

# ETHIOPIA

## Somali, Oromia and Tigray Displacement

Intercommunal conflict in the Somali and Oromia border regions that escalated on 4 August has led to the internal displacement of more than 141,000 people. Shelter and health assistance are among the most urgent needs for the IDPs. The areas most affected by the conflict are Jijiga in Somali region and East Hararghe area in Oromia, where fatalities among the population were reported. With the exception of a reported influx of around 2,000 displaced people into Mekelle Town of Tigray region, there is no other information regarding the impact of the August events on Tigray.

### NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE



### IMPACT

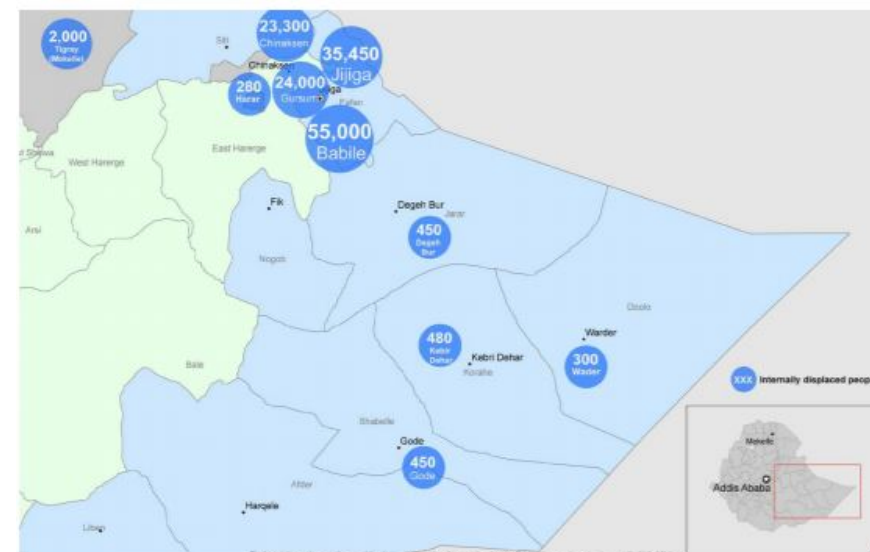


Figure 1: Displacement following the inter-communal conflict (4-7 Aug 2018) in Somali region

Source: OCHA 17/08/2018

### Anticipated scope and scale

The cross-border conflict in the Somali and Oromia regions that started on 4 August has displaced **141,000 people**.

The situation improved in mid-August as conflict decreased and there was a slow return movement of IDPs to their areas of origin. However, new reports of violence since 28 August indicate that the crisis is ongoing and **further casualties and displacement are likely to continue** over the coming weeks.

### Key priorities



**+141,000 IDPs**  
since 4 August



**+35,000 IDPs**  
in need of shelter in Jijiga



**Health aid suspended**  
due to insecurity

### Humanitarian constraints



Several humanitarian actors, including WFP, UNHCR, and WHO, reported suspending activities in the Somali region due to insecurity. In 2017, NGO staff member deaths, kidnappings or injuries, robberies and/or physical assaults were reported.

#### Limitations

The lack of recent figures on displacement since the middle of August makes it difficult to ascertain the current numbers of IDPs and/or returnees in the reported areas. Data on secondary displacement is also unavailable, as is information regarding the situation of IDPs in Tigray.

## Crisis impact

On 4 August, renewed clashes broke out along the Somali-Oromia border region, after state federal forces entered Jijiga city and clashed with Somali region's paramilitary forces. (BBC 04/08/2018) Violence broke out in at least four towns in the Somali region, with armed actors attacking civilians and looting property. Mobs, aided by Somali's regional forces, particularly targeted civilians who were perceived to be non-Somali. (Reuters 04/08/2018) During this particular outbreak of violence, 30 people were killed. On 11 and 12 August, violence spread to the East Hararghe district of Oromia region, where at least 40 people were killed by Liyu paramilitary forces who are loyal to Somali region's former leader Abdi Mohammed Omer. On 28 August, at least 13 ethnic Somalis were reportedly killed in Babile, Tulli Guled and Chinaksen towns, also in East Hararghe. (Halbeeg 28/08/2018, Addis Standard 28/08/2018)

