

ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY SITUATION

31 January 2022



UNHCR distributes basic relief items including blankets, soap, mosquito nets, sleeping mats and buckets to households sheltered in a kindergarten in Mekele, Ethiopia. © UNHCR Olga Sarrado Mur

Key Developments

ETHIOPIA

On 21 January, UNHCR released a [media briefing note](#) expressing deep concerns at the deteriorating conditions faced by Eritrean refugees in the two remaining camps in the Tigray region, including the lack of food, water and medicine. After three weeks with no access due to the security situation, UNHCR staff managed to reach Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps on 17 January for the first time since the air strikes earlier in the month in and near the camps. UNHCR has been calling on all parties for a ceasefire and guaranteed safe passage that would allow voluntarily relocation of the more than 25,000 refugees remaining in the camps to a new site provided by the government of Ethiopia in Dabat in the neighboring Amhara region.

On 28 January, WFP issued a [press release](#) on food insecurity levels in Tigray, indicating that 4.6 million people, or 83 per cent of the region's population, are estimated to be food insecure. (The data excludes western Tigray.) The assessment, carried out in November 2021, also indicated that 2 million of these are severely food insecure, equivalent to Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 4 & 5 levels. WFP said that "*families are exhausting all means to feed themselves, with three quarters of the population using extreme coping strategies to survive.*" Levels of food insecurity are most worrying in North-Western, Eastern, and Central zones of Tigray, where families are suffering from severe to very severe levels of hunger. The full report can be found [here](#).

On 18 January, heavy fighting broke out in Tongo, Benishangul Gumuz Region (BSGR), reportedly between Ethiopian Security Forces and Unidentified Armed Groups (UAGs). Tongo refugee camp, which hosts some

12,000 refugees, was subsequently reportedly looted, and burned and all humanitarian staff evacuated from the area. The security situation in the area had been tense since December 2021 when fighting resulted in looting and burning of equipment from INGO and RRS offices and the relocation of humanitarian workers and government partners from Gure-Shembola refugee camp hosting some 10,000 refugees.

Some 22,000 refugees who had been residing in the two camps have since self-relocated to three main locations closer to Assosa, the regional capital. Benishangul Gumuz regional authorities have identified a new temporary site with capacity to accommodate 20,000 people. UNHCR and partners are working to install basic services including shelter, water points, and latrines and to begin relocating refugees to the new site as soon as possible.

The Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) Deputy Director General and UNHCR's Deputy Representative, along with senior management of WFP undertook a mission to Assosa from 27 to 28 January, to support the response and dialogue with the Regional Government. On 27 January, they met the Deputy President of BSGR and other relevant entities to discuss the emergency response. Cross border information sharing between UNHCR Ethiopia, and Sudan is ongoing, as well as for Government counterparts. The review of UNHCR regional contingency plans with Sudan is also underway.

Until recently refugees in BSRG had been hosted in five refugee camps: Sherkole (11,589), Tsore (18,484), Bambasi (19,337), Tongo (11,822) and Gure-Shembola (10,343). Majority of the refugees (about 46,183) come from Sudan (mostly Blue Nile State) and arrived in Ethiopia in successive waves.

Ethiopia Response

The humanitarian situation across northern Ethiopia continues to be deeply concerning for refugees, the internally displaced and host communities. Civilians have endured over one year of conflict with extremely limited basic services and assistance available, leading to a significant escalation in humanitarian needs with ongoing new displacements. The security situation remains volatile, affecting civilians and constraining humanitarian actors on the ground. Communication, electricity, and banking services remain intermittent.

Eritrean Refugee Response

On 17 January, UNHCR visited Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps in Mai Tsebri to assess the overall security situation and the most pressing needs of the refugees. In Mai Aini camp, the team held interviews with refugees and confirmed the reported drone strike on 5 January that resulted in three fatalities among refugees and four others wounded. The mission also confirmed the drone strike on a flour grinding mill in Mai Tsebri town on 10 January where seventeen people, mostly women, were killed and several others wounded. No refugee casualties were reported in this incident. While the overall security situation in the camps was reportedly calm, the refugees were seen selling their belongings including their clothes as they are in dire need of food and other essentials including water and healthcare.

Refugees also told UNHCR of increasing preventable deaths – more than 20 over the last six weeks – linked to the overall decline in conditions, and in particular the lack of medicine and health services. The clinics in the camps have been essentially closed since early January when they finally completely ran out of medicine. The lack of fuel means that clean water can neither be pumped nor trucked to the camps, with refugees resorting to collecting water from streams that are rapidly drying up, leading to a severe risk of water-borne diseases. Despite concerted efforts, the complete inability to move supplies into the region means that extreme hunger is an increasing concern. With food running out in the camp and no additional stocks available for distribution, refugees told us they had resorted to selling their clothes and few belongings to try to get food.

