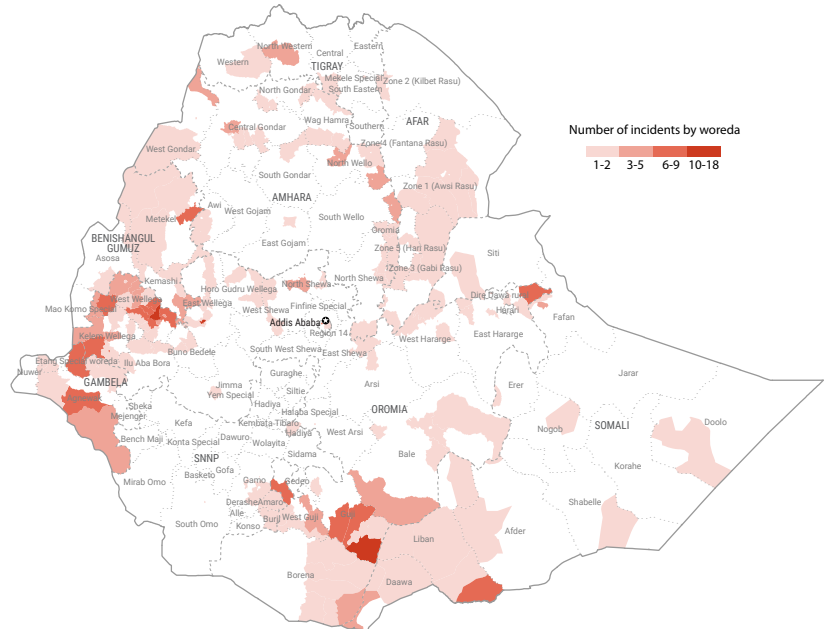


This report is produced by OCHA Ethiopia in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period April to June 2020. The next report will be issued in September 2020.

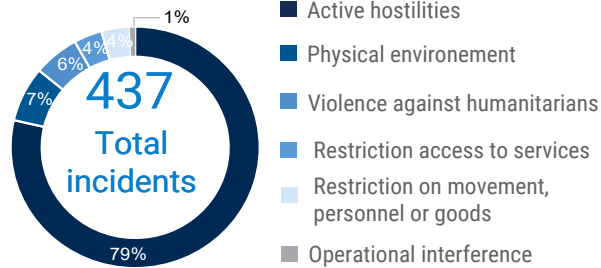
Highlights

- The operational environment to relief operations remained permissive through the reporting period.
- Insecurity and violence continues to be the main impediment to relief operations in Ethiopia, affecting in particular west and southern Oromia.
- Long-standing conflicts over land tenure and access to resources continue. The conflict in the Afar-Somali regional border, has left thousands stranded, out-of-reach to humanitarian partners.
- The aid community in Ethiopia joined the global call made by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, for a cessation of hostilities to respond to COVID-19 in areas affected by violence.
- By End-June, COVID-19 related government-imposed restrictions were eased, allowing intra and inter-regional movements. Partners are now able to operate without restrictions, respecting the mandatory use of masks, hygienic measures, and social distancing in their activities.
- Despite the risk of COVID-19 and lingering community tensions, in May and June various regional administrations returned thousands of IDPs to areas of origin, i.e., Awi (Amhara) - Metekel (Benishangul Gumuz), East Hararge (Oromia) - Fafan (Somali), and Bale (Oromia) - Liban (Somali).
- The humanitarian community has demanded a halt in the deportation of thousands of Ethiopian irregular migrants in light of COVID-19, and a pause to the return of IDPs, until conditions in areas of return are fully conducive for the resumption of livelihoods in safety and security.
- Partners have expressed regret on the lack of consultation / coordination by regional authorities on IDP return processes, and on the limited adherence to humanitarian and durable solutions principles given the dire situation returnees are facing in areas of return.
- Whilst aid workers in Ethiopia are not directly targeted in the violence, operations are conducted in high-risk environments. Only in May, partners reported four violent incidents against aid workers, including physical attacks, temporary arrests, threats and intimidation.
- In May, WFP launched a system to monitor 'road movements constraints' in Ethiopia, and started issuing regular maps displaying the physical condition of roads (<https://logcluster.org/countries/ETH>)
- On 29 June, the killing of an Oromo artist and political activist in Addis Ababa unleashed violent protests across Oromia, some taking an ethnic dimension. The situation has significantly impacted operations in Oromia and in other regions such as BGR, Gambela, and SNNPR.



