"The 2,500 IDPs living in Dembedoran is still a cause of concern as the population still gets their water from water trucking.

OCHA Field Unit Support from Barentu confirmed on its report of 19 September 2002 that Dembe-Doran IDP camp was facing critical water problem. According to the report the ICRC had been trucking water but stopped it four months ago up on announcement to the local administration. As no measure was taken to address the water problem in camp ICRC re-directed one shift of the Shambiko-Bushuka water truck to Dembe-Doran. According to the report the water in Bushuka was nearing depletion. On depletion of this water source would lead Dembe-Doran to a critical water problem." (ICC, 30 September 2002)

"UNMEE Military Observers have reported that on 29 and 30 June, the Deputy Administrator in Shambiko confirmed that between 6,000 and 7,000 of the 15,000 IDPs in Korokon IDP camp were relocated to Shambiko and Kotobia, because of the acute water shortages in Korokon." (UNMEE, 5 July 2002)

"Debub

ICC staff conducted a field mission to IDP camps in Senafe and Tsorona areas in Debub zone from 21 to 25 November 2001. The team discovered that Gema'e and Endabastifanos villages have acute water problems, which require urgent attention and intervention. Easy access to clean and safe water should be provided to IDPs in these villages before the situation deteriorates. The Auli'e La Haila IDP camp needs basic hygiene requirements such as latrines, bathrooms, garbage pits and cleaning tools. The health station of Genzebo, which serves the Mai Wurai camp, lacks electricity and this is a major setback for the IDPs. Shelter is also a problem as IDPs in Mai Wurai and Tsorona need to replace their old worn-out tents." (ICC 28 December 2001)

"The water supply and environmental sanitation situation in late 2001 can be further characterised as follows:

Due to the destroyed water supply facilities and the drying up of water sources in drought affected areas, a large part of the rural population has to fetch water from very far away. This places a heavy burden on vulnerable groups, especially women and children, who may have to walk several hours per day in search of water.

In some areas affected by the drought, and for many returned IDPs and those still remaining in camps, expensive and difficult water trucking is still the only option. Due to poor road conditions, water trucking is a very difficult task in the rainy season.

In many areas the population is forced to use water from unprotected sources containing little water, often subject to surface pollution. In areas with low water tables, typically drought-affected areas, the population is getting water from motorised boreholes. However, boreholes are expensive not only to construct but also to operate and maintain, thus putting an increased load on the already limited resources available for the IDPs and other vulnerable groups.

A large part of the population depends, either directly or indirectly, for some or all of their food and livelihood on livestock, which require considerable quantities of water. Animals often use the same sources used by humans for domestic purposes. In addition, irrigation consumes a large proportion of available water resources in many areas where crops require more water than is available from rain. This places a further strain on already limited water resources (particularly in drought-affected areas).

The following conditions and practices contribute to diarrhoea, especially among children: lack of access to, or limited use of, latrines; widely practised open space defecation; poor water supply and handling at household-level; and poor personal and domestic hygiene among all population groups.

During 2001, a large number of trenches and household/family latrines have been constructed in IDP camps, but the impact of these interventions is impeded by a lack of awareness of the proper utilisation of these facilities, and the long-term effect of the interventions remains still to be seen.

Some areas are still inaccessible either due to their proximity to the Ethiopian border or because of the presence of mines. In these areas it is assumed that most facilities no longer exist and substantial resources are needed to restore services." (UN, November 2001, pp. 27-28)

Estimated that only 44% of the urban and 16 % of the rural population have access to safe water (February 2001)

- Only and estimated 1% of the rural populations have access to sanitation facilities and 52% in urban settings (January 2001)
- 10 liters per person/per diem average water consumption in Debub camps below generally accepted standard of 15 liters
- Defecation in open areas by most population groups remains a major problem
- Major rehabilitation of water supply sources and the sanitation facilities required to facilitate the return of IDP populations

"In addition to the drought, the devastating war with Ethiopia, that displaced more than a million people, has caused considerable pressure to be placed on already limited water resources in host communities. The water supply problem has been further aggravated by the lack of management, maintenance of structures, and trained personnel at many water installations. It is estimated that only 44% of the urban and 16 % of the rural population have access to safe water.

[...]

Regarding sanitation, the lack of access to, or limited use of, latrines and the indiscriminate defecation in open areas by most population groups remains a major problem. It is estimated that only 52% of the urban population have access to sanitation facilities; the corresponding figure in rural areas is 1%. "(GOE/UN January 2001, pp. 21, 22)

"In all of the [Debub] camps visited, average water consumption is ten litres per person per day. This is below the generally accepted standard of 15 litres per person per day. In most cases the reason is not the

lack of an adequate water supply at the camps, but the inadequate supply of water containers. In Alba camp, there are three covered hand-dug wells in use. As much as 100,000 litres of water is drawn from the three wells, one of which supplies 45,000 litres per day. However, the water level of this well is fluctuating from five metres to seven metres and there appears to be concern that this well is operating at or beyond its capacity. The people reported that while some chlorine is added to the well and reservoir, it does not appear that there is proper chlorination.

Even where there are latrines available, the majority of the IDPs still use the open spaces for human waste. Latrines currently exist at health centres in all of the camps." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.39)

"In many areas in the country and in all IDP camps, particularly during the dry season, large numbers of women and children (especially girls) have to spend a disproportionate amount of their time and energy fetching water from distant sources, sometimes walking as long as 2-3 hours to obtain water;

[...]

Water trucking to IDP camps continues to be an elaborate and expensive operation to maintain. However, due to the increasing and continuous demand for water and absence of other options to deliver water to the IDP camps such operations will have to continue on a case-by-case basis;

Water supply sources and the sanitation facilities in areas affected by the conflict will require major rehabilitation in order to facilitate the return of IDP populations;" (UN February 2001, pp.24-25)

Shelter

Shelter situation of IDPs and Expellees in camps is very critical (June 2004)

- Damaged tents due to fire, wear and tear or weather conditions urgently need replacement or repair

"[...] have lived in camps for five years and their tents are worn out and urgently need to be replaced.

Shelter is a critical determinant of survival for IDPs providing protection from the environment and enhancing resistance to disease. It is also important for human dignity and sustains family and community life in difficult circumstances" (ACT, January 2004)

"The temporary shelter situation in IDP and Expellee camps is currently very critical. The tents, which are totally or partially damaged due to wear and tear or weather conditions, need to be urgently replaced or repaired. Out of a total of 19,699 households, 14,357 require urgent tent replacement, while 1,048 are in need of repair. In order to be able to respond quickly to other emergencies, a stockpile of about 2,500 tents would be needed. In addition, camps lack adequate sanitary facilities including latrines, forcing IDPs to use communal areas outside of camps as informal latrines.

[...]

Focus on Mai Alba IDP camp

Nearly 1,000 internally displaced persons and displaced returnees from six villages live in tents in the Mai Alba IDP camp in Adi Quala. The camp has been in existence since 2001. The return to their home villages has not happened because of damaged homes, insecurity or mine infestation. With very few owning livestock, the majority depend on food aid. Because of the rough terrain not easily accessed by vehicles, the camp dwellers walk 6 hours to Adi Quala town to collect their food rations and mill their grain. LWF only once provided IDPs with clothes. ICRC provided tents and blankets. However, some of the tents are worn-out and need to be replaced. (UN OCHA, 31 January 2004)

Rain storm destroyed 642 tents in Mai-Wurai Camp

"The camp administrators of Mai-Wurai camp reported on 02 May 2004 that rain accompanied by windstorm destroyed 632 tents in the Camp.

Based on the report ICC Field Liaison Unit visited the camp on 28 May 04 and discussed with the Camp administrator and the dwellers about the incident. The administrators and dwellers said that the rain started in the afternoon around 16:00 hours and continued up to 17:30 with heavy wind dismantling 632 tents. Out of the above-mentioned number of tents blown up 174 tents could not be recovered. The owners of these damaged tents are now living with their neighbours.

Similarly four tents were destroyed as fire broke out in Mai Alba IDP camp during the first week of May. ERREC regional office is taking further investigation on the damaged tents." (UN OCHA, 17 June 2004)

Key objective to assist in reintegration and recovery of IDPs (June 2003)

"Key objectives in the family shelter and household items sector are to assist in the reintegration and recovery of IDPs, settlement of deportees, while providing temporary shelter, household items, hygienic materials and kerosene. The assumption in CAP 2003 was that all the IDPs, in camps and outside of camps, would be returned to their places of origin. However, due to a number of reasons, including the lack of progress in demining the settlement areas (villages) and their respective farmlands and grazing areas, this is not likely to happen in 2003. ICRC is engaged in replacing worn-out tents in IDP camps although its stock is currently inadequate to meet the demand. UNDP under its PoWER project is currently finalising arrangements to resettle over 8,700 Eritreans who were expelled from Ethiopia. The expellees currently hosted in Shelab camp are expected to move to their final settlement in the Gerenfit area. In addition, some 1,250 expellees from Adi Keshi will be moved to Ugumu village. The expellees from Shelab and Adi Keshi (about 10,000) need assistance in emergency shelter.

[...]

Progress has been made in the shelter and household items sector. ICRC has distributed 1,502 tents to IDP households in Debub region. However, ICRC stocks need to be replenished to meet existing demand, particularly for families whose tents are already worn out. To reduce the dependency on scarce wood resources, ICRC has provided 10 litres of kerosene per house old to 8,341 households in Shelab and Adi Keshi camps and host communities for one month. To continue distribution, urgent additional funding is required. The only planned programme within CAP 2003 in this sector – distribution of 12,500 tents and building materials to 7,500 households - has not been implemented completely due to lack of funding." (UN, 3 June 2003)

Rainstorm destroyed 420 tents in Mai-Wurai IDP camp

"ICC field officers reported that on 31 March 2003 a stormy rainfall had destroyed 420 tents in Mai-Wurai IDP camp. Currently, ICRC is distributing tents and tarpaulins to families whose tents are worn out. The tents and tarpaulins available in ICRC stock are reported to be short to meet the existing demand in the IDP camps." (ICC, 18 April 2003)

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has distributed 1,502 tents in Debub zone and 9,678 tarpaulins and 20 meters of rope to each tarpaulin for IDPs residing in camps in Gash Barka. In addition, ICRC has provided 1,500 tents for the settlement of rural expellees from Shelab to Gerenfit and there is a plan to provide tarpaulins for the remaining." (ICC, 30 May 2003)

"ICC Field Officers have recently visited Gash Barka and Debub zones to update the IDP figures and monitor the general humanitarian situation. There has been no recent movement of IDPs. Regarding the humanitarian situation, ICC field officers reported that most of the IDPs were facing critical problem of fuel for cooking, soaps and for some shelter was critical as their tents are worn out." (ICC, 30 May 2003)

IDPs in host communities or to be returned during 2003 need assistance in shelter and household items (November 2002)

- 10,688 IDPs in host areas need shelter and household items as of November 2002
- ICC shelter assessment identified 11,901 IDPs households needing replacing their worn tents
- 2300 IDPs left homeless in Senafe following storm (April 2002)

"IDPs and Deportees in Camps

About 64,300 IDPs and expellees/deportees are currently in camps. They are expected to return to their places of origin in the year 2003 but all require assistance in emergency shelter.

Returnee IDPs

Although there was no major return of IDPs in the year 2002, following the completion of the demarcation process and mine clearance the IDPs in camps will eventually return to their places of origin. Most of the villages are devastated, their houses completely or partially destroyed and assets and possessions are looted. Amongst those who returned in 2002 (to the three regions affected by the war Gash-Barka, Debub and Southern Red Sea), around 4000 families have received assistance in emergency shelter (corrugated iron sheets, rafters, beams, cement and material for doors and windows). In the same manner, IDPs that will return in 2003 will be supported with the same package of building materials.

Around 10,688 IDPs are still hosted within various communities in rural and urban areas. These need continuous assistance in shelter and household items." (UN, November 2002, p.29)

"As the rainy season is approaching, temporary shelter has become one of the critical problems in almost all IDP and expellee camps. Recently the ICC field team has been conducting shelter assessment in IDP and expellee camps. The outcome of the assessment highlighted that 11,901 IDPs households living both in Gash Barka and Debub zones need urgent replacement of their worn out tents, over and above 2001 IDP families need covering such as plastic sheeting before the rainy season. The Eritrea Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) reported that at present there is no stock of tents to respond to this urgent need." (ICC 25 April 2002)

"Preliminary findings from a shelter needs assessment conducted last week indicate that about 10,000 IDP families in camps in Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea zones face serious shelter needs in the coming months. These IDPs would urgently need a replacement of their old and worn-out tents before the onset of the rainy season. Already, a number of tents around Senafe were blown away recently as a result of early and unexpected rains, rendering some 2,300 IDPs homeless. The final results of the report will be published shortly. Approximately 10,000 tents are urgently required for 50,000 IDPs (10,000 families). UN Agencies have no stocks available to respond to this shelter crisis. With the rainy season only two months away, the UN is appealing to donors for assistance to the needy people." (OCHA 19 April 2002)

Shelter rehabilitation project for returned displaced populations through POWER programme (June 2002)

- 33,000 people had fled Tserona
- UNDP rehabilitated 4500 houses in Tserona and Senafe
- Near-by village Gamae was razed to the ground and 1,500 houses still to be re-built along with the market center, the health center, the court house and the school
- In Shera, the POWER programme undertook restoration of 560 housing units prompting the return of a few IDPs (May 2002)
- POWER programme rehabilitated 134 houses in Tisha

- Mines are a major impediment for re-construction and people returning to their destroyed villages

Tserona:

"Some housing structures were completely destroyed, others partially damaged and the sub-zone's population of 33,000 people fled the area. For one year, they lived in camps for internally displaced people (IDPs).

But in less than five months, a postwar rehabilitation project, implemented by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), has put metal roofs, doors and windows back on the houses. Life is slowly returning to Tserona - once an important cross-border trading centre.

To date, 2,750 houses have been rehabilitated in the area, with a further 1,750 in the nearby sub-zone of Senafe - a total of 4,500 houses. The project is funded by The Netherlands and Italy - in fact Tserona's town square has been renamed The Hague Square in appreciation of the assistance.

[...]

[Gamae:]

Some 10,000 people are still displaced, unable to return home, because their villages have either been completely destroyed or are under Ethiopian occupation. The nearby village of Gamae has been razed to the ground - its inhabitants are just a few hundred metres away in a sprawling IDP camp.

According to UNDP programme officer Assefaw Tewolde, Gamae is due to be reconstructed so that the people can resume their livelihoods. But there is still much to be done in Tserona.

Vital nerve centres such as the market, health centre and the court house have been reduced to rubble. The market now consists of makeshift stalls in the centre of town. Some of the houses are beyond repair.

Assefaw says there are some 1,500 destroyed houses still to be rehabilitated, along with schools - there are still students in makeshift classrooms - and electricity has to be restored. Now there is also the challenge of creating sustainable livelihoods for the local population and introducing income-generating activities." (IRIN 5 June 2002)

Serha:

"Serha is a ghost town. The wind sweeps eerily through the empty houses. The town was destroyed, but now the POWER [post-war emergency and rehabilitation] is a joint programme between the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and UNDP project is starting to restore 560 housing units and a few people are trickling back. Most of the inhabitants are still in IDP camps, along with Eritreans from villages still under Ethiopian occupation or villages deemed unsafe because of mines and unexploded ordnance." (IRIN 29 May 2002)

Tisha:

"Sa'ada Ali Orneh Higo has just returned to her village, Tisha, which was on the frontline between the two opposing armies. Her house is deeply scarred by bullet holes and it is with some trepidation that she came back.

"We were surprised when we saw the weyane [Ethiopians] arrive over the mountains," she recalls. "We fled to the [nearby] caves. I just had the clothes on my back."

She was away from her house for a year. The structure was partially destroyed and all her possessions were looted, she says. Now, thanks to the POWER project, she has a brand new roof on her house and new doors and windows. A total of 134 houses have been rehabilitated in the village, and work is underway to restore schools and other villages in very remote mountain areas.

But Sa'ada still fears there may be mines in the area. "Although they say it's clear, we are still afraid," she says."

"I am satisfied with the pace of reconstruction. The government of Eritrea is working to restore the situation," Tesfai adds. "But I am really concerned about the sustainable livelihoods of the people. Certain villages on the border are completely destroyed, other villages are still infested by mines."

Work to rehabilitate destroyed houses is ongoing, he says, but external assistance is still needed to help people put their lives back together again." (IRIN 29 May 2002)

Most urgent shelter needs met by the end of 2000 (February 2001)

- 24 camps in the Debub, Gash-Barka and Northern Red Sea areas by end -2000
- 70% of IDPs in camps are sheltered in tents; the rest relying on plastic sheeting
- Tents in camps established in 1998 seriously worn
- Women and children spend almost the entire day looking for firewood due to severe shortages

"There are currently 24 organized camps in the three zobas of Debub, Gash-Barka and Northern Red Sea. The 208,163 camp residents are living in tents or under plastic sheeting and are almost completely dependent on ERREC and the humanitarian community for emergency relief. Some 80% have lived in camps for more than two years and many of the non-food items they received or brought with them have been worn out or broken. Many fled from areas close to the border, in the future Temporary Security Zone (TSZ)." (GOE/UN January 2001, p. 14)

"By the end of 2000, the most urgent shelter needs of these populations were met and the desperate situation of May-August 2000, had been stabilised." (GOE/UN January 2001, p. 20)

"There are 10 camps in Debub with a total population of about 80,000 (16,000 households).

[...]

In some camps, the tents that were given out in 1998 are now seriously worn, while, in other cases, families of one and two are still living under plastic sheeting and have never received tents. Apart from blankets, soap and mosquito nets, items like jerrycans and cooking utensils have not been uniformly distributed. Many households have to borrow kettles and other items from those who have them. There is an acute shortage of firewood in all camps. In Alba camp, women and children may spend 6-8 hours in search of firewood. Families do not have adequate supplies of clothing, particularly the adults." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.38)

"70 - 80% [of IDPs in Gash-Barka camps] reside in temporary shelter (i.e. tents or under plastic sheeting). 50% of the households require replacement tents [9,927 units] while those [· 3,971 households] currently using plastic sheeting should be provided tents." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.44)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Education projects strained by limited resources (June 2003)

"The overall objective of the education sector is to increase access to education in nomadic, drought prone and war-impacted areas, improve quality of education and increase girls' access, retention and performance. Small but important gains have been made in education, although much remains to be done to ensure continued access to quality basic education for all children. Continued school feeding programmes, which are taking place in over 350 schools, have increased overall attendance by as much as 18% and this has included increased girls' attendance. The planned project for 2003 is ongoing but constrained by limited resources, counterpart capacity and delays in the education reform process. So far, only US\$ 801,991 (38.4%) has been resourced out of the required US\$ 2,090,000. Following the Boundary Commission ruling, plans for peace education and confidence-building initiatives were outlined in CAP 2003, however a lack of funds prevented the implementation of those plans. This has serious educational implications for children in camps and for peace education initiatives in general.
[...]

Education remains a very under funded sector and this hampers the ability to increase enrolment and improve quality and retention. Schools are in dire need of supplies, and are noted for poor learning environment as most use makeshift accommodation. However, school drop out rates are closely monitored and school feeding programmes are being implemented to promote school attendance. So far, there are over 350 schools under school feeding programmes implemented by WFP and NGOs countrywide." (UN, 3 June 2003)

1998-2000 conflict eroded achievements made in the educational sector since independence (September 2001)

- Rapid education assessment by end-2000 revealed that 150 schools had been damaged in 8 sub-regions
- Call by the beginning of 2001 for technical and material support to emergency education
- Loss of school documents creating serious difficulties in academic assessment of students
- Estimated that 40,000 school children had returned to their home areas by end-August 2001

"During the past year, war and drought have had a profoundly negative effect on the educational system in Eritrea. Rapid development made in the educational sector since independence was negated in war-affected parts of the country as a large number of school facilities were either destroyed or vandalised. The displacement of populations and the economic effects of the drought left many households destitute, forcing children to stay at home in order to support their families. Many who have attempted to stay in school have record poor attendance and low achievement due to distractions at home.

Further, the displacement of populations has led to the pupil/teacher ratio increasing dramatically in host communities. The situation is aggravated by a general shortage of trained teachers (especially among the Afar, Tigre and Saho speaking communities) and basic learning materials. Other factors, such as the

distance to schools, the shortage of boarding facilities, and the lack of feeding programs have also affected enrolment, particularly that of girls.

In terms of priority needs, it is clear that providing technical and material support to emergency education for the war- and drought affected populations will remain essential during 2001. It will be especially important to increase access to education by constructing makeshift schools and repairing damaged ones, and to continue providing support for school-feeding programs. It will also be necessary to provide material support in the form of learning materials and furniture to schools currently lacking these basic necessities. Training of new teachers will help to bring down the high student/teacher ratio; upgrading the skills of those currently serving will improve the quality of teaching." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.22)

"A rapid education assessment, conducted in July-August, revealed the extent of damage to educational facilities in the conflict-affected areas, including 150 schools in 8 sub-regions serving 83,240 children." (UNICEF 7 December 2000)

More detailed information was provided by assessments in formerly occupied areas undertaken in May 2001:

"There were no schools operating officially in any of the villages [in the Senafe sub zone] visited by the Assessment Teams. In Senafe town, there are unofficial classes being taught to 1st through 6th Grade students by secondary school students. These impromptu classes are being financially supported by the UN Military Observers. However, this project does not currently have the full approval of the local officials of the Ministry of Education.

Throughout the sub zone, school buildings were routinely targeted for destruction and looting. A major effort of reconstruction and refurbishment will be required in order to prepare for the new school year in September 2001." (ICC 2 May 2001b)

"There are only three villages with schools out of seven villages assessed [in the Adi-quala and Mai-Aini sub-zones of Debub region]. Their roofs are destroyed and doors and windows have been looted. Desks and blackboards have been taken as well. The remaining villages have no school and the children have to walk long distances to the nearest school. " (ICC 2 May 2001)

"No functioning/operating schools were observed in the areas visited [in the Tsorona sub-zone of Debub]. Although several schools in the area are undamaged, a general lack of teachers and material has meant that schools are currently not able to function.

The school buildings in Tsorona are partially destroyed (no roofs, doors, or windows) and need to be restored and equipped. The school building in Genzebo, which caters for neighboring villages, is usable. However it needs some repairs, school furniture and material as well as teachers. All the teachers are still in the Alba camp." (ICC 1 May 2001)

"In order to improve enrolment rates and the nutritional status of children in schools, WFP is making preparations to start school feeding programme in selected areas in the forthcoming academic year scheduled to begin in the second week of September. It is estimated that 40,000 school children returned to their home areas. Most of the schools in the TSZ are destroyed and looted and still not operational to give proper educational service. As such it is expected that classes will be overcrowded due to shortage of teachers and classrooms. Unless, immediate attention and action is taken to rehabilitate and equip the schools the whole pedagogic atmosphere of the teaching and learning process will be affected. Similar attention should be sought for the social service infrastructure of the schools such as provision of clean water and latrines. Out of 85 schools located in the TSZ only 48 were accessed and estimation has been made on the damages inflicted accordingly. Out of the assessed schools, through the assistance of UNICEF, UNDP/POWER, CESVI, COSV, APS and the French government 37 schools have been rehabilitated." (ICC 31 August 2001)

"A qualitative study revealed, among other things, that displaced girls in the camps were adversely affected by the conflict. Other factors such as the distance to schools and the lack of feeding programmes have also affected enrolment of girls especially. The main constraint to the provision of emergency education was and continues to be the inadequate funding especially for human resources and lack of community involvement. In terms of priority needs, it is important to increase access by supporting renovation and construction of makeshift schools and to collaborate more closely with WFP in supporting school-feeding programmes. Support to the training of new teachers will assist to bring down high student-teacher ratio and upgrading of the skills of those in service will improve the quality of teaching. An assessment of the extent of damage to 85 schools in the TSZ has just been completed and the findings are being analysed and will provide the basis for a more effective rehabilitation support." (UNICEF 5 September 2001)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Disruption of coping mechanisms

Major obstacles to recovery and self-reliance remain unchanged (November 2002)

- 2002/2003 drought has serious consequences on agricultural and economic activity
- 80 per cent of Eritrea's population traditionally involved in farming and herding
- Eritrea facing the worst drought since its liberation in 1991 is heavily dependent on external assistance
- In Debub and Gash Barka where most displaced and war affected concentrate, people will harvest only 15% of normal agricultural product in 2003
- Demobilisation and return of soldiers in order to enable agricultural recovery have barely started
- Presence of landmines and UXOs major impediment to agricultural recovery
- IDP return lagged behind and no advantage was taken of the 2001 rainfalls, as a result only 60% farming activity was restored in war-affected areas
- Failure of annual as well as spring rains have led to considerable grazing pastures shortages and livestock in Anseba and Northern Red Sea are dying (August 2002)

"USAID/OFDA's Food Security and Agriculture specialist reports that the condition of livestock has visibly deteriorated since December 2002. The drought has led to a substantial reduction in pasture availability and water for livestock. In turn, animals and herdsman have been forced to migrate much further this year than in the past in search of water and fodder, particularly to the eastern escarpment. The increased grazing pressures will likely lead to rapid exhaustion of the land. An estimated 75 percent of the population of Eritrea depends on livestock production as part of their livelihood.

Landmine threats and insecurity along the southern border with Ethiopia have hindered the mobility of people and livestock, thereby reducing agricultural and other economic activities. Large tracts of the most productive farmland and prosperous grazing grounds are still inaccessible. In January and February, the U.N. Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea reported that newly laid landmines were discovered in the western part of the 25 kilometer buffer zone separating Ethiopia and Eritrea. The mines are believed to be the work of local armed factions rather than that of the either side's army." (USAID, 18 March 2003)

"Since independence, Eritrea has remained a desperately poor country. The Ethiopian-Eritrea war in 1998-2000 severely hurt Eritrea's economy. GDP growth in 1999 fell to less than 1 percent, and the GDP decreased by 8.2 percent in 2000. The conflict caused some \$600 million in property damage and loss, including losses of \$225 million in livestock and 55,000 homes. The economy is largely based on subsistence agriculture, with 80 percent of the population involved in farming and herding. Clashes prevented planting of crops in Eritrea's most productive region, causing food production to drop by 62 percent. Export crops include coffee, cotton, fruit, hides, and meat, but farmers are very dependent on rain-fed agriculture, so growth in this and other sectors is hampered by lack of a dependable water supply. Worker remittances from abroad currently contribute 40 percent of GDP. Eritrea's economic future remains mixed. The country is dependent upon its ability to master fundamental social problems like illiteracy, unemployment, and low skills, and to convert the diaspora's money and expertise into economic growth.

[...]

