

Ethiopia – Complex Emergency

May 18, 2021

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Escalating violence in southern Amhara, along the Afar–Somali border, and in parts of Oromiya in recent months has resulted in significant population displacement and hundreds of civilian deaths.
- Approximately 23.8 million people across Ethiopia will likely require humanitarian assistance through September, according to the 2021 Ethiopia HNO.
- Continued drought in parts of northern and southern Ethiopia in recent months has diminished food production and exacerbated humanitarian needs.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the Ethiopia Response in FY 2021	USAID/BHA ¹	\$442,919,541 ²
	State/PRM ³	\$28,380,980
Total		\$471,300,521

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 5

¹ USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)
² Humanitarian funding for the complex emergency in Ethiopia includes more than \$168 million for the Tigray crisis response and nearly \$5.8 million for the ongoing desert locust response. For additional information regarding the Tigray crisis response, please refer to the USAID/BHA Tigray Crisis Fact Sheet. For additional information regarding the Ethiopia desert locust response, please refer to the USAID/BHA East Africa Desert Locust Crisis Fact Sheet.
³ Total U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) funding in Ethiopia includes assistance to Somali and South Sudanese refugees who are sheltering in Ethiopia, which is also included in the regional U.S. Government (USG) response totals for Somalia and South Sudan.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Intercommunal Conflict Escalates in Amhara and Along Afar–Somali Border

Escalating intercommunal conflict and armed group attacks in southern Amhara Region and along the border between Afar and Somali regions in recent months has resulted in civilian casualties, looting, the destruction of property, and significant population displacement. Between April 16 and 18, a series of armed group attacks in and around Ataye town in Amhara’s Oromiya Special Zone resulted in an undetermined number of civilian deaths, population displacement, and heightened tensions between Oromo and Amhara ethnic groups, prompting the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to declare a state of emergency in southern Amhara on April 19, according to international media. Previously, intercommunal clashes involving the two ethnic groups had occurred in parts of Amhara’s North Shewa and Oromiya special zones—including in Ataye and surrounding villages—on March 18, resulting in dozens of deaths, injuries, and displacement. Overall, intercommunal violence and armed group attacks in the two zones in March and April displaced an estimated 330,000 people and limited humanitarian actors’ ability to access crisis-affected populations, according to the UN.

Meanwhile, intercommunal violence between Afari and Somali-Issa communities along the Afar–Somali regional border has resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths and had displaced approximately 35,000 people across Afar as of late April, according to the UN. Between April 2 and 6, a series of intercommunal clashes occurred along the Afar–Somali border, resulting in the deaths of approximately 100 people, according to local media. The clashes followed the GoE Electoral Board’s March decision to cancel polling stations for the country’s 2021 general elections in Afar’s Adaytu, Gadamaytu, and Undafo’o communities, where territorial disputes between Afari and Somali-Issa communities in recent months have resulted in intercommunal clashes that have generated significant population displacement and undermined humanitarian conditions. In response to recent violence, USAID/BHA non-governmental organization (NGO) partners the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and GOAL began providing protection assistance to nearly 27,000 people across three affected *woredas*, or districts, along the border between the two regions in April.

Armed Group Attacks Endanger Civilians in Oromiya

Escalating attacks by armed actors, including suspected Oromo Liberation Front Shene (OLF-Shene) elements, continue to result in civilian deaths and displacement in portions of Oromiya Region’s East Wollega, Horo Guduru Wollega, and West Wollega zones, local media report. On March 30, suspected OLF-Shene elements attacked civilians in West Wollega’s Babo Gambel *woreda*, resulting in the deaths of 28 people and injuries to at least 12 others. Previously, suspected OLF-Shene elements carried out attacks in East Wollega and Horo Guduru Wollega on March 6 and 7, resulting in the deaths of approximately 42 people and displacing an unknown number of people. Armed actors allegedly associated with OLF-Shene also abducted approximately 30 individuals from a church during one of the attacks. Relief actors operating in Oromiya reported in late March that armed attacks in East Wollega and West Wollega since February had resulted in increased rates of population displacement.

