



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

# IOM FLASH APPEAL NORTHERN ETHIOPIA CRISIS

NOVEMBER 2020 - APRIL 2021



UM RAKOUBA CAMP IN GEDAREF STATE, EASTERN SUDAN  
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## SITUATION OVERVIEW

In early November 2020, a military confrontation began in Ethiopia’s Tigray region between the Ethiopian Federal Defence and forces linked to the Tigray Regional Security Forces (TRSF) leading the Government of Ethiopia to declare a State of Emergency. Since then, a large influx of refugees from Ethiopia’s Tigray region have fled across the border to Eastern Sudan.

As of 13 January 2021, the Government of Sudan’s Commission for Refugees (COR) has registered over 58,044 refugee arrivals. With a tense and volatile humanitarian situation unfolding in Ethiopia and continued daily flows into Sudan, refugee arrivals are reported through main border points in Hamdayet, Wad Alhelw locality in Kassala State, Algazira, Yagolo and Yasbisher sites in Wad Al Mahi locality in Blue Nile State, and Lugdi and Abderafi, Faqsha locality in Gedaref State. Points of Entry (PoE) are located in extremely remote areas, accessible only via sand tracks and other non-paved roads. These sites also act as transit points for transportation and relocation to camp sites and settlements.<sup>[1]</sup>

The majority of refugees are entering Sudan through Hamdayet in Kassala and in proximity to Village 8, where over 12,000 refugees are being temporarily hosted by host communities in Gedaref State. Smaller points of entry are also increasingly hosting refugees, with 13,374 individuals have sought refuge in Lugdi locality and over 1,000 refugees hosted in Abderafi locality, Gedaref State, and over 700 refugees hosted between Algazira, Yagolo, Yasbisher localities in Blue Nile state. Since their arrival, 17,800 refugees relocated from Hamdayet, Village 8, and Abdrafi to Um Rakouba refugee camp.<sup>[2]</sup> As fighting continues in northern Ethiopia, the humanitarian situation is expected to worsen. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 100,000 Ethiopian refugees will require assistance in Sudan between November 2020 and April 2021.

1. UNHCR and COR Report

2. UNHCR Sudan Ethiopia Situation Update 13 January 2021



58,044

REFUGEE ARRIVALS TO SUDAN  
(FIGURES UPDATED AS OF 13 JANUARY 2021)

## IOM APPEAL (USD)

(November 2020 - April 2021)



Water, Sanitation  
and Hygiene

5,000,000



Health

1,000,000



Shelter and  
Non-Food Items

600,000



Protection

200,000



Transition, Recov-  
ery and Livelihoods

4,000,000

TOTAL

10,800,000



Needs are significantly growing and under-addressed. An IOM rapid assessment noted that the most urgent needs include water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, health, protection, nutrition, transport, non-food items (NFI), and camp coordination and camp management (CCCM). Risk of disease outbreak and transmission is high, with positive HIV and tuberculosis cases identified and high potential for the spread of COVID-19 and vector disease within overcrowded displacement sites.<sup>[3]</sup>

Prior to this influx of refugees, Sudan was already considered one of the world's largest and most protracted humanitarian crises. In total, 9.3 million people across the country are in need of humanitarian assistance. This number includes nearly 2.5 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs),<sup>[4]</sup> 1.1 million refugees, 324,000 returnees, as well as 5 million in conflict and disaster-affected communities and other vulnerable people in need of assistance.<sup>[5]</sup> The pre-existing humanitarian situation is coupled with a positive but fragile political transition, ongoing economic crisis and the evolving impacts of COVID-19. Yearly, floods and emergencies related to seasonal climatic shocks amplify needs, damaging crops and infrastructure, and displace thousands and affect the most vulnerable populations.