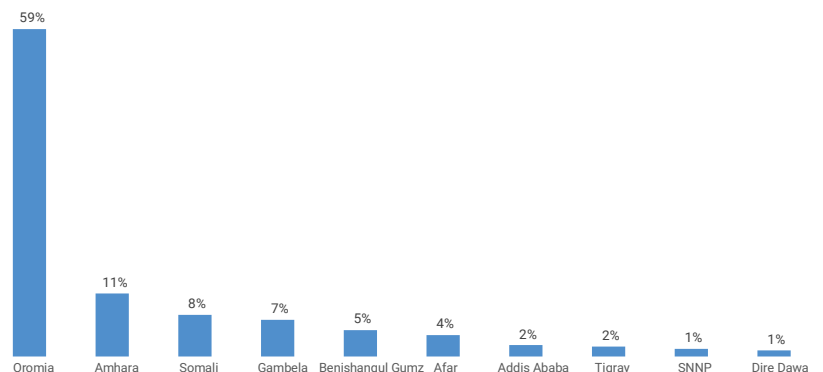
Source: Access Incidents database
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

REPORTED ACCESS INCIDENTS BY TYPE



35 Access incidents related to COVID-19

REPORTED ACCESS INCIDENTS BY REGION



COVID-19 Humanitarian access in Ethiopia



Generally, lack of access hinders the quality of the response and the scale at which partners can deliver goods and services to people in need. In Ethiopia, COVID-19 entails another layer of complexity to relief operations, in addition to active hostilities, community violence and unrest, violence against humanitarians, movement restrictions or physical access constraints.

COVID-19 poses a much higher risk to the population in areas affected by violence (west and southern Oromia), as these are traditionally underserved in terms of government presence and services, and have a reduced number of partners. Due to curtailed access to health and water and limiting prevention measures, areas with inter-community confrontations, e.g., Metekel (BGR) and Central Gondar (Amhara), are equally exposed. Similarly, isolated and boundary areas between Afar / Oromia and Somali regions and those with structural deficits (Afar, BGR, SNNPR, or Somali), face the same challenges. In some areas, COVID-19 related restrictions have impacted IDPs ability to meet basic needs and forced them to adopt harmful coping mechanisms such as increased child marriage rates in Amhara, increased in child labor/ begging in Gedeo (SNNPR)/ West Guji (southern Oromia), or cases of women engaged in transactional or survival sex reported in the Wellegas (western Oromia). Lastly, several sources informed about an increase in gender-based violence (GBV) in places like Central Gondar (Amhara) or Gambela.

The aid community and government counterparts stepped up efforts to ensure that partners – and private contractors – could continue movements and operations throughout the country, including COVID-19. The UN advocated for international and regional borders to remain open for the import of relief items and movements of humanitarian staff; fast-tracking the issuance of visas for staff involved in COVID-19 response; or the facilitation of extension of visas and work permits for staff in-country.

Partners reported difficulties in obtaining exit visas for their staff, importing/ processing customs of telecommunications equipment such as satellite phones. On two occasions, aid workers were temporarily detained for not respecting movement restrictions or social distancing measures. Overall, partners have reported 34 incidents linked to COVID-19 and government restrictions (State of Emergency, SoE), six of which in Addis Ababa, 12 in the Oromia region. Seven cases were related to the enforcement of SoE measures by security forces; 13 to restrictions of movements; 10 violence/ intimidation of aid workers (stigmatization). Reportedly, there has been a general increase in crime, such as street robberies, thefts, and house break-ins across the country, related to the deteriorated socio-economic situation.

At the time of writing, COVID-19 related government restrictions have been eased through the country. Partners can operate without restrictions, on the condition of respecting the mandatory use of masks and social distancing. In terms of logistics, international borders have remained open for humanitarian teams and supplies. In the Moyale border (Kenya), customs authorities allowed the entry of aid supplies without restrictions, while other boundaries such as Metema (Sudan) have been closed to all movements. WFP, and the newly established Logistics Cluster, are actively monitoring the situation in all borders in Ethiopia.

