



ETHIOPIA

5.5 MILLION PEOPLE IN TIGRAY AND NEIGHBOURING ZONES OF AFAR AND AMHARA FACE HIGH LEVELS OF ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY

IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS
MAY - SEPTEMBER 2021
Issued June 2021

CURRENT SITUATION MAY - JUNE 2021	
 5.5M 61% of the population analysed (9M) People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION	Phase 5 353,000 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4 2,078,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3 3,092,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2 1,995,000 People Stressed
	Phase 1 1,463,000 People in food security

PROJECTED SITUATION JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021	
 4.4M 74% of the population analysed (6M) People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION	Phase 5 401,000 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4 1,802,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3 2,194,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2 1,037,000 People Stressed
	Phase 1 527,000 People in food security

The population analysed in the current (9M) differs from the one of the projection (6M), as Afar, North Wello and Southern Tigray zone could not be updated due to lack of data. Trend of comparable areas shows a deterioration in the proportion of people estimated in IPC Phase 3 or above.

Disclaimer: This is an IPC global product. It is based on the conclusions reached by the Ethiopia IPC analysis team. This report has not been endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia.

Overview

An IPC analysis update conducted in Tigray and the neighbouring zones of Amhara and Afar concludes that over 350,000 people are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) between May and June 2021. This is the highest number of people in IPC Phase 5 since the 2011 famine in Somalia.

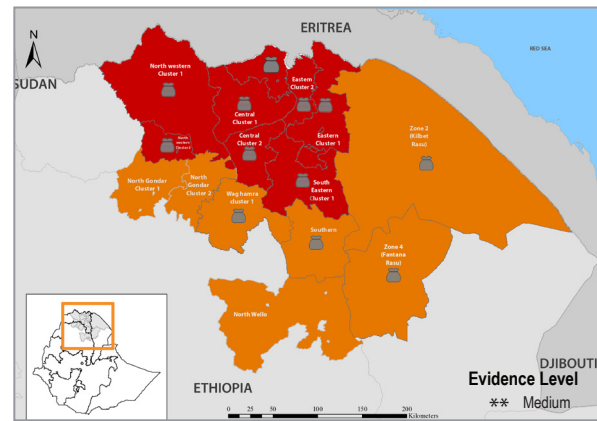
This severe crisis results from the cascading effects of conflict, including population displacements, movement restrictions, limited humanitarian access, loss of harvest and livelihood assets, and dysfunctional or non-existent markets.

As of May 2021, 5.5 million people (61% of the people in the area) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity: 3.1 million people are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 2.1 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This is despite the major humanitarian food assistance that has reached up to 5 million people in the last few months.

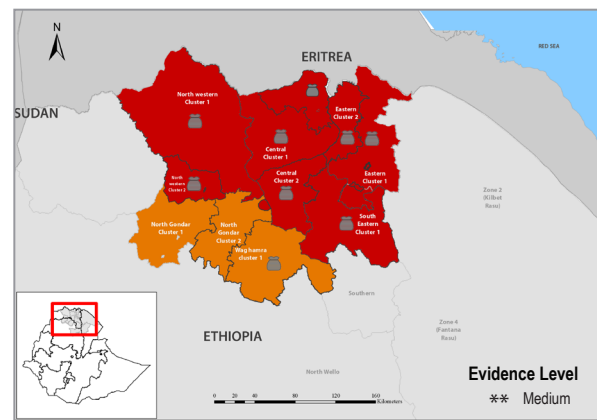
In the areas where data was sufficient to conduct a projection analysis, the situation is expected to worsen through September 2021, with 4.4 million people (74% of the population analysed) in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). Among these, an estimated 400,000 people are expected to face Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). These estimations take into account an expansion of humanitarian assistance to reach 60% of the population. If the conflict further escalates or, for any other reason, humanitarian assistance is hampered, most areas of Tigray will be at Risk of Famine (see box below).

This IPC analysis serves as an urgent call for the delivery of crucial life-saving assistance for the millions affected. Urgent action is needed to scale up the geographic coverage and quantity of assistance: more people need more assistance, more consistently, in all affected areas.