In response to the evolving situation, IOM is scaling up its operations in eastern Sudan to provide humanitarian and protection assistance to affected refugee populations and their host communities. IOM's planned interventions are in line with the Inter-Agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan for November 2020 – April 2021, and are designed first and foremost to ensure the most pressing humanitarian needs of refugees are met in conjunction with Refugee Response Coordination mechanisms.

This Flash Appeal is based on a contextual analysis of humanitarian and protection concerns and the impact on the local context, with a planning figure of 100,000 refugees and 50,000 in the host community, recognizing human mobility patterns, cross-border movements and migrant communities already established in the area. The overall objective is to mitigate the impact of the influx of refugees in Gedaref State, reduce human suffering and material losses in the areas of displacement and ensure recovery and community stabilization initiatives are initiated to mitigate potential risks of social strain and tensions, address vulnerabilities, and ensure equitable access to services for all. COVID-19 prevention and mitigation activities have also been considered when planning the interventions included within this Flash Appeal.

## IOM CAPACITY TO RESPOND

IOM Sudan is headquartered in Khartoum and has been operational since 2000. IOM has a robust operational footprint, including seven sub-offices, two hub-offices and various project sites across the country. IOM is an active member of the United Nations Country Team. IOM Sudan co-leads with UNHCR the Counter Trafficking and Mixed Migration Working Group (TWG) and the COVID-19 IDP Camp Coordination Taskforce. IOM is also member of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Information Management Working Group (IMWG), Durable Solutions Working Group and the Refugees Working Group (RWG) - the main coordination forum for the emergency response in Eastern Sudan in addition to virtual national-level coordination fora.

An Inter-Agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan was launched on 24 November 2020 and outlines the needs and response plans for the crisis. The inter-agency plan appeals for USD 147.6 million to meet the urgent needs of nearly 100,000 Ethiopian refugees coming into Sudan for a six-month period from November 2020 to April 2021. IOM's interventions under this Flash Appeal are in line with the Inter-Agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan which calls for IOM support in the WASH, Health, Protection, Shelter/NFI, and Logistics sectors. In coordination with the inter-agency sector leads, Logistics sector needs for the timeframe of this Flash Appeal will be covered by sector partners, and therefore funding needs under this sector have been excluded from IOM's Flash Appeal.

IOM Sudan mission has 332 staff members, with more than 150 staff dedicated to working on emergency and post-crisis activities across the country including Kassala and Gedaref states. In Kassala, IOM has six staff, while in Gedaref, IOM has five staff members, managing emergency response programming including WASH interventions and operation of the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC). The centre offers a drop-in space for migrants on the move and operates a referral system in conjunction with partner organisations to provide support to vulnerable migrants. The MRC in Gedaref receives more than 780 Ethiopians migrants annually. IOM provides information to migrants seeking support from the MRC, and supports medical screening and follow-up, including through established referral systems to offer treatment at the clinic of the MRC's implementing partner.

IOM has proven capacity to operate complex and emergency assistance programming in Sudan and has experience implementing activities under the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. In Kassala and Gedaref states, IOM has previously rehabilitated a major water treatment plant in Girba, Kassala, rehabilitated two second-level hospitals, one in Kassala and one in Gedaref, that serve both migrant and hosting communities, and implemented a variety of WASH activities at points of entry (PoEs) – including two currently being used as entry points by refugees in Lokdi and Gallabat in Gedaref.

In response to the evolving dynamics of the crisis, IOM has deployed a surge team to the field to increase capacity to support ongoing operations. Surge staff have technical expertise in emergency assistance and coordination, WASH, health, including mental health and psychosocial support, and transition and early recovery. IOM's overall Northern Ethiopia Crisis response coordination in Sudan is led by IOM's Head of Programmes in Khartoum.

