

Ethiopia – Northern Ethiopia Crisis

DECEMBER 20, 2022

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

7-7.5
MILLION

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

USAID – October 2021

12.1
MILLION

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

UN – July 2022

2.4
MILLION

People Displaced Across Northern Ethiopia

IOM – July 2022

57,500

Refugees From Northern Ethiopia in Eastern Sudan

UNHCR – September 2022

- The signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement (CoHA) by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) has led to increased humanitarian access across much of northern Ethiopia’s Tigray Region. Relief workers are scaling up response operations to reach newly accessible populations.
- However, armed groups—including the Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) and local Amharan militias—continue to threaten civilians and limit humanitarian access in parts of Tigray.
- The restoration of basic services, which is critical for furthering the scale-up of humanitarian operations, remains ongoing in Tigray.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response in FY 2023

USAID/BHA¹ \$15,413,471

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

Total \$15,413,471

¹ USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Signing of CoHA Leads to Security Improvements and Increased Humanitarian Access in Northern Ethiopia

Humanitarian access has gradually improved in northern Ethiopia in recent weeks following major diplomatic breakthroughs in negotiations between the GoE and the TPLF in early November. GoE and TPLF representatives signed a formal CoHA on November 2, officially ending active fighting between the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) and the TPLF, while establishing basic frameworks for disarmament and demobilization of TPLF forces, the restoration of critical services in Tigray Region, transitional justice measures, and long-term conflict resolution initiatives. While the agreement also contained provisions regarding the expedited delivery of humanitarian assistance into Tigray, access remained heavily restricted until GoE and TPLF officials signed a follow-up implementation agreement on November 12, committing to unhindered humanitarian access to Tigray by air and road.

In the weeks following the signing of the CoHA, the ceasefire between ENDF and TPLF forces largely held, resulting in a significant reduction in armed conflict incidents in northern Ethiopia, and some TPLF elements have begun taking initial steps towards demobilization, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Database (ACLED). Moreover, humanitarian access to Tigray has gradually improved, with relief actors working to quickly scale up operations and deliver increasing quantities of emergency food and other relief commodities, as well as fuel and cash for humanitarian activities in the region. On November 15, overland transport to Tigray resumed along critical routes connecting Amhara Region's Gondar town with Tigray's May Tsebri town, Amhara's Kombolcha town with Tigray's capital city of Mekele, and Afar Region's capital city of Semera with Mekele, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA). Notably, on November 16, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) delivered more than 290 metric tons (MT) of food assistance to May Tsebri via the Gondar–May Tsebri route, marking the first time relief actors have managed to deliver assistance along the corridor since June 2021, OCHA reports. By November 30, at least 20 different humanitarian organizations had delivered nearly 20,000 MT of food assistance, more than 3,000 MT of critical relief items, and at least 58,000 gallons of fuel to Tigray by road to sustain humanitarian operations.

In addition, following the November 12 implementation agreement, the USAID/BHA-supported and WFP-managed UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) resumed flights to Tigray's capital city of Mekele for the first time since August and initiated flights to North Western Zone's Shire town for the first time since the beginning of the conflict, transporting humanitarian staff and airlifting urgently needed relief commodities. UNHAS had transported approximately 32 MT of emergency health care supplies to Shire as of December 14.

Armed Group Activity Threatens CoHA and Continues to Limit Access in Parts of Tigray

Despite the overall improvement in humanitarian access to Tigray following the signing of the CoHA, armed group activity continues to threaten civilians, restrict humanitarian access, and adversely affect relief operations in parts of the region. Eritrean Defense Force (EDF) troops remain present across large swathes of northern and northwestern Tigray, reportedly occupying several towns and abusing local civilians, according to international media. Moreover, members of ethnic Amhara militia groups continue to occupy parts of western Tigray, where they have allegedly forcibly displaced ethnic Tigrayan civilians in recent weeks. As a result, thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have reportedly arrived in and around Shire town in recent days. While neither the EDF nor the Amhara militias are party to the CoHA, the agreement

calls for the withdrawal of all non-ENDF forces from Tigray. International observers remain concerned that continued EDF and militia activity could threaten the continued implementation of the CoHA.