Partners have scaled-up COVID-19 Health and WASH activities (INGO group “HINGO” has re-programmed activities worth US\$70 million), and in some cases affected regular health and nutrition services. Operations have been delayed promoting new ways of working, such as distributing various rounds of food aid in one go, or resorting to remote protection monitoring. According to a study by OCHA/ Clusters, the impact of COVID-19 in humanitarian programmes has been estimated at seven per cent. Activities entailing direct contact with beneficiaries, workshops, field assessments, etc. have been interrupted. Lastly, coordination services have been impacted, forcing partners to resort to virtual meetings, when possible.

Afar - (Zone 1 and 3) – Somali (Siti zone) – Eastern Oromia (West Hararge)



Afar region has been particularly impacted by COVID-19 given its strategic location in terms of population movements and entry of commodities from Djibouti. The operating environment continues to be characterized by simmering ethnic tensions between Afari and Amhara, Oromo, and Somali neighbors. Overall, partners have reported 14 of such incidents from April to June.

Clashes involving Afar and Somali Issa clan continue along boundary areas between Afar's zone 1 and 3 and Sitti zone (Somali). The situation in the three contested kebeles of Gedmayitu (Amibara *woreda*), Undufo (Gewane *woreda*), and Ad-eyitu (Mille *woreda*) remains very volatile (see "OCHA Access Snapshot - Afar region / Sitti zone, Somali region – as of 31 January" for further details, <https://bit.ly/39OqXib>). During the reporting period, six violent incidents took place in zone 3, involving ethnic Afari and Oromo from Keryu/ Sub Clan in Awash, and Somali from Issa Clan. All clashes caused casualties and prompted the intervention of security forces, and blocked partners' access, while the humanitarian situation is dire. Zonal authorities estimate that between July and October 2019, 78,000 people have been displaced, mainly in three villages, i.e. Dhalactu, Allale, and Madane as well as in other remote ones. Reportedly, the number of people in need is increasing in remote parts of Gablalu, Erer, Afdem and Maiso *woredas*, where movements for UN Agencies remain restricted. The lack of road infrastructure in such a vast region impacts partners' movements and operations.

Partners in Afar do not feel safe to operate beyond the eastern part of the 'Awash highway'. In May, two incidents impacted partners directly, one related to a physical assault against aid workers and another related to the looting of aid supplies. These incidents show the high risk environment for humanitarian operations, which in contested areas may become quickly politicized. There is a need for regional administrations to strengthen peace building and reconciliation efforts with involvement of all IDPs in order to improve access conditions and step up critical assistance to the population.

Amhara region



The operational environment in Amhara is marked by multiple localized conflicts, some involving UAGs and groups of armed youth, others between Amhara, Afari, Gumuz or Oromo communities. Partners have reported 34 incidents of hostilities and community violence, impacting operations. An increase in criminal activities and the proliferation of small arms remain a concern for safety of aid workers.

In West and Central Gondar, the situation remained stable, however, in North Gondar, in May, clashes between a youth group and security forces caused a number of casualties. On a positive development, a peace initiative led by religious and community leaders and the involvement of UAG members in various localities led to an agreement between the youth group and Amhara authorities to end violence. In relation to previous violence with Ethnic Qemant communities in West and Central Gondar, according to regional authorities, there has been no reported security incidents for the past months.

Since April, the inter-communal conflict between Afari and Amhara and Afari and Oromo communities significantly escalated in North Shewa (Kewet *woreda*), North Wello zone (Haro, Raya Kobo *woredas*) and Oromia Special zone (Bati and Daweharewa *woredas*), including the use of explosive devices, with 12 violent incidents reported, prompting the intervention of security forces. These conflicts are motivated by competition over resources and long-lasting territorial claims. At the end of May, inter-communal tension between communities was reported from Ataye and Senbitie towns (North Shewa).

In May and June, Ethiopian and Sudanese armed forces clashed along the common border in Metema district, West Gondar, affecting communities on both sides and disrupting economic activities. No forced displacement or humanitarian impact was reported. At the time of writing, the situation in the area is calm.

Amhara (Awi zone) – Benishangul Gumuz region (Metekel zone)



Since September 2018, clashes between Amhara and Gumuz communities in Metekel zone displaced thousands 21,000 IDPs to Awi and 10,000 IDPs within Metekel respectively. In January, following a series of peace and reconciliation conferences, Benishangul Gumuz Region (BGR) authorities announced a plan to return IDPs in Metekel Zone to their original places. However, violence between the two communities continued in April and May, with nine violent incidents reported in Metekel, of which six in Mandura *woreda*. There remains deep resentment among communities over unresolved disputes, border demarcation and land ownership.

