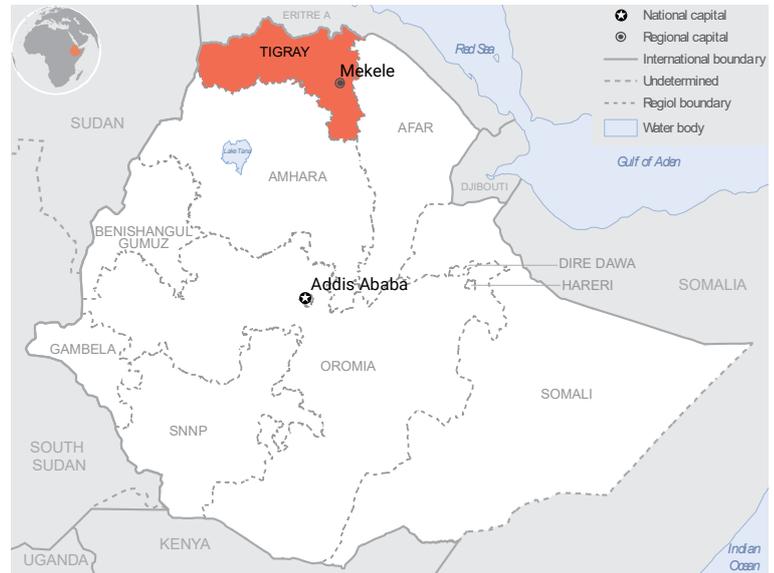


This report is produced by OCHA Ethiopia and covers the period from 27 to 30 November 2020. The next report will be issued on Friday, 4 December.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The UN and humanitarian partners remain deeply concerned about the plight of nearly 500,000 people, and the more than 200 aid workers who are present in Mekelle city, when the Government launched the final phase of the “law enforcement operations” in the city.
- Thousands of people in Tigray region are feared displaced and some reportedly injured, while many are without access to basic assistance due to interruption of trade and transfers, insecurity, lack of communication and lack of fuel and cash to access markets. Verification of needs remains a challenge due to a communication blackout and lack of access to the region.
- UNHCR and partners in Sudan have warned about the urgent need for additional refugee settlement sites, as the Um Rakuba camp in Gedaref State has reached its current maximum capacity of 10,000 people. More than 45,600 new arrivals have sought asylum in eastern Sudan since 7 November.
- The UN and humanitarian partners acknowledge the Federal Government’s stated commitment to ensuring that humanitarian assistance is made available to people impacted and calls for unconditional, full and immediate humanitarian access to the affected people.



Tigray region, Ethiopia. Source: CSA, OCHA. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

850,000

People already dependent on some type of humanitarian assistance

1.1M

Projected additional people to need assistance due to conflict (Tigray, Amhara, Afar)

45,600

Asylum seekers in Sudan since 7 November

US\$75.6M

Outstanding requirement in the Humanitarian Preparedness Plan

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Following the Government operation in the city of Mekelle in Tigray region, humanitarian actors have reported an increase in the number of displacements and injured people. Concerns are growing for the safety of more than 500,000 people living in the city and the wellbeing of the people who are reportedly relying on untreated water to survive due to damage and destruction of water infrastructure, according to media and humanitarian sources.

According to [ICRC](#), several people are living in makeshift camps without food, water or medical care and in fear for their lives due to ongoing insecurity in the area. Several others have fled their homes, leaving their crops and risking food insecurity due to lack of access to basic commodities. Hospitals and primary health-care facilities in northern Ethiopia, in and around areas that have seen intense fighting, are in urgent need of additional medical supplies.

A crucial concern is access to food for the 96,000 refugee population in Tigray. According to [UNHCR](#), humanitarian workers in Shire and Mekelle are unable to access the refugee camps due to the security situation. Food rations for refugee camps were exhausted on Monday, 30 November, due to lack of access to supplies in warehouses inside and outside Tigray. The last joint general food distribution by World Food Programme (WFP), Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR was supplied for two months (October and November), and UNHCR estimates that at most three days of food supplies is left in the camps. UNHCR is advocating for access to the Tigray Region and the refugee camps to deliver these rations.

Communication blackout, power outage, and banking restrictions continue to impede humanitarian response to the rising needs. Aid workers in the region have reported that lack of fuel and movement restrictions are impeding both business continuity and humanitarian response. Thousands of people have been separated from their families and this is complicated by the network breakdown that has made tracing difficult. Immediate unhindered humanitarian access is needed to bring in lifesaving support, including fuel supplies to run vehicles and generators, as well as cash to support vulnerable Persons of Concern, according to UNHCR.

