

ETHIOPIA

Displacement in SNNP and Oromia regions

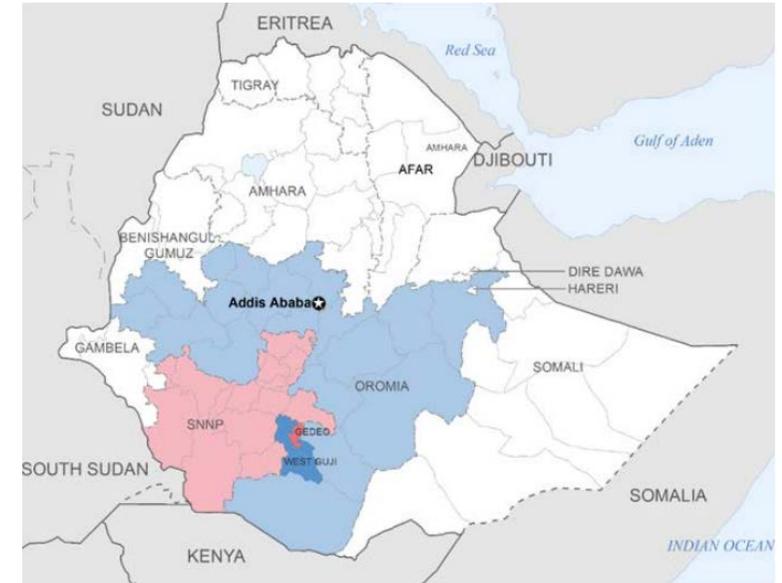
Briefing note – 22 June 2018

Around 400,000 people have been newly displaced on both sides of the regional borders of Gedeo (SNNP region) and Guji (Oromia region) zones since 1 June (ECHO 19/06/2018). In total, some 700,000 people have been displaced since a new wave of violence between the Gedeo and Guji communities started on 13 April. Insecurity continues to prevent IDPs from returning to their areas of origin (OCHA 14/06/2018; OCHA 22/05/2018; UNICEF 10/05/2018). IDPs are staying in shelters in public buildings and spontaneous IDP sites. Host communities have a limited capacity to absorb the new arrivals, with high levels of food insecurity and acute malnutrition already affecting some of the local population. Needs identified include shelter/NFIs, food, WASH, and healthcare (ECHO 19/06/2018; OCHA 14/06/2018).

NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE



IMPACT



Ethiopia West Guji – Gedeo Conflict Displacement; May 2018 (OCHA 09/06/2018)

Anticipated scope and scale

With ongoing insecurity, access constraints are likely to continue to hinder humanitarian actors from reaching the affected population. Upcoming rains from June to August could damage shelters and exacerbate food, WASH and health needs.

Key priorities



+700,000
people displaced



Over 4,000
homes damaged



Crops and food stocks
lost



Latrine damage
and risk of water contamination

Humanitarian constraints



Response operations are being hindered in the area by insecurity and violence, but more detailed information on access constraints is lacking.

Limitations

Information on the total number of IDPs as well as their sectoral needs remains relatively limited.

Crisis impact

At least 400,000 people have been newly displaced along the border of Gedeo (SNNP region) and Guji (Oromia region) zones since a sharp escalation in fighting between Gedeo and Guji communities in the beginning of June (ECHO 19/06/2018). This is the latest development in intercommunal violence between the communities that started in Kercha woreda of West Guji zone on 13 April, before spreading to other woredas along the border. A total of 700,000 people have been displaced by the conflict since mid-April, including 527,263 IDPs from West Guji to Gedeo zone and 170,467 IDPs within West Guji zone. The conflict continues to evolve at a fast pace.

The Oromia and SNNPR authorities supported the return the IDPs to their respective areas of origin in April 2018. However, insecurity continues preventing returns. Secondary displacement of IDPs from West Guji is reported (OCHA 14/06/2018).

As of late May, Kochere, Yirga Cheffe, Wonago and Dilla Zuria of the seven IDP-hosting woredas in Gedeo are classified as hotspot Priority 1 and Gedeb woreda is classified as Priority 2 (OCHA 22/05/2018).

