

Ethiopia – Northern Ethiopia Crisis

MAY 3, 2023

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

7 TO 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

71,658

Refugees From Northern Ethiopia in Eastern Sudan

UNHCR – February 2023

- USAID/BHA’s discovery of widespread diversion of wheat commodities in northern Ethiopia’s Tigray Region has prompted a pause in distribution of all USG-funded in-kind food assistance in the region to prevent further diversion.
- Insecurity in Amhara Region led to the deaths of two CRS staff members on April 9, according to the NGO and international media.
- The UN announced on March 10 that it had extended the IASC System-Wide Scale-Up mechanism through September 6 to further strengthen humanitarian response capacity and coordination efforts.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the Northern Ethiopia Crisis Response in FY 2023

USAID/BHA¹ \$230,860,678

STATE/PRM² \$2,700,000

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

Total \$233,560,678

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

² U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

USAID/BHA Discovers Widespread Food Diversion in Tigray, Prompting Pause of In-Kind Food Assistance

During a routine monitoring trip between March 21 and 23, members of the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) discovered evidence of diversion of USAID-funded wheat commodities in Sheraro and Shire towns in Tigray's North Western Zone. In Shire, DART staff observed approximately 2,000 metric tons of unopened USAID-branded bags of wheat—enough to feed 134,000 vulnerable people for a month—for sale in a local grain market and being processed into flour at mills owned by local wholesalers. USAID/BHA staff also witnessed unauthorized individuals transporting wheat from Sheraro to Shire following a food distribution in Sheraro on March 16. Six subsequent trips by DART staff to several other areas in Tigray between March 30 and April 13 confirmed that the diversion of in-kind food assistance was widespread and coordinated throughout the region. In particular, during a March 30–31 trip to Tigray's capital city of Mekele, DART staff observed USAID-branded wheat being sold in secondary markets and processed into flour at local mills following a food distribution for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the city. USAID staff also witnessed bags of UN World Food Program (WFP)-branded wheat in markets and private mills during several trips. The diversion of life-saving food assistance in Tigray threatens vulnerable populations amid high levels of food insecurity in northern Ethiopia and ongoing access constraints following two years of conflict.

USAID/BHA—in cooperation with food partners—has temporarily paused the distribution of in-kind food assistance in Tigray to prevent further diversion of food aid from vulnerable populations in the region. USAID/BHA continues to support the provision of non-food assistance in Tigray and work with humanitarian partners operating in the area to ensure the implementation of aggressive risk mitigation systems. Moreover, USAID's Office of the Inspector General is conducting a full investigation of the allegations.

Armed Attacks in Amhara Against Humanitarian Actors Result in Two Deaths

An attack by unknown armed actors in Amhara Region's Kobo town resulted in the deaths of two Catholic Relief Services staff members on April 9, the USAID/BHA partner and international media report. Armed actors shot both aid workers while they were traveling from Amhara back to Addis Ababa after a work assignment. On the same date, unidentified gunmen reportedly shot at a humanitarian ambulance elsewhere in the region, injuring its driver and a midwife, local media report. While further details about the attacks and the perpetrators remained under investigation as of late April, the incidents occurred during a period of general insecurity and violent protests in Amhara—including heavy artillery fire in Kobo—resulting from the GoE's decision to disband regional special forces units. It is not yet clear whether the armed attacks were connected to the violence in Amhara; however, as of late April, the security situation and humanitarian access in the region had improved significantly, relief actors report.

Malaria and Measles Cases Rise in Afar and Amhara

Infectious diseases—including malaria and measles—continue to generate health risks for vulnerable populations in Afar and Amhara, particularly for internally displaced persons (IDPs), the UN reports. Overcrowding at IDP sites in Amhara has exacerbated conditions for the spread of malaria, leading the number of cases in the region to reach nearly 12,000 as of March amid the current belg rainy season. Despite the efforts of health actors, malaria remains one of the top ten causes of illness at several IDP

sites in Amhara. Simultaneously, health actors and the UN reported nearly 3,500 malaria cases—a 5 percent increase compared to March figures—across 45 woredas in Afar as of April 18. Relief organizations note the need for increased medicine and supplies among children and pregnant and lactating women in Afar’s most-affected woredas, including approximately 200,000 insecticide-treated bed nets and an estimated 50,000 doses of malaria treatment.

Health actors also report the onset of a measles outbreak in Afar, documenting more than 60 new suspected cases across Chifra, Dubti, Kori, Mille, Samara Logiya, and Yalo woredas during the week of April 18. The case total represents an increase of nearly 20 more suspected cases compared to one month earlier. Moreover, despite two immunization campaigns in Afar since December 2022, health actors note that the uptick in measles cases has mostly affected unvaccinated individuals or those of unknown vaccination status. In response to the rise in measles cases in Afar, one USAID/BHA partner provided technical support for the Regional Health Bureau-coordinated measles vaccination campaign from March 1 to 15, vaccinating nearly 150 children in affected areas.

