

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA SITUATION

May 2023



Mashwa with her two children at the Mai Woini IDP site in Tigray. © UNHCR/Laurence Bron

ETHIOPIA

Security developments

The general security situation was calm in most parts of Tigray with some inaccessible areas in Southern and Eastern zones. Shire operation areas remained calm during the month of May despite the apparent insecurities along the remote rural villages bordering Eritrea. There were major security concerns in Afar related to inter-communal violence due to disputed land.

The pause in food distribution led to demonstrations in some of the major towns in Tigray demanding humanitarian support. The lack of food has severely affected internally displaced persons (IDPs), specifically people with chronic illnesses, children, pregnant and lactating mothers and survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Additionally, people are resorting to negative coping mechanisms which has become a security concern to humanitarian actors.

Despite the ongoing concerted efforts to facilitate the return of IDPs to North-western zone, there were confirmations of 5 kebeles where IDPs could not return due to security and protection issues.

In Afar, there were reports of unexploded ordinance (UXO) incidents causing fatalities and injuries in several woredas leading to demonstrations in an attempt, by residents, to get support from federal and regional Government. According to official reports from the law enforcement, Ethiopia National Defence Force (ENDF) commenced de-mining in Kasagita area and the activities are in progress.

UNHCR refugee and IDP response

Tigray region

IDPs

UNHCR and partners continued to respond to the needs of new IDP arrivals and IDP returnees in various locations of Tigray region.

An influx of IDPs was observed in Endabaguna coming from Mai Tsebri/Tselemti. UNHCR along with partners, the mayor's office, Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs (BoLSA) and community leaders, were engaged in verification of the IDP list in Axum IDP sites. A total of 15,870 IDPs were verified and validated by the authorities. These IDPs were displaced from seven woredas of Northwestern Zone of Tigray.

UNHCR and Development Expertise Centre (DEC) carried out distribution of partial CRI kits which benefitted 1,000 vulnerable and newly arriving IDP households in Endabaguna. A total of 50 vulnerable households in Selekleka IDP site benefited from UNHCR's direct distribution.

Following the decision by the Mekelle City Administration on a decision to have Maywoini Secondary School continue as an IDP site, pending realization of durable solutions, 182 IDP households were relocated from KIsanet to Maywoni IDP site in Mekelle Hadinet sub city in May. UNHCR's Camp Coordination Cluster (CCCM) partner, Action for the Needy in Ethiopia (ANE) is conducting an assessment to improve shelter conditions in the location.

In Mekelle, UNHCR and 16 partners conducted counselling and registration for IDPs from Northwest and Central zones for 78,164 individuals (17,549 households). Also in May, 26,025 individuals (6,049 households) returning to Northwest were supported including with cash for transportation, emergency cash, and core relief items (CRIs).

To complement the Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) in return areas, UNHCR has developed a Post Monitoring Assessment tool to measure the performance of the assisted return exercise. The assessment will be conducted for returnees residing in Shire and Asegede.

To address the impact of the oncoming rainy season, UNHCR and its partner ANE distributed 220,500 ETB to a total of 294 IDP households (750 ETB/Family / approximately USD 14) in Adi-Abi IDP site in Shiraro.

Construction of two semi-permanent protection desks were completed in Endabaguna and Selekleka IDP sites by the Development Expertise Center (DEC). The protection desks are utilized by UNHCR's protection partners for protection monitoring and consultation with IDPs. A similar protection desk is under construction in Shiraro.

Refugees

During the month of May, the protection team received 46 Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers at the reception centre bringing the total number of new arrivals to 207 since January 2023.

The identification of urban refugees and asylum-seekers is ongoing and a total of 1,167 have been profiled in Sheraro, Shire, Axum and Adwa. Out of the 1,167 refugees, 42% are children. Profiling of refugees and asylum-seekers is aimed at ensuring accurate information on the persons we serve to improve programming intervention.

Amhara region

IDPs

Construction of the Bakello site (Debre Birhan) is ongoing with 331 out of 358 shelters completed. The construction of WASH facilities is also ongoing. Authorities in Debre Birhan have however informed UNHCR and

partners that the site will not be extended further as they plan to have all IDPs in the collective sites transferred to their places of origin. It should be noted that these IDPs resided in the Oromia region and many of them have never lived in the North Shewa area in Amhara. According to the authorities, the presence of IDPs in Debre Birhan is a security concern. A committee will be established to manage this relocation. In the meantime, 3,800 of the most vulnerable IDPs (out of the 22,000 in Debre Birhan) will be identified and relocated to Bakello.

In North and South Wollo, UNHCR continued routine CCCM, protection and shelter activities in 11 collective IDP sites. Sanitary kit distribution reached 1,260 women and girls in Kutaber IDP site and within the Dessie host community.

In May, a total of 37 communal emergency shelters, damaged by the heavy storm at Jara IDP site were repaired and as a mitigation measure, UNHCR distributed 2,265 plastic tarpaulins to IDPs to reinforce their shelters to avert further effects from the storms. Three new free mobile legal aid centres have been opened in Kombolcha, Kemissie and Woldiya by the Wollo University to ensure legal complaints from IDPs and returnees are addressed.

