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## HIGHLIGHTS

The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, made a six-day mission to Ethiopia.

Over 100,000 children could suffer from severe acute malnutrition in the next 12 months in Tigray – a tenfold increase compared to the average annual caseload.

Some 175 trucks with humanitarian supplies arrived in Mekelle during the reporting period but this is still not enough, with an estimated 100 trucks needed daily.

Since mid-May, over one million people were reached with food assistance in Southern, North-Western, Eastern, and South-Eastern Zones.

Humanitarian partners are scaling up response in neighbouring Afar and Amhara Regions affected by the conflict.

## **SITUATION OVERVIEW**

Humanitarian operations in Tigray remain highly compromised by lack of access into the region and depleting relief supplies. Access is hampered by ongoing armed hostilities in boundary areas between Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions. Clashes reported in various locations in North Gondar and North Wello Zones in Amhara Region as well as in Fanti Zone in Afar Region. Meanwhile, access to North-Western Tigray through Amhara-controlled Western Tigray remains cut to relief partners.

Meanwhile, access via the only open road through Afar Region has been challenging and unpredictable due to insecurity, extended delays with clearances by concerned authorities, and thorough searches at checkpoints. Since 28 July, at least 223 trucks with humanitarian supplies for the UN and INGOs left Semera, the capital city of Afar Region, toward Mekelle. By 4 August, 175 trucks with food, non-food items, and fuel arrived in Mekelle, while most of the remaining trucks are being scanned at a checkpoint and few trucks are in Abala, the last entry point to Tigray. Two trucks have reportedly been blocked by civilians and looted at Sixty checkpoint, 97 km from Semera, on 28 July. While this recent entry of supplies is a positive step, it is still insufficient, with an estimated 100 trucks needed every day to assist 5.2 million people in need.

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Staff rotation to and from the region is challenging. In addition to the flight of the visiting UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, on 30 July, only two scheduled flights of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) have flown to and from Mekelle, one on 22 July and another, originally set to depart on 26 July on 4 August. UNHAS is ready to run two flights per week from Addis Ababa to Mekelle, pending Government clearance, as commercial flights have been halted since 24 June.

The humanitarian situation in Tigray remains dire with the interruption of supply lines to the region and the depletion of humanitarian stocks. According to the latest food security analysis review published on 22 July, there is clear evidence to support the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) findings that roughly 400,000 people are acutely food insecure in phase 5 (Catastrophe). This is in addition to four million people in phase 3 or 4 (Crisis or Emergency) in Tigray and neighbouring zones of Amhara and Afar regions.

Based on qualitative information from the field, the number of food insecure people continues to increase. The people currently suffering from acute food insecurity could slide into a catastrophic hunger and further into famine-like conditions if food and livelihood assistance are not rapidly scaled up. UNICEF estimates that over 100,000 children could suffer from life-threatening severe acute malnutrition in the next 12 months – a tenfold increase compared to the average annual caseload. Screening data also indicates that almost half (47 per cent) of all pregnant and breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished.

The agricultural planting season has been missed in many parts of Tigray. While there is currently a limited window to support planting, with a significant increase in planting with the good rains, many farmers remain unable to plant mainly due to a lack of seeds. The best estimate for harvest is dire. It is expected that only 25-50 per cent of the average cereal production will be available this year. Besides, there are no/limited available food stocks as many

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people were unable or prevented from planting for the last eight months. Consequently, food assistance will be required up to the following year's harvest season in October 2022.

Humanitarian operations continue to be severely affected by the lack of fuel. About 20 of the total 33 water trucks in Shire area, for instance, are out of service, leaving only 26 per cent of the water trucking capacity operational. Latrines and waste management are also affected by lack of fuel, contributing to disease outbreaks at displacement sites.

Electricity and telecommunications remain cut off, and banking services are still not restored. Humanitarian partners continue to face challenges with importing communications equipment. Six in-country communication devices are still in customs or held by the federal police, and some 30 VHF and satellite phones are still not authorized.

On 30 July, an INGO working in Tigray reported that alleged sexual violence cases in the Tigray region were on the decrease and there is a significant increase in reporting of previous cases. According to the INGO, about 70 unrecorded new rape cases were reported at the Adigrat IDP camps alone last week. The survivors reportedly cited the slow pace of their reporting to fear of reprisal from the alleged perpetrators.

Meanwhile, the spillover of the Tigray conflict into neighboring Afar Region has so far displaced about 70,000 people, according to regional authorities. In ten districts bordering Tigray, communities have hosted and assisted nearly 50,000 of the displaced people of Tigrayan and Afari origin with minimal humanitarian assistance provided to these communities due to lack of resources and limited access. An additional 500,000 people in Awsi, Kilbati, and Fanti Zones are at high risk of displacement if the current conflict continues. Afar authorities distributed food and non-food items to some of the recently displaced people. At the same time, partners plan to provide health, protection, and emergency

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food, water, hygiene, and sanitation assistance to the displaced. In collaboration with the Afar Regional Health Bureau and humanitarian partners, UNICEF has deployed four mobile health and nutrition teams to provide nutrition services.

The conflict along the Amhara-Tigray regional border is also worsening, with an estimated 100,000 displaced people in volatile and conflict-prone areas in North Gondar, Central Gondar, South Gondar, Awi Zones, and in various pockets across the region. There is a limited humanitarian relief presence in North Wello, North Shewa, and Oromia Special Zone where urgent humanitarian needs are being reported. There are an unconfirmed number of IDPs in Zigem *Woreda* in Awi Zone, none of whom have received humanitarian assistance. Partners are prioritizing scaling up the response in Afar as well as in Amhara.

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