

## Ethiopia appeals for food for 6 million people

Ethiopia appealed for 160 thousand. tons of emergency food aid. According to Addis Ababa, where famine threatens millions of people 6.

According to aid workers, lasting five years of drought affected over 23 million people in seven East African countries, including Kenya and Somalia. Drought is especially disastrous in Ethiopia, where 80 per cent. people live from agriculture. It comes from half the country's GDP and most of the exports. Ethiopian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Mitiku Kassa said that this year the rainfall was exceptionally low. - As a result, the number of people needing immediate assistance during the period from October to December increased from 4.9 million to 6.2 million - informed. Ethiopia has 83 million inhabitants. Kass calls for 159.4 thousand. tons of food worth 121 million U.S. dollars, 11 tons of special foods for malnourished children and women for 8.9 million dollars and about 45 million U.S. dollars aid for non-board. In 1984 in Ethiopia died of starvation nearly one million people. Television stations showed emaciated children and adults whose legs were as thin as sticks. This led to one of the largest charitable campaign in history. According to aid organizations, the number of people affected by hunger can be greater than what the government estimates. Due to the large distances and poor infrastructure, independent observers have difficulty in gathering data in Ethiopia and in the most deprived regions of active insurgents and has no access to them. Working for the UN humanitarian coordinator Fidelle Sarassaro urged Ethiopian authorities to ensure free access for humanitarian organizations to engrossed in the eastern region of Ogaden conflict. - Access there is a challenge for organizations engaged in food and it must change. This is already being discussed with the government - said. According to the British organization Oxfam, the international community should focus on preparing local communities to prevent and deal with the effects of drought and other disasters, rather than relying on outside help.

According to the UN two thirds of arable land in Africa have been destroyed by erosion and the misuse of pesticides. In Ethiopia it is 85 percent destroyed. lands. - The current situation shows that food aid is important and can save lives, but need more funds for long-term program that will help solve the real reasons because of which people here are so prone to disaster - considers the director in Ethiopia, Oxfam Waleed Rauf.