UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL APPEAL

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022

Families displaced by the ongoing conflict in the Tigray region find shelter in an IDP site called Five Angels in Shire where UNHCR has set up shelters for displaced families | © UNHCR/Olga Sarrado Mur

Cover photo: Abraht, 23, fled her home in Maichew eight months ago as the conflict reached the area. She was already two months pregnant with her first child | © UNHCR/Olga Sarrado Mur

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Overview

Priority populations targeted for assistance (planning figures)

1.3 million Ethiopian IDPs in Afar, Amhara and Tigray

158,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia

110,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan

$205M Overall financial requirements

(Ethiopia $117 million; Djibouti $1 million; Kenya $5 million; Somalia $5 million; South Sudan $5 million; Sudan $72 million)

More than a year of fighting in northern Ethiopia has displaced millions, creating a protection crisis with reports of widespread gender-based violence, human rights abuses and dangerous levels of food insecurity.

Conflict broke out in the Tigray region in November 2020 and subsequently spread into the neighbouring regions of Afar and Amhara. The complex security situation, with a state of emergency that lasted from November 2021 to mid-February 2022, has hampered the delivery of assistance and blocked access to some areas. A shortage of cash, fuel, electrical power and telecoms services have repeatedly delayed activities and field missions planned by UNHCR and partners. UN humanitarian flights into Tigray were suspended for a period in late 2021, although they are again operational on a limited basis, while road access into Tigray has been impossible since mid-December 2021.

UNHCR needs donors' help to ensure that vital protection and assistance can reach the people who need it.

The UN Northern Ethiopia Response Plan, revised in October 2021, estimated that 90% of the population of Tigray — 5.2 million people, half of them children — were in urgent humanitarian need. The WFP released an Emergency Food Security Assessment in January 2022 showing that almost 40% of people in Tigray were suffering from an extreme lack of food. An Emergency Site Assessment by IOM showed that as of September 2021 there were 2.6 million internally displaced people in the three regions affected by the crisis.

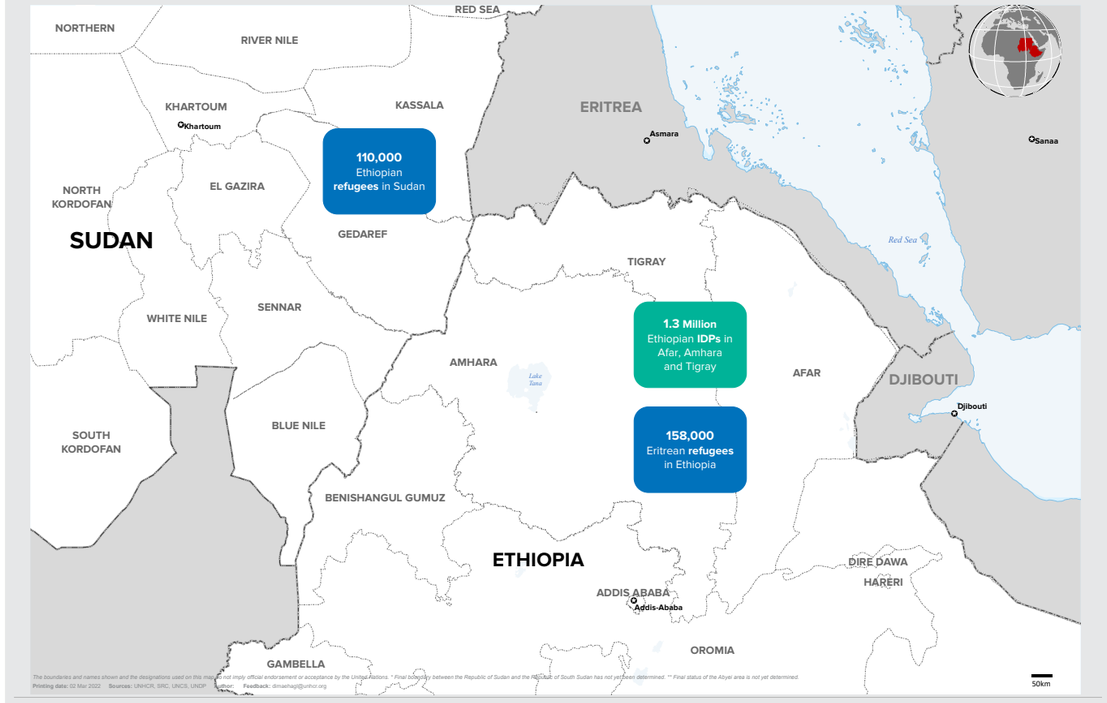
Serious protection needs persist. A dramatic rise in reports of gender-based violence is believed to represent a fraction of the actual incidence, given the lack of access to medical facilities and social stigma around reporting. Humanitarian partners also report people resorting to extreme negative coping mechanisms to secure access to food. People are moving from rural to urban areas in search of security and assistance, and there has been a notable increase in begging, child labour and women engaging in survival sex for food.