3. IOM Mission report November 2020

4. DTM Mobility Tracking Report April 2020

5. UNHCR Refugees Emergency Inter-agency Response plan





## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

As of 13 January 2021, more than 20,572 refugees fleeing violence from the Tigray region in Ethiopia had been transferred to the newly re-established refugee camp of Um Rakouba, in Gedaref State. From the outset of the emergency, UN agencies and NGOs partners, have worked to provide basic WASH services. However, the scale of the needs and the speed of the influx has challenged capacities and the ongoing response needs to be scaled up urgently with additional resources to meet the minimum basic WASH standards. In this regard, and through the call of UNHCR, IOM deployed an emergency WASH team in November 2020 to contribute to the response and scaled up the WASH response.

Currently, access to WASH services in the camp is below Sphere and UNHCR WASH Cluster Strategy standards. There is an inadequate supply of water both in terms of quantity and quality. There is a poor access to safe and dignified sanitation facilities. Hygiene conditions are dire, and demand for the promotion of improved hygiene practices, regular distribution of hygiene items, waste management and appropriate awareness on COVID-19 preventive measures remains critical.

In light of this, IOM has focused its efforts in improving the provision of safe and sufficient water supply by the construction of emergency water supply points linked to the current water trucking activities in the camp. In order to reduce the need for water trucking activities in Um Rakouba, IOM is strategically aiming to extend an existing water distribution pipeline to reach several sectors of Um Rakouba camp. Yet, to overcome the limited water quantity currently available in the camp, additional resources are needed as IOM is planning to drill additional boreholes, in line with the camp plans shared by UNHCR, and implement rehabilitation and improvements in the existing infrastructure to ensure that water provision for the refugees meet WASH standards. The activities proposed will also ensure positive impacts for host communities, through the increased water quantity and quality. To build on governance, IOM plans to establish community-led gender-balanced WASH committees for the management of WASH services while creating ownership and empowering local communities to take the lead in their operation and maintenance (O&M).

To improve the access to safe and dignified sanitation facilities, IOM is constructing 500 household shared latrines and 300 bathing facilities in accordance with UNHCR site plans. The sanitation facilities integrate gender and protection considerations for girls and women, and include hand washing points. The implementation of sanitation facilities in Um Rakouba is led by IOM, who has been one of the few partners who has been able to mobilise resources and construct sanitation facilities. However, additional resources are still required not only in order to increase the number and meet standards but to ensure adequate maintenance of the sanitation facilities. Among them, repairs, desludging, decommissioning, and regular provision of cleaning materials. In addition, there is a need to further scale up the integration of gender and protection concerns, among them, the provision of well-lit areas nearby the sanitation facilities, and the extension of privacy walls. IOM is also supporting the Refugee Response in the provision of institutional WASH sanitation facilities with the ongoing construction of gender segregated semi-permanent Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrines in the different health-care facilities (HCF) in the camp. Safe access to, and use of, appropriate sanitation facilities is critical to prevent faecal-oral disease contamination and mitigate the risks of gender-based violence (GBV).

A special emphasis will be given on the distribution of hygiene items and menstrual hygiene management kits for women of reproductive age. In addition, IOM is targeting to tailor-made the emergency WASH response to adequately cover people with specific needs. In line with this, resources are required to implement dedicated activities which cover people with disabilities, children and elders. The overall objective is to meet the minimum Sphere standards for the overall population and meet the specific WASH and cross-cutting protection needs of women of reproductive age and people with specific needs.

IOM's WASH interventions will also aim to 1) systematically promote good hygiene practices through sessions, household visits, campaigns, and alongside distribution of appropriate information, education and communication (IEC) material based on identified health risk practices assessed, including prevention messages on COVID-19; and 2) construct the water supply distribution system for Um Rakouba camp, building on the completed platform which IOM has already completed since the start of the crisis, to establish a system that is envisioned to provide water access to over 20,000 refugees and host community members. IOM will ensure adherence to COVID-19 prevention measures during the awareness sessions and distribution activities, following national guidelines. IOM plans to distribute culturally appropriate and contextually-tailored menstrual hygiene management (MHM) kits for most vulnerable women of reproductive age. However, additional funding is needed to cover the needs of all women and girls in menstrual age residing in the Um Rakouba camp, as well as other groups of people with specific needs.