The safety and security of aid workers, as well as the population at large remains a big concern for humanitarians. More than 100 aid workers are reportedly still unaccounted for, since the fighting began and organizations are working to re-establish contact with team members, many of whom were forced to flee when conflict erupted. [ICRC](#) has reported that three ambulances belonging to the Ethiopian Red Cross have been attacked since the fighting started, a disturbing trend as it signals lack of respect and protection for first responders and humanitarian actors.

Security incidents have also been reported in other regions of Ethiopia, impacting access and needs assessments. DTM's Event Tracking Tool has recorded 85,462 IDPs in Konso zone. The priority needs cited by the displaced people include water, medical services, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, non-food items, food, livelihoods and cash.

In the western part of the country, the security situation is reportedly deteriorating, with recent conflicts in Guliso displacing inhabitants. An inter-agency mission planned in Metekel has been suspended due to insecurity.

In the eastern part (the Hararges) the security situation seems to be escalating due to the conflict between the Afari and the Issa community in Afar and in Somali region.

The UN and humanitarians continue to negotiate with all parties to the conflict for unconditional, full and immediate humanitarian access to reach people in need, following the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

The [Ethiopian Human Rights Commission](#) released a new statement which calls on the Federal Government to restore communications and provision of basic services (including humanitarian supplies), set up the logistical and humanitarian infrastructure necessary to reconnect separated families and support returns, and allow access to independent and transparent investigations into conducts of grave human rights violations.

Cross-border impact

Humanitarian actors both in Ethiopia and across the border in Djibouti, Eritrea and Sudan remain concerned over the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia that is currently affecting operations in neighbouring countries.

Sudan

The conflict continues to forcibly displace people into Sudan, where humanitarians are reporting complex logistical and operational challenges in the response. Out of more than 45,689 new arrivals - 45 per cent of whom are children - received in Kassala, Gedaref and Blue Nile states since 7 November, [UNHCR](#) has managed to relocate 10,472 to Um Rakuba site, 70 km further from the border inside Sudan. The relocation from border is hampered by logistics and distances, limiting the number of people being transferred. UNHCR and partners in Sudan have [warned](#) about the urgent need for additional refugee settlement sites, as the Um Rakuba camp in Gedaref State has reached its current maximum capacity of 10,000 people.

Humanitarian actors have reported that hundreds of asylum seekers remain close to the border to wait for family members or relatives separated on transit or left in Tigray. Family tracing services have been established and are reuniting many separated refugees.

UNHCR and partners continue to scale up relief efforts together with Sudan's Commission on Refugees and local authorities amidst complex logistical challenges. The [UN High Commissioner for Refugees](#), Filippo Grandi, visited Sudan Khartoum and has [appealed](#) for US\$147 million over the next six months to support the refugee response.

Partners are distributing life-saving aid, including hot meals, water and latrines for the new arrivals. Staff at the Hamdayet border crossing in Kassala State and the Lugdi crossing in Gedaref State, are registering thousands of new arrivals each day, with an estimated daily average of 2,500 people per day. The most vulnerable refugees including older people, pregnant and lactating women and children are receiving special care, including supplementary feeding.

UNHCR continues to call for international assistance for the thousands of refugees who have arrived in eastern Sudan amid a vulnerable humanitarian situation characterized by food insecurity and economic hardships. UNHCR has [received](#) about 32 tons of emergency aid from Dubai, with 100 tons of additional relief items expected this week, out of an expected total four airlifts from UNHCR's global stockpile hosted by the International Humanitarian City in Dubai (IHC).

The UN and our partners have finalized their refugee response plan [Inter-Agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan - Refugee Influx from Ethiopia] seeking US\$147 million to help a projected 100,000 refugees between November and June 2021.

The Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has allocated an initial \$425,000 to the most immediate health, water, sanitation and hygiene needs of people hosted in Um Raquba Camp, Gedaref, and is working on additional allocations to be announced over the coming days.

HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Humanitarian access to people affected by the conflict remains constrained due to insecurity, communications blackout, and movement restrictions imposed by both parties.

A team comprised of Tigray regional sector bureaus (WASH, Health, Agriculture, BOLSA,) and the INGO REST that conducted an assessment in areas reporting displacement in Tigray region a week ago reported that at least 950,154 people were displaced within Tigray region and into Sudan. The internally displaced people (IDPs) are sheltering in schools and with host communities. Food, non-food items (NFI), health services (for chronic patients, the injured etc.), WASH, mass psychosocial support are some of the identified priority needs.

