



# Ethiopia – Northern Ethiopia Crisis

**DECEMBER 30, 2021** 

#### SITUATION AT A GLANCE

6.5-7

People Facing Severe Acute Food Insecurity in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray

USAID - October 202 I

People Targeted for Humanitarian Assistance in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray

UN – December 2021

**MILLION** 

People Displaced by the Crisis Across Northern Ethiopia

IOM - October 2021

50,710

Refugees From Northern Ethiopia in Fastern Sudan

UNHCR - December 2021

- Bureaucratic impediments and heightened levels of insecurity continue to limit humanitarian access to northern Ethiopia, particularly to Tigray. No convoys carrying humanitarian aid reached Tigray's capital city of Mekele between December 15 and 30, exacerbating the already dire need for assistance.
- Conflict continues to result in widespread displacement across Afar, Amhara, and Tigray, generating urgent humanitarian needs.
- Ethiopia is projected to face record levels of food insecurity during 2022, with the greatest needs concentrated in conflict-affected areas of northern Ethiopia. Insecurity and a critical shortage of supplies and fuel continue to hinder food assistance.



# **TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING**

For the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response in FYs 2020–2021

USAID/BHA<sup>1,2</sup> \$560,592,662 State/PRM<sup>3</sup> \$56,795,000<sup>4</sup>

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 7.

**Total** \$617,387,6625

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> USAID/BHA FY 2020 funding includes emergency food assistance from the former Office of Food for Peace and non-food humanitarian assistance from the former Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM). In addition, State/PRM provided \$45,388,900 toward the northern Ethiopia response in the Horn of Africa region, bringing the total U.S. Government (USG) funding to nearly \$663 million. A portion of this funding is also reported in the USG Sudan fact sheet.

Funding in this fact sheet includes assistance to refugees residing in Tigray, which is also reported in the USG Ethiopia fact sheet as part of the Ethiopia Complex Emergency.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>This total includes \$326,361 in FY 2020 supplemental funding through USAID/BHA for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) preparedness and response activities.

# **KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

#### Humanitarian Access Remains Constrained as Conflict Lines Shift

Government of Ethiopia (GoE)-aligned forces—including the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF)—have advanced into areas formerly held by Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)-aligned elements in Afar and Amhara regions in recent weeks, following the TPLF withdrawal from Afar and Amhara in late December, international media report. The recent shift in conflict lines resulted in the return of several cities in Afar and Amhara to GoE control, including South Wello Zone's Dessie and Kombolcha towns in Amhara—key relief hubs with humanitarian offices, warehouses, and a fuel depot—and subsequent improved humanitarian access to additional areas of Amhara. Insecurity within Tigray Region itself remains high, with continued reports of hostilities and airstrikes, including airstrikes on two towns that killed as many as 20 people on December 20, according to the UN. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported on December 28 that one of its staff members had died as a result of the conflict in Tigray, bringing the total number of humanitarian workers killed since the onset of the conflict to 24 people. In a December 24 statement, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for both parties to the conflict to seize the opportunity to end hostilities and ensure the provision of life-saving humanitarian assistance.

Though the recent developments represent an opportunity for progress, insecurity and bureaucratic impediments continue to restrict the provision of principled humanitarian assistance in northern Ethiopia, particularly in Tigray. No humanitarian convoys coordinated by the USAID/BHA-funded Logistics Cluster—the coordinating body for humanitarian logistics activities, comprising UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders—were able to reach Mekele from Afar's capital city of Semera between December 15 and 30 due to operational challenges, bureaucratic impediments, and insecurity along the only accessible land route into Tigray. As of late December, a convoy of trucks carrying food and nutrition supplies is stalled in Afar's Abala town—the last checkpoint in Afar before entering Tigray—due to insecurity and operational constraints; humanitarian organizations must await a resolution to the extensive delays in Abala before dispatching additional convoys from Semera, according to the Logistics Cluster. Nearly 70 trucks with approval to travel to Mekele remain stalled in Semera as of December 30, the UN reports.

