

## SITUATION UPDATE



International Medical Corps staff members conduct a sanitation and hygiene education session in Shiraro woreda, Ethiopia.

### FAST FACTS

- In Ethiopia, International Medical Corps' nine mobile health and nutrition teams in Shire, Shiraro, Axum and Adwa have so far carried out more than 32,000 consultations.
- International Medical Corps has screened 36,940 children and pregnant women for acute malnutrition since we started delivering services in the area.
- In Hamdeyet refugee camp in Sudan, International Medical Corps has delivered nearly 10,000 items to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as masks, soap, jerry cans and handwashing stations.

Today, more than eight months since the outbreak of conflict between the Ethiopian National Defense Force and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, the security situation in the Tigray region of Ethiopia remains volatile. On June 28, the government withdrew all troops from Mekelle following the announcement of a ceasefire. The Tigray Defense Forces have since taken control of most areas of Tigray, which has caused disruptions in delivering humanitarian assistance across the region.

Though humanitarian organisations have recently gained increased access to areas within Tigray that have been difficult to reach, there are shortages of supplies to meet the growing needs, and access still remains a challenge, with many roads being blocked. This situation has worsened in the last 48 hours. Humanitarian needs in the area remain high and are likely to rapidly increase unless immediate action is taken. Of particular concern is the rising number of cases of malnutrition in the region, accompanied by significant food insecurity. Humanitarian partners have been responding to the growing needs and have so far reached 4.8 million people with food assistance and protection, but significant support is still needed.<sup>1</sup>

In Sudan, more than 46,000 refugees have arrived from Ethiopia since the start of the conflict. Though the announcement of the ceasefire in Ethiopia's Tigray region has brought hope to refugees of returning home, many still want to remain in Sudan until the situation becomes more stable. As a result, humanitarian needs in the area remain high, particularly the need to protect refugee camps from flooding during the rainy season. The humanitarian community continues to respond to the health, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs of refugees in Sudan.<sup>2</sup>

## International Medical Corps Response

### Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, International Medical Corps has been providing vital nutrition, health, gender-based violence (GBV) and WASH services to internally displaced people in Shire, Shiraro, Axum and Adwa. We currently have nine mobile health and nutrition teams providing a variety of services, including outpatient consultations, nutrition screening, antenatal consultations, family-planning services and health education.

<sup>1</sup> UNOCHA: Ethiopia Tigray Region Humanitarian Update, July 19, 2021. <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/>

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR: Emergency Response to Tigray, Situation Weekly Update #1, July 9, 2021.

During the last two weeks, the mobile health and nutrition teams reached 6,956 individuals through outpatient consultations, bringing the total number reached through consultations to 32,003. Teams also have carried out 3,024 acute malnutrition screenings for children under 5, and 658 screenings for pregnant and lactating women. As of July 18, more than 150 children under 5 with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) have been enrolled onto outpatient therapeutic management. This is particularly important given the growing concerns around rising malnutrition in the region.

International Medical Corps also has been delivering WASH activities in Shire, Shiraro and Axum woredas. Between July 5 and July 18, we reached 6,161 people through hygiene promotion activities covering handwashing, proper use of latrines and safe handling of household water. Teams also are delivering safe water—which staff are monitoring and chlorinating on a daily basis—in trucks to the sites.

Since the beginning of the conflict, International Medical Corps also has been delivering health and nutrition services in Humera, Wolkayit and Tsegede woredas. The teams have so far provided 29,249 consultations, screening more than 20,354 children and pregnant women for malnutrition, and providing mental health counseling to 1,015 people. Activities were suspended in this area on July 12 due to increased tensions; however, we hope to continue activities in the near future.

## Sudan

In Sudan, International Medical Corps has provided assistance in the Hamdeyet refugee camp, focusing particularly on the prevention of COVID-19. This has included training on how to screen people for COVID-19 to community leaders and mobilizers, who have in turn referred more than 1,000 people for COVID-19 testing. We also have supported awareness-raising activities by 25 community health volunteers who have reached more than 2,500 people with important information on COVID-19. In addition, we have distributed vital hygiene equipment to refugees in the camp, such as masks, jerry cans and soap, and have set up 80 handwashing stations.

International Medical Corps also has been providing support in the Tunaydbah refugee camp, including conducting screening for acute malnutrition, delivering 100,000 medical masks to community health facilities and providing education about COVID-19.

In the near future, we plan to expand our support in the area by improving capacity at the Gedaref Hospital Nutrition Stabilization Center, which receives referrals from Tunaydbah and Umm Rakuba camps, as well as from the host community.



*International Medical Corps staff members distribute clean water.*



*A staff member distributes medical masks in Tunaydbah refugee camp.*