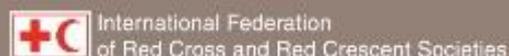


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# Information bulletin

## Africa: Tigray Population Movement

20 November 2020



**This bulletin is issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. Respective National Societies, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) has been released to support Sudan Red Crescent; and is in process for to support Ethiopian Red Cross with their response to the situation as it currently stands. The IFRC is continuously monitoring the situation as it evolves; and is on standby to expand the support being provided to member National Societies as necessary. This will be done in coordination with other Movement components including the ICRC.**

### **The situation**

Since 3 November 2020, A series of escalating clashes between the Ethiopian Federal Government and the Tigray Regional Government has resulted in a growing humanitarian emergency including heavy casualties and population movements both internally and cross border. An estimated 9 million people within or near the Tigray region are at risk due to increasing confrontations.

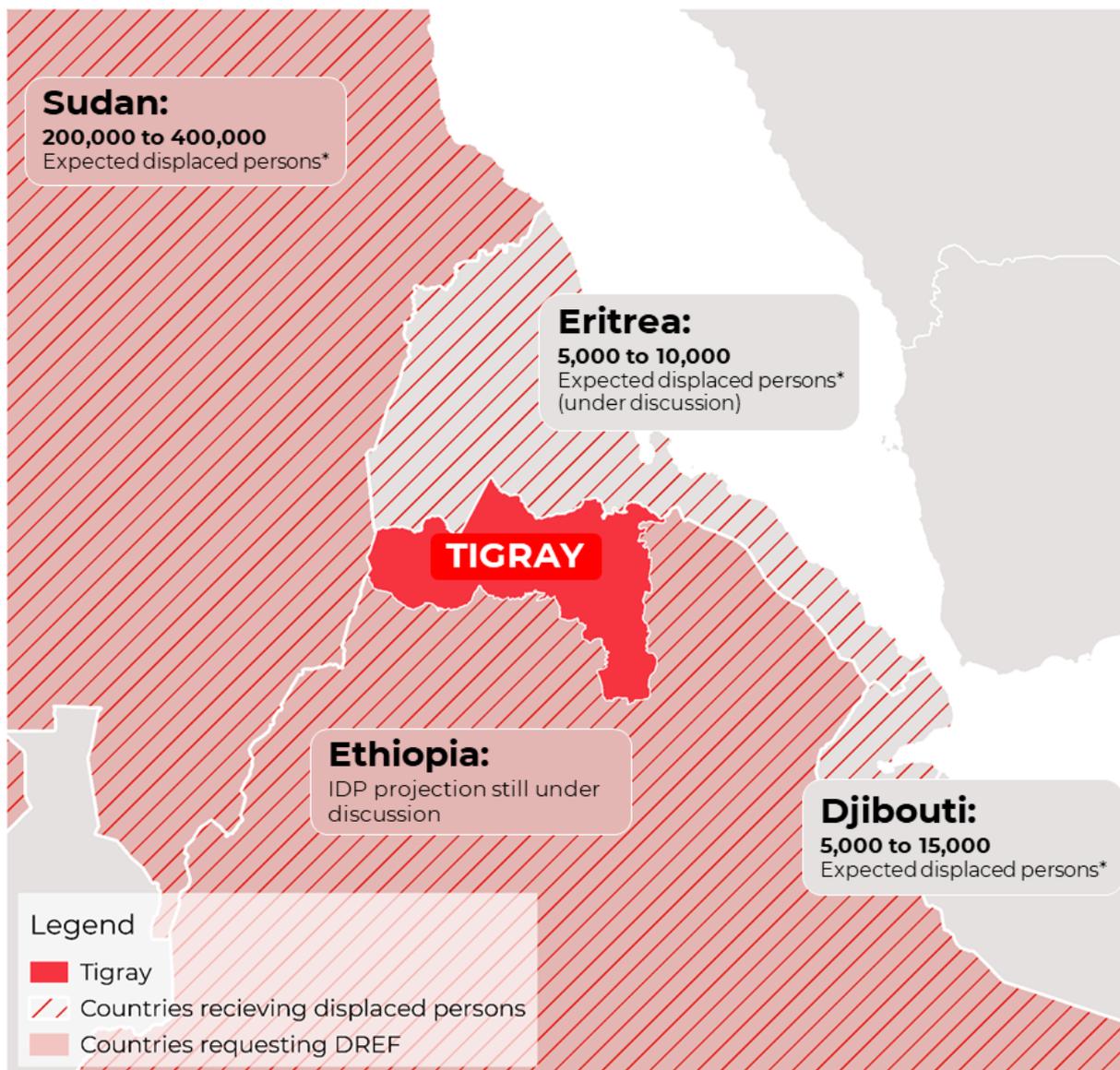
On 6 November 2020, Ethiopian Lawmakers approved a state of emergency for a period of six months in the Tigray Region. On 7 November 2020, the Ethiopian Parliament voted to dissolve the Government of Tigray Region, putting in place a transitional government for the region. On 13 November 2020 saw an escalation in the situation with rocket fire hitting Bahir Dar and Gondar airports in the Amhara Region, which neighbors Tigray to the south. On 14 November 2020, rocket fire hit the capital of Eritrea, Asmara.