As of 26 January, in the new refugee site in Alemwach, a total of 670 verified refugees in Dabat are all hosted temporarily at the emergency collective centers in Dabat town, North Gondar. Construction work continues, with sixteen communal hangars with a capacity to accommodate 1,600 refugees almost completed, and an additional 22 hangars under construction to host some 4,000 persons.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

As of mid-January, the total number of IDPs in Debark, Amhara region, was 136,124 individuals, including 2,340 IDPs who recently arrived from Tselemti and Adi Arkay woredas. Given the increasing needs of IDPs, OCHA started a ten-day mission to interact with local authorities and humanitarian actors to strengthen coordination and response system to the IDP situation in Gondar/North Gondar.

On 24 January, the UNHCR Ethiopia Representative undertook a mission to Debre Birhan, Amhara region, during which he met with zonal authorities and visited two IDP sites hosting over 400 IDP households, most of whom have recently arrived in Debre Birhan from Dano woreda, West Shewa Zone of Oromia Region. On 25 January, the Representative and the Principal Situation Coordinator were joined by the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for East Africa, with whom they visited Dessie. The mission participated in CRI distribution to IDP new arrivals and met with UN agencies and partners operating in Dessie. The mission also met with the Commission for Food Protection and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Women, Children and Social Affairs (BoWCSA).

UNHCR is currently establishing a presence in Dessie where WFP, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and implementing partners are operating. UNHCR is working on expediting deployment of protection staff and finalizing partnership agreements to scale up its protection presence. Furthermore, UNHCR has initiated a Protection Working Group and is working on a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support framework. Dessie had been inaccessible and heavily impacted by the armed conflict for almost two months, during which infrastructures were destroyed leading to lack of adequate basic services required for communities and returning IDPs.

Following the recent fighting reported at the border between Tigray and Afar regions resulting in significant displacements, UNHCR and the Disaster Prevention and Food Security Programme Coordination Office (DPFSPCO) are working on a joint enrolment exercise of these IDPs to facilitate the planning and provision of assistance and services. So far, a total of 2,254 IDP households from five kebeles (wards/neighborhoods) have been enrolled.



Protection: In Mekelle, the last convoy of voluntary IDP returns in the operation that started in December 2021 departed on 25 January with 5,442 individuals (943 households). Since 8 December, 9,604 individuals (5,442 households) have returned to South-eastern, Central, South, Eastern and North-western zones of the Tigray region. UNHCR ensured that returns were informed, voluntary, safe, and dignified. This included the provision of CRIs, protection counselling, coordination of the Return Working Group and refreshments to the returnees.

Following the airstrike on Dedebeit IDP site on 7 January, the number of new IDP arrivals displaced from that site is increasing in Abi Adi. As of 24 January, 560 households had arrived in Abi Adi and UNHCR and OCHA completed a two-day rapid protection needs assessment in this area to better understand the protection concerns of the new arrivals and to identify people with specific needs.

On 26 January, the Disaster Prevention and Food Security Programme Coordination Office (DPFSPCO) and UNHCR led an ECHO mission to the IDP site in Semera and the newly identified site where the IDPs of Semera will be relocated once the site has been set up. The ECHO mission also visited Aysaita camp for Eritrean refugees together with the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS).



Shelter and Non-food Items: In Tigray region, zonal authorities with the support of the Emergency Taskforce launched a multisectoral assessment in Selekleka on 12 January, to relocate remaining

IDPs from Dedebit. Shelters were available to host 2,000 individuals in the school facilities. UNHCR committed to provide 500 standard kits of CRIs; 1,000 plastic sheets and contribute funds for transportation.

UNHCR provided a total of 200 CRI materials consisting of blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats and collapsible jerricans to Shire's Sehul hospital in support of wounded IDPs from Dedebit who had been transferred to the hospital. In addition, UNHCR also distributed packed water and NFIs consisting of 30 pieces of bedsheets, 14 dozen of two-liter packed water and 50 kg of dates to the wounded IDPs.

In Amhara region, on 10 January, UNHCR and partner Action Africa Help International (AAH-I) in Bahir Dar concluded the distribution of NFIs to 9,412 returnees (2,470 HH) and conflict affected populations in Sekota (8,041 persons/ 2,000 HH) and Sehala (1,371 persons/ 470 HH) in Wag Himra. The distribution of the NFI kits to the IDPs from Abala hosted in Semera site has been completed by ANE targeting 1,000 households.