According to the government of Eritrea, it is now a matter of few months time before all the rural farmers have consumed the negligible harvest and their livestock. Food and water shortage, diarrhea, respiratory, skin and other infectious diseases will take their toll. Without swift urgent international response, the lives of 2.3 million Eritreans, are at serious danger of death and starvation." (RI, March 2003)

"The chronic drought in the Horn of Africa over the last two decades has revisited the region, beginning mid 2002. The resulting food shortages in the region are peaking in the first five months of 2003, leaving millions of people exposed to hunger, starvation, malnutrition and possible death, some of which have already occurred in some parts of Eritrea. The effect of the drought is far much pronounced in Eritrea, where 70% of the country's 3.9 million people stare starvation in the face. Response to pleas for help in Ethiopia has been comparatively favourable, with half of the 1.44 million MT of food required forestall a humanitarian disaster in 2003 sourced. The general situation, particularly in Eritrea, however, remain dire and in urgent need of immediate and concerted domestic and international attention.

[...]

The humanitarian concern revolves around the sustainable and long-term recovery of both countries from both the war and the current drought. This will require the return of IDPs as well the demobilization of hundreds of thousands of soldiers in both countries, to free much needed labour for improved agricultural production.

The drought affecting in excess of 17 million people in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and that appears set to spread to regions of Somalia, demands a simultaneous emergency as well as long term development approach if its chronic character is to be broken. Land tenure and agricultural credit schemes in Ethiopia as well as the National Service policy in Eritrea may have to be reviewed if the situation is to be improved in the long term." (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003) "Whilst efforts to respond to the humanitarian situation were ongoing, Eritrea was struck by severe drought affecting the primary agricultural areas of Gash Barka and Debub in addition to the traditionally drought-prone areas. Failure of both the winter and spring rains followed by delayed onset of the main summer rains have left Eritrea facing the worst drought since its liberation in 1991.

Traditional coping mechanisms of the affected households have been severely strained over the past years. An increasing number of affected households have few assets left and depend heavily on external assistance. The reoccurrence of the drought has reduced the resilience and self-reliance of the affected population to a minimal level and has not only caused food insecurity but also led to problems regarding livestock and in the health, water & sanitation, and education sectors." (UN, November 2002, p.6)

"This group [drought affected] of over 1.4 million people is scattered in various areas throughout Eritrea's six regions. In 2001, the most severely affected areas were located in the Anseba, Northern Red Sea, and the Southern Red Sea zones. The current drought has hit all regions severely. Particularly, by so seriously affecting the prime agricultural regions of Debub and Gash Barka, the current drought not only puts at risk the huge populations concentrated there, but it weakens the ability of those two regions to continue in their role as bread basket for the rest of the country. Many farmers on prime agricultural land are expected to harvest only 15% of normal harvest and rural families are at serious risk of the extreme effects of drought, including domestic water shortages, disease, malnutrition and starvation. Large numbers of agro-pastoralists who are already highly food insecure having suffered failed crops and the decimation of their herds during three consecutive years of poor and erratic rains, face the danger of losing even more animals. About 80% of livestock are at risk and expected to be seriously affected. The level of malnutrition is reported to be higher among this group than any other group." (UN November 2002, p.13)

"In spite of the obstacles, it is generally believed that the peace process appears irreversible and that the presence of UNMEE will ensure there is no resumption of armed hostilities. The return of refugees and IDPs is expected to continue throughout 2002 and agreement is being reached to implement a demobilisation programme for 200,000 Eritrean soldiers which, although placing further strain on the

coping mechanisms of villages, will at the same time return soldiers to productive activity and restore family structures to the TSZ and subsequent civilian influx into the bread-basket regions of Gash Barka and Debub is a favourable sign for increasing agricultural production. The cessation of war and the increased prospects of permanent peace have removed a major impediment to the resumption of farming in many parts of Gash Barka and Debub Zones, but the continued presence of land mines has rendered many areas inaccessible. Additionally, the return of many IDPs to their former villages was not early enough to take full advantage of the summer rains and it is estimated that only about 60% of farming activity was restored in 2001 in war-affected areas." (UN, November 2001, p.19)

"The livestock have been adversely affected by lack of graze, as the 'Azmera' or spring rains that support early regeneration of vegetation had failed and the main summer rains set on late. Everywhere livestock are emaciated, as the landscape is either completely barren or the vegetation has not grown to grazeable heights. Herders have started to migrate from the normally prospective pastoral areas in desperate search of graze. In some places in zobas of Anseba and Northern Red Sea livestock have started to die in big numbers." (ICC 28 August 2002)

Displacement from highly fertile Gash Barka and Debub regions led to major disruptions in food and livestock production (October 2001)

- The grain producing regions of Debub and Gash Barka normally provide approximately 70 percent of Eritrea's food requirements
- Many people have been displaced several times and lost all their livestock, possessions and food stocks
- War-related agricultural disruptions and inflated grain prices depleted pastoralists' valuable draught and breeding livestock assets
- Regional drought exacerbated war-related emergency in Eritrea
- Decreased access to dry season grazing along the border led to considerable livestock losses and decreasing economic endowments
- IDPs unable to take advantage of propitious cultivation conditions due to presence of landmines and lengthy de-mining operations (2001)

"Even under normal conditions, Eritrea is a food deficit area with Eritrea's food grain requirements being consistently higher than its net domestic supply of food-grains. Drought and war have contributed to a substantial increase in grain prices that in most cases are beyond the reach of many households. Among the pastoralist communities, increases of grain prices has resulted in a reduction in the numbers of their livestock as they were forced to sell at lower prices to get food. Livestock being the main asset of this population, they are now dangerously exposed to starvation that could easily degenerate into famine." (ACT 5 December 2000)

"The border hostilities that occurred between Ethiopia and Eritrea from May 1998 until June 2000 displaced hundreds of thousands of farmers from the grain producing regions of Debub and Gash Barka which provide approximately 70 percent of the country's food requirements. The abandonment resulted in reduced acreage under cultivation and a subsequent significant shortfall in agricultural production. The effect of the war on the agricultural production has been exacerbated by pronounced damage to economic and social infrastructure, loss of cross border trade and three consecutive years of drought conditions. Crop production in 2000 was further hampered by a number of factors including the loss of draught animals, insufficient rains, pests, diseases and the enlisting of a large numbers of the working-age population into

the National Service. The displaced people have placed an additional strain on the rural host communities. Women, children and the elderly represent approximately 90 percent of the estimated over 1 million war-displaced persons in Eritrea. In addition, 92,000 Eritreans are believed to have taken refuge in Sudan, Yemen and Djibouti.

Some of the women, men and children have been displaced several times and, as a result, have lost all their livestock, possessions and food stocks. To cope with the crisis, many households have resorted to supplementing their income through the sale of charcoal, firewood and building poles, resulting in serious environmental degradation in and around the camps of the internally displaced persons (IDP). These desperate coping strategies have exacerbated food insecurity in those areas.

The war has aggravated the chronic and transitory food insecurity, which has become endemic in several parts of the country over the past decade. Due to the war, farming has not been possible in the Hazemo plain of the Debub region which is the breadbasket of Eritrea, contributing almost 30 percent of the national crop production. In the traditionally grain surplus areas of Gash Barka, the acreage under cultivation was reduced by approximately 50 percent and the 2000/2001 yield is expected to be four to five times lower than normal.

Decreased availability/accessibility of valuable dry season grazing areas located along the border with Ethiopia has resulted in significant losses of livestock and livestock products. Indiscriminate distress selling of livestock, including valuable draught and breeding animals, at lower than average market prices, in order to buy much needed grain, has resulted in a further depletion of livestock assets. Many households simply have no livestock left to sell. This has added to the numerous challenges faced by the growing number of female and child-headed households.

[...]

The Government of Eritrea has repeatedly reiterated its desire for self-reliance in terms of basic needs and food security and has been committed to providing assistance and protection to its civilian population suffering from the combined effects of drought and conflict. However, due to the size and complexity of the ongoing crisis, the government reports a food deficit of about 80 percent in 2001. Commercial food imports are expected to increase for several years given the current trends, and this will put additional strain on the war and drought-weakened foreign exchange reserves. Moreover, the Eritrean Grain Board (EGB) does not have sufficient carryover food stocks to meet commercial demands. Therefore the government is seeking food aid to cover the needs of the affected population." (WFP May 2001, paras. 1-4, 9)

"The main source of food for the population [in the Adi-quala and Mai-Aini sub-zones of Debub region] is the food they get in the IDP camps. In the camps monthly food rations are provided by the World Food Programme and distributed by ERREC. The rations distributed at camps and other distribution points are brought over to the villages and town centers. The Pastoral communities also depend on these rations as well.

There is no farming for the last three years in the villages visited. Fear of proximity to border areas and landmines threat did not allow any form of cultivation. The returning population is presently not able to cultivate and there is urgent need to provide seeds and tools before the planting season in June [2001]." (ICC 2 May 2001)

"The onset of the main season *Kremti* rains started on time. Rainfall continued throughout the entire month of July [2001] and was reasonably well distributed.

[...]

The overall future food-security situation, especially the food availability and food access, will be influenced by events in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). The TSZ covers all the sub-zones of Debub and Gash Barka Zones, bordering Ethiopia [...]. These sub-zones are the major crop-producing areas of Eritrea. Guluj, Lalay Gash, and Mulki sub-zones in Gash Barka constitute the breadbasket of Eritrea but lie completely within the TSZ. Similarly in Debub, Senafe, Tsorena, Maiaini, and Adiquala sub-zones are major crop-producing areas that fall within the TSZ.

Agricultural activities in these sub-zones are hampered by the presence of land mines. Close to 70,000 IDPs are remain in camps because they were not able to return to their home villages due to landmine risks. In addition to those in camps, many IDPs continue to live with host families who are relatives or otherwise. Although mine clearing is underway, it appears that many areas will not be cleared in time for IDPs to return home to cultivate their fields and benefit from this year's good rainfall. This lost opportunity means that these IDPs will require continued support before they can resume their normal livelihoods." (FEWS NET 6 August 2001)

"A report from the section of Planning and Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) stated this week that the crop production of this year is expected to be twice that of last year's produce. This summer 342,442 ha of farmland was tilled but since the rain has discontinued by the end of August the harvest would be less than what had been forecasted earlier. Due to uneven distribution of rainfall and delay of IDPs return to their home villages the Ministry has managed to till 87,800ha out of planned 93,000ha using integrated package. The report further stated that in the highland of Eritrea most of the dams have accumulated enough water, which would enrich the underground water reserve and would be helpful for farmers to run small irrigation farming. In addition, the report said the condition of livestock would improve as the grazing land has received enough rain." (ICC 23 October 2001)

War has added a heavy burden on women and young girls (January 2001)

"The most clearly affected victims of the recent war in Eritrea are the women and children, especially adolescent girls. Since the start of the conflict, women and children have constituted a large number (on average 26% and 67%, respectively) of the total number of war-affected. In some areas, they make up almost 90% among both war and drought-affected populations. During times of emergency, the obligations and responsibilities that women and girls assume in their homes and communities increase dramatically. Meanwhile, traditional coping mechanisms and safety nets have been stretched to the limit, making it difficult for a majority of the women and girl-headed households to adequately provide for the protection and care of their families without external assistance." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.22)

ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

General

Current drought compounds post-conflict requirements in social sector (May 2003)

- Coping mechanisms over-stretched and social safety nets eroded
- Nomadic pastoralists hindered by land restrictions and presence of landmines

"In the past two years more than 103,000 refugees have returned to Eritrea, and about 195,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their villages. However, more than 60,000 IDPs and 'expellees' still remain in very poor conditions in camps. UNICEF is urgently appealing for US\$ 350,000 needed to provide basic items to children living in these difficult environments.

Many of the challenges brought about by the current drought and the recent war interact with each other and increase the vulnerability of children to an extreme level. For example, nearly half of all households in the country are female-headed households, with many of the men away on military service, or killed in the war. Thus, coping mechanisms are severely over-stretched and social safety nets are eroded. Furthermore, the ability to cope with drought is strongly hindered due to land restrictions, such as in the temporary security zone (TSZ). Many of Eritrea's people are nomadic pastoralists, who must travel long distances during lean years in order to find food for their herds. The presence of landmines along the southern border further hinders the normal movements of people and livestock." (UNICEF, 28 May 2003)

Separated children received adequate care because of strong family bonds (September 2000)

- Strong tradition of mutual help
- IDP camps organized according to home village structures
- Care of the unaccompanied children facilitated by neighbors nearby and other family members

"A sample of six camps (out of a total of 31) in the regions of Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea were selected to provide geographical and situational comparison. The population in the selected six camps represent 25% of the total IDP population.

[...]

In the camps people were organized according to their home village structure, and the village administrator would also be the administrator in the camp. This meant that the administrators knew all details of the families in their group. Many informal messages would be sent to and from the home villages, and even across the border into Sudan.

Even if children were living in groups alone in the camp, for instance sharing a tent, there would always be neighbors nearby and in some cases also family members. This facilitated care of the children in the camp, and also helped links with their parents if the parents had remained at home.

In the villages there is a strong tradition of mutual help, with the richer families helping the poorer ones. In the camps, however, this traditional coping mechanism is stretched since there are few spare resources

available. Therefore neighbors may watch over separated children, but may not be able to provide material assistance.

[...]

The problem of separated children in Eritrea as a result of more than two years of war is being kept to a minimum largely due to the strong family bond and sense of responsibility and response that exists in Eritrean communities. Moreover, during Eritrea's struggle for liberation, an effective system to deal with the situation of vulnerable children, mostly orphaned and unaccompanied children were developed, building a solid foundation for knowledgeable and capable social workers within the most prominent actors for child welfare in Eritrea, namely MLHW and ERREC. However, the ongoing movements of population and subsequent social and economic disruption and the shortage of human resources caused by the war, have increased workload and over-stretched the workload of both the MLHW and ERREC." (MLHF/UNICEF/SCF September 2000, pp. 4, 26, 27)

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

Most houses in border town Tsorona damaged during Ethiopian offensive (June 2001)

"Thousands of Eritrean civilians displaced by war three years ago are returning to their home town, Tsorona, only to find it completely demolished by Ethiopian forces during the two-year border war that ended last June.

Not a single house with a roof intact can be found in this town, situated just a few kilometres (miles) from the former trench lines.

Since the exodus home began 10 days ago, some 6,000 civilians have returned to Tsorona and the surrounding areas, according to figures provided by the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC).

Government officials say that an additional 6,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) are expected to return to the area over the next several weeks.

Unable to move back into their houses, returning families have pitched tents throughout the town and on hillsides overlooking fields still littered with land mines.

"We are very glad to be back home, but we have nothing -- no houses, no water, no medicines," said Saleh Nagash, a 70-year-old man who returned to Tsorona two days ago with his wife, seven children, and seven grandchildren." (AFP 8 June 2001)

Damage in formerly occupied areas targeted to public property and buildings (May 2001)

- Nearly 100 % of private homes and community buildings found to have been damaged and in need of extensive repair
- Destruction of Civil Administration buildings such as border post, police station, church and shops in the Debub region
- Hospital in Senafe completely demolished beyond repair
- Barentu Hospital emptied of equipment
- Only 10 of the 58 health facilities Gash Barka region intact
- Substantial damage on private and public buildings reported in Barentu, Tessenei and Ali Gidir

"An assessment team, consisting of staff from ERREC, OCHA, UNICEF, UNDP/Power, and UNMEE/CIMIC, accompanied by local civil administrators, visited villages and towns in Tsorona sub-zone of Debub on 1 May 2001. Initially, 16 villages were prioritized for assessment within the sub-zone. However, due to security concerns related to the presence of mines and UXOs, a total of 7 villages were finally visited.

[...]

As stated above, considerable damage has been inflicted to Tsorona town and the villages of Mai Agam and Kudo Waiba. In these three locations nearly 100 % of private homes and community buildings have been damaged and require extensive repair (mainly roofing, windows, doors). In Tsorona town, most modern structures are still standing although they lack roofing as the corrugated iron sheets have been removed. In Mai Agam and Kudo Waiba, housing, mainly of traditional type, has suffered extensive damage as a result of the war and lack of maintenance." (ICC 1 May 2001)

"A joint Government and UN agencies conducted a Rapid Village Assessment (RVA) of Temporary Security Zone areas from 23 - 24 April in Adi-quala and Mai-Aini sub-zones of Debub region. 12 persons from UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA, ERREC, Local Administrators and UNMEE officers visited 6 of 7 villages planned to be assessed within the two sub-zones using Rapid Village Assessment form to collect information.

[...]

Severe damage and looting occurred in Ksad Eka village located about 5 km to the main border crossing point at Mereb River. Civil Administration buildings such as border post, police station, church and shops have been destroyed. It was evident that destruction and looting was targeted mainly at important economic facilities.

An estimated 90% of traditional huts (made of mud walls and thatch roofing) have deteriorated due to lack of up-keep and maintenance." (ICC 2 May 2001)

"Community buildings were a common target of looting and destruction throughout the sub-zone. Severe damage and looting to both community and private buildings (homes) occurred in Serha village and in Serha town. As a generalization, the level of damage to villages varies directly with their proximity to the disputed border. Serha (town) has barely a single building standing intact. In other villages, the destruction of homes is common, but not to the scale evidenced in Serha. More typically, community buildings were the targets. Civil administration buildings, schools, clinics, churches, police stations and shops have routinely suffered varying degrees of damage. The Assessment Team noted that it appeared that there was more damage to the houses where villages were evacuated, rather than to the houses of people who had never left.

[...]

The only hospital in the sub zone before the conflict was in Senafe. It is now completely demolished beyond repair." (ICC 2 May 2001b)

"During the three weeks of occupation by Ethiopian forces, beds, mattresses, fridges, microscopes, operating lamps, drip stands, drug supplies, prescription pads were all loaded onto civilian trucks and driven across the disputed border.

The once 70-bedded centre now has 10, five with springs only. It has one microscope saved by a technician who grabbed it as he fled and all six fridges that made up the region's central cold chain for immunisation have also gone.

[...]

In the Gash Barka region alone only 10 of the 58 health facilities are still functioning, either due to looting or destruction. In Debub, says WHO officer Dr Debrezion Berhe, south of Asmara, the latter is more prevalent." (WHO 31 July 2000)

"Overall, few people have been able to return home and there are increased risks due to land mines and the oncoming rains. Additionally, returnees are finding their homes devastated, livestock stolen, machinery destroyed, and shops looted. The items destroyed or stolen include agricultural equipment, food stocks, seeds and livestock feed.

In Areza and Mai Dima (Debub) some people are returning but finding property stolen and their houses destroyed from shelling. The homes in Adi Nefas and Debre Sahli have been re-reported completely razed,

leaving the previous inhabitants with little choice but to remain in IDP camps for the time being." (ICC 24 June 2000)

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Eritreans wait to resettle border so as to return home (July 2004)

- Delay in demobilisation and demining due to the border stalemate, prevent relocation of IDPs

"Within Eritrea, there are still 58,000 people displaced from the 1998-2000 border war with Ethiopia. Aid workers said it was very unlikely they would be relocated before the stalemate in the Eritrea-Ethiopia border demarcation was resolved." (IRIN, 17 March 2004)

"Together with Zoba Gash Barka, Zoba Debub (south) is a region bordering Ethiopia, where heavy fighting took place during the recent border war. Most of the population fled in search of a safe haven leaving behind all their assets including livestock, most of which were destroyed, damaged, looted and/or slaughtered. Thus they were left empty handed and are unable to return to their place of origin because their houses are destroyed. Furthermore, they cannot engage in agricultural activities due to the contamination of their surroundings by land mines. Some are still living in IDPs camps, placing a tremendous socio economic burden on their hosting communities while others have returned to start their living almost from scratch." (ACT, January 2004)

"As a consequence of the war, more than 60,000 displaced people still live in temporary camps in the country. Approximately 35,000 refugees are still awaiting repatriation, after 100,000 reportedly returned from the Sudan by the end of 2003. A delay in demobilisation and de-mining has prevented families from returning to their homes." (Caritas, 17 February 2004)

Returning refugees from Sudan and Ethiopia need assistance for reintegration (July 2004)

- Since 2000, at least 119,000 Eritreans have returned home from Sudan

"Since the beginning of 2004, 7,779 Eritreans have returned home bringing the total of those that have returned since 2000 to a total of some 119,000 people. Although WFP is providing assistance to returnee households until they are able to obtain their first harvest, most of the refugees are returning to communities in Gash Barka, a region that is severely affected by the war and drought leaving the population in desperate need of basic facilities. At the same time, there is also a critical need to provide reintegration assistance to returnees and to support communities' absorption capacities. The target number of Eritrean returnees from the Sudan for 2004 is 35,000." (UN OCHA, 31 May 2004, p. 13)

"UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 367 Eritrean refugees from Sudan on 2 and 10 July 2004, the last organised repatriation operations before the onset of the long rainy season. The total number of assisted Eritrean returnees for the first six months of 2004 stands at 8,275 people. Since 2000, UNHCR together with ERREC have assisted 119,903 people return to Eritrea in safety and dignity. The voluntary repatriation operation will resume in October 2004 once roads become accessible after the rains. Large-scale organised voluntary repatriation will phase out on 31 December 2004 as the process nears full term. From 2005 UNHCR, will continue to help those wishing to return on an individual basis." (UN OCHA, 16 July 2004)

"Some 103,000 refugees have returned from Sudan since July 2000. Of these returnees, around 95% have returned to Gash Barka, with the Sub Zones of Goluj (38%), Tesseney (41%) and Haykota (7%) receiving most returnees. The remaining Eritrean refugees in Sudan comprise an estimated 147,000 residing in 23 camps, 13,000 registered in urban areas and an estimated 195,000 living in urban areas but not registered. 36,102 refugees in camps are currently registered to repatriate (as of March 2003). In addition to IDPs and returnees, almost 17,000 persons out of the 75,000 expellees from Ethiopia are in camps.

The target of a Tripartite Repatriation Commission that a minimum of 60,000 and up to 90,000 Eritrean refugees be repatriated from Sudan in 2002 was achieved because of the closure of the common border between Sudan and Eritrea since 2002. The refugee status of Eritrean refugees in Sudan lapsed on 31 December 2002. Screening of Eritrean refugees in Sudan begun September 2002. In October 2002, following increased tensions between Eritrea and Sudan and the subsequent closure of their common border, the repatriation exercise drew to a halt. 92,000 Eritrean refugees remained in camps in Sudan and a further 123,000 are scattered in the urban areas in Sudan. A further 5000 Eritrean refugees are scattered in Kenya, Ethiopia and Yemen.

Later in October 2002, Eritrea accused Sudan of planning forced repatriation of the refugees, a charge Sudan denied. The governor of Kassala State in the northeast of Sudan ordered the relocation of a refugee camp near the Eritrean border further hinterland. Sudan detained 45 Eritrean refugees for suspicion of involvement with SPLA rebels. The coming into effect of the cessation clause at the end of 2002 saw an increase in the number of refugees seeking continued refugee status, with thousands of them registering for status review. 32,000 refugees in Sudan are registered to return to Eritrea when the repatriation exercises resumes. 100,000 refugees approached UNHCR screening teams in Sudan for refugee status determination in the run up to the December 31st deadline." (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003)

"The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has reached an agreement with the governments of Eritrea and Sudan on where to open a humanitarian corridor between the two countries to facilitate the repatriation of thousands of Eritrean refugees, the UNHCR has said.

"We have reached agreement on the location of the border crossing, that will allow the resumption of repatriation to begin soon," Christian Koch, acting head of UNHCR in Eritrea, told IRIN on Wednesday. Describing the agreement with the two governments as an "important breakthrough", Koch said: "I am confident that we're going in the right direction and that in a short time we'll be able to fine-tune the operational aspects of the repatriation to start moving the convoys". "We're under time pressure. We're very interested in getting some people home before the rains start so they can benefit from the planting season," Wendy Rappeport, external relations officer with UNHCR told IRIN. Written communications from the two governments, agreeing that the corridor should be located on the Laffa-Talatasher road which crosses the Eritrean-Sudanese border, were received by UNHCR on 5 and 7 of June respectively. This resolves a key issue discussed in parallel negotiations between UNHCR and the two governments.

There has been no direct communication on repatriation between the two governments since October 2002, when deteriorated relations between them led to their mutual border being closed. Negotiations with the governments have been ongoing since October 2002 to allow the voluntary repatriation to resume. So far, about 36,000 Eritreans have registered to be repatriated, 32,000 of whom have been verified by the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) as genuine Eritreans, and therefore allowed to return home.

Over 100,000 have applied to stay in Sudan. A registration process is ongoing to establish how many of the estimated 340,000 Eritreans in Sudan wish to stay there, and how many are eligible to do so. Since the beginning of this year, Eritreans have to apply individually to either UNHCR or the Sudanese government to retain their refugee status, which ceased at the end of 2002.

Between June 2000 and October 2002, before the border was closed, 103,000 Eritreans returned home from Sudan.

Since the stalling of the repatriation, UNHCR has been concentrating on reintegrating those who had already returned, by providing basic services for them like schools, water points, health facilities and income-generating activities. "We are giving them the basic conditions to allow them to become economically self-reliant," Koch told IRIN. "Those who have come back are therefore less of a burden for the Eritrean authorities and it has made their reintegration into Eritrean society easier." (IRIN, 13 June 2003)

2003/2004 Scenario: A continuation of status quo (June 2003)

- Effects of drought, delays in demarcation, continued threat of mines and UXOs will result in a continuation of status quo and possible new displacements
- Impediments to return remain as drought worsens

"The implications of the delays in demarcation, the possible transfer of territories as well as the continued threat of Mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) to those living and working in and around the TSZ, have implied that a significant number of those affected by demarcation including the current caseload of IDPs and expellees are unable to return. They will remain where they are currently, needing full support, particularly food assistance and replacement of worn-out shelter.

[...]

IDPs have not yet returned to the TSZ and will not be able to do so until mines have been removed and demarcation completed. The predicted influx of refugees from the Sudan has not happened. The demobilisation programme has been delayed, thus affecting the return to productive activity and restoration of family structures. However, progress towards peace is still the most likely scenario. Unless the decision of the EEBC leads to negative developments in the coming months, the situation will continue to stabilise, with the necessary focus on areas such as the return of refugees and rehabilitation and demining of returnee areas.

The most likely scenario for the remainder of 2003 would be a continuation of the status quo with the effects of the drought becoming more widespread and further displacement of population, old caseloads remaining in current sites and possible resumption of the repatriation programme. With regard to the response required to cover humanitarian needs, the Government and the UNCT remain hopeful that contributions to both food and non-food requirements will increase.

[...]

The outlook for 2004 does not seem favourable. If the coming rainy season is below normal, there will undoubtedly be a continued need for assistance. Continued food and water shortages will have a devastating impact on the people. Even if the rains are unexpectedly good, it is likely that emergency assistance will be needed, as asset bases have been drastically eroded and water resources are unlikely to recover within one short rainy season. This is in view of the impact to date of the drought on a) the asset base of most of the affected population; b) the nutritional status of children and women; c) lack of labour; and d) the number of IDPs who are unable to return to normal lives in their home villages and farming fields.

