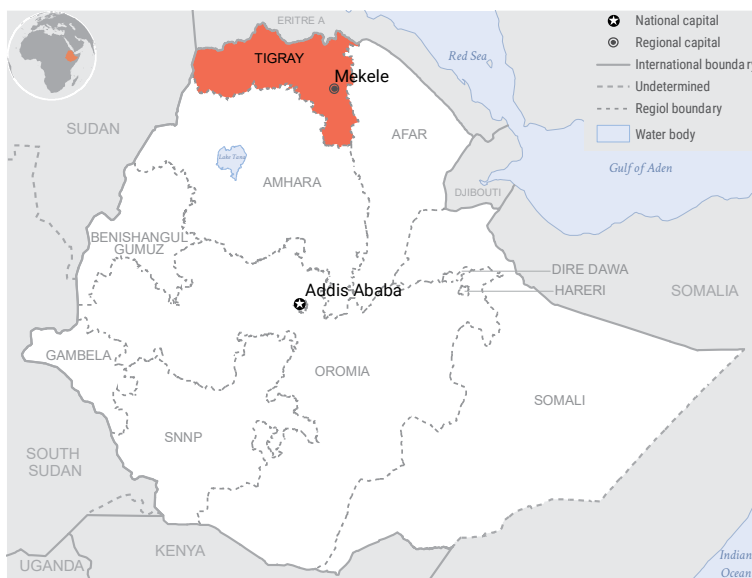


This report is produced by OCHA Ethiopia and covers the period from 24 to 26 November 2020. The next report will be issued on Tuesday, 1 December.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- According to the Government of Ethiopia, the third and final phase of their “law enforcement operations” is launched towards Mekelle city, capital of Tigray region, a city of more than 500,000 people. This came following the expiration of the 72-hour period granted to the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) to surrender.
- Tension remains high in Mekelle in anticipation of the military action announced by the Government. Humanitarians have raised concern over further disruption to essential services, particularly for the 850,000 people already dependent on relief assistance, including 96,000 refugees in Tigray.
- Humanitarian actors have reported urgent needs in food, water, and shelter in affected areas in Sudan and Ethiopia. In Tigray, only five days’ worth of food supplies is available to assist 96,000 refugees who depend on humanitarian aid to survive.
- About 5,000 new arrivals have been received in eastern Sudan since 22 November, bringing the total number of asylum seekers from Ethiopia to more than 42,600, as of 25 November.
- On 26 November, the federal Government of Ethiopia announced the intention to scale-up humanitarian assistance to the affected population in Tigray by opening a humanitarian access route, managed by the Ministry of Peace.



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)

**42,000**

Asylum seekers in Sudan since 7 November

**US\$75.6M**

Outstanding requirement in the Humanitarian Preparedness Plan

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

Humanitarian actors in Ethiopia and the region remain alarmed by the possibility of armed conflict in Mekelle city, capital of Tigray region, and continue to call on all parties to the conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including health facilities, schools and water systems. This follows a directive issued by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on 26 November instructing the Ethiopian National Defence Forces to commence the third and final phase of operations towards Mekelle after the expiry of the 72-hour period granted.

There is great concern about further disruptions to essential services, including delivery of food, water and essential medicines to the overall population, and in particular the existing 850,000 people receiving aid relief pre-conflict, of which 96,000 are refugees in the four camps and host communities inside Tigray. Specifically in Mekelle, there are more than half a million residents, including more than 200 aid workers.

Amnesty International reports that hundreds of civilians have reportedly lost their lives in the region since the start of the conflict. On the refugee operation front, humanitarian actors note that the situation is increasingly dire, with only five days remaining on the refugee food rations and other supplies, including food, cash, and fuel, to carry out essential service delivery.

Violence and insecurity continue to be reported in other regions of Ethiopia, triggering internal displacement in multiple locations, including in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' region (SNNP) due to conflict in Konso zone as well as in Metekel zone, Benishangul Gumuz region. Food, water and shelter are urgently needed, as most of the displaced people are staying in open spaces, including schools.

### Cross-border impact

More than 42,000 asylum seekers - 45 per cent of whom are children - have crossed the border from Tigray into eastern Sudan between 7 and 25 November, according to UNHCR. Humanitarian workers and the Transitional Government of Sudan continue to identify new sites to settle the increasing number of refugees arriving in the country. The majority, 69 per cent, arrived in Kassala state, with 30 per cent arriving in Gedaref state and 1 per cent in Blue Nile state. The daily average of new arrivals since 10 November stands at 2,656, according to UNHCR.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) issued a **press release** noting that the Sudanese Red Crescent Society has scaled up its operation at the border with Ethiopia, highlighting the growing humanitarian needs as refugees continue to arrive in large numbers.

## 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 to the conflict.

A team comprised of Tigray regional sector bureaus (WASH, Health, Agriculture, BOLSA,) and the national NGO 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.

In response to the Tigray situation, the Protection Cluster members are mapping actors for potential IDPs protection interventions across the three impacted regions of Amhara, Afar and Tigray. **Mobilization of resources is ongoing to scale-up protection staffing for an operational response.** The protection of populations impacted by the conflict remains an overarching humanitarian concern. In addition to safety of aid workers, ensuring safety and access of all civilians to vital goods and services is a priority for humanitarian partners. The humanitarian community is calling on all parties to the conflict to ensure safety and freedom of movements for all civilians, including aid workers, so that people affected by the conflict can receive urgently needed life-saving assistance.

On the Sudan side, supplemental and therapeutic feeding is now being provided to some 300 malnourished children and pregnant and lactating mothers identified among the new arrivals. Increased assistance is reaching refugees as more deliveries of supplies arrive at the border—including food, medical supplies and ready to use therapeutic and supplementary food. The relocation of the new arrivals from the border however continues to be hampered by logistical and operational challenges.

According to the Disaster Risk Management Bureau in Amhara region, some 13,000 IDPs are expected to flee to West Gonder and 7,000 IDPs to North Wollo zones. This is in addition to the more than 159,000 IDPs that have been displaced by violence from Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz regions to Amhara region. The regional government in Amhara has already requested the federal authorities (NDRMC) for food and NFIs to be prepositioned the anticipated caseload. Amhara regional authorities (the DPFSPCO/ANSSCC) deployed teams to West Gonder and North Wollo zones to assess the situation on the ground and register IDPs.

## COORDINATION

The Emergency Coordination Centers in Tigray, Amhara and Afar continue to 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.

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 are underway to deploy rapid assessment teams to Tigray, and areas affected by the conflict in Ahmara and Afar border areas.

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

## 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. 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 \$75.7 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	3.1
Protection	2.6	2.1
WaSH	12.8	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 96.9 M</b>	<b>\$ 75.7 M</b>

In Sudan, the UN and 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.

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