

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY SITUATION

August-September 2022



Azmera here preparing a meal for her family, is a civil engineer from Tigray region of Ethiopia who is now living as a refugee in Tunaybah camp in Gedaref, Sudan. She works with Medair in the camp, supervising the construction of durable shelters (tukuls) to help her community live safely and in dignity. © UNHCR/Afarin Dadkhah Tehrani

Key Developments

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 on multiple fronts, especially at the towns along the borders between the Tigray region and the Amhara and Afar regions.

The renewed fighting in northern Ethiopia is having serious impacts for refugees and existing internally displaced populations. Humanitarian needs are on the increase as significant new internal displacement have also been reported in all three regions.

Efforts to bring humanitarian aid into Tigray were suspended following the outbreak of fighting on 24 August and the blocking of access roads. The cancellation of the UNHAS flight to Mekelle resulted in a complete lack of cash flow into the operation, affecting UNHCR's response on the ground.¹ Due to the volatile security situation throughout Tigray including the increase in airstrikes, UNHCR field missions were suspended for some days in

¹ By the time this report was published, UNHAS flights had resumed on 8 October 2022.

September, also following an announcement from the Ethiopian government that aid organizations should refrain from working in areas where the government is taking 'preventive measures.'

On 11 September, the Tigray regional government [announced](#) that it is "ready to participate in a robust peace process under the auspices of the African Union and is ready to abide by an immediate and mutually agreed cessation of hostilities in order to create a conducive atmosphere. On 14 September, the [Ethiopian government said](#) it is "committed" to the AU-led peace process aimed at ending the near two-year conflict in the north. The UN Secretary General has ["encouraged"](#) the parties to engage actively with the AU-led process in good faith and without delay and to create conducive conditions for the talks to take place."

Ethiopia Response

Eritrean refugee response

In **Tigray**, in early September, authorities in Shire advised humanitarian agencies to suspend all movements from and to Mai Tsebri town and the two Eritrean refugee camps Mai Aini and Adi Harush due to the worsening security situation in the area. However, despite the volatile security situation, UNHCR and WFP were eventually able to travel to Mai Tsebri to conduct the general food distribution for the months of September and October from 23-28 September. In total, 9,800 refugees (5,922 in Mai Aini and 3,878 in Adi Harush) received monthly food rations. WFP also delivered nutrition supplies to lactating and pregnant mothers as well as to children 6-59 months. Refugees also received one month of laundry soap supplies and additional CRIs distribution.

In **Afar**, most activities were ongoing uninterrupted. On 19 September, UNHCR conducted a two-day training for 20 Refugee and Returnee Services (RRS) and UNHCR staff, including registration, protection, field and resettlement staff.

In **Amhara** region, humanitarian activities are ongoing at the Alemwach settlement for Eritrean refugees.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) response

There are reports of some 210,000 new IDPs in the north-west around Shire. Their situation remains dire as they have been trapped in a conflict zone without food, water, relief items and shelter for several weeks. Assessment have found many unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), elderly, persons with chronic illnesses and women-headed families. UNHCR is taking the lead in emergency shelter response and Core Relief Items (CRIs) for the new IDPs. Other agencies are providing additional household items and WASH and water treatment supplies.

Despite the security challenges in **Tigray**, the protection team has continued to deliver to the extent possible in Mekelle. UNHCR distributed Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) kits to 2,524 women and girls in 4 IDP sites in Mekelle. The distribution took place between 21-29 September. UNHCR and partners are continuing with IDP response activities wherever possible and have completed the maintenance of 120 emergency shelters out of the 159 planned in Sebacare IDP site in Mekelle while 30 family tents were pitched in Quiha site to support IDPs displaced from Afar. The IDP return exercise from Mekelle to various locations in the central zone that started on 20 August was interrupted at one point but eventually resumed in early September. A total of 689 individuals (361 households) were able to return between 20 August and 6 September. UNHCR, partners and the local authorities continue to facilitate returns where possible. IDP returnees were provided with cash assistance for transportation, core relief items (CRIs), and dignity kits were distributed to women and girls.

Between 16-30 September, Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS) conducted home visits across IDP sites in Shire, Adwa and Endabaguna providing counselling services to 1,738 IDPs. During their visits, they observed critical shortages of food, shelter as well as lack of hygiene and sanitation supplies.

A Protection Desk has been set up in Endabaguna. IHS started psycho-social support and referrals of IDPs to other agencies for further support based on their needs. In Seleleka, IDPs were also referred to International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVT) mobile health teams. In total some 80

IDPs including 25 women received medication, nutritional and mental health and psychosocial support services between 16-30 September. In Adwa, awareness raising sessions on how to prevent malaria and other seasonal outbreaks reached more than 2,700 IDPs. A total of 655 IDPs, including 61 women, were trained on how to identify and register persons with specific needs.