2021 Ethiopia HNO Identifies 23.8 Million People in Need

Approximately 23.8 million people in Ethiopia—more than 20 percent of the country’s population—will likely require humanitarian assistance through September, according to the 2021 Ethiopia Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), released by the UN in late February. This figure—which the GoE has not endorsed—marks a nearly threefold increase from the population in need identified by the country’s 2020 HNO. Overall, the UN attributed heightened levels of need across the country to escalating

conflict—particularly in northern Ethiopia’s Tigray Region—as well as the socioeconomic impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, continued climatic shocks, and desert locust infestations. Food, agriculture, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance are priority needs among vulnerable populations across the country, according to the HNO. Humanitarian needs will be particularly acute among the country’s growing population of conflict-affected internally displaced persons (IDPs), most of whom are reliant on humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs. The UN anticipates that the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance will likely decrease by 2.1 million people between October and December, in part due to the October-to-January *meher* harvest.

Climatic Shocks Result in Heightened Humanitarian Needs

Recent below-average rainfall and a hotter-than-average January-to-March *jilaal* dry season have led to the persistence of drought conditions in parts of northern and eastern Ethiopia—including portions of Afar, Oromiya, Tigray, and Somali—resulting in heightened humanitarian needs. As of late March, approximately 2.1 million people in Somali were in need of humanitarian assistance due to the impact of drought, with a growing number of people reliant on costly water trucking services to meet basic needs, according to the UN. Similarly, water shortages were affecting approximately 300,000 people in Afar as of late April. Dry weather conditions across the two regions between March and April damaged livelihoods and undermined agricultural production as well as livestock conditions, resulting in heightened rates of food insecurity and wasting. Despite the persistence of drought-related needs, some parts of western Ethiopia may experience above-average rainfall between May and September, increasing risks related to flooding and resultant displacement, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).

KEY FIGURES



10 Million

People supported monthly through USG emergency food assistance



10

Number of USG implementing partners providing health programming

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

In response to acute food needs across Ethiopia, USAID/BHA is supporting the UN World Food Program (WFP) and international NGO Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to provide emergency food commodities—including U.S.-sourced cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil—to Ethiopia’s most vulnerable families. USAID/BHA partners also provide cash transfers to food-insecure households across the country, enabling them to purchase food from local markets. With nearly \$327 million in FY 2021 funding to date, USAID/BHA partners are reaching approximately 10 million people in Ethiopia with food assistance on a monthly basis.

HEALTH

USAID/BHA supports the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and 9 NGOs to improve access to health care services across Ethiopia. USAID/BHA provides medical supplies, supports health units, and trains community health workers to support urgent health needs, often integrated with nutrition and WASH programming. In addition, State/PRM partners, including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and NGOs, support essential health interventions for refugees, asylum-seekers, and other vulnerable populations in Ethiopia.



20

Number of USG implementing partners providing WASH programming

WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM fund the provision of critical WASH assistance throughout Ethiopia to improve access to safe drinking water and prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases. With USAID/BHA support, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNICEF, and 18 NGO partners are conducting hygiene awareness sessions, rehabilitating water systems, and providing safe drinking water to IDPs and other people in need. In addition, State/PRM is supporting UNHCR to implement WASH activities that assist refugees sheltering across Ethiopia, including those fleeing Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.



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Number of USG implementing partners providing nutrition programming

