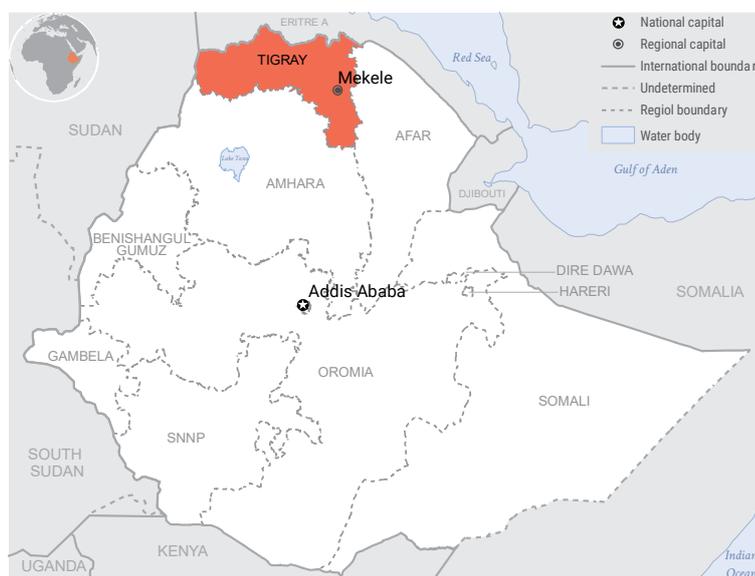


This report is produced by OCHA Ethiopia and covers the period from 17 to 20 November 2020. The next report will be issued on Tuesday, 24 November.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Humanitarian access and telecommunications remain a challenge in most parts of Tigray region, making it difficult to assess the full extent of the impact of the ongoing conflict on the population and the security of humanitarian workers.
- Humanitarian actors in Tigray region have reported a shortage of food, fuel and cash. About 96,000 refugees risk lack of access to water due to a looming shortage of fuel to run water pumps.
- The Federal government is in the process of activating a humanitarian coordination mechanism to provide lifesaving assistance to affected population in Tigray, Afar and Amhara. The Ministry of Peace will be leading this with the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA).
- In Sudan, humanitarian actors have raised concern over the increased influx of Ethiopians into eastern Sudan, where more than 31,000 new arrivals have been registered as of 19 November.
- The protection of civilians impacted by the conflict remains an overarching humanitarian concern.



Tigray region, Ethiopia. Source: CSA, OCHA. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

600,000

Pre-conflict relief food beneficiaries

1M

PSNP clients

100,000

Pre-conflict IDPs

96,000

Refugees

1.1M

Projected additional people needing assistance due to the conflict (in Tigray, Amhara, and Afar)

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Fighting between Federal and Tigray regional forces in Ethiopia has reportedly moved towards densely populated areas in eastern Tigray. Fighting has also been reported around Shire, where thousands of refugees live, and where humanitarian actors have their main operational bases for the refugee operation.

Access to the affected areas remains a challenge due to insecurity. Telecommunication channels remain down, road and air access closed, and banks only providing minimum services, hampering movement of personnel and supplies into the region and within the region.

Humanitarian partners in Tigray continue to warn that available stocks - including food and medical supplies - will soon be exhausted, putting millions at risk of food insecurity, malnutrition, and health risk, amongst others. Nearly two million people need life-saving support, including food, water, shelter, health, and protection services. According to ICRC, health care facilities in Tigray and Amhara already urgently need medical supplies and support to care for the influx of wounded. Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) has transported people injured in areas affected by clashes, while more than 1,000 people have contacted the ICRC's hotline and visited its office in Mekelle and Addis Ababa looking for help to reach their families.

The Tigray Regional Emergency Coordination Center has just finalized the revision of its Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan. The plan estimates that over 1 million people will be displaced by the conflict and will need lifesaving humanitarian assistance. The plan also recognizes existence of other vulnerable population in the region, including refugees, returnees and PSNP clients.

Population displacement has been reported from Western Tigray- most displaced people fleeing to Sudan. As of 20 November, UNHCR Sudan reports the arrival of over 31,000 asylum seekers from Ethiopia. Other large number of IDPs has been reported in Shire areas but numbers are still not confirmed. The IOM managed Displacement Tracking Mechanism is working to verify these numbers. Some 800 IDPs are currently displaced in Addi Adekay district, North Gondar zone, Amhara region due to the conflict (displaced from Medebey Zana district, Tigray region), while IDPs who had arrived from Alamata Town (Tigray region) in Kobo district, North Wollo, Amhara region reportedly returned to their places of origin after the Ethiopian National Defense Forces reportedly took control of these areas. New IDPs were also reported in Midre Genet district, West Gonder zone, Amhara region and Dalul district, Kilbati zone, Afar region.

Humanitarian partners in Ethiopia are further concerned about the increasing report of violence in Oromia and Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) regions. Violent incidents involving unidentified armed groups have been reported on an almost daily basis, mainly in the Western Oromia region, while several thousand people were reportedly displaced by inter-communal violence in Konso zone, SNNPR on 16 November.

Cross-border impact

Tigray's situation continues to have a spill-over on the humanitarian responses in Sudan. UNHCR is warning that a full-scale humanitarian crisis is unfolding as thousands of refugees flee ongoing fighting in Ethiopia's Tigray region.

Sudan

In collaboration with humanitarian workers, authorities in Sudan are registering the arriving refugees and providing them with assistance, including food, water, blankets, sleeping mats, and temporary shelters. According to UNHCR, more than 31,500 new arrivals have been registered in eastern Sudan between 7 and 19 November, with an average arrival of nearly 3,500 people per day. The asylum seekers are hosted in Kassala (19,980), Gedaref (10,700) and Blue Nile States (680). At least 53 per cent of the total new arrivals are male, while 45 per cent are children below 18 years old and 4 per cent are above 60 years old.