Current Situation May - June 2021



Projected Situation July - September 2021



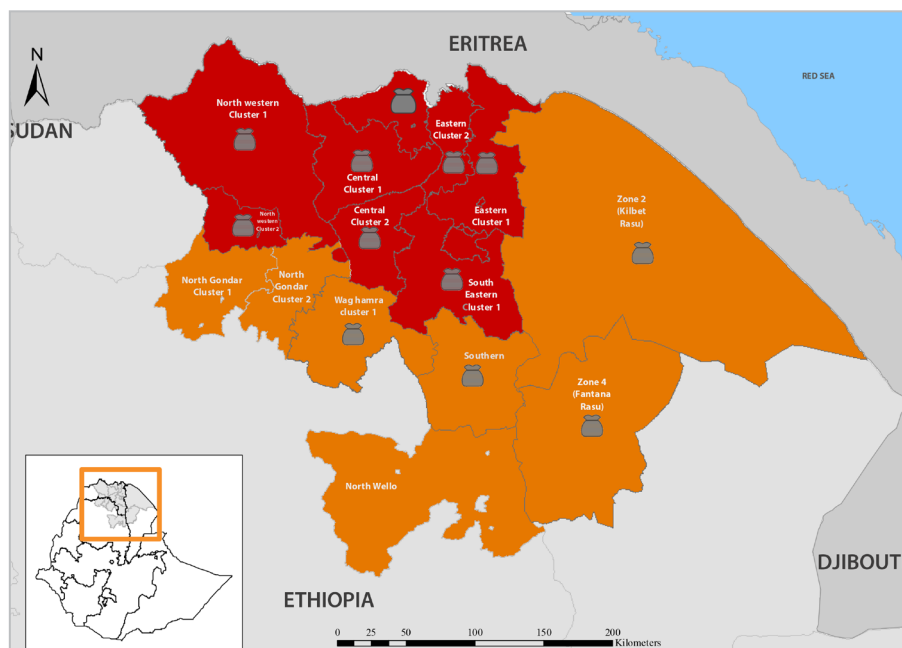
1 - Minimal	4 - Emergency	Area receives significant humanitarian food assistance (accounted for in Phase classification) > 25% of households meet 25-50% of caloric needs through assistance > 25% of households meet > 50% of caloric needs through assistance
2 - Stressed	5 - Famine	
3 - Crisis	Areas not analysed	



Risk of Famine

According to the IPC, Risk of Famine is a statement about the potential deterioration of the situation compared to the most likely scenario expected in the projection period. It is not an IPC classification, but a statement focusing on a worst case scenario that has a reasonable chance of occurring. While the situation may stabilise or somewhat improve, it is also possible that the conflict will intensify and expand into areas not yet affected. An expansion of the conflict would result in further destruction of property and livelihoods and population displacements, and would further impede humanitarian access. Food assistance is expected to increase from the 3.4 million people reached in April to nearly 6 million people in June 2021. There is, however, a reasonable chance that this will not materialise. In the event that the conflict intensifies and humanitarian assistance plans are significantly hampered, there is a risk that Famine may occur in North Western, Central and Eastern Tigray.

CURRENT SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE MAY - JUNE 2021



Key for the Map IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

(mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Area receives significant humanitarian food assistance (accounted for in Phase classification)

> 25% of households meet 25-50% of caloric needs through assistance

> 25% of households meet > 50% of caloric needs through assistance

Evidence Level

** Medium

State	Admin zones / cluster of woredas	Total population analysed	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
			#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Afar	Zone 2 (kilbet rasu)	478,326	47,833	10	143,498	30	239,163	50	47,833	10	0	0	3	286,996	60
	Zone 4 (fantana rasu)	274,885	41,233	15	68,721	25	137,443	50	27,489	10	0	0	3	164,932	60
	Total	753,211	89,065	12	212,219	28	376,606	50	75,321	10	0	0		451,927	60
Amhara	North gondar cluster 1	405,842	121,753	30	142,045	35	121,753	30	20,292	5	0	0	3	142,045	35
	North gondar cluster 2	389,593	116,878	30	97,398	25	136,358	35	38,959	10	0	0	3	175,317	45
	North wello	1,495,707	523,497	35	373,927	25	448,712	30	149,571	10	0	0	3	598,283	40
	Wag hamra cluster 1	170,700	34,140	20	42,675	25	68,280	40	25,605	15	0	0	3	93,885	55
	Total	2,461,842	796,268	32	656,045	27	775,102	31	234,427	10	0	0		1,009,529	41
Tigray	Central cluster 1	1,074,798	53,740	5	214,960	20	322,439	30	376,179	35	107,480	10	4	806,098	75
	Central cluster 2	695,580	34,779	5	139,116	20	208,674	30	243,453	35	69,558	10	4	521,685	75
	Eastern cluster 1	517,961	51,796	10	103,592	20	233,082	45	103,592	20	25,898	5	4	362,572	70
	Eastern cluster 2	689,745	68,975	10	172,436	25	310,385	45	137,949	20	0	0	4	448,334	65
	North western cluster 1	1,438,037	71,902	5	143,804	10	431,411	30	647,117	45	143,804	10	4	1,222,332	85
	North western cluster 2	123,120	12,312	10	30,780	25	43,092	35	30,780	25	6,156	5	4	80,028	65
	South eastern cluster 1	456,226	91,245	20	91,245	20	159,679	35	114,057	25	0	0	4	273,736	60
	Southern	770,447	192,612	25	231,134	30	231,134	30	115,567	15	0	0	3	346,701	45
	Total	5,765,914	577,360	10	1,127,067	20	1,939,897	34	1,768,694	31	352,896	6		4,061,487	70
Grand Total		8,980,967	1,462,694	17	1,995,331	22	3,091,605	34	2,078,442	23	352,896	4		5,522,943	61

Note: A population in Phase 3+ does not necessarily reflect the full population in need of urgent action. This is because some households may be in Phase 2 or even 1 but only because of receipt of assistance, and thus, they may be in need of continued action.