The conflict has sent millions of Ethiopians fleeing for safety within their country and almost 60,000 across the border into Sudan. Tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees have also been uprooted and forced to seek safety elsewhere within Ethiopia.

The security situation in Ethiopia deteriorated during the last quarter of 2021 and UNHCR operations in neighbouring countries put in place emergency preparedness measures to respond to any refugee influx in 2022. The operations include Djibouti, which has undertaken preparedness measures for some 5,000 Ethiopians, while Kenya has prepared for 20,000, Somalia 20,000, South Sudan 20,000 and Sudan 100,000. The measures will enable concerned operations to commence basic preparedness activities in critical sectors such as water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, food security and nutrition, IT/telecommunications, protection, and the procurement of core relief items (CRIs).

To deliver life-saving assistance and protection to up to 110,000 Ethiopians who may seek refuge in Sudan, as well as 1.3 million Ethiopian IDPs and an estimated 158,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, UNHCR is appealing for donors to prioritize **$205 million** of its existing funding needs for **January-December 2022**. This includes $117 million of needs in Ethiopia, $72 million in Sudan, and smaller amounts for other countries in the region to prepare for potential arrivals.

Response planning figures for Northern Ethiopia and Eastern Sudan



For more information, please visit Global Focus

UNHCR distributes basic relief items including blankets, soap, mosquito nets, sleeping mats and buckets to households who are sheltered in a kindergarten in Mekelle and who were displaced by the conflict in Tigray | © UNHCR/Olga Sarrado Mur

UNHCR response to date

Ethiopia

Before the crisis, there were 96,000 registered refugees in Tigray, around 60,000 of whom received food assistance. More than 25,000 are still in the Mai Aini and Adi Harush refugee camps in the Mai Tsebri area of Tigray. Two other camps, Hitsats and Shimelba, were officially closed in early 2021 after being looted and destroyed during the conflict, scattering refugees across Tigray and beyond.

UNHCR regained access to Mai Aini and Adi Harush in January 2021, but from June to September access was again hindered by insecurity and the destruction of the Tekeze bridge between Mai Tsebri and Shire, the location of UNHCR's sub-office. To date due to insecurity and difficulties with movement of supplies, access to the camps and thus provision of services remains very challenging.

UNHCR continues to work with its government counterpart – the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) – with the objective of moving refugees to a safer site in Amhara where they can receive the assistance they need.

The conflict triggered the movement of over 43,000 Eritrean refugees from Tigray to Addis Ababa. As of January 2022, UNHCR had provided 22,000 of these refugees with documentation, including refugee ID cards and proof of registration. UNHCR will continue biometric verification of refugees in the capital, as well as in the Tigray and Afar regions, in collaboration with RRS. UNHCR is also working with RRS to provide assistance to Eritrean refugees in Afar and Addis Ababa.

In Afar, where approximately 55,000 Eritrean refugees are registered, mostly in two camps as of February 2022, UNHCR only has access to the camp at Aysaita, which has 24,730 refugees. The second camp, Berhale, with 20,639 refugees and others living with surrounding host communities, had intermittent access challenges in 2021, which at times delayed food and cash distributions. Escalation of the conflict in January 2022 resulted in the camp being directly affected by fighting, with tens of thousands of refugees fleeing Berhale to Semera and other areas in the Afar region.

UNHCR, WFP and RRS have sought to organize monthly food distributions for the camps in Tigray and Afar since December 2020. However, access to these camps was often interrupted in 2021 causing delays, except for Aysaita camp in Afar.