In total, the UN reports that 65 trucks carrying humanitarian commodities, including life-saving food assistance, reached Mekele during the first three weeks of December, comprising approximately 4 percent of the humanitarian supplies that the UN estimates were required to sustain relief operations during that period. Meanwhile, the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has resumed operations with twice-weekly flights between Ethiopia's capital of Addis Ababa and Mekele. Though humanitarian organizations have transported a limited amount of operational cash on UNHAS flights, it remains insufficient to support operations in Tigray, according to the UN.

#### Conflict Contributes to Record Levels of Food Insecurity in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is projected to face a record number of people in need of emergency food assistance during 2022, representing a nearly 40 percent increase from 2021 levels, with the greatest needs concentrated in conflict-affected areas of northern Ethiopia, according to the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET). Emergency—IPC 4—levels of food insecurity are now widespread across northern Ethiopia, with worse outcomes possible in parts of Tigray, where the GoE's de facto blockade of the

region has hindered relief actors' ability to provide life-saving assistance. In neighboring Afar and Amhara, conflict in late November and early December severely disrupted humanitarian operations, forcing the UN World Food Program (WFP) and the Catholic Relief Services (CRS)-led, Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP) to temporarily halt distributions in some areas of Amhara. Moreover, food distributions in Tigray that are meant to take place every six weeks have only reached food-insecure individuals roughly every five months, according to FEWS NET estimates. Widespread Emergency outcomes are likely to persist in northern Ethiopia, where conflict continues to drive high levels of displacement and significantly reduce access to food and income-generating activities.

Meanwhile, insecurity and a critical shortage of cash, food commodities, and fuel have hindered food assistance in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. A lack of fuel for humanitarian use in Tigray forced some food partners to suspend operations beginning on December 10 and threatens to halt a USAID/BHA partner's food dispatches across the region in the coming weeks; relief actors had approximately 7,000 gallons of fuel left in the region as of December 23, while nearly 32,000 gallons of fuel are required to dispatch the remaining 8,000 metric tons (MT) of food commodities available in Mekele, the UN reports. Heightened insecurity and significant looting of food commodities in late November and early December temporarily disrupted food assistance in and around Dessie and Kombolcha, where the USAID/BHA-supported JEOP and WFP are working to provide life-saving food assistance to 450,000 people. Due to the ongoing impediments to the humanitarian response in northern Ethiopia, during November the JEOP and WFP provided food assistance to only approximately 400,000 people in Tigray, compared to the estimated 5.2 million people in need of emergency food assistance in the region.

# Widespread Displacement Continues to Drive Humanitarian Needs

Displacement from Tigray's Western Zone—an area that has remained largely inaccessible to relief actors due to insecurity—has continued with the movement of approximately 30,000 people since November 21, 2021, bringing the total number of people displaced from Western Zone since the beginning of the conflict in November 2020 to more than 1.2 million people, according to the UN. USAID/BHA and the UN continue to call for safe, voluntary, and dignified returns in line with international law. Humanitarian actors are conducting needs assessments for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) that have arrived in North Western Zone from Western Zone in recent weeks; a needs assessment in one site hosting an estimated 14,000 IDPs found that displaced households require urgent food assistance and health care services, as well as shelter and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support. During the week of December 16, relief actors established a new IDP site in North Western Zone to shelter more than 8,500 people, including 4,300 girls and women. Humanitarian actors had distributed more than 9,000 kits containing essential shelter and WASH items to displaced households as of December 23.

Meanwhile, local authorities' efforts to reopen schools being used to shelter displaced populations have resulted in secondary displacements in North Shewa Zone's Debre Birhan town, which hosts the greatest number of IDPs in Amhara, according to the Amhara Regional Disaster Risk Management Commission. Local authorities estimate that approximately 145,000 IDPs were sheltering across 12 IDP sites, including ten schools, as of late November. The closure of IDP shelters located at schools forced displaced households to return to their areas of origin in Amhara's North Shewa, Oromia, and South Wello zones, or to relocate to alternative IDP sites within North Shewa. As of December 25, local authorities had closed two of the 10 sites hosting IDPs in Debre Birhan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