CURRENT SITUATION OVERVIEW MAY - JUNE 2021

Despite significant ongoing humanitarian food assistance, an estimated 5.5 million people (61% of the analysed population in Tigray and neighbouring parts of Amhara and Afar) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) as of May - June 2021. Of these, about 3.1 million people (34%) are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), 2.1 million people (23%) are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 353,000 people (4%) are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). The zones where active conflict is ongoing and other hard to reach areas, namely North Western, Central and Eastern zones, register the highest levels of people in IPC Phase 4 and 5.

In the areas analysed in Tigray, currently, 4.1 million people are estimated to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), representing 70% of the population analysed (5.8 million people). Overall, 1.9 million people (34% of the population) in Tigray are classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), 1.8 million people (31%) are classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), and 353,000 people (6%) are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). The population in Catastrophe is concentrated in North Western clusters, Central clusters, and Eastern cluster 1.

In Amhara, out of 2.5 million people from North Gondar, North Wello and Waghimra administrative zones, about one million people (41% of the population) are classified in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), 775,000 (31% of the population) are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 234,000 people (10% of the population) are classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

In Afar region, Zone 2 and Zone 4 were analysed and included about 750,000 people. Of these, 452,000 people (60% of the population) were classified in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), including 377,000 people (50%) in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 75,000 people (10%) in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

Main outcomes

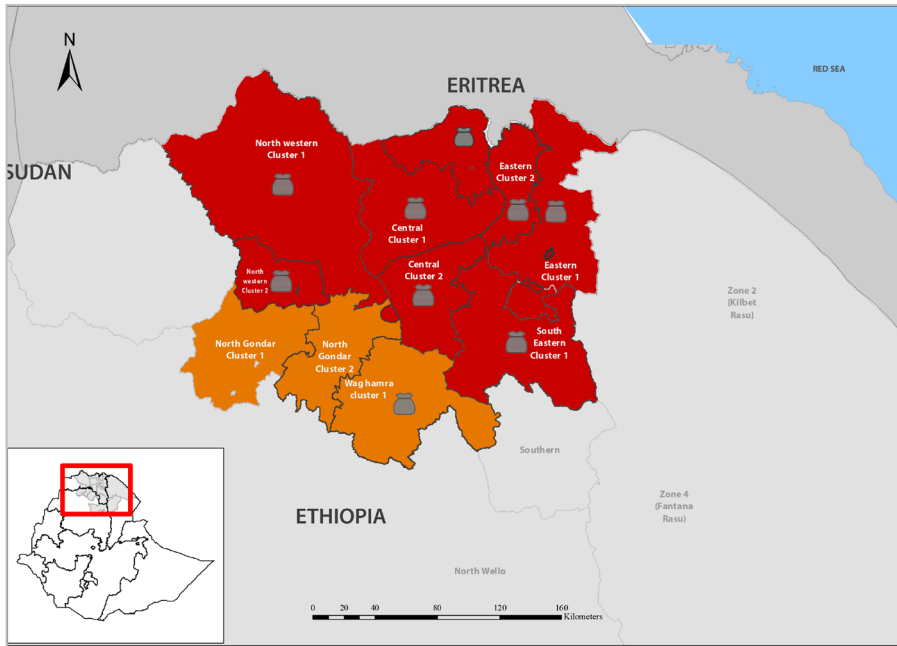
- Two main surveys were used to collect information on food insecurity: a remote survey based on telephone interviews (“mVAM”) and a face-to-face survey among newly arrived Internally Displaced People (IDPs), who were asked to report the situation in their area origin. Data were collected between mid-April and mid-May. Data from the telephone survey are described below. Although not statistically representative, the IDP survey shows, on the basis of both the Food Consumption Score and the Household Hunger Scale, an even more severe situation than the one highlighted in the mVAM survey findings.
- **Food Consumption Score:** Over 50% of households have inadequate food consumption (poor and borderline) in all areas of Tigray, except in the Southern Tigray zone, where 40% of households have inadequate diets. The areas with highest levels of inadequate diets are North-Western Cluster 1 (55% poor and 26% borderline), Central Tigray Cluster 1 (23% poor and 42% borderline), and Eastern Tigray (27% poor and 33% borderline). North Gonder Cluster 1 and Waghimra, both in Amhara region, also register very high levels of inadequate food consumption (76% and 71% respectively).
- **Number of Meals:** Around one third of households in North Western, Central Cluster 1 and Eastern Cluster 1 (27% to 39%) eat only one meal per day.
- **Household Hunger Scale:** 25% and 44% of the households had very severe household hunger scores in North Western Cluster 1 and Central Cluster 1, respectively. Between 6% and 15% of the households had a severe score in the other clusters analysed in Tigray.
- **Coping Strategies:** A high proportion of people have resorted to detrimental coping strategies, such as sale of assets. About 80% of the people in North Western Cluster 1 and Central Tigray Cluster 2 have adopted emergency coping strategies, such as selling the last female animal, begging or selling the house or land. Similar results are observed in the other clusters of North Western and Central, where 55% to 62% of the people interviewed have adopted these coping strategies in the month prior to the survey.