In addition, a new refugee camp has been set up in Tunaydbah camp in Gedaref state with a planned capacity of 35,000 people. The IOM capacity to respond in this camp is severely limited by the lack of resources. In coordination with the WASH Cluster, the objective of IOM is to replicate the above-mentioned activities in Tunaydbah refugee camp, provided additional support is available.

Funding required

\$ 5,000,000

Target no. of individuals

100,000





## HEALTH

The influx of refugees is currently being hosted in different camps and entry points where primary health care (PHC) resources and infrastructure are strained, exacerbated by the decreased availability of medical supplies, impacting general health care, but also undermining long-term mental health and psychosocial well-being of the affected population. Additional strain placed on limited health care services additionally risks fuelling communal tensions between host and refugee communities if not sufficiently augmented to provide appropriate access for all. In this context, increased health coverage is crucial.

In response to the rapidly increasing medical needs and in coordination with the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), WHO, and UNHCR, IOM aims to provide essential PHC including consultations and health promotion, through operating two mobile clinics and supporting referrals for secondary and tertiary care.

IOM will also support the government and partners for COVID-19 response in line with IOM's Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) through enhancing disease surveillance in communities and along mobility corridors, providing personal protective equipment where needed, conducting risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) with targeted messages in migrants' languages (Saho, Kunama, Amharic, and Oromo), enhancing health interventions at POEs, and IPC.

Funding required

\$1,000,000

Target no. of individuals

50,000



## SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

While initial Shelter and NFI (S/NFI) provision have begun, there remains a significant need for S/NFI in Um Rakouba camp and at entry point transit centres. As refugees have left all personal belongings behind, immediate S/NFI solutions are needed for up to 100,000 anticipated refugees. Two months into the crisis, most refugees currently live in critical conditions, in uncovered shelter or in the open-air, exposing them to risk, including particular protection risks for women, girls, and children living in these conditions.

In response to the evolving conditions on the ground and the rapid arrival of refugees from Northern Ethiopia, IOM, in coordination with COR and UNHCR, will distribute 2,000 NFIs and 3,000 shelter kits to refugees in Um Rakouba camp. The kits will consist of shelter materials procured locally, suitable for Sudanese weather and based on shelter cluster standards. Additionally, IOM is also planning to provide seasonal NFI kits based on a needs assessment of the most vulnerable groups, which will include three sleeping mats, three blankets, face masks (COVID-19 prevention), jerry cans, soap and mosquito nets the distribution process will also ensure all items are contextually relevant and tailored to the existing needs.

In order to maintain IOM's accountability to affected populations, IOM will further consult with women, girls, men, boys, elderly persons and persons with disabilities to address any complaints and to adapt based on comments received through accessible feedback and complaint mechanisms.

Funding required

\$600,000

Target no. of households

5,000



## PROTECTION

The mainstreaming of protection into the other sectors of intervention will be ensured through capacity building and support. In terms of standalone protection activities, IOM will conduct the following:

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Due to the spontaneous, perilous journey into Sudan, a significant number of the refugees, both children and adults, display signs of distress, anxiety and a sense of insecurity, IOM will partner with the Trauma Centre in Gedaref state, a government health facility, to carry out MHPSS services in the Um Rakouba camp, covering on-site counselling, early detection of MHPSS issues, social activities for children and adults to reduce their level of stress and strengthen existing referral mechanisms. The Trauma Centre will assign two psychologists and one case worker to collaboratively carry out the MHPSS services with IOM in the camp as other UN agencies and international NGOs are planning related activities, such as establishment of a child-friendly space and strengthening of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and associated referral systems, IOM will ensure close coordination and information sharing with these agencies in the relevant inter-agency coordination platforms to pursue complementarity of intervention.

