

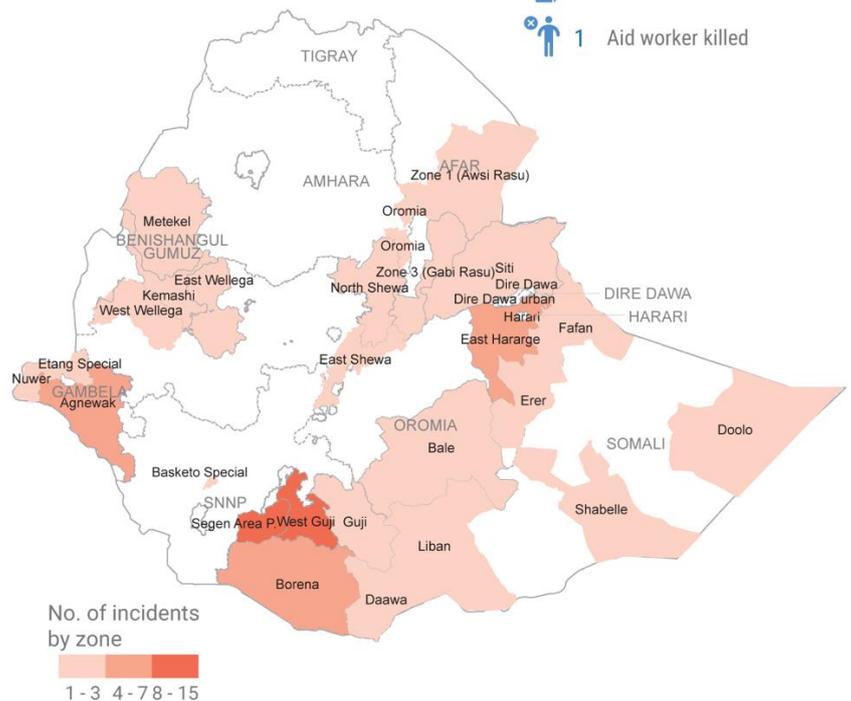
This report is produced by OCHA Ethiopia in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 1 to 30 April 2019. The next report will be issued on or around 01 June 2019.

OVERVIEW

- The overall operational environment to humanitarian operations in Ethiopia remains permissive.
- Localized hostilities between the Ethiopian Defense Forces (EDF) and Unidentified Armed Groups (UAGs) as well as between different ethnic groups along regional boundary areas continue to hamper consistent humanitarian access.
- Most access incidents reported by partners in April are related to armed clashes, localized insecurity, and inter-communal conflict, whereby pocket areas of inaccessibility can affect thousands of people in need.
- The National Flood Taskforce issued a flood alert in *belg*-receiving areas of the country and river flows caused by highland rains. Over 5,600 people were displaced by floods in Selti woreda, Selte zone (SNNP region). Physical access was also impeded in Somali region as a result of poor road conditions and seasonal rivers becoming impassable, particularly in Dollo Ado road to Liban zone.
- Humanitarian partners in Ethiopia are not a target. However, this could change as frustration is growing among the affected population given the scale of the needs and the challenges in the response.
- Partners need to allocate appropriate resources in communicating with communities and ensuring their activities are adhered to the humanitarian principles of operational independence, neutrality and impartiality.

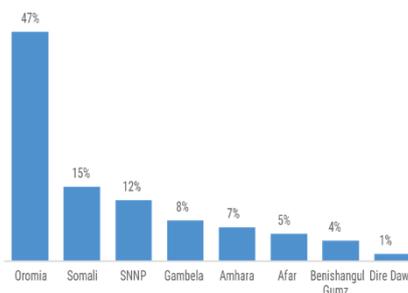
KEY FIGURES

 73 Access incidents reported
 1 Aid worker killed



Source: Access Incidents database
 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

REPORTED ACCESS INCIDENTS BY REGION



REPORTED ACCESS INCIDENTS BY TYPE



SITUATION OVERVIEW

Afar region



On 9 March, four national staff of an INGO were detained in Afar region while conducting a humanitarian programme, allegedly for entering the region without permission. The humanitarian community remains concerned over their wellbeing, after such a prolonged period of time.

Amhara region



The operating environment was compromised in various parts of the region due to hostilities between ethnic groups and Amhara Special police. In Kemise Special Oromo woreda, fighting between ethnic Oromos and Amhara Special Police Forces led to casualties, and the blockage of the road between Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar. In the Eastern part of the region, violence was registered in Ataye, Majete and Kara Kore towns, prompting the deployment of the EDF. In Western Gonder zone, tension between ethnic Amhara and Qemants remain. Almost all IDP sites in Central and Western Gonder zones are accessible, however, security concerns remain in remote sites in Metema, Quara, Jawi, Pawe and Minjar Shenkora woredas. There is a reported lack of operational partners in West Gondar zone.

Benishangul Gumuz region (BGR)



Access to Kemashi zone remains heavily restricted due to ongoing hostilities in neighboring West Wollega (Oromia region), as the main road access to Kemashi goes through West Wollega (Nekemte - Gimbi – Nejo road towards Assossa). Overall, the UN and most partners have not been able to access Kemashi zone for the last eight months. Meanwhile, some attacks against Oromo IDPs returning from the Wollegas to Kemashi have been reported in border areas, including the looting of cattle. At the time of writing, Kemashi zone remains inaccessible by road from West Wollega, limiting critical assistance and protection monitoring activities, against a backdrop of Government supported returns to the zone.