Delays in demarcation means IDPs will not be going home for another year. Prolonged displacement and the maintenance of IDPs, as they wait for their return, will become much more problematic for humanitarian agencies. Even if demarcation takes place soon, the emergency situation will still continue and there will be additional needs. However, consolidation of peace, following demarcation, is the best promise for rehabilitation of social services such as health, education, water and sanitation.

There is a risk that reconstruction, rehabilitation and development needs will be neglected because of the effects of the drought and limited resources. The expected rehabilitation of destroyed houses and other

social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and water sources will be delayed. The devastation caused by the war is vast and the transition from emergency to recovery will consequently require a protracted response. Until such a transition has been achieved, the CAP will remain an important instrument. The actors and the stakeholders in the humanitarian community believe that the huge caseload of IDPs, the return of refugees and IDPs, the reintegration of expellees and widespread food insecurity due to the combined effects of war and drought necessitate the continuation of the CAP into 2004. Humanitarian programmes should therefore be linked to longer-term development initiatives as reflected in the Integrated Recovery Programme.

Even if the situation were to develop in a positive manner, the humanitarian needs would remain so extensive that humanitarian action would be necessary for some time to come. Ensuring food security as a means of forestalling asset stripping, diseases and malnutrition as well as the return of refugees and resettlement of IDPs remain areas of key concern and will require concerted domestic and international attention. Resources are therefore needed as a matter of urgency not only to implement existing programmes that address overall priorities but also to build capacity to cope with further potential changes in the situation." (UN, 3 June 2003)

"Over 185,000 IDPs have returned home since the signing of the Algiers Agreement that ended the border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2000. Nevertheless, almost 60,000 IDPs remain displaced, many, as stated in our last report, because their home areas remain inaccessible due to the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), or because they are under Ethiopian control or their houses have been completely destroyed and there is a lack of infrastructure generally. Many of the displaced people came from the Gash Barka and Debub regions in the south where most of the country's staple crops are traditionally grown. Increased mine explosion incidents in the country during the reporting period has done little to encourage return and resettlement. Many of the mine explosion incidents, it has been confirmed, have been caused by newly laid ones, likely to further undermine return of the displaced to their homes. Four Eritrean demining workers of the HALO Trust were killed in November 2002 and a boy killed in February 2003 in mine explosion incidents in Eritrea. Several injuries were reported as well.

Delay in the demarcation of the border, now slated for July 2003, has also ensured that a significant number of the displaced are unable to return. Return to areas that will change hands between the two countries is certain to remain on hold well into 2003, as the transfer is dependant on the demarcation process. In practice, this means that a large number of IDPs will remain where they are at present and will need full support, including food assistance in view of the prevailing chronic food shortages in most parts of the country." (UN OCHA, 31 March 2003)

Urgency subsists to increase support for demobilization, demining, and territorial demarcation to facilitate return of IDPs (November 2002)

- Return may lag behind at least until the demarcation process consolidates probably not until April 2003
- Approximately 47,492 IDPs still unable to go home remain in camps and require substantial humanitarian support as they have no access to income-generating opportunities
- The return of 10,688 IDPs outside camps/in host communities is pending upon improvements in the security situation
- During the first half of 2002, UN estimated over 25,000 IDPs had returned to their home areas
- 2001 saw the return of 15,569 IDPs bringing the total returnee number at 185,569
- 58,180 IDPs continue to be unable to return to their home areas due to landmines and lack of infrastructural rehabilitation

"During the period under review, there was little IDP movement in Eritrea. Due to several constraints already mentioned, return to areas that will see control change hands between Ethiopia and Eritrea may last well into 2003 as the transfer is dependant on the demarcation process. In practice, this means that a large number of IDPs will remain where they are at present and will need full support, including replacement of shelter until they return (some 65% of the more than 18,000 tents used by Eritrean displaced families are in urgent need of replacement [...]). Following the findings of an assessment in April, ICRC began distribution of 3,000 tents and 3,600 tarpaulins in camps countrywide in May 2002 [...]" (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.11-12)

"The issue of IDPs, a consequence of war, has not been completely solved and may not be until peace is fully established and the country returns to normalcy. The current number of IDPs totals 58,180. These will continue to require emergency relief assistance, including both food and non-food aid in 2003. The situation for this group is expected to change in 2003 when some groups are able to return to their homes, and if the 2003 rainy season shows better prospects for agriculture. Accordingly, basic emergency aid will need to be complemented with initial rehabilitation and reintegration assistance. The overall IDP population consists of the following three distinct groups:

➤ **IDPs in camps**

In 2000 and 2001, there was a large-scale return of IDPs to areas in Gash-Barka and Debub. Improvements in the security situation allowed many to begin to rebuild their lives and communities in previously inaccessible areas. However, the home areas of 47,492 IDPs, originally from areas now within the TSZ, remained inaccessible due to the presence of land mines, overall insecurity and the failure of demarcation. These IDPs have been accommodated mainly in camps in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub. The remaining group, still largely unable to conduct income-generating activities will continue to require significant humanitarian support in all sectors.

➤ **IDPs outside camps/host communities**

In addition to IDPs still in camps, 10,688 IDPs are living with host communities and in scattered groups, complementing their livelihoods with their own very limited resources, in the Guluj, Tebeldia, Gergef, and Sabunait areas of Gash-Barka. Originally, from the Omhajer area, this population is waiting for improvements in the security situation before returning to their homes. This vulnerable group will require assistance in the areas of return and reintegration as soon as their home areas become accessible.

[...]

➤ **IDPs Returning to Home Areas**

Since November 2001, an additional 15,569 IDPs have returned spontaneously. These IDPs are currently rebuilding their lives and communities, often in areas ravaged by war. humanitarian assistance to this group will invariably include reintegration-, rehabilitation-, and reconstruction- related items to returning IDPs until such time as they are able to attain an adequate level of self-sufficiency. Rehabilitation of infrastructure and services as well as programmes in the mine action sector will be crucial as many are returning to border areas damaged by war and contaminated by large numbers of mines and UXOs." (UN, November 2002, p.13-14)

"The current humanitarian context is defined by the effect of the drought, which now threatens the country with widespread crop failures and shortage of water, in addition to the continuing effects of war, generalized poverty, the imperative of creating a safe environment for the return of thousands of IDPs, expellees and returning refugees and their reintegration in many parts of the country. The urgency of demobilization, demining, and territorial demarcation to consolidate peace and stability remains as strong as ever." (UN, November 2002, p.10)

"Although the humanitarian situation has changed in 2002, the changes are not as significant as expected. During 2003, the number of IDPs is likely to remain constant until demarcation allows IDPs to return to their villages of origin mainly inside the TSZ. There may be less quality assurance with regard to adherence to established international practices and mine action standards. Risks from land mines and UXOs continue

to present serious challenges, particularly for all those living and working in mine-affected areas." (UN, November 2002, p.11)

"In 2001, 15,569 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) returned to their home areas bringing the total number of returnees to 185,569. The remaining 58,180 IDPs have been unable to return to their home areas due to the presence of landmines, unexploded ordnances (UXOs), insecurity or the fact that the infrastructure has been completely destroyed. A further 16, 811 rural expellees are also accommodated in camps, awaiting reintegration." (UN, November 2002, p.1)

"Landmine threats and insecurity along the southern border have hindered the mobility of people and livestock, thereby reducing agricultural and other economic activities. Large tracts of the most productive farmland and prosperous grazing grounds are still inaccessible. The need to accelerate humanitarian demining can therefore not be over-emphasised. Recent UN data highlights that the majority of mine victims are young people between the ages of 1 and 20. Most frequently, they are injured or killed by some type of UXO: In 2001, 90 of the 157 total reported victims were young people killed or injured by UXOs. In the first half of 2002, 31 of the 53 reported victims were children killed or injured by UXOs." (UN November 2002, p.10)

"In the five months following the launch of the appeal, over 25,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 20,000 refugees have returned home, almost 1 million people have received food assistance and activities in all sectors have continued." (UN, May 2002, p.1)

"Nevertheless, some 57,202 IDPs have yet to return, many because their home areas remain inaccessible due to contamination by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), insecurity, because they are under Ethiopian control or have been completely destroyed."

"The demining of areas in the TSZ will continue but is estimated to take at least another nine months in addition to the time needed to undertake demining for the demarcation process, so return to areas that will change hands is expected to last until well into April 2003. In practice, this means that a large number of IDPs will remain where they are currently. They will need full support, including replacement of shelter until they return." (UN, May 2002, p.1)

"The Steering Committee for Coordinating Humanitarian Activities in the TSZ was re-activated last week with the Commissioner of the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) acting as Chairperson. The Committee, which is composed of representatives from the UNMEE, UN Humanitarian Coordinators Office, the Commission for Coordination with the Peacekeeping Mission (CCPM), ERREC and the Ministry of Local Government, discussed the problems facing roughly 48,000 IDPs still remaining in camps in Eritrea. They agreed that more specific information needed to be collected on the numbers coming from each of the destination villages, the socio-economic condition of the IDPs and, at a later date, an assessment of the areas where they will be resettled." (UNMEE, 10 May 2002)

"408 IDPs returned to their home village of Debai-Sima in the Southern Red Sea zone from 22-24 January 2002. These IDPs had been living in Adi-Nefas camp in Assab. Some 1600 IDPs are expected to return from the camp of Adi Nefas and its environs to their villages. UNDP/Power in collaboration with Movimondo is facilitating the return by re-establishing the shelter and water infrastructures. There are 47,605 IDPs in camps in the country residing in Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea zones." (ICC 25 February 2002)

UNHCR terminates Eritreans' refugee status by December 2002 and plans to return up to 90,000 refugees (August 2002)

"Some 52,000 refugees have returned from Sudan since the voluntary repatriations programme begun in May 2001. Of these returnees, around 95% have returned to Gash Barka, with the Sub Zones of Goluj (38%), Tesseney (41%) and Haykota (7%) receiving most returnees. The remaining Eritrean refugees in Sudan comprise an estimated 147,000 residing in 23 camps, 13,000 registered in urban areas and an estimated 195,000 living in urban areas but not registered. In addition to IDPs and returnees, almost 14,000 persons out of the 75,000 expellees from Ethiopia are in camps.

A Tripartite Repatriation Commission meeting between the Governments of Sudan, Eritrea and UNHCR in March 2002 agreed that a minimum of 60,000 and up to 90,000 Eritrean refugees would be repatriated from Sudan in 2002. Registration for repatriation of all camp and settlement based refugees is to be completed by 31 December 2002 and up to 62,000 refugees will therefore be expected to repatriate with assistance in 2003. The UNHCR repatriation programme will also be affected by the worldwide cessation of Eritreans' refugee status, which will take effect on 31 December 2002. UNHCR is urging all Eritrean refugees residing in Sudan to register by this deadline and join its voluntary repatriation program. On a case by case basis, Eritreans may seek to remain as refugees through legal screening or apply for resident status in accordance with Sudanese immigration procedures. The cessation clause includes Eritreans who took refuge in Sudan as a result of the 30-year independence war as well as those who entered Sudan due to the recent border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia." (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.12)

IDP relocations (June 2002)

- ERREC, UNDP, ICRC and OCHA relocate IDPs from Korokon camp to Shambiko and Kotobia
- Displaced people will require specific relocation assistance according to where they'll want to establish themselves

Relocations due to water shortages:

"A special programme to relocate part of the population of Korokon Internally Displaced Persons camp in the Gash Barka region in Sector West, started on 24th June under the supervision of the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) and the Regional Administration. A total of 30 trucks to move the IDPs and their belongings were provided by UNDP under its Post-War Emergency Recovery programme. Also participating in the relocation are ICRC and OCHA. The plan calls for approximately 1,580 people to be moved to Shambiko and about 4,800 to Kotobia. The World Food Programme will continue to supply food rations to the IDPs at all three of these locations. The IDPs in Korokon have been facing severe water problems for some time and are having water brought in by truck. But with the rainy season fast approaching, there is concern that some of the roads may become impassable, making it difficult for the water trucks to reach the camp." (UNMEE, 28 June 2002)

Potential relocations linked to the border demarcation:

"Demarcating the border will involve a transfer of territory, removal of mines and movements of people. It is hoped that there would not be any unilateral population or troop movements.

[...]

With the transfer of territory a large number of people is likely to be in need of relocation assistance. The Ethiopians who are now going to become Eritreans or vice-versa, will be a challenge for the humanitarian community with regard to the allocation of farmland, and basic needs such as food and shelter. In addition, the views of the affected people would need to be taken into consideration.

OCHA will take the lead in organizing inter-agency field assessments jointly with UNMEE to look at the number and location of affected populations and areas." (OCHA, 19 April 2002).

Majority of the displaced had returned to their homes four months after organised return started in April 2001 (September 2001)

- 98% of people displaced chose to return in the most fertile areas of Eritrea which has
- UN estimated total of 170,000 persons had returned to their villages in the TSZ by November 2001
- About 7000 IDPs returned to their homes in Tserona (2002)
- In July 2001 government agency ERREC declared to have completed assisted repatriation of 200,000 civilians displaced by war
- Reported in June 2001 that 10,000 returning IDPs were not able to return to their homes for fear of landmines or Ethiopian occupation
- IDPs unable to return have been sheltered in temporary camps

"Those who returned in 2000 – 2001, and IDPs are facing the same consequences of been hit by over three years of protracted drought conflict and displacement: destroyed houses, farms and livestock, as well as looted and lost belongings. During the first phase of the voluntary repatriation operation of 2001, 98% of all returnees chose to return to areas within the Gash Barka Zone, an area that includes some of the most fertile areas of Eritrea, but which has been affected by over three years of protracted drought, as well as the long-lasting reminders of conflict: landmines and unexploded ordinance." (UN, November 2001, p.45)

"As the guns fell silent, and confidence mounted, the populations started to return voluntarily to accessible home villages as early as March 2001. As the peace process continued to hold and the United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) announced the establishment of the TSZ on 18 April 2001, the Government conducted organised repatriations of IDPs from camps to give returnees an opportunity to cultivate their lands during the 2001 agriculture season (however, due to a lack of seeds, tools, and draught animals, some were unable to take full advantage of this year's planting season)." (UN, November 2001, p.8)

"According to UNMEE, there were originally 70,000 IDPs who were unable to return to their homes. Part of the reduction in IDP numbers is due to the recent return of some 7,000 from Tserona town to their homes, spontaneous returns to other areas, and more accurate camp population figures. The government of Eritrea, UN agencies and UNMEE were all working to facilitate the return of the remaining IDPs, including "a humanitarian mine-action programme, rehabilitation of social services and providing of food and non-food assistance", said UNMEE." (IRIN 12 November 2001)

"The organized repatriation of IDPs to their homes is underway. The first movements began in late April with the return of 5,300 IDPs from Mekete to Barentu and its environs (outside the TSZ). ERREC is now also organising the movement of IDPs to areas within the TSZ. The focus of return is currently Debub zone. 7,000 IDPs left Alba, Haineba, and Halai camps along with 4,000 from Jejah camp and have returned to their homes in the TSZ during the first phase of returns. A further 15,596 IDPs from Mai-Sagla, Agrae and Harena camps were repatriated mid May 2001. So far, since Mid-April 33,596 IDPs have been repatriated through organized returns. Spontaneous returns are also ongoing, particularly to Senafe sub-zone." (ICC 23 May 2001)

"Some 100,000 IDPs have returned to their villages between mid-April and 15 June 2001 with the assistance of ERREC. Out of the returned 10,000 IDPs are not able to return to their homes for fear of landmines or their homes are still under the Ethiopians [...]. They are mainly from Zalambesa, Ambesetegeleba and Meshal Akran Kebabi Adis (a local Admin structure of about 10 villages). These populations are in three temporary camps around Senafe and six around Tserona towns. In addition ERREC has prepared an operational plan that began on 16 June, with the aim of repatriating 50,150 IDPs to their home villages within the TSZ in Gash Barka zone. This movement will empty Mekete IDP camp and

reduce the number of IDPs considerably from other camps. So far 10 IDPs camps are emptied in Debub Zone. " (ICC 17 June 2001)

"For the past few months, diplomatic disagreements on the demarcation of the TSZ kept the strip of land disputed and unsafe. In addition, minefields had still to be demarcated. However, the pressure on the Eritrean government to allow its people to move back home had been building up, with hope of the people returning in time to start a new crop.

Another failed harvest season would have been detrimental to any early return of the IDPs. Consequently, even without all the mined areas being clearly indicated, the people have started to return. MSF is assisting the Eritrean authorities with the provision of clean water and re-establishing basic healthcare facilities in key locations." (MSF 29 June 2001)

"The main humanitarian concerns of the returning IDPs are as follows:

A large number of IDPs will not be able to return and will remain accommodated mainly in the existing IDP camps. This population, including these returning will to a large extent continue to be dependent on humanitarian assistance provided by the Government and humanitarian agencies in sectors such as food, shelter, household items, water and sanitation, health and nutrition, and education.

IDPs are returning to original home areas where assets have been looted, and homes, basic infrastructures and social services destroyed. They will require two level of assistance; immediate assistance in the form of food, shelter, seeds and farming tools and on the longer term they will require to rebuild their properties and start to earn a living. In addition support will be required to re-establish vital services such as clinics, schools and access roads.

IDPs moving to temporary camps near their homes will require immediate provision of water supply, sanitation and health facilities. In addition they will require some of their old tents to be replaced because the rains have already started.

Mines/UXOs continue to be a threat in the areas where the IDPs are returning. Although some mine action and awareness have started the slow process of demining will hinder IDPs access to their home villages as well as farming and grazing grounds. This sector is receiving less funding which is expected to further slow the return movements.

Initial weather conditions indicate failure of the short rains April/May. This will affect the long cycle crops such as maize, Sorghum and Finger Millet. IDPs that have returned to some of these areas are faced with this phenomenon as well as lack of seeds and tools. Returned IDPs will continue to require food assistance for the coming six months before they can realize some harvest. In areas where the local population depends on irrigated crops such as those along the Gash and Mereb rivers they will require water pumps and piping to be able to cultivate crops." (ICC 17 June 2001)

"The SWG [Shelter Working Group] noted that the need for shelter is still enormous.

[...]

Despite these activities shelter continues to be a problem. It was strongly recommended that rehabilitation and reconstruction of dwellings should move very fast as delays are doubtless to cause more suffering." (ICC 5 July 2001)

"Repatriation of IDPs and refugees continues. So far 165,096 IDPs have been transported to their home villages in the TSZ and its adjacent areas in an organized manner by ERREC[...]

[...]

ERREC has repatriated 106,446 IDPs from 10 IDPs camps in Debub zone to their home villages. Some 13,000 IDPs which are not able to return to their homes moved to six newly established temporary IDP camps around Tsorona town and three camps around Senafe town. The number of those staying in temporary camps can be reduced to half if immediate action is taken to clear landmines, rehabilitation of the water facilities and shelter. The process of IDPs repatriation in Gash Barka is continuing organized by ERREC. Out of 88,770 IDPs, some 45,150 have been transported to their villages and around 5,000 IDPs are expected to leave Mekete camp to their homes in Tokombia and Shambiko next week. This will close

Mekete and Jejeh IDPs camps. IDPs who are not able to return to their home areas will be relocated to Korokon and Adi-Keshi camps. IDPs in Jejeh camp will move back to Dembe-Doran. Shelab expellees will remain in their present camp until the local authorities allocate them land for resettlement. IDPs living in host families in Goluj sub zone will remain in the present location until their home areas are declared safe by local authorities. The relocation of IDPs is being done to make best use of existing resources and bring the IDPs closer to their villages. This will enable easy return of IDPs once the obstacles to their return are solved. About 500 IDPs in Gindae camp have already been repatriated to Assab. Detail information on IDPs movement by sub zone, camp, village are available at the ICC." (ICC 5 July 2001)

"The return of 200,000 civilians displaced as a result of the border war with Ethiopia has been completed, AFP quoted the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) as saying on Tuesday. The last truck carrying such people, many of whom fled to relief camps when war broke out in 1998, delivered them to their homes on 22 July, ERREC official Ibrahim Said told AFP." (IRIN 25 July 2001)

"A large part of the 170,000 IDPs that have returned to date were moved during the rainy season; others returned spontaneously. However, a total of 73,759 persons remain in or outside camps, and with host communities as their home areas remain inaccessible due to various factors including contamination by mines and UXOs, insecurity caused by the close proximity of villages to the border, or the fact that several villages are located in areas currently under Ethiopian administration. This population continues to require food aid and non-food assistance. In May 2001, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) together with the Government initiated the repatriation of Eritrean refugees from Sudan. About 21,000 refugees were repatriated by September 2001; another 41,000 are expected to be repatriated by the end of 2001." (UN, November 2001, p.8)

Increased IDP return as security situation improved (January 2001)

- UN/Government report issued in January 2001 reducing return estimate to only 400,000 people
- Deployment of the UN peace-keeping force drastically improving the prospects for return movements as of January 2001
- By end-September 2000, government agency overestimated IDP return to some 600,000 people
- IDPs had by the beginning of July started to return to areas no longer occupied by Ethiopian troops
- Assessments in 8 of 12 war affected sub-zones in Gash-Barka and Debub found that over 350,000 IDPs had returned to their home communities by end of July 2000
- Reports of some IDP camps being emptied by beginning of September

"IDPs are starting to go home to unoccupied areas of Debub and Gash-Barka, particularly in and around Adi Keih, Mai Aini, Adi Quala, Enda Gergis (also the Agraa camp near Enda Gergis), Tessenei, Talata'asher, Ali Gidir, Guluj and others. Though awaiting formal meetings on repatriation proceedings scheduled later this week, significant numbers of Eritrean refugees are returning from Sudan. Recent figures are 980 individuals from Shagarab to Guluj, bringing the total to around 3,000; approximately 200 every day from Lafa to Talata'asher; 8,000 to Tessenei; and unspecified numbers to Alaboo and Haikota.

There is also movement away from the overcrowded Salina camp. Approximately 50% of the IDPs have returned to Imni Haili and Adi Quala sub-regions.

[...]

People from Zula camp have been asked to return to Adi Keih, but the response has as yet been poor since many IDPs feel more secure in the mountainous area of the camp." (ICC 10 July 2000)

"A joint assessment was carried out by UNDP, ERREC and Cooperazione Italiana from July 24 - August 4 in Gash-Barka and Debub zones [...].

Their findings show that over 350,000 IDPs had returned to their home communities. This represents 75% of all the IDPs from those sub-zones. The total IDP population in Eritrea was estimated at 1.1 million, according to the Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment to Gash-Barka and Debub, June 30 - July 2, 2000." (ICC 12 August 2000)

"Dige (Gash-Barka) camp emptied in August and the last two weeks have seen the emptying of Girmaika (Gash-Barka) and Adi Ketina (Debub). In all three cases, IDPs have spontaneously returned home. A further 1,500 IDPs returned to their homes in the Barentu area from Mekete Camp (Afabet sub-zone) during the past two weeks. ERREC provided transportation." (ICC 9 September 2000)

"Similar to the situation in Debub, people are returning home spontaneously from IDP camps in Gash Barka. This reflects a level of confidence in the current status quo relating to the cease fire and planned arrival of UN peacekeepers, combined with the need to resume agricultural activity as the rainy season comes to an end (September). Although people are returning home, it should be remembered, that not all are able to go back to their homes which were destroyed and many are without household items which were abandoned in flight. Consequently, although people are no longer in camps, relief needs remain.

[...]

It is now estimated by ERREC that some 600,000 IDPs have returned home." (ICC 25 September 2000)

In January 2001 figures presented in a joint UN/Government report indicated that the initial estimates of returnees had been exaggerated:

"The signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 18 June 2000 resulted in a more secure environment and the gradual return of over 400,000 IDPs and refugees (25,000 refugees have returned in an organized manner; many others spontaneously) during the fall. Accordingly, the humanitarian community began implementing return and reintegration initiatives in support of these groups. Emergency assistance (in particular food distributions) was provided to these returned groups, where necessary, in their home communities.

[...]

On 12 December 2000 the Algiers Peace Agreement was signed, ending the two-and-a-half-year border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This positive development together with the deployment of the 4,200 strong United Nations peace-keeping force and 200 United Nations Military Observers, expected to be completed by the end of January, has drastically improved the prospects for return movements by both IDPs and refugees displaced from the border areas." (GOE/UN January 2001, pp.8, 10)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Many communities in the border areas remain inaccessible to the humanitarian community (November 2002)

- Eritrea has a stable security situation
- Mines in most affected border areas are often the main impediments to access

"Eritrea is enjoying relative stability, accompanied by steps towards peace and recovery of civil society. Eritrea and Ethiopia have publicly accepted the EEBC delimitation decision of 13 April 2002, thus laying the basis for durable peace. The main focus of the peace process now is on demarcation and territorial transfers. The humanitarian situation for many communities in the border areas remains critical and is compounded by the inability of the humanitarian community to access some of these populations. When such access becomes possible, further peace confidence building measures among the two communities will need to be undertaken." (UN, November 2002, p.11)

"Most of the areas in the war-affected zone are now accessible for assessments and LWF/DWS-ER together with other Government and humanitarian agencies have made several assessment missions to the areas cited above. Some areas are not yet open due to suspected landmine problems." (ACT 28 May 2002)

Up to 50,000 Eritreans residing in the occupied Senafe territory were out of reach for humanitarian agencies (January 2001)

"Senafe and the surrounding 114 villages were occupied by the Ethiopian armed forces in May and June 2000. An estimated 43,000 to 50,000 Eritreans are currently residing in the occupied territory.

This area has been seriously impacted by the war since the onset of the conflict in 1998. People have faced continuous, and often repeated, displacement. The population was largely dependent on relief assistance even before the recent occupation. Since the occupation, the area has been inaccessible to assistance from Eritrea and it is believed that the stranded population is facing severe hardship. The little information that reaches Asmara indicates that much destruction of the economic infrastructure has taken place." (GOE/UN January 2001, p.33)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National response

Eritrean authorities struggle to restore services while restricting international humanitarian agencies (June 2003)

"During 2002, Eritrea made little progress toward recovery from the destruction left behind by two years of warfare.

Eritrean authorities struggled to restore basic government services in the border region, and basic social services remained in a state of disrepair. UNHCR rehabilitated water systems and constructed schools and health care facilities in some returnee areas.

Jailing of government opponents and new Eritrean government decrees that restricted press and religious freedoms strained the government's relations with international donors and international aid agencies. Government restrictions on international humanitarian agencies hampered development and reintegration programs. As in previous years, aid workers complained that Eritrean authorities imposed tight management and administration controls over their programs, slowing humanitarian efforts.