Early April, in Gilgel beles town (Metekel), several clashes among communities caused casualties and prompted the deployment of security forces to calm the situation. In April, several incidents took place in Jawi *woreda* (Awi) in the border with Dangura *woreda* (Metekel). In May, clashes erupted in Guangua and Zigem *woredas* (Awi), following which, Federal authorities decided to establish a Command post under the leadership of the Ethiopian Defence Forces (EDF) to end the cycle of violence and enable a smooth return of IDPs to areas of origin. No security incidents were reported in June.

While partners in Metekel managed to deliver some limited assistance to IDPs, in Amhara, authorities dismantled IDP sites in Awi in September 2019, and for a long period, denied partners' access to respond arguing that doing so would create a "pull factor" for IDPs to remain. Following sustained engagement, in February, the government delivered food to over 20,000 IDPs while partners provided some Health, WASH, and shelter/ non-food items (NFI) support.

In April, BGR authorities started to return IDPs within Metekel zone, some 800 to Gumadi *kebele* (Dangura *woreda*) and 6,000 IDPs to boundary areas with Jawi *woreda* (Awi), while on the other side, Amhara authorities announced plans to return 60,000 IDPs to Metekel, a figure that was disputed by BGR authorities. At the time of writing, near 18,000 IDPs have returned from Amhara to Metekel, specifically to Dangura and Mandura *woredas*, and over 10,000 to their places of origin within Metekel zone. In addition, 1,500 people (mainly Gumuz) displaced from Jawi residing in Gilgel Beles' High school returned to Jawi. According to Amhara authorities, there remain some 6,000 IDPs in Awi zone, who have not returned due to various reasons, including lack of resources.

Humanitarian partners were caught off guard by the decision to commence returns, and regretted the lack of consultation and preparatory work in areas of return. They also noted concern about the voluntariness of returns, for instance, IDPs in Gilgel Beles had expressed their preference to remain in Metekel and some reportedly chose to leave/ hide to avoid being returned. According to a "go-and-see mission" in Metekel, returnees stated they had returned voluntarily but complained about difficulties in accessing their former houses and farmlands and limited assistance available, emphasizing urgent needs on shelter and NFIs.

Eastern Oromia (East Hararge) – Somali region (Fafan zone)



Inter-communal conflict between Jaro (Oromo) and Geri clans (Somali) has long-lasting in areas between East Hararge (Oromia and Fafan (Somali) mainly due to access to land for pasture and resource competition. In 2015, and through 2017, the conflict escalated as part of the large-scale political stand-off between regional administrations, 24,000 people were displaced from Tuliguled (Fafan zone) to Chinaksen *woreda* (Eastern Oromia) plus 14,000 from boundary located *kebeles* in Oromia, and over 42,000 people were displaced from Chinaksen to Tuliguled, Qoloji, Jijiga plus within boundary areas on the Somali side. Conflict caused many deaths, burning of houses, looting of personal property, and damaged community facilities such as health posts, water networks or schools.

Tensions and sporadic clashes were reported in February and March in Chinaksen and Tuliguled, causing casualties in a number of villages. Since then, the overall situation improved, though lingering tensions remain, impacting partners' operations on an intermittent basis. For instance, in Chinaksen, some boundary areas such as Gololcha and Usuele *kebeles* remain tense, forcing partners to cancel operations in May, while at least five health posts remained closed in June. In other parts of East Hararge, some areas of Gursum, Kumbi and Meyu *woredas*, are also inaccessible due to insecurity.

By Mid-June, both regional governments started returning IDPs to areas of origin, with the involvement of EDF to secure the process. Some 23,000 IDPs have returned to Chinaksen and some 25,000 to Tuliguled, while further returns continue. In addition, the Dire Dawa City Council and Somali administration are working to relocate 3,000 IDPs from the Millennium Park in Dire Dawa to Shinile town, Sitti zone (Somali). An assessment to Chinaksen heard from local authorities and returnees that the return process had been “consultative and voluntary”. Reportedly, IDPs requested to return to minimize the risk of COVID-19 in congested IDP sites like Qoloji. However, the mission identified huge gaps in terms of provision of assistance to the returnees, and partners regretted the limited consultation and involvement in the process. IDPs are unable to access services as community facilities such as health, WASH or education remain damaged, and underscored shelter and food as priority. In Tuliguled, another assessment unveiled an appalling situation, with returnees staying in open spaces or with relatives and in urgent need of food, water, health, and NFIs. Health, schools, animal health posts, and grain millers remained also dysfunctional.