Key Drivers

- **Conflict:** The primary driver of the food security crisis in northern Ethiopia is conflict. Since its onset in November 2020, high levels of violence, destruction of livelihoods and displacement have occurred. The conflict has also brought about the destruction of community infrastructures of all types (water points, health facilities, schools) and infrastructure and equipment for food storage, processing and market storage (OCHA). Reports also show evidence of the destruction of agriculture and livestock inputs and tools (FAO).
- **Large displacements:** As a consequence of the conflict, some 1.7 million people have been displaced in northern Ethiopia, with 1.65 million people displaced in Tigray alone. The IDPs have fled their homes, leaving most of their assets and livelihoods behind. Many displaced households have moved from conflict-affected rural areas to urban centres as well as along the main roads, where they are more likely to access humanitarian assistance. There are 265 IDP sites in northern Ethiopia, including 105 sites in Tigray. Among these, some sites are very large; the Shire site hosts over half a million people, the Adwa Site, 200,000 people, and the Sheraro site, over 150,000 people. According to the International Organization on Migration (IOM), the majority of IDPs in Tigray depend primarily on host communities' donations and about half of the IDP sites did not benefit from food distribution. Those living in camps do not only face food shortages but are also unable to meet other basic needs. According to the same source, out of the 85 sites surveyed, at least 25% of households live in self-constructed non-waterproof shelters or open spaces. In almost half of the sites, over 50% of displaced families live without basic shelter.
- **Movement and access limitations:** Roadblocks, other blockades, and movement restrictions in some areas make it difficult to access all camps. There are indications that there is little to no possibility of leaving some areas despite high levels of food insecurity. Populations with limited options for movements are of particular concern due to their inability to reach food distribution points, or, vice versa, for any assistance to reach them. Restricted mobility also affects access to the few functioning hospitals and other basic services in the main urban centres of the region. Restricted access has also been the main impediment for scaling up food distribution operations in rural areas, however, recent improvements in humanitarian access in May allowed a partial scale-up of food assistance, which is expected to be expanded over the coming months.
- **Food production losses:** As the conflict started at the beginning of the Meher crop-harvesting season, an estimated 90% of the harvest for 2020 was lost. Armed groups are reported to have vandalised farms and villages, pillaging any food stocks they found on the way (Tigray Bureau of Agriculture). Prior to the conflict, about 80% of the population in the areas relied on agriculture as their primary source of income and food (FSMS 2020). As of May 2021, around 80% of the households had either no food stocks or stocks that would last until the end of May only (87% in Tigray). This was partly due to the missed harvest and to looting and destruction (WFP). Due to insecurity, the vast majority of services linked to agriculture and livestock are no longer functioning. Agricultural inputs are not available due to outlets closure and most of the warehouses were vandalised. Seeds are poorly available and experts reported that very few livestock drug dealers are open in major towns (FAO). In April, the conflict frontline shifted towards the South Eastern, Eastern and Southern administrative zones, which are known for very high livestock populations in the region (FAO). In some parts of the Western and Central zones, an estimated 80-90% of all cattle were looted. Households still holding livestock in less affected areas engaged in large destocking to generate income to sustain their food purchases. This high supply of livestock in the market has decreased terms of trade, which have become highly unfavourable for herders.
- **Market dysfunction and loss of income:** Purchasing power has significantly dropped due to the unavailability of cash, nonpayment of salaries and livelihood loss (FAO). Usual seasonal migration by poorer households towards Western Tigray has been hampered due to insecurity and movement restrictions. Access to regular salaries has also been a problem for the 'wealthier' salaried workers employed by the private and public sectors, where salaries were not paid from November 2020 to February 2021. Salary payments restarted in March 2021, but this was limited to government employees located in major towns. Due to the poor or non-existent harvest and stocks, in the most affected areas of North-Western and Central Tigray, between 50 and 70% of households have food assistance as their main source of food (WFP MVAM). The second key source of food is markets, which are mainly located in the major towns of Mekelle, Adigrat, Adwa, Axum and Shire. The security situation has contributed to food shortages and high prices by disrupting both upstream input markets and downstream output markets. Recently arrived IDPs in Shire (North Western) and Axum (Central) reported that markets were non-functional in rural areas from where they had been displaced due to active fighting, also displacing traders or making trade too dangerous.