In mid-2002, Eritrean authorities restructured the country's demining operations and requested that international mine removal organizations terminate their work. The government's actions effectively stopped the removal of tens of thousands of landmines from Eritrea's prime agricultural areas and adversely affected the return of thousands of refugees and internally displaced Eritreans.

Recovery efforts were further stalled by Eritrea's limited skilled labor pool in returnee areas and the presence of relatively few local and international development agencies." (USCR, 2003)

The Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC) is in charge of coordinating both national and international assistance (January 2001)

- ERREC presences in all IDP camps
- Sectoral working groups (SWG) are chaired by the ERREC or a line ministry and co-facilitated by an appropriate UN agency
- SWG for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Recovery (3R) established by end-2000

"In Eritrea, ERREC [Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission], representing the Government, is by far the largest implementor of assistance and is in charge of coordinating both national and international assistance. Specific line ministries are responsible for sectoral coordination and the implementation of programmes and for reporting regularly to ERREC on the beneficiaries reached, new developments, needs and constraints. At the local level, the regional and sub-regional administrations cooperate with ERREC in assisting the IDPs and Rural Deportees." (UN January 2000, p.11)

"ERREC have offices in each of the six Administrative Zones and almost all sub-zones in Eritrea and have a presence in each of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps which are run by ERREC and a Camp Administrator from the Ministry of Local Government. UN agencies and the Red Cross Movement are expected to work closely with ERREC within their humanitarian plan of action for the country.

International and national NGOs are required to register with ERREC and provide regular reporting. Although ERREC has the overall responsibility for co-ordination of humanitarian operations, within the specialised sectors humanitarian actors are required to work with the relevant line ministry, i.e. Ministry of Health or Education. Co-ordination within this framework is facilitated centrally at the Asmara level through five Sectoral Working Groups (SWG). Each SWG is chaired by the relevant GoE representative and facilitated by a UN agency. There is also a mine action group and an informal group, which meets to brainstorm on issues relating to micro-finance/credit. All these groups meet every fortnight and there is a general humanitarian meeting each month. In addition to meetings in Asmara, inter-agency co-ordination meetings are being established at the zonal level. Two meetings have been held in Gash-Barka and the first meeting was held in December in the Northern Red Sea Zone." (ICC 11 January 2001)

"At present [July 2000] approximately 48 humanitarian agencies are active in Eritrea [...]. ERREC is the principal body responsible for the coordination of all humanitarian activities on behalf of the Government. In addition, ERREC is the largest direct implementing entity of humanitarian assistance. ERREC has sole responsibility for the coordination of non-governmental and international organisations. [...]"

Sectoral working groups (SWG) are chaired by the ERREC or a line ministry and co-facilitated by an appropriate UN agency with participation of local and international NGOs and international organisations. The main functions of the SWGs are four-fold: to exchange technical information and set uniform standards for humanitarian responses; to work towards adequate coverage of needs; and to coordinate operations; and to facilitate resource mobilisation that includes planning for mid- to longer-term requirements. The SWG are responsible for identifying humanitarian needs by sector and location, identifying gaps in assistance, and coordinating interventions based on priority needs. Each SWG compiles a weekly report outlining humanitarian needs and actions to be taken. These reports are shared among all relevant actors and orally presented at the weekly general coordination meeting, co-chaired by the ERREC Commissioner and the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. Below is an overview of the sectoral working group structure.

Sectoral Group	Chair	Co-chair/Facilitator
Food	ERREC	WFP
Health and Nutrition	Ministry of Health	WHO
Water and Sanitation	Ministry of Water, Land and Environment	UNICEF
Shelter and Household Items	ERREC	UNHCR
Education	Ministry of Education	UNICEF
Return and Rehabilitation	ERREC	UNHCR and UNDP

(UN July 2000, p.9)

"Recently a decision was taken to also establish a SWG for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Recovery (3R).

[...]"

It needs to be noted that a desperately needed coordination mechanism for emergency and recovery programmes in the agricultural sector still needs to be established.

General Coordination Meeting: the now monthly General Coordination Meeting is called by ERREC, chaired by the UN RC/HC and facilitated by OCHA and the ICC. The main aim of the meeting is to brief all humanitarian actors on the overall humanitarian situation and to exchange sectoral information." (UN November 2000, p.19)

"Following the resumption of the conflict in May 2000, an Inter-Agency Child Protection Working Group, set up to exchange information on war-affected children in Eritrea, identified a need to assess and address the situation of separated children in IDP camps. [The Inter-Agency Child Protection Working Group in Asmara consists of the MLHW, UNICEF, UNHCR, SCF (UK), the Eritrean Red Cross (also representing

ICRC) and Citizens for Peace in Eritrea. The CPWG has recently been expanded to include NUEYS and DANIDA.]” (MLHF/UNICEF/SCF (UK) September 2000, p. 4)

“In response to the arrival of UN peacekeepers, the government established the Commission for Co-ordination with the UN Peacekeeping Mission (CCPM). The CCPM is the interface between UNMEE and the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and comprises five functions each headed by an Associate Commissioner: Demining, Administrative Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs, Military and Security Affairs, and General Services.” (ICC 11 January 2001)

Two thirds of the humanitarian mine action programme was terminated by the government of Eritrea (September 2002)

- Government of Eritrea created Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) in August 2002
- Government of Eritrea terminated the work of 3 de-mining NGOs on grounds of weak performance resulting in the low pace of IDP returns (October 2002)
- Demining is the greatest challenge faced by Eritrea and will determine the boundary demarcation progress
- There were no mine risks education activities taking place in Eritrea as of October 2002
- During the first half of 2002, 31 of the 53 reported UXO victims were children

“The Eritrean Demining Authority that was proclaimed on the 4th of August has been formed but only unofficially, we haven’t been officially advised of the formation of this Authority, but we know that work is going on behind close doors to plan the new Eritrean National Programme.” (UNMEE, 11 October 2002)

“The Government of Eritrea has formed the Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) [on 4th August 2002] based on proclamation 123/2002, in order to expedite the removal of landmines buried in the country.

According to the report issued by the CCPM [Commission for Co-ordination with the UN Peacekeeping Mission] the newly formed EDA’s responsibilities include:

- Conducting research about landmines buried in the country,
- Transforming the land in to productive farmland by removing landmines,
- Expediting the return of IDPs to their villages by clearing their farmlands of landmines,
- Upgrading the people’s level of knowledge of the dangers of landmines, and
- Co-ordinating all demining activities in Eritrea.

The report further stated that the CCPM has terminated the operation of three international humanitarian demining NGOs namely: the Danish Demining Group (DDG), Danish Church Aid (DCA) and Mine Awareness Trust (MAT) on grounds of weak performance.” (ICC, 30 September 2002)

“De-mining is going to be one of the most important challenges facing the country. Because of the mines, demarcation is expected to take a long, given that it is a long border. The presence of mines/UXO near the border area is one of the main obstacles to the return of displaced populations to their home villages. It is also an impediment to agriculture in many areas, as some of the most fertile lands are affected by mines.” (OCHA 19 April 2002)

“Phil Lewis (UNMACC): The question is what is the impact on demining efforts of the expulsion of the demining NGOs. It is just more than the expulsion of the demining NGOs that we are talking about here because the Eritrean Authorities actually closed down temporarily, which is still occurring, their own national mine action programme which has seen a significant reduction in all humanitarian demining activities in the Temporary Security Zone and in fact no mine risk education activities are occurring in that

zone at the moment. The current situation is that only Halo Trust and Ronco, a commercial organization working for the US State Department are currently operating in the TSZ. [...]

Both of these organizations are operating in an executive coordination control vacuum because there is no executive body operating, coordinating, tasking, monitoring activities in Eritrea at the moment.

[...]

Phil Lewis (UNMACC): At the start I stated that it was a significant reduction in humanitarian demining activities in Eritrea and at the moment that's what it is. About two thirds of the previous humanitarian mine action programme has ceased operations. Now hopefully the National Programme is simply reconfiguring itself and that at some stage we will see the National Programme reconstituted and re-activated and actually working out there doing humanitarian mine action, but at the moment nothing is occurring on the National Programme side other than the new Authority working to develop its plans on how it's going to recommence operations, and what support it's going to have and where it's going to work etc. We are not involved in those deliberations.

[...]

The reason they did this, [terminated the operation of international demining NGOs], namely the reason that has been given is that the previous humanitarian Programme was too slow, it was too costly and it wasn't achieving the aims of the Eritrean Government in getting IDPs returned to their homes in the Temporary Security Zone and based on that the Eritrean Government decided to close down the Programme, review it, work out how they could develop better plans to do things quicker, cheaper and achieved the aims of getting the IDPs back to their homes quickly.

Question [Addis Ababa]: As a demining expert yourself, do you agree with the Eritrean Government that it was too slow that it was too costly?

Phil Lewis (UNMACC): It's already on public record that the Chief of UNMAS came out to Eritrea to try to negotiate with the Eritrean Government on a slowing down of this process so that we could do a proper transition over to a national program. The United Nations believes that the work that was being done was being done in accordance with the proper standards, it was being done at a rate commensurate with any other mine action program around the world and that it was being conducted efficiently. These arguments were not accepted by the Eritrean Government, which was their prerogative and they have decided to do it their own way."(UNMEE, 11 October 2002)

"Landmine threats and insecurity along the southern border have hindered the mobility of people and livestock, thereby reducing agricultural and other economic activities. Large tracts of the most productive farmland and prosperous grazing grounds are still inaccessible. The need to accelerate humanitarian demining can therefore not be over-emphasised. Recent UN data highlights that the majority of mine victims are young people between the ages of 1 and 20. Most frequently, they are injured or killed by some type of UXO: In 2001, 90 of the 157 total reported victims were young people killed or injured by UXOs. In the first half of 2002, 31 of the 53 reported victims were children killed or injured by UXOs." (UN November 2002, p.10)

ERREC survey of humanitarian activities in Eritrea (September 2001)

- Initial survey includes 162 projects reported by 34 organisations
- Database to be updated approximately every two months

"This briefing paper is a first look at information gathered through the 'Who does What Where' (W3) survey of local and international humanitarian and recovery organisations active in Eritrea during 2001. This first cut includes 162 projects reported by 34 organisations with a total value of over \$74 million. Once completed, the database is expected to include around 300 projects from some 70 organisations so the database is at present slightly more than 50% complete.

[...]

Background

The W3 survey was initiated by the Eritrean Refugee and Relief Commission (ERREC) to gather essential baseline information on all humanitarian and recovery projects in Eritrea. The survey covers all activities of national and international NGOs as well as non-core activities of UN agencies and International Organisations and includes all projects active in 2001, including those still in the project design stage.

[...]

The W3 database is also a component of a wider information management exercise, which will streamline the collection, management, analysis and dissemination of key information of use to humanitarian, recovery and development actors. This exercise will be initiated next month with the release of Geographic Data Standards intended to minimise confusion over the name and location of settlements and administrative divisions in Eritrea, while establishing a robust platform for data management.

Objectives

Access to baseline information on humanitarian, recovery and development projects can fulfil a range of needs for different actors. For ERREC, the government body with overall responsibility for coordinating the work of humanitarian and relief agencies in Eritrea, the database will provide a comprehensive view of activities to facilitate coordination, monitoring and the identification of gaps and duplication. For humanitarian and recovery agencies, the database can help identify partner agencies working in and with complimentary geographic areas, sectors and beneficiary groups and facilitate project identification. For donors, the database can facilitate monitoring and the identification of gaps in assistance.

The W3 database is intended to achieve the following objectives:

Establish a comprehensive database of humanitarian and recovery projects in Eritrea;

Serve the information needs of the government, national and international organisations, the UN and donors;

Make baseline project information available to the widest possible audience;

Provide tools to allow detailed analysis of the data by sector, beneficiary, geographic location and a range of other categories;

Ensure compatibility with other data sources through the use of common data standards." (ICC 18 September 2001)

International coordination mechanisms

UN Resident Coordinator supported by OCHA to coordinate UN response (April 2001)

- The Resident Coordinator has the overall responsibility for coordination within the UN System (2000)
- Support for the Resident Coordinator provided by the UN Country Team and OCHA
- OCHA coordination unit staffed by 5-6 persons by the end of 2000
- Information and Coordination Centre (ICC) established in June 2000 to support coordination of the humanitarian response
- A Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) overseeing the UN peace keeping operation (UNMEE)
- Joint UN/Government coordination mechanism for humanitarian assistance in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ)

"Relief and humanitarian assistance by UN Agencies is coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator, supported by the Country Team, which is composed of all resident agencies. The Country Team meets regularly to ensure maximum integration of programmes and to avoid duplication." (UN January 2000, p.11)

"At the onset of the crisis in May 2000, OCHA began to facilitate a rapid response by recruiting additional professional staff members and sending in short-term professionals to cover staffing gaps in the meantime. OCHA, under the auspice of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, focused on the facilitation of a rapid, coherent and effective response to the increasingly large and complex emergency. By the end of June, a rapid assessment of humanitarian needs was carried out in the most affected areas of Gash Barka and Debub regions. This assessment helped to determine humanitarian priorities in the revised UNCTA.

[...]

The OCHA-supported coordination framework is organised under the authority of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator who has ultimate responsibility for the coordination of UN Agencies. In direct support of the Humanitarian Coordinator, OCHA's role is to take the lead in creating and sustaining a unified operation that is based on the full participation of all humanitarian partners. In particular, OCHA is responsible for ensuring that: a) needs are identified; b) planning is cross-sectoral; c) information is shared; and d) programmes are coordinated. A key aim of OCHA is to establish a platform, in conjunction with the ICC that allows ERREC, UN Agencies and NGOs to work collectively to address humanitarian needs by agreeing on a clear division of labour and sharing assets and expertise.

[...]

Monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the humanitarian strategy will be a key function undertaken by the Office of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in collaboration with the UNCT in Asmara and the sectoral working groups encompassing all humanitarian partners under the leadership of ERREC. The UNCT will have collective responsibility for monitoring the internal and external contexts that impact on the implementation of humanitarian interventions. At any time during the period of implementation, adjustments to the action plan may be necessary in view of changes in the political, security and humanitarian situation." (UN July 2000, pp.4, 10, 11)

"Under the auspices of the ERREC Commissioner and the RC/HC, a joint Information and Coordination Centre (ICC) was established in the early stages of the recent emergency with support from UNDAC (United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination). The ICC is managed on a day-to-day basis by OCHA in close collaboration with ERREC. Other human and material resources come from UNICEF, UNDP, Norwegian Church Aid, and ERREC. The main function of the ICC is to facilitate the joint relief effort through the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on population movements, humanitarian operations and changes and trends in the overall humanitarian situation; the publication of theme papers (e.g. on IDP camps); and briefings for newly arrived agencies. Since October 2000, the ICC also has a Field Liaison Unit (FLU), which comprises a Field Coordinator and three UNICEF-funded national Field Liaison Officers. The main function of the FLU is to strengthen ongoing information collection at the field-level in collaboration with the Government and other partners. In order to facilitate the Annual Needs Assessment exercise, the ICC produced a Reference CD-ROM that contains over 400 reports, updates and other documents relating to the humanitarian situation in Eritrea;

OCHA has supported the establishment of Sectoral Working Groups (SWG), which are chaired by ERREC or a line-ministry and co-facilitated by an appropriate UN Agency with participation of local and international NGOs and international organisations. At present, there are SWGs for the following sectors: Food; Health & Nutrition; Water & Sanitation; Shelter and Household Items; and Education. Recently a decision was taken to also establish a SWG for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Recovery (3R).

In the early stages of the crisis General Coordination Meetings were held once or twice a week. The now monthly General Coordination Meeting is called by ERREC, chaired by the RC/HC and facilitated by OCHA and the ICC. The main aim of the meeting is to brief all humanitarian actors on the overall humanitarian situation and to exchange sectoral information." (UN November 2000, pp. 9-10)

"The previous year saw the number of international NGOs increasing from approximately 10 to over 30. Many of the organisations which were already present in Eritrea (e.g. the resident UN humanitarian organisations) increased their operations considerably in order to assist the Government in responding to the crisis that unfolded in 2000. For example, OCHA, the principle entity responsible for humanitarian

coordination within the UN system, went from a one-person presence to a five-person office. In addition, a completely new type of partner arrived on the scene, in the form of UNMEE, the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission. These developments and the increasing scope and complexity of the emergency that unfolded in 2000, necessitated the establishment of more elaborate, inclusive and comprehensive coordination structures and mechanisms," (UN February 2001, pp.34-35)

"UNMEE whose operations are focused on the TSZ, is headed up by a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) who is the most senior UN representative in Eritrea[...] The SRSG is DO [Designated Official] in the TSZ and is responsible for overall co-ordination of UN activities in the TSZ. Also within UNMEE, there is a Force Commander, a military person who is responsible for military decisions concerning deployment and management of the peacekeepers. Within the military setup there is a Civil Military Affairs branch (CMA) one of whose function is the establishment of a Civil Military Co-operation centre (CIMIC). CIMIC is responsible for providing liaison facilities and two-way information sharing between the humanitarian community and UNMEE peacekeepers. CMA and CIMIC as a component of it, report to the Force Commander." (ICC 11 January 2001)

"Coordination

A new coordination mechanism for humanitarian assistance in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) has been put in place jointly headed by the HC's office and ERREC. It builds on the existing structures: 1. Steering Committee for Humanitarian Assistance in the TSZ. 2. Technical Advisory Sub-Committee on Assessments and Information. 3. Sectoral Working Groups (SWGs). Initially the SWGs were established in June 2000 covering five sectors, Education, Health and Nutrition, Food, Shelter and non-food items, Water and Sanitation. The SWGs have a GOE chair and UN agency facilitator. Meetings are attended by GOE, UN Agencies NGOs, Red Cross Movement and Donors.

In Collaboration with UNMEE the humanitarian community has started to undertake assessment missions in the (TSZ).

(OCHA/Senior Network, April 2001)

For further details on Coordination Arrangements in Eritrea, see Annex 1 in the UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001

Division of sectoral areas between UN agencies (July 2000)

"[In July 2000 it was envisaged that] The roles and responsibilities of UN agencies by sectoral division will be as follows:

Food, Logistics and Food Security: WFP will provide immediate food assistance and transport of food where appropriate. FAO will provide agricultural inputs and technical assistance to implementing agencies and partners.

Shelter and Household Items: UNDP and UNHCR will provide assistance in this sector, with UNHCR focussing on the Gash Barka region. The SWG for this sector operates with the participation of NGOs, bilateral agencies, UN agencies and ERREC. On the basis of updates on activities and information provided by each participating agency, the SWG continually updates a matrix that clearly identifies needs, stocks available and in the pipeline and the shortfalls.

Water and Sanitation: UNICEF, WHO, and NGOs will work closely to coordinate necessary interventions. UNICEF will support provision of water supply equipment, such as generators, pumps and pipes to rehabilitate or construct bore holes, hand-dug wells and other water systems. Sanitation tools will also be provided where possible. Capacity building support for institutions and support to water supply and sanitation programmes are among priority concerns of UNICEF. WHO and NGOs will help to control outbreaks of water borne diseases due to unsafe water and poor sanitation.

Health and Nutrition: WHO, UNFPA and UNICEF will work closely in coordinating health interventions. WHO will support training, assessment and control of epidemics as well as strengthening the health

information system. UNFPA will extend reproductive health services and education. UNICEF will support emergency actions involving immunisation, provision of basic health supplies, rehabilitation of basic health infrastructure and nutrition surveillance.

Education: UNICEF will provide professional and financial support to the Government. UNICEF will also collaborate with the Government in monitoring project implementation through joint field visits, quarterly and annual progress reviews and reports. UNICEF will continue to co-chair with the Ministry of Education the donor/partners' coordination meeting. It will ensure that emergency education data and information is accessible to all users through the ICC. UNICEF will also continue to advocate for inter-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration and participate in experience sharing and knowledge development for quality assurances.

Psychosocial Care and Protection of Children: UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare will ensure that the rights of all children are protected during the emergency, particularly those affected by the conflict. The situation of unaccompanied children will receive priority attention through assessment, family reunification and provision of services targeting them. Psychosocial support services will be promoted to mitigate the impact of war on children and women.

Communication and Crosscutting Issues: This initiative will be implemented through a collaborative venture with the Ministry of Health (lead agency) and partners including SCF-UK, OXFAM, MSF and UNHCR. UNICEF will support awareness programmes about: the threat of landmines; violence against women; hygiene promotion; and HIV/AIDS prevention and control in an emergency. UNICEF will collaborate closely with UNFPA in peer education among young people.

Coordination: OCHA will continue to facilitate coordination efforts, providing access to information and resource mobilisation on behalf of humanitarian agencies and organisations.

Return and Rehabilitation: The Return and Rehabilitation Sectoral Working Group will be established at the appropriate time and most likely be introduced in the 2001 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal Process." (UN July 2000, pp.10-11)

"At the beginning of the emergency in Eritrea, there was considerable confusion regarding organizational responsibility for providing shelter. Originally the responsibility of UNDP, a number of other agencies, including the ICRC, UNICEF and various NGOs, also made shelter available. When responsibility passed to UNHCR, staff were hard-pressed to find solutions to the issue of shelter in the absence of tents or poles with which to support the plastic sheeting. One creative approach was suggested: the use of a combined plastic sheeting/wooden frame that could be used initially as emergency shelter and subsequently as the basis for a roof on a more permanent dwelling." (UNHCR February 2001, p.27)

Donor response

CAP 2004 Mid Year Review for Eritrea reveals that low funding could disrupt humanitarian programs for IDPs (June 2004)

- Only 25,7% of CAP 2004 funded as of June 2004
- More financial support needed to resettle permanently and encourage the return of expellees and thousands of IDPs
- Limited responses in food commodities forces aid agencies to temporary reduce the ration sizes to 85% for IDPs

"The funding status of CAP 2004 stands at 25.7%. The Resident Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Simon Nhongo, has expressed his serious concerns at this low funding level, especially in the non-food sector which is 23.3% funded, compared to food at 27.4%. With the "hunger" season approaching, this low level of support will undermine the nutritional status of women and children as well as increase the possibility of

water-borne diseases. If funding was forthcoming, Mr Nhongo says, the 8,000 plus expellees and the thousands of IDPs languishing in camps could either be resettled permanently or return to their villages. In order to avoid a serious deterioration during this period, Mr Nhongo appealed to the international community to generously provide non-food support.

At the General Humanitarian Coordination Meeting held on June 11 in Asmara and co chaired by ERREC and the Resident Humanitarian Coordinator, concern was expressed over the shortage of construction materials and supplies for water projects making it extremely difficult to implement such projects. Manpower shortages and lack of capacity to plan and implement projects hamper sustainability resulting in donors' unwillingness to fund projects. OCHA and the UNCT are consulting with the Government to address these issues and a meeting of Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Sectoral Working Groups is being organised for this purpose." (UN OCHA, 18 June 2004)

"The CAP Mid Year Review (MYR) is finalized. It has underlined that the key priorities for humanitarian response in 2004 remain: preventing loss of life; maintenance of a healthy food pipeline; and, support for critical social service interventions, especially in the nutrition, water, sanitation, and shelter sectors. The MYR has also given priority to interventions in the agriculture sector that preserve livelihoods and prevent food aid dependence as well as the repatriation of Eritrean refugees. The CAP MYR further underscored strengthening humanitarian coordination and support services, information management and data collection will be important priorities.

To address these priorities, the CAP MYR underlined that humanitarian partners should ensure adequate response during 2004 by focusing on coordinated assessments; strategic planning and monitoring; dissemination of information; inter-agency programme support; and, advocacy. This will ensure harmonization of efforts and effective utilization of available resources. For humanitarian interventions to be effectively addressed, joint efforts are required by the Government, Donors, UN and NGOs, the MYR document added.

The expected humanitarian needs and response for 2005, based on the current situation, argue strongly for the development of another CAP for 2005. However, whether it would be a traditional or transitional CAP, the decision would be made later. The continuation of the situation at the current level or even the deterioration thereof - taking into consideration the huge caseload of IDPs, widespread malnutrition and food insecurity - presuppose the necessity. As stated by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn of Africa, Martti Ahtisaari, "Eritrea will require international humanitarian assistance for the coming few years."" (UN OCHA, 17 June 2004)

"Food aid agencies have operated on a temporary reduction in ration sizes (60% of standard ration for drought relief and 85% for IDPs in camp). Improved response and new arrivals of food commodities will allow continuation of food distributions with higher rations from May onwards. Maintaining the food pipeline is also critical." (UN OCHA, 15 June 2004)

International operational activities in 2003

Warning of widespread starvation unless donors respond (July 2003)

- WFP: unless food crisis addressed, the country will face "irreversible spectre" of malnutrition and starvation

- The expulsion of the international demining group Halo Trust "affects the mood and attitude of donors"
- Eritrea's drought crisis overshadowed by neighbouring Ethiopia
-

"The UN's World Food Programme has warned that unless the desperate food crisis is addressed in Eritrea, the country will face the "irreversible spectre" of malnutrition and starvation.

[...]

Eritrea is reeling from one of the worst droughts in its history, the effects of which have been exacerbated by the 1998-2000 war with Ethiopia. Two thirds of its 3.7 million population require humanitarian assistance. The UN's Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator Carolyn McAskie, who recently visited the country, said the difficulty in getting pledges to the region meant that less than 19 percent of the food aid was actually on the ground.

WFP says only about half its appeal for US \$100 million for Eritrea has been met. Spokesman Robin Lodge told IRIN that the next few weeks would be critical as the seasonal "hunger gap" was approaching when people urgently require food assistance. "We are seriously underfunded and could be seeing a break in the food pipeline in the next couple of months," he warned.

Lodge also noted that events such as the expulsion of the international demining group Halo Trust "affects the mood and attitude of donors". Last month, the Eritrean government asked Halo Trust to leave the country, saying it had set up a national demining authority which could do the job itself.

"There is also a reticence among Eritreans who don't like to show their problems," Lodge added.

Another issue, he stressed, was the fact that Eritrea's drought crisis was overshadowed by that of neighbouring Ethiopia. "Ethiopia has a much higher profile, better coverage, the world is more used to images of hungry people from that country," he said. And while the number of people needing food aid in Ethiopia was huge, proportionally the need in Eritrea was greater, he stressed. "Unless we can address this crisis, we will be facing an irreversible spectre of widespread malnutrition and starvation, which is becoming a reality with every day that passes," WFP's deputy Country Director Mamadou Mbaye warned." (IRIN, 1 July 2003)

UN SG appoints new UN Special Envoy to Horn of Africa as humanitarian crisis deepens (July 2003)

- Special Envoy calls for a more positive response to the humanitarian crisis

"In response to the severe drought which has devastated large parts of both Ethiopia and Eritrea, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has announced the appointment of former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as his Special Envoy for the Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn of Africa.

[...]