Gambela region



Protracted conflicts, confrontations between ethnic Agnuak and Nuer, spill-over violence and cross-border attacks from South Sudan, and criminality continue to challenge relief operations and safety of aid workers. From April to June, partners reported over 30 access and security incidents, including between host communities and refugees and among sub-clans. In May and June, there was a spike in violence between host and refugee communities in Gog *woreda* and Pugnido town, Agnewak zone, with lives lost on both sides. Refugees in Pugnido camps requested their relocation, destroyed some facilities in the camps, and denied partners’ access in protest.

In April, an armed clash in Nyoplew and Wie-Gatluak areas of South Sudan (between SPLM-IO and General Ochan Puot supporters) bordering Jikow *woreda*, Nuer zone, caused some casualties in Ethiopia. In April, various cross-border attacks also caused casualties in various refugee camps located in Gog and Itang *woredas*, forcing partners to temporarily suspend operations affecting the delivery of critical assistance to refugees and host communities. Further, various attacks by armed groups (allegedly from South Sudan) raided villages and refugee camps leaving a climate of fear and insecurity disrupting local livelihoods. In May, 6,000 IDPs displaced in March by clashes between Nuer sub-clans in Makuey *woreda*, Nuer zone, returned to their area of origin following a series of peace and reconciliation conferences. However, IDP returnees have reportedly received limited support and are in need of basic assistance.

Overall, partners continue to operate in a highly insecure and volatile environment with no signs of improvement, and have expressed frustration on the limited improvement of security, which was promised after the killing of two INGO aid workers in September 2019 by unidentified armed men (still at large).

Southern Oromia (West Guji) – SNNPR (Gedeo)



In West Guji, the security situation has improved over the last months, nonetheless, operations against UAGs in neighboring Guji zone continue to affect few boundary *kebeles*. Violence has impacted relief operations and blocked access intermittently to parts of Gelana, Kercha, Dugda Dawa, Melka Soda, Suro Berguda *woredas* (nine incidents from April to June). The security situation in Melka Soda remains a concern, and 20,000 IDPs remain out of partners’ reach since last year due to insecurity and floods. Access constraints and low partner coverage are currently hindering the response to a cholera outbreak (since 26 June) in Melka Soda *woreda*, with more than 100 confirmed cases. In Amaro *woreda*, there remain some 8,000 especially vulnerable IDPs (out of 24,000 in total), despite some assistance provided by authorities and partners in May-June, in terms of food, shelter and NFIs.

Overall, tensions between communities in West Guji have remained noticeably low thanks to continued community-level security, and peace and reconciliation efforts. Partners continue recovery activities to address the needs of hundreds of thousands of IDP returnees from Gedeo, however, many returnees still remain in need of livelihoods, shelter and NFIs as well as farming tools (particularly for coffee production) as well as access to water and scholastic materials. In Kercha *woreda*, returnees complain about the lack of sustained food distribution as an estimated 100,000 people were not adequately or at all registered during the joint verification exercises. Similarly, some 19,000 left-out IDPs in Suro Berguda *woreda* (affected by inter-communal conflict for over a year) remain out of support schemes.

In May, the arrival of heavy rains caused flooding hindering access to several locations in Gelana, Abaya, Bule Hora, Dugda Dawa, Melka Soda and Suro Berguda *woredas*. Reportedly, over 123,600 people were affected, including some 69,800 displaced in Gelana, Bule Hora, Abaya and Dugda Dawa, and close to 9,900 houses damaged/flooded (mostly in Gelana). The displaced population was temporarily sheltered in overcrowded community/ public facilities and some have already returned to parts of Gelana and Bule Hora where water receded. Some short-term priority needs including food, WASH, health and nutrition, shelter/NFI, and livelihoods remain to be addressed in Bule Hora, Dugda Dawa, Abaya and Melka Soda due to a limited resources and security issues, while recovery support remains a significant gap.