Restoration of Critical Services Remains Underway in Tigray

In accordance with the CoHA, the GoE and other actors are continuing efforts to restore critical services—including banking, electricity, and telecommunications—across Tigray. In recent weeks, power has been restored in Tigray’s Adigrat, Humera, Mekele, Shire, and Wukro towns, where access to electricity has been intermittent or unavailable since June 2021. In addition, telecommunications services have been restored in Shire, and the restoration of telecommunications networks in Tigray’s Adwa and Axum towns is expected in the coming days. Relief actors have long noted that the lack of reliable communication with staff based in Tigray has hindered overall support for humanitarian operations in the region. Moreover, the GoE has taken initial steps toward restoring banking services in Tigray, where the humanitarian crisis has been exacerbated by the inability of local populations to access cash or savings to buy food, international media report. Cash shortages have also restricted humanitarian operations in the region over the past two years, according to relief actors. The UN has emphasized that the rapid restoration of basic public services across Afar, Amhara, and Tigray is critical to supporting humanitarian efforts and reducing the suffering of conflict-affected populations in northern Ethiopia.

KEY FIGURES



1 Million

Crisis-affected people in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray reached with food assistance by WFP since November 1



3,500

Children treated for severe wasting in Afar by UNICEF during September

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

In response to acute food needs across northern Ethiopia, USAID/BHA is supporting the Catholic Relief Services (CRS)-led Joint Emergency Operation (JEOP) consortium of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as WFP, which operates with the support of other implementing partners, to provide emergency food assistance—including U.S.-sourced cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil—to vulnerable populations in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. WFP continued food distributions in Afar and Amhara in November, reaching more than 177,000 people in Afar and an estimated 377,500 people in Amhara with in-kind food assistance during the month. Meanwhile, the CRS-led JEOP reached nearly 1.5 million people in Amhara with life-saving food assistance between early October and late November. In Tigray, WFP resumed the delivery of food assistance to vulnerable populations in the region following the GoE and TPLF’s signing of the CoHA. The JEOP NGO consortium and UN agency have reached more than 1 million people and nearly 506,000 people, respectively, in Tigray with food assistance since the agreement came into effect.

NUTRITION

USAID/BHA supports 11 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. The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and other USAID/BHA partners are also working

to strengthen fixed-location health facilities and support mobile health and nutrition teams (MHNTs), providing essential medical services to IDPs and host community members across northern Ethiopia. In Afar and Amhara, UNICEF and USAID/BHA NGO partners are also providing specialized treatment for malnutrition in children ages five years and younger. UNICEF and its partners treated more than 3,500 children ages five years and younger for malnutrition in Afar during September. Moreover, with USAID/BHA support, UNICEF provided life-saving preventative treatment to children and pregnant and lactating women in Afar via 36 MHNTs.



810,000

IDPs in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray reached with medical consultations since November 2020

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 have supported 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 most health facilities have been damaged and where ongoing insecurity continues to impede crisis-affected populations' access to health services. USAID/BHA partner International Medical Corps (IMC) has provided outpatient consultation to nearly 810,000 IDPs across 26 IDP sites in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray through the operation of 22 MHNTs from the beginning of the response in November 2020 to late November 2022. With U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) support, an implementing partner has distributed essential medicines and other medical supplies to violence-affected health facilities in Afar, northern Amhara, and Tigray. Additionally, State/PRM supports the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide health assistance to refugees in northern Ethiopia, including those sheltering in Alemwach refugee site in Amhara's North Gondar Zone.



16

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 16 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 UNHCR and another implementing partner 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 the Alemwach refugee site.