In Amhara region, UNHCR is developing a site called Alemwach at Dabat, where the Government has provided land that will host approximately 25,000 refugees. As of February 2022, while construction work continued and the road to Alemwach from Tigray remained insecure, 670 Eritrean refugees who self-relocated resided in interim emergency collective centres in Dabat town, north Gondar, where they continued to receive humanitarian assistance.

In the last quarter of 2021, over 1.2 million IDPs in northern Ethiopia had access to protection services through protection desks and other outreach. UNHCR activated sub-regional Protection Clusters, with partnerships for protection outreach and monitoring activities in key locations. A total of 65 protection desks for case management have been established in the three regions by UNHCR and over 4,290 queries from refugees and IDPs in

camps and host communities were received.

In Afar and Amhara regions, UNHCR and partners significantly scaled up the response in support of the newly displaced. In the last quarter of 2021, some 430,000 people were reached. In addition to receiving access to protection services, they received core relief and emergency shelter support, a 20-fold increase since September.

UNHCR and partners have reviewed their operational approach and plans to ensure the flexibility to adapt to IDP movements back to areas of return or new displacement in different areas, including further displacement of refugees. Since August 2021, UNHCR has opened five field units in Tigray and set up additional presence in Bahir Dar, Dessie and Debre Birhan in Amhara, and the Semera Field Office in Afar has received extra staff to meet additional IDP needs.

Over 1 million IDPs and affected populations are in dire need of humanitarian assistance in the Amhara region.

In the Tigray region, UNHCR and partners' multisectoral programme reached nearly 860,000 IDPs and host community members with specific needs. In addition, UNHCR's Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) role supported over 560,000 IDPs in 48 sites across the region.

Since the onset of the emergency, UNHCR and IOM have co-led the CCCM Cluster in Tigray, Amhara and Afar. The Durable Solutions Task Force (DSTF), co-led by UNHCR, is active in Tigray and Amhara. In Tigray, it plays a key role in the relocation taskforces in Shire and Mekelle. It has, for example, supported the voluntary relocation of over 15,000 IDPs to the Sabacare-4 site in Mekelle. In the Amhara region, the Return and Solutions Task Force, a subset of the DSTF, has also been established to operationalize IDP relocation and voluntary repatriation.

Some 20,000 returning IDPs benefited from information, counselling and referral services from the protection desk network, including ahead of their relocation or return, while over 15,000 children received mental health and psychosocial support in child-friendly spaces, and more than 12,000 people were reached with gender-based violence prevention and response services.

UNHCR has made progress in supporting the establishment of IDP community leadership structures and sub-structures, capacity development for local authorities, site profiling to identify the level of access to services and gaps in Shire and Mekelle, and cluster outreach missions in surrounding cities and increasingly in hard-to-reach areas.

Distribution of core relief items (CRIs) has reached over 47,000 IDP households (226,000 individuals), with 250 shelters constructed in Shire, 600 in Mekelle, and 200 in Debark. In addition, 14,100 women and girls received dignity kits, and 23,400 IDP shelter kits and 3,500 solar lamps were distributed in 2021.

Sudan

The crisis has forced tens of thousands of Ethiopians to seek refuge in Sudan. As of the end of January 2022, Sudan hosted 59,511 Ethiopian refugees who had arrived since November 2020. One in three of these arrivals was a child, and one in 10 was below five years old. The total includes 51,207 arrivals in Kassala and Gedaref states, mainly from Tigray, and 8,304 who arrived in Blue Nile state from Benishangul-Gumuz region. Most have been relocated to the refugee camps of Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah, which need improvements in shelter, water supply access, sanitation, health and protection in order to better guarantee physical safety and reduce protection risks, particularly gender-based violence.

In July 2021, Ethiopian nationals of Qemant ethnicity began to enter Sudan from the Amhara region. Around 2,270 arrived in Sudan's Gedaref state in mid-October via the Taha/Basunda crossing point. With support from Sudan's Commissioner for Refugees (COR), the Qemant refugees were relocated to a new site at Babikri.

Currently, more than 19,000 refugees are living in Um Rakuba, 23,600 refugees in Tunaydbah and 2,100 asylum-seekers in Babikri. A new camp in Blue Nile state, Camp 6, has been also established, mostly for arrivals from Ethiopia's Benishangul-Gumuz region.