PROJECTED SITUATION MAP AND POPULATION TABLE JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021



Key for the Map

IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

(mapped Phase represents highest severity affecting at least 20% of the population)

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Area receives significant humanitarian food assistance (accounted for in Phase classification)

- > 25% of households meet 25-50% of caloric needs through assistance
- > 25% of households meet > 50% of caloric needs through assistance

Evidence Level
** Medium

State	Admin zones / cluster of woredas	Total population analysed	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3		Phase 4		Phase 5		Area Phase	Phase 3+	
			#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%	#people	%		#people	%
Amhara	North gondar cluster 1	405,842	101,461	25	121,753	30	142,045	35	40,584	10	0	0	3	182,629	45
	North gondar cluster 2	389,593	77,919	20	97,398	25	155,837	40	58,439	15	0	0	3	214,276	55
	Wag hamra cluster 1	170,700	34,140	20	42,675	25	76,815	45	17,070	10	0	0	3	93,885	55
	Total	966,135	213,519	22	261,826	27	374,697	39	116,093	12	0	0		490,790	51
Tigray	Central cluster 1	1,074,798	53,740	5	161,220	15	322,439	30	429,919	40	107,480	10	4	859,838	80
	Central cluster 2	695,580	34,779	5	139,116	20	313,011	45	173,895	25	34,779	5	4	521,685	75
	Eastern cluster 1	517,961	25,898	5	77,694	15	233,082	45	129,490	25	51,796	10	4	414,368	80
	Eastern cluster 2	689,745	68,975	10	137,949	20	310,385	45	137,949	20	34,487	5	4	482,821	70
	North western cluster 1	1,438,037	71,902	5	143,804	10	431,411	30	647,117	45	143,804	10	4	1,222,332	85
	North western cluster 2	123,120	12,312	10	24,624	20	49,248	40	30,780	25	6,156	5	4	86,184	70
	South eastern cluster 1	456,226	45,623	10	91,245	20	159,679	35	136,868	30	22,811	5	4	319,358	70
	Total	4,995,467	313,228	6	775,652	16	1,819,256	36	1,686,018	34	401,313	8		3,906,587	78
Grand Total		5,961,602	526,747	9	1,037,478	17	2,193,953	37	1,802,111	30	401,313	7		4,397,377	74

Note: A population in Phase 3+ does not necessarily reflect the full population in need of urgent action. This is because some households may be in Phase 2 or even 1 but only because of receipt of assistance, and thus, they may be in need of continued action.



PROJECTED¹ SITUATION OVERVIEW JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021

Key Assumptions - To estimate the projected acute food insecurity figures, the analysis considered the following assumptions as the most likely scenario:

- **Conflict and displacements:** The security situation in Tigray remains largely unpredictable and volatile. Due to continued sporadic fighting, displacement from the rural areas is expected to continue in the region and surrounding areas. Population displacements, including secondary or even tertiary displacement, are likely through September 2021. Conflict assumptions differ from one area to another, with stabilisation expected in some areas and continuous fighting in others. In Central, North Western and Eastern, the assumptions of the analysis refer to sustained, continued conflict, with at least a potential scale-up of hostilities or increase of displacements in the short and mid-term in some areas, due to repositioning of armed groups on the ground.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** In the projected period, it is assumed that humanitarian access will continue to improve - or at least remain at May's level, but with irregular delivery and sporadic interruption in areas where active fighting remains. Based on inputs from operational partners, it is assumed that humanitarian food assistance, including the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), will significantly scale up to 60% of the total population each month from July to September. This is up from an average coverage of 37% before the analysis (January to April). Openings in mid-May resulted in improved access, thereby halving the number of inaccessible woredas. However, the IPC analysts established a typology of woredas, some with the same level of access as in the current period, others with improved access and others still with low access. As a consequence of this re-adjustment of plans, the IPC analysts estimated that in Central 1, Eastern cluster 1 and 2, North Western 2, Southeastern 1, and North Gondar 1 and 2, the projected severity and magnitude of food insecurity will be worse in the projection period compared to the current. In North Western cluster 1 and in Waghamra, the situation is projected to remain the same, despite the significant scale-up planned. This is because planned food distributions are expected to be limited by access and logistic constraints linked to the rainy season.
- **Income and markets:** Labor migration will remain limited. On average years, labour migration contributes to generating income for poor and very poor households for a good part of the year, especially around critical farming activities. The typical migration to the Western areas of Tigray for the Meher planting season will likely be inexistent. Due to sporadic conflict and restriction of movements during the projection period, there will be limited opportunities to generate food and income from seasonal labour migration. Prices are expected to remain at high levels, well above the five-year average. The continued conflict and state of emergency are likely to continue driving low levels of economic activity in the region. Economic conditions are expected to deteriorate further with the expected contraction of the macroeconomy. Even if the conflict decreases or stops immediately, the economy will not go back to the pre-conflict conditions due to the time required for rehabilitating and rebuilding infrastructures and community facilities.
- **Sources of food:** As food stocks from agricultural production were depleted for the vast majority of people already by the end of May, and given the limited alternative sources of income, humanitarian assistance will likely be the main source of food for the majority of the population, including for the IDPs hosted in main urban centres and the numerous displaced in hard to reach areas.
- **Rainfall:** Erratic distribution of the February-May 2021 Belg rains ranging between 30 and 80% below average in Southern Tigray resulted in delayed and reduced planting and germination failures. Due to the delayed rainfall, maturation of late-planted and replanted crops will likely be affected and cereal production is expected to be below-average levels. Belg harvests will thus be significantly reduced in June. Agricultural activities are to remain constrained in the upcoming season. This low pluviometry, compounded by the lack of seeds and poor access to agriculture services, will likely negatively impact 2021 Belg crop producers and long cycle crops for the 2021 Meher.
- **Desert Locusts:** Currently, there is no confirmed desert locusts' swarm in Tigray region. Nonetheless, desert locusts may affect Eastern and Southern Tigray areas around August 2021, if conditions remain favourable to the development of new swarms.

