

ETHIOPIA SITUATION (TIGRAY REGION)

01 – 14 May



Selam, 19, started her coffee making business almost as soon as she arrived in Tunaydbah settlement in East Sudan.

Key Developments

ETHIOPIA

- On 6 May, the UN [released](#) \$65 million for the humanitarian response in Ethiopia. The amount is made up of \$45 million from the UN-managed Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund and \$20 million from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). A total of \$40 million from the two pooled funds will be dedicated to the aid operation in Tigray, to fund emergency shelter, clean water and health care facilities. It will also fund work to prevent and respond to cases of gender-based violence, as well as emergency telecommunications to support the humanitarian operations. The remaining \$25 million will fund humanitarian operations in the rest of Ethiopia. According to OCHA, more than 16 million people need humanitarian assistance throughout Ethiopia, including 4.5 million in Tigray alone.
- As part of the development of the Northern Ethiopia Response Plan following the IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Scale-Up Activation for the Tigray situation, announced on 28 April 2021, the Protection and CCCM Clusters have developed cluster-specific response plans until the end of 2021 to address both immediate and longer-term needs of IDPs.

SUDAN

- On 5 May, UNHCR and the Commission for Refugees (COR) finalized the updated refugee population figures at Hamdayet and Village 8 following a joint UNHCR and COR Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) validation exercise. The new figures have been shared with the inter-agency Refugee Working Group. For the two camps, BIMS registration was completed in Um Rakuba and is ongoing in

Tunaydbah and expected to be completed towards the end of May, after which the revised figures for all locations will be available.

- More than 7,100 asylum-seekers from the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia remain at six (6) remote locations at the Blue Nile State border. UNHCR, COR and partners are sensitizing refugees about relocation. As of 11 May, UNHCR and COR had relocated 820 asylum-seekers from Menza to the newly established site at Village 6. The remaining population at the border remain hesitant to be relocated.



Ethiopia Response

The humanitarian situation across the Tigray Region remains deeply concerning for refugees, the internally displaced and host communities. Civilians have endured six months of conflict with extremely limited basic services and assistance available, leading to a significant escalation in humanitarian needs with new displacement ongoing. The security situation remains volatile especially in rural areas, affecting civilians and constraining humanitarian actors on the ground. Basic services have gradually resumed in parts of Tigray; however, electricity and banking services remain intermittent.

With access restrictions lifted, UNHCR is working to reach those Eritrean refugees who have been dispersed by the conflict, as well as to significantly scale up IDP response operations while undertaking Protection and Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster leadership responsibilities.

Eritrean Refugee Response

UNHCR continues to identify and register Eritrean refugees – including those who were displaced from Hitsats and Shimelba camps – in Tigray, Afar, and Addis Ababa. It is believed that many refugees are still dispersed around Shiraro, Adigrat and “hard to reach” areas across the Tigray region. Many refugees with whom UNHCR has been in contact are requesting life-saving assistance as many are in poor health conditions and in need of basic aid. Discussions are ongoing with the government on the provision of assistance to refugees outside of camp settings.

Nearly 8,100 refugees from Hitsats and Shimelba have arrived at Adi Harush and Mai Aini camps either on their own or through ARRA's organized transport from Shire. There were few relocations from Shire to Mai Tsberi camps during the reporting period.

The total number of refugees residing in Adi Harush and Mai Aini has dropped between January and April, based on the number of refugees coming forward to collect monthly food distributions, including those relocated from Shimelba and Hitsats. It is not clear to where Eritrean refugees are moving, but it is likely many are moving to Addis Ababa and other locations they perceive to be safer than Tigray.

The joint UNHCR and ARRA exercise implemented with Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) to identify refugees who have relocated from Shimelba and Hitsats to Addis Ababa has been suspended again due to COVID-19 measures. As of 25 April, 1,658 households, representing 2,963 individuals, had so far been identified. The majority have expressed a desire to have temporary status in Addis Ababa or to apply for official “Out of Camp Policy” (OCP) status, while some have indicated a willingness to return or be relocated to Adi Harush or Mai Aini camps. The main vulnerabilities are women at risk, unaccompanied and separated children, and single parents. UNHCR’s urban protection team is in the process of developing a strategy to provide protection assistance to this group.