UN Extends IASC System-Wide Scale-Up Mechanism Through September 6

In response to ongoing humanitarian needs generated by the effects of conflict and environmental hazards such as ongoing extreme drought, the UN announced on March 10 that it was extending the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) System-Wide Scale-Up mechanism for Ethiopia through September 6. UN Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths’ decision to extend the scale-up came after the IASC initially activated the mechanism for northern Ethiopia on April 28, 2021 as a response to escalating conflict in Tigray and deteriorating humanitarian conditions. The current six-month extension encompasses conflict- and drought-affected areas of the country and aims to further strengthen humanitarian capacity and coordination efforts in response to both the crisis in northern Ethiopia and Horn of Africa complex emergency.

KEY FIGURES



\$4.6 Million

In dedicated USAID/BHA funding for nutrition services during FY 2023 as of mid-February

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

NUTRITION

With approximately \$4.6 million in FY 2023 funding, USAID/BHA continues to support 12 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 non-governmental organization (NGO) partners are also providing specialized treatment for malnutrition in children ages five years and younger. State/PRM also supports partners providing nutrition services to refugees in Afar and Amhara.



810,000

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

HEALTH

The USG supports 14 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. During March, USAID/BHA partner International Medical Corps (IMC) provided more than 13,000 outpatient consultations across Amhara and Tigray and offered education on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to more than 35,000. With 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.



13

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 13 partner organizations conducting protection programs as humanitarian access and security conditions permit. Partners are expanding 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 at the Alemwach refugee site.



\$4.2 Million

In dedicated USAID/BHA funding for shelter and settlements support during FY 23 as of mid-February

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

With \$4.2 in FY 2023 funding, USAID/BHA continues to support crisis-affected populations with emergency shelter assistance in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray through 9 implementing partners. With USAID/BHA funding, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reached 1,000 displaced households in Tigray's Southern Zone with emergency relief supplies between January and March through a Rapid Response Fund partner. 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 across northern Ethiopia.



69,000

People in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray reached with safe drinking water between January and March

WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM are supporting 18 partners to distribute 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 safe drinking water through water trucking services to more than 69,000 people in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray between January and March. Moreover, UNICEF reached approximately 18,000 IDPs and host community members with hygiene promotion activities during the same period.



228,000 MT

Of humanitarian cargo transported to Tigray between mid-November 2022 and April 2023

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, the coordinating body for humanitarian logistics activities, comprising UN agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders. Between November 2022 and early April 2023, the Logistics Cluster supported the transportation of more than 228,000 MT of essential humanitarian cargo to Tigray. The cluster also coordinates overland convoys that transport relief items to communities in need in Afar and Amhara.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Following weeks of escalating tensions between regional and federal authorities, clashes erupted between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian National Defense Force (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			
Center for Victims of Torture (CVT)	Protection	Tigray	\$1,600,000
Concern Worldwide	Health, Nutrition	Amhara, Tigray	\$1,400,000
CRS	Food Assistance—U.S. In-Kind Food Aid	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$200,009,764
	Shelters and Settlements, WASH	Afar	\$2,500,000
GOAL	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$2,000,000
IMC	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
iMMAP	HCIMA	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$750,000
IOM	Shelters and Settlements	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
Medical Teams International (MTI)	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar	\$2,000,000
Samaritan’s Purse	Health, Nutrition, Protection, Shelters and Settlements, WASH	Amhara, Tigray	\$3,000,000
UNICEF	Health, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$7,300,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$1,000,000
UN World Health Organization (WHO)	HCIMA, Health	Afar, Amhara, Tigray	\$800,000
World Vision	Health, Nutrition, WASH	Afar, Amhara	\$2,000,000
	Program Support		\$500,914
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$230,860,678
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partner	Multi-Sector Assistance	Countrywide	\$2,700,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$2,700,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2023²			\$233,560,678

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

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING	\$697,165,168
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING	\$116,400,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN ETHIOPIA RESPONSE IN FY 2022	\$813,565,168

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	\$1,684,182,003
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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 February 24, 2023.

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 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 (ARPA) Migration and Refugee Assistance funding and \$3,100,000 in FY 2022 ARPA Supplemental funding to respond to COVID-19.

⁶ As of September 30, 2022, State/PRM provided \$180,845,000 toward the northern Ethiopia response in the Horn of Africa region, bringing the total USG funding for FYs 2020- 2022 to nearly \$1.7 billion. Portions of this funding is also reported in the USG Sudan and USG Horn of Africa fact sheets.

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)