ETHIOPIA

1 Provide quality protection support and services to Internally displaced persons (IDPs).

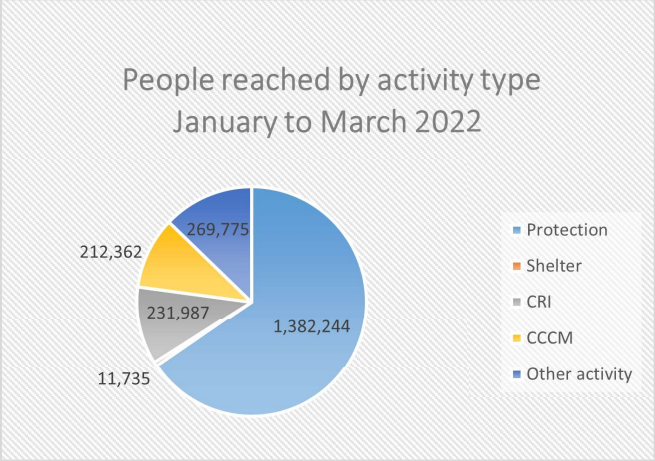
2 Address basic needs of IDPs through shelter, core relief items and camp management activities enhancing their protection.

3 Support IDPs in achieving a durable solution of their choice to their displacement.

Ethiopia continues to face a massive chronic displacement situation fused by layers of new forced population movements throughout the country due to conflict, inter-communal violence, natural hazards, and impacts of climate change notably in southeast Oromia, Benishangul Gumuz and Somali regions. At the same time, IDP returns have been recently recorded in parts of Amhara, Tigray, and Somali regions.

As of March 2022, an estimated 5,582,000 persons were displaced within the country due to armed conflict and natural disasters, while some 2,848,000[1] IDPs, in Amhara, Afar and Tigray regions, have returned to their place of origin in the first quarter of 2022, seeking durable solutions[2].

Despite the ongoing access challenges due to insecurity constituting a major impediment to relief operations, UNHCR continues to play significant role, including leading the process of IDP returns in Tigray, Afar, Amhara and Somali Regions. Support included provision of quality protection and services to IDPs, addressing their basic needs through shelter, core relief items (CRI) and camp management (CCCM) activities, to enhance protection and assistance in achieving a durable solution.



From January to March 2022, UNHCR and its partners have reached over 2.1 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and returning IDPs with protection and assistance in nine regions of Ethiopia.

Over the first quarter of 2022, UNHCR interventions, implemented with our partners and in close coordination with authorities, have reached 2.1 million people with protection services, shelter and core relief support, and Legal support in nine of Ethiopia's regions including Afar, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali and Tigray.

Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde, UNHCR Representative, meets with IDPs during his visit to Tigray.

While remaining in situations of protracted displacement, many IDPs and other vulnerable populations face inequality particularly in access to basic services, Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) (access to documentation, right to justice), as well as restrictions of their freedom of movement.

[1] *DTM, National Displacement Report, by IOM, March 2022.*

Furthermore, in all nine regions, underlying issues such as widespread intercommunal conflict, unemployment, socio-economic disparities, conflict over scarce resources and climate effects remain largely unaddressed.

Nevertheless, UNHCR, in coordination with Government counterparts and partners, continues to scale up response to internal displacement and returns, committed to a 'do no harm' approach and prioritizing considerations of gender equality and women's rights, as well as different vulnerabilities that women, men, boys and girls face in accessing humanitarian assistance

Highlights

Overview

UNHCR continues to provide protection, shelter, and core relief items for over 2.1 million IDPs across the country, and proactively contributes to an effective, coordinated response to the growing internal displacement in Ethiopia. For instance, in Amhara, Oromia, Afar, Somali, Tigray, and Benishangul, UNHCR and its partners assisted over 304,808 IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host communities with full sets of CRIs.