Protection: The protection team in Shire is supporting data consolidation for Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps. In Mekelle and Adigrat, UNHCR has identified 1,881 refugees and asylum-seekers and is assessing the possible relocation of registered refugees to the camps. Based on information gathered during the verification exercises, the number in Adigrat is estimated to be much higher. An estimated 2,000 refugees reported to be in Shiraro have not yet been verified.



Shelter: In Mai Aini and Adi Harush, many relocated refugees were temporarily hosted in communal sites in schools and Early Childhood Care Centers. UNHCR has now moved all refugees to emergency shelters, allowing schools to resume classes and other activities to restart.

A new camp site in the Amhara region with capacity to accommodate up to 20,000 people has been identified and the relocation taskforce consisting of UNHCR, ARRA and key partners has done preliminary work on a site plan. Discussions are ongoing with the government on the need for a new camp at this time.



Food Security and Nutrition: Monthly food distributions have been organized with WFP, UNHCR and ARRA since December 2020. Preventive and curative nutrition interventions are ongoing in the two camps.



Water and Sanitation: The water delivered to Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps is still insufficient to meet the refugees’ needs. UNHCR and partners are providing 14 litres of water per person per day in Mai Aini camp, where water systems are fully operational, and 11 litres per person per day in Adi Harush camp where the system has been partially restored. UNHCR and ARRA, the Government Refugee agency are advocating with the authorities for access to fuel to enable water trucking.



Non-food items: All 8,100 newly relocated refugees have received Core Relief Items (CRIs) upon arrival to Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The newly appointed Head of the Tigray Region Administration encouraged organizations to increase the presence of staff in Adigrat, Adwa, Axum, and Abiye Adi.



Protection: UNHCR protection monitoring in all IDP sites highlights dire living conditions. Gender-based violence (GBV) risks are exacerbated by overcrowded living spaces where it is estimated between 30-40 individuals share one classroom with a lack of gender segregation in some sites. The lack of care arrangement for unaccompanied/separated children and other vulnerable people as well as the lack of specialized services for children, GBV survivors and women of reproductive age group are reported as major concerns. There are also general security concerns among the IDPs.

The Protection cluster in Shire has developed a survey tool to assess the level of individual documentation and safety of IDP sites across all IDP sites.

On 5 May, UNHCR and partner Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS) conducted protection monitoring in Axum and Adwa and met with local authorities and community representatives. Local authorities estimate about 150,000 individuals are displaced in Axum and hosted in 13 sites. In Adwa, about 105,000 IDPs are hosted in 11 sites. The monitoring team visited eight of the 24 sites in Axum and Adwa with plans to schedule more visits in the following weeks. The team observed more organized sites than elsewhere but the IDPs are in dire need of assistance such as food and basic household items, health care, shelter, and physical safety in the sites. The risk for disease outbreak and Gender Based Violence (GBV) is also high due to overcrowding.



Abeba, 38, was forced to flee her home in Tigray with her four children. She came to UNHCR's protection desk in Shire seeking food and medical support.

On 7 - 8 May, OCHA, UNHCR, IOM, and WFP undertook a mission to look at the possibility to establish or scale up the presence of UN agencies in Adigrat, Adwa, Axum and Abiye Adi to support and compliment the efforts of NGOs already present in the areas.

On 12 May, UNHCR and Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS) conducted a protection monitoring outreach mission to Debaguna. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with IDPs currently hosted at a center formerly used as a reception facility for Eritrean unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) before the conflict. It is reported about 29,000 IDPs live in Debaguna. While security in the area is calm, critical needs include food and non-food items (NFIs). The water system supplying the IDPs is damaged and needs repair; IDPs currently rely on water trucked by UNHCR's partner to the sites. A similar mission to Adi Daero (about 30kms north of Shire city) took place on 14 May.

The protection monitoring team and the CCCM cluster coordinator visited and assessed the community-based structures in 4 IDP centres in Mekelle including Ayder, Mai Woini, Adi Shmduhun and Yekatit –11. The IDPs, in addition to other basic needs such as food and medicine, also reported reliance on the host community for cooked food.

Following an assessment conducted by UNHCR and partners in 14 IDP sites in Shire, 182 individuals identified in need of mental health care will be referred for care and support through the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Technical Working group (TWG) currently lead by IOM in Shire. The assessment was conducted to determine the needs of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Shire. The MHPSS TWG coordinates all actors in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to promote psychosocial wellbeing and respond to mental health conditions of IDPs.