# Damaged Health Facilities and Supply Shortage Constrain Health Response

Increased fighting has resulted in widespread damage to health facilities in Afar and Amhara, where approximately 1.5 million women and children require essential health services, according to the UN. An estimated 50 ambulances, four blood banks, 420 health centers, 1,700 health posts, and 35 hospitals in Amhara sustained damage due to the conflict, according to the Amhara Public Health Institute. Additionally, at least 90 health facilities, including one hospital and at least 20 health clinics, were damaged or looted of equipment and supplies in Afar's Zone I, Zone 4, and Zone 5. As of December 17, damage due to conflict had rendered more than 1,400 health facilities across Afar and Amhara nonfunctional, according to USAID/BHA partner International Medical Corps (IMC). The UN estimates that only approximately 90 of the more than 410 health facilities in Afar remain operational, including just two hospitals. In Tigray, stocks of medical supplies are dwindling as the continued de facto blockade of the region has prevented relief actors from transporting essential drugs and equipment, as well as cash and fuel critical to humanitarian operations. Approximately 790,000 children currently require vaccination against measles in Tigray, but the severe shortage of cash and fuel has prevented relief actors from administering 860,000 doses of the vaccine—sufficient to vaccinate an estimated 774,000 children—that were successfully transported to Tigray during the week of December 16, according to the UN.

#### **KEY FIGURES**

### U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE



Crisis-affected people in Tigray reached with WFP emergency food assistance from July to November

# **FOOD SECURITY**

In response to acute food needs across northern Ethiopia, USAID/BHA is supporting the CRS-led JEOP consortium of NGOs, as well as WFP, which operates with the support of other humanitarian partners, to provide emergency food assistance—including commodities such as U.S.-sourced cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil—to vulnerable populations in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. In Tigray, the JEOP reached approximately 2.5 million people across five of Tigray's six zones with food rations between June and November, despite significant operational challenges. In Amhara, the JEOP expanded its caseload in response to rising needs, reaching at least 562,000 people since late October. Meanwhile, WFP delivered emergency food assistance to nearly 300,000 individuals affected by the crisis in Afar and Amhara since early October.



Children screened for wasting in Tigray by UNICEF during November

#### NUTRITION

With approximately \$24 million in FY 2021 funding, USAID/BHA supports 10 partners in their efforts to prevent and treat malnutrition across conflict-affected areas of northern Ethiopia. Using a community-based approach, USAID/BHA partners promote recommended infant and young child feeding practices through one-on-one counseling and group education sessions to improve nutrition outcomes. Additionally, USAID/BHA partner the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) is distributing nutrition commodities—including ready-to-use therapeutic foods—to crisis-affected populations in Tigray. UNICEF and other partners are also working to strengthen fixed-location health facilities and operating mobile health and nutrition

teams (MHNTs), screening more than 110,000 children for acute malnutrition in Tigray during November alone. In Afar and Amhara, UNICEF and USAID/BHA NGO partners are providing specialized treatment for malnutrition in children ages five years and younger and conducting infant and young child feeding counseling at community levels.



MHNTs in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray supported by USAID/BHA

#### **HEALTH**

The USG supports 13 partners providing critical health care services in northern Ethiopia through community health facilities and mobile health units. USAID/BHA partners are supporting more than 60 integrated MHNTs throughout Afar, Amhara, and Tigray, which provide critically needed health and nutrition services to remote and hard-to-reach areas. MHNTs serve an essential function in areas where the majority of health facilities have been damaged and looted and where ongoing insecurity continues to impede crisis-affected populations' access to health services. Additionally, partners are providing urgently required medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, and personal protective equipment throughout Tigray, and have supported the operation and rehabilitation of more than 300 health facilities. To mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on populations in Tigray, USAID/BHA partners are training local health care workers in infection prevention and control methods and strengthening community health coordination. With State/PRM support, an international NGO (INGO) has distributed essential medicines and other medical supplies to violenceaffected health facilities in Tigray, as well as in Afar and northern Amhara. Additionally, State/PRM supports UNHCR to provide health assistance to refugees in Tigray, including those sheltering in North Western Zone's Adi Harush and Mai Aini camps.



USG-supported partners providing dedicated protection services in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray

#### **PROTECTION**

In response to protection needs resulting from the crisis in northern Ethiopia, the USG supports 12 partner organizations conducting protection programs as humanitarian access and security conditions permit. Partners are expanding gender-based violence (GBV) case management support, training social workers and community-based case workers, providing dignity kits—which contain items to address the specific needs of women and girls—to GBV survivors, and establishing child-friendly spaces, among other activities. In addition, State/PRM supports an INGO and UNHCR to provide protection and other multi-sector assistance to crisis-affected refugees and IDPs. With State/PRM support, UNHCR has scaled up protection services in Mai Ani and Adi Harush camps, as well as in Amhara's Dabat town, where the UN agency is working with regional authorities to develop a new camp to host crisis-affected refugees.