After a fourth year of drought in Eritrea, some 2.3 million people -- or two thirds of the population -- are in need of food assistance. The worst crop failure since its independence in 1993 has left some 40 per cent of the country's women and children chronically malnourished. Because of low resourcing, the WFP has only been able to assist 400,000 drought-affected people with a 60 per cent ration.

"This current drought represents yet another shock especially to the children and the elderly, who are still trying to recover from a major drought just two years ago. While the international community has responded fast to our earlier appeals, we sense that there is a distinct lack of commitment to recovery and development", said James T. Morris, the WFP's Executive Director.

[...]

Other elements of the crisis also need to be addressed. While food aid is the overwhelming requirement, it is not enough to prevent famine in the two countries. Lack of food and poor nutrition, combined with inadequate and unsafe water make people vulnerable to disease, which is the primary cause of death during famines." (UN SG, 18 June 2003)

"Eritrea requires a more positive response from the international donor community to address the humanitarian crisis facing the country", United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn of Africa, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari noted as he wrapped up his two-day mission to the country on Tuesday 8 July 2003. "It would be catastrophic if we do not meet emergency needs", he added.

"My feeling is that this may also be a window of opportunity to try to address more long-term issues in order to increase the self reliance of the Government", Mr. Ahtisaari said. "As droughts have become more frequent, there is need for greater urgency and will by all sides to start addressing the underlying factors that have made Eritrea so vulnerable to drought". The challenge now is for all partners to work together to ensure long-term solutions to the food security problems and to reduce dependency on food aid.

While acknowledging the strong cooperation among the Government, donor agencies, humanitarian organisations and the local communities, Mr. Ahtisaari said that it was essential to ensure sustained dialogue on humanitarian, recovery and development issues between Government authorities and the international community in order to build support for self-reliance.

[...]

Mr. Ahtisaari said that his visit to Eritrea was aimed at increasing funding for food and non-food assistance and advocating for long-term development programmes to ensure food self-sufficiency across the nation. The Special Envoy noted that the UN was firmly committed to assisting the Government of Eritrea and that he would "concentrate on securing the necessary financing of the immediate crisis needs and then look at long-term financing possibilities".

While there are competing emergencies worldwide and donors tend to look at bigger emergencies, the special Envoy noted that "relative size is also important", given that two-thirds of Eritrea's population (2.3 million people) is in need of humanitarian assistance. He appealed to the donor community to make a timely and adequate response to the needs of the people and not to allow Eritrea's crisis to be overshadowed by higher profile emergencies.

Mr. Ahtisaari urged donors not only to make pledges, but also to ensure timely arrival of supplies in country. Recently, there had been an increase in pledges and commitments, especially in the food aid sector. Still, only 21.8% of required food aid had arrived in Eritrea as of June 2003.

While in Eritrea, Mr. Ahtisaari discussed the humanitarian situation and recovery efforts with President Isaias Afwerki, senior Government officials, the UN Country Team, representatives of the donor community, the Red Cross Movement, and non-governmental organizations. Mr. Ahtisaari also visited drought and war-affected Debub region where he witnessed first-hand the humanitarian and recovery interventions of the government, UN agencies and NGOs. In the sub-regional capital Senafe, he met with the Governor of Debub region. He visited the Senafe Hospital, destroyed during the border war with Ethiopia and now housed in temporary buildings, and the Metera IDP camp, home to 1,400 families.

Prior to briefing UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on his findings, the Special Envoy will hold meetings with donor representatives in Brussels and Washington in an effort to search for ways to raise the necessary resources to better address the humanitarian situation in the country." (UN OCHA, 16 July 2003)

"Mr Marti Ahtisaari, special human rights envoy of UN secretary general, made a tour of inspection in Senafe accompanied by Ms Askalu Menkerios, minister of labour and human welfare, and Mr Kahsai Gebrehiwot, administer of Zoba Debub (southern Eritrea).

Mr Ahtisaari observed those living in temporary shelter after being displaced by the weyane (Ethiopian) invasion, including a hospital and other infrastructure destroyed by the weyane aggression. Speaking on the

occasion, Ms Askalu Menkerios praised the UN secretary general for sending a special envoy to study the drought in Eritrea. The minister went on to say that although the government is doing all it can to help the people, the world community's reaction to the plight was not as expected.

Mr Ahtisaari on his part said that the UN secretary general has assigned him to find an urgent solution to the drought and social issues in Eritrea." (Shaebia/BBC, by email, 8 July 2003)

USAID response (July 2003)

"On December 2, 2002, U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea Donald J. McConnell declared a disaster in Eritrea due to food security concerns throughout the country and the significant loss of main season crops in western Eritrea. USAID/OFDA has committed more than \$2.1 million in humanitarian assistance funding to implement a food security program through CARE a CRS livelihood recovery project, and a water project through the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF).

From February 18 to February 25, USAID/OFDA dispatched a technical assessment team including food security, health, and water/sanitation experts to Eritrea to assess the humanitarian situation and meet with key government officials. The USAID/OFDA team, along with USAID/Eritrea staff, traveled to the three worst affected regions in the country. This was the fourth USAID/OFDA assessment in the past six months.

To date, USAID/FFP emergency food assistance in Eritrea in FY 2003 totals more than 118,000 metric tons (MTs) and is valued at more than \$51 million. This food assistance includes wheat, blended cereal, beans and vegetable oil. USAID/FFP provided more than 13,400 MT of emergency food assistance in FY 2002, valued at \$5.8 million.

The Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (State/PRM) has provided more than \$3.5 million in FY 2003 through UNHCR for refugee assistance and environmental programs in Eritrea." (USAID, 30 April 2003)

"In FY 2003 to date, USAID/OFDA has committed funds of more than \$2.5 million to support emergency water and sanitation, food security, and agricultural recovery activities in drought-affected areas. In response to increasing water shortages, USAID/OFDA has funded additional water and sanitation projects through Concern Worldwide and Mercy Corps.

From May 5 to 13, 2003, USAID/OFDA deployed a monitoring mission to assess the drought-affected areas of Eritrea and review USAID/OFDA's response so far. This was the fifth USAID/OFDA assessment in the past nine months.

[...]

To date, USAID's Office for Peace (USAID/FFP) emergency food assistance in Eritrea in FY 2003 totals approximately 144,680 MT valued at more than \$63.8 million, and represents 50 per cent of the total requirements for drought relief this year [...] USAID/FFP plans to deploy a regional expert to assess the situation and provide recommendations for FY 2004 food assistance requirements." (USAID, 24 July 2003)

IMF and ECHO extend aid to Eritrea, but call for strengthening transparency and accountability (July 2003)

- World Bank supports education sector investment and emergency reconstruction programmes

"The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has called for "decisive and urgent" action by Eritrea to confront what it described as the enormous economic challenges ahead. In a report, following bilateral discussions with Eritrea, the IMF's executive directors said the challenges included addressing the severe drought in the country, accelerating the demobilisation and reintegration of some 200,000 combatants, re-establishing macroeconomic stability and laying the foundations for sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. The directors acknowledged that many of the problems stemmed from the drought, the legacy of war with Ethiopia, political and governance difficulties as well as limited resources, but stressed there had also been "policy slippages".

"Directors recognised that external assistance will be critical for the success of the economic strategy, and encouraged the authorities to step up their efforts to resolve outstanding governance issues with donors to permit the resumption of such assistance," the report said.

Donors have been cautious in extending assistance to Eritrea, after it jailed political dissidents and independent journalists. The IMF also called for strengthening the transparency and accountability of the central bank, and improving the flow of information between the government and private sector. "While acknowledging that the government will continue to play an important role in the Eritrean economy, they [directors] urged the authorities to do a careful appraisal of that role and to adopt policies that foster the development of the private sector," the report said.

It noted that progress had been made in some areas, including tax and expenditure reform, trade liberalisation and bank supervision. The directors also welcomed Eritrea's intention to reduce the fiscal deficit in 2003, primarily through cuts in current spending, and shifting expenditure to education and health.

Meanwhile, the European Commission has extended humanitarian aid, worth €1.3 million, to help Eritrea combat the effects of drought. "The aid will include provision of water where levels have receded to below humanitarian minimums, as well as the measuring of and response to emergency levels of acute malnutrition," the EC said in a statement. "Funds will be allocated to humanitarian agencies operating in the region, via ECHO [European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office]." (IRIN, 2 July 2003)

"The World Bank's Board of Directors yesterday [19 June 2003] approved an IDA credit of US\$45 million to finance investments in the Education sector, and an IDA grant of US\$15 million for Emergency Reconstruction in Eritrea. The Eritrea Education Sector Investment Project (EESIP) will help increase equitable enrollment, especially among girls and neglected groups and poor districts children. It will improve the quality of education at basic and secondary levels, as well as strengthen the Ministry of Education's capacity to deliver education services.

The program will also finance the establishment of a Teacher Training and Development Unit that will help improve the quality of teachers in service while developing a master plan for teacher recruitment, training, deployment and utilization. About 88,000 children will be enrolled under the program and get an opportunity for a more effective and relevant basic education. "These children will be taught by better qualified teachers, they will experience a new and modern curriculum, have more books and instructional materials and a better chance to acquire skills they can use in the labor market", said Paud Murphy, World Bank Task Team Leader for the Eritrea ESIP.

Eritrea is fully committed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Education For All goals by the year 2015, and activities under the EESIP will contribute to overall productivity and economic growth. The Emergency Reconstruction Supplemental Project (ERSP) will address the negative impact of the drought and prevent reversal of achievements made under the existing Emergency Reconstruction Project, approved by the Bank in November 2000. The Supplemental Grant will help maintain Government's development expenditures and build the resource base of poorer rural households. Funds will also be made available to help communities regain their assets and increase incomes lost as a result of the drought. "Mitigation of the losses associated with the drought is most appropriately financed by a grant.

Use of a credit in these circumstances would negatively affect the country's growth prospects", said Florian Fichtl, World Bank Task Team Leader for the ERSP.

The combined use of seeds and fertilizer, along with other complementary inputs, will increase production, while the rehabilitation of access roads and the maintenance of dams will allow delivery of water to the needy and enhance irrigation capacity of rural communities. Recurrent drought is common in Eritrea due to its relatively low rainfall and arid climatic zones, and activities under the Grant will focus primarily on zones most affected by drought." (WB, 20 June 2003)

UN Strategy 2003: CAP Mid-Year Review (June 2003)

"Since the launch in November 2002 of the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal (CA) for Eritrea for the year 2003, the United Nations (UN) and its partners have been working together to assess the humanitarian needs and address the progressively more acute vulnerability of more than 2.3 million drought and postconflict affected people in Eritrea. Over the past five months, the overall funding needs of the CA have been revised from US\$ 163,389,457 to US\$ 159,963,824, and while considerable efforts have been made to achieve the goals articulated in this Appeal, only US\$ 66,346,809 have been received to date, leaving a shortfall of US\$ 93,617,015.

[...]

The implications of delayed and limited resources have led humanitarian partners to focus on life-saving interventions, such as food, water, health, nutrition, agriculture and shelter. The collaborative work of government and the humanitarian community does not have the capacity nor the means to address any but the most urgent needs. Agencies have taken steps to further prioritise the target population with a view to ensure that with limited funds, only those whose lives are at risk will receive priority attention. Prioritisation is based on the needs of the most vulnerable under the current situation, such as drought-affected populations; IDPs, expellees in camps, returned Eritrean refugees, refugees from Sudan and Somalia, IDPs who are yet to be integrated and their host communities. Under this prioritisation exercise, a total of 262,000 persons could not be considered as a priority for the time being. They comprise two categories of beneficiaries identified by the CAP 2003, i.e. 200,000 soldiers to be demobilised and 62,000 refugees to be repatriated from Sudan. However, their needs have to be resourced now since these programmes are expected to resume soon. The number of people requiring immediate attention now has been adjusted to 2,038,000 most vulnerable persons.

[...]

According to the 2003 CAP, the short-term goals of the Government, UNCT, IOs and NGOs support the overall humanitarian strategy of preventing starvation; providing humanitarian needs with a positive impact on the health and nutritional status of the population; increasing access to the most pressing needs such as safe drinking water, sanitation, primary health care, etc.; strengthening household food security and coping mechanisms, reinforcing ongoing reintegration and recovery activities, while responding in a timely and adequate manner to the severe drought conditions in Eritrea.

Although some progress has been made towards achieving the short-term goals, low levels of and delays in funding, in the five months since the launch of the CAP, continues to be the main constraint having a negative impact on the overall humanitarian programme. The deteriorating humanitarian situation has therefore necessitated a revision of the immediate priorities of the original Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal. The immediate goal has now become famine prevention and life-saving programmes - preventing excessive deaths (mostly among children) from lack of water and appropriate and adequate food.

[...]

Programme Implementation and Impact on Affected Populations [selected sections]

[...]

In addition to the funding of US\$ 66,346,809 received through the CAP, US\$ 37,460,342 is being channelled by NGOs through the Food Aid, Food Security, Water and Sanitation and Health and Nutrition sectors. The Government has procured 80,000 MTs of grain for distribution, to the value of US\$ 15 million. [...]

Food Aid

The key objective of the Food Aid Sector is to meet the emergency food needs of the most vulnerable drought and war-affected populations. For example, WFP planned to target some 900,000 drought affected persons and 585,700 war / drought affected populations for 2003. In addition, food aid is provided bilaterally to the Government and by NGOs. The total food complementary commitment through NGOs is 81,693 MTs comprising around 42% of total pledges (209,488 MTs). It is to be noted that, although there is support for food, of the 209,488 MTs pledged out of 476,000 MTs, only 69,337 MTs (33%) have actually reached Eritrea.

[...]

In the absence of food distribution, there would be mass migration of people in search of food.

[...]

Food Security

The food security situation of the country remained grim during the first quarter of 2003. With only about 11% of expected crop production realised during the 2002 cropping season, the prospects of impending food shortages on a nation-wide scale looked real. As a result, food aid remained a top priority. Also, due to the crop failure, local sources of seeds were depleted and for some crops, like wheat and barley in some areas, it is estimated that the total amount harvested is below the seed required for a normal planting season. This situation, combined with the fact that external seed sources have proved limited with regard to suitable varieties, makes seed distribution a main priority to re-establish domestic food production and break food aid dependency. Currently, efforts are still ongoing to close the seed availability gap of about 7,000 MTs.

[...]

Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation

Some progress has been made - improved access to safe water for 23,000 drought affected and other vulnerable persons and 6,000 returnees from Sudan with the provision of 20 litres of safe water per day.

[...]

The preliminary figures for the population facing water shortages is 2.2 million of whom 1.7 million are facing water shortages due to the drought. Provision of water supply and sanitation facilities remains a priority for the rest of the year.

Family Shelter and Household Items

Key objectives in the family shelter and household items sector are to assist in the reintegration and recovery of IDPs, settlement of deportees, while providing temporary shelter, household items, hygienic materials and kerosene. The assumption in CAP 2003 was that all the IDPs, in camps and outside of camps, would be returned to their places of origin. However, due to a number of reasons, including the lack of progress in demining the settlement areas (villages) and their respective farmlands and grazing areas, this is not likely to happen in 2003. ICRC is engaged in replacing worn-out tents in IDP camps although its stock is currently inadequate to meet the demand. UNDP under its PoWER project is currently finalising arrangements to resettle over 8700 Eritreans who were expelled from Ethiopia. The expellees currently hosted in Shelab camp are expected to move to their final settlement in the Gerenfit area. In addition, some 1,250 expellees from Adi Keshi will be moved to Ugumu village. The expellees from Shelab and Adi Keshi (about 10,000) need assistance in emergency shelter.

[...]

Mine Action

De-mining contingents of UNMEE continue their work in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). UNMEE MACC (Mine Action Coordination Centre) and Force MAC (Mine Action Centre) are moving ahead with

demining support for demarcation. Route clearance activities are continuing in Sector West on both sides of the new border. UNMEE MACC Mine Risk Education (MRE) teams continue to provide critical mine risk education training to the most severely affected local populations in the TSZ.

[...]

Impact of Funding Levels on Humanitarian Programme [selected sections]

Within the framework of the 2003 CAP for Eritrea, UN agencies requested US\$ 163.4 million targeting 2.3 million vulnerable people. As of 20 May 2003, the total response was US\$ 66,346,809 or 41% of the revised figure of US\$ 159,963,824.

[...]

Food Aid

Lack of early and adequate response has forced WFP to sequentially review its programme of assistance. Instead of the targeted 900,000 drought-affected population and 580,700 war-affected, WFP is reaching only 400,000 (drought-affected) and a reduced caseload of 450,000 war-affected population.

[...]

Water and sanitation

A lack of adequate funding for water and sanitation has contributed to reduced access to drinking water, resulting in people walking as long as three to five hours in search of water, increased water contamination and resulting diseases, and eventual distress migration and internal displacement when coping is exhausted.

[...]

The provision of safe water and sanitation facilities in IDP camps has become a problem with water being trucked several kilometres to some camps. Other IDPs have had to be relocated from areas without sufficient water.

Family Shelter and Household Items

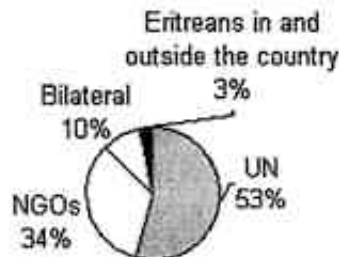
Progress has been made in the shelter and household items sector. ICRC has distributed 1,502 tents to IDP households in Debub region. However, ICRC stocks need to be replenished to meet existing demand, particularly for families whose tents are already worn out. To reduce the dependency on scarce wood resources, ICRC has provided 10 litres of kerosene per household to 8,341 households in Shelaab an Adi Keshi camps and host communities for one month. To continue distribution, urgent additional funding is required. The only planned programme within CAP 2003 in this sector - distribution of 12,500 tents and building materials to 7,500 households - has not been implemented completely due to lack of funding.

[...]

Mine Action

Delays in funding this sector are resulting in non-marked minefields and slow process of demining. Some 58,180 IDPs have yet to return to their places of origin, mainly because their home areas remain inaccessible due to contamination by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). In addition, 16,811 expellees from Ethiopia would have to be resettled from the camps." (UN, 3 June 2003)

Breakdown of Contributions to Eritrea



Source: UN, 3 June 2003

For further details please see the *CAP for Eritrea 2003: Mid-Year Review* [\[hotlink\]](#)

UN Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator visits Eritrea (June 2003)

"United Nations Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Carolyn McAskie arrives in Asmara on Monday 9 June 2003 for a two-day official visit to Eritrea. The purpose of her mission is to observe the effects of the drought and the overall humanitarian situation; raise awareness among the international community and mobilise resources, and, support for emergency relief operations. During her visit, Ms. McAskie will discuss the humanitarian situation and response status with senior officials of the Government of the State of Eritrea, members of the UN Country team, representatives of the donor community and Non Governmental Organisations. Ms. McAskie will also visit drought-affected areas and IDP camps. [...]" (ICC, 30 May 2003)

"Ms. McAskie said that it was essential to "work hard at a new partnership" between government authorities and the international community to help make delivery of vital aid more effective and efficient. "We need their support," she added, "if I am going to be the kind of advocate that I need to be on behalf of the suffering people of Eritrea."

Ms. McAskie's visit to drought-stricken Debub region confirmed the reality that there is little sign of improvement in the drought situation and the early "Azmera" rains have failed. The drought emergency continues to threaten food security, with acute food and water shortages causing high rates of malnutrition. Ms. McAskie witnessed total crop failure in the Hazemo Plains, once the most fertile area in the region. "Right now, we are at the severe malnutrition stage, with a large number of people affected. Our goal must be to make sure that drought does not lead to famine", the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator said. "We also need adequate response to address the underlying factors that have made Eritrea so vulnerable to drought", McAskie added.

In Tsorona, a town trying hard to rebuild itself after being destroyed during the border war with Ethiopia, Ms. McAskie visited camps for internally displaced persons unable to return to their home areas for security reasons, presence of landmines and/or destroyed homes and socio-economic infrastructure. She

also visited the overstretched Tsorona health centre and a soil conservation project undertaken by the Government of the State of Eritrea.

"Up to 70 percent are suffering either due to the fall-out from war or drought, and this can only constitute a major disaster," said Ms. McAskie at the launch of the 2003 Mid-Year Review of the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for Eritrea. Noting that the humanitarian situation in Eritrea is dire and the need for humanitarian assistance remains high, she urged the international community to "translate their pledges into cash-in-hand". (OCHA, 12 June 2003)

Main Findings

"Following the almost complete devastation of local cereal production in 2002 [Less than 10% of the national annual requirement was produced in 2002], and the exhaustion of coping mechanisms over the past year, over 2 million Eritreans currently require humanitarian assistance. This group, which constitutes over two thirds of the population, includes many IDPs, recent returnees and refugees that are still struggling to overcome the effects of the recent border conflict with Ethiopia. Global acute malnutrition rates of 30% have been recorded in some areas, while the lack of rainfall has had a major impact on groundwater levels and access to safe water for humans and livestock. Prospects for a successful spring planting season remain poor, as the expected *Asmera* rains have largely failed in critical areas. Conditions in the traditional cereal producing regions of Gash Barka and Debub show little sign of improving ahead of the next rains, the *Kremti*, which are expected in July.

Despite low donor response during the first quarter of 2003, contributions to the Consolidated Appeal for Eritrea increased significantly during the second quarter. Contributions against the Appeal presently stand at 43% of the US\$159 million required in 2003. However, the late response has impacted negatively on most assistance pipelines. With regard to food, less than 19% of required food aid had arrived in Eritrea as of early June 2003. As a result, the humanitarian community is only able to provide food assistance to 60% of the targeted population, at a severely reduced ration. With regard to non-food sectors, a mere 12% of requirements have been met.

Critical and immediate needs within the 2003 Appeal amount to US\$73 million and include, most urgently, general food items for 2 million people and supplementary food for 400,000 women and children; funding for emergency safe water delivery; agricultural inputs for the 2003 planting season; and infrastructure for IDPs, returnees, and refugees.

As highlighted by the ERC's mission to the Horn, the effects of the ongoing drought are compounded by underlying and structural causes of vulnerability. These include chronic food insecurity, poverty, under-development, and the fact that large portions of the productive labor force are yet to be demobilized. Although a number of programmatic frameworks have been put in place to address some of these issues, including the Integrated Recovery Programme (IRP) and the UNDAF process, major funding shortfalls hamper any significant progress in this area. Generally weak support for non-food sectors within the CAP further aggravates the problem. The fragility of relations between the Government and the donor community can also be seen as a major contributing factor to the lack of support for some longer-term initiatives.

The working environment for NGOs in Eritrea presents a further challenge, both in terms of the effectiveness of the immediate humanitarian response and of the longer-term recovery. The recent expulsion of the last international demining NGO, Halo Trust, from Eritrea has effectively halted direct operational support by the international community to humanitarian demining. NGOs that are currently involved in the provision of other forms of humanitarian assistance indicate a need for greater transparency, clarity and consistency with regard to operating procedures in Eritrea and in their relationship with ERREC. NGOs have also expressed an interest for greater involvement in the CAP process. Thus, coordination arrangements need to be strengthened in this regard." (UN OCHA, 26 June 2003)

ICRC delivers seeds and food to 10,000 displaced families in Debub (June 2003)

"The ICRC has completed its seed and food distributions in the region of Debub, Eritrea. Some 10,000 farming families displaced during the border war with Ethiopia were able to return recently, but were facing difficult conditions. Together, they have received 250 tonnes of cereal seed and almost 640 tonnes of food.

ICRC trucks delivered the supplies to ten distribution points, located inside or close to the Temporary Security Zone, a buffer zone along the Ethiopian-Eritrean border. People were delighted to get the seed before the sowing season started, and the food will keep them going until harvest time. In the village of Una Watot (in Mai Aini), the women ululated to express their joy. "We would not have known what to do if there had been no assistance," a villager told the ICRC delegate. In the region of Gash-Barka, distributions are continuing. Since early May, the ICRC has delivered 137 tonnes of sorghum seed and 842 tonnes of food. "War and drought made the people here dependent on assistance. With the seed you are providing, and some rain, we hope to become independent again," said a local administrator in Adi Keshi during the relief operation there.

The ICRC drought response in Eritrea focuses on families displaced during the border war with Ethiopia. In total, 20,000 households in Debub and Gash-Barka (100,000 people) are receiving 457 tonnes of seed and 1,915 tonnes of food, consisting of wheat grain, split peas, oil, sugar and salt. Providing seed will encourage drought-affected farmers to grow their own crops and become self-sufficient again." (ICRC, 12 June 2003)

UNICEF: Malnutrition a priority challenge as more than 15% of children are malnourished (May 2003)

"International standards and policies dictate that blanket supplementary feeding should be provided to all children in countries where more than 15% of children are malnourished. In Eritrea at present, malnutrition rates of over 30% have been found in some districts, indicating a real need to step up supplementary feeding efforts. UNICEF is working closely with the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organisations to improve the coverage and quality of therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes, but the present supply of food is only enough to feed 22,000 (5%) of the 420,000 children who need assistance. To fill this gap, 10,000 MT of fortified blended food is immediately required as a life-saving intervention. The cost of purchasing this food will require US \$ 4 million, of which half (US\$ 2 million or 5,000 MT of fortified cereal blends) is being appealed by UNICEF.

UNICEF has accelerated the implementation of water and sanitation programmes given the desperate conditions in rural areas. There are currently 15 water projects occurring, benefiting some 50,000 people, and UNICEF is sub-contracting to target additional sites that are hardest hit. However, US\$ 1.5 million is urgently needed to allow these projects to continue and expand.

Education programmes have also been affected by the drought. Given that less than half of children are enrolled in primary school in the country, it is essential to ensure that education is not disrupted. In order to encourage enrollment, UNICEF, in cooperation with the World Food Programme and NGOs, is supporting school-feeding programmes along with water and sanitation interventions for school-aged children." (UNICEF, 28 May 2003)

UNICEF activities specifically targeting IDPs

"[...]

Child Protection: Child protection focuses on children with special protection needs, including internally displaced and street children. Reunification of orphans with their families, protection of separated children,

and support for child-headed households are included. UNICEF also provides basic items to displaced children in camps.

[...]

Water and Sanitation: UNICEF has started to implement new water and sanitation projects at Ombajer, Tserona, Mai Aini, Chealo Hadadam and Sheketti for a total cost of US\$ 1,115,000. The project will benefit a total of 26,300 people, including returned refugees and those affected by war and drought, most living in the Temporary Security Zone - the 25km wide buffer zone stretching the length of the border with Ethiopia. Consultants were hired to monitor, supervise, and support contractors and the relevant authorities to speed up project implementation.

[...]

Education: The construction of a school in Barentu has been initiated to benefit 800 school children including returnees from the Sudan, IDPs, those expelled and others.

[...]

Child Protection: Basic supplies are being supplied to 35,000 children in IDP camps. UNICEF has also urgently appealed USD\$350,000 to continue these efforts. Continuing family reunification of children separated due to previous conflicts and deportation. Rapid Vulnerability Assessment of child-headed households and separated children/unaccompanied minors is currently being planned nation-wide.

