

HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 45,000 IDPs in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in Central Gonder
- The level of humanitarian needs in 2019 expected to remain similar to 2018.
- UNHCR notes spontaneous movement of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia.
- PM Abiy discusses with Western Wollega zone community. Urges the community to nurture a culture of dialogue in solving problems.



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Over 45,000 IDPs in need of immediate humanitarian assistance in Central Gonder

A spate of violence in central and western Gonder zones of Amhara Regional state has left thousands of displaced people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Upon request from the Regional Disaster Prevention and Food Security Coordination Office (RDPFSPCO), the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) is dispatching supplies to over 45,000 IDPs in and around central Gonder. The commission has started dispatching 851 metric ton of relief food items consisting of cereals (wheat and rice), CSB, oil and the amount requested for non-food items consisting of consisting 20 tents, 8,000 plastic sheets, 18,369 blankets and 73,474 different utensils. The commission is working with RDPFSPCO to provide similar kind of assistance to people who were displaced in western Gondar. An NDRMC team arrived in Bahir Dar, the regional capital, on 18 February to closely monitor the situation and facilitate coordinated assistance to the affected people.

ETB 35 million allocated by the region, but need surpass regional capacity

On 13 February 2019, the Amhara Regional Government stated that the region has allocated ETB 35 million to respond to the needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the region. However, addressing the needs of the growing number of IDPs is now far beyond the capacity of the region, according to Ato Asemahegn Asres, Head of the Regional Government Communication Affairs Office who called on the support of humanitarian partners and the community at large to provide in-kind and financial assistance. A regional task force is set up to lead resource mobilization efforts and a bank account has been opened for this purpose.

Overall more than 80,000 displaced in the region

Regional reports indicate more than 80,000 people are displaced throughout the region. Although recent inter-communal conflicts in areas bordering Northern Gondar zone and Tigray regions contributed to the sudden spike in the number of IDPs in the region; displaced people in the region also come from Oromia (Buno Bedele, Jimma, Nekemt and Kelem Wellega zones), Benishangul Gumz (Kemash zone), SNNP (Bench Maji zone) and Somali regions since October 2017. Overall, the IDPs lack adequate access to basic services such as food, water and sanitation, education, health, shelter and livelihoods.

- Humanitarian needs are expected to remain similar to 2018; with increased IDPs due to conflict-driven displacements but reduced needs in climate-induced drought. The Plan is expected to be officially released in February or early March 2019
- UNHCR has recently observed spontaneous movements of South Sudanese refugees mainly from Kule camp, home to approximately 55,000 refugees, as well as some from Nguenyiel, the newest camp in the Gambella Regional State.

2019 Ethiopia humanitarian needs to remain similar to 2018

The Government and partners have introduced the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) for the first time in Ethiopia this year. Using data from the *meher* needs assessment and other sources, the HNO provides the severity of humanitarian needs across sectors and geographic locations. Humanitarian partners have analyzed existing humanitarian information to reach consensus on priority acute humanitarian needs for targeting purpose. The consensus is reflected in the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which is expected to be officially released in February or early March 2019.

Preliminary *meher* assessment reports indicate that the level of humanitarian needs in 2019 will remain similar to 2018 mainly due to mass internal displacements in various parts of the country, and related humanitarian and protection needs. The country registered one of the fastest growing internally displaced population (IDPs) in the world in 2018. More than 80 per cent of at least 3 million IDPs in the country (1/3 of whom displaced in 2018) cited inter-communal violence as the primary driver of displacement. Other displacements are due to protracted drought and seasonal flooding. Women and the youth account for 51 per cent of the displaced population in the country, calling for gender and youth-sensitive programming in addressing the displacement crisis such as prevention of gender-based violence, availing education, vocational training and other livelihood opportunities. This is also in a bid to prevent secondary movements, including irregular migration.

Meanwhile, humanitarian needs resulting from direct/immediate drought impact have decreased. The *kiremt* (July – September) rains in *meher* harvest dependent areas performed well in 2018. Despite the overall good seasonal rainfall performance, food insecurity and malnutrition remained high in 2018 and will remain so in 2019. This is the result of lack of recovery for the people affected by back-to-back droughts from mid-2015 to mid-2017, as well as failed rains in pocket areas of the country in 2018, including in central SNNP and eastern Oromia regions and in large parts of south and southeastern Ethiopia where the *deyr/hagaya* (September-November) rains were drier than normal.

