

ETHIOPIA:

Human rights violations and conflicts continue to cause displacement

A profile of the internal displacement situation

3 September, 2009

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Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Norwegian Refugee Council
Chemin de Ballexert 7-9
1219 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 799 07 00
idmc@nrc.ch

www.internal-displacement.org

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OVERVIEW

Human rights violations and conflicts continue to cause displacement

For decades, Ethiopia has been affected by famine and conflict. In 2009, there have been various reports of internal displacement resulting from conflicts and human rights violations perpetrated by the army and groups opposed to the government. It is difficult to establish the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) as neither the government nor any international organisation has undertaken a profiling exercise. The access of humanitarian and human rights organisations and the media to some areas of the country has been restricted.

The ongoing conflicts in Somali Region between the army and the Ogaden National Liberation Front, and in the south and south-west of the country with the Oromo Liberation Front, both pose serious security, humanitarian and protection challenges. The impact on civilians of the conflict in Somali Region has been likened to that of Darfur. Meanwhile, there are also conflicts in at least five of the country's nine regions with causes ranging from competition over scarce water and pasture resources to disputes over administrative boundaries. In February 2009 alone, some 160,000 people were driven from their homes by conflict between the Garre of the Somali region and the Boran of the Oromiya region over a contested piece of land.

Displacement in Ethiopia is well documented but there is no evidence of durable solutions for IDPs. There is no agency or ministry mandated to respond to issues of forced internal displacement. Even though Ethiopia is actively involved in the drafting of the African Union convention on internally displaced people, there is growing evidence to suggest that conflicts in the country have far-reaching implications for protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced people. In a context of widespread impunity, no-one sanctioning violence that leads to displacement has been prosecuted.

The absence of political efforts to resolve internal conflicts and the continuing border dispute with Eritrea presents an ongoing serious risk of renewed conflict and displacement in the Horn of Africa. If the government does not improve humanitarian access, affected IDPs and other vulnerable people will continue to face a protection and humanitarian crisis.

Background: locations and causes of conflict and displacement

For decades, Ethiopia has faced severe famines and regional and international conflicts. From 1977 to 1978 it waged a war with Somalia in which the USA and USSR were involved, it fought a border war with Eritrea between 1998 and 2000, and from 2007 to early 2009 its army was pitted against insurgents (supported by Eritrea) and other nationalist groups in Somalia (The Enough Project, 9 February 2009).

Ethiopia was transformed from a unitary state to an ethnic federal state in 1994 by the new government led by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which seized power from the Dergue government of Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991. This new constitutional order was intended to redress the ethno-national grievances among the many ethnic groups in the country (International Journal on Minority and Group Rights, 2008).

However, despite this system of ethnic federalism under which the country is divided into ethnically-defined regions and zones, in almost all cases, displacement was triggered by conflict between different ethnic groups over access to political power or scarce resources such as water and pastoral or agricultural land. There are several conflict-induced displacement situations in Ethiopia, the largest occurring in the administrative regions of Somali, Oromiya, Gambella and Tigray. In addition to these, the government's counter-insurgency activities in regions such as Oromiya, Somali, and Gambella have led to serious human rights violations which have also led to displacement of civilians (HRW, June 2008; ISS, May 2007).

In November 2008, a study undertaken by the Ethiopian NGO African Rally for Peace and Development (ARPD) showed internal armed conflicts in most of the regions of Ethiopia, including Oromiya, Tigray, Somali, Southern Nationalities and Peoples Republic (SNNPR), Afar, Gambella, and Benishangul-Gumuz (ARPD, November 2008). The US State Department's 2008 Human Rights Report on Ethiopia reported that ethnically-based conflicts in western, eastern and southern areas had resulted in an increase in killings and injuries since 2007 and the displacement of tens of thousands of people (USDoS, 25 February 2009).

According to ARPD, the major causes of conflicts within Ethiopia's regions are ethnicity, disputed border and administrative arrangements, the impact on the distribution of resources and power, large-scale spontaneous and planned migration, religious differences, and mineral extraction.