[...]

HIV/AIDS: UNICEF has developed and produced 40,000 stickers, 32,000 posters and 32 HIV/AIDS billboards in six local languages and has distributed them countrywide, especially targeting IDP camps and Youth Centers. [...] UNICEF is also producing "The Ten Facts Young People Should Know About HIV/AIDS" for distribution particularly in schools and IDP camps. However, progress has been severely hampered due to lack of funds." (UNICEF, 28 May 2003)

Overall UN strategy: CAP 2003 re-iterates urgency to increase support for demobilization, demining, and territorial demarcation to facilitate IDP return (November 2002)

- 10 UN agencies appealing for US\$ 163,389,457 for 23 projects in 10 sectors for 2003
- Address protracted emergency needs of war and drought affected populations
- Strengthen reintegration, rehabilitation and recovery persisting needs of displaced and returnees
- Although 2003 CAP emphasises recovery and rehabilitation an estimated 2.3 million people are affected by the worst drought since 1991 and by the legacy of war and need emergency assistance
- Approximately 47,492 IDPs still unable to go home remain in camps and require substantial humanitarian support as they have no access to income-generating opportunities
- The return of 10,688 IDPs outside camps/in host communities is pending upon improvements in the security situation

"This Appeal covers a significant part of expected humanitarian needs in Eritrea in 2003. Many vital programmes undertaken by the Government, international organizations, or the NGO community are funded outside the framework of the CAP. However, in order to effectively to address their part of the wider humanitarian intervention in Eritrea, ten UN agencies and entities are appealing for US\$ 163,389,457 for 23 projects in ten sectors [...] as part of this Appeal. Funding is urgently required to ensure that efforts made in 2002 are built upon, that continued emergency relief needs are met, and vital initiatives aimed at drought relief, return, reintegration, recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction are adequately supported." (UN, November 2002, pp.1-2)

"An estimated 2.3 million people are affected by drought and the effects of war, and still need emergency assistance" (UN, November 2002, p.1)

"Whilst efforts to respond to the humanitarian situation were ongoing, Eritrea was struck by severe drought affecting the primary agricultural areas of Gash Barka and Debub in addition to the traditionally drought-prone areas. Failure of both the winter and spring rains followed by delayed onset of the main summer rains have left Eritrea facing the worst drought since its liberation in 1991.

[...]

The Government believes the CAP has been an important funding, planning and coordination mechanism and strongly supports its extension into 2003. The need for a CAP in 2003 had been carefully considered, but the drought validates the need for the integrated response to the emergency situation provided by a CAP framework. In addition to attention focused on the drought there is an ongoing effort being made in the area of return, repatriation and reintegration of refugees and IDPs." (UN, November 2002, p.6)

Groups of special attention in CAP 2003:

"Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)"

The issue of IDPs, a consequence of war, has not been completely solved and may not be until peace is fully established and the country returns to normalcy. The current number of IDPs totals 58,180. These will continue to require emergency relief assistance, including both food and non-food aid in 2003. The situation for this group is expected to change in 2003 when some groups are able to return to their homes, and if the 2003 rainy season shows better prospects for agriculture. Accordingly, basic emergency aid will need to be complemented with initial rehabilitation and reintegration assistance. The overall IDP population consists of the following three distinct groups:

> IDPs in camps

In 2000 and 2001, there was a large-scale return of IDPs to areas in Gash-Barka and Debub. Improvements in the security situation allowed many to begin to rebuild their lives and communities in previously inaccessible areas. However, the home areas of 47,492 IDPs, originally from areas now within the TSZ, remained inaccessible due to the presence of land mines, overall insecurity and the failure of demarcation. These IDPs have been accommodated mainly in camps in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub. The remaining group, still largely unable to conduct income-generating activities will continue to require significant humanitarian support in all sectors.

> IDPs outside camps/host communities

In addition to IDPs still in camps, 10,688 IDPs are living with host communities and in scattered groups, complementing their livelihoods with their own very limited resources, in the Guluj, Tebeldia, Gergef, and Sabunait areas of Gash-Barka. Originally, from the Omhajer area, this population is waiting for improvements in the security situation before returning to their homes. This vulnerable group will require assistance in the areas of return and reintegration as soon as their home areas become accessible.

[...]

> IDPs Returning to Home Areas

Since November 2001, an additional 15,569 IDPs have returned spontaneously. These IDPs are currently rebuilding their lives and communities, often in areas ravaged by war. Humanitarian assistance to this group will invariably include reintegration-, rehabilitation-, and reconstruction- related items to returning IDPs until such time as they are able to attain an adequate level of self-sufficiency. Rehabilitation of infrastructure and services as well as programmes in the mine action sector will be crucial as many are returning to border areas damaged by war and contaminated by large numbers of mines and UXOs." (UN, November 2002, p.13-14)

Changes in Target Beneficiaries Between 2001 and 2002

Beneficiary Groups [...]	Population at end 2001	Population at end 2002	Change
Drought-Affected	524,000	1,400,000	+ 876,000
IDPs	73,749	58,180	- 15,569
Returned Refugees	83,991	103,000	+ 19,009
Returned IDPs	170,000	185,569	+ 15,569
Refugees in Eritrea	1,922	3,058	+ 1,136

Expellees / Deportees	13,694	16,811	+ 3,117
Soldiers to be Demobilised	200,000	195,000	-5,000
Urban vulnerable	213,000	213,000	0

(UN, novembre 2002, p.8)

WFP 2003 response in food sector:

WFP contingency planning for 2003 targets 60,000 IDPs with a total requirement of 11,700 MT of food aid and 23,400 MT for 2003/04 (UN, November 2002, p.47).

"The overall objective of food sector assistance in 2003 is alleviation of hunger by covering immediate food relief needs of about 600,000 drought-affected persons and assistance in recovery towards improved self-reliance in food production. At the same time the broader and longer-term picture of food security will be addressed through the UNDAF process, in particular the development of a national food security strategy.

➤ **Meet emergency needs through food aid**

The fragile nutritional security offered by the general and supplementary rations would very quickly deteriorate in the event of a disruption or discontinuation of relief food aid. In early 2002, WFP supported approximately one million war- and drought-affected persons in Gash Barka, Debub, Anseba and Northern Red Sea Regions. In 2003 this number is expected to increase considerably due to the humanitarian crisis caused by the drought conditions. Out of an estimated 1.4 million people that are fully or partially in need of food aid, WFP will appeal for funding to resource food aid for 600,000 beneficiaries that will be registered and clearly targeted as vulnerable victims of crop failure and drought. In addition, the PRRO will support 278,700 IDPs, returnees, expellees and demobilised soldiers with general rations. It is recommended that bilateral food aid contributions are made to ERREC to cover the additional emergency food aid required in 2003." (UN, November 2002, p. 20)

UNDP 2003 response in shelter sector:

"By providing shelter and household necessities that are urgently needed to IDPs still living in camps and returning to their places of origin in the year 2003 and the deportees who will be settled, the project will contribute to the overall sectoral objective of assisting IDPs and the deportees to cope with the current situation with dignity and resilience. It also contributes to the process of reintegrating IDPs who have returned to their homes. The project also aims at contributing to the overall objective of lessening the impact of the current humanitarian crisis on land resources by making kerosene available to IDPs.

The project will provide emergency shelter kits to 15,250 families. Various household items including kitchen utensils, jerry cans, buckets, as well as blankets, bed sheets, mats, clothing and soap will be provided to both deportees/IDPs living in camps and the most vulnerable households among the returned IDPs. Kerosene will be provided as the most needed non-food item." (UN, November 2002, p. 63)

"IDPs and Deportees in Camps

About 64,300 IDPs and expellees/deportees are currently in camps. They are expected to return to their places of origin in the year 2003 but all require assistance in emergency shelter.

Returnee IDPs

Although there was no major return of IDPs in the year 2002, following the completion of the demarcation process and mine clearance the IDPs in camps will eventually return to their places of origin. Most of the villages are devastated, their houses completely or partially destroyed and assets and possessions are looted. Amongst those who returned in 2002 (to the three regions affected by the war Gash-Barka, Debub and Southern Red Sea), around 4000 families have received assistance in emergency shelter (corrugated iron

sheets, rafters, beams, cement and material for doors and windows). In the same manner, IDPs that will return in 2003 will be supported with the same package of building materials.

Around 10,688 IDPs are still hosted within various communities in rural and urban areas. These need continuous assistance in shelter and household items." (UN, November 2002, p.29)

UNICEF-WHO response to HIV/AIDS risks targeting IDPs, drought-affected areas, deportees, returning refugees and the host communities:

"This multi-sectoral initiative aims through collaborative programmes between UN agencies and other development partners to support the national efforts to minimise the risks of HIV transmission related to drought and post-conflict situations. This will be done by improving access to information on HIV/AIDS that is culturally and gender-sensitive and services including voluntary confidential counselling and testing. Further, equipment and supplies for the diagnosis and management of STIs and HIV/AIDS will be provided to selected health facilities." (UN, November 2002, p.61)

International operational activities in 2002

Mid-term review of 2002 CAP highlighted most priorities had not changed neither materialized (November 2002)

- Overall UN strategy for 2002: bridging the gap between emergency and recovery/rehabilitation
- Focus on the return of displaced populations going hand in hand with greater emphasis on the non-food sectors
- Food sector interventions to 800,000 vulnerable people amount to US\$54 million
- 54.8% of the 2002 appeal budget for non-food sectors: reintegration, rehabilitation, reconstruction compared to just 31.2% in 2001
- UNICEF programmes in Mines Risk Education (MRE), HIV/AIDS awareness and child protection had received no funding as of June 2002

"The scenario outlined in the CAP as the most relevant remains largely unchanged, however many aspects have been delayed. It states that there will be progress towards peace and that the return of IDPs and refugees to the TSZ will accelerate. The demobilisation of soldiers will commence and will at the same time return soldiers to productive activity and restore family structures. Access to the TSZ and a subsequent civilian influx into the breadbasket regions of Gash Barka and Debub will be favourable for increasing agricultural production. Production of food is forecasted to fall short and substantial food assistance will therefore remain necessary under this scenario.

[...]

Although the outcome of the scenario seems to remain the same, the process has started out somewhat differently. IDPs have not yet returned to the TSZ and will not be able to do so in an organised manner until assessments have been undertaken. The demobilisation programme is only just beginning as a pilot phase and thus the return to productive activity and restoration of family structures has been delayed. However, Progress towards Peace is still the most likely scenario. Again, unless the decision of the Boundary Commission leads to negative developments in the coming months, the situation will continue to stabilise, with the necessary focus on areas such as the return of refugees and rehabilitation and demining of returnee areas." (UN May 2002, p.3)

"Greater emphasis on non-food sectors

In 2000, it was apparent that the humanitarian community as a whole focused much of its efforts on the most easily identifiable beneficiary groups, i.e. IDPs in camps, with less emphasis being placed on less

visible vulnerable groups such as IDPs in host communities and drought victims. Lack of resources in the non-food sectors during 2001 also hampered efforts aimed at supporting longer-term recovery of such groups. *In recognition of this fact, the 2002 CA places a greater emphasis on non-food sectors. The UNCT will also re-evaluate its approach in 2002 and will make every effort to address the needs of groups such as IDPs outside camps and the drought-affected in line with the theme of the 2002 CAP, "Reaching the Vulnerable".* (UN, November 2001, p.10)

"This second inter-agency CA for Eritrea reflects the need to continue providing significant levels of emergency assistance. Food aid for vulnerable war- and drought-affected groups comprises the bulk of the required assistance in 2002. However, medium- to long-term programmes are equally important, in particular those aimed at completing the return of displaced persons, where possible, and contributing to the restoration of socio-economic conditions in the country. As such, the UNCT will focus on return, reintegration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction programmes in non-food sectors with a total value of over US\$ 66 million. In terms of food aid, it is expected that the UN will continue to provide emergency food aid to 800,000 most vulnerable persons in 2002. The total value of interventions in the food sector amounts to over US\$ 54 million. In relative terms, the non-food sectors constitute 54.8% of the total amount appealed for in the present CA. In 2001, non-food sectors amounted to just 31.2% of the original requirement; 36.9% of the revised requirement.

Within the above framework, the goals of UN agencies participating in the 2002 Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) [...] are to:

- *Support the ongoing efforts of the Government to effect the safe and expeditious return and sustainable reintegration of IDPs, refugees, demobilised soldiers, and expellees/deportees and address remaining emergency needs of vulnerable groups until such time as greater self-reliance is achieved;*
- *Support the resumption of farming and other income generating activities in war- and drought-affected areas with a view to increasing the self-reliance of returning IDPs and refugees, and drought-affected groups;*
- *Complement Government efforts to restore basic social and community services [...], rehabilitate infrastructure, and conduct emergency mine action in areas of return; and*
- *Link emergency assistance efforts to longer-term reconstruction initiatives in order to prepare for a phase-out of emergency operations and a smooth transition to development through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).*

In line with the theme of the 2002 Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) - "**Reaching the Vulnerable**" - the UN agencies have also placed a particular emphasis on identifying and highlighting the needs of especially vulnerable groups. In 2002 it is expected that these will include, among others, returnees (including IDPs and refugees), host communities, IDPs still in camps, demobilised soldiers, and drought-affected populations. Within these groups, women and children will remain a high priority.
[...]

This Appeal covers a significant part, but not all, of expected humanitarian needs in Eritrea in 2002. Many vital programmes undertaken by the Government, international organisations, or the NGO community are funded outside the framework of the CAP. However, in order to effectively address their part of the wider humanitarian intervention in Eritrea, ten UN agencies and entities are appealing for US\$ 120,463,547 for 23 projects in 11 sectors [...] as part of this Appeal. Funding is urgently required to ensure that efforts made in 2001 are built upon and that continued emergency relief needs are met and vital initiatives aimed at return, reintegration, recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction are adequately supported." (UN, November 2001, p.1)

Selected target groups of special attention to the UN in CAP 2002:

"Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

As a result of the combined effects of war and drought 73,749 IDPs will continue to require emergency relief assistance, including both food and non-food aid in 2002. *The situation for this group is expected to change in 2002 as additional groups are able to return to their homes. Accordingly, assistance will shift*

from basic emergency aid to initial rehabilitation and reintegration assistance. The overall IDP population consists of the following three distinct groups.

IDPs in camps

As described above, 2001 saw the large-scale return of IDPs to areas in Gash-Barka and Debub. Improvements in the security situation allowed many to begin to rebuild their lives and communities in previously inaccessible areas. However, the home areas of 50,239 IDPs, originally from areas now within the TSZ, remain inaccessible. These IDPs are accommodated in camps in the regions of Gash Barka and Debub. [...] This group, still largely unable to conduct income-generating activities, will continue to require significant humanitarian support in all sectors.

IDPs in host communities

Of the total IDP population, 14,199 displaced live with host families in the regions of Maakel, Anseba, Debub, South Red Sea, and North Red Sea. As this group continues to rely on the resources of already hard-pressed communities, assistance to these groups will be provided in the context of the larger community (see Host Communities, paragraph below).

IDPs outside camps/host communities

In addition to IDPs still in camps and those living with host communities, an estimated 9,311 IDPs are living in scattered groups, relying on their own very limited resources, in the Guluj, Tebeldia, Gergef, and Sabunait areas of Gash-Barka. Originally, from the Omhajer area, this population is *waiting for improvements in the security situation before returning to their homes*. This vulnerable group will require assistance in the areas of return and reintegration as soon as their home areas become accessible.

Host Communities

It is estimated that 3,000 families (15,000 persons) continue to serve as hosts. As the hosts are often directly or indirectly war- and/or drought-affected themselves, the group shares many of the needs of their guests. Sharing their meagre resources and incomes with the IDPs continues to place a severe strain on many households. Hence, a wide range of assistance, both food and non-food, will be provided to host communities in 2002.

Returnees

Since the formal end of the border war in late 2000, two main groups of displaced Eritreans have begun returning: refugees that left Eritrea to seek the relative safety of neighbouring countries and those who fled from war-affected border areas to other parts of Eritrea. The humanitarian community will target these two returnee groups in 2002.

[...]

IDPs Returning to Home Areas

Dramatic improvements in the security situation that followed the signing of the Algiers Peace Agreement in December 2000, the deployment of UNMEE and the establishment of the TSZ, made possible the return of approximately 170,000 IDPs to areas previously inaccessible. These IDPs are currently rebuilding their lives and communities, often in areas ravaged by war. Assistance to this group will invariably include reintegration-, rehabilitation-, and reconstruction-related interventions. The UNCT will also provide emergency food and non-food items to returning IDPs until such time as they are able to attain an adequate level of self-sufficiency. Programmes in the mine action sector will be crucial as many are returning to border areas contaminated by large numbers of mines and UXOs." (UN, November 2001, pp. 14-15)

Financial overview 2002:

"The first UN CA for Eritrea was launched in February 2001, with a second CA launched in November 2001 covering needs of the year 2002. The original CA for 2002 appealed for US\$ 120,463,547. This figure was later revised downward to US\$ 92,343,068. [...]

As of 7 October 2002, the overall donor response to the 2002 Appeal was 35.4%. As in 2001, contributions were not balanced across all agencies and sectors, but rather concentrated in specific areas. As indicated

below, the UN agencies in Eritrea are still seeking more than US\$ 59 million for emergency and recovery assistance in 2002." (UN, November 2002, p.7)

Under-funding for 2002 UN consolidated Appeal at 7 October 2002

Food sector: 23.3% funded

Non-food sector: 41.1% funded

Overall: 35.4% (UN, November 2002, p.7)

"In the Combined Inter-Agency Appeal 2002 (CAP), UNICEF asked for a total of US \$10.3 million, but so far has only received US \$2.4 million. A large proportion of this is being spent on establishing and rehabilitating water supplies in settlement areas, as well as setting up basic health and sanitation facilities.

But the agency has warned that the shortfall has left several of its other critical activities unfunded. Three of its programmes -Mines Risk Education (MRE), HIV/Aids awareness and child protection programmes - have so far received no finance.

The agency says that MRE has become a priority as many people return to their homes in areas which are believed to be still mined. HIV/Aids awareness is also becoming increasingly important. The number of people affected by the disease is increasing rapidly in Eritrea and experts say there will be an urgent need for an expanded programme once the army starts demobilising and 200,000 soldiers return to their communities." (IRIN 11 June 2002)

WFP appeal for funding emergency food assistance in 2002 received only 23.3% of funds pledged (November 2002)

- WFP received by October 2002, only 23.3% of the amount pledged for 2002
- WFP appeal for 131,460 MTs covers the needs of 800,000 war affected people

"The response to the **Food** sector, led by the World Food Programme (WFP) was just 23.3% as of 7 October [2002]. WFP reduced its beneficiaries in March 2002 from 1,000,000 to 600,000 due to bilateral donations to WFP's implementing partners to cover some 300,000 drought-affected people in the norther part of the country. With the delay in implementation of both the demobilization and food-for-work (FFW) programmes, WFP was able to reprogramme its initial resources and thus is in a posititon to cover its planned activities without pipeline break up to end of 2002." (UN, October 2002, p.7)

"The expanded emergency appeal for 131,460 MTs of food will assure the provision of food commodities meeting the needs of 800,000 beneficiaries comprising very poor, poor and middle socio-economic groups in rural Eritrea from January - December 2002. This amount represents gross requirements and carry over stocks will be used to partially meet these needs. This appeal is equivalent to **US\$ 51.4 Million** to cover the costs of food purchase, transportation, direct and indirect operational support costs. Thus far, the transitional phase of the EMOP expansions has seen approximately one million beneficiaries covered (775,000 war affected IDPs, 20,000 returnees and 200,000 drought affected beneficiaries) by the relief food distributions due to delayed beneficiary registration. This condition is expected to continue through December 2001 whereupon beneficiary numbers are expected to decline further towards the anticipated 800,000 caseload as more displaced persons return to productive livelihoods in their lands of origin." (UN, November 2001, p.54)

Emergency health response for disease control and infrastructural rehabilitation curtailed due to under-funding (May 2002)

- WHO received no funding at all through CAP 2002 by November 2002
- No mobile health services to nomadic and hard to reach populations were established

"In general, the health sector has received very little funding. WHO for instance did not receive any funding through the CAP 2001. This is a serious issue that needs close consideration, as the health sector is an important component. It is important to explain that despite the lack of funding for the CAP 2001, health and health-related activities are underway in Eritrea using regular and extra-budgetary sources of funding, including US\$ 889,332 used to train health workers, replace destroyed equipment, combat malaria and for epidemic control activities. WHO however, could not establish mobile health services to the nomadic and hard to reach population and renovate/furnish five health facilities, which were among the 47 health facilities destroyed by the war. If fund is made available through CAP 2002, WHO would like to concentrate on the above two problems which need to be addressed urgently.

[...]

So far, no funds have been received for communication activities (HIV/AIDS prevention and Landmine Awareness Education) for CAP 2002." (UN, May 2002, p.5)

Response to water and sanitation sectors UNICEF (November 2001)

- UNICEF received 38.32% of its CAP requirements for 2002 as of November 2002
- 130 water points will be rehabilitated or cleared for returning IDPs
- The project aims at finding longer-term solutions to water-trucking

"The impact will be achieved by constructing, rehabilitating or cleaning a total of 130 water points to support provision of potable water sources to at least 75,000 returning IDPs and drought-affected people. The programme will ensure that sustainable management systems are initiated for the water systems. In IDP camps the project will assist in maintaining the up-keep of the existing structures. The project will also undertake water trucking to IDP camps and areas of return and those affected by drought. Access to environmental sanitation and increased awareness on improved hygiene and environmental sanitation in IDP camps as well as in IDP return areas and drought affected areas where improved water facilities are constructed will also be objectives of the project. The activities will be implemented in close cooperation with the communities, i.e. the communities will participate in the planning and implementation stages with a special view to the roles and needs of women and children. The techniques that will be used include the Participatory Hygiene And Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) tool and other participatory techniques." (UN, November 2001, p.67)

"Situation Analysis

As large numbers of IDPs have returned during 2001, interventions have focused on providing water in home/return areas. In many places of return, existing water and environmental sanitation facilities have been deliberately destroyed, looted, or have deteriorated due to lack of maintenance. Nevertheless, all 170,000 IDPs who have returned to date have been provided access to water either from boreholes, wells, or via water trucking. However, in many of the return areas there is still a need to improve the facilities and to find more permanent solutions. This is especially true in areas currently being serviced by water trucks. In addition to the returning IDPs, it is anticipated that the 90,000 refugees expected to return from Sudan in 2002 will put further pressure on already limited water resources in areas affected by war and/or drought.

Throughout the country, early estimates indicate that the late rains have so far been fair in 2001. However, as water sources have been severely depleted during the past years of drought it will take several years before the groundwater is replenished. The number of drought-affected people in 2002 is expected to stand at 524,098.

[...]

There is no doubt that the need is much higher than what UN agencies will be able to cater for. At the same time the emergency is no longer as visible as before and it is expected that some members of the humanitarian community will begin to scale-down operations during 2002.

Target Beneficiaries

The target beneficiaries for the sector will be IDPs in camps and host communities, returnees from IDP camps and the drought-affected populations. The emphasis will be placed on women and children.

Operational Objectives

Water Supply:

- Ensure that by the end of 2002 an additional 75,000 people have access to safe water in IDP return areas and in drought affected areas;
- Ensure that by the end of 2002, establishment of sustainable management systems are initiated for all long-term water supply facilities constructed or rehabilitated in IDP return areas and drought affected areas; and,
- Ensure that the IDPs in camps have access to sufficient and safe water.

Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene:

- Improve access to environmental sanitation in IDP camps as well as IDP return and drought-affected areas where water facilities are constructed or improved; and
- Increase awareness on improved hygiene and environmental sanitation in IDP camps as well as IDP return and drought-affected areas where water supply facilities have been constructed." (UN, November 2001, pp.27-28)

Response to shelter needs of IDPs, returnees, deportees and host communities UNDP (November 2001)

- UNDP received only 39,63% of funds pledged for 2002 by November 2002
- 60% of IDPs staying in camps need replacement shelter
- Kerosene for cooking identified as IDP's major need considering scarcity of fire wood and risk of land mines incurred by children and women looking for wood

"The funding of the proposed project will provide shelter and household necessities that are urgently needed by IDPs still living in camps and those who returned to their villages. This project will contribute to the overall sectoral objective of assisting the IDPs to cope with the current situation with dignity and resilience. It would also contribute to the process of reintegrating IDPs to their communities. By making kerosene available to IDPs, the project also aims at contributing to the overall objective of lessening the impact of the current humanitarian crisis on the environment, thus reducing the risk of land mine accidents and the burden of collecting firewood in remote locations, especially for young women.

The project will provide emergency shelter kits and undertake emergency shelter rehabilitation benefiting over 10,000 families. Various household items including kitchen utensils, jerry cans, buckets, as well as blankets, bed sheets, clothing and soap will also be provided to both IDPs living in camps and the most vulnerable households among the returned IDPs. Kerosene will be provided for stoves already distributed to IDPs and currently idle for lack of kerosene." (UN November 2001, p. 69)

"Situation Analysis

As mentioned, ERREC has organised the return of about 170,000 IDPs to their places of origin. However, as mentioned above, 50,239 IDPs remain in camps as they are still not able to return home due to various factors. At present 26,551 IDPs are still hosted in camps in the Gash-Barka region. [...] In Debub, 23,308 IDPs are sheltered and assisted in Senafe and Tsorona sub-zones. [...] In Northern Red Sea 380 persons are

accommodated in Ghindae camp. For planning purposes it is estimated that around 55% of the IDPs still in camps (38,000 persons) are likely to remain in camps in 2002. 60% of those in camps will require replacement of tents and further non-food assistance.

Amongst those who will be able to return home in 2001 (to the three regions most affected by the war - Gash Barka, Debub and Southern Red Sea), it is estimated that 60% will be provided with roofing material (corrugated iron sheets, rafters, beams, cement and material for doors and windows). Most dwellings in these sub-zobas have suffered more than 30% wall destruction, in addition to looting of roof, doors and windows. The exercise of providing roofing to returning communities has been reasonably successful in the past year, although at least 2,000 families did not receive any assistance in this sector.

The 1,550 deportee families presently hosted in the Shelab camp are scheduled to be resettled into two areas of Gash Barka region (namely Gerenfit and Adi-Teelchaimanot). The deportees will need shelter such as the *agudo* structure since it is the most suitable for the climate and traditional culture of the people.

Many IDP and deportees continue to be hosted by relatives or communities. There are households who live in overcrowded rented accommodations with no permanent wage earner, often lacking money for their basic needs. More than 40,000 are still hosted in rural and urban areas under these conditions. [...] It is also important to support the replacement of those non-food items that have sustained considerable wear and tear. Most of the displaced households have been obliged to borrow items from their hosts and there is a need to compensate them for their generosity when they too are facing severe hardships.