Sudan has kept its border open for individuals seeking asylum, although there are consistent reports from refugees in Gedaref that crossing is extremely difficult from the Ethiopian side. UNHCR and partners have access to border points in Sudan, with the Government granting prima facie refugee status to all Ethiopians of Tigrayan ethnicity and affected by the Tigray situation since November 2020. UNHCR and COR continue to screen and register new arrivals, while humanitarian partners continue to provide them with water, health services and meals.

UNHCR has scaled up its presence in Sudan and expanded its offices in Gedaref and Kassala states. The operation has transitioned towards longer-term staffing with the recruitment of permanent positions. Protection staff numbers have been increased, with an almost 50-50 gender ratio overall.

UNHCR and COR jointly conduct individual biometric registration and issue refugees with ID cards on relocation to the camps. Protection teams conduct protection monitoring, identify and verify persons with specific needs, and refer them to specialized services. These include unaccompanied and separated children, pregnant women, single mothers, persons with disabilities, women and girls at risk, youth and older persons. Health services, psychosocial support, legal services, and protection and material assistance are available for survivors of gender-based violence as per the established inter-agency referral pathways. Engagement with youth has been enhanced through awareness raising campaigns and meetings in order to address onward movements and other youth-specific risks.

Refugee children at Hamdayet, near the Ethiopia-Sudan border where refugees from Tigray region are received | © UNHCR/Assadullah Nasrullah

One of the 450 families forcibly displaced by the conflict in Tigray and who have been sheltered in the Ay-der Elementary school pack their belongings and wait to be relocated to Sabacare 4, a new site set up in Mekelle to provide shelter to those who cannot return to their homes | © UNHCR/Olga Sarrado Mur

Urgent needs

Ethiopia

UNHCR plans in 2022 to assist approximately 158,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, including some 56,000 in Afar, 37,000 in Tigray and 65,000 in Addis Ababa, as well as 1,300,000 IDPs in northern Ethiopia.

UNHCR is working with RRS on the verification and assistance of refugees. Since a change in the Government's asylum policy on prima facie refugee status for Eritreans in 2020, some Eritreans in Tigray have not had the opportunity to apply for asylum and remain undocumented and unregistered.

The conditions in the Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps in Tigray are dire. The security situation limits service provision and the ability to move refugees to the new site at Alemwach, which UNHCR is working to get operational as soon as possible. Clinics have run out of medicine, lack of fuel has stopped water supplies, and refugees have resorted to collecting water from streams, putting them at risk of water-borne diseases. Refugees interviewed by UNHCR in mid-January in Mai Aini reported that 20 refugees had died over the prior six weeks from preventable causes such as the lack of health services and medicines. Food supplies are also a major concern, with distribution hampered by fuel shortages. A few partners maintain a presence in the camps but with minimal implementation of activities due to lack of fuel and other supplies. In addition, new needs for refugees displaced in the Afar region are also emerging, including protection services and access to basic services, with a new temporary site being established at Serdo, some 60 km from Semera, for refugees displaced from Berhale.

Across northern Ethiopia, a more robust multisectoral response is required for the large numbers of displaced people, encompassing the whole spectrum of basic needs and assistance. Protection risks include gender-based violence and a lack of documentation hindering freedom of movement and contributing to family separation. Overcrowded sites expose displaced people to health and protection risks including COVID-19.

CRI kits comprising blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, jerrycans and soap are urgently required, as are shelter and dignity kits for women and girls. To meet minimum humanitarian standards and coordinate services, IDP sites need protection site assessments, planning and development, and support for camp management and community structures.

Protection

Ethiopia | UNHCR will focus on protection monitoring and counselling; strengthening the community-based protection structures and interventions; access to justice; risk mitigation, prevention and response to gender-based violence; assistance to persons with specific needs including unaccompanied and separated children and strengthening family-based care; distribution of dignity kits; and working with the government to ensure maintaining the civilian character of camps and other humanitarian sites. UNHCR will seek to improve access to justice and to promote accountability to affected populations.

In 2022, UNHCR will put more protection desks into action to identify persons with specific needs, support and refer survivors of gender-based violence, and assist in the return counselling process.

Education

Ethiopia | According to Education Cluster data, there are about 1.4 million school-age children in Tigray, Afar and Amhara. A preliminary damage assessment of 2,056 schools reported that 5,700 classrooms had suffered 60-100% damage. A significant number of classrooms require repairs and thorough cleaning.