The Borena zone of Oromiya Region, Gambella Region and SNNPR have witnessed recent intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts (ARPD, November 2008; ISS, 1 May 2007). In August 2008, inter-clan conflict displaced almost 13,000 people in Gambella Region (interview with OCHA, 5 June 2009).

Even though numbers of people displaced by conflict and human rights violations are not easy to establish due to the restrictions that are placed on the activities of media reporters and humanitarian organisations wishing to profile populations in need, the UN and other international organisations estimate that over 300,000 people remain displaced by conflict or violence in Ethiopia in 2009 (interviews in Addis Ababa, June 2009).

Somali Region

The conflict between the government and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) in Somali Region has continued into 2009 (BBC, 9 March 2009; Garoweonline, 8 March 2009). In an August 2009 Al-Jazeera interview, Genocide Watch founder and president Gregory Stanton and the human rights activist Fowsia Abdulkadir described a "genocide-like" situation comparable to Darfur, with reports of killings and burning of villages despite the army's severe access restrictions on the media and humanitarian organisations (Al-Jazeera, 9 August 2009).

These restrictions make it impossible to establish the number or situation of people displaced by the conflict in Somali region (The Christian Science Monitor, 26 February 2008; Reuters, 27 February 2008; VOA, 25 February 2009). However, many analysts talk of displacements of hundreds of thousands of people (interviews in 2009 in Addis Ababa, Geneva, and Nairobi).

According to a 2008 Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, the government's counter-insurgency campaign against the ONLF, designed to cut off civilian support to the ONLF and concentrate its rural support base in designated larger villages and towns, had caused widespread forced displacement, particularly between June and August 2007. The government had ordered civilians to relocate from small villages and pastoralist settlements to designated towns throughout the conflict-affected zones, typically ordering the villagers and nomads to move within two to seven days. To secure compliance with the evacuation orders, the army had repeatedly implemented a phased system of terror involving the confiscation and killing of livestock, public executions, and the destruction of villages by burning (HRW, June 2008; p.33).

Oromiya Region

Another rebel group operates in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya and claims to be fighting for the autonomy of the Oromo people. The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) has fought the Ethiopian army since 1973. Little information is available on how this conflict has caused displacement due to government restrictions. In August 2009, the government summoned the Ambassador of Kenya, demanding that his government stop a private media company in Kenya airing an investigation on the OLF (Daily Nation, 6 August 2009).

Conflicts over disputed administrative borders

In October 2008, approximately 100,000 people were displaced as a result of conflict in the Filtu and Hudet areas over a disputed border between the ethnically-defined Oromiya and Somali Regions (IDMC interview, Addis Ababa, 9 June 2009). In the majority of cases, people sought shelter with host communities, while others scattered in the surrounding bush.

In early 2009, ethnic clashes between Somali and Oromo ethnic groups displaced tens of thousands of people. The conflict was triggered when the Oromiya regional authorities started drilling a borehole on contested land close to the dividing line between the Oromiya and Somali Regions, which has never been properly demarcated. When the Garre Somalis destroyed the rig, members of the Borana clan mobilised to take revenge, angry at what they saw as years of Somali encroachment. Some 300 people lost their lives during the conflict (BBC, 26 February 2009). Initial reports suggested 70,000 people were displaced (BBC, 13 March 2009), but regional government officials later put the figure at over 150,000 (interview with Somali and Oromiya officials in Moyale, 17 June 2008).

In October 2008, almost 18,000 people were displaced in Alaba district of SNNPR as a result of inter-ethnic conflict between the Arsi and the Alaba over a disputed administrative boundary (IDMC interview, Addis Ababa, 9 June 2009).

Physical security

HRW has reported that serious human rights violations have taken place in areas affected by conflict and displacement, and that the government has not investigated or brought to account the perpetrators (HRW, January 2009). A June 2008 HRW report on Somali region was very critical of the human rights records of both the Ethiopian government and army and the ONLF. According to HRW, violations included military attacks on civilians and their villages, while continuing abuses by both rebels and Ethiopian troops were posing a direct threat to the survival of people remaining in war-affected areas, and creating a pervasive culture of fear (HRW, June 2008).