Over the first three months of 2022, UNHCR launched UNHCR Ethiopia Protection Monitoring Tool (E-PMT) in Benishangul Gumuz, East/West Oromia, Afar, Tigray, and Somali analysing protection related patterns and trends to better understand the protection environment and risks as they occur, and to be able to develop a response capacity, and for advocacy purposes including at the regional and country-levels coordination meetings and widely with donors and partners.

CRIs distribution in Abi Adi. © UNHCR/Fahmida Karim

Operational Response

Amhara region

In the first quarter of 2022, over 542,879 IDPs benefitted from protection services, including through UNHCR protection desks, as well as receiving core relief items and emergency shelter support. Activities conducted by UNHCR protection desks operational in Amhara include analysing underlying issues and patterns that affect the community, sharing information, counselling, conducting referrals to adequate services, initiating case management, and mitigating protection risks.

Child Friendly Space in the IDPs site of Kulichmeda, Amhara region. © UNHCR/ Dieguen

As part of its Camp Coordination and Camp Management coordination role, UNHCR successfully advocated with the authorities for a new location, the "Woinshet paper" factory in north Shewa, to accommodate IDPs formerly located in the "Sunflower" factory, and for the allocation of 4.2 hectares of land in Genet for a permanent IDP location in North Shewa.

In the first quarter of 2022, UNHCR has supported the relocation of 6,100 IDPs from Sunflower factory to Woinshet paper factory/North Shewa and put in function four child friendly spaces in three IDP sites, the Chinese factory and Woinshet paper factory, and one in Kulichmeda.

UNHCR established the Protection Cluster in Dessie in 14th Jan. 2022 to coordinate 13 existing partners, and in addition continues to co-lead the CCCM cluster in Amhara and did a two-day workshop for over 20 Government officials in Bahir Dar.

To enhance provision of services in the IDP sites, and UNHCR in coordination with the Dalenta Woreda Administration, conducted a two-day training on Child Protection (CP), Gender Based Violence (GBV), Protection of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Mental Health and psychosocial (MHPSS) Support for some 80 participants, incl. Government frontline health care providers and partner staff.

In addition, in coordination with the Dessie city Zonal Administration, UNHCR conducted a five-day training (Feb 21 to 25, 2022) for Government multi-sectoral response providers in the critical sectors of safety and security, health, legal, and psychosocial support, with the aim to strengthen coordination with local authorities and federal Government officials, as well as to improve understanding of UNHCR's role in the humanitarian, emergency setting.

Tigray region

In Tigray, from January to March 2022, UNHCR and its partners reached over 545,000 IDPs and returning IDPs with protection services, shelter, core relief items and other forms of assistance. In Mekelle, UNHCR set up reception centers to provide counselling and referral to adequate services. In addition, UNHCR organized trainings for some 170 healthcare first responders, social workers, and Government officials to reduce GBV and PSEA for IDPs and other persons of concern.

In Sheraro, UNHCR launched emergency cash-based assistance to nearly 2,000 IDP families (cca. 8,000-10,000 individuals) from most of the 14 IDP sites in Sheraro and nearby areas, from the Western Zone and from five kebeles in the Ethio-Eritrean border area.

In addition to Women and Girls Safe Space (WGSS) and Child Friendly Space (CFS) services already established in the majority of the IDP sites, UNHCR through its partners facilitates kinship and foster care arrangements for separated and unaccompanied children, and provides trainings and awareness-raising sessions for Government officials and service providers on general protection, GBV, SEA, case management for SEA survivors, community outreach and feedback mechanisms etc. Additionally, a cleaning campaign was organized in three IDP sites in Abi Adi (Awrara, Mailomin and Welkayt); site leveling was conducted in sites managed by UNHCR.

UNHCR Regional Bureau Director for the East, Horn and Great Lakes Regions of Africa Clementine Nkweta-Salami discussing with an IDP returnee in Tigray.

Gambella region

In Gambella region, UNHCR together with its partners assisted over 2,500 IDPs with protection counselling and core relief items to address some of the basic needs of persons internally displaced by natural disasters. In addition, UNHCR in partnership with partner Humanity and Inclusion (HI) provided wheelchairs and crutches to 12 persons with disabilities.