In early September, the Protection Cluster in Shire area of operation conducted a protection assessment mission to two new displacement areas of Zelazile and Kalawilo, where most of the IDPs were displaced for the second time, coming from Sheraro. Protection response priorities include awareness raising on gender-based violence, assistance to pregnant and lactating mothers and persons with disabilities, mental health and psychosocial support needs, distribution of dignity kits for women and girls, and urgent support for unaccompanied and separated children.

In **Afar**, according to the local government, there are approximately 174,000 new IDPs in the region in need of humanitarian assistance. Our local partners are providing some detail on different groups of IDPs but many are in areas that are hard to reach due to insecurity and heavy rainfall.

In the **Amhara** region, local authorities have reported the displacement of 155,200 IDPs from different zones. Local authorities in these zones have asked for immediate assistance including food, shelter, and other life-saving support. UNHCR and partners are exploring options to provide the required assistance.

Some IDP sites in the region (Jara in North Wollo and Sekota in Wag Hemra) were not accessible to humanitarian partners throughout September to provide much-needed services. Movement restrictions beyond Debarke have similarly prevented access to Zarema IDP site. In other areas of central Amhara, UNHCR has been able to support voluntary return movements of some IDPs to their areas of origin.

Sudan Response

The resumption of fighting in northern Ethiopia 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 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. Immediate priorities include border monitoring, prepositioning of stocks, and to ensure readiness to receive additional numbers at Tunaydbah, Um Rakuba and Babikri camps.

On 23 September, UNHCR declared an internal Level 1 emergency for Sudan due to the deteriorating situation in Ethiopia and to enable enhanced preparedness and response capacity on the ground. The Level 1 declaration for Sudan will remain in force for an initial period of six months.

On 25 September, Commissioner for Refugees (COR) staff in Gedaref, announced that they would be joining the COR strike taking place in other parts of the country. Since then, UNHCR and partners have been denied access to Um Rakuba, Tuneydbah and Babikri camps for certain activities. This has caused disruption in the delivery of other services and implementation of programmes. The planned duration of the strike is still unclear. UNHCR management continues to engage with COR in Khartoum, Gedaref and the camps to advocate for access for staff and partners to the extent possible and ensure provision of essential services are sustained.

The situation in Hamdayet (entry point and reception center bordering the Tigray region) remains calm with fighting in Ethiopia reportedly taking place at a distance from Sudan's eastern borders for the time being. Sudanese authorities, however, have expressed continued safety concerns for organizations should fighting move closer to the border.

Efforts are underway to create additional space for potential new arrivals in Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba. On 11 September, UNHCR and partners began the assessment of vacant plots in Tunaydbah to determine the capacity for accommodating new arrivals. In Um Rakuba, COR has committed to demarcate new plots in Zone 4 to accommodate an estimated 1,000 to 2,000 new arrivals.

In Gedaref, an interagency mission led by UNHCR visited a proposed site for a new transit centre in Al Qureisha on 21 September. The site is approximately 50 km away from Al Asera border point. It has been proposed by COR as a potential transit centre for Amhara refugees. However, its distance from the border might also make it suitable for a small camp for longer-term occupation in the event of a relatively small number of Amhara new arrivals.

UNHCR teams from Gedaref and Kassala, together with COR, conducted a monitoring mission to Gergef reception centre during the week of 26 September (despite the COR strike). Gergef is on the border with Eritrea and could be a possible entry point for arrival of Eritreans. While the overall condition of the reception centre is good, some facilities, particularly access to water, sanitation and hygiene need rehabilitation. COR has advised that in the event of an influx, tents and communal shelters could be erected on the land opposite the reception centre. At the moment, only two partners are present at the reception centre.

KENYA

NEW ARRIVALS AND BORDER DYNAMICS

Kakuma and Kalobeyei: A total of 12 Ethiopians were received between 7-20 September and are currently residing at Kakuma and Kalobeyei reception centers (RCs). All of the individuals entered Kenya through the Moyale border and travelled to Nairobi, and then to Kakuma. By end of September, a total of 60 Ethiopian individuals were in the two RCs (40 in Kakuma RC and 20 in Kalobeyei).

Daadab: During the period 9 - 22 September, UNHCR's legal partner, the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK), conducted border monitoring and reported the arrival of 14 Ethiopian individuals (8 males, 6 females) into the country through the El Wak and Mandera border points. Twelve (12) individuals reported to have arrived in Kenya in search of economic opportunities – predominantly casual labour – while two were asylum-seekers. Since the beginning of the year, 482 Ethiopians have been recorded to have crossed into the country through the Mwingi, Mandera, El Wak and Wajir border areas.