The violence has led to massive internal displacement. As of 17 August, 141,000 people were reportedly displaced across Oromia, Somali and Tigray regions and in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

Displacement August 2018		
Number of IDPs	Location	Region
55,000	Babile	Oromia
35,450	Jijiga,	Somali
24,000	Gursum	Oromia
23,000	Chinaksen	Somali
2,000	Mekelle Town	Tigray
480	Kabridahar	Somali
450	Gode	Somali
450	Degahbur	Somali
300	Wader Towns	Somali
280	Harar Town	Oromia

It is difficult to ascertain the whereabouts of the IDPs because on 15 August, there were also reports stating that some IDPs had begun to return home to Jijiga from their displacement locations. Others were reportedly moving onwards to either Harar, Dire Dawa or Addis Ababa. (OCHA 17/08/2018) A least 15,000 people (3,000 families) who fled from Magaalo-Qaran, Horfadhi and Gobyarey localities in the Somali region are reported to have moved on to Somaliland. (Halbeeg 18/08/2018)

**Shelter:** There are reports that an unknown number of properties were looted. (Reuters 04/08/2018) By 17 August, there were some 35,450 IDPs in Jijiga city, some of whom were sheltered in churches and in Garab'ase Military Camp. (OCHA 17/08/2018) Around 5,000 IDPs remained in St. Michael Church and 450 in Garab'ase Military Camp. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

In West Guji zone, shelter conditions are poor, overcrowded and lack privacy. (CARE 31/07/2018) IDPs sleep on the cold ground in public facilities. Many others live in makeshift shelters that cannot keep out the heavy rains, leaving them at risk of serious health problems such as pneumonia. (UNHCR 03/08/2018) Some families have used banana leaves and wood to create makeshift shelters that must be rebuilt frequently, given the heavy rain and poor-quality construction. (Addis Standards 06/08/2018, WVI 16/08/2018)

**Health:** Health needs are critical. Most health sector partners suspended their operations due to security concerns, affecting the delivery of healthcare services. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

Health facilities in Jijiga are no longer functioning, as health experts and workers remain at home in fear of the security situation, while others fled the city. Pharmacies, private clinics and other health facilities were closed because of the tense security situation. (ICRC 29/08/2018) There is a shortage of drugs and medical supplies. Psychosocial care and mental health services for IDPs are not available, mainly because of an absence of qualified personnel (WHO 24/08/2018).

**Protection:** Civilians in both Somali and Oromia zones are facing violence due to their ethnicities. Some have fled their homes as they feared being targeted because of their ethnicities. (ICRC 29/08/2018) Displaced families in the West Guji areas have been separated and the overcrowded conditions are leading to protection risks. UNHCR highlighted protection risks especially for women and unaccompanied children, many of whom have suffered trauma, abuse and violence and are in urgent need of counselling. At least 29 people were killed in Jijiga, and at least 54 others died and 44 were wounded in August in East Hararghe area. (UNHCR 03/08/2018, Geeskaafrika 11/08/2018) Children and the elderly were among the victims. (Addis Standard 13/08/2018)

**Food:** Critical food shortages have been reported among IDPs, particularly in Jijiga, Degahbour, Wader, Kabridahar, and Gode, not only for the displaced but also for the host community. The situation is likely to exacerbate needs, as IDPs and host communities in Somali region already faced IPC 4 (Emergency) levels of food insecurity. (WHO 24/08/2018, OCHA 17/08/2018, Fewsnet 28/07/2018)

**NFIs:** IDPs are in need of cooking equipment, sleeping mats and blankets, and other NFIs. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

## Humanitarian and operational constraints

On 15 August, WFP reported that UN travel restrictions were in place and some of its operations in the Somali region were on hold. (WFP 15/08/2018) UNICEF also reported suspending its operations for treatment of moderate malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition in the Somali region. (UNICEF 17/08/2018) According to the WHO, security concerns prompted most health sector partners to suspend their operations, affecting delivery of healthcare services. (WHO 24/08/2018)