Overall, the severity of food insecurity is expected to increase significantly through September, as per the assumptions described in the box on the left. Taking into account these assumptions, it is expected that the number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) will increase from 61% in May - June to 74% in July - September 2021, reaching 3.9 million people. The number of people classified in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) is estimated to increase by around 50,000 people in the projection period, totaling 400,000 people. This is despite the mitigating effects of planned humanitarian food assistance.

In the North Western, Central, Eastern and South Eastern administrative zones of Tigray, about 3.9 million people (78% of the population analysed, up from 72% in May-June) are expected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). Among these, 1.8 million people (36%) are estimated to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), 1.7 million people (34%) in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 400,000 people (8%) in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). This is an increase of 250,000 people compared to the current conditions. The worst affected populations are located in the hard-to-reach areas in North Western, Central and Eastern zones. Up to 55% of the population is expected to be in Emergency and Catastrophe (IPC Phase 4 and 5) in the most affected areas.

Similarly, in the North Gondar and Waghamra zones of the Amhara region, about 490,000 people are expected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), representing 51% of the analysed population, of which 375,000 people (39%) are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 116,000 people (12%) are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

In the areas where the most likely scenario considers a continuation of hostilities and poor or intermittent humanitarian access, the food consumption gaps will remain large to extreme for the households, including those receiving sporadically humanitarian food assistance. The displaced population can no longer rely on their livelihoods, while most of those who remained in their areas of origin will face the effects of protracted coping strategies and continue to deplete/exhaust their livelihoods and assets. This coincides with a season with no/low livelihood activities. This is exacerbated by the fact that labour migration to Western Tigray will be impossible. Malnutrition is likely going to increase especially in hard to reach rural communities where active conflict is ongoing.

¹The July-September 2021 projection covers the Meher dependent areas only, including North Western, Central, Eastern, South Eastern administrative zones of Tigray, as well as North Gondar and Waghamra zones in the Amhara region. In total, 6 million people were analysed, compared to the 9 million analysed in the current.

Purposive sampling surveys conducted in the most affected kebeles (non-representative) show proxy Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) based on mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) ranging from 20% to 34% across North Western, Central, Eastern and South Eastern Tigray. In areas where the security situation is expected to stabilise, the projected situation remains similar to the current (Central cluster 2, Waghamra).

The deterioration is mainly due to conflict affecting the lives and livelihoods of people in the analysed areas. Stocks were depleted, for the vast majority of households in Tigray, already by the end of May. Considering that the seasonal labour migration will not take place due to active fighting in the most productive areas of the region and that markets are functional mainly in the major towns, humanitarian assistance will continue to be the only source of food for the majority of the population. The IDPs hosted in main urban centers and the numerous displaced in hard-to-reach areas will solely depend on assistance to reduce their food gaps.

The assumptions made on humanitarian food assistance foresee a scale-up that will likely mitigate the deterioration of the food security situation. However, several factors will affect the capacity to reduce food gaps: the ration provided will continue to be below the two-thirds of households' caloric requirements, high levels of ration-sharing, despite partners' operational efforts, diversion, looting, fear of retaliation and difficulty to reach distribution points, will continue hampering distributions. Obtaining authorization to pass certain checkpoints and deliver assistance will remain another challenge. Consequently, it is expected that assistance will be continuous in some areas, intermittent in others and absent in a few other regions.

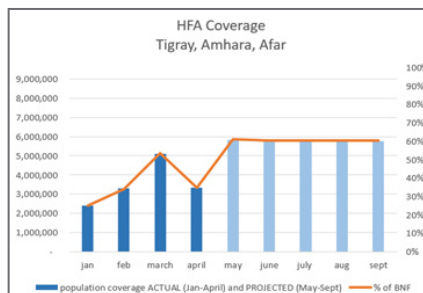
A Risk of Famine exists, and Famine could occur in the following months if the conflict further escalates or if, for any other reason, the planned delivery of humanitarian assistance is hampered.