In Afar region, UNHCR dispatched NFIs to two sites in Semera hosting 1,000 IDP households from Abala. Distributions of NFIs began on 6 January, with the participation of the IDP community and partners on the ground. A total of 5,000 core relief items are planned for distribution to returning IDPs in Dessie, South Wollo.

Relief assistance was also provided to IDPs from Abala who were brought by the local authorities to Semera. The IDPs received firewood, cooking pans and utensils to facilitate the establishment of a communal kitchen and preparation of the dry food provided by WFP. Additionally, UNHCR is working with ANE to prepare for NFI distribution to these IDPs following site layout to establish shelter and communal kitchen. UNHCR has also provided digging tools to IDPs for the construction of temporary latrines to prevent a health outbreak, pending installation of showers and latrines to cover hygiene and sanitation needs.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management: In Shire, UNHCR was selected by the sub-national CCCM Cluster as lead agency for the new IDP site in Selekleka for IDPs relocated from Dedebit after the 7 January airstrike. Following the relocation of over 5,000 IDPs from Dedebit to this new site, CCCM partners have been supporting the IDPs. IOM will support with partitioning of the communal halls which have been repurposed as an IDP center in the town. UNHCR conducted site planning activities including demarcation of the new site. UNHCR is preparing to set up Protection Desks and will also be providing CRIs and plastic sheeting.

On 26 January, WFP and UNHCR conducted blanket distribution of food to 6,949 individuals in Selekleka, residing in school facilities. WFP also distributed food to 81,500 individuals in Shire, representing 50 percent of the 163,000 IDPs planned for assistance in Shire.

Sudan Response

The Metema-Gallabat border crossing point was closed again by Sudanese authorities for security reasons, with only Ethiopian fuel trucks allowed entry. The border point at the edge of Fashega has not been primarily used by Ethiopian asylum seekers so far. Tigrayans have been arriving mainly through Hamdayet (opposite the border from Humera), while ethnic Qemant have been arriving south of Metema at the Taya border crossing.

On 9 January, UNHCR's Principal Situation Coordinator met with the Acting Wali of Gedaref and representatives from security forces and line ministries. UNHCR was strongly urged to ensure that all partners provide more support to host communities and to other local communities in Gedaref State. Overall, the message of the Sudanese authorities indicates that increased support for the host community will be critical to maintain peaceful co-existence between refugee and host communities.



Protection: UNHCR, the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW), Save the Children and UNICEF held case conference meetings for critical child protection cases. Various cases related to low school attendance and follow up modalities for unaccompanied and separated children were examined with support provided to refugees in line with the recommendations made by the team.

The GBV sub-working group is developing an information sharing protocol based on the results of a survey on the data sharing and processing practices of seven partners working on GBV referrals and case management in eastern Sudan. The sub-working group aims to have the information sharing protocol in place by end of February 2022.



Education: The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) completed the construction of two primary schools in Tunaydbah, each with six semi-permanent classrooms. A total of three primary schools will now be operating as of February 2022, helping increase the enrolment rate in the camp which stood at 20 per cent at the end of December 2021. Mobilization efforts have commenced to encourage parents to enroll their children in school, and the recruitment of 30 refugee teachers is also underway. NRC distributed education kits with stationaries and books to 3,400 students in Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba.

Save the Children International opened an additional Early Childhood Development Centre (ECDC) in Um Rakuba. This brings the total number of ECDCs to eight in Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba four in each camp providing services to over 90 per cent of refugee children aged four to five years old.



Health and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS): ALIGHT donated various medical equipment to Gedaref Hospital as part of ongoing efforts to support the host community and strengthen the capacity of the existing national healthcare system. Equipment included blood count machines, microscopes, surgical sets, and water containers. ALIGHT also provided nutritional support to 150 refugees living with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in Um Rakuba.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management: As part of ongoing efforts to scale up support to Sudanese communities near Um Rakuba, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has begun rehabilitating several buildings and procuring materials, including solar lights and panels, sports equipment, baking equipment and art kits, for various quick impact projects. These interventions were informed by the findings of a technical assessment and focus group discussions with the host communities. DRC met with community leaders of Abraham Village, near Tunaydbah to seek their feedback on quick impact projects.



Communicating with Communities: During the week of 20 January, UNHCR and IOM held a review meeting on mixed movement to discuss areas of collaboration on issues related to mixed migration, human smuggling, and trafficking. Discussions focused on how to conduct joint analysis, report on migration patterns and document possible victims of trafficking to better address these issues.

SOMALIA

NEW ARRIVALS AND BORDER DYNAMICS

Somaliland: In mid-January the UNHCR Deputy Representative and Emergency Coordinator undertook a mission to Somaliland, accompanied by the Somaliland Head of Sub-Office. The mission team held meetings with government officials and the National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA) Chairman.