The assessment teams have established command posts to facilitate the response to the displaced population. All districts have been instructed to distribute food and non-food items from stocks. At least ETB 87 million worth of food and NFIs have reportedly been dispatched to displacement/reception areas, from the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC), the INGO consortium (JEOP), and the regional Government stock.

The Government (NDRMC) has established four Incident Command Posts in northwest Ethiopia: three in western Tigray and one in Gondar town (Ahmara region), to facilitate and coordinate humanitarian assistance responses and ensure function of WASH services and provide basic services for the conflict affected communities. Communication remains a major concern in the area where network for both voice and data is still unavailable.

OCHA convened an ad-hoc RAWG meeting on 20 November to deliberate on three key areas; (1) MIRA survey application to collect information on needs in Tigray and nearby border areas of Afar and Ahmara; (2) translation of the key informant questionnaire (currently in Tigrinya and Amharic); and (3) MIRA guidance note and code of conduct.

UNHCR and partners – majority of whom have limited presence in the three camps in Shire are working to distribute core relief items (CRIs), water, biscuits and other assistance. However, there are no vehicle movements between any of the camps nor between the camps and Shire, and due to lack of communication, fuel and security, and there is no confirmation on whether basic services are still functioning in the camps.

The Government of Norway has expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in the region and [announced](#) that it will provide approximately NOK 27 million (~US\$3 million) to support the humanitarian response in Tigray and for refugees who have crossed the border into Sudan.

ICRC continued to provide medical assistance and support for family tracing in accessible areas. The team has reportedly delivered medical supplies to health care facilities in North Amhara and first aid supplies to but many urgent needs remain. Health care facilities in Tigray Region need support to care for the wounded, and other hospitals are running out of drugs and supplies for routine medical issues.

COORDINATION

The Emergency Coordination Centers in Tigray, Amhara and Afar conduct regular coordination meetings to strengthen preparedness to respond to needs resulting from the Tigray conflict. Response is also being coordinated with local available resources, where possible.

In Afar, an operational plan is being developed for humanitarian partners to continue operation and access to the border districts. IOM is planning rapid displacement assessment with engagements of sector office and partners to get access to the areas to monitor and track the displacements.

As per the Government's announcement to open a humanitarian access route, humanitarian partners, under the leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator supported by UNOCHA, has been in discussion with the Government

taskforce established for this purpose. Preparations were made to deploy rapid assessment teams to Tigray, and areas affected by the conflict in the Ahmara and Afar borders.

UNHCR and partners in Shire continue to coordinate protection delivery to the refugee camps although humanitarian presence greatly depends on the evolving security situation.

In Amhara, OCHA is leading an inter-agency coordination meeting attended by UN agencies, I/NGOs and federal-based WASH and NFI Cluster Coordinators.

In Tigray, the Mekelle DRMTWG has established an Emergency Coordination Center (ECC). The ECC has finalized the operational plan. ICRC, WASH, and the Health bureau have started responding with the available resources but are calling for urgent mobilization of resources to avert malnutrition, impact of COVID-19 pandemic, and waterborne diseases, including cholera.

FUNDING UPDATE

Resource mobilization around the Humanitarian Preparedness Plan is ongoing, while partners are moving forward with its implementation with available resources. The Plan targets nearly 2 million people in Tigray, Amhara and Afar with life-saving assistance at a cost of US\$75.6 million. The targeted population includes existing humanitarian caseload and additional 1.1 million people expected to need assistance as a result of the conflict.

The total 'top priority' funding requirements to facilitate the minimum preparedness activities to response to the projected needs between November 2020 and January 2021 is US\$ 96.9 million. Considering available resources, the outstanding requirements is \$75.6 million (see breakdown in the table below). Protection mainstreaming will be promoted across all sectors by incorporating protection principles in humanitarian assistance and promoting access, safety and dignity in humanitarian assistance. While additional in-house capacities can be mobilized, regional and international support is required, both in terms of technical and financial support to ensure effective and timely humanitarian assistance to the evolving humanitarian context in northern Ethiopia.

Below is the sector breakdown of the Preparedness Plan requirements per sector.

Sector	Total requirement (US\$ Millions)	Outstanding requirements (gap) (US\$ Millions)
Education	2.9	2.9
ES/NFI	18.5	15.3
Food	36.9	26.6
Health	9.8	8.7
Logistics	5.0	4.5
Nutrition	8.5	3
Protection	2.6	2.1
WaSH	12.8	12.5
Total	\$ 96.9 M	\$ 75.6 M

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