

## NORTHERN ETHIOPIA SITUATION

February 2023



*Young Eritrean refugees playing in Alemwach refugee site in Dabat, Amhara region, Ethiopia. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno*

## ETHIOPIA

### Key developments

UNHCR's High Commissioner undertook [a visit to Ethiopia](#) from 5-7 February where he met with senior government officials and displaced communities including Eritrean refugees. The High Commissioner reaffirmed his commitment to support the humanitarian response for refugees and internally displaced people in Ethiopia and work towards achieving long-term solutions, including for those displaced by drought and the impact of climate change. Since the peace deal was signed in November last year, UNHCR and other partners have been able to scale-up the delivery of much-needed assistance including medicines, shelter materials, clothes, household items and blankets. During his visit, the High Commissioner also met with Ethiopia's President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and other officials, whom he thanked for Ethiopia's continued hospitality towards refugees.

On 6 February, the High Commissioner, UNHCR's Regional Director for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, and UNHCR's Representative in Ethiopia visited Tigray and Amhara regions. In Tigray, the delegation met with the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (AU-MVCM) in Mekelle followed by a Northern Ethiopia All Staff meeting in the Mekelle Sub-Office. The High Commissioner expressed his warm thanks to the colleagues who stayed and delivered throughout the conflict and ensured that UNHCR will continue to support IDPs to return to their homes. The High Commissioner also visited the Mai Woini IDP site in Mekelle, where he met with IDP families.

In the Amhara region, the delegation visited the Alemwach refugee settlement with the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) Director General where they met with refugee representatives and discussed various concerns affecting refugees including security and movement restrictions. The High Commissioner noted the suffering and resilience of the Eritrean refugees and appreciated their readiness for reconciliation after the crisis. He reiterated UNHCR's commitment to advocate for refugees to be considered in the peace process by all parties.

On 10 February, the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator authorized the lifting, with immediate effect, of the relocation status of personnel of United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) organizations and eligible family members of internationally and locally recruited personnel in Mekelle and Shire areas in Tigray Region.

The situation in Benishangul Gumuz region remains volatile and humanitarian actors on the ground are coordinating with government officials to deliver life-saving assistance. However, several thousand households remain in inaccessible areas with limited or no access to humanitarian assistance. Many are now also internally displaced in Amhara and Oromia regions.

## UNHCR refugee and IDP response

### Tigray region

In February, UNHCR and partners continued to support vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs with various forms of assistance across the Tigray region including through cash assistance, distribution of dignity kits, clothes and setting up family tents.

During the month of February, UNHCR's partner, Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS), established a child friendly space in Axum and it is now being accessed by 200 children.

Return and relocation counselling as well as profiling of IDPs is ongoing in Shire operating area. This is in close collaboration with authorities, IDP leaders and partners: Organisation for Social Services, Health and Development (OSSHD) and Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS). So far, 26,322 individuals in Shire, Axum and Sheraro sites have expressed willingness to return to their areas of origin.

During a Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) mission to Fatsi, Zalambessa and Erob, UNHCR and partners Action for the Needy (ANE) & IHS distributed CRIs to 4,500 IDPs. UNHCR and IHS conducted focus group discussions with IDP returnees in Ganta-Afeshum, Gulemkada and Hawzen as part of a protection and solutions monitoring exercise. The discussions revealed serious protection issues in areas of return and the findings will be shared with all relevant clusters for advocacy and response.

### Amhara region

Food distribution took place for refugees in Alemwach. It is to be noted that so far 919 refugees in Alemwach have expressed their wish and have registered to return to Eritrea.

Due to the ongoing fighting in the Oromia region, people continue to flee from East Wollega (Oromia) to North Shewa (Amhara) where over 300,000 persons are displaced in five woredas. The Disaster Risk Management Office requested urgent humanitarian assistance (food, CRIs, shelter, clothes, etc.) and the UNHCR team in Amhara is preparing to respond.

Two communal hangars were pitched in the Woinshet Paper Factory site in Debre Birhan to accommodate new IDP arrivals from Oromia. In addition, a total of 1,000 tents were received for the development of the newly allocated IDP site in Bakello Kebele in Debre Berhan to accommodate the new IDPs. Twenty (20) communal shelters (with a capacity to host approximately 1,000 individuals) and 7 blocks of communal kitchens were completed in the Turkish site in Dessie. Also in Dessie, UNHCR distributed CRIs to 2,680 new IDPs from Oromia

and dignity kits to 1,600 women and girls. In addition, 10 communal shelters and 3 blocks of communal kitchens are under construction in Mekane Yesus site, in Tehulederie woreda.

Relocation of IDPs originally from Oromia, from various locations within the Amhara region to Jara site in North Wollo continued through the month of February. More than 10,500 IDPs are hosted at the site. Protection services have been extended to the Adi Arkay return areas and its neighbouring woredas through UNHCR partner DICAC. Case workers and social workers have already been deployed to provide GBV response. UNHCR provided cash for shelter to 250 IDPs who found their houses destroyed upon return to Adi Arkay.

Following the spontaneous return of over 750 IDPs from Sekota to Abergele, an inter-agency survey mission led by OCHA was organized to better understand and identify their most urgent needs. According to the focus group discussions, 38,762 IDPs originating from Abergele are in favour of returning.

