

Response to Internal Displacement in Ethiopia

January to September 2021

1. To provide quality protection support and services to IDPs.

2. To address basic needs of IDPs through shelter, core relief items and camp management activities enhancing their protection.

3. To support IDPs in achieving a durable solution of their choice to their displacement.

Conflict, inter-communal violence, natural disasters and other impacts of climate change continue to drive people into displacement. Some have lived in displacement for several years, while others have fled their homes very recently. It is estimated that some 4 million people are internally displaced across the country, while 1.3 million IDPs are returning to find a durable solution.¹ All of them need our attention.

In response to this internal displacement situation, in the first three quarters of the year, UNHCR reached **over 1 million people in nine of Ethiopia's regions** including Afar, Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali and Tigray.

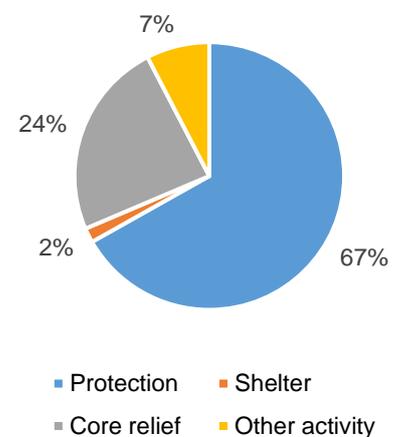
When addressing internal displacement, UNHCR responds on a needs-basis, works closely with partner organizations and coordinates its activities with authorities as well as through the respective humanitarian Cluster for Protection, Shelter/NFI and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM).

From January to September 2021, UNHCR and its partners have reached over **1 million** internally displaced people (IDPs) and returning IDPs with protection and assistance in **nine of Ethiopia's regions**.



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People reached by activity type
January to September 2021



¹ DTM, National Displacement Report No.9, September 2021.

Key Highlights

During the past quarter, UNHCR started to strengthen its presence in **Afar and Amhara regions** and preparing to scale up its response to the new internal displacement situation caused by conflict. In close collaboration with Regional authorities and partners, UNHCR activated the Protection and CCCM Cluster in Afar region, and has initiated the activation of the Protection Cluster in Amhara region as well - aiming at further improving a coordinated protection response to the internally displaced population.

UNHCR and its partners have been able to reach over 22,000 internally displaced people in the two regions with core relief items, including buckets, sleeping mats, jerry cans, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets and soap. The initial distribution targeted newly displaced in Debark (Amhara), as well as in Digdiga, Hidalu, Gorea and Gulina woredas (Afar). When supporting IDPs, UNHCR prioritizes persons with specific needs, such as single women with children and older people, as the needs remain significant.

More needs to be done, and UNHCR is preparing to further scale up its response in both regions. Core relief items arrived in Amhara, to be distributed to some 25,000 people in Dessie and Kombolcha, while preparations are ongoing for the distribution of CRIs to over 12,000 IDPs in Afar's Awra woreda. In preparation of establishing protection desks in five IDP sites in Afar region, UNHCR and partner EECMY DASSC also carried out trainings for social workers enabling them to provide counselling, identify persons with specific needs and make life-saving referrals to available services.

“We have lost all our property and had nothing in our hands when we fled. You can imagine how difficult life is without anything. Your support is very timely as it is the rainy season. The blankets and plastic sheets help to protect from the cold and the mosquito net from illness.”

Male, 62 years old, Gulina woreda, Afar region



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Operational Response (January -September 2021)

In **Benishangul Gumuz region**, UNHCR and partners supported over 58,000 internally displaced people with protection services, shelter, core relief items and clothing. In the Metekel zone, which remains very difficult to access, UNHCR, together with its partner ANE, provided shelter to IDPs, as well as clothing to women. In Bambasi and Sherkole IDP sites, over 200 vulnerable children were identified and included in available protection services.

In **Gambella region**, UNHCR assisted over 4,700 IDPs, including over 3,900 IDPs affected by the recent flooding in Lare woreda, with core relief items, with support from the International Rescue Committee (IRC). In addition, UNHCR carried out a training on CCCM for over 20 participants from among authorities, UN and NGO partners.