In Gedeo, following the authorities' announcement in March indicating that there were no IDPs left in the zone, protection services providers have been denied the necessary clearance to proceed. On a positive note, following SNNP regional authorities' approval, displacement tracking/monitoring activities have been ongoing and close to completion in 14 zones of the region, aimed at reliably assessing the situation following the last year's massive return of IDPs to areas of origin in the sub-region.

Southern Oromia (Guji and Borena zones)



In Guji, security operations against UAGs impacted partners' movements and operations (24 incidents from April – June) and caused havoc among the population, with over 80,000 people displaced since mid-2019. Since April, security operations intensified in Gumi Eldelo, Liban, Goro Dola and Seba Boru *woredas*, with reported allegations of violence, arbitrary detentions and other human rights violations against the population by all parties to the conflict. Reports indicate continued population displacements, in June, some 800 people were displaced from Gumi Eldelo to Negelle town. Overall, 120,800 people remain displaced, 80,800 in successive waves since June 2019 plus 40,000 since September 2017. Humanitarian space is shrinking, though partners have not been targeted and continue to operate in such high risk context.

Insecurity and COVID-19 have significantly delayed the implementation of projects. The population is suffering as a result of insecurity, limitations to movement (confinement) and lack of access to services and livelihoods. Near 18,000 IDPs remain in areas inaccessible to partners. In May, partners were not able to access the entire Gumi Eldelo *woreda* and parts of Liban, Goro Dola and Seba Boru *woredas*. In June, partners' access to Saba Boru was cut off by security forces. Authorities have dispatched food to some 69,400 IDPs (out of 80,800 IDPs), however, some 11,400 have not received food for the past seven months. IDPs and vulnerable population remain in dire need of NFIs (clothes, household items), shelter and WASH (see "OCHA Access Snapshot - Guji zone, Oromia region – as of 30 June" for further details, <https://bit.ly/39pg8Ew>)

Lack of access has impacted the response to 'desert locust' in Guji, affecting the supply of pesticides/ bio-insecticides and other equipment for control operations. Further, partners have reported cases whereby health posts are being used by security forces, depriving the community of such essential services, particularly in light of COVID-19. Only a handful of relief agencies are present and operational in Guji.

The situation in Borena remains volatile due to ongoing security operations against UAGs in Arero, Dhas, Guchi, Miyo, Moyale and Wachile *woredas*, hindering access to some 9,800 IDPs and 22,000 returnees (out of 35,400 IDPs and 248,500 returnees). By Mid-May, the UN lifted security restrictions in Guchi, Wachile and Miyo *woredas*, however, partners report that some kebeles in Guchi (Qachalcha, Arbori, Kurmiru and Harkeke) and some along the border with Kenya remain insecure due to UAG presence. Lack of access is forcing the affected population to travel to urban centres to access aid in main distribution points (except in Wachile). Reportedly, the main unmet needs are NFIs (household items), water treatment, school feeding programmes (suspended due to COVID-19) and livelihoods (ruminants restocking).

Southern Oromia (Bale, East Bale zones)



In 2017, 110,000 people (Ethnic-Oromo) were displaced from Somali region and border kebeles within **Bale**, 70,000 of which have already returned to areas of origin. Out of the remaining 40,000, 34,000 originate from Somali's Kersa Dula and Gura Dhamole *woredas*, and 6,000 from Oromia's border *woredas* of Sawena, Medda Welabu and Rayitu.

By early May, Bale authorities returned around 10,000 IDPs from Medda Welabu to Kersa Dula *woreda* (Somali). In a matter of days, intercommunal fighting broke out between host communities and returned IDPs, causing casualties and pushing IDPs to move back to Bale, where they encountered old IDP sites demolished and settled in some public spaces. IDPs (especially women and children) reportedly lost all their belongings during the move and remain in desperate need of food, health and NFIs. Reportedly, the return process was conducted without due consultation with the communities and very limited involvement and coordination with partners and authorities on the Somali side. IDPs had expressed earlier their reluctance to return due to residual tensions with Somali **communities**. At the

time of writing, IDPs remain sheltered in schools and other public buildings in Medda and Bidire towns. Reportedly, around 30,000 IDPs remain in dire need of food, including 20,000 IDPs in Medda Welabu who have not received food for the last four months. Authorities are determined to continue returning IDPs despite the risk of inter-community violence and COVID-19, and the very limited assistance available. Further, authorities continue to deny access to partners to assess and respond to the most urgent needs.