From 25 - 30 April, conflict between two individuals sparked communal clashes between ethnic Amharas and Gumuz in Metekel zone leading to a number of casualties. This was followed by retaliatory attacks, leading to dozens of deaths and houses burned in Jawi woreda of Awi zone, Amhara region. The deployment of the EDF calmed the situation. Over 3,000 people were displaced in Jawi and Pawe woredas. As of end April, UN and NGO movements in the affected areas were suspended. Tensions remain extremely high, amid conflicting reports of casualties, while partners are mobilizing to respond.

East and West Wollega (Oromia region)



In East Wollega, since 1 March, Zonal Authorities had impeded shelter interventions in IDP sites, allegedly to discourage IDPs from remaining, until a solution was locally negotiated by mid-April. Lastly, in Nekemte town, where most partners operating in the region are based, there has been a range of attacks with hand grenade by UAGs in the last two months. These attacks have created a number of casualties, none among humanitarian personnel.

Aid operations in West Wollega are intermittently restricted by ongoing hostilities between the EDF and UAG, with clashes taking place in a number of woredas, i.e. Begi, Bogi Dirmegi, Nejo, Leta Sib, Kiltu Kara, Mana Sib and Lalo Asabi. The situation remains unpredictable. Furthermore, there is limited partner presence with reduced capacities, including in sectoral coordination. The situation in most IDP sites is reportedly dire, with gaps in all sectors and assistance below international standards.

Gambela region



The overall security situation in Gambella region has worsened and remains unstable. Several incidents have been reported between Nuer and Agnuak ethnic groups that contributed to a high level of anxiety and suspicion between communities. Security forces continue attempting to contain the escalation, mainly associated with revenge killings. In April, three refugees lost their lives allegedly linked to tribal/ clan conflict, and one aid worker was killed in his private residence in Gambella town. The motives behind the killing remain unknown. At the end of April, aid agencies temporarily suspended operations and movements between refugee camps as a precautionary measure, without affecting the delivery of critical services to the refugees.

Gedeo (SNNPR) - West Guji (Oromia)



In Gedeo, previous access impediments by Zone authorities limiting partners' access to IDP sites in the zone were lifted by mid-March, following massive media coverage and the visit of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. In April, partners did not report any major obstacles in terms of access and mobility within the Zone. As the rainy season approaches, important bottlenecks need to be addressed in terms of physical access. For instance, the road to Gedeb woreda (Banko – Tetatu kebele) and to 'Chopke' IDP site as well as the road to Gotiti are critical hotspots.

In West Guji, armed conflict between EDF and UAGs as well as between different community groups in pocket areas in Birbirs Kojowa, Bule Hora, Gelana, and Kercha woredas continue to hamper access. These clashes have involved violent attacks, leading to deaths, injuries and the burning of houses. Such violence appears to be an attempt to expulse other population groups from the territory and/or hinder possible returns, and is impacting the provision of assistance in rural areas. Overall, nearly 75,000 IDPs live in areas with limited access by partners. This is against a backdrop of Government supported returns of IDPs to areas of origin, including to areas with limited access. While no direct attacks against humanitarian workers have been reported, there have been some reported incidents of threats and intimidation by UAGs.

East and West Hararge (Oromia)



Since 2015, access to large areas along the boundary between Oromia and Somali regions remains challenging due to ongoing inter-communal conflict between ethnic Oromos and Somalis. In March – April 2019, public demonstrations in major cities related to the handing of condominium houses in Addis and allegedly built in Oromia regional boundaries, resulted in partners' movement restrictions.

In East Hararge, a number of kebeles in Kumbi woreda were occupied by Somali Regional "Liyu" police in 2015, and the displaced population has not yet been able to return. Similarly, in Meyu woreda, some kebeles also occupied by the Somali Regional police remain partially accessible. In Babile woreda, ten kebeles have been intermittently inaccessible since August 2018. Lastly, in Mekanisa Oromo zone, the majority of kebeles remain partially accessible, while some areas of Gursum woreda, have been also partially accessible since October 2017.

In West Hararge, partners report challenges in accessing some kebeles in Mieso woreda as well as in Bordode kebele of Gumbi Bordode woredas (northwestern part of West Hararghe zone). Lastly, in Waltane, there have been some reported incidents related to the border conflict.

Borana & Moyale (Oromia – Somali region)



Fighting between ethnic Oromos and Konso (SNNPR) over grazing land was reported in early April in Borana zone, including a number of revenge attacks leading to casualties. In addition, fighting between Borana (Oromos) and Merehan – (Somali) ethnic groups took place in Gumi Eldelo woreda (East Guji zone). This violence continues to hamper access to people in need in the area.

Somali region



In April, fighting over land was reported between Oromo and Somali ethnic groups. In one incident, five Somalis were killed and several other injured in Lagahida woreda. On 23 April, a partner contracted truck was shot at outside Gode town, causing no personal injuries. Some movements restrictions have been reported as a result of anti-government demonstrations (Kebribayah - Degahbur road), which prompted the intervention of the security forces. In addition, partners have reported challenges in accessing a number of IDP sites in Dawa, Doolo, Fafan, Liben and Siti zones due to insecurity. On 24 April, rain in Dollo Ado resulted in flooding of Saroole river and Aden fadit and Usbo-el streams that cross the main road from Dollo Ado to other parts of Liban zone, including Melkadida and Bolkomanyo, halting a number of partners' missions to the area.

Tigray



All borders crossing with Eritrea were closed at the end of April from both sides, limiting road traffic and trade activities. On the other hand, the main road from Tigray to Addis Ababa - through Amhara region - both from Mekele – Wollo - Addis Ababa and Humera – Gondar - Addis Ababa has been blocked recurrently by a group of youth called the "Fano", with various reports of trucks carrying food commodities looted. So far, there is no report of humanitarian partners or assets being targeted. UNDSS issued a number of security advisories against using these roads, prompting partners to use the Addis Ababa – Afar - Tigray road (avoiding Amhara region).