## Aggravating factors

### Drought

A prolonged drought has affected the livelihoods of pastoral and agro-pastoral farmers in the areas of Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), southern Oromia, and southeastern Somali regions. Drought in 2016 already reduced production by up to 90% in some areas, resulting in reduced purchasing power and diminished food security, and forcing many to abandon their livelihoods. A large number of the IDPs fleeing conflict in the Oromia and Somali regions moved with their livestock. The influx of displaced people with livestock in areas that face livestock feed shortages is putting additional pressure on limited resources, and negatively impacting ongoing livestock interventions. (UNOCHA 30/11/17, DRMTWG 03/2018) Almost 8 million people in Ethiopia depend on assistance due to the effects of the drought. (OCHA 03/08/2018)

### Floods

While consecutive years of drought have led to displacement in many areas across the country, flash floods - as well as Cyclone Sagar, which struck Ethiopia on 20 May - have affected people in Somali, Oromia, SNNPR and Afar regions. Livelihoods and crops have been damaged in these regions. Somali region was most affected, with around 12,911 hectares of farmland destroyed. (ACAPS 2018) Heavy rain was reported in August in Guji zone, damaging the shelters of IDPs and posing health risks to displaced people. (UNHCR 03/08/2018)

### Food insecurity

IDPs and host communities face IPC 4 (Emergency) in the Somali region. The number of poor households facing Emergency outcomes is expected to rise through the end of the dry season in September. Some 42% of the population in Somali region, or 2.3 million people, are food insecure. (Fewsnet 17/08/2018, Fewsnet 27/07/2018, FAO, 27/04/2018)

## Malnutrition

In Somali region, poor food-security outcomes are leading to critical levels of acute malnutrition, with 1.7% of the population affected by severe acute malnutrition. (WHO 01/06/2018)

## Disease outbreaks

Health emergencies, including the outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and measles, strained an already overstretched health system in 2017. (UNICEF 2017).

**AWD:** In 2018, 1,234 cases of AWD and 18 related deaths (CFR 1.4%) had been reported as of August. 151 cases were reported in the Somali region, and 66 cases in Tigray. (WHO 20/08/2018)

**Measles:** 2,944 suspected cases of measles have been reported in 2018 (with 815 confirmed), with no fatalities. New cases were reported in August, including from Somali and Tigray regions. (WHO 27/07/2018)

## Previous displacement

In April 2018, historically recurring clashes between communities along the border of Gedeo (SNNPR) and West Guji (Oromia) zones began again. Fighting intensified in June, and hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes. Most of the displaced people originate from West Guji. (IOM 14/08/2018) The capacity of the hosting communities to absorb the new arrivals is strained. (CARE 31/07/2018) In Guji, about 82,174 individuals are hosted in collective sites, while 84,618 live with host communities. In total, 166,792 people are identified as being hosted across Guji. (IOM DTM 27/08/2018)

Displacement has also occurred because of inter-community Oromia-Somali clashes since September 2017. By April 2018, conflict along the border separating the two regions had displaced almost 1.1 million people. (OCHA 20/05/2018, OCHA 17/04/2018, IOM 17/04/2018)

Ethiopia is host to the second-largest refugee population in Africa. This includes more than 928,000 refugees, most of whom come from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan. The majority of refugees in Ethiopia are located in five regions, including Tigray and Somali. (UNHCR 17/08/2018)

## Drivers of the conflict

Oromia and Somali regions share the longest border within Ethiopia. The inhabitants of Oromia, one of the biggest regions in Ethiopia, tend to be farmers and pastoralists. Somalis are primarily pastoralists. Although they share language, religion and culture, they have fought over resources, land and water over the past 25 years. In 2004, after the referendum that gave part of the smallest administrative regions to Oromia,

thousands of Somalis fled the contested areas in fear of repercussion. (VOANEWS 29/11/2017; BBC 18/09/2017) Clashes between Oromos and Somali groups over border demarcations and resources have caused significant casualties and deaths, as well as displacement, since September 2017, when protests in four Oromia towns turned violent, leaving at least 18 people dead. (OCHA 20/05/2018, OCHA 17/04/2018, VOA 13/08/2018, VOA 18/09/2018)

Intercommunal clashes flared up in April in the border area of the SNNPR and the Oromia region. The recent violence came on the heels of the drought and tensions over resources, and because of significant political, social and economic reforms that the federal government is implementing countrywide. (ICRC 29/08/2018, UNHCR 03/08/2018) Conflict near the regional border has displaced nearly 1 million people since April. Continued violence and escalating tensions in Gedeo and West Guji have prevented significant IDP returns to areas of origin. (USAID 25/07/2018)