FOCUS ON HUMANITARIAN FOOD ASSISTANCE

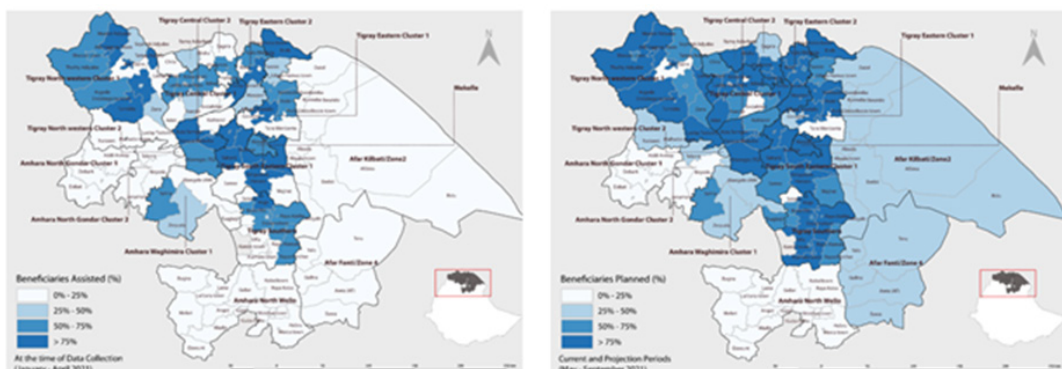
It is critical to note that, even after taking into account increased humanitarian access and a scale-up of assistance, this analysis identifies large populations in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3, 4 and 5). Should projected rates of assistance not materialise, a higher number of people would slide into the more severe IPC Phases, and the risk of Famine would increase.

In a context of significant population displacements, lost harvests, depletion of food stocks, market dysfunctions and price spikes, humanitarian food assistance plays a crucial role in mitigating food gaps. The equivalent of two-thirds of households' energy needs was delivered to 2.4 million people (of which 1.9 million in Tigray) in January, 3.3 million (of which 2.8 million in Tigray) in February, 4.9 million (of which 4.65 million in Tigray) in March, and 3.4 million (all in Tigray) in April.

Due to the presence of armed groups on the ground, access to deliver humanitarian food assistance has been low until April 2021. Improvements have been noted, however, since May 2021, for instance: more than 30 woredas were inaccessible during the first few months of the year, but 10-15 woredas were inaccessible by May. The Government of Ethiopia and partners are expecting that the level of access will allow to scale up the delivery of assistance from 37% to 60% of the population. As such, 5.8 million people were expected to be assisted from May onwards, with a ration that covers around two-thirds of their energy needs.



Graph source: Food Cluster



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Response Priorities

- Take all necessary steps to ensure immediate and continuous access for humanitarian organisations to all populations in need of assistance and overall respect of the humanitarian space so that the people's basic rights can be fulfilled. This also includes unhindered access to the available services.
- Ensure unhindered mobility for people to access distribution points and areas where basic services are provided and to return to their home safely.
- Scale-up significantly humanitarian food assistance in terms of spatial coverage, population coverage and ration provided. This is imperative to avert a deterioration into Famine levels. This includes providing immediate and regular assistance to reduce food gaps, prevent acute malnutrition and widespread death. Provide sustained funding to ensure continued support to food, nutrition, non-food cluster and agriculture humanitarian activities in the region. Deliver nutrition support for severely (SAM) and moderately (MAM) malnourished children. Provide social services - water, mobile health services - and reestablish health centers. The living conditions of IDPs and host communities are dire. These are in need of immediate support for food, shelter, other essential non-food items, healthcare, water and sanitation facilities, and protection (IOM/ACAPS).
- Provide emergency livelihood support, including the provision of agricultural and livestock support (seeds, extensions services, livestock feed and veterinary services) to ensure the major agricultural season does not result in a second lost harvest. Support trade to stimulate economic activity - protection for traders and safe markets, ensure livelihood support for populations not displaced to access their farms and agricultural inputs. As access improves, repair damaged social and economic infrastructure. Ensure fully functional telephone communications, financial services, including banks, markets and transportation services.
- Further strengthen COVID-19 prevention methods and increase people's awareness, particularly in the rural areas, with special attention to the IDP population living in congested areas.
- Conduct in-depth food security, malnutrition and mortality surveys and ensure frequent monitoring of all key indicators and measurements, especially through representative SMART (rapid and/or comprehensive) nutrition and mortality surveys. Support partners' collaboration efforts to conduct food and nutrition security assessments to enhance data availability for IPC analysis, particularly in inaccessible locations or communities experiencing security challenges.

Risk Factors to Monitor

The overall context in northern Ethiopia is volatile and fluid. Populations have been classified in the most severe IPC Phase and a Risk of Famine has been identified for large parts of Tigray. As a consequence, it will be crucial to monitor very closely the evolution of the situation and conduct real-time IPC updates as needed.

It is worth recalling that the analysis for the projected period (July – September) is based on a number of assumptions: (i) a cessation or stabilisation of hostilities in some areas; (ii) an expansion of humanitarian access; and (iii) an increase in humanitarian aid. Despite these anticipated positive developments, this analysis identifies populations in IPC Phase 5 and a Risk of Famine. This underlines the extreme severity of the situation. Should any of the above-mentioned assumptions fail to materialise, the implications for the food insecure populations in affected regions of northern Ethiopia would be devastating. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that any deviation from the assumptions triggers further analysis.