HRW also reported a military campaign of forced relocations and destruction of villages in 2007 (HRW, June 2008). Villagers told HRW how the army killed herders and other fleeing civilians, and burned homes, property and food stocks (HRW, 3 October 2007). Reuters also reported that the burning of villages was forcing locals to flee to the bush where their basic needs were unmet (Reuters, 4 September 2007).

Similar allegations of the army committing human rights violations against the civilian population in the Somali Region were also documented by Amnesty International, the US Department of State and Genocide Watch (AI, 28 May 2009; USDoS, 25 February 2009; Al-Jazeera, 9 August 2009).

Satellite images have backed up reports that the Ethiopian army has burnt towns and villages in Somali Region. The American Association for the Advancement of Science says the images confirm the HRW report and show the army systematically ill-treating civilians in their counter-insurgency campaign (BBC, 12 June 2008).

Gender-based violence is also said to be widespread in Somali region, which is reportedly openly countenanced by the army. Several witnesses have reported that they were gang-raped to the point of unconsciousness by soldiers (Al-Jazeera, 9 August 2009; HRW, June 2008; Reuters, 27 February 2008).

In the February 2009 conflict between the Garre-Somali and the Oromiya-Boran, 300 lives were lost. The BBC reported that many of the displaced had had their villages destroyed and their property stolen (BBC, 13 March 2009).

Landmines continue to hamper the free movement of people in conflict areas. Ethiopia is one of the most heavily-mined countries in Africa. A Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) survey found that 1.9 million people were at risk and identified almost 1,500 communities affected by landmines (Afrol News, 15 April 2009).

Humanitarian access

The activities of aid workers have been severely restricted in regions such as Somali. Humanitarian agencies have since 2008 been granted permission to deliver food but the military escorts still hinder full access (Daily Telegraph, 17 October 2008; BBC News, 19 September 2008; The Times, 18 September 2008). The army has maintained control over humanitarian aid by accompanying convoys, and determining whether it is safe for a delivery to go ahead. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has been denied access to Somali Region, and has called on the government to immediately allow its teams to provide assistance to people in the region who are facing an increasingly desperate situation (MSF, 4 September 2007). In July 2008, the Swiss arm of MSF halted its operations in the Region, due to the obstacles put in its way. According to the organisation's statement: "The authorities' attitude towards humanitarian organisations has translated into recurrent arrests of MSF Switzerland staff without charge or explanation... Despite continuous attempts to improve the working relations with authorities, our organisation can only regret the absence of any room to bring independent and impartial assistance." (IRIN, 10 July 2008)

Insecurity in some parts of the country has also hindered aid delivery. In September 2008, two aid workers working for an international organisation were kidnapped by gunmen in Somali Region (BBC, 23 September 2008).

National and international responses

The absence of political effort to resolve internal conflicts and the continuing border dispute with Eritrea presents an ongoing serious risk of renewed conflict in the Horn of Africa, with potential for large-scale displacement and severe humanitarian consequences. At a recent joint meeting between the House of the Federation and representatives of all nine regional governments in Benishangul-Gumuz Region, regional governments accused the federal authorities of not doing enough to help them contain conflicts in the regions (The Reporter, 15 August 2009).

The government's strong control of humanitarian response mechanisms has left many of the disasters either unreported or played down. Responses have been fragmented, inadequate, late, and have left affected populations in an even worse situation (interview in Geneva, November

2008). For example, government food distribution policies have reportedly prevented assistance reaching people in need (AI, 2009); The Telegraph, 17 October 2008; BBC News, 19 September 2008; The Times, 18 September 2008, IRIN, 10 July 2008).

If the government does not improve humanitarian access, affected IDPs and other vulnerable people will continue to face a protection and humanitarian crisis (ICG, 17 June 2008). USAID reported in March 2008 that “literally hundreds of areas... have neither been assessed nor received any food assistance”, with “populations terrorised by the inability to access food” (The Times, 18 September 2008). The British Channel 4 reported that the army had withheld food from villages in Somali Region as part of a “scorched earth” policy against the ONLF (BBC, 19 September 2008; The Times, 18 September 2008). Before the British Minister for International Development toured a hospital in the town of Kebri Dehar during a visit to Somali Region in October 2008, local officials forced starving infants out of the emergency ward and on to the street (The Telegraph, 17 October 2008).