## Key characteristics

- **Demographic profile:** An estimated 36.2 million people live in Oromia region. (Population of 2017 04/03/2017) An estimated 8.5 million people live in the Somali region. (CSA 2017)
- **Nutrition levels.** 29% of population in Ethiopia is undernourished (World Bank 2016).
- **Health statistics:** The infant mortality rate across the country is 49.6 deaths/1,000 live births. (Index Mundi 2017) The maternal mortality rate is 353 deaths/100,000 live births. (Index Mundi 2015)
- **WASH statistics:** Only 30% of the population is using unimproved drinking water services. (UNICEF 2016)

## Response capacity

With the support of the Government of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, WFP reported that since 9 August, it has been distributing food rations for 52,000 people sheltering in three locations in the regional capital of Jijiga city. A humanitarian coordination committee with government and humanitarian partners was working to identify food distribution points for other vulnerable people in Jijiga.

WFP also provides food assistance to 2 million food-insecure people in the Somali region. Another 311,000 drought-affected people receive WFP food assistance under the government-led Productive Safety Net Programme. (WFP 15/08/2018)

The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) dispatched 4,000 quintals of rice, 2,000 quintals of corn-soya blend, 80 quintals of oil, and 2,000 cartons of biscuits to Jijiga. NDRMC delivered NFI kits to 1,500 households in the town. The Ethiopian Red Cross (ERC) reported it would continue providing water trucking service at St. Michael Church. The ERC also established CTC/ mini-clinic/ medical supplies and is providing ambulance services.

Other partners on the ground are reviewing available resources and will start distribution through the emergency command centre. (OCHA 14/08/2018)

UNICEF responded by providing high-energy biscuits to children and women. Buckets, blankets, soap and water-treatment chemicals are also being distributed. Before the conflict, UNICEF supported the treatment of some 132,000 children and 110,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women for moderate malnutrition, and 8,500 children for severe acute malnutrition. The support is expected to resume once the situation improves. (UNICEF 17/08/2018)

In response to the escalation of the Gedeo-Guji conflict since April 2018, the Government and partners have taken steps to enhance response coordination and to boost response capacity at site level. Two Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs) were established in Dilla Town in Gedeo zone and in Bule Hora Town in West Guji zone. The EOC response has been established since 19 July for the Guji zone. The EOC is structured with key sectors under the leadership of federal and zonal government officials. The EOC comprises Management, Operations, Planning, and Logistics sections. In West Guji zone, Food, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Protection, Site Management, and Shelter and NFI clusters have been established. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and humanitarian partners have deployed staff to support the EOCs. WHO, UNICEF, UNCHCR, WFP, IOM, and UNFPA have deployed national and international multi-sector experts to both zones, including incident managers, emergency coordinators, WASH experts, surveillance officers, medical nutritionists, moderate malnutrition management experts and information management officers, as well as security experts (OCHA 17/08/2018).

GOAL, People in Need, IRC, World Vision, NRC, MSF-Spain, Save the Children, Plan International, MCMDO, Action Aid, CARE, and Christian Aid are NGOs with an operational presence in the IDP-hosting woredas across Gedeo and West Guji zones. (OCHA 17/08/2018)

Trócaire also reported responding to the needs of more than 20,000 people who have been displaced by violence in the Moyale region. The aid is mostly shelter, kitchen sets and hygiene kits. (Trocaire 14/08/2018)

