

**Emergency Relief Coordinator calls for additional funding to address Ethiopia's humanitarian needs and promote durable solutions**

(Addis Ababa, 10 September 2019) Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock called today for additional funding to support the Government-led response to Ethiopia's displacement crisis and wider humanitarian needs. More than 8 million people in Ethiopia need food, shelter, medicine or other emergency assistance.

Mr. Lowcock was speaking at the end of a two-day mission in Ethiopia with the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, and the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary.

"Ethiopia has to cope with persistent and multi-faceted humanitarian problems, including drought and flooding, disease outbreaks and inter-ethnic violence that has in recent years forced millions of people to flee their homes," said Mr. Lowcock.

The delegation met recently returned families and other conflict-affected displaced people in Chitu *Kebele* in the Yirgachefe district in Gedeo, which is one of the zones most affected by intercommunal violence that has caused displacement and loss of livelihoods since 2018.

"I support the Government's desire to find durable solutions to displacement problems, and am under no illusion as to how difficult that is. While many people have now been able to return to their home areas, some remain in limbo, living close to their destroyed or damaged homes and worried they will not have the opportunity to restart farming and other livelihoods they lost when they fled last year. The Government is trying to deal with this, many people in host communities are displaying enormous generosity and humanitarian agencies are supporting them, but more international support is needed too."

Humanitarian organizations are working with the local authorities and development partners to ensure internally displaced people have access to emergency assistance and basic services.

During the mission, the UN principals reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the Government to ensure all displaced people are able to voluntarily return home in a safe and sustainable way, or integrate into new settlement areas, including accessing housing, land, livelihood opportunities and schools.

Prior to the Government's efforts to return people to their areas of origin, which started in May 2019, there were 3.2 million internally displaced people in Ethiopia, including 2.6 million who fled conflict and 500,000 who were displaced because of climate-related causes.

The 2019 Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan, which requires US\$1.3 billion to help 8 million people, is only 51 per cent funded. The biggest contribution currently comes from the Government of Ethiopia, which has provided \$288 million for the food sector on top of contributions from international donors. More funding is urgently required for nutrition, health, shelter, protection, education and other needs.

While aid is a critical lifeline for millions of Ethiopians, most humanitarian needs in Ethiopia are recurrent and predictable. Long-term solutions are required to reduce needs and build resilience.

***For more information, please contact:***

**Addis Ababa:** *Choice Okoro*, +251 912502691, [okoroc@un.org](mailto:okoroc@un.org)

**New York:** *Russell Geekie*, [geekie@un.org](mailto:geekie@un.org) +1 917 331 0393 or *Hayat Abu-Saleh*, [abusaleh@un.org](mailto:abusaleh@un.org) +1 917 224 9751

**Geneva:** *Jens Laerke*, OCHA Geneva, [laerke@un.org](mailto:laerke@un.org) +41 79 472 9750

The Government of Ethiopia is implementing a disaster risk management approach to reduce needs. During the mission, the delegation discussed with the authorities and partners how to better join up humanitarian and recovery programmes to support the Government's efforts. The delegation also discussed ways to reduce conflict, which regularly precipitates humanitarian crises. This requires holistic and inclusive peacebuilding approaches to address the root causes of violence.

“Donors have historically been extremely generous to Ethiopia during its worst crises. Now we hope they will also invest more in prevention and long-term recovery efforts so that we can build resilience and break the cycle of recurrent crises – in Ethiopia the next emergency may be only one failed rainy season away,” said Mr. Lowcock.

Mr. Lowcock also expressed concern over the safety of aid workers following the murder of two staff members of Action contre la Faim (ACF), a highly respected international NGO, in Gambella last week. “We condemn this terrible attack and are discussing the implications with all concerned,” he said.

***For more information, please contact:***

***Addis Ababa:*** Choice Okoro, +251 912502691, [okoroc@un.org](mailto:okoroc@un.org)

***New York:*** Russell Geekie, [geekie@un.org](mailto:geekie@un.org) +1 917 331 0393 or Hayat Abu-Saleh, [abusaleh@un.org](mailto:abusaleh@un.org) +1 917 224 9751

***Geneva:*** Jens Laerke, OCHA Geneva, [laerke@un.org](mailto:laerke@un.org) +41 79 472 9750