In new **East Bale zone** (recently split from Bale), emergency food distributions continue to be mostly suspended as a result of insecurity, affecting 35,000 IDPs (12,500 in Lega Hidha, 7,500 in Dawe Kachen, 6,500 in Dawe Serer, 6,500 in Sawena, 1,600 in Rayitu). Insecurity continues to affect access to IDPs in hard-to-reach areas, for instance 6,500 IDPs in Dawe Serer *woreda* have only received one food ration for the past eight months. Otherwise, remote IDP sites in Dawe Kechen, Sewena and Dello Mena *woredas* remained inaccessible through June due to damages in roads caused by heavy rains.

Western Oromia (Wellegas) – Benishangul Gumuz region, BGR (Kamashi zone)



The spiral of violence in Western Oromia continues, with conflict dynamics worsening since April. The population is trapped in the violence, and partners' operations are most of the time halted leaving thousands without aid. Clashes are reported almost on a daily basis, having reached urban areas such as Nekemte town in East Wellega and Gimbi town in West Wellega, and included an increased number of armed attacks by UAGs on vehicles. Dozens of casualties have been reported amidst allegations of grave human rights violations, nor least increased targeted killings and abductions by UAGs.

Humanitarian partners have not been directly targeted. However, ongoing UAG attacks on vehicles increase the risk of being misidentified and mistakenly targeted, or of being caught up as collateral damage. While movements from Nekemte - Gimbi - Assossa are cleared, the situation in deep field locations remains extremely volatile hindering partners' movement and operations. In April and May, various UAG attacks to vehicles and to a clearly marked ambulance left a number of casualties, including two minors, two religious leaders, and four government officials who were returning from distributing fertilizers to IDPs. In June, a week-long market strike in Nekemte town, increased tensions and pressure on the community given the stand-off between security forces and the UAG behind the strike. These incidents illustrate the complexity and dangerous operational environment for humanitarians in the sub-region.

An estimated 37,000 secondary IDPs in West Wellega - plus an unverified number in East Wellega - have not received assistance for almost one year and remain in an alarming situation. As background, these IDPs were returned by government to Kamashi in June 2019, and moved back due to insecurity and lack of access to services there. Authorities' reluctance to recognize them as IDPs constitutes a case of 'denial of access to assistance' and has curtailed the response. IDPs have noted their intention to remain/ be relocated in Oromia, and requested support in terms of food, shelter, health, and access to livelihoods. Access to boundary areas with Kamashi is restricted as a result of lingering community tensions from 2018. Partners have reported cases of discrimination in terms of access to aid towards Ethnic-Oromo by Gumuz authorities in Belojiganfoy *woreda*.

Overall, the response has been heavily impacted by insecurity and COVID-19, impacting programmes in WASH, NFI/ shelter, or emergency cash that targeted over 100,000 people. The situation is critical in deep field locations due to limited government and partners' presence. A recent assessment to boundary areas between Wellegas and Kamashi, highlighted that most schools, health posts, and kebele administration offices, are either partially damaged or destroyed, lacking equipment, supplies, and human resources.

Tigray region



The humanitarian situation in Tigray is characterized by the large presence of IDPs (120,000) since 2018 and refugees mainly from Eritrea (95,490 according to UNHCR, as of June 30). IDPs have reportedly complained about limited assistance by authorities and aid partners. Meanwhile, desert locust and armyworms affected some areas in South, Central and Northwestern Tigray, impacting on food security, with an estimated 430,000 affected by drought.

Reportedly, some 400 Eritrean asylum seekers remain stranded at Shiraro town, unable to access asylum procedures in Ethiopia. Further, the announcement by the Federal government to close 'Hitsats' refugee camp and relocate refugees to 'Mai-ayni' and 'Adi-Harush' camps, was received with anger by refugees and local communities. An international medical NGO had two staff temporarily imprisoned due to disagreements with local authorities and militia over the end of their activities in the camp. While staff was later released, the INGO equipment remains under police custody.

In April, Tigray authorities issued their own State of Emergency directive to COVID-19, and introduced movement restrictions and mandatory quarantine requirements for travelers outside the region, including aid workers. These measures affected operations by limiting movements within and from outside the region, including for a limited period to refugee camps. As elsewhere in Ethiopia, authorities gradually eased restrictions and worked to enable relief operations, including by lifting quarantine requirements for humanitarian missions.