In partnership with HI and Oxfam, trainings were conducted for Government officials, OPDs (organizations for persons with disabilities), kebele administrators, community, and religious leaders on protection of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, and peaceful coexistence, as well as women empowerment and inclusive leadership.

East and West Wollega zones, Oromia region

In the first quarter of 2022, UNHCR and partners supported over 5,000 IDPs and returning IDPs in the East and West Wollega zones of Oromia region. UNHCR strengthened and further scaled up the coordination of relevant programmes with Kellem and Horo Guduru Wollegas by concluding partnership agreements with ANE (Shelter/NFI), AAH (CP/GBV), Wollega University (Free Legal Aid/HLP) and Trilateral Peace and Development office (Peace Building).

UNHCR in partnership with the Wollega University's seven legal aid centres supported over 5,100 IDPs, returning IDPs, host communities and persons with specific needs, raising legal awareness, providing free legal aid, and counselling, preparing written court interventions, and assisting in legal representation before court to restore their housing, land and property rights and civil documentation.

In Nejo, Gimbi (West Wollega) and Kamashi (Kamashi zone), UNHCR conducted protection monitoring and, together with partner ANE, completed the registration and verification of 2,000 IDP households for distribution of NFIs.

West Guji and Gedeo zones, Oromia region and SNNP regions

In the first quarter of 2022, in West Guji and Gedeo zones of Oromia and SNNP regions, UNHCR and its partners supported over 66,000 IDPs and returning IDPs, with protection counselling, legal aid and awareness-raising, referrals, SGBV support, targeted assistance, and capacity building training.

In partnership with Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), targeted assistance was provided to Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs) through the distribution of 258 sheep for 129 female-headed households to engage in income-generating activities in Gedeb and Yirgachefe Woredas of Gedeo Zone, and Abaya and Hambala Wamana Woredas in West Guji Zone.

Distribution of sheep ©UNHCR/Yirgachafe , Gedeo

> "The support brought back light into my life, which was darkened by the conflict. I am now able to feed my children and send them to school on my own."
>
> **A female IDP returnee in Kedida Gubata, Gedeo zone**

In addition, UNHCR conducted targeted shelter reconstruction for 350 women and persons with disabilities in Yirgachafe woreda of Gedeo zone, reinforcing the protection of persons with specific needs by ensuring their safety, dignity and hope to rebuild their lifves after the crisis.

With its partner EECMY, UNHCR distributed walking sticks and hearing aids to 29 students with disabilities in Dilla Zuria and Gedeb Woredas of Gedeo Zone, and in Abaya, Hambela Wamana and Galena Woredas of West Guji Zone.

Furthermore, through the 12 free legal aid centers of Dilla and Bule Hora Universities, UNHCR reached 1,584 vulnerable returnees. These activities created an environment conducive for the IDP returnees to access justice, claim and enjoy their rights, as well as to raise awareness of the line Government offices as primarily responsible to ensure that IDP returnees are protected as per the existing legal frameworks.

UNHCR conducted capacity building training on Sexual and Gender Based (SGBV) prevention and response to 50 participants from school communities, including schoolteachers and principals, community representatives, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) club members, and Kebele administration.

Dire Dawa

In the first quarter of 2022, in Dire Dawa, UNHCR reached over 6,800 IDPs, returning and relocated IDPs with protection services. Awareness-raising activities were held with the authorities, youths, community, and religious leaders on combatting violence against women and girls; collaborative community coping mechanisms were strengthened.

Two grinding mills were donated at two IDP sites in West Hararge (Meiso, and Bordede woreda), for the benefit of, overall, more than 3,500 persons, including IDPs and host community, with the objective to reduce the incidence of sexual abuse against women and girls (and other health hazards), Who previously travelled significant distances to find milling services.

UNHCR donated 2 grinding mills to cooperatives of women & persons with specific needs.