Specifically, attention needs to be given to:

1. **Conflict:** The analysis assumes that, in the most likely scenario, some areas will witness a progressive reduction in conflict, while a few others will continue to experience insecurity.
2. **Delivery of humanitarian food assistance, including the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP):** The analysis assumes large scale deliveries of assistance to almost 60% of the population every month. In terms of spatial coverage, population coverage or ration provided, deviations from this most likely scenario would have major effects on the projected food security situation.
3. **Displacement:** Displacement (either as a function of renewed fighting or stabilisation supporting returning home) can plausibly be expected to increase. This will be closely linked to the evolution of the conflict, with possible variations at woreda level. Prolonged situations of forced immobility in areas with limited humanitarian access should also be monitored.
4. **Employment and agriculture activities:** Particularly in areas not subject to active fighting, the ability of community members to access employment and farming activities will need to be monitored.



PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The Northern Ethiopia analysis update covers 10 administrative zones subdivided into homogeneous woredas based on geographic proximity, livelihoods and coping mechanisms, meteorological drought analysis, rainfall patterns, and food insecurity for at least the last three years. The clustering was conducted before the conflict. This analysis represents an update of the previous combined Meher and Belg analysis released in November 2020 and focuses on the areas directly or indirectly affected by the Tigray conflict that started in November 2020. The Western Tigray zone is not included in this analysis due to lack of data. The update of the current analysis (May to June 2021) thus covers the Tigray region, except the Western part, and the Tigray neighboring zones in Afar and Amhara, namely Kilbet Rasu and Fantana Rasu in Afar and North Gondar, North Wello, Waghama in Amhara. A population of about 9 million was analysed, including all the population in the zones mentioned except the city of Mekelle. About 5.8 million people are located in Tigray, about 2.5 million people in Amhara and about 753,000 people in Afar. The update of the projection period (July to September 2021) excludes Afar, North Wello and Southern Tigray zone due to lack of data. The population analysed includes the rural and the urban population and accounts for displacements in and out of the area.

This IPC analysis was carried by 40 technical experts, including analysts from 12 agencies and representatives from the Government at both federal and regional levels. A team of five senior analysts from the IPC Global Support Unit supported the whole process and monitored compliance with IPC protocols. This report is based on the technical consensus and conclusions that the 40 IPC analysts reached upon the completion of the IPC analysis workshop which ended on 26 May 2021. However, this report has not been endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia.

Data from two recent surveys (May 2021) informed food consumption and livelihood outcomes. Data were available for the Food Consumption Score, Households Hunger Scale, reduced Coping Strategy Index, number of meals, consumption of seeds, own animals, wild food, Livelihood Coping Strategies, destruction or looting of assets, food stocks, shocks, main source of food, main source of income, humanitarian food assistance records, among others. The first survey was conducted with the computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) methodology, interviewing populations sampled from the previous FSMS survey, assuming representation from their area of origin for non-displaced people and the new area of destination for IDPs. Respondents who were displaced were reassigned to the current location in terms of sampling. The limited sample size and the bias towards those who owned operational cellphones were considered during the analysis.

The second survey was conducted among newly arrived IDPs, capturing information regarding conditions in the settlement they resided in before being displaced. As this survey targeted new arrivals, it was used to infer the situation for areas not accessible by other means. The limited sample size and length of the journeys were factored in during the analyses.

Anthropometric information on nutrition was obtained from surveillance programs at monitoring sites implemented by the Government, NGOs and UN agencies. Purposive sampling screenings were also conducted in most affected Kebele, in selected woredas.

Other key evidence used in the analyses include: current humanitarian access (OCHA), displacement status and trends (DTM), current and forecasted food assistance (FC), field mission reports (FAO, WFP), weather forecast (ICPAC), market functionality and prices (ETCO).

Limitations of the analysis

Due to limited access, data used in this IPC update was mainly drawn from remote phone surveys (Computer-assisted telephone interviews) and face-to-face IDP surveys using the "new arrivals" method. Due to mobile network constraints and the impossibility of pre-sampling the new arrivals, these surveys presented limitations regarding the number of observations and spatial sampling and coverage. Nevertheless, the sampling of these surveys was relatively homogeneously distributed across all areas and woredas, including the hard-to-reach ones. Only seven woredas - two in central and 5 in Southern zones - were not covered out of a total of 90 woredas in the 14 areas of analysis. Despite the good coverage, due to intermittent phone connectivity, hard to reach areas may have been less represented than those with functioning antennas along the main road Mekelle-Adigrat-Axum-Shire.

Although this IPC analysis update is based on limited data, both in terms of quantity and quality, it represents the most up-to-date and comprehensive overview of the food security situation in Tigray and neighbouring areas.

While the situation is worrying, it is important to mention that outcome indicators could be partially influenced by the fasting period that took place just before the data collection period.

Participation of experts from Tigray and neighbouring areas was limited because of poor telephone and internet connectivity. Some federal partners from NGOs and Government normally involved in IPC activities were unable to join the analysis or dropped out during the process.