UNHCR notes spontaneous movement of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia

UNHCR has recently observed spontaneous movements of South Sudanese refugees mainly from Kule camp, home to approximately 55,000 refugees, as well as some from Nguenyiel, the newest camp in the Gambella Regional State. UNHCR staff on the ground reported up to 3,000 refugees may have left the two camps on 31 January and 1 February 2019, with limited movements continuing from Kule camp as of 5 February 2019.

In some cases, whole families were seen leaving the camp with their belongings. The reasons for the sudden departures and their final destination remained unclear. However, some refugees indicated that they were returning to South Sudan for fear of retaliatory action following the recent sub-clan based conflicts in the camp. Others said they were going to visit their families and would eventually return to the camp.

Sources within South Sudan said up to 5,000 refugees had spontaneously returned to South Sudan from Ethiopia since mid-December 2018, a number of which returned to Maiwut and Nasir Counties in Upper Nile State and were accommodated in makeshift shelters. It is understood that it is their intention to return to the camps in Ethiopia once security concerns are addressed.

Sub-clan based fighting that erupted in the Gambella camps at the beginning of January has since subsided. The government continues to engage with community elders, refugee

and host community representatives as well as the humanitarian community to restore a durable peace within the camps.

UNHCR in Ethiopia is closely monitoring the situation in close coordination with agency colleagues in South Sudan.

Currently, Ethiopia hosts more than 400,000 South Sudanese refugees mainly hosted in seven camps in the Gambella region.

PM Abiy discusses with Western Wollega zone community

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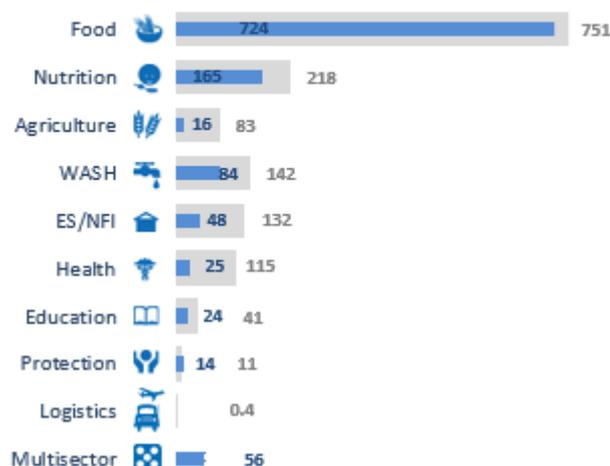
On 17 February 2019, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Lemma Megersa, Chief Administrator of Oromia region held a discussion with community members of Begi *woreda* in Western Wollega zone, according to the Office of the Prime Minister. During the discussion, Premier Abiy stressed the importance of unity to enable peace and development, and asked the community to be forward looking and growth oriented. He also urged the community to nurture a culture of dialogue in solving problems. Responding to the community's grievance about limited infrastructure, Abiy stated "irrigation projects to ensure farmers in the area are beneficiaries and will begin to address some of the concerns raised."

The initiative taken by Government to ensure peace and security will help humanitarian partners to scale up life-saving assistance in the region. Nearly 250,000 people were displaced by inter-communal violence in Benishangul Gumuz region and across the border in East and West Wollega zones of Oromia region since late September 2018. The overall response is improving in East and West Wollega; while Kamashi zone remains inaccessible to humanitarian partners due to insecurity.

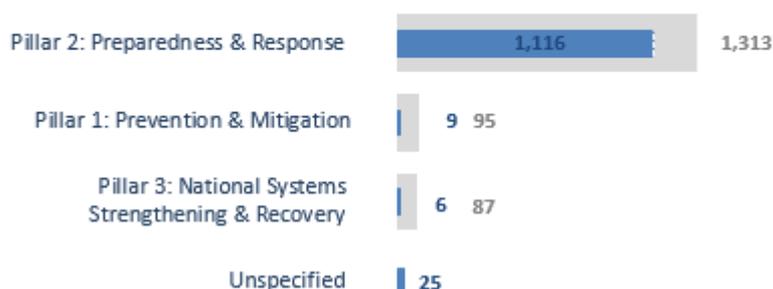


Ethiopia: 2018 HDRP Funding Update (as of 15 January 2019)

Requirements and funding per sector - \$million



Requirements and funding per pillar- \$million



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