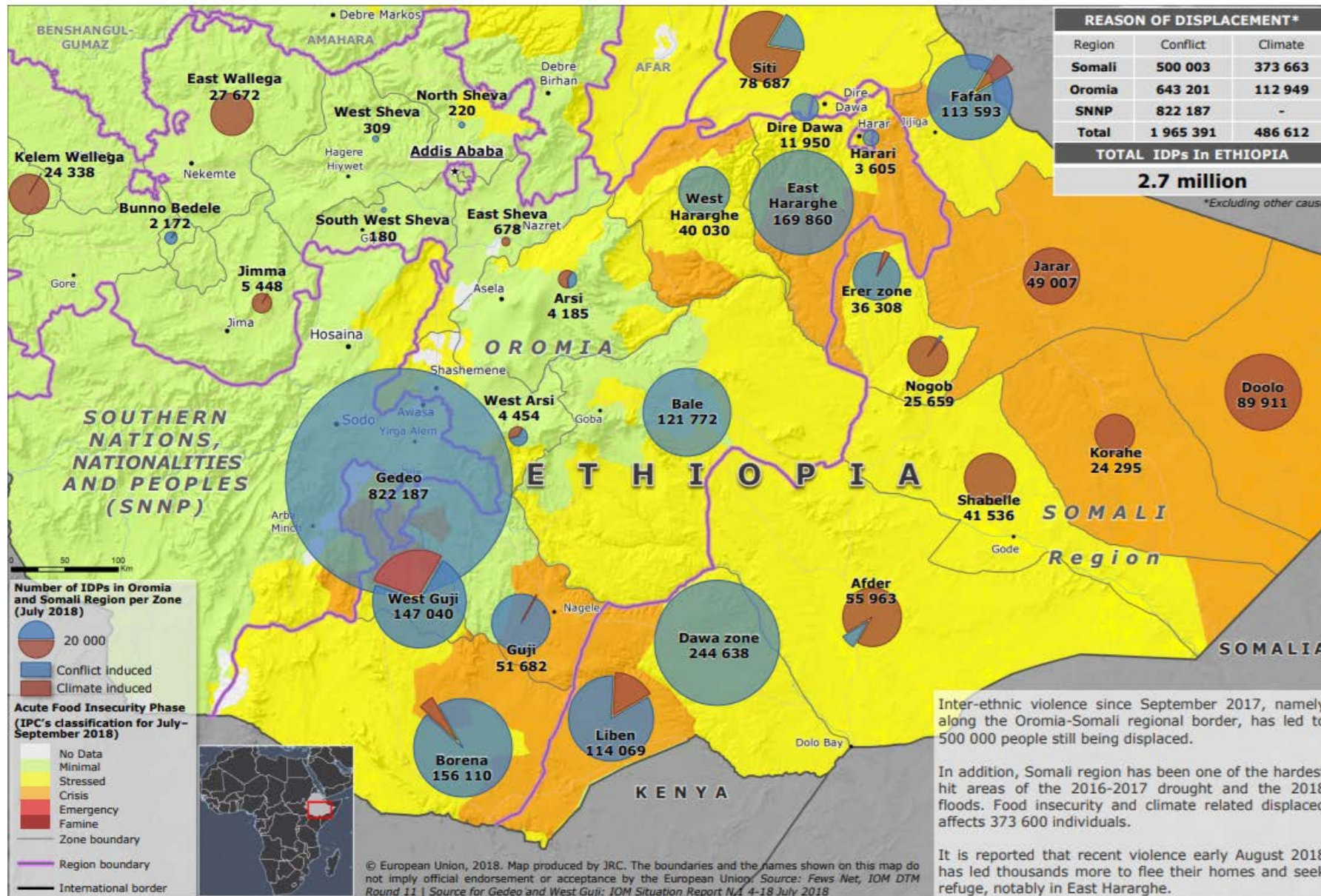
## Information gaps

- There is limited information on the sectoral needs as a result of this latest outbreak of conflict.
- There is no information about how the conflict has impacted education.
- There is no information detailing the extent of damage to homes.
- There is no disaggregated data to breakdown the displaced population according to age, gender, or persons with disabilities.
- With the exception of a reported 2,000 IDPs relocating to Mekelle Town in Tigray region in mid-August, recent information on displacement numbers and potential needs of the displaced is lacking.

## Lessons learned

- In Ethiopia, in the context of implementing the National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Management, the Government has established Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Committees not only in the capital, but also on the local level. These committees are directly involved in counting IDPs, initial assessments, compiling figures with IOM support, and providing assistance through government, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, international NGOs and humanitarian actors, such as the ICRC. (ICRC 10/02/2017)
- On the issue of access to education for internally displaced children, local school authorities in Ethiopia allow internally displaced children who did not have resident personal identity documents to attend school, thus avoiding or reducing interruptions to their education. (ICRC 10/02/2017)

## Ethiopia | Drought, conflict and displacement in Oromia, Somali and SNNP regions as of 9 August 2018



Source: Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) – DG ECHO