



Providing livelihood support to drought-affected households in Tigray, northern Ethiopia

The lives and livelihoods of an estimated one million people in Ethiopia's Tigray region have been severely disrupted by the recent drought in the north. As a result of the drought, only 40 percent of expected crop production in 2023 was salvaged, which is inadequate to meet the food needs of the estimated 5.8 million people in the region. Furthermore, livestock production has been severely affected due to a lack of feed that is normally obtained from the previous season's crop residues. The recent drought is an additional shock that the population has had to bear on top of the residual impacts of the 2020–2022 conflict (with some one million people still in displacement camps), yearly desert locust outbreaks from 2019 to 2023, and outbreaks of transboundary and zoonotic livestock diseases. The impact of these multiple, consecutive shocks hitting the same people has greatly compromised the capacities of families to cope. According to the recent seasonal assessment, 4.5 million people are acutely food insecure. This includes one million drought-affected people, one million internally displaced people, and 2.5 million host community members/returnees still grappling with the lingering impacts of the conflict.

To mitigate the short- and long-term humanitarian and economic impacts of the drought, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is providing livelihood support to the most vulnerable drought-affected households by distributing staple crop seeds (cereals, pulses and vegetables). This support will be complemented with activities to build the capacities of affected households through Farmer Field Schools and agricultural extension services to ensure the efficient use of the seeds provided.



Currently, FAO is working in 55 districts in Tigray to provide agricultural inputs, in particular fertilizers, to 197 000 households affected by other shocks, i.e. the residual impact of the conflict and desert locust invasion. The Government of the Kingdom of Belgium has contributed USD 500 000, through SFERA, to FAO's response in the region. This will enable the Organization to not only extend its support to the drought-affected population in Tigray, but also to deliver critical support to restore the livelihoods of drought-affected farmers. In collaboration with the Tigray Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources, FAO will provide agricultural inputs (staple crop seeds) to 4 660 households, with each receiving enough seeds to plant 0.5 hectares during the upcoming main rainy season in late May/June 2024.

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