Access into Tigray Region has been severely restricted, with roads blocked, flights suspended, and communication lines (including phone and internet) shut down. There are reports that access is increasing, with some roads now open but remains extremely limited.

The Tigray Region, with a population of approximately 5 million, was already host to approximately 600,000 people dependent on relief assistance before the crisis, including 400,000 food insecure, 100,000 IDPs, and nearly 96,000 refugees, and nearly 16,000 returned migrants<sup>1</sup>. While in neighboring regions of Ethiopia and surrounding countries, people were already grappling with the effects of COVID-19, as other disasters and crises, including floods, food insecurity and pest infestations. The population movement resulting from the situation in Tigray Region, compounds the impact of these crises leaving people even more at risk, and even more vulnerable.

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<sup>1</sup> Ethiopia: Tigray Region Humanitarian Update Situation Report No. 1 (UNOCHA)



\*UNHCR projections for number of persons displaced as a result of the ongoing situation in Tigray by the end of May 2021. The lower boundary for the range is the expected planning figures for response planning, the upper boundary is the worst predicted scenario from the contingency planning

**Ethiopia: 7,500 beneficiaries**  
Response areas:

  
Health

  
Migration

  
PGI

  
Cash

  
Shelter/HHI

**Sudan: 40,000 beneficiaries**  
Response areas:

  
Health

  
PGI

  
WASH

  
Shelter/HHI

## Population Movement<sup>2</sup>

### Sudan

As of November 18, 2020, over 30,000 people have crossed the border to seek refuge in Sudan<sup>3</sup>, with approximately 4,000 people crossing per day since the past 2 weeks, this is the largest influx seen in East Sudan since the past two decades. According to data from UNHCR, 45% of those crossing the border into Sudan are children under the age of 18, 43% are women. The majority (64%) of border crossings occur in Kassala State, flowed by Gedaref (34%), and Blue Nile (2%).

Arrivals are temporarily hosted in transit centers located near border entry points in Al Lukdi, Gedaref State and Hamdayit, Kassala State where they are screened and registered by UNHCR and local government for eventual relocation to permanent camp settings. Current camp facilities in East Sudan are inadequate to receive large population influxes. The hygiene situation at the Al Lukdi and Hamdayit Transit Centers is made precarious by a lack of water supply, latrines, hand washing facilities, and bathrooms. People have resorted to open defecation near the sleeping area. Fuel shortages, limited transportation and difficult road conditions are hampering relocation to settlement camps are causing overcrowding at the transit centers. Um-Rakoba Settlement Camp, the primary relocation site, faces similar challenges. UNHCR is currently planning to upscale Um-Rakoba capacity from 6,500 to 10,000 people.

Additional shelter must be built to handle new capacity including additional food storage and procurement of HHIs such as sleeping mats, blankets, and mosquito nets. Um-Rakoba lacks a sustainable water source and water will have to be trucked in until a more sustainable solution can be developed. WASH supplies are needed such as family hygiene packs, dignity kits for women and girls of childbearing age. Additionally, there is a lack of hygiene infrastructure such as latrines, hand washing stations, and bathing units.



Photo by SRCS: Conducting assessments in al-Lukdi, Gedaref.



Photo by SRCS: SRCS working with UNCHR near Um-Rakouba camp.

<sup>2</sup> Situation as of November 18, 2020

<sup>3</sup> UNOCHA Humanitarian Bulletin Ethiopia, Issue #19, 20 Nov. 2020  
[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian\\_bulletin\\_2\\_-\\_20\\_november\\_2020\\_-\\_final\\_002.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian_bulletin_2_-_20_november_2020_-_final_002.pdf)

## Ethiopia

The Ethiopia Red Cross Society (ERCS) has reported 261 internally displaced persons within Ethiopia moving from the Alamata in Southern Tigray to the Amhara Region. Numbers of internally displaced persons within the Tigray Region are difficult to ascertain due to lack of access and communication shutdown in the region.

### Red Cross and Red Crescent Actions

In **Ethiopia**, ERCS has strategically located 13 ambulances in different regions and are ready to respond as the need arises. This is complimented by a pool of skilled volunteers trained in first aid and who can serve as paramedics. The National Society has already supported the evacuation of 736 people with combat and civilian injuries to medical facilities in Gondar. ERCS supported the 261 displaced persons coming into Amhara with food and bottled water.

On 9 November 2020, three ERCS ambulances were attacked while on duty in Dansha area, North Gondar. ERCS has called for all parties involved in the conflict to respect the Geneva Convention providing protection to its volunteers and its staffs and medical team who are providing help to civilians who are not a part of the conflict. It also called on parties involved in the conflict to stop armed attacks on ambulances with the Red Cross logo



*Photo by ICRC: Risk of wider humanitarian emergency as fighting breaks out in the north of the country*

In **Sudan**, The Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) has deployed volunteers to border crossing areas since the start of the crisis to assist and provide first aid as needed. The SRCS has initiated a rapid needs assessment along the border to better understand the current situation; to engage local government, authorities, and stakeholders in the area for increased coordination; and to assess the security situation; to understand immediate health, MHPSS, WASH, shelter, and protection needs. On 15 November 2020 SRCS pre-positioned disaster preparedness stock in its regional warehouse for 500 households including: 1,000 blankets, 1,000 mosquito nets, 1,000 tarpaulins, 1,000 sleeping mats, and 1,000 water jerry cans. Distribution of items to affected populations has already begun. SCRS is also providing medical aid, working through the existing SRCS health center in Hamdayit transit center where volunteers are also present to provide psychosocial support.