> Establishment of a fully equipped milling facility in an easily accessible area, made our life easier and safer. We used to travel long distances, back and forth, wait in queues, and on many occasions return with unpolished grains. power interruptions, but now we finally have access to the facility.
>
> **A 34-year-old IDP woman, Mother of four**

Somali region

In addition to conflict-induced displacement, the Somali region is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change and extreme weather, such as extended drought, flash floods, strong winds, ultimately resulting in disruption of the farming season. Extended drought, following three consecutive failed rainy seasons since late 2020, has affected an estimated 3.5 million people.

> UNHCR provided me with household items and warm clothing when I needed them most. My whole family is now protected from the cold weather in Fafan. We also received items for cooking, fetching, and storing water. I am so happy and grateful for all the support.
>
> **A 47-year-old IDP woman, displaced by drought , Somali region**

UNHCR provided shelter to IDPs in Maraa-Gajo IDP site, Kebribeyah.
© UNHCR/ Eugene Sibomana

In the first quarter of 2022, UNHCR reached nearly 7,700 IDP families in Jijiga and Melkadida, affected by drought and conflict with life-saving emergency shelter, non-food items and warm clothing. UNHCR mobilized partners to conduct a quick protection assessment in four zones, advocating, through the regional level sectors including Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs, the provision of water, food, and livestock for those in a newly formed IDP sites in Fafan.

In addition, over 120 IDPs benefited from water provision in Gidhibka. This should alleviate suffering, until the regional government secures water supply in the area.

Melkadida

In Melkadida, UNHCR with Partnership for Pastoralist Development Association (PAPDA) continued to invest in community conflict resolution committees and community-based protection though supporting community dialogues, including women representatives in three IDP sites (Melka Hager, Bifeta 2 and Bokolow), with the focus on major protection risks including SGBV against women in IDP settings.

Benshagnul Gumuz region

In Benshagnul Gumuz region, UNHCR and partners assisted over 18,000IDPs with protection counselling, shelter, CRIs, CCCM services including basic protection training to health volunteers, and referrals to appropriate services. Additionally, 272 women and girls were provided with dignity kits; UNHCR advocacy ensured that 39 IDPs successfully underwent eye surgeries in Bambasi.

Afar regions

In Afar region, in the first quarter of 2022, UNHCR and its partners were able to reach over 357,000 people with various forms of assistance. UNHCR with partner EECMY set up three protection desks in Afdera, Semera and Guya to serve nearly 77,000 IDPs with information, counselling, and referrals. In addition, as part of the CCCM cluster, UNHCR advocated for provision of food, water, health services, latrines, sanitation in all IDP sites in the region. UNHCR also supported the construction of 650 shelters to accommodate 3,250 IDP households in Guya and Semera IDP sites.

> When we arrived at Guya, we were sleeping in open air. UNHCR gave us a tent, and now my family has a shelter to stay in. I hope that more such tents will be set up, so that no one must sleep in the open.
>
> **A 45-year-old woman at Guya IDP site, Semera, Afar**

Gaps and challenges

- Ongoing conflict continues to hinder humanitarian access to several areas of internal displacement, implementation of lifesaving efforts, and durable solution initiatives, especially in Oromia, Benishangul and Somali regions. In the first quarter of 2022, conflict and extended drought have been the main triggers of internal displacement.
- Lack of cash, fuel, phone, and internet connectivity continue to compel UNHCR and other partners to significantly reduce their aid activities and presence.

- Despite the rapidly rising internal displacement, the limited presence of humanitarian partners, and even discontinuation of operation of some humanitarian agencies in Benshangul, Somali, the Wollegas, West Guji or Gedeo zones in Oromia and SNNP regions, contributed to the emergence of serious gaps in the IDP response. Lack of regular protection monitoring, insufficient protection services, including MHPSS, livelihood and HLP support activities, have exacerbated existing, but also created new protection concerns.

UNHCR is grateful for the contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia IDP Operation in 2022

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