NUTRITION

USAID/BHA partners are leading efforts to prevent and treat acute malnutrition across Ethiopia. Working through UNICEF, WFP, and 10 NGO implementing partners, USAID/BHA supports community- and evidence-based programs aimed at decreasing malnutrition-related morbidity and mortality by strengthening prevention efforts, as well as the identification and treatment of wasting, particularly among children and pregnant and lactating women. USAID/BHA partners have continued to provide malnutrition prevention and treatment services during Ethiopia's ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, which has coincided with a notable increase in severe wasting—a life-threatening form of malnutrition—cases as populations face multiple crises.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Populations in Ethiopia frequently experience recurrent drought, seasonal flooding, intercommunal conflict, food insecurity, pest and disease outbreaks, and limited access to health and WASH services, contributing to sustained humanitarian needs and an ongoing complex emergency. USG humanitarian assistance is designed to remain flexible and respond to needs as they arise, providing support to crisis-affected populations across the country.
- From 2015 to 2016, the former USAID Office of Food for Peace and Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance responded to Ethiopia's worst drought in more than 50 years, which resulted in at least 10.2 million people requiring emergency food assistance. In 2017, drought conditions in previously less-affected pastoral areas of southeastern Ethiopia intensified after consecutive seasons of below-average rainfall, decreasing livestock herd sizes and impacting access to food and livelihoods opportunities.
- Localized intercommunal conflicts throughout 2018 exacerbated humanitarian needs and prompted widespread displacement in Ethiopia, with approximately 2.8 million people displaced internally by late 2018—the highest number of IDPs in any country for the year. In May 2019, the GoE initiated a process to return IDPs to prior areas of residence across the country, despite ongoing security concerns. Conflict incidents and related displacement have continued through February 2021. Humanitarian organizations are responding to the acute needs of IDPs and returnees across the country as access and security conditions allow.
- On November 17, 2020, U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Michael A. Raynor redeclared a disaster for FY 2021 due to the complex emergency in Ethiopia.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR ETHIOPIA COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN FY 2021¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
ETHIOPIA			
USAID/BHA			
CRS ²	Food Assistance-87,040 Metric Tons (MT) of U.S. In-Kind Food Aid	Amhara, Dire Dawa, Oromiya, SNNP	\$44,680,038
ECC-SCDO-Harar	WASH	Oromiya	\$400,000
Food for the Hungry	Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz	\$1,895,096
iMMAP	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Afar, Oromiya, Somali	\$413,899
International Potato Center (IPC)	Agriculture	Amhara, Oromiya, SNNP	\$2,100,000
Priority Worldwide Services	Transportation - Disaster Site	Countrywide	\$2,035,756
UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Agriculture	Countrywide	\$3,750,350
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,200,000
WFP	Food Assistance-Local, Regional, and International Procurement (LRIP), Cash Transfers for Food, 88,750 MT of U.S. In-Kind Food Aid, Nutrition, Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice	Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Oromiya, Somali	\$215,644,689
World Vision	Health, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Oromiya, SNNP	\$2,600,000
	Program Support		\$38,265
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING³			\$274,758,093
STATE/PRM			
Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)	Protection	Gambella, Tigray	\$115,980
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Multi-Sector Assistance	Gambella	\$1,250,000
UNHCR	Multi-Sector Assistance	Countrywide	\$9,880,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$11,245,980
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR ETHIOPIA COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN FY 2021			\$286,004,073

TIGRAY⁴			
USAID/BHA			
CRS	Food Assistance-57,120 MT of U.S. In-Kind Food Aid	Tigray	\$29,992,763
	Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray	\$5,000,000
FHI 360	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Tigray	\$5,999,048
GOAL	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray	\$3,000,000
iMMAP	HCIMA	Tigray	\$87,480
IOM	Shelter and Settlements	Tigray	\$8,000,000
IRC	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Tigray	\$4,860,000

REST	Food Assistance-Transportation	Tigray	\$570,000
Samaritan's Purse	Health, Nutrition, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray	\$5,000,000
OCHA	HCIMA	Tigray	\$300,000
WFP	Food Assistance-LRIP, Nutrition, Logistics Support	Tigray	\$100,000,000
World Vision	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Tigray	\$5,131,897
	Program Support		\$220,260
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$168,161,448
STATE/PRM			
ICRC	Multi-Sector Assistance	Tigray	\$4,640,000
UNHCR	Multi-Sector Assistance	Tigray	\$12,495,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$17,135,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR TIGRAY RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$185,296,448
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$442,919,541
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$28,380,980
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$471,300,521

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of May 18, 2021.

² USAID/BHA's \$44,680,038 contribution supports the CRS-led Joint Emergency Operations Program (JEOP).

³ USAID/BHA funding for the Ethiopia complex emergency in FY 2021 includes nearly \$5.8 million for the ongoing locust response.

⁴ Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of April 28, 2021.

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](https://www.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](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)