One of the most important household items in the present appeal is kerosene for cooking purposes. Firewood is very scarce due to the drought situation and the collection of wood in many areas of the TSZ, which is heavily mined. Women and children, particularly young girls, have to spend much of their time in search of suitable fuel creating a negative impact on the environment and putting themselves at serious risk. Many families have been provided with a kerosene stove but cannot afford to buy fuel." (UN, November 2001, p.31)

Response in areas of sexual health (November 2001)

"As a result of series of border conflict with Ethiopia through 1998,1999, and 2000, over 1.5 million people were displaced from their villages and found safety in IDP camps. Furthermore, over 75,000 [...] Eritreans or Ethiopians of Eritrean parentage were deported from different parts of Ethiopia. Over 4 million people within Ethiopia are living with HIV/AIDS.

In 2002, UNHCR expects that some 90,000 Eritrean refugees from Sudan will repatriate voluntarily, as well as smaller numbers of refugees from Djibouti and Yemen. Already the re-establishment of diplomatic ties with neighbouring Sudan has resulted in the repatriation of 20,984 Eritrean refugees. The implication of repatriation on the host community considers life style changes that may enhance the spread of HIV/AIDS. In addition, idle life experienced during displacement pose further risk to young boys and girls living in IDP camps. For instance, temptation to experiment with sex may lead to unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS infection. Life Skills for HIV/AIDS education is a recent development in Eritrea, introduced by UNICEF in June 2001. UNICEF and the MoE plan to continue teacher training and materials development in September 2001. This will greatly enhance the capacity of teachers and youth to address HIV/AIDS among young people in post-emergency Eritrea. Currently, there are 41,191 and 28,931 individuals in various camps in Gash Barka and Debub Regions. UNICEF in collaboration with MoE and Family Health International will extend and strengthen advocacy and promotion of Voluntary Confidential Counselling and Testing to cover IDPs, refugees and deportees.
[...]

- Ensure 80% of youth, IDPs, refugees and returnees have access to information about HIV/AIDS prevention and care especially where and how to obtain services such as STI treatment, VCCT and condoms.

[...]

- Ensure the availability of proper voluntary counselling and testing services in selected health facilities among IDPs, refugees, deportees and host communities.

[...]

- In collaboration with UNHCR, develop institutional capacity within the NUEW, the NUEYS, and professional associations such as the Association of Teachers, to respond to the needs of women and girls in IDP camps, pre-settlement centres and in host communities." (UN, November 2001, pp.38-39)

Joint Government-UNICEF psychosocial care and counseling for children and women IDPs delayed and re-designed due to late funding (November 2001)

- Changes of humanitarian context led to re-design of the project towards setting temporary school facilities as an identified most pressing need
- Pilot psychosocial care centres to be established in selected IDP camps
- Training of 32 social workers in psychosocial counselling skills to include children and women who have been sexually abused

"The establishment of 'child friendly' centres in two IDP camps identified as having the largest number of separated children and child-headed households, under CAP 2001, has been delayed due to late receipt of funds. Consequently, the project was re-designed to address changed circumstances on the ground in June 2001. With the establishment of the TSZ, the majority of targeted beneficiaries returned to their villages of origin. Subsequently, many of the children identified in the July-September 2000 study have been reported as reunified, pending official endorsement, with their immediate or extended family members. Public administrators in the Senafe Sub-Zoba have reported that the most pressing need for children in this area is to attend schools, as many of them have missed much school time since the start of the war. However, many school buildings in the TSZ have been damaged, destroyed or lack proper school material. Therefore, based on the reports of the local public administrators, the project for this sector will now support 1,710 school-aged children from the surrounding villages (1,310 from Senafe sub-region and 400 from Tsorona sub-region) by setting up temporary boarding facilities, in order to facilitate their attendance throughout the school term from 2001 to 2002. Awareness raising and sensitisation activities of NUEYS under the project will also continue." (UN, November 2001, p.35)

"To address the psychosocial needs of war-affected children and women who fled from occupied areas, the MLHW [Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare], with the support of UNICEF, will provide access to psychosocial care and counselling for these children and women in the IDP camps. The project has selected Harena/Mai Habar and Zula camps to establish pilot psychosocial care centres because of the large concentration of IDPs originating from the occupied areas. The total population in these camps is 35,321, out of which 31,790 (approximately 90%) are the targeted children and women. Plans to expand care centres to other IDP sites in Debub will depend on the findings of an assessment, which will be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the situation of children and women impacted by war and violence." (UN February 2001, p.63)

International operational activities in 2001

Response to the 2001 Appeal (November 2001)

- Overall donor response to 2001 CAP 52%, accounting 59% food sector and 39% non-food
- 170,000 IDPs were assisted to return in the TSZ
- Repairs and reconstruction in Tsorona and Senafe areas considerably progressed
- Global malnutrition in camps dropped while remaining at 21% in drought-affected areas and 3.5% severe malnutrition in some parts of the countries
- Under-funding in non-food sectors and coordination seriously undermined implementation of recovery projects

"As of 25 October 2001, overall donor response to the 2001 Appeal was 52%. Although this figure represents a relatively good response in a global context, it should be noted that the overall pledge rate against non-food projects (39%) remains low in comparison to that of food-related interventions (59%). As indicated below, the UN agencies in Eritrea are still seeking more than US\$ 30 million for non-food emergency assistance in 2001. In some non-food sectors the shortfall is all the more apparent. For example, a number of important sectors including agriculture, mine action, and socio-economic recovery received less than 10% of funds requested through the 2001 CA. Although some sectors, such as mine action, benefited from significant funding provided outside the CA, the *disparity between funding available in food and non-food sectors is of considerable concern. An inability to respond to needs in certain sectors invariably undermines the overall humanitarian relief effort.*

Funding Coverage for UN Consolidated Appeal for 2001 in US\$ (As of 25 October 2001)

Sectors	Total Revised Requirement (%)	Total Coverage (%)	Total Unmet (%)
Food	83,978,000 (63%)	49,908,944 (59%)	34,069,056 (41%)
Non-Food	49,217,034 (37%)	19,228,333 (39%)	29,988,701 (61%)
Overall	133,195,034 (100%)	69,137,277 (52%)	64,057,757 (48%)

Impact of 2001 CAP

As donor response to the 2001 Appeal grew steadily throughout the year, it allowed the UN to respond to the needs of various war and drought-affected groups. As mentioned, the Government, with the assistance of the UN system, was able to return 170,000 IDPs to their home areas in the TSZ and adjacent areas. Basic assistance, consisting of food, emergency rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure (water, health, education and shelter), and mine/UXO marking and clearance, was provided in return areas. In highly damaged areas such as Tsorona and Senafe, thousands of homes and community buildings were repaired. The return of IDPs to Gash Barka and Debub allowed many to cultivate their lands during 2001 and, although this year's yield is expected to be significantly lower than normal, a better harvest is forecasted for 2001 than was produced in 2000.

[...]

Effective response, especially in *the food sector*, resulted in a substantial drop in global malnutrition levels in children under-five and pregnant and nursing mothers. In the camps malnutrition dropped to acceptable levels, resulting in the closure of many supplementary feeding centres. However, in drought-affected areas, malnutrition levels remained high (21% global malnutrition and 3.5% severe malnutrition in certain areas [...]) mainly due to irregular distribution cycles and reduced ration sizes. In 2001 the UN was also able to support interventions aimed at creating awareness of, and protecting Eritreans from, HIV/AIDS while promoting an environment that prevents violence against women by developing capacity through training and the provision of educational materials.

As indicated, response to *the non-food sectors* of the Appeal was generally lower. This was particularly true for projects/sectors benefiting drought-affected groups. Although food aid was delivered to drought-affected areas (in which traditional coping mechanisms were stretched to the limit following three consecutive years of failed rains), interventions in sectors such as water and health were limited due in part to the lower response to the Appeal in these sectors. Notwithstanding the progress mentioned above, it is clear that funding shortfalls in non-food sectors also negatively impacted overall recovery efforts. As a specific example, support to micro-finance schemes for women that were planned under the 2001 CHAP could not be implemented as no funds were secured through the CAP. Funding for coordination of humanitarian activities, among them facilitation of the 2002 CAP, currently stands at just 14%, seriously limiting the ability of the UNCT to plan and implement project activities.

Finally, regarding impact of the 2001 CAP, broad participation in the process by representatives of the humanitarian community, Donors, and the Government has resulted in a closer relationship between these actors and better understanding of the humanitarian situation. This facilitated inter-agency work during 2001 and resulted in a clearer focus when preparing the 2002 Appeal." (UN, November 2001, pp.7-8)

Humanitarian community focusing activities on emergency and reconstruction assistance for the returnees (September 2001)

- Survey suggests that 23 percent of humanitarian activities were specifically targeting IDPs
- Shelter materials a priority for returning IDPs

"This briefing paper is a first look at information gathered through the 'Who does What Where' (W3) survey of local and international humanitarian and recovery organisations active in Eritrea during 2001. This first cut includes 162 projects reported by 34 organisations with a total value of over \$74 million.

[...]

Almost half the projects submitted to date list the General Population as the primary beneficiary, indicating intent to assist communities hosting IDPs as well as the IDPs themselves, as well as all members of communities receiving returns. Of those projects that target specific beneficiary groups, 23% are targeted at IDPs and 18% at children.

[...]

As with the sectoral section, agencies completing the W3 survey were asked to mark one group as the 'primary' beneficiary but as many 'secondary' beneficiary groups as necessary. Examining the combined data of primary and secondary beneficiary shows that many projects specifically target assistance to children (16%), IDPs (16%), women (14%) and returnees (9%)." (ICC 18 September 2001)

"Since the majority of internally displaced persons have now returned to their home areas, the attention of the humanitarian community in Ethiopia and Eritrea is focused on providing emergency and reconstruction assistance. With the heavy rains of the last two months, shelter materials have become a priority for returning Eritrean internally displaced persons. United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Committee have therefore initiated programmes to provide housing materials to some of the worst affected villages. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, has initiated a pilot project to rehabilitate 2,000 houses in Tsorona and 1,000 in Senafe, both in Sector Centre. Water and sanitation are also among the priorities of the humanitarian community; UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several non-governmental organizations are actively involved in the water sector. A number of agencies, including UNICEF, are also actively participating in school reconstruction and in the supply of school equipment and education materials.

While the health of returning internally displaced persons is relatively good, there is a concern that it could deteriorate in areas where medical and water facilities have been damaged or destroyed. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are working closely with the Eritrean Ministry of Health to

provide basic health-care services in these areas and to rehabilitate, re-equip, and re-staff local health centres in the Temporary Security Zone.

[...]

Contributions to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Eritrea now stand at approximately 56 per cent, an increase since June 2001. Although this is encouraging, additional food aid pledges for victims of natural disasters and internally displaced persons are urgently needed for both Ethiopia and Eritrea, and there are still significant shortfalls in all the non-food sectors."(UN SC 5 September 2001 , paras.25-29)

See also: Nutrition study of IDPs returning to their villages in Gash Barka confirms effectiveness of the humanitarian response (August 2001)

International operational activities in 2000

Mine-clearance operations ongoing since 1993 (May 2002)

- UNICEF carrying mine awareness programmes in IDP camps and schools (2002)
- 650 Eritrean combat engineers demobilized and made available for mine action work within the Temporary Security Zone
- A national Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (MACC) to be established under national Eritrean management
- UNMEE budget provides for the core Mine Action Coordination Centre staff and equipment

"The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) is coordinating a mine awareness programme aimed at educating the population on the immediate and long-term consequences of landmine risks.

It has given financial and logistical support to the Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA) and other organisations to conduct mine awareness campaigns in IDP camps and schools. Even before this latest war, Eritrea was considered a heavily-mined country, stemming from the 30-year struggle for independence from Ethiopia.

UNICEF points out that landmines are an impediment to Eritrea's social and economic development. "Protecting civilians and especially children from landmines calls for a major international commitment to the development of culturally appropriate programmes for mine awareness and physical rehabilitation," it stresses." (IRIN 29 May 2002)

"Even before the recent border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Eritrea was considered a heavily mined country. In 1994, around fifty different antipersonnel and antitank mines from fourteen different countries had been identified in Eritrea. According to information provided by the Eritrean Humanitarian Demining Project (EHDP), between 500,000 and 1,000,000 mines and 3 million UXO are present in Eritrea. It is estimated that more than 5% of Eritrea's land area may be mine-affected.

As soon as Eritrea gained independence in 1993, it embarked on a mine clearance programme under the auspices of the EHDP. Project offices and camps were opened in Keren, Asha-Golgol and Nakfa. Between 1993 and 1994, the US Government assisted Eritrea with demining through the provision of funds for a mine action programme that included training and equipment for deminers. In addition to mine clearance, the EHDP established a research department and undertook together with the Department of Social Affairs and the Eritrean War Disabled Fathers Association mine awareness projects. The mine awareness activities involved community-based and in-school training, education of families, community elders and rehabilitation workers. However, lack of funds and expertise limited the function of the EHDP. Despite the

above efforts, landmine casualties continued to rise in Eritrea, with about 40% of the reported victims being children." (UN February 2001, p.33)

"Competencies and Capacity Analysis"

□ The UN MACC [Mine Action Coordination Centre] was established in Eritrea under the auspices of the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Though UNMACC is primarily concerned with the operational requirements of the UN Peacekeeping Force in the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas, its immediate and longer-term mine action plans will be driven mostly by humanitarian needs. Its mandate within the UN system is to act as a coordinator of mine action activities, thus UNMACC is a key partner in the coordination of mine action activities in the country. Already, both the Government of Eritrea and other actors are looking to UNMACC for leadership in this area;

□ UNICEF's mandate under the UN mine action policy is to take responsibility for mine awareness education activities. In implementing this mandate, UNICEF is working closely with different partners, including the EHDP and UNHCR. Collaboration with the latter focusing mainly on returning refugees;

□ Within the UN system, UNDP is responsible for the socio-economic consequences of mine action, and capacity building for the development of integrated and sustainable national mine action programmes. Accordingly, UNDP will assist the Eritrean Government to consolidate its mine action capacity with assistance focusing on establishing an effective and sustainable National Mine Action Centre;

□ OCHA will monitor the humanitarian implications of the mine issue;

□ EHDP (a national NGO in the process of being registered) has a mandate to undertake land mine and UXO clearance and awareness programmes. EHDP will be a key partner in mine action work in Eritrea;

□ Other actors, including NGOs will be accommodated through the coordination structure of the National Mine Action Centre that will be established (see objectives)." (UN February 2001, p.34)

"[Reported in June 2001 that], humanitarian demining teams are being trained and equipped in collaboration with the Eritrean Mine Action Centre and the National Training Centre, with the assistance of UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Centre and NGOs such as the HALO Trust, Danish Church Aid and the Danish Demining Group. Several teams, including two from the Eritrean Demining Agency, who were trained with UNMEE financing, have already been deployed to the Temporary Security Zone to conduct minefield survey, marking and clearance tasks in support of the humanitarian relief efforts.

The UNMEE budget will continue to provide for the core Mine Action Coordination Centre staff and equipment so that it can effectively carry out its role of coordination, technical advice and information management for mine action in the Temporary Security Zone. In addition, the Mine Action Coordination Centre intends to take a more proactive role in the development of national capacities to ensure that the necessary resources are mobilized as soon as possible to deal with the current threat, and that sufficient sustainable capacity is built in the medium term.

[...]

However, funding remains a constraint on the urgently needed mine-awareness activities, and is having an impact on the speed with which humanitarian deminers can be trained, equipped, and deployed with adequate supervision. The Eritrean Government has recently demobilized 650 combat engineers and made them available for mine action

work within the Temporary Security Zone. Some Ethiopia and Eritrea, particularly in the light of the establishment of the Temporary Security Zone and the commencement of the return of IDPs to the Zone." (UN SC 19 June 2001, paras. 30-31, 33)

"As part of its response to the risk posed by landmine to IDPs and other Eritreans returning to villages in the TSZ, UNICEF has placed a mine awareness staff within the United Nations Mine Action Centre (UNMACC) and has provided advisory support through the regional office and its headquarters. This support has enabled mine awareness education in Debub and Gash Barka regions. Support was also extended to UNHCR's repatriation of Eritrean refugees from Sudan at Tesennei reception desk. Capacity development, through training of 13 staff of Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA), facilitated the establishment of two regional offices in Barentu and Adi Keshi. Thirteen mine awareness field educators

are currently working in these regions with support from the two offices. One staff member at the national level is providing technical support to the regional offices." (UNICEF 5 September 2001)

"The United Nations Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (UNMACC) reported that a major effort is underway to address the safety concerns of IDPs returning to their original villages. Mine action operations are continuing in the TSZ, including work by 240 humanitarian deminers from the Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA). Halo Trust has clearance, survey, marking and mechanical teams in action. Danish Church Aid (DCA) and the Danish Demining Group (DDG) have mechanical assets and rapid response teams working in the TSZ. UNMACC disclosed that it is also working with Ethiopia to obtain more information on mine fields. Other partners in the UN such as UNICEF and UNDP are active in mine action programme. UNMACC reported that the donor countries are expressing increased interest in, and showing support for, mine action programmes. Currently UNMACC major activities are focusing on marking dangerous areas and mine awareness about the dangers of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs), which are still a threat to thousands of population returning to their areas of origin. Mine action training, funded by ECHO, was carried out by Danish Church Aid in Barentu included three of our supplementary feeding staff. Our staff gave lesson about landmine awareness in their feeding centres concentrating especially on children. There is also a good coordination between us and Halo Trust, with whom we revised the accessibility of villages before we selected our samples. Halo Trust were leading convoys to KTK in the period from December 2000 to March 2001 where there were some threats of landmine. Currently, both Halo Trust and DCA are cooperating with us in giving mine awareness and education in the three subzones of our activities as well as in other areas of both Gash Barka and Debub Zones." (MoH & SCF August 2001, p.4)

"The Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA)

The Eritrean Demining Agency was established in 1995 under the Ministry of Defence, but separate from the combat units. Initially the US State Department funded the EDA and US Special Forces trained 80 "ex fighters" as de-miners, with additional clearance equipment provided by the German embassy in Asmara. The programme of clearance was suspended in 1998, at the outbreak of war. During the period of the US Special Force presence they also trained a capacity of Mine Awareness Officers to disseminate information to mine affected communities.

At present the EDA is being reorganised under the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC), with a mandate from the State of Eritrea Commission for Co-ordination with the UN Peacekeeping Mission (the so-called "Peace Commission"). The head of EDA was recently appointed Associate Commissioner for De-mining to the Peace Commission. EDA has recently recruited persons for training to build a national de-mining capacity. It is intended that the Mobile Mine Action Teams will comprise persons from this recruitment drive. Following the activities of the three months training these persons will be absorbed into the structure of EDA in their trained capacity as Mine Awareness Officers or Survey Officers or to be further trained in other aspects of mine action.

A national Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (MACC) will be established under national Eritrean management, combining resources from EDA and UNMEE-MACC. UNDP and UNMAS will provide inputs to the institutional capacity building of the national MACC. The proposed DCA programme will provide inputs to the operational capacity building inclusive in the EDA national plan, and complimentary to the inputs provided by UNDP and UNMAS. A National Training Centre (NTC) is established now in one of the existing EDA compounds outside Asmara, where the DCA trainer will have access to function in co-ordination with EDA and the national MACC." (ACT 3 May 2001)

Shift from emergency relief towards rehabilitation was the humanitarian strategy already proposed in 2000 (February 2001)

- Two large-scale integrated initiatives being implemented by the beginning of 2001

- POWER (post-war emergency and rehabilitation) is a joint programme between the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and UNDP
- Eritrean Emergency Reconstruction Programme (ERP) is a Government/multi donor programme
- World Bank funding almost 30% of ERP
- ERP finances activities aimed at restarting the economy

"Under this [2001] Appeal, UNHCR is planning to provide assistance in shelter and household items as part of an integrated multi-sectoral package to returning refugees and IDPs [...]. In addition to the provision of emergency shelter and household items, UNDP in 2001 will focus on recovery and rehabilitation programmes mainly through its Post-War Emergency Rehabilitation (POWER) programme, which includes rehabilitation of damaged or partially destroyed houses in the war-affected regions. Overall assistance in this sector is coordinated through the Sectoral Working Group on Shelter and Household Items. This SWG is led by ERREC and co-facilitated by UNHCR. In 2001, the SWG will continue to monitor the overall situation in this sector, track humanitarian responses and identify gaps and possible overlaps." (UN February 2001, p.27)

"The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) has been established and the first peacekeepers have arrived. Given this stabilisation, focus of the humanitarian intervention has begun to shift from emergency relief to include rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery (3 Rs). Beyond a theoretical debate about a linear continuum from relief to development with the 3R's somewhere in between, what does this mean in reality?

Currently in Eritrea, there are ongoing relief programmes, but there are also small-scale interventions of a rehabilitation nature and more are planned. Some are bilateral interventions such as school rehabilitation by DANIDA, rehabilitation of the hospital in Tessenai by ICRC and various activities by a number of international NGOs. In addition, there are two large-scale integrated initiatives:

- The Government of Eritrea/UNDP Umbrella Programme for Emergency Recovery and Rehabilitation in War-Affected Areas in Eritrea (POWER), and
- The Eritrea Emergency Reconstruction Programme (ERP)" (ICC 18 December 2000)

"POWER Programme

The US\$ 15 million POWER (post-war emergency and rehabilitation) Programme, a joint programme between the Government of Eritrea (GoE) and UNDP, which is mainly funded by the Italian Government, can be seen as a bridging programme between emergency relief interventions and rehabilitation. It aims 'to link relief and development from the outset so as to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to sustainable rehabilitation and to support the resumption of economic and social development.'

To do this, during the first six months, POWER will focus on meeting urgent needs but at the same time promoting the underpinning concept of sustainable and integrated recovery activities in the field of settlements as well as rehabilitation of social infrastructure, agricultural production and human capital. During the remaining period of the project emergency, needs will be met as they arise but the focus will be on contributing to the long process of rehabilitation and development. To promote the link further, POWER also includes a capacity building element to facilitate local government and civil society to plan implement and monitor as well as manage and coordinate interventions.

The POWER Programme will have four sectors of intervention:

- Rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses;
- Rehabilitation of social infrastructure in the areas of education, health and water and sanitation (WatSan);
- Promotion of sustainable livelihoods through support to agriculture; and
- Facilitating coordination of the emergency and reconstruction response.

Implementation of projects in these sectors will focus on the most affected zones of Debub and Gash-Barka, particularly areas of return, areas with extensive housing and social infrastructure damage, female headed households as well as opportunities to promote long-term impact on recovery and development.

ERP

The Eritrea Emergency Reconstruction Programme is a Government/multi donor (World Bank, African Development Bank, European Union and the Governments of Eritrea, Denmark, France and Italy) multi-sectoral programme totaling US\$ 287 million. The ERP aims to begin the process of long-term reconstruction and economic recovery and will be implemented in two years. The ERP recognises ongoing efforts coordinated by ERREC in response to immediate humanitarian needs and is 'designed to finance a set of complementary actions in support of the public and private sectors that will have the most impact in restarting the economy'.

The ERP comprises of five component parts:

1. Agriculture;
2. Reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure;
3. Private sector development;
4. Social protection; and
5. Balance of payments support.

ERP projects will focus on the Debub and Gash Barka zones, which were most affected by the recent conflict but will not exclude other zones. Actual implementation of the projects will be the responsibility of the relevant line ministries and other Government agencies." (UN January 2001, p. 38)

"Co-ordination

Given the fact that both programmes represent the Government's plans for rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery, the Government remains responsible for the coordination of, and between, both programmes so as to ensure an integrated intervention that promotes long-term recovery. Currently there are clear mechanisms in place within each programme to co-ordinate projects and components that make up the programme. In the main part, this is achieved through the project appraisal process. As yet, there are no formal links between the two programmes, but the ERP has only just been approved and implementation has not begun." (ICC 18 December 2000)

Evaluation concludes that actual resource commitments did not match UNHCR's high ambition for IDP support in Eritrea (February 2001)

- Eritrea provided UNHCR with an opportunity to test its new IDP policy
- 16 international staff on the ground by end-June 2000
- UNHCR's retreated from its initially envisaged expansive approach to IDPs in Eritrea, symptomatic of its ambivalence towards its IDP policy and the implementation phase
- UNHCR downplayed IDP numbers in need of assistance from 750,000 down to 125,000 targeted people, from June to July 2000

"UNHCR initially adopted a high profile with regard to the problem of internal displacement in Eritrea, a position that was subsequently belied by the low resource commitments made in relation to the operation. Moreover, the extent to which the organization's involvement in Eritrea was guided by the organization's recent policy paper on IDP operations was not apparent. UNHCR has nonetheless shown a commitment towards orienting its approach in a sustainable direction.

The Eritrea/Sudan emergency, as well as UNHCR's reestablishment in Eritrea after a two-year absence from the country, occurred at a critical juncture in the international debate concerning IDPs. In January 2000, Richard Holbrooke, US ambassador to the United Nations, expressed his reservations about the distinction traditionally made between refugees and IDPs, underlined the international community's inadequate response to the problem of internal displacement and called on UNHCR to assume a leading role in this domain.

Partly in response to this intervention, UNHCR re-examined its existing IDP policy and issued a new policy statement, asserting that the organization was 'predisposed' to an involvement with IDPs, as long as certain conditions could be met. These included the authorization of the UN and consent of the state concerned, access to the affected population, the security of UNHCR staff, as well as adequate resources and organizational capacity [...].

Eritrea and the IDP policy

Eritrea provided UNHCR with a timely case in which to test this new policy, as the IDP situation in that country met most if not all of the specified criteria for UNHCR involvement. Unlike other countries affected by the problem of internal displacement, people left their homes in Eritrea as a result of a war with a neighbouring state, and not as a result of civil war or persecution by their government. Indeed, the Eritrean government recognized its responsibility to meet the needs of citizens displaced by the border war.

In other respects, UNHCR's conditions for involvement were also met. The government granted UNHCR access to IDPs, except those located in front-line areas near Ethiopian positions, and it sought to guarantee the security of humanitarian personnel. The presence of IDPs and returning refugees in the same areas of Eritrea provided another rationale for UNHCR's involvement.

For the reasons cited above, UNHCR initially mounted a relatively vigorous and visible response to the IDP situation in Eritrea. A memorandum issued by the High Commissioner on 6 June 2000, for example, committed UNHCR to '[fully participating] in the inter-agency effort on behalf of internally displaced people, in line with its position outlined in the position paper on IDPs of 6 March 2000' [...]. Similarly, in its June 2000 strategic plan of operations, the UNHCR office in Asmara made a strong case for the organization's involvement with the internally displaced.