The asylum seekers, whom the majority reportedly walked on foot for days to enter eastern Sudan, report significant security and protection challenges while on transit. UN officials in Sudan report that the asylum seekers appeared exhausted, with many reporting incidents of family separation, as people fled in haste in search of safety. Humanitarian actors have raised concern over the risk of COVID-19 transmission as people integrate into the new settlements. Tigray region, according to WHO, is the third most affected region in terms of COVID-19 cases in Ethiopia.

Priority needs include shelter, food, and water and relocation to safe areas away from the borders. Fuel shortages, limited number of vehicles, and poor road conditions are hampering refugees' relocation from the border to settlement areas in Sudan and the delivery of supplies. The situation in eastern Sudan is already dire as the asylum seekers arrive at a part of Sudan where the host community also faces urgent needs, with some communities enduring Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity. People in eastern Sudan are recovering from recent floods that added to an already fragile situation due to a dire economic crisis, endemic and recurrent disease outbreaks, and the impact of COVID-19. Additional funding is urgently needed to enable humanitarian partners to scale-up their responses to the rapidly escalating crisis.

HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

UN and NGOs in Tigray continue to assist vulnerable people with available stock. OCHA is working closely with all humanitarian partners in Ethiopia to mobilize resources and critical personnel for the response, pre-positioning stocks and strengthening coordination.

UNHCR, in partnership with the Government Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), UN agencies and NGO partners is continuing to extend protection and humanitarian assistance to over 96,000 Eritrean refugees who are mostly sheltered in the refugee camps and the host communities in Tigray. Access to the four refugee camps in Tigray, namely Adi Harush, Hitsats, Mai-Aini and Shimelba, remains possible, with essential services still functioning. However, recent reported fighting around Shire has disrupted communication and the ability to follow the situation in the camp in the area. Overall, the ability to assist both refugees and the internally displaced is greatly constrained amid a reduced humanitarian presence and available commodity. There is high likelihood of agencies fast running out of stock if supplies are not ensured immediately.

UNHCR and IOM are working on emergency tracking tools to allow the registration and counting of IDPs. Under the coordination of the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERC), UNHCR is working to deliver Core Relief Items (CRIs) for 5,000

IDPs in Shire. An emergency centre has been set up by ERC in Shire and has, so far, been equipped with 500 mattresses and 500 First Aid Kits. Combined humanitarian actors' efforts allow the delivery of water, soap and biscuits, and other essential items.

The protection of populations impacted by the conflict remains an overarching humanitarian concern. In addition to aid workers' safety, ensuring the safety and access of civilians to vital goods and services remain a priority for humanitarian partners. Free and uninterrupted access to commercial supplies needs to be guaranteed. The humanitarian community is calling on all parties to the conflict to ensure safety and freedom of movements for all civilians, including aid workers, so that people affected by the conflict in Afar, Amhara and Tigray can receive urgently needed life-saving assistance.

COORDINATION

The Federal government is in the process of activating a humanitarian coordination mechanism to provide lifesaving assistance to affected population in Tigray, Afar and Amhara. The Ministry of Peace will be leading this with the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA).

UNHCR Ethiopia and partners are convening regular inter-agency coordination cell in Shire to discuss the evolving situation, which involves both refugee issues and the emerging IDP situation.

The regional Disaster Risk Management Bureau and OCHA are regularly convening Inter-cluster coordination platforms in Semera and Bahir-darto coordinate response in Afar and Amhara regions and assist IDPs fleeing from the conflict.

On 12 November, the Tigray Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) held its first meeting since the conflict erupted. The meeting was chaired by the Bureau of Agriculture and OCHA. Meeting participants, representatives from sector bureaus and humanitarian partners, agreed to hold physical meetings twice a week to discuss humanitarian situation and coordinated response. Partners decided to map available stock, updated respective contingency plans and start implementing it. An information desk will be established for partners to access information in the midst of the communication blackout.

On 19 November, the Tigray ECC meeting updated the Tigray Emergency Response Plan in accordance with the developing situation. On 20 November, a team from the Tigray regional Early Warning department, WASH, Health sectors and the national NGO REST will travel to Axum and Adigrat to establish hot meal services for displaced people who are fleeing violence. The team was also requested to conduct registration of the IDPs and will provide transportation services to places where they would like to go.

FUNDING UPDATE

A Humanitarian Preparedness Plan targeting nearly 2 million people has been finalized by the Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team. The plan seeks US\$75.7 million to provide life-saving assistance to people affected by the conflict in Tigray, Afar, and Amhara regions until January 2021. The targeted population includes existing humanitarian caseload and additional 1.1 million people expected to need assistance due to the conflict.

The total 'top priority' funding requirements to facilitate the minimum preparedness activities to response to the projected needs between November 2020 and January 2021 is US\$ 96.9 million. Considering available resources, the outstanding requirements is \$75.7 million (see breakdown in the table below). Protection mainstreaming will be promoted across all sectors by incorporating protection principles in humanitarian assistance and promoting access, safety, and dignity in humanitarian assistance. While additional in-house capacities can be mobilized, regional and international support is required, both in terms of technical and financial support to ensure effective and timely humanitarian assistance to the evolving humanitarian context in northern Ethiopia.

Below is the sector breakdown of the Preparedness Plan requirements per sector.

Sector	Total requirement (US\$ Millions)	Outstanding requirements (gap) (US\$ Millions)
Education	2.9	2.9
ES/NFI	18.5	15.3
Food	36.9	26.6
Health	9.8	8.7
Logistics	5.0	4.5
Nutrition	8.5	3.1
Protection	2.6	2.1
WaSH	12.8	12.5
Total	\$ 96.9 M	\$ 75.7 M