In 2022, a renewed focus will be on getting 20,000 refugee children back into school, constructing emergency learning spaces in the new site in Amhara, and providing learning materials for refugee children affected by the conflict, as well as establishing WASH facilities and distributing essential items including facemasks, thermometers, and soap. UNHCR will also collaborate with education partners on child protection and psychosocial interventions for displaced children.

Shelter and infrastructure, energy, CCCM and CRIs

Ethiopia | In 2022, at least 60,000 IDP households will be targeted for shelter and distributions of CRIs. In Tigray, the Shelter Cluster is working on the identification of unfinished buildings for rehabilitation in Mekelle for the potential relocation of IDPs. Those who return to their areas of origin are likely to have diverse needs, including household items, farming equipment and seeds. A reintegration package will be provided to 75,000 IDP returnee households and 30,000 local community households through unrestricted cash assistance, shelter kits and CRIs.

UNHCR and partners will manage sites and collective centres hosting 1.8 million IDPs in Afar (376,500), Amhara (712,000) and Tigray (700,000). Additional resources will enable the CCCM Cluster to support community-led site maintenance activities through cash for work and distribution of tools to sites with conflict-affected IDPs who are susceptible to various protection risks.

UNHCR will support refugees relocated from Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps to the new site if the security situation allows. Refugees relocated to the new site at Alemwach will also be assisted with emergency and transitional shelters and CRIs including jerrycans, soap, kitchen sets, blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and solar lamps, as well as dignity kits for women and girls.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Ethiopia | The WASH cluster is coordinating service delivery and working in collaboration with Shelter and CCCM teams to set up required infrastructure and facilities for water and sanitation within the IDP sites.

In the refugee camps, efforts will be made to install, repair and improve water supply networks and storage facilities to ensure refugees and surrounding host communities have adequate access to potable water. Water trucking will be required until the water systems are fully operational, particularly in the new camp at Alemwach in Amhara and the new temporary site at Serdo in Afar. Additional communal latrines and bathing facilities will be installed to improve sanitation and hygiene conditions that have deteriorated due to overuse and overcrowding.

Health and nutrition

Ethiopia | UNHCR and partners provided over 60,000 consultations in refugee camps during 2021, but access was very limited in the last months of the year. Only a limited number of cases have been successfully referred to secondary and tertiary health care because of movement restrictions and because most hospitals in the region are not fully functional. Other health services provided include drugs and medical supplies, and continuation of treatment for HIV or tuberculosis.

In 2022, UNHCR and partners will strengthen refugee community outreach activities and support health workers in promoting preventive health services and COVID-19 mitigation, increasing health awareness and health care utilization, and will put these systems into action in the new site. Access to health care in refugee camps – currently interrupted by the prevailing security environment – remains a high priority, as does ensuring the provision of drugs and medical supplies. UNHCR and partners are also developing mental health and psychosocial activities for adults and children in the three regions.

Logistics

Ethiopia | UN and humanitarian flights are critical for the movement of humanitarian workers and supplies, and for medical evacuations. UNHCR is coordinating with the Logistics Cluster to set up logistics pipelines in Ethiopia for the response. Larger warehouse spaces need to be leased across the three regions to support the emergency response, increase storage capacity for supplies, and support new refugee sites.

An Ethiopian refugee at Tunaydbah refugee camp in Sudan | © UNHCR/Assadullah Nasrullah

Sudan

UNHCR is planning to assist up to 110,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan, which includes the 59,000 Ethiopian refugees who arrived since November 2020, and potential additional arrivals in 2022. Support is urgently needed to scale up interventions across all sectors while maintaining preparedness for any new influx from Ethiopia. The immediate and long-term priority is to strengthen assistance in protection, as well as shelter, CRIs, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), environment and energy, and health in sites hosting refugees.

Agencies and humanitarian organizations are putting in place flood mitigation measures in preparation for the May-October rainy season.

As the operation moves away from the emergency phase and into a sustained operational phase, it is essential to also focus on livelihoods and enhanced host community services that can serve refugees in an integrated fashion.

Protection

Sudan | Urgent protection needs include border monitoring and initial refugee registration; safe shelter for transit; provision of food, safe water and sanitation, and CRIs; responding to protection concerns and receiving feedback at established protection desks; and ensuring safety and security. Particular attention is needed towards child protection, response to gender-based violence, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and anti-trafficking measures.