There is no dedicated government agency or office or a focal point that is known to be dealing with conflict-induced displacement. In August 2008, the government disbanded the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) whose responsibilities were to be to anticipate and prevent disasters and build local capacities to do so as well and transferred its mandate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Ministry officials now charged with disaster risk management (DRM) anticipate the increased decentralisation of these DRM responsibilities. A proposed policy has called for the mainstreaming of disaster risk management throughout government and greatly strengthened disaster management capacity at the highest levels of government. Debates continue within the government regarding the policy and it is unclear if or when it will be adopted and to what degree this will deal with conflict-induced displacement (ODI, June 2009).

Government line ministries normally help UN agencies disburse food and sanitation assistance (OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, 10 August 2009). In July 2009, the UN disbursed some \$6 million towards helping the Ethiopian government help contain the rising challenges of food insecurity, malnutrition, and ensure health care and water and sanitation support, mostly in displacement-affected areas of Somali, Oromiya, and SNNPR (IRIN, 27 July 2009).

In August 2009, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) recommended to the government “to ensure that refugees and other vulnerable persons, such as internally displaced persons, enjoy their rights under national law as well as various international legal instruments to which it is a party...” The Committee further requested the State Party to “provide, in its next periodic report, detailed information on the human rights situation of refugees and internally displaced persons on its territory...” (CERD, 31 August 2009).

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Background (Special Report 2007)

Background (Special Report 2007)

Special Report: A heritage of autocracy and natural disasters

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries. Throughout its history, it has suffered from recurring droughts and floods and related famines. It is also characterised by a long history of centralised state power, culminating in military rule under the Marxist Dergue government led by Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam from 1974 to 1991. The 1985 famine brought international attention to Ethiopia, and triggered a huge response to support millions of starving Ethiopians.

The famine brought to the fore the ruthless demographic engineering of the Dergue government. While at times restricting aid agencies' access to the worst-affected northern regions of Tigray and Wollo, the government initiated a large-scale resettlement programme, moving some 600,000 people from the famine-stricken northern highlands to the more fertile south-western lowlands of Gambella and Oromiya regions. Following a shortage of volunteers for the programme, the regime forcibly assembled and transported highland peasant farmers. Tens of thousands of them died either in transit or on arrival, as they were unable to make a living in the different climate, and were susceptible to malaria. The government also implemented a "villagisation" policy, which was intended to eventually cluster some ten million peasants in socialist rural centres. The living and working conditions of these centres were later described as resembling those of forced labour camps.

Both resettlement and villagisation had a terrible impact on the social fabric of the affected populations. Both were presented internationally as development programmes and supported by donor governments. Both programmes, however, also had political objectives, in particular to curb popular support to rebel movements in Tigray, Eritrea and Oromiya regions. Many resettled people were in fact subsequently recruited into the government armed forces, as this offered the only way out of their miserable situation.

Natural disasters such as floods and drought have caused recurring displacement. The most recent waves of drought-related displacement occurred in 2000 and 2003, mainly in eastern regions. Massive flood-induced displacement occurred in November 2006. Ethiopia was also affected by the August 2007 floods.

Besides natural disasters and internal inter-ethnic or separatist conflicts, international conflicts have also long affected the Ethiopian population. Somalia's invasion of the Ogaden (today's Somali region) in 1977, and the 1998-2000 border war with Eritrea triggered significant internal displacement, the latter conflict alone forcing around 300,000 people to flee their homes.

The EPRDF and ethnic federalism

During the 1980s, and not least as a consequence of the poor official response to the drought, regional opposition movements gained momentum while socialist-bloc support for the Dergue dried up. In 1991, a number of those opposition groups, led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), toppled the government. The new ruling coalition of parties joined as the Ethiopian

People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), under the central control of the TPLF, which maintains alliances with the ruling regional parties.

