

## NORTHERN ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY SITUATION

30 AUGUST 2022

### ETHIOPIA

On 24 August, reports emerged of renewed fighting in the Tigray region between the Ethiopia National Defence Forces (ENDF) forces and Tigrayan Forces (TF) around the town of Kobo (on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border) ending a months-long ceasefire. The security situation in northern Ethiopia is becoming more complex following this resumption of hostilities. Intensive clashes have since continued at the towns along the borders between the Tigray region and the Amhara and Afar regions.

There are reports of TF gaining ground especially in the Amhara region creating secondary displacement of IDPs in the region. On 30 August, UNHCR was informed that thousands of IDPs were moving from the Jara IDP site in Amhara region hosting over 30,000 IDPs towards Chifra in the Afar region. Similar movements have been reported by authorities of IDPs moving into Tigray region from Afar and Amhara regions. In Afar region alone, the authorities have reported that over 110,000 persons have been displaced since last week.

Efforts to bring humanitarian aid into Tigray were suspended following the outbreak of fighting on 24 August and the blocking of access roads. Just before the humanitarian corridor was closed, UNHCR in Mekelle received 18,000 liters of fuel and three (3) trucks with CRIs, while five trucks of 40 metric tons, each loaded with clothes (4) and administrative items (1) are on standby in Semera, pending entrance into Tigray.

The cancellation of the UNHAS flight to Mekelle has resulted in a complete lack of cash flow into the operation, which will affect UNHCR's response on the ground. In Shire, with low fuel and cash flow, UNHCR suspended the relocation of Eritrean refugees from Adwa to the camps in Mai Tsebri, the distribution of CRIs to refugees, and the IDP return activities.

UNHCR currently has 157 staff (108 national, 49 international) in northern Ethiopia (Amhara, Afar, Tigray) and continues to deliver operational activities to the extent possible in all the three regions, taking precautionary measures as required. UNHCR staff are present on a daily basis in the Mai Tsebri (Tigray), Alemwach (Amhara) and Aysaita and Serdo (Afar) Eritrean refugee camps. Field Units in Abi Adi, Maichew and Adigrat, teams deployed for assessments and CRIs response in South and South-eastern Tigray have been recalled to Mekelle. A total of 11 staff from Shire and Mekelle who had departed on leave are currently unable to return to Tigray. UNHCR Business Continuity and Contingency plans are being updated accordingly.

### SUDAN

The resumption of fighting between the ENDF and TF on 24 August prompted a review of preparedness measures for a potential influx in Gedaref and Kassala states. State authorities, including the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) and other local officials indicate that although no sign of an influx has been observed as of yet, they anticipate that if an influx occurs, it could be a mix of Tigrayans, Amhara and Eritreans who could cross at a variety of locations along the border, and who would be distributed to different refugee camps in Sudan. One of the key triggers for a renewed influx into Sudan could be if the conflict moves to Western Tigray. Current contingency figures agreed upon with government and partners to inform planning and preparedness are for an influx between 15,000 (the most likely scenario) and 30,000 (worst case scenario). Immediate priorities include border monitoring, repositioning of stocks, and to ensure readiness to receive additional numbers at Um Rakuka and Babikri camps. So far in August, a total of 259 new arrivals were recorded in eastern Sudan.

#### Contacts

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