Number of people displaced by woredas in SNNPR and Oromia regions (OCHA 14/06/2018)

Region	Total displacement	Woredas and number of IDPs
SNNPR (Gedeo Zone)	527,263 people	Bule: 38,459
		Dilla Zuria: 10,551
		Gedeb: 278,745
		Kochere: 61,403
		Wonago: 16,199
		Yirgacheffe: 103,950
		Dilla Town: 17,956
Oromia (Guji zone)	170,467 people	Abaya: 7,877
		Birbirs Kodawa: 5,686
		Bule Hora: 15,330
		Gelana: 43,224
		Demtu Hambela: 29,080
		Kercha: 69,264

In addition to the displaced population, populations in areas experiencing violence also face significant protection concerns (OCHA 14/06/2018; OCHA 22/05/2018; UNICEF 10/05/2018). The exact number of casualties is unknown, but the violence is reported to have left at least 200 people dead (ACLEDD 18/06/2018). Fire arms, machete and spears have been used in the violence (Borkena, 11/06/2018). As the number people displaced grows and insecurity continues, the capacity of the hosting communities to absorb the new arrivals is being strained.

Overall, the main humanitarian needs for IDPs identified include shelter and NFIs (particularly plastic sheeting, kitchen sets and blankets), food, WASH, and healthcare (ECHO 19/06/2018; OCHA 14/06/2018; OCHA 09/06/2018; OCHA 06/06/2018; UNICEF 05/2018; ECHO, 27/04/2018). Humanitarian assistance is expected to be needed for at least the next six months (OCHA 14/06/2018).

Shelter and NFIs: Over 4,000 houses have been damaged in West Guji and IDPs have lost most or all of their household items (OCHA 22/05/2018; Ethsat 04/06/2018). In some IDP-hosting woredas, the new influx of IDPs has almost doubled the population, placing strain on housing and other resources. Return remains impossible for many IDPs and there is a lack of resources to promote relocation opportunities. (ECHO 19/06/2018; OCHA 22/05/2018; OCHA 14/06/2018).

Food: The region was already affected by drought and food insecurity prior to the escalation of the conflict. Acute malnutrition is high in both zones (OCHA 14/06/2018). Loss of crops, food factories, food stocks and livelihoods have been reported and markets have been negatively affected on both sides of the regional borders of Gedeo and Guji zones (Ethsat 04/06/2018; OCHA 22/05/2018; UNICEF 05/2018). The food ration distribution has also been limited and affected by the lack of storage facilities in the area (OCHA 14/06/2018).

WASH: At least 76 water schemes need immediate rehabilitation and several water points in the IDP-hosting woredas became dysfunctional due to overuse (OCHA 22/05/2018; UNICEF 05/2018). Water supply coverage is critically low in IDP-hosting woredas. For example, in Gedeo zone it ranges from 21% in Gedeb to 64% in Dilla Zuria. The water trucking service was discontinued when the IDP return operation started by the government, but some IDPs remained in IDP-hosting areas and now face water access constraints. Communal latrines in IDP-hosting woredas are in need of rehabilitation (OCHA 22/05/2018).

Health: Health facilities in IDP-hosting woredas in Gedeo zone are providing free health service for the IDPs, but it is limited and overstretched (OCHA 22/05/2018). Properties and public infrastructures, as health facilities, have been burnt down and/or looted (OCHA 14/06/2018).

Education: Schools have been damaged by the conflict (OCHA 14/06/2018; UNICEF 05/2018).

Humanitarian and operational constraints

Humanitarian operations have had to scale-back due to ongoing insecurity. Security constraints have been reported mainly in Abaya, Birbirs Kajiwa, Gelana, Hambele Wamena, and Kercha woredas of West Guji zone and in all woredas of Gedeo zone of SNNPR (OCHA 06/06/2018). Local sources reported that the road to Moyale was shut down by clashes between the two communities in Gedeb town (Ethsat 04/06/2018).

The response effort in IDP-hosting woredas had also been delayed by the stance of regional authorities to provide assistance mainly in areas of return (OCHA 22/05/2018).

International and local response operations face resource constraints (OCHA 14/06/2018).

Aggravating factors

Floods

Heavy rains and floods had already affected 347,000 people mainly in Somali, Afar, Oromia and SNNP regions since mid-April, including around 200,000 people who were displaced. The response to the flood emergency has exhausted resources, limiting agencies' ability to respond to another emergency in the area (ECHO 23/05/2018).

Heavy rains continued into May and early June in southwestern regions, where 32 people have been killed (23 people in Sidama zone and nine people in Gamo Gofa zone) and 23 injured by landslides in the SNNPR state and West Arsi zone of Oromia region (OCHA 03/06/2018; ECHO 29/05/2018; Daily Nation 29/05/2019; UNICEF 05/2018). Needs of populations affected by floods also include WASH, health, food, and shelter (OCHA 10/05/2018).