In an attempt to decentralise the rigid system it had inherited from the Dergue period, and in order to avoid secessionist movements, notably in the regions of Somali and Oromiya, the EPRDF engaged in a major reform process from 1991. Nine *killil* or administrative regions were created and divided into zones, which were often named after the majority ethnic group. Each zone was further sub-divided into *woredas* (district councils) composed of a number of *kebele* (local councils) in urban neighbourhoods, or of peasant associations in rural areas. While many of those entities had already existed under the Dergue, the EPRDF's devolution processes vested them with some degree of political and administrative autonomy.

The *woreda* is the focus of administrative and political action in the federal system. It is crucial to control a *woreda* to exercise political influence and to have a say in the centrally-steered taxation and distribution of funds and resources, including land, food aid, employment and documentation. District and local authorities are generally either directly affiliated with, or allied to, the EPRDF, although the situation changed somewhat following the elections of May and November 2005, when opposition parties increased their representation in the national parliament from 12 seats to 172 and also in local government. The elections were marked by violent suppression of widespread protests against alleged vote-rigging by the EPRDF, and possibly led to the displacement of thousands of people.

The government's reaction to the protests led several donors to divert financial support away from direct budgetary support to the central government, instead directly funding NGOs or local government bodies through the "Protection of Basic Services" mechanism. While donor governments have stopped aid transfer on several occasions in the past, such disruptions have never been sustained, consistent or coordinated.

The system of ethnic federalism, dividing Ethiopia into ethnically defined regions and zones, and channelling access to power and resources according to ethnic criteria, is quite unique in the world; it lends the strong central government a federalist face in a country which is home to approximately 80 different ethnicities. However, none of the administrative regions is ethnically homogenous, and the increasing migration of people within Ethiopia in recent years due to famine, economic hardship, resettlement and urbanisation has made the principle of ethnically-distinct zones increasingly difficult to realise and to sustain.

Competition for access to local and regional power structures appears to be increasing. Underlying this competition is a general scarcity of resources, including land, water, food and work opportunities. In a number of regions, older and more recent localised resource-based conflicts have taken on a more ethnic character, further encouraging the activities of armed secessionist movements such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). Other groups, like the Somali Sheikash clan, strive for access to political representation.

Conflict-displacement in the context of displacement due to natural disasters, resettlement and economic migration (Special Report 2007)

Special Report: Natural disasters as a cause of displacement

While this report mainly focuses on conflict-induced displacement, the dimension of displacement due to natural disasters cannot be seen as a completely separate issue. As a result of these natural hazards, the culture of sharing scarce resources is often being tested to its limits and resource-triggered conflicts are on the rise. Oxfam, February 2005; UN OCHA, Pastoralist

Communication Initiative, 2007. Furthermore, the distinction between economic migration and displacement due to natural disasters is often hazy. Where people need to leave their homes in search of food and work, there clearly is an element of involuntariness involved. Large-scale resettlement programmes intending to manage food scarcity must also be seen in this context of very complex interactions of different population movements.

People directly displaced by natural disasters are often assisted better than conflict IDPs. Their main problems, such as successful reintegration and reconstruction of livelihoods, are to a large extent due to a gap between humanitarian and development assistance.

Ethiopia's south and east, particularly Somali and South Oromiya regions, and increasingly Afar region, are chronically food-insecure and regularly affected by drought and floods. As of mid-2007, parts of Ethiopia (particularly in Oromiya region) had received below-average rainfall and were facing shortages of water and pasture land. Then, during August and September, Amhara, Afar, Gambella, SNNPR, Somali, Tigray and Oromiya regions were hit by floods, affecting over 220,000 people and leading, according to UN OCHA, to the displacement to temporary shelters of over 70,000 people.

These floods hit the country less than a year after the devastating floods of 2006, which had temporarily displaced some 600,000 people. DPPA Flood Impact Assessment, 2007, expected to be published on the DPPA website: www.dppc.gov.et. Most of them returned home within weeks, with the notable exception of some 4,000 flood-displaced people in Dire Dawa, whose original dwellings were too close to the river bed, and who were awaiting government-built housing in a camp set up for them. The living conditions of the Dire Dawa IDPs, visited in February 2007, were good, and social services well organised and accessible to all. Less than half of them were able to move to their new homes in the course of 2007, while the others continued to wait for new housing.