33,000

Recently returned individuals began to receive relief commodities in Amhara in October

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USAID/BHA supports crisis-affected populations with emergency shelter assistance in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray through 10 implementing partners. With USAID/BHA funding, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began to provide relief commodities to more than 33,000 individuals who had recently returned to their area of origin in Amhara during October. Partners are also distributing relief commodity kits—which include bed mats, blankets, and wash basins—to recently displaced individuals. In addition, State/PRM supports UNHCR to provide shelter assistance to refugees and IDPs in Tigray.



190,000

People in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray reached with safe drinking water during October

WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM are supporting 14 partners to distribute water, sanitation, and hygiene (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 and sanitation services in IDP sites and health facilities. USAID/BHA partner UNICEF provided WASH commodities, such as hygiene products and water cans, to more than 101,000 people in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray during October. Moreover, UNICEF provided water trucking services to an estimated 190,000 conflict-affected people in the three regions throughout the same period.



\$35 Million

In dedicated USAID/BHA logistics support

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AND RELIEF COMMODITIES

USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners are providing 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 transportation and storage of life-saving commodities—to the humanitarian community through the Logistics Cluster. UNHAS cargo flights to Tigray resumed in late November, having transported an estimated 32 MT of life-saving relief commodities to the region as of December 14.

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 nationwide state of emergency in response to renewed and spreading hostilities; the Ethiopian parliament voted to lift the state of emergency on February 14, 2022. ENDF elements regained control of parts Afar and Amhara following the withdrawal of TPLF elements on December 20, 2021. On March 24, the GoE declared, and the TPLF agreed to, a humanitarian truce. The truce was subsequently broken on August 24, when fighting resumed throughout Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. On November 2, GoE and TPLF officials signed the CoHA—as well as a follow-up agreement on November 12—outlining steps for establishing unfettered humanitarian access to Tigray by air and road.
- Security conditions in northern Ethiopia have improved following the November 2 CoHA and November 12 follow-up agreement, allowing for the resumption of robust humanitarian assistance operations across Afar, Amhara, and Tigray. However, armed group activity continues to restrict access in some areas.
- On October 28, 2022, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Tracey Ann Jacobson renewed the declaration of humanitarian need for Ethiopia for FY 2023 due to the continued humanitarian needs resulting from the complex emergency—including the armed conflict in northern Ethiopia—and the impact of climatic shocks, such as the ongoing drought, 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, D.C.-based Response Management Team to support the DART.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2023¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA			
Concern	Health, Nutrition	Amhara, Tigray	\$1,400,000
GOAL	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$2,000,000
IMC	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
IOM	Shelter and Settlements	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
Medical Teams International	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar	\$2,000,000
Samaritan’s Purse	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
World Health Organization	HCIMA, Health	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$800,000
	Program Support		\$213,471
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$15,413,471
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2023²			\$15,413,471

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2022

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING	\$710,457,167
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING	\$116,400,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2022	\$826,857,167

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2021

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING	\$473,410,249
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING	\$57,120,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2021	\$530,530,249

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

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING	\$99,200,908
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING	\$7,325,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2020^{3,4,5}	\$106,525,908

TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FYs 2020-2023⁶	\$1,479,326,795
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¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of December 16, 2022.

² Estimated value of food assistance and transportation costs at time of procurement; subject to change.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ This total includes \$326,361 in FY 2020 supplemental funding through USAID/BHA for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) preparedness and response activities and \$2,425,000 in FY 2020 COVID-19 supplemental funding through State/PRM. This total also includes \$3,310,000 from State/PRM in FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Act Migration and Refugee Assistance funding to respond to COVID-19.

⁶ In FY 2021, State/PRM provided \$45,388,900 toward the northern Ethiopia response in the Horn of Africa region, bringing the total USG funding for FYs 2020- 2022 to nearly \$1.5 billion. A portion of this funding is also reported in the USG Sudan fact sheet.

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)