Shelter and Non-food Items: On 11 May, the Relocation Task Force (RTF) conducted technical assessments at Sebacare and the Orthodox Epiphany Festival site in Shire town, to inform recommendations for the construction of additional emergency shelters. The Sebacare site has a capacity to construct around 1,600 emergency shelters.

In Shire, UNHCR has completed the construction of 250 emergency shelters in sites including Five Angels location in Shire, where additional 250 emergency shelters are being constructed by Samaritan's Purse. This will contribute toward the relocation of some 25,000 individuals (5,000 families) in need of relocation from overcrowded schools.

14 trucks of core relief items (CRIs) have reached Shire. UNHCR has developed a CRI distribution plan for stocks in Shire and shared with Shelter/NFIs Cluster for action. The CRIs will be distributed to about 50,000 individuals (10,000 households) in Shire, Debaguna, Sheraro, Adi Daero, Axum, and Adwa towns. CRI distributions in Mekelle has reached 80 per cent of IDPs (based on March population figures) and is temporarily on hold as some IDPs are selling NFIs to meet their food needs as food assistance is delayed. In Central and Southern Tigray, CRIs will be distributed to IDP sites in rural areas in line with the recommendations of the Shelter/NFI cluster.



In Shire, UNHCR and NRC construct emergency shelters for newly identified IDP sites to benefit the internally displaced families who fled conflict in western Tigray.

The construction of the "Sabacare 4" IDP site to host over 19,000 individuals (3,800 households) is ongoing and coordinated by the CCCM cluster (co-led by IOM and UNHCR) in cooperation with the Government. UNHCR through partners Action for the Needy (ANE) and Development Expertise Center (DEC) have now completed 328 shelters out of a target of 500 shelters to be constructed by UNHCR, as part of the CCCM efforts. No humanitarian organization has so far committed to constructing the additional shelters that are needed to reach the planned site capacity. Advocacy is ongoing with other CCCM cluster partners. A total of 4,000 structures (both communal and shelter units) will be needed.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management: The management of the IDP sites in Shire has been divided between UNHCR and IOM. UNHCR will manage the sites of Embadanso High School, Adi-Kentibay/5 Angels, Hibret school, Special force, Adi-Wenfito, Dehab Tesfay, BGI Elementray, Shire Preparatory School, Wokerduba Elementary.

A CCCM protection plan has been set up in Shire, including weekly protection monitoring at IDP sites. In addition, following the outreach mission to Adwa and Axum, the Protection team in Shire is advocating with other UN agencies and NGOs to increase assistance to IDPs, mostly food and non-food items. The Protection team plans to scale up outreach mission to other sites, including Debaguna, Shiraro and other locations.

A new IDP site in Matsa was identified a few kilometers out of Shire town. A site plan for this site has been developed by the CCCM Cluster. If approved, the area has a capacity to allow the construction of 340 emergency shelters.

Sudan Response

The arrival of refugees from the Tigray region into Sudan has continued with fewer than 30 per day in May. Refugees continue to arrive mainly at Hamdayet transit center with fewer number of new arrivals to Village 8.

Relocation: Due to restructuring of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) in East Sudan, the letter for resumption of relocation was not sent by COR to the Governor of Gedaref. UNHCR is closely following up. In the meantime, registration for relocation is ongoing in Hamdayet and Village 8.

SECTOR UPDATES



Protection: In all locations, Protection desks have been established to provide information on legal issues, rights, and obligations of refugees and facilitate the registration process. Protection teams are identifying people at heightened risk, including pregnant women, persons with disabilities, unaccompanied children and older persons and referring them to specialized services as may be needed, including counselling and health services for survivors of gender-based violence.

The Age, Gender, and Diversity Mainstreaming participatory assessment was held from 9 - 11 May in both Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah together with all partners. Two themes; "Safety" and "Access to Basic Needs" were the focus.

Community members in Um Rakuba have reported an increase of GBV cases in the camps. The GBV sub-working group is following up to learn more and inform the response.



Health: UNHCR and partners continue to conduct temperature screening, distribute soap and sensitization of refugees on COVID-19 mitigation measures at entry points in the Tigrayan language.

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