Most IDPs displaced by the 2000 and 2003 droughts in Somali Region have returned to their areas of origin, with the exception of the Fafen and Hartisheik camp residents. Because not all return movements proved economically sustainable, the reintegration of the returnees remains challenging, despite exceptionally good rains in 2007. The current activities of the Ethiopian army in parts of Somali region further seriously impact on their opportunities for trade and access to food and water.

[...]

Resettlement programmes and economic migration

The current situations of conflict-induced internal displacement should be seen in the context of broader population movements, because economic migration and resettlement programmes also influence the composition and cohabitation of populations, as well as the stability of regions.

In early 2003, as part of its National Food Security Programme, the Ethiopian government launched a new resettlement programme, intending to resettle 2.2 million people, or 440,000 households, from the chronically food-insecure highlands to more fertile agricultural lowland areas within three years. The resettlement programme was planned for four regions: Tigray, Oromiya, Amhara and SNNPR, and implemented in three phases of 100,000, 150,000 and 190,000 households each. Potential resettlers were identified during awareness-raising campaigns at both the *woreda* and *kebele* levels, and host *woredas* were identified based on the availability of arable land. In an attempt to mitigate resentment by the host community and to ease the transition, basic infrastructure (such as health services, water supply, primary schools and roads) was to be established, and the people resettled were to receive an eight-month food ration.

The government suggested that the scheme was successful and mostly led to self-sufficiency, and that past failures had been due to uncontrolled self-resettlement. Other reports suggest that

resettlement was often experienced as a heavy burden. Critics said the programme did not always respect four core principles: the resettlement was not always voluntary, the land allocated was not always suitable for planting, host communities were not always properly consulted, and the resettles were not always properly prepared. It was said that in certain cases the resettlement led to severe malnutrition, as the highlanders were not accustomed to the agricultural techniques required in the lowlands. A considerable number of resettled people eventually had to move on, this time unassisted. As mentioned above, past resettlement programmes, particularly the large-scale resettlements under the Dergue government in the 1980s, were fraught with problems and caused widespread suffering.

One interviewee said that the radical changes in demographic equilibrium induced by resettlement programmes and economic migration should be taken into account more in federal planning. For example, Gambella's neighbour region to the north, Benishangul Gumuz, is confronted with similar demographic issues as Gambella. The region, fertile and sparsely populated, faces a looming crisis: in 1994, only 55 per cent of the inhabitants were indigenous, and since then, large numbers of people moving in from other regions have become a source of growing concern for the regional government. Informal resettlement and economic migration, including urban migration, could also have a destabilising effect. Development-related displacement could do the same, for example in Afar where a big dam for irrigation has reduced the land for the Afar people, or where the creation of national parks as tourist attractions has forced people out of their home area.

Background

Study shows Conflict prevalent in all regions of Ethiopia (November 2008)

- Conflict present in all regions of Ethiopia
- Causes range from competition over resources, administrative boundaries, ethnicity etc

APRD, November 2008

[...]1. This report of a baseline research provides a list of areas and sites of violent conflicts in Seven Regional States of Ethiopia, namely Oromia, Tigray, Southern Nations/Nationalities and Peoples/SNNP/, Afar, Somali, Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz. For most violent conflicts reported, a brief summary of the major immediate causes are provided. The parties to these violent conflicts are also listed. The motives of each parties involved in the conflicts are also briefly explained. The types of interventions are also mentioned. Nonetheless, a much bigger list of conflicts without detailed description and conflict analysis are provided as there are no full-fledged public researches. A stand-alone baseline reports for the Oromia, Tigray, Southern Nations/Nationalities and Peoples, Afar,

Somali, Gambella and Benishangul National Regional States are also attached in the annex. The matrixes and tables in each regional state report offer very concise summary of the violent conflict, parties, actors, causes, and damages.