In **Dire Dawa region**, UNHCR and partners supported nearly 3,000 IDPs, returning and relocated IDPs through protection, shelter and materials for permanent shelters, as well as livelihoods (such as set up of mini markets) to facilitate their path to durable solutions. Of those, over 300 women, including survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and female-headed households, received livestock support to help them generate income. Preparations for further livelihood and core relief support are ongoing.



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UNHCR and partners also supported nearly 73,000 IDPs and returning IDPs in **the East and West Wollega zones of Oromia region**.

In the past three months alone, UNHCR in partnership with the Wollega University's seven legal aid centres supported over 1,650 IDPs, returning IDPs and other persons with specific needs, raising legal awareness and providing free legal aid and counselling, preparing written court interventions and assisting in legal representation before court to restore their housing, land and property rights and civil documentation. Please find more information on UNHCR's legal aid work in our [quarterly legal aid factsheet](#).

In efforts to prevent GBV, UNHCR and partner Action Against Hunger (AAH) implemented training and sensitization activities, including through mass communication, reaching over 25,000 people. In addition, UNHCR and AAH supported GBV survivors with dignity kits, financial aid to cover medical and other expenses, psycho-social support and counselling. Beneficiaries were also assisted through small-scale income-generating activities aimed at reducing vulnerabilities to GBV. To support community-driven peacebuilding efforts, UNHCR together with partner ANE conducted a peacebuilding workshop with IDPs and government representatives.

So far, UNHCR and ANE have provided core relief items to over 15,000 newly displaced in the Wollegas. In addition, UNHCR with partners ANE and GOAL assisted over 3,400 persons with specific needs with cash to help meet their basic needs or cover rental subsidies.

In **West Guji and Gedeo zones of Oromia and SNNP region**, UNHCR and its partners supported over 61,000 IDPs and returning IDPs.

Overall, almost 15,000 people were reached with legal aid and awareness raising through UNHCR's partnership with Bule Hora and Dilla Universities and their free legal aid centres. Of those, over 3,800 IDPs and returnees received this kind of support in the last quarter alone. This collaboration has proven to be essential in efforts to assist IDPs and returnees restore their housing, land and property or to obtain civil documentation. Please find more information on UNHCR's legal aid work in our [quarterly legal aid factsheet](#).

UNHCR and its partner EECMY DASSC provided referral services and support to GBV survivors, core relief items as well as tailored support services to persons with specific needs. Over 5,800 IDPs with specific needs, including female-headed households, received core relief items to help replace needed household items lost during displacement, and to improve their temporary shelters. Some 1,365 female-headed households and persons with disabilities were supported with cash-based interventions and tailored protection support, enabling livelihood opportunities rather than solely depending on the humanitarian assistance. UNHCR further donated a vehicle to the West Guji Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs to increase the office's outreach to return locations.

"I lost my husband during the conflict and was forced to flee with my children. Upon return, I found our property destroyed and looted, which made my grief even worse. UNHCR and EECMY supported me with livestock, which allowed me to build up a livelihood. It is a turning point now that I am the breadwinner of the family. I am more hopeful now to have a dignified life."

Single mother returning with her children, Gedeb woreda, Gedeo zone

In the **Somali region**, UNHCR responds to the needs of IDPs through our offices in Jijiga and Melkadida, reaching over 50,000 people.

Together with partner Partnership for Pastoralist Development Association (PAPDA), UNHCR constructed two women-friendly centres in Bokollow and Bifeta 2 IDP sites. These centres will be used for recreational



and skill-enhancing activities, as well as for GBV case management. In Tuli-Guled woreda, UNHCR with partner constructed 50 improved shelters for returning IDPs, including older persons, people with disabilities, child-headed households, and women and girls at risk, who had lost their homes as result of conflict. Nearly 25,000 IDPs, including women and girls, as well as older persons without family support, in Fafan, Siti, Korahey and Doolo zones benefited from core relief items.