SOUTH SUDAN

NEW ARRIVALS AND BORDER DYNAMICS

Between 19-27 September, UNHCR saw an increase in spontaneous refugee returns to Pibor in South Sudan from Ethiopia; about 564 individuals have crossed over from the camps in Ethiopia bordering South Sudan. Based on protection monitoring reports, this increase in returns is attributed to a shortage of services in the country of asylum, closure of schools, and a cut in food rations, as well as conflict between the Murle and the Anyuak ethnic group of Ethiopia (along the Gambella region and South Sudan border).

In addition, between 26 September and 2 October, UNHCR monitored refugee returns and tracked population movements through the monitoring desks established in Akobo East, Jebel Boma, and Pochalla counties (Jonglei State). A total of 148 individuals spontaneously returned to South Sudan via Akobo East from Ethiopia. According to the returnees, the main reasons for return, among others, are improved security in South Sudan, desire for family reunification, reduction of monthly food rations in Ethiopia and an eagerness to check / attend to properties.

SOMALIA

NEW ARRIVALS AND BORDER DYNAMICS

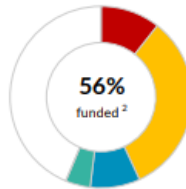
UNHCR through its partner, Legal Clinic, continues to conduct border monitoring activities along Somalia's various entry and exit points. During the months of August and September, in Dollow, UNHCR recorded some 400 individuals outgoing towards Ethiopia and over 1,150 individuals entering Somalia. Most of those entering Somalia cited various reasons for their movement, including insecurity, drought, lack of livelihood opportunities, family reunification and seeking humanitarian assistance.

Funding Overview



FUNDING UPDATE | 2022

\$205.4 million
 UNHCR's financial requirements 2022 ¹



**ETHIOPIA
 EMERGENCY**
 as of 29 September 2022

■ Tightly earmarked
 ■ Earmarked
 ■ Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
 ■ Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
 □ Funding gap (indicative)

 CONTRIBUTIONS ³ | USD

	Unearmarked	Softly earmarked	Earmarked	Tightly earmarked	Total
Japan	-	82,075	6,000,000	1,500,000	7,582,075
Italy	-	-	-	3,570,192	3,570,192
Education Cannot Wait	-	-	-	1,513,645	1,513,645
United Arab Emirates	-	-	-	904,018	904,018
Band Aid	-	-	-	611,247	611,247
UNO-Fluechtlinghilfe	-	538,221	-	-	538,221
Country-Based Pooled Funds	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
European Union	-	-	-	489,744	489,744
Republic of Korea	-	-	400,000	-	400,000
Spain	-	-	-	38,900	38,900
Other private donors	-	126,379	-	-	126,379
Sub-total	-	746,675	6,400,000	9,127,746	16,274,420
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	9,056,860	17,437,524	60,273,909	12,668,731	99,437,024
Total	9,056,860	18,184,199	66,673,909	21,796,477	115,711,445

Methodology: Unearmarked funding is allocated and reallocated multiple times during the year to allow UNHCR to fund prioritised activities. This funding update includes an indicative allocation of funds so as to accurately represent the resources available for the country. The contributions earmarked for Ethiopia Emergency shown above are combined with an indicative allocation of the softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions listed below. This allocation respects different levels of earmarking. Adjustments relate to programme support costs and carry-over.

OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁴ | USD

United States of America 303.7 million | Canada 12.4 million | Private donors Australia 7.4 million | Private donors USA 7.2 million | Sweden 5.8 million | Private donors Germany 4.3 million | Switzerland 3.6 million | Republic of Korea 2.9 million | Netherlands 2.4 million | France 2.1 million

Iceland | IGAD | Japan | Luxembourg | Norway | Spain | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁵ | USD

Sweden 99.3 million | Norway 72.5 million | Private donors Spain 51 million | Private donors Japan 40.9 million | United Kingdom 40.1 million | Netherlands 37.2 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Germany 27 million | Private donors USA 26.2 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 25.6 million | Japan 21.7 million | France 18.5 million | Switzerland 18.4 million | Private donors Italy 14.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.8 million | Private donors Canada 11.2 million | Private donors Sweden 10.4 million | Italy 10 million

Algeria | Armenia | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | Morocco | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

Notes:

- The financial requirements of the Ethiopia Emergency include requirements in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.
- The percentage funded (56%) and total funding amount (\$115,711,445) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$89,710,443 representing 44% of the financial requirements.
- Contributions to the Ethiopia Emergency are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.
- Due to their earmarking at a related region, sub-region, country or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for the Ethiopia Emergency. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.
- Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contributed \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

For more information: <http://reporting.unhcr.org>

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