UNHCR expressed appreciation for the Somaliland government for their support to the Ethiopian asylum-seekers and requested NDRA to resume the biometric registration for those who are already in the territory. UNHCR underlined its commitment to support Registration as guided by its Protection Mandate. NDRA is supportive for registration of the new arrivals from Ethiopia and the establishment of a reception centre in Borama on land provided by the government. UNHCR will support the registration process through training, provision of equipment, and staffing. UNHCR also requested the government to consider mobile registration at the point of entry as currently the registration is done by NDRA centrally in Hargeisa.

The delegation then travelled to Borama town where they held a meeting with the Deputy Governor of Borama, who reported a decrease in the number of arrivals compared to previous months, and further stated that the recent Ethiopian arrivals (less than 40 HHs) need urgent attention to prevent protection risks related to lack of shelter.

Puntland/Galmudug: The UNHCR Deputy Representative and Emergency Coordinator undertook a mission to Galkayo as part of their ongoing missions to assess the operation's level of emergency preparedness for a possible refugee influx from Ethiopia.

South Central Somalia (Jubaland): UNHCR completed the distribution of one-off multipurpose cash grants to all new arrivals (136 households). UNHCR concluded level 2 biometric registration for the Ethiopian new arrivals in Dollow with a total 203 household/582 individuals registered in ProGres V4. Discussions are underway with local authorities to obtain the land title for the site allocated for the construction of a reception centre in Dollow in preparedness for any eventual arrival of Ethiopian refugees.

SOUTH SUDAN

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND BORDER DYNAMICS – Upper Nile

63 South Sudanese refugees returned to South Sudan (Nassir, Ulang and Malakal counties) from Gambella refugee camps in Ethiopia through Pagak and Wicluak Jaak border entry points and have settled within host communities and with relatives.

On 25 January, 25 South Sudanese refugee households (102 individuals) returned to Malakal town from Ngunyyien Tharpam refugee camp in Ethiopia, with the majority settling at Fire Brigade collective site. On 26 January, UNHCR conducted a protection assessment mission to understand triggers for return, protection concerns, and intentions.

Contingency Planning

UNHCR conducted meetings with government counterpart Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) with the aim to establish clear return and reintegration systems and processes that will help build trust and confidence among returnees. They also identified challenges and opportunities for returns and started developing strategies to nurture sustainable returns that will lead to early recovery and stabilization.

Progress Made in Preparedness

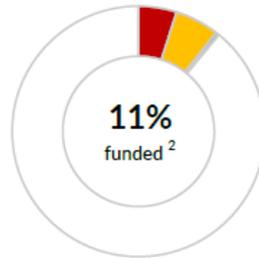
On 23 - 25 January, UNHCR conducted a training on community mobilization and community driven solution mechanisms to displacement in Ulang and Yomding (Ulang county). The training aimed to develop a structured plan to ensure sustainability of return and reintegration processes. Participants were trained on the understanding of CCCM, protection, human rights and community participation, coordination, prevention of GBV and information management. Beneficiaries of the training included representatives from the local authorities, community/local and religious leaders including the executive chief, youth, women, elderly, and persons with disability leadership, teachers and humanitarian organizations from WASH, Health, Protection and Nutrition sectors.

Funding Overview



FUNDING UPDATE | 2022

\$205.4 million
 UNHCR's financial requirements 2022 ¹



**ETHIOPIA
 EMERGENCY**
 as of 25 January 2022



CONTRIBUTIONS ³ | USD

	■ Unearmarked	■ Softly earmarked	■ Earmarked	■ Tightly earmarked	Total
Japan	-	-	6,000,000	-	6,000,000
Other private donors	-	11,351	-	-	11,351
Sub-total	-	11,351	6,000,000	-	6,011,351
Indicative allocation of funds and adjustments	957	800,109	5,629,923	10,059,327	16,490,316
Total	957	811,459	11,629,923	10,059,327	22,501,666

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 situation. The contributions earmarked for the 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

Republic of Korea 2.9 million | Netherlands 2.6 million

Denmark | Luxembourg | Norway | Spain | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | United States of America | Private donors

■ UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS ⁵ | USD

Sweden 77.6 million | Netherlands 37.2 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Germany 27.6 million | Switzerland 18.4 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.8 million

Algeria | Armenia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private donors

Notes:

1. The financial requirements of the Ethiopia Emergency include requirements in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.
2. The percentage funded (11%) and total funding amount (\$22,501,666) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$182,920,222 representing 89% of the financial requirements.
3. Contributions to the Ethiopia Emergency are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.
4. 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.
5. 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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