Drought and underlying food insecurity

Over 7 million people face acute food insecurity in Ethiopia, combined with malnutrition and water shortages in southern lowlands (OCHA 21/06/2018). Ethiopia was one of the worst affected East African countries during the El Nino drought of 2016/17 and large-scale livestock deaths in many pastoral households were reported, the long-term consequences of which continue to be felt. A poor *Belg* (March- May) 2017 season in SNNPR resulted in emergency assistance needs (FEWS NET 01/03/2018). Parts of SNNPR and Oromia remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) (FEWS NET 09/2017).

Health outbreaks

There is a scabies outbreak in Gedeb, Kochere, Yirgachefe and Wonago woredas. Although there were no reported health outbreaks so far among the IDP population, AWD/Cholera and measles are potential health risks due to the use of water from unsafe sources, open defecation, overcrowded shelter and sharing of clothes.

Political insecurity

On 26 March, the ruling coalition Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) nominated Abiy Ahmed, head of the EPRDF's Oromo bloc (Oromo Peoples Democratic Organization - OPDO) to succeed the former Prime Minister. Parliament elected Ahmed as Prime Minister on 2 April (Africa News 3/4/2018; BBC 2/4/2018). He is the first Prime Minister from Oromia region (Aljazeera 2/4/2018).

Unrest and protests against the government began over land rights in the Oromia region in November 2015, eventually broadening against the Tigray-led government on issues including inequality, cultural rights, economic marginalisation, and corruption. Protests spread to the Amhara region, populated by the second largest ethnic group in the country. Protests were met with a brutal government response (Reuters 30/03/2017; Aljazeera 19/2/2018).

Violence escalated in October 2016 and a state of emergency was imposed by the government, to be lifted only in August 2017 (Journal du Cameroun 18/2/2018). In 2017, thousands of protesters were detained and hundreds killed (Africanews 26/10/2017; HRW 31/12/2017). Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn resigned on 15 February 2018, and on 16 February a new six-month state of emergency was declared in an attempt to quell government protests. On 2 June, Ethiopia's cabinet approved a draft law that would bring an end to the state of emergency two months earlier than originally scheduled (The East African 02/06/2018).

Contextual information

History of conflict

Ethiopia is home to several ethno-linguistic communities with different histories, languages, and cultures. The Gedo-Guji conflict is one of major inter-ethnic challenges in Ethiopia. This conflict has been characterised by the police force of Oromia Regional State suppressing the Gedeo protests against the use and allocations of pasturelands and water resources, which changed under the policy to restructure the Gedeo into the Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State and the Guji into the Oromia National Regional State (Academic Journals, 12/03/2012). It is not yet clear what exactly triggered the new wave of violence on such a scale, but land disputes over border demarcations remain a source of tensions (ECHO, 27/04/2018; Borkena, 11/06/2018).

Key characteristics

- **Demographic profile:** An estimated 36.2 million people live in Oromia region and around 19 million people in SNNP region (Population of 2017 04/03/2017).
- **Nutrition levels.** 41% of population in Ethiopia is undernourished (Index Mundi 2006).
- **Health statistics:** The total 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 38% of the population have access to improved drinking water sources (Index Mundi 2008).
- **Literacy levels.** Literacy rate on people between 15-24 years old is 44.6% (Index Mundi 2015).

Response capacity

Local and national response capacity

The local government, community and civil society were the first and main responders to provide assistance for the new IDP influx since mid-April (OCHA 22/05/2018). The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (DRMC) has been supporting the affected population with food distribution (OCHA 09/05/2018). The Ethiopian Red Cross is supporting

affected people with NFIs (OCHA 09/05/2018). Most humanitarian assistance to the IDPs is still largely shouldered by the hosting communities and local authorities (OCHA 14/06/2018).

International response capacity

UN agencies in the country are also providing some response. IRC, World Vision, Save the Children International and NRC are engaged in the provision of humanitarian relief (OCHA 22/05/2018; OCHA 06/06/2018; OCHA 14/06/2018; OCHA 09/05/2018). OCHA Ethiopia has a sub-office in SNNP region (Hawassa). The country office in Addis Ababa oversees humanitarian coordination and response in Oromia region (OCHA 21/06/2018).

Despite a relatively strong presence in country, the resources of humanitarian actors are already stretched due to the 2.5 million displaced people across the country (ECHO, 27/04/2018).

Information gaps and needs

There is lack of information regarding sectoral needs of people affected. Information regarding displacement in areas of insecurity is limited.