2. However, as the research on this topic is scanty, all the facts and statements could not be verified through other sources. Even worse, due to unofficial nature of some reports available and the norms in the ethics of research, citation of seemingly authoritative documents has proven very contentious and therefore difficult.

Nine National Regional States and Two Special City Administrations

3. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is constitutionally a federation of nine member regional states, which are mainly based on ethnolinguistic population and boundaries, and two special city administrations: Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. These are: Amhara; Tigray; Oromia;

Afar; Somali; Gambella; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples; Harari and Benshangul-Gumuz. In all regions, there are about 529 *Woredas* (District).

Conflicts Prone Regions of Ethiopia

4. Although the causes, magnitude, complexity and intensity of the violence nature of conflicts vary from region to region, all the studied regional states have witnessed some sort of violent conflicts. Some regions are however more conflict-prone regions than others. Regional states such as Tigray are less prone than others say Southern Nations/Nationalities. Other regional states are prone to border conflicts for example the Oromia with many of its neighbouring regional states including Benishangul-Gumuz.

Causes of Conflicts in Ethiopia

5. Based on the Field Researches, the major causes of conflicts in regional state are controversies over ethnic identity, disputes over border and administrative arrangements, population dynamics due to spontaneous and planned large scale migration and their impact on resource and power-sharing, religious conflicts, mineral extraction, and structural causes of conflicts such discriminatory caste-like culture. Distributional issues are also additional causes of conflicts to the above listed central underlying causes of violent conflicts in Ethiopia (see all the annexes). In the case of South Omo, Bench-Maji zones of SNNPR, the causes of conflicts are not as clear as the prevalence of violent conflicts. A detailed research is very necessary.

Intra-ethnic and Inter-ethnic Conflicts

6. Relatively speaking a better researched area such as the Borana zone of Oromia, Gambella, and SNNP predominantly exhibits both intra-ethnic and interethnic conflicts. In some cases the intra-ethnic conflicts are predominant than inter-ethnic ones.

Inter-ethnic within University Campus Conflicts, violent conflicts among religious followers, Migration and development related conflicts

7. There are three causes of violent conflicts which are not mentioned in the researches we collected. Violent conflicts inside universities are becoming more frequent but are the least researched. Similar conclusion can be safely reached with regard to the violent conflicts in mining and exploration areas and among followers of different religions. Large and spontaneous migration of people from one regional state to another has also exacerbated existing conflicts..."

Continued border tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea (2007)

- Border tensions between the two neighbours continue to simmer
- The conflicts in Somalia, involving both countries, and the 2007 conflict in Somali region (Ethiopia) contribute to the heightening of tensions

ADDIS ABABA, June 28, 2007 (AFP) -

President Meles Zenawi announced Thursday Ethiopia had beefed up its army to repel a possible attack from arch-foe Eritrea, as he demanded fresh talks to end a simmering border dispute. [...]

Eritrea immediately denied it was acting aggressively, and accused Meles of posturing.

"This is just the posturing and bluffing of a paranoid person," Asmara's Information Minister Ali Abdu told AFP.

"He (Meles) is doing this with the intention of diverting issues from Ethiopia's domestic problems and its own internal opposition."

[...]

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has warned of the potential for a new outbreak of hostilities between the two east African countries, pointing to a worsening situation with heavy troop deployments in the border buffer zone.

Eritrea, a small country of 4.2 million people, has the largest army in sub-Saharan Africa with an estimated 202,000 troops, according to the UN Development Programme. The second largest is Ethiopia, a far larger country of 75.6 million inhabitants with an army of an estimated 183,000 troops.