Building on efforts in the past quarter, UNHCR established and further strengthened community conflict resolution committees and community-based protection committees, as well as different IDP associations, such as for women and girls, youth and persons with disabilities in Filtu town, Bifeta 2, Ma'lim Dhore and Bokollow IDP sites. In Fafan, Siti and Liben zones, UNHCR established eight community-based protection committees composed of 70 IDP and host community representatives, and six peacebuilding committees in Meiso/Karsadula including of elders, youth, women and girls. These committee members will promote awareness of peaceful co-existence and social cohesion, issue early warnings on potential conflict and mitigate tension. UNHCR also facilitated inter-communal dialogue on peacebuilding, and established an integrated community centre with a counselling room and a meeting hall for community gatherings in Dhadamane and Qoloji IDP site.

UNHCR and partners undertook efforts to prevent and respond to GBV in Dollo Ado and Filtu woredas, as well as at four sites in the Fafan zone. This included case management and referral pathways, training of partners' and government staff on case management and psychosocial support to GBV survivors, as well as awareness-raising activities. In the past quarter, UNHCR organized and facilitated community dialogues to raise awareness on and prevent GBV involving over 3,500 people.

In the **Tigray region**, UNHCR and partners expanded its multi-sectoral programme to facilitate access to protection services, and to provide core relief and shelter support. In total, the programme is designed to reach over 740,000 IDPs and host community members with specific needs. In the past quarter, UNHCR expanded its presence outside the two main response hubs in Mekelle and Shire to Abi Adi, Adigrat, Axum (also covering Adwa), Maichew and Sheraro.

UNHCR's role in Camp Management and Camp Coordination in the Tigray region

Since the activation of the humanitarian coordination system in the Tigray region, UNHCR has led the Protection Cluster and co-led the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster in the region and provided camp management in over 50 IDP sites hosting over 467,000 internally displaced people in Abi Adi, Adigrat, Axum, Mekelle, Sheraro and Shire.

Together with other CCCM and Protection partners and the Relocation Task Force, UNHCR supported the relocation of IDPs sheltering in schools to the Sabacare 4 relocation site, which has the capacity to accommodate over 17,250 individuals. By the end of September, more than 5,000 IDPs have been relocated to this new site. Children in the Tigray region have not been able to attend school as schools were closed initially due to COVID-19 and then conflict. As displacement grew, more and more IDPs sought shelter in school premises. Today, a total of 371,000 IDPs who are accommodated in schools are in need of alternative housing. The CCCM and Protection Clusters together with its members, including UNHCR, are actively looking into alternatives to schools to accommodate IDPs to allow for the resumption of education for children and maintain advocacy to prevent forced evictions.

Together with partners ANE, IHS and EECMY, UNHCR assisted over 150,000 IDPs with core relief items responding to their expressed main needs. This response was informed by protection monitoring and referrals with a view to prevent negative coping mechanisms, including child labour and survival sex, both of which have been reported. Nearly 2,700 women and adolescent females in Abi Adi, Adigrat and Maichew were also assisted with female hygiene kits. In addition, UNHCR in collaboration with partner DEC provided emergency shelter assistance to over 8,400 IDPs. In line with its shelter strategy, UNHCR aims to further scale up its response with core relief items, as well as through the construction of emergency shelters, and provision of shelter and repair kits.



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Over 500,000 IDPs residing in and around IDP sites have access to a network of 54 Protection Desks which UNHCR and partners established within the region. Protection Desks and outreach sessions aim to provide information and counselling to IDPs, identify individuals in need of protection or assistance and refer IDPs to the relevant services. The number of those desks and their respective outreach capacity is adjusted to the developments. Recently, several desks shifted and consolidated due to the relocation of IDPs from schools. The protection response was further strengthened by setting up GBV and Child Protection programming for IDPs, including the establishment of child-friendly spaces, setting up family-tracing processes for unaccompanied and separated children, and identification and referrals of GBV survivors to specialized services.