Funding required

\$200,000

Target no. of individuals

5,000



### Awareness Raising on Risks of Human Trafficking

Risk of human trafficking is heightened in emergency situations due to a breakdown of social protection networks, separation from family members, and weakened law and order. The risk is amplified for Ethiopian refugees in the camps, as there are currently limited security measures in place to limit access and exposure, increasing risk of traffickers accessing potential victims. On the other hand, a prolonged stay in the camps with no clear prospect of resettlement or repatriation to Ethiopia may compel the refugees, especially youth, to embark on irregular movements from the camps and further to other parts of Sudan or even beyond, at the hand of traffickers or smugglers. Capitalizing on its extensive experience in counter-trafficking (CT) in humanitarian settings across the globe, IOM will carry out awareness raising activities among the refugee population with the aim to reduce their risks of falling victim to human trafficking. IOM will integrate CT messages into its MHPSS and COVID-19 prevention activities to disseminate the messages in an efficient and integrated manner. IOM will also disseminate IEC materials on CT and counter-smuggling, which have been already produced for Sudan in Tigrinya. Furthermore, IOM will strive to track potential human trafficking cases in the camps and refer cases of victims of trafficking to appropriate service providers; this will include provision of CT trainings to partners and service providers so that they can support effective tracking, referrals and service provision.

### Assistance to Stranded Migrants

IOM through its Migrant Response Centre (MRC) will continue to support stranded migrants who have left Ethiopia and are in need of assistance. The MRC partners will provide primary healthcare support to vulnerable migrants and host community members. Such healthcare support, together with food, non-food items and an assisted voluntary return and reintegration option, will be provided to migrants who meet the MRC's eligibility criteria.



## TRANSITION, RECOVERY AND LIVELIHOODS

The implementation of transition and early recovery initiatives that contribute to community stabilization in Gedaref and neighbouring states in Eastern Sudan, will be critical following the influx of refugees from the Tigray region. In Gedaref and in Sudan in general, the impact of the refugee influx will likely compound an already fragile situation characterised by an economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, lack of basic services (especially health services), food insecurity malnutrition, and natural disasters including floods. In line with the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, and in coordination with local authorities, partner agencies, and the civil society, IOM will complement its provision of humanitarian assistance with community stabilization and social cohesion initiatives to mitigate possible risks of tensions in the areas of displacement and support host communities and local authorities to absorb the influx of refugees and decrease pressure on the already overstretched available resources.

During the first phase of the response IOM will conduct periodical context analyses, collect data of available resources and basic services, monitor human mobility patterns (including those of labour migrants and seasonal migrants) and assess the impact of the situation supporting the Government of Sudan. Access to basic services will be increased (WASH, health, education) for hosting communities and refugees to ensure equitable access to services for all and mitigate possible risks of tensions over limited resources or unequal access to services whilst improving livelihood opportunities and provide livelihood training bringing together host, refugee and migrant communities.

Livelihood activities will be designed based on the context and the needs on the ground, considering the various population movements within the state and cross-border movements of pastoralists and labour migrants. Activities will be tailored to each target group, refugees in camp settings, refugees living among host communities and vulnerable host communities to ensure equitable opportunities for all. Moreover, in coordination with UNHCR, NRC and other Cash Base Intervention (CBI) working group members, IOM will provide cash assistance where needed to prioritize adapted assistance to persons with disabilities, elderly persons, women and children as appropriate, and to persons who suffering from serious medical issues.

Funding required

\$4,000,000

Target no. of individuals

25,000

#### CONTACTS

#### PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE DIVISION

[prd@iom.int](mailto:prd@iom.int)

#### DONOR RELATIONS DIVISION

+41 22 717 9111 [drd@iom.int](mailto:drd@iom.int)

#### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

#### FOR MIGRATION

17, Route des Morillons

CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland

+41 22 717 9111 [hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int) | [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