Movements of IDPs were observed from some collective sites prompted by the search for livelihood opportunities. A total of 228 IDPs were reported to have left Borena site, South Wollo and about 2,110 IDPs from Jara site.

Refugees

The ongoing strife in Sudan continues to increase displacements into Ethiopia, principally, through the Metema border in West Gondar. As of 31 May, UNHCR screened 5,638 people among whom, 2,349 were recognized as refugees in Sudan.

In Alemwach, 110 refugees were issued with resident ID cards. The project for the issuance of the residence cards is a pilot project funded by the World Bank and led by the Government of Ethiopia. Following the resumption of registration of refugees in Alemwach, 825 newborns were registered in May. This will permit the documentation of the children, inclusion in available services/assistance and an updating of family composition attestation.

To support children in the host community, learning materials were provided to 576 in Chila primary and included exercise books, drawing books, pens, pencils, color pencils and erasers.

In commemoration of the Mental Health Awareness Month, UNHCR conducted training for partner agencies and representatives from the Woreda Health Office, Dabat Health Center and Dabat Primary Hospital with 24 participants. The training focused on highlighting the priority areas of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to UNHCR and expound more on the case management steps. Suicide prevention and response training was also conducted.

Afar region

IDPs

In May, UNHCR, the Protection Cluster and CCCM lead, successfully facilitated the voluntary return of 1,843 IDPs living with host communities in Samara, Logia and Dubti areas. The IDPs voluntarily returned to their home areas in Berhale and Abala. These returns conclude the Return Task Force's activities in Afar region.

UNHCR conducted a mission in Berhale to assess the situation of IDPs in secondary displacement in Dessa Korima informal settlement. While IDPs would like to return home, they need information on the situation in their home areas. Hence, UNHCR urged UNDSS and OCHA to conduct a security assessment to determine whether home areas in Abala and Berhale are conducive to return.

Refugees

A two-day registration training on ProGres (UNHCR's registration platform) was conducted for a total of 25 Registration and Protection staff of from RRS and UNHCR. This will build the registration capacity and expertise ahead of the planned Individual Comprehensive Registration (the collection of the complete set of biographical data on each individual within a group) and RRS' gradual taking over of registration activities as part of Ethiopia's registration multi-year action plan.

In May, GBV case management was provided for 18 GBV survivors in Aysaita and Serdo refugee camps. Medical referral and psychosocial support were provided for all the survivors.

In Berhale, UNHCR through its WASH partner International Medical Corps (IMC) supplied 2.7 million litres of safe drinking water to refugees in the camp. Repair and maintenance of the water supply network is ongoing. In Aysaita, 8.5 million litres of portable water to refugees and 3 million litres to the host community were supplied.

SUDAN

New Arrivals

In May, no new arrivals were recorded by the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) at border crossing points and reception centers. This abrupt and complete cessation of movement into Sudan is attributed to the ongoing conflict and the general security situation in the country. At the same time, there was a spike in secondary displacement, primarily from Khartoum to different locations in eastern Sudan. During the month of May, an estimated 9,631 refugees and asylum-seekers (4,378 families) self-relocated to Wad Medani (some 5,000 people) in Al Jazirah state and different locations in Gedaref state, including Um Gulja (4,024), Um Gargour (252), Um Rakuba (203) and Tunaydbah (152).

Operational Context

Over the course of the month, the general security situation in Gedaref remained relatively calm but unpredictable. Limited access to cash, shortage of fuel and supply chain disruptions remain key challenges which affect the ability of UNHCR and partners to deliver protection and assistance to persons of concern. In addition, the frequent network disruptions have rendered communication very difficult. Moreover, the influx of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers to Gedaref from Khartoum and other unsafe areas has added further pressure on already strained operational resources.

The deteriorating socio-economic conditions, loss of livelihoods and the surge in inflation have intensified hardship for displaced people and host communities alike. This, in turn, has further aggravated protection risks, including sexual exploitation and abuse, gender-based violence and human trafficking. Refugees have voiced concerns about the impact of the ongoing conflict on their safety and security and expressed anxiety about their future in Sudan. This in part caused some Ethiopian refugees to start self-mobilizing for returns, particularly those in Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba camps. UNHCR teams observed a series of intra-communal meetings between refugee leaders and community members where the topic of returns was reportedly discussed. This mobilization escalated in the last week of May into peaceful demonstrations by refugees in Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba whereby they called on the international community to facilitate their return to Ethiopia. On top of this, the arrival of the rainy season with heavy rainstorms and strong winds has already caused significant damage in the camps, pushing the operation in a race against time to respond to ever growing needs.