Demonstrating UNHCR's commitment to the Eritrea programme, by 27 June 2000 some 16 international staff were on the ground. Significantly, one of the early deployments was a Public Information Officer, who helped raise international awareness of the IDP situation. UNHCR also made its presence and interest felt in meetings with government officials and other humanitarian agencies, thereby raising further expectations with regard to its role with IDPs.

Despite such expressions of intent, UNHCR's resource commitments to the IDP programme were initially low, and the organization soon appeared to retreat from the more expansive role which it had originally envisaged. This development exemplified what one staff member described as UNHCR's 'deep ambivalence at the policy level' regarding its role in Eritrea. By July, an appeal for \$23 million (\$13.3 million of this sum targeted for Eritrea) had been issued, and predictions that 50 per cent of the appeal would be met were considered realistic[...].

In parallel with the reduction of resource commitments for the IDP programme, there was an apparent downward reassessment of beneficiary numbers. In the early days of the emergency, on 2 June 2000, the UNHCR office in Asmara spoke of some 550,000 IDPs in Gash Barka province, and another 200,000 in Debub, as being potentially in need of the organization's assistance[...]. By the following month, however, UNHCR's appeal for Eritrea and Sudan stated that only 125,000 IDPs and 90,000 returnees, were to be targeted for UNHCR assistance.

A number of people interviewed in the course of this evaluation expressed frustration at the ambiguity of UNHCR's approach to the IDP problem in Eritrea, as well as the organization's apparent inability to translate its generic IDP policy into operational practice. As one staff member argued, 'at present there is

no guidance and it is just a matter of contingencies. The UNHCR IDP operation in Eritrea could just as well have been half the size it is – or double. The only limiting condition seems to have been someone's judgement as to what was fundable'.

The question of an 'expectations gap' in respect of UNHCR's approach to IDPs is perhaps endemic to it, but still needs to be firmly addressed. With refugees, UNHCR's mandate is clear, and it does not have the choice of standing by. With IDPs, the case is different, and UNHCR does not intervene in all, or even most IDP situations. However, in the spirit of the new IDP policy, UNHCR must make its intentions clear, and then follow through. The danger is that, if it raises expectations as it did in Eritrea, but then does not follow through to the extent originally indicated, it loses credibility, and a group of needy persons risks falling between the gaps of the international system." (UNHCR February 2001, pp. 17-19)

UNHCR IDP-related assistance to be phased out earlier than planned (May 2001)

- Programme aims at achieving sustainable voluntary return
- Targeted IDPs have the same needs as the returning refugees
- Stated in mid-term review that UNHCR's IDP assistance would be phased out more rapidly than previously planned

"UNHCR will assist all refugees who wish to return to Eritrea for purpose of this Appeal. The target beneficiaries for 2001 are 92,000 returnees and 100,000 internally displaced persons:

30,000 of the most vulnerable returnees who returned in 2000 and who are in continued need of humanitarian assistance;

62,000 refugees, consisting of all those who fled the May 2000 hostilities and still remain in Sudan and those residing in Sudan prior to 2000 who can return in 2001; and

100,000 internally displaced persons in the major areas where refugees will return.

The target population is comprised of approximately 70% women and children. The majority has an agricultural background. Many are living in poor conditions due to lack of shelter, water, health, agricultural input and income.

[...]

UNHCR's operation for 2001 will be aimed at achieving sustainable voluntary return and reintegration of Eritrean refugees. Because refugees will be returning to areas affected by internal displacement, it will be necessary to also provide assistance to those IDPs who are located in the same areas and have the same needs as the returning refugees.

Objectives

- ☐ Facilitate, and depending on progress in the peace process, promote the voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees in the Sudan, Yemen and Djibouti;
- ☐ Ensure protection and conditions of safety and dignity during the repatriation and reception process;
- ☐ Facilitate the refugee reintegration process through initial assistance;
- ☐ Promote effective transitions from UNHCR's reintegration support to longer-term community rehabilitation and development efforts undertaken by other agencies within the national development/recovery plans of the Government;
- ☐ Address the emergency non-food needs of internally displaced persons in areas of refugee return, help them to return to their home areas and support their initial reintegration; and
- ☐ Provide special care and assistance for the most vulnerable returnees." (UN February 2001, p. 75)

"UNHCR's budgetary requirements of US\$ 20,503,500 as set forth in the Consolidated Appeal (concurrently reflected in UNHCR's "Supplementary Appeal" for US\$ 24,685,500 for the region issued in

mid-December), continue to reflect actual operational requirements for 2001. The principal change since the CAP was issued is that UNHCR is concentrating available resources on the Voluntary Repatriation Programme for Eritrean refugees in Sudan, Yemen and Djibouti, and will implement and phase out its IDP assistance activities more rapidly than previously planned." (OCHA 22 May 2001)

UNHCR focusing its assistance on IDPs in the Gash Barka Zone (August 2000)

- UNHCR was about to repatriate refugees from Sudan when new conflict broke out in May 2000
- Initial phase focused on international protection and provision of immediate assistance to IDPs in and from western Eritrea
- Emergency relief assistance aimed at facilitating return of both refugees and IDPs
- UNHCR active in provision of shelter and non-food items to IDPs and returning populations

"Towards the end of 1999, a breakthrough in negotiations between UNHCR and the Government of Eritrea, created prospects for the resumption of a large-scale repatriation operation. The planned return and reintegration of these "old caseload" refugees from Sudan and Yemen, was scheduled to take place over a period of three years, starting in May 2000. A Tripartite Agreement was signed to this effect between UNHCR and the Governments of Eritrea and Sudan on 7 April 2000, outlining the modalities of the operation. With preparations and information campaigns well underway, and with many refugees eager to return to Eritrea, the operation was ready to start within days, when fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia flared up again, imposing an interruption of activities

Instead of assisting people to return and reintegrate, UNHCR had to change gear and cope with a new influx of Eritrean refugees into the neighbouring countries. The Office, in collaboration with the respective Governments and other players in the region, has, thus, started to meet the immediate needs of refugees in Sudan, Djibouti and Yemen, while providing life-saving emergency relief assistance to IDPs in Eritrea." (UNHCR July 2000, p. 1)

"The programme of emergency relief assistance to IDPs in Eritrea is taking place within an inter-agency framework, whereby UN agencies have taken on different responsibilities, mainly according to sectors and geographical areas. The UNHCR programme in Eritrea focuses on populations, which have been internally displaced within the Gash Barka Zone or from the Gash Barka Zone to other areas of Eritrea. UNHCR's involvement is based on the following rationale:

- The IDP population in and from the Gash Barka Zone includes former refugees who had returned from Sudan in earlier years and who are now, newly, internally or externally displaced;
- The returnee and IDP population in these zones, if not assisted, might be compelled to cross the international border with Sudan thereby becoming refugees;
- The Gash Barka Zone is the most important area of expected future return of some 250,000 Eritrean refugees in Sudan (160,000 *öldö* and 94,000 *ñewö* refugees);
- The provision of emergency relief to IDPs in the Gash Barka Zone will lay the foundations for the return not only of IDPs but also of refugees.." (UN July 2000, p.52)

Response by Non Governmental Organisations

ICRC providing assistance to IDPs (May 2004)

- ICRC is facilitating access to clean water for IDPs

- ICRC distribute shelters in IDP camps

Facilitating water access

"ICRC continues its work in the war-affected areas of Eritrea. 41 houses in Kokoabie and Maitsada are now completed and the rehabilitation of Karibosa well is also finished. The ICRC completed its survey of all the water points in Senafe Sub-Zoba with a view to drilling 50 boreholes. A newly received drilling machine is being used: the first water (borehole) point was completed in Asmara and will serve to train the pump technicians of the Eritrean Water Resources Department. The construction of 1500 fuel-efficient ingera ovens in collaboration with the Energy Research and Training Centre is ongoing. In Gash Barka: 5'115 tarpaulins (+ 102'300 m of rope) and 2'460 palm mats were distributed to some 20'800 IDP's in Adi Keshi and Dembedoran camp. In Debub, 860 tarpaulins (+ 17'200 m of rope) were distributed to some 4'300 IDP's in Tisha and Hahaile camps in Senafe. In the Southern Red Sea Zoba, 229 families in Debai Sima received one water container or jerry can each. 290 MT of seeds (sorghum, pearl millet, barley and tef) are in their respective warehouses in Barentu, Senafe and Adi Quala awaiting distributions to some 9'122 families (more than 37'200 people) in Gash Barka and Debub, which will start during week 22." (UN OCHA, 21 May 2004)

"In accordance with its mandate to protect and assist the victims of armed conflict, the ICRC is active mainly in the Gash Barka, Debub and the Southern Red Sea Zoba, areas directly affected by the war. Economic Security: ICRC's programme, in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy, to replace traditional injera ovens with mogoggo ovens, which consume 50% less firewood, are ongoing in Adi Keshi (Gash Barka), Metera and Afoma (Debub) IDP camps. 1500 will be provided this year. Some 47,770 litres of kerosene were distributed to the 477 IDP families of Zalambessa in Senafe Debub and another 4700 litres to the 229 resettled IDP families in Debai Sima (Southern Red Sea). 858 water containers with a 50L capacity were distributed to camps in Debub. In March/April, 81,252 bars of soap (200gr each) were distributed to 20,313 beneficiaries in 10 camps in Debub and another 34 880 bars were distributed to 8,720 beneficiaries in 2 camps in Gash Barka. 626 mosquito nets were provided for families with children under 5.

Shelter

In April, before the onset of the rainy season, 2902 shelters were distributed to Mai Wurrui, Afoma and Metera camps. 5170 palm mats, handcrafted locally to boost the local economy of the war-affected Zoba, were distributed to those same camps to help insulate the shelters against heat. In its efforts to repair houses destroyed by the war, the ICRC completed 35 houses during the period under review and 31 are under construction in Karibosa. In Kokoabie and Maitsada, 20 houses were completed and 21 are still under construction.

Water and Habitat: ICRC received the new PAT-401 drilling machine in April to implement its well-digging programmes in the war-affected areas of the country. An updated survey of all water points in the TSZ has been completed in collaboration with the Eritrean Water Resources Department. In addition to new wells, and considering the country's depleting ground-water resources, the ICRC will set up and disseminate a number of water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting ponds, micro-dams and terracing. The drilling of the planned 50 boreholes will begin this month." (UN OCHA, 7 May 2004)

"One of the ICRC's goals in Eritrea is to ensure that people in the border region have access to primary health care. A significant step towards achieving this aim has been to repair six war-damaged health facilities. The latest project, and by far the biggest, is the Shambuko health centre. Work here has involved repairing the badly damaged main building, together with the quarantine, kitchen and laundry areas. New items included an incinerator for medical waste and a water tank. In addition, the centre is now connected to the water system. The Eritrean Ministry of Health is supplying medical equipment and medicines, and is providing the medical and paramedical staff.

In the border town of Adi Quala, shelling had partly destroyed the water pumping stations, and pipelines were damaged. What was left of the water system could not supply a town of 15,000 people. The first step

was to repair and rebuild the building that housed the pumping equipment. Once the building was finished, the ICRC installed two high-pressure pumps, a chlorine dosing pump and a dewatering pump. Together, these new machines will substantially increase the amount of water available in Adi Quala. At the other end of the network, the ICRC renovated the existing public water point near the market and built three new water points in residential areas near the town centre. The ICRC also donated a set of tools to the local water board committee, so they would be able to carry out repairs to the water network. Finally, after training local technicians on the new pumps and tools, the ICRC handed over the completed project to the municipal administration." (ICRC, 15 December 2003)

ICRC providing non-food items to IDP (May 2002)

- ICRC provided 38,000 IDPs in camps with non-food items (2002)
- ICRC provided water to 31,000 IDPs and expellees through trucking to 4 IDP camps (2002)

"In view of the current situation and the developments connected with the physical demarcation of the border it is foreseen that large numbers of IDPs will remain in the camps for a significant part of the year or even until 2003. The ICRC, as one of the few remaining organisations dealing with shelter and non-food items and ensuring access to potable water in the camps, is committed to assisting the remaining IDPs still in camps in Eritrea. (5,000 tents and 13,000 tarpaulins and non-food items will be distributed to 18,000 IDP families in 2002). The ICRC also continues to provide support in terms of access to water and health care to Eritrean communities during the rehabilitation phase.

Between January and March 2002, a total of 38,000 IDPs living in camps were also provided with soap, cooking pots and tents. The ICRC is also monitoring the shelter and water needs of IDPs who decide to leave the camps to return home.

During the same period clean water was guaranteed to over 31,000 IDPs and people expelled from Ethiopia through water trucking operations and the maintenance of water supply systems. In Zoba Debub, Gash Barka and Northern Red Sea, the ICRC continued water trucking in Mai Wuray, Korokon, Dembe Doran and Ghinda IDP camps, deploying 5 RCSE water trucks. In the same IDP camps and in Shelab camp, where Eritreans expelled from Ethiopia are living, 7 water points and 16 distribution systems have been maintained and improved with the supply of spare parts for electromechanical equipment and with installation and maintenance of bladders, reservoirs, hand pumps and water taps." (ICRC 31 May 2002)

ACT appeal for IDP shelter needs (May 2002)

- ERRC and ICC April 2002 IDP shelter needs assessment revealed that all tents have been used between 2-4 years
- 11,961 (65%) households need urgent replacement of their tents
- An estimated 80% household were headed by women in Zoba Debub and Gash Barka

"One of the main serious concerns shared among all humanitarian agencies and government bodies in Eritrea is the fast deteriorating condition of the temporary shelter, especially with the approach of the rainy season, in the IDP and expellees camps in the country. This issue was raised and discussed by Olara Otunnu, the Secretary General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict during his visit to Eritrea in March 2002. As a result, a joint mission from the Information and Coordination Center (ICC), representing humanitarian organizations and from ERREC was undertaken from 9-12 April 2002 to all IDP and expellee camps to conduct needs assessment of shelter, which need to be urgently replaced before the

coming rainy season. It is proposed that the shelter materials should be flown into the country from overseas to reach the people in time before the rains begin.

ACT members Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) – Eritrea and the Lutheran World Federation / Department of World Service – Eritrea are proposing to urgently provide tents for the most vulnerable of the displaced. This appeal is only to cater for the urgent shelter needs of the most vulnerable.

[...]

Among the findings of the assessment team are the following:

□ a stormy rainfall during March 2002 had already blown away a number of tents around Senafe pressurizing an urgent reaction.

□ another recent storm has already left several families homeless in Gash Barka IDP camps.

□ in all IDP camps, except for few recently provided by ICRC, all tents have been used between 2 and 4 years.

[...]

Total number of households/tents..... 18,350

Total number of tents requiring urgent replacement 11,961 (65%)

Total number of tents requiring wrap up (replacement of the top (roof) covering) 2,049 (11%)

Total number of tents that can survive the rainy season (maximum 6 months) 4,340 (24%)

The assessment also included information on the number of female-headed households where the need of tents is very urgent. A rough estimation which was made available is described as follows:

□ Out of 14,571 households (5,188 in Zoba Debub and 9,383 in Zoba Gash Barka) around 80% are female-headed families and

□ Out of these female-headed families around 25% or 3,642 (1,297 households in Zoba Debub and 2,345 in Zoba Gash Barka) of the families are headed by widowed/divorced women" (ACT, 28 May 2002).

MSF providing IDPs with basic health care, epidemiological surveillance, nutrition, vaccination and water and sanitation services (December 2001)

"However, at the request of the Eritrean Ministry of Health (MOH), MSF is remaining in the Tserona area through the fall malaria season. Malaria is endemic in the area, and, because the population lost much of its immunity after two years in IDP camps in the highlands, MSF will stay on hand to respond to any potential malaria epidemic.

Aid focused on displaced during and after war

Initial activities focused on aid to people displaced by the fighting, in 24 camps in the Debub, Gash Barka, and Red Sea zones. MSF provided basic health care, epidemiological surveillance, care for the malnourished, vaccinations, and water and sanitation support. MSF also distributed jerrycans, blankets, tents, and plastic sheeting.

Hostilities ceased in June 2000, and in the following months thousands of people were able to return home. With the MOH taking charge of most of the needs of the displaced, MSF's work in the camps started to wind down in late 2000 and was finally completed in June 2001.

Meanwhile, MSF turned its attention to Senafe and Tserona, two sub-zones of Debub that had been occupied by the Ethiopian army during the fighting, and to some areas in Gash Barka. In Senafe, the hospital had been destroyed and the health posts closed.

In February 2001, MSF opened a small clinic that has about 80 consultations a day, and put up a 30-bed tent hospital. In May, MSF finished its work in the area when the Eritrean authorities returned to the zone, as mandated by the ceasefire agreement.

In Tserona and in Gash Barka, during summer 2001 MSF helped prepare for the return of the displaced by focusing on emergency repairs to health fac

DanChurch Aid (DCA) to train Mobile Mine Action Teams to facilitate IDP return (May 2001)

"It is DCA's intention to work with and through the Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA) in close co-operation and collaboration with the UN MACC. Based upon the humanitarian situation, the top priority will be in support of resettling IDP's and refugees from Sudan, who are obviously in great danger of being injured by mines and UXO. The target group that DCA, in its co-operation with EDA, aims to assist in this emergency response are those displaced populations within *Gash Barka* and *Debub* zones who will return to villages inside the boundaries of the Temporary Security Zone. This return is expected imminently once the warring forces have returned to the outer limits of the TSZ and the peacekeepers are in place.

Of Eritrea's 3,5 million population, it is approximately 300,000 IDP's and refugees that are now expected to return to the former battle areas in the *Gash Barka* and *Debub* Administrative Zones who are the most exposed to the immediate mine and UXO threat as a result from the last war. Besides being very important for the food production in the country, the safe return of the population to these zones is regarded as imperative to the success of the Peace Accord, and thus the political stability in Eritrea. As the population is returning to resume the much-needed agriculture and livestock activities, it is expected that the realities of the mine/UXO threat will become much more apparent.

A more thorough and detailed priority setting for affected areas should be available from the results of The HALO Trust Rapid Survey currently being completed. Although the UNMEE-MACC will prioritise the area within the TSZ to support initially the operational requirements of the peacekeeping forces and the civilian population returning there, there is a need to work at the community level to ensure that the level of accidents are kept to a minimum amongst the returning population by marking dangerous areas and increasing the population's awareness of any mine threat that exists in their community areas.

PROPOSED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

Description of Assistance

DCA will recruit, train and monitor the development of four Mobile Mine Action Teams who will by the end of the three month period have visited the areas of the returning displaced in the TSZ that fall within the zones of *Gash Barka* and *Debub*." (ACT 3 May 2001)

Assistance to IDPs by NGOs within the InterAction coalition (March 2001)

"Details of InterAction Member Assistance in Eritrea"	
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) (August 3, 00)	ADRA is erecting 300 tents for 2,100 Eritreans from families with no male support in refugee camps around Kassala, Sudan. The families will be able to take the tents with them when they return to Eritrea, as many of their homes have been destroyed. ADRA is also providing support to a sanitation project in the Laffa camp.
Africare (May 23, 00)	Until recently, Africare had been assisting the Eritrean Government for nearly a year to provide medical, shelter, and supplementary food assistance to displaced Eritreans temporarily camped in Gash-Barka

Region as a result of the war. They are now shifting their focus to the recently displaced people and are focusing mainly on emergency food needs.

CARE

(September 5, 00)

CARE's emergency relief projects include: helping local institutions manage food distribution, providing seeds for planting, landmine awareness and demining, and health care for women and children displaced by the war.

Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB)

(June 30, 00)

CMMB has responded with an airlift of medicines and medical supplies valued at more than \$940,000. The airlift contained items requested by CMMB's on-site partner - including analgesics, antibiotics, multivitamins, and first aid and surgical supplies. Contents of the airlift will be distributed to approximately 28 facilities around Eritrea.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

(December 6, 00)

Since June 2000, CRS and members of Caritas Internationalis have been assisting the Eritrean Catholic Church in building capacity for emergency response. At the church's request, CRS donated an initial \$160,000 towards the purchase of three trucks to transport emergency relief supplies. CRS continues to work with the local church partners to assess and respond to health and education needs of displaced and drought-stricken communities and to ensure that the local partners have the capacity for emergency response and rehabilitation.

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)

(May 26, 00)

CRWRC is financially supporting a shipment destined for Eritrea by one of their partners.

Concern Worldwide

(May 26, 00)

Concern Worldwide is working with German Agro Action to provide emergency food rations to 10,000 displaced people in the Mensura camp (45 km south of Keren). They are also providing high protein biscuits and medical supplies in Asmara.

Direct Relief International

(May 26, 00)

Direct Relief International is currently working with Interaction partner agencies to provide emergency medical assistance in the form of commodities to more than 500,000 displaced people.

International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)

(October 6, 00)

ICMC entered Eritrea in early June 2000 to provide capacity building and program support to the Eritrean Catholic Secretariat (which is providing food, non-food items, and health care to the internally displaced as well as education and health programs to rural Eritreans) and to work in partnership with UNHCR on developing services for Eritrean refugees returning from Sudan. ICMC's current work includes re-integration programs in eight communities in southeastern Eritrea that suffered significant damage during the war and that are now experiencing significant population returns.

International Medical Corps (IMC)

(June 28, 00)

IMC is operating mobile health clinics in the Debub and Gash-Barka zones in Eritrea, where more than 330,000 internally displaced persons are living both in traditional IDP camps and scattered among the

region's hills and valleys. IMC is providing emergency medical care and supplementary feeding for children under 5 and lactating and pregnant women.

International Rescue Committee

(June 15, 00)

IRC is providing assistance for the Eritrean refugees in the Kassala area of Sudan. Their activities include health programs for mothers and children under five years of age, improving the nutritional status of children under five, providing sanitation services, and providing water for approximately 30,000 people.

Latter-day Saint Charities

(March 6, 01)

Latter-day Saint Charities has sent more than 940,000 lbs. of relief supplies, including powdered milk, blankets, first aid supplies, clothing and wheat. Total value of assistance exceeds \$1.3 million.

Lutheran World Relief

(June 30, 00)

LWR, through their partner Lutheran World Federation, is assisting in the transport and distribution of commodities to the internally displaced people and to provide potable water, food, shelter, and blankets to the most vulnerable. LWR has sent a cash grant of \$41,826, and is accepting financial contributions to aid in the purchase of 45 metric tons of high energy biscuits and powdered milk for up to 100,000 people, 50 water storage bladders, 40,000 blankets, and 10,000 family size tents in Keren, Eritrea. LWR is a member of Action by Churches Together (ACT).

Mercy Corps International

(January 8, 01)

Mercy Corps will begin implementing a one-year school feeding program this year throughout Eritrea in partnership with Africare, as part of USDA's Global Food for Education Initiative. Mercy Corps is currently assisting several thousand malnourished children and pregnant/lactating women in Debub Zone with supplemental food and health education. The program is implemented in partnership with the Eritrean Ministry of Health and funded by a grant from the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance. Mercy Corps is distributing a locally-produced enriched cereal through health facilities in 17 sites, including one IDP camp. Other sites target non-camp IDPs, families hosting IDPs, and IDPs who have recently returned to their homes.

Operation USA

(November 2, 00)

Operation USA sent a 40-foot container of medical supplies and equipment to Eritrea this week with funds provided by an Eritrean-American relief group, the International Medical Fund. The shipment was consigned to the Eritrea Relief and Refugee Commission of the Ministry of Health. Operation USA is also waiting for confirmation on a donation of milk powder for Eritrea.

Oxfam America

(July 26, 00)

Oxfam's response focuses in three areas: water, sanitation, and hygiene. Specifically: provide water pumping and distribution networks to ensure easy access to clean water; dig trench latrines and use latrines plates which can be moved when necessary; employ latrine attendants who will maintain the cleanliness of the latrines; promote and conduct hygiene campaigns to assist in the prevention of diseases and encourage good hygiene practice in the target community.

Save the Children

(July 18, 00)

Save the Children is planning program interventions that will include provision of non-food items as well as a variety of services (water, sanitation, shelter, fuel, medicines, etc.). They will continue to coordinate

response activities with Sudanese government officials and other humanitarian agencies.

Stop Hunger Now (SHN)

(November 1, 00)

SHN has provided \$5,000 to the Eritrean Development Foundation to support their feeding programs.

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

(June 30, 00)

UMCOR is responding to the drought in Eritrea by providing assistance for food and other supplies through partners that include the Eritrean Development Fund and ACT International

USA for UNHCR

(July 27, 00)

UNHCR has started the voluntary repatriation of the new Eritrean refugees from Sudan. UNHCR is intervening in the Gash Barka region to support IDPs and returnees.

US Fund for UNICEF

(November 1, 00)

UNICEF is providing emergency assistance in Eritrea including: supplemental nutrition for severely malnourished children; primary health care including immunizations for measles, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases; oral rehydration salts; shelter for displaced persons; emergency education supplies; water purification and sanitation support; and psycho-social trauma counseling for children affected by the conflict as well as the drought." (InterAction March 2001)

Mobile MSF teams reaching IDPs in remote communities (August 2000)

"MSF-F have mobile teams operating in the valleys between **Adi Keih** and through south of **Zula camp**, providing health care to isolated and remote communities hosting IDPs. In these areas MSF-F note that the health situation is deteriorating, particularly with an increased incidence rate of diarrhea and dysentery, as well as acute respiratory infections in higher regions and malaria in lower regions. Due to problems of accessibility, only limited humanitarian assistance is reaching these communities.

Diarrhea has become the number one source of morbidity in **Alba camp**. MSF-H is working on reducing the rate of incidence, but additional resources are always welcome. Due to population densities, the same situation is feared in **Harena** (which has already reported significant increases in incident rates, with reported incidences of shigelosis), **Adi Keshi** and **Mekete**." (ICC 26 August 2000)

Reference to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known references to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (as of August 2004)

- References to the Guiding Principles Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other references to the Guiding Principles

None

Availability of the Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles are widely available in Arabic. Published by OCHA.
Source: OCHA; Mr Francis Deng, the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons; Mr Sergio Vieira De Mello Assistant to the Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, To download the full document click here: [External Link]
Date: 11 April 2001

Training on the Guiding Principles

None

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARI	Acute Respiratory Infection
ARTI	Acute Respiratory Tract Infections
CHW	Community Health Worker
CSB	Corn-Soya Blend
DMK	Locally produced high protein flour
EPI	Expanded Immunization Programme
ERREC	Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IDA	Iron Deficiency Anemia
IDD	Iodine Deficiency Disorder
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ICRC	International Committee of the Red-Cross
Kcal	Kilo calories
LTSH	Landsite Transport, Storage, Handling
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLG	Ministry of Local Government
MOLHW	Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare
MT	Metric Tons
NFIS	National Food Information System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
TSZ	Temporary Security Zone
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAD	Vitamin A Deficiency
VIP	Ventilated Improved Pit
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

LIST OF SOURCES USED

(alphabetical order)

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