IFRC is supporting Ethiopia and Sudan by mobilizing its Disaster Relief Fund (DREF).

Country	Operation types	Operation links	Allocation (CHF)	# of Targeted People
Sudan	DREF	MDRSD029	498,763	40,000
Ethiopia	DREF	MDRET024	357,390	7,500
<b>Total</b>			<b>856,153</b>	<b>47,500</b>

The DREF operation in **Sudan** will provide emergency services to 40,000 persons crossing the border into Sudan from Ethiopia due to the current crisis in Hamdayit and Al-Lukdi transit centers, as well as the Um-Rakoba refugee settlement. The operation will have a focus on shelter, WASH, health, and protection services.

The DREF operation in **Ethiopia** will assist 7,500 internally displaced persons with a focus on health, protection, RFL, shelter, and immediate humanitarian assistance with cash and NFIs. Assistance will be focused on the border areas with the Tigray Region and within Tigray itself once access is established.

IFRC will continue to support respective National Societies for scaling up humanitarian response efforts in a coordinated manner with other Movement partners, including the ICRC; as well as other actors as appropriate.

### Coordination

**IFRC** is providing technical and financial support to ERCS and SRCS via its Eastern Africa Country Cluster Support Team as well as the Regional Office for Africa, based in Nairobi. The IFRC has a permanent representative delegation to the African Union in Ethiopia; and a Country Office in Sudan

**ICRC** has a large presence in Ethiopia with a sub-delegation in Tigray. The ICRC deputy head of delegation was on a mission to Tigray at the onset of the armed clashes and has since remained at the Mekelle ICRC sub-delegation. The ICRC field office is embedded with ERCS regional office and they work closely. All communication is suspended for Tigray; thus, the Movement relies on a single satellite call from ICRC for information. In Sudan, ICRC and SRCS are coordinating to do an RFL assessment. ICRC also has an ongoing collaboration with the Kassala Teaching Hospital and the Physical Rehabilitation Program Centre in Kassala.

**Partner National Red Cross /Red Crescent Societies** in both Sudan and Ethiopia are also providing support. In Ethiopia, Danish Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross diverted resources from ongoing projects to support ambulance running costs. In Sudan, German Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross have ongoing operations in Kassala and Gedaref and are assessing the possibility to support SRCS with cross border population movements through existing bilateral projects as well as by seeking additional funding sources. Danish Red Cross through an ongoing Protection / PSS project in Kassala could provide a strong foundation for supporting in the population movement response, particularly in the areas of child protection, building of child friendly spaces, and trainings for volunteers in psychological first aid deployed to transit and reception centers in Hamdayet and Gerguf.

**Other actors** including local governments, UN agencies, and local community structures are being actively coordinated with. In Sudan, The Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) co-chaired by UNHCR and the Sudanese Commission for Refugees (COR) is holding coordination meetings with international and local partners, as well as UN agencies. The Sudanese Ministry of health in Gedaref is distributing bottled

water, hand spray pump, insecticides, vegetable oil, and wheat flour. UNHCR and local government are screening new arrivals, and the local community has been supporting in reception centers with the provision of food and water.

UNOCHA and humanitarian partners finalized a Humanitarian Preparedness Plan projected to target 1.98 million people with multi-sector assistance in Tigray, Afar and Amhara regions.

**For further information, specifically related to this Information Bulletin please contact:**

- **IFRC Country Cluster Support Team:** John Roche, Head of Eastern Africa Cluster, email: [john.roche@ifrc.org](mailto:john.roche@ifrc.org) , phone: +254 78 043 6710
- **IFRC Sudan Country Office:** Farid Aiywar, Head of Country Office, Sudan, email: [farid.aiywar@ifrc.org](mailto:farid.aiywar@ifrc.org), phone: +254 724 593 799

**IFRC office for Africa Region:**

- Adesh Tripathee, Head of Disaster Crisis Prevention, Response and Recovery Department, Nairobi, Kenya; email: [Adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org](mailto:Adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org) phone +254 731 067 489

**In IFRC Geneva:**

- Nicolas Boyrie, Senior Officer - Operations Coordination, Tel +41 79 152 5147; email: [nicolas.boyrie@ifrc.org](mailto:nicolas.boyrie@ifrc.org)

**For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)**

- IFRC Africa Regional Office: Philip Komo Kahuho PMER Manager, email: [philip.kahuho@ifrc.org](mailto:philip.kahuho@ifrc.org), phone: +254 732 203081

## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



**Save lives,**  
protect livelihoods,  
and strengthen recovery  
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**  
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**  
and a culture of  
**non-violence** and **peace**.