### **Afar region**

Since August 2022, a total of 9,508 IDPs have been supported with cash assistance to return to their areas of origin in the Afar region. In most return areas, the need for reintegration support remains unaddressed. UNHCR has provided 4 grinding mills since 2022 to some kebeles (wards), but more is needed. UNHCR's implementing partner, Organisation for Social Development (OSD), began its 10 Quick Implementation Projects designed to support reintegration.

On 24 February, UNHCR, together with local authorities and partners Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), OSD and WFP provided transportation and cash to 957 IDPs living in Semera and Logyia to return to Konneba.

In collaboration with Women Children and Social Affairs' office jointly with Dubti One Stop Center, UNHCR's partner, DICAC provided cash assistance to 23 GBV survivors for transportation and medication. In addition, DICAC provided awareness raising session on GBV and early marriage to 312 women and girls in Serdo and Aysaita camps.

### **Oromia region**

UNHCR is constructing fifty shelters at Geba Senbata IDP site in Nekemte to support vulnerable IDPs. In addition, UNHCR and its partner Wollega University visited the free legal aid center in the East Wollega zone prison where free legal aid services and psycho-social support were provided to nine prisoners.

UNHCR participated in a Rapid Shelter Needs Assessment in Nekemte town where IDPs displaced from Kamashi (Benishangul Gumuz), East Wollega, and West Wollega (Oromia) are living in inadequate shelters, in open spaces or in congested sites. According to the East Wollega zone officials, there are 20,399 IDPs who need urgent assistance. UNHCR through partner Wollega University is undertaking protection monitoring and providing free legal aid to the displaced population.

The legal aid centre has supported 96 IDPs, 40 of whom are women, with legal aid services (legal representation, awareness, counselling and writing). Due to the conflict, 11 courts in West Wollega zone are not functional and IDPs are reliant on UNHCR's free legal aid project to access legal services.

## **SUDAN**

**New arrivals:** In February, 74 new arrivals from Ethiopia were recorded entering eastern Sudan through Gallabat, Taya and Hamdayet. Some of the new arrivals are from Tigray and indicated that they had fled their villages a while ago due to conflict; however, they had been unable to cross into Sudan due to the heavy presence of military and armed forces at the border areas. Given that the military presence has reduced following the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities agreement, the refugees were able to cross the border into Sudan and join their family members.



## Operational update

**Peer-to-Peer mission:** Between 5-16 February, Sudan hosted a high-level delegation for the Peer-to-Peer mission that looks at the IASC coordination structure and the set-up of the UN in country. Representatives from UNHCR, OCHA, UN Women, and World Vision were part of the mission. In the meeting with the heads of UN agencies, UNHCR highlighted the organization's efforts to strengthen coordination with regard to the humanitarian response to the Ethiopia refugee situation.

**Relocation to camps in the East:** Following interviews with the refugees in Hamdayet and Village 8, some refugees who have been residing in these border locations have indicated a willingness to be relocated to the refugee camps in Gedaref. Despite limited access to services in these border locations, the refugees in these areas have been living in Hamdayet and Village 8 and had previously refused to be relocated to any of the refugee camps.

**Germany and Switzerland delegation visits Kassala and Hamdayet:** A delegation comprising of representatives from Germany and Switzerland undertook a mission to Kassala from 12-16 February with a focus on protection and counter-trafficking. Aside from visiting several of their funded projects in the Shagarab, Girba, and Kilo 26 camps, the delegation met with Commission for Refugees (COR) staff, community-based protection networks, and a youth group supporting counter-trafficking activities. On 14 February, the delegation visited Hamdayet where they met with COR staff, local security authorities, and community leaders. In addition, the delegation visited the reception center and spoke with a few of the refugee new arrivals from Eritrea. They were also taken near the border with Ethiopia to see the Tekeze river and areas where Ethiopian refugees had crossed into Hamdayet at the onset of the influx in November 2020.



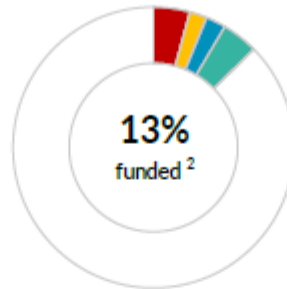
*The distribution of emergency shelter kits in Babikri settlement in Gedaref State, Eastern Sudan, as part of rainy season preparedness. The kits will help strengthen shelters against heavy winds and rains in this region. © UNHCR/Afarin Dadkhah Tehrani*

## Funding Overview



**\$193.86 million**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2023<sup>1</sup>



FUNDING UPDATE | 2023

### ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY

as of 28 February 2023



#### CONTRIBUTIONS<sup>3</sup> | USD

	■ Unearmarked	■ Softly earmarked	■ Earmarked	■ Tightly earmarked	Total
Private donors Germany	-	106,566	-	-	106,566
IGAD	-	-	-	44,439	44,439
Other private donors	-	4,142	-	-	4,142
<b>Sub-total</b>	-	<b>110,708</b>	-	<b>44,439</b>	<b>155,147</b>
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	8,079,036	4,364,727	3,916,945	8,056,342	24,417,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,079,036</b>	<b>4,475,435</b>	<b>3,916,945</b>	<b>8,100,781</b>	<b>24,572,197</b>

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<sup>4</sup> | USD

#### ■ UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS<sup>5</sup> | USD


Sweden 77.6 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

Notes:

- The financial requirements of the Ethiopia Emergency include requirements in Ethiopia and Sudan.
- The percentage funded (13%) and total funding amount (\$24,572,197) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$169,291,920 representing 87% 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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