Background to the 1998 border dispute

- Both Ethiopia and Eritrea share a joint history of armed opposition and overthrow of the Ethiopian Derg dictatorship
- In 1991 the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) overthrew Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam and took Addis Ababa and Asmara
- Eritrea nationhood was proclaimed in 1993 by 99percent votes in favour of independence and with Ethiopian approval
- Given the excellent relations between Eritrean-Ethiopian government in early 90s, contentious issues of border-delimitation, citizenship and commerce were left unsettled and became source of conflict
- Public resentment grew against people of Eritrean and Tigrean origin for their prominence in business and politics and the under-representation of ethnic Oromo, Amhara and Somali
- After Eritrea's independence in 1993, Ethiopia became landlocked and economic relations between the two countries were further strained by the adoption of Eritrea's own currency
- Ethiopia annexation of Eritrea in 1962 and the establishment of administrative boundaries blurred the 1902 colonial boundary notably around Badme, Tsorona-Zalambessa and Bure

"The political parties now in government in Ethiopia and Eritrea share a joint history of armed opposition to the former regime in Ethiopia: a brutal military dictatorship known as the Derg, led by Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam.³ The Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) dominated the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance of ethnically-based liberation fronts, which fought the Derg to obtain more autonomy for their respective regions.

[...]

The TPLF started in 1975 as a national liberation front, with the political goal of establishing a "Democratic Republic of Tigray." It naturally turned to Eritrean liberation fronts for assistance, and ultimately formed a close alliance with the EPLF. The relationship between the two fronts was marked from the onset by significant differences over ideology and military strategy, but pragmatism prevailed as both fronts confronted a ruthless common enemy in the Derg. As the TPLF gained increasing control over territory, it also forged the broader Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance with other Ethiopian liberation fronts based on Ethiopia's various "nationalities."

In May 1991, the anti-Derg alliance between the EPLF and the EPRDF finally gained control; first the EPRDF took Addis Ababa, then, a few days later, the EPLF won control of Asmara. Following the fall of the Derg, the EPRDF in July put in place a transitional government that was to have led Ethiopia towards democracy. [...] The EPLF in late May named a provisional Eritrean government to guide the newly liberated Eritrea to formal independence two years later.

Eritrean Independence and Cooperation Between Ethiopia and Eritrea (1991-1998)

The Ethiopian Transitional Government pledged to uphold the right of self-determination for all of Ethiopia's peoples.[...] In early July 1991, the new government approved the plan put forward by the Eritrean provisional government to hold a referendum to determine Eritrea's status.

[...]

Around the world, over one million people in more than forty countries took part in the referendum.[...]More than 99 percent of voters opted for Eritrea to separate from Ethiopia and become an independent state. [...] The vote was certified as free and fair by U.N. observers as well as by the Ethiopian government. [...] When Eritrea declared its independence, Ethiopia was among the first countries to recognize the new state.

[...]

The Short-lived Partnership

The newly-established Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and newly-independent Eritrea initially became close partners. A 1993 agreement between the ministries of internal affairs of the two countries confirmed an earlier agreement to exempt citizens of the other country from entry visa requirements. [...] This provision was intended “to promote and further consolidate the historical and cultural relationships long cherished by the peoples of the two countries, further strengthen the affinity and bonds of friendship between them.”

[...]

So close were relations between the two countries that in June 1996 President Issayas Afewerki of Eritrea told an Addis Ababa newspaper that the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia was becoming “meaningless.”

[...]

Tensions (1994-1998)

Perhaps because the new governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea came to power as allies against a common enemy and therefore felt a great deal of trust for each other, certain aspects of their bilateral relationship— including how to define the citizenship of people of Eritrean origin living in Ethiopia after Eritrea’s independence, and the delineation of their common border—were never resolved in formal agreements. These unresolved issues as well as economic issues gradually led to tensions and hostility between the two countries.

[...]

For many, the establishment of an Eritrean provisional government and the promulgation of new laws by both this de facto authority and the new Ethiopian government raised immediate questions over the status of people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia. Public resentment over the role of people of Eritrean origin in business and government after 1991 coincided with protests at the dominant role of Tigrean leaders in the new government. This criticism was fueled by protests that even as the new Ethiopian leaders restructured the state based on what it defined as its constituent nations and nationalities, the Oromo, Amhara, Somali, and others were underrepresented and marginalized, while the Tigrean nationality dominated. Indignation over the standing of those of Eritrean origin, however, was from Eritrea’s independence in 1993 readily transformed into a questioning of the loyalties—and ultimately the right to remain as citizens—of members of the Eritrean minority within the new Ethiopia.

[...]

Even as tