

Situation Report EEPA HORN No. 134 - 26 April 2021

Europe External Programme with Africa is a Belgium-based Centre of Expertise with in-depth knowledge, publications, and networks, specialised in issues of peacebuilding, refugee protection, and resilience in the Horn of Africa. EEPA has published extensively on issues related to the movement and/or human trafficking of refugees in the Horn of Africa and on the Central Mediterranean Route. It cooperates with a wide network of Universities, research organisations, civil society, and experts from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, and across Africa. The situation reports can be found [here](#).

Reported Situation in Tigray (as per 25 April)

- Fierce fighting between Tigray defense forces and ENDF allied forces has continued in the Central and Northwestern zones of the Tigray region.
- Reported that Ethiopian and Eritrean troops have burned down residential areas in Idagahamus, Tigray, and scores of civilians have been injured.
- The International Organization for Migration (IMO) says more than 1 million people were internally displaced across 178 accessible locations in Ethiopia's Tigray region and neighboring Afar and Amhara. However, the data is only applicable to accessible areas. Surveyors have been unable to access large parts of the region, especially in Central, Eastern, and Southern Tigray.
- Their data suggests that many of the refugees are fleeing to large towns and cities to "seek humanitarian assistance". The highest concentration of IDPs is in Shire where 445,309 IDPs are residing in overcrowded collective shelters, including schools, within the host community and in open spaces.
- Other urban areas with high displacement concentrations included Adwa (129,524 IDPs), Mekelle (126,267), Adigrat (100,168) and Aksum (60,115). The majority of IDPs are from Western and Northwestern Tigray.
- The IOM is also reporting that 75 sites housing IDPs have yet to receive any humanitarian aid since the conflict started.
- According to MSF, which has teams present in the region, there has been an increase in reports of violence against civilians, including extra-judicial killings and sexual violence. These incidents have been observed by MSF staff.
- MSF further reported that "clashes continued in Central, Eastern, North-Western, South Eastern, and Southern Zones." MSF also estimates that 4.5 million people are in need of assistance in Tigray.
- The Associated Press (AP) has spoken to a Mai-Cadra survivor in Hamdayet refugee camp, Abraha Kinfe, who lost his wife named Letay nine days after delivering twin baby girls. "I don't know what wrong I did to my God for these troubles," said Abraha.
- The AP report says four days after Letay delivered, her afterbirth was expelled. But she wept day and night in pain. "If I took my wife to the clinic, they might kill me," said Abraha. "It was very difficult to decide."
- Abraha told AP that on the ninth day after giving birth, Letay beckoned him closer. "Look after my babies," she said. "I am going to die. I don't have hope and I am very sorry."
- The man, of Tigrayan origin, had the ethnicity on his ID changed and feared speaking his native Tigrayan when Amhara militia came to his house multiple times.
- Hearing about new killings everyday in the city, they decided to flee a month after the conflict began, eventually reaching Sudan.

Reported Situation in Ethiopia (as per 25 April)

- Opposition politician, Lidetu Ayalew remains banned from traveling abroad despite needing life-saving heart surgery.

- The Ethiopian Federal Police requested the ban due to criminal offenses, primarily his condemnation of the Tigray war.
- Endale Haile, Ethiopia's chief ombudsman, told AFP that over 250 thousand people have been displaced in Oromia and 75 thousand in the Oromo Special zone, which is part of the Amhara region.
- The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has postponed voters' registration by two and three weeks in various parts of the country.
- In Afar and Somali regions where voters' registration has been delayed, the registration deadline has as a result been extended by three weeks.
- The board said that voters' registrations did not start in all the four zones of Wellega in western Oromia, due to problems associated with security.

Reported Situation in the Horn region (as per 25 April)

- Gunfire erupted in Somalia's capital on Sunday between soldiers loyal to the government and others angry at the country's leader as tensions spiked over President Farmajo's extended stay in power.
- Sudan Tribune (ST) said Sudan will sue Ethiopia before the international courts if Ethiopia unilaterally carries out a second filling without concluding a legally binding agreement on the GERD.
- Yasir Abbas, Sudan's Minister of Irrigation said his government is considering various options to protect the country from the risks of the dam and its socio-environment impact on the downstream countries.
- He further stressed that Sudan will file lawsuits against the Italian contracting company and the Ethiopian government.

Reported International situation (as per 25 April)

- The EU has pulled more than €100 million (\$120 million) in funding away from Eritrea, citing Tigray conflict and lack of interest.
- The funding had been allocated in part for the construction of new roads in the country. When this was announced in 2018, it raised many concerns, as it was feared that conscripted National service members would be used as labour force. The UN has called the National service slave labour.
- In a letter to the European Parliaments Development Committee, Urpilainen, the Commissioner for international partnerships proposed that the money goes to other areas in the Horn of Africa, including 80 million to Sudan, 20 million to South Sudan, and 20 million to refugees in the region.
- The Commissioner also wrote that implementation in Eritrea had been highly challenging and that the current situation reflected "lack of interest expressed by the Government of Eritrea" on EUTF-funded projects and development cooperation with the EU.
- UNHCR Ethiopia said face-to-face activities in the Refugee Reception Centre in Addis Ababa has been temporarily suspended due to Covid-19.
- UNHCR also said they have established telephone helplines and online platforms to ensure that refugees can get in touch and access protection services.
- But, this will negatively affect those living in inaccessible areas due to telecom and internet blackout.
- Ethiopia's finance ministry signed a \$907 million financing agreement with the World Bank geared towards improving access to financing, the fight against COVID-19, and electricity investment. Some \$700 million was a loan and \$207 million a grant.

Disclaimer: All information in this situation report is presented as a fluid update report, as to the best knowledge and understanding of the authors at the moment of publication. EEPA does not claim that the information is correct but verifies to the best of ability within the circumstances. The publication is weighed on the basis of interest to understand the potential impacts of events (or perceptions of these) on the situation. Check all information against updates and other media. EEPA does not take responsibility for the use of the information or the impact thereof. All information reported originates from third parties and the content of all reported and linked information remains the sole responsibility of these third parties. Report to info@eepa.be any additional information and corrections.

Links of interest

<https://www.iom.int/news/over-1-million-people-displaced-due-conflict-northern-ethiopia-iom-dtm>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-signs-907-mln-financing-pact-with-world-bank-2021-04-23/>

<https://www.msf.org/ethiopia-tigray-crisis-update?s=04>

<https://apnews.com/article/health-ethiopia-lifestyle-africa-middle-east-abdb94e97a25e17befcc6574201a9ff3>

<https://addisstandard.com/news-nebe-postpones-voters-registration-no-registration-so-far-in-all-four-zones-in-wellega-oromia-due-to-security/>

<https://apnews.com/article/africa-9147f458892e0cde2b647ef9e9d10638>