The inability of IDPs to meet basic needs compounds protection risks and creates negative coping mechanisms. In particular, it creates a high-risk environment for GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) due to the increasing inequality and power dynamics. To prevent SEA, UNHCR, in coordination with the PSEA network and partners, conducted trainings for 235 participants, conducted sensitization activities and installed boxes for complaints and feedback in IDP sites in Mekelle. Together with other UN agencies, including UNICEF, WHO and WFP, UNHCR contributed to information sessions for 46 partner staff on PSEA and GBV risk mitigation.

Capacity development remains a key priority in order to contribute to the overall strengthening of the humanitarian response. So far, UNHCR has trained over 500 persons on a variety of protection issues, including GBV, child protection, risk education or protection mainstreaming.

Gaps and challenges

Humanitarian access to several areas of internal displacement, as well as security concerns for partners and staff, remain key challenges to the response. In the Tigray region specifically, the paramount limitations are related to the lack of cash, phone and internet connectivity and fuel. Due to the fuel shortage, UNHCR, as most organizations, had to significantly reduce its activities and presence in Tigray. Also, given the limited

connectivity, tracking progress and impact of the response through data collection and analysis remains a challenge. In addition, capacity development on protection information management will need to be enhanced among all partners through the Protection Cluster to strengthen the overall protection data landscape.

In other parts of the country, the limited presence of humanitarian responders or the reduction in the overall response capacity in locations with high needs, such as the Somali region, Wollega, West Guji or Gedeo zones in Oromia and SNNP regions, has resulted in serious gaps in the response, compounding existing and creating new protection concerns.

Way forward

In the last quarter of the year, UNHCR together with its partners will:

- aim at further scaling up the response to internal displacement – with a particular focus on areas experiencing large-scale new displacement, such as in Afar and Amhara regions, and strengthen and solidify its protection response to internal displacement throughout the country.
- pursue durable solutions to internal displacement with the views and needs of the displaced communities at the centre.
- strengthen its role as Protection, CCCM and Shelter/NFI Cluster lead and co-lead and leverage Cluster leadership to advocate for stronger presence and programmes of partner organizations for a more robust inter-agency response.

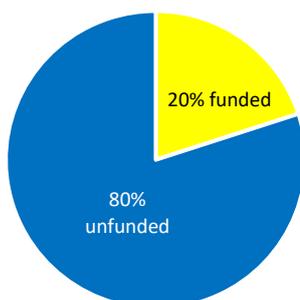
Coordination and Partnerships

UNHCR's vision is for all internally displaced people to find protection from harm, live peacefully, learn, work and flourish as contributing members of the communities in which they live, and find longer-term solutions to build a secure future.

In implementing its programme on internal displacement, UNHCR works closely with the Federal Government of Ethiopia, Regional authorities, other UN agencies, NGOs, the displaced population as well as host communities. To ensure that its response is well coordinated, UNHCR works closely with the three Clusters for Protection, Shelter/NFI and CCCM with a view to place the protection of IDPs at the centre of the humanitarian response.

Read more on UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement, in our [2019 policy](#).

Funding (by 19 October 2021)



USD 73 million requested for the UNHCR Ethiopia IDP response in 2021 – 20% has been received to date.

UNHCR is grateful for the direct contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2021

US | Denmark | IKEA Foundation | Japan | European Union (ECHO) | Netherlands | Education Cannot Wait | The Lego Foundation | Canada | Norway | Ireland | Sweden | Switzerland | CERF | “la Caixa” Banking Foundation | Italy | CERF | Czechia | UN Children’s Fund | Country-based Pooled Funds | UNO-Fluechtlingshilfe | United Nations Foundation | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | Toyota Tsusho Corporation | Laboratorios Viñas | Band Aid | UPS Corporate | Other private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2021

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Private donors Spain 55.7 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 28.5 million | United Kingdom 28.4 million | Germany 26 million | Japan 23.4 million | Private donors Japan 20.7 million | France 20.2 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Italy 14 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Private donors Sweden 11.9 million | Italy 10.7 million

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