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Daily Reports

THE COMPREHENSIVE SOURCE

Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Global Challenges | Rising Food Prices in Ethiopia Dangerous for People Living With HIV/AIDS, *IRIN/Plus News* Reports
[Jun 25, 2008]

Food prices in Ethiopia, which have risen by 40% in the past year as a result of drought and the global food crisis, are having a detrimental effect on HIV-positive people in the country -- who may be weak, unable to work and shunned by their communities -- [IRIN/Plus News](#) reports. In addition, although many Ethiopians are skipping meals and cutting out "luxuries" such as vegetables and eggs, that can be "particularly dangerous" for those who are taking antiretroviral drugs, according to *IRIN/PlusNews*.

Gideon Cohen, coordinator of a [World Food Programme](#) initiative for urban Ethiopians who are HIV-positive, said that antiretrovirals "can't work if people aren't eating enough; this is where food prices impact more strongly on them." According to health officials, poor nutrition weakens the body's defenses against the virus, hastens the development of AIDS and makes it difficult to take antiretrovirals. The treatment also can increase appetite, and it is possible to reduce some side effects and to promote drug adherence if antiretrovirals are taken with food.

Cohen said that WFP works to help feed 111,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and their family members but that the global food crisis has complicated plans to expand the initiative to reach an additional 43,000 people over the next three years. The Ethiopian HIV/AIDS feeding program is already 44% over budget and has had to borrow from other United Nations programs, *IRIN/Plus News* reports (*IRIN/Plus News*, 6/23).

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