The 2023 participatory assessment was conducted in all the camps by multifunctional teams composed of representatives from UNHCR, partners, COR and other government entities. It focused on 13 thematic areas - access to justice, child protection, community participation, core relief items, education, food/nutrition, health, livelihood, peaceful co-existence, safety and security, sexual and gender-based violence, shelter and WASH. It provided an opportunity to consult refugees about protection risks, priorities and proposed solutions regarding the different issues. This was done through 127 focus group discussions and 47 semi-structured key informant

interviews and complemented by a desk review of secondary data. A total of 3,527 refugee men (1,869) and women (1,658) of different ages and backgrounds from Babikri (410), Tunaydbah (1,774), Um Gargour (44) and Um Rakuba (1,299) participated in the assessment. The findings of the assessment will be compiled in a report to be finalized in June and will help inform protection strategies and programmes of the operation.

In addition, community-based structures in all the three camps, Babikri, Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba received training on prevention of and response to abuse, exploitation and violence against children. These structures are expected to play a key role, particularly in the current context in supporting efforts to identify children at risk and in implementing prevention-related activities in the camps.

In May, the camps were affected by a number of fire incidents and strong rainstorms and winds. On 3 May, a fire broke out in the market of Um Rakuba village which is located adjacent to Um Rakuba camp. Two (2) refugee children sustained burn injuries due to the fire and promptly received medical treatment at the MSF clinic in the camp. No fatalities were recorded. The fire was put out before it could spread to the camp. Almost 100 market stalls and some 15 residential shelters belonging to the host community were destroyed in the blaze. A number of the destroyed market stalls belonged to refugees from Um Rakuba camp who had rented them from the host community for their businesses. Their livelihoods were, therefore, severely impacted due to the loss of their shops in the fire. Considering that the fire incident occurred outside the perimeters of the camp, UNHCR is exploring ways it can support those affected by the fire amid growing needs due to the influx of refugees and asylum-seekers in Gedaref from Khartoum and other unsafe areas and against already strained resources. As an immediate measure, UNHCR agreed with the local authorities to provide fuel for the local fire brigade which was unable to respond to this incident due to fuel shortage.

In Tunaydbah, six (6) small-scale fire incidents occurred in the camp, affecting 19 refugees. No fatalities or injuries were recorded, and the affected households received assistance including materials to rehabilitate their shelters. Moreover, a fire incident occurred on 22 May at the local market outside Tunaydbah camp, damaging 76 stalls of which some 47 were used by refugees for their businesses. About 23 people sustained burn injuries (including two COR staff members) due to the fire and received medical treatment at the MSF clinic in the camp. In addition, the IRC guesthouse was completely destroyed, therefore, IRC staff were relocated to Gedaref. The police are investigating the cause of the incident and will share the final report with COR and UNHCR. Moreover, COR advised all those who had been affected by the fire to file a report with the police.

On 27 May, a major storm hit Gedaref, affecting hundreds of refugee households and causing extensive damage to shelters and facilities in Um Gargour and Um Rakuba camps. No fatalities or injuries were reported. In Um Rakuba, some 500 refugee households (about 1,790 individuals) in different zones of the camps were impacted, with 200 shelters completely destroyed and 300 others partially damaged. In addition, a number of facilities, including the registration center, the multipurpose shelter in zone 3, UNHCR compound, a women's center in zone 1 and one of the youth centers sustained significant damage. The water network was not affected, however, a number of latrines were damaged. Similarly, in Um Gargour, over 50 of the tents which had been pitched to accommodate the relocated refugees and asylum-seekers collapsed and some 15 latrines and showers which had been recently installed were damaged. UNHCR, together with partners, immediately took action to assist the affected refugees and repair the damaged facilities and infrastructure. The storm caused extensive damage to infrastructure in Um Rakuba camp. In Babikri, heavy rains and strong winds which occurred on 29 May, caused damages to six (6) tukuls and nine (9) rakoubas, affecting 15 refugees. UNHCR and partners conducted a rapid assessment and provided the affected families with assistance to repair their homes.

Funding Overview



FUNDING UPDATE | 2023

\$201.9 million

 UNHCR's financial requirements 2023 ¹

**ETHIOPIA
EMERGENCY**

as of 23 May 2023


 CONTRIBUTIONS ³ | USD

	Unearmarked	Softly earmarked	Earmarked	Tightly earmarked	Total
CERF	-	-	-	1,200,003	1,200,003
Country-Based Pooled Funds	-	-	-	502,365	502,365
Private donors Germany	-	106,566	-	-	106,566
IGAD	-	-	-	44,439	44,439
Other private donors	-	32,894	-	12,467	45,361
Sub-total	-	139,460	-	1,759,274	1,898,734
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	11,097,901	8,921,135	11,965,167	9,317,484	41,301,687
Total	11,097,901	9,060,595	11,965,167	11,076,758	43,200,421

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 28.5 million | Canada 7.4 million | Japan 4.5 million | Finland 3.1 million | Private donors Australia 3 million | Switzerland 2.6 million

France | Isle of Man | Luxembourg | Spain | Sweden | Private donors :

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁵ | USD

Sweden 69 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | France 26.7 million | Private donors Spain 24.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Private donors Japan 13.3 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | 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 (21%) and total funding amount (\$43,200,421) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$19,728,703 representing 79% 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 \$50 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

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

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