Education

Sudan | Education needs among the Ethiopian refugees are high: 28% are 4-18 years old. There is a dire need for early childhood care and development, as well as primary and secondary education. Refugee children who are out of school face serious protection risks, including exploitation and abuse, gender-based violence and early marriage. After an initial provision of temporary learning spaces in Babikri, Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba, there is a need for semi-permanent classrooms that are furnished and have standardized learning and teaching materials. The education facilities also need gender-sensitive WASH facilities and child-friendly spaces. Schools currently operate in shifts. More investment in infrastructure and teachers will support the education system. More refugee volunteer teachers should be identified, trained, and compensated through standardized incentives. Refugee teachers need training in life skills, COVID-19 preparedness and psychosocial support, including play-based learning, psychological first aid, code of conduct and gender-based violence. The youth require life and vocational skills training and post-secondary learning opportunities to meet their immediate and longer-term needs for livelihoods and well-being. As camp planning evolves, more permanent and better equipped learning spaces will be needed, accessible to those with mobility limitations. The Refugee Education Working Group, co-led by UNHCR and UNICEF and in collaboration with the federal and state Ministry of Education, is formulating a longer-term roadmap that will identify

key milestones for transition from a non-formal to formal education programme, facilitating inclusion in the national system and ensuring sustainable access to accredited education.

Shelter and infrastructure, energy, CCCM and CRIs

Sudan | Refugees relocated to the camps are allocated individual home plots and provided with multisectoral assistance such as shelter materials and CRIs. UNHCR and partners have also established communal shelters in Hamdayet and tents and transitional shelters in Babikri, Tunaydbah and Um Rakuba. The construction of permanent shelters commenced in Babikri, Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah and will continue throughout the year, prioritizing areas at higher risk of flooding.

Additional support is required to scale up the delivery of durable shelters, which provide extra protection. With the onset of the rainy season, efforts to bolster preparedness are ongoing with the prepositioning of emergency shelter kits and CRIs.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Sudan | WASH actors are working to ensure safe drinking water at border crossings and refugee settlement sites. As of December 2021, access to safe drinking water was above the SPHERE post-emergency standard of 20 litres per day at Um Rakuba and Village 8 and stood at 19 litres per person per day in Tunaydbah and Babikri. Work is ongoing to repair and expand existing water networks using sustainable sources, allowing the phase-out of water trucking, which is expensive and unsustainable.

Sanitary products for women and girls of reproductive age need to be prioritized. Solid waste bins and solid waste disposal are being put in place, along with hand-washing stations and increased hygiene promotion. With the coming rainy season, vector control management to mitigate waterborne diseases associated with stagnant water and waste management will need to be prioritized.

Energy and environment

Sudan | The provision of cooking energy assistance and energy-saving stoves needs to be prioritized so that refugee families are not obliged to fetch firewood, which can lead to injuries, friction with host communities, and negative coping mechanisms such as the sale of food rations for the purchase of firewood and charcoal. With funding, every household will be provided with at least 25 kg of charcoal or 0.5m^3 of firewood, and an improved cooking stove for either firewood or charcoal. Improved cooking stoves will save energy and reduce carbon emissions. Tree-planting initiatives to replace trees cut for firewood or used in construction will be needed to ensure environmental protection.

Health and nutrition

Sudan | Additional funding is required to ensure the continued operation of the health facilities and continued access of refugees and host communities to health care services in 2022.

In the reception centres, health clinics run by partners perform health and nutritional screening, triage medical cases, provide sexual and reproductive health services, and identify malnourished children and individuals on long-term treatment for chronic illnesses.

In Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah camps, refugees receive comprehensive health care services at health facilities that also serve members of host communities.

Scaling up health and nutrition services and infrastructure in Babikri settlement, which was established in December 2021, is a priority. In particular, maternal and child health and nutrition services, including antenatal care and delivery services, need to be strengthened.

Sustained funding is also required for maintaining COVID-19 prevention and control, including risk communication, vaccination and provision of care in isolation centres. To date, 17,864 refugees and asylum-seekers have received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Babikri, Tunaydbah, Um Rakuba and Village 8. This represents approximately 50% of the current target population (36,000 individuals). In 2022, UNHCR and partners, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, will continue the vaccination campaign to strengthen protection against COVID-19 and associated health risks.