Rolls of heavy-duty plastic sheeting airlifted by USAID/BHA in coordination with IOM to Ethiopia to support needs in Tigray



People in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray reached with essential WASH supplies



In dedicated USAID/BHA logistics support

#### SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

With more than \$17 million in FY 2021 funding dedicated to shelter and settlements assistance, USAID/BHA supports crisis-affected populations in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray through implementing partners CRS, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Samaritan's Purse, and World Vision, as well as the IOM-managed Rapid Response Fund (RRF). As of December 5, through the RRF, USAID/BHA partner IOM had reached nearly 92,000 crisis-affected individuals with emergency shelter assistance, and provided more than 196,000 individuals with life-saving relief commodities since the start of the conflict. Partners are also distributing relief commodity kits—which include bed mats, blankets, and wash basins—to recently displaced individuals, among other activities. In addition, State/PRM supports UNHCR to provide shelter assistance to refugees and IDPs in Tigray.

#### **WASH**

USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners are distributing WASH supplies and other relief commodities to crisis-affected and displaced populations in northern Ethiopia, as well as delivering equipment to support the rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure damaged during the crisis, constructing or rehabilitating water supply systems, and providing handwashing facilities in IDP sites and health facilities. USAID/BHA partner UNICEF provided safe drinking water through water trucking to nearly 106,000 people in Tigray and 52,000 people in Afar during November, and reached nearly 143,000 people in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray with critical WASH supplies. Meanwhile, with USAID/BHA support, IMC transported approximately 80 MT of WASH supplies through Logistics Cluster-led convoys to Tigray from July to December.

#### LOGISTICS SUPPORT AND RELIEF COMMODITIES

USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners are supporting essential logistics support for the humanitarian response in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. With USAID/BHA support, WFP is providing critical coordination and logistics services, including critical transportation and storage of life-saving commodities, to the humanitarian community through the Logistics Cluster.

#### **CONTEXT IN BRIEF**

- Following weeks of escalating tensions between regional and federal authorities, clashes erupted between the TPLF and the ENDF in several locations across Tigray on November 4, 2020. Although the GoE declared victory on November 28, clashes continued. After a sharp escalation in fighting in late June 2021, the GoE declared a unilateral ceasefire, ENDF elements withdrew from Tigray, and the TPLF gained control of much of the region as the conflict expanded to neighboring Afar and Amhara. On November 2, 2021, the GoE declared a six-month nationwide state of emergency in response to renewed and spreading hostilities. ENDF elements regained control of Afar and Amhara following the withdrawal of TPLF elements on December 20.
- Security conditions remain volatile, with active conflict continuing to endanger populations in affected areas of Afar, Amhara, and Tigray, including displacing individuals within Ethiopia and into adjacent areas of eastern Sudan.
- On November 18, 2021, U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Geeta Pasi redeclared a disaster for Ethiopia for
  FY 2022 due to the continued humanitarian needs resulting from the complex emergency—including the
  entrenched armed conflict in northern Ethiopia—and the impact of climate, conflict, food insecurity, and
  health shocks on vulnerable populations across the country.
- On March 1, 2021, USAID activated a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to lead USG humanitarian response efforts to the crisis in northern Ethiopia. USAID also stood up a Washington,

#### USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 20211,2

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT		
USAID/BHA					
American Refugee Committee (ARC)	Protection	Tigray—Central, Eastern, Mekele, North Western	\$1,500,000		
CARE	Agriculture	Tigray—Eastern, South Eastern, Southern	\$9,175,461		
CONCERN	Health, Nutrition	Amhara–South Wello; Tigray–South Eastern	\$800,000		
CRS	Food Assistance–328,820 MT of U.S. In Kind Food Aid	Amhara—North Gondar, North Shewa, North Wello, South Gondar, South Wello, Wag Hamra; Tigray—Mekele, Central, Eastern, South Eastern, Southern	\$276,863,088		
	Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray—Central, Eastern, Mekele, South Eastern	\$5,000,000		
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Tigray-wide	\$339,996		
FHI 360	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Amhara–South Wello; Tigray–Central, Eastern, Mekele	\$5,999,048		
GOAL	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Afar-Zone 4; Tigray-Central, Eastern, Mekele, South Eastern	\$3,000,000		
IMC	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar—Zone I; Amhara—North Gondar, North Shewa, South Wello; Tigray— Central, North Western	\$4,000,000		
iMMAP	HCIMA	Tigray-wide	\$87,480		
IOM	Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Afar–Zone I, Zone 4; Amhara–Central Gondary, North Gondar, North Shewa, South Wello; Tigray-wide	\$9,535,860		
IRC	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Tigray–North Western	\$4,860,000		

	Program Support		\$1,554,980
	Airlifted Relief Commodities	Council, Notal 17 Count	\$2,333,93
ZOA	WASH, Shelter and Settlements	Amhara–North Shewa; Tigray–Eastern, Southern, North Western	\$2,700,000
World Vision	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Afar-Zone 1, Zone 4; Amhara-North Wello, South Wello; Tigray-Mekele, Eastern, North Western, South Eastern	\$5,131,89
	Nutrition, Logistics Support	Afar-wide, Amhara-wide, Tigray-wide	\$27,00000
WFP	Food Assistance–91,049 MT of Local, Regional, and International Procurement (LRIP)	Afar–Zone I, Zone 2, Zone 4; Amhara–North Gondar; Tigray–North Western, Southern	\$73,00000
UN World Health Organization (WHO)	Health, HCIMA	Afar-Zone I, Zone 2, Zone 3; Amhara-wide, Tigray-wide	\$1,316,95
UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	Health, Protection	Tigray-wide	\$1,637,52
UN Development Program (UNDP)/UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)	HCIMA	Tigray-wide	\$1,475,15
UNICEF	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar-wide, Amhara-wide, Tigray-wide	\$10,410,382
Save the Children Federation (SCF)	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Tigray–Central, Eastern, Mekele	\$5,000,000
Samaritan's Purse	Health, Nutrition, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray–North Western	\$5,000,000
Relief Society of Tigray (REST)	Food Assistance–Transportation	Tigray—Central, Eastern, South Eastern, Southern	\$570,000
Plan USA	Protection	Tigray–Central, Mekele, North Western, South Eastern	\$1,800,000
of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Tigray-wide	\$1,300,000

# USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2020

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT			
USAID/BHA						
CRS	Food Assistance–Cash Transfers, 33,690 MT of U.S. In-Kind Food Aid	Tigray–Mekele, Eastern, North Western	\$68,000,000			
	Health, WASH	Tigray-wide	\$215,250			
Ethiopian Red Cross Society	Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Tigray–Western	\$695,341			
iMMAP	HCIMA	Tigray-Mekele, North Western	\$218,112			
IOM	Shelter and Settlements	Tigray–Mekele, Central, North Western	\$1,118,911			
IRC	Protection, WASH	Tigray–North Western	\$604,492			
	Food Assistance–1,159 MT of U.S. In-Kind Food Aid	Tigray-Mekele, Eastern, South Eastern	\$2,019,312			
Pathfinder International	Health	Tigray–North Western, Western	\$111,111			
REST	Agriculture, Food Assistance—51,770 MT of U.S. In Kind Food Aid, Health, Nutrition, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray—Central, Eastern, South Eastern, Southern	\$17,838,987			
UNICEF	Nutrition	Tigray-wide	\$379,392			
WFP	Food Assistance-LRIP	Tigray–North Western	\$8,000,000			

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING \$99,200,908

TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY  $2020^3$ 

\$99,200,908

# TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FYS 2020–2021

\$617,387,662

#### **PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION**

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.org
  - o Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of October 12, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Estimated value of food assistance and transportation costs at time of procurement; subject to change

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This total represents funding previously reported on the USG Ethiopia FY 2020 Fact Sheet #4 and East Africa FY 2020 Development & Disaster Risk Reduction Fact Sheet, both dated September 30, 2020. This funding was redirected to address new humanitarian needs stemming from the conflict in Tigray.