As part of flood preparedness and response measures, efforts are underway to procure and pre-position medical supplies and equipment in the different sites to help ensure the continuation of medical assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers during the rainy season.

Livelihoods

Sudan | Over a year into the emergency response, the focus is shifting towards enabling increased self-reliance and resilience of refugees, with a view to enhancing their protection and contribution to the social and economic fabric of host communities. UNHCR will support agricultural projects for refugees and host communities, a small-scale project to assist survivors of gender-based violence to start small businesses, and vocational skills training for refugee youth to reduce the incentive for onward movements. In addition, UNHCR and partners will conduct baseline assessments for longer-term livelihoods projects. Most of the Ethiopian refugees in Sudan live in Gedaref state, a region that is the breadbasket of Sudan, and where there is a tradition of seasonal employment of Ethiopians during the farming season. UNHCR is working in coordination with other UN agencies, such as UNDP and FAO, as well as INGOs, to develop a longer-term strategy aiming to provide support to host communities and employment opportunities to refugees.

Logistics

Sudan | Transportation from the border areas in eastern Sudan and Blue Nile state to reception points and onwards to Um Rakuba, Tunaydbah and Camp 6 is extremely costly, particularly in hard-to-reach border areas. As UNHCR continues to provide assistance to those refugees remaining at the border transit sites while preparing for the possibility of additional influxes during the rainy season, logistics costs remain high.

Staffing and administration

The emergency situation in both **Ethiopia** and **Sudan** is transitioning from Emergency Response Teams to more permanent staff to ensure consistency and to step up the protection response.

Ethiopia | In 2022, UNHCR will scale up its presence in Afar and Amhara (Debre Birhan, Gondar, Bahir Dar, Debark and new field office in Dessie) to support IDP return and reintegration.

Additional staff, office space, staff accommodation, vehicles, and ICT equipment are required to manage the massive IDP situation and UNHCR's cluster lead responsibilities efficiently.

Sudan | Protection staffing at the senior level is critical given the myriad complex protection challenges. The need for safe staff facilities at the camps is also a priority.

Eritrean refugees, former residents of the Hitsats and Shimelba camps in Tigray region, are relocated to safety by UNHCR. The two camps were destroyed at the onset of the conflict | © UNHCR/Olga Sarrado Mur

Key challenges

Access in Ethiopia

- Key challenges include intermittent telecoms and internet services, access to cash and fuel supplies, and ongoing insecurity. Conditions inside Tigray as well as parts of Afar and Amhara regions are still extremely difficult with power outages and scarcity of food. The UN has been actively advocating and negotiating for access to bring in fuel and humanitarian supplies, and to reach people in need, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. Priorities and strategies for 2022 will depend largely on the security situation, logistical challenges, risk management and coordination with partners and stakeholders in what is a highly complex humanitarian and operational environment.

Supply and logistics in Ethiopia

- There are lengthy local customs clearances impeding the delivery of CRIs, communications equipment, medicines, medical supplies, and other essential shipments ordered through the Global Frame Agreement holders and international suppliers. Delivery of other essential shipments ordered from the global markets and UNHCR's emergency stockpiles destined for northern Ethiopia also experience challenges in customs clearances. Local market fluctuations, shortages of essential supplies in the Amhara and Afar regions, as well as fuel supply restrictions, the absence of banking institutions in Tigray, coupled with a chronic cash shortage, have hindered timely provision of humanitarian assistance.

Communications and logistics in Sudan

- The area along the Sudanese border where refugees arrive and are sheltered is very remote. Relocating arrivals from Hamdayet to Um Rakuba and Tunaydbah takes a full day. Travelling off-road from the border to Camp 6 can also take an entire day. Communication remains difficult but partners have improved connectivity in the camps.

Coordination

Ethiopia | Ethiopia has well-established refugee response and coordination processes in place, based on the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), which are anchored in a solid framework of refugee law and procedure. An inter-agency Refugee Coordination Group comprised of the heads of agencies, and other senior staff supporting the national refugee response, meets on a regular basis to discuss strategic and inter-sector operational issues. Active sector working groups include Protection, Health, Education, WASH, Shelter, Energy and Environment, together with a Child Protection/Gender-Based Violence sub-working group. The Humanitarian Country Team also forms part of the broader consultation forum on the overall refugee response, together with United Nations Development Assistance Framework working groups that relate to refugees.

UNHCR plays a prominent and active role at the level of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) forum, among others. Strategic decisions related to IDPs are taken mainly by the HCT. Common advocacy messages and decisions on how to approach humanitarian concerns with the Government of Ethiopia are discussed and strategy/policy documents developed.

Sudan | There are currently 46 partners, including UN, NGOs, and government agencies, working in the response to the Ethiopian refugee influx in Kassala, Gedaref and Blue Nile state, 35 of whom have appealed for funding as part of the inter-agency response plan for 2022. Most have established offices in Gedaref, Kassala or Damazine from which the refugees' sites are serviced. The coordination structure for the refugee response in east Sudan follows the Refugee Coordination Model in Sudan, led by COR and UNHCR. National-level strategic decisions are made at the Refugee Consultation Forum in consultation with its membership.

State-level operational coordination is facilitated through the Refugee Working Groups (RWGs). Both Gedaref and Blue Nile state have established RWGs and refugee sector working groups that coordinate the ongoing response to Ethiopian refugees. In the case of refugee sites opening in other states, additional RWGs can be considered.

UNHCR takes the lead in sectoral coordination but can transfer the lead or co-lead role to other agencies with proven expertise and sufficient capacities. This includes co-leadership agreements with NGOs and UN agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO).

Coordination with host communities is implemented in close cooperation with UNDP and the Ministry of Finance. Coordination on counter-trafficking will involve IOM and the Ministry of Social Welfare. In its coordination role, UNHCR follows the principles of partnership and strives for the inclusion of all actors in the refugee response.

Funding the response

This regional appeal presents UNHCR's call to fast-track **$205 million** of its existing funding needs for the Northern Ethiopia emergency situation and regional preparedness in 2022. The urgent needs presented here include $117 million for Eritrean refugees and IDPs, $72 million for Ethiopian refugees in Sudan, and $16 million for preparedness activities in neighbouring countries.

Ethiopia situation financial requirements | January-December 2022

Impact	Related Outcome Areas	Planned response		Preparedness				Total
		Ethiopia	Sudan	Djibouti	Kenya	Somalia	South Sudan	
Protect	Access, documentation, refugee status determination, gender-based violence, child protection	40,962,362	17,743,572	400,000	1,400,000	3,200,000	2,300,000	**66,005,934**
Assist	Health, Education, WASH	69,400,218	41,125,860	400,000	3,600,000	1,800,000	2,700,000	**119,026,078**
Empower	Livelihoods (education in Djibouti)	4,312,001	5,482,235	200,000				**9,994,236**
Solve	Return, Resettlement, Integration	2,783,513	7,612,126					**10,395,639**
Total		**117,458,094**	**71,963,793**	**1,000,000**	**5,000,000**	**5,000,000**	**5,000,000**	**$205,421,887**

The importance of flexible funding

The emergency situation in northern Ethiopia has evolved significantly since the onset of the conflict in November 2020. Communities across Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions have faced armed conflict, violence and displacement on a scale not seen in Ethiopia for decades. The complexities of access for humanitarian agencies as well as a rapidly moving conflict have posed many challenges to the response, requiring flexibility and adaptability on the part of humanitarian agencies to provide life-saving assistance to affected populations. UNHCR requires ongoing support to respond to current large-scale needs whilst also preparing for potential further displacement both internally and across borders.

In 2021, almost $25 million in flexible funding was available for use in the Ethiopia emergency, representing more than 20% of the funds available. In an ever-changing operational environment, flexible funding will continue to be vital to ensure the response is efficient and adaptive to provide protection and assistance to the people who need it.

To all donors, especially those who provide funding that is flexible and not earmarked for a particular use, UNHCR extends its most sincere thanks.

For more information

Visit Global Focus, which is UNHCR's main operational reporting portal for donors and other key partners. The site provides an overview of the protection risks that refugees and other populations of concern to UNHCR face across the world, as well as regularly updated information about programmes, operations, financial requirements, funding levels and donor contributions.

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA EMERGENCY SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL APPEAL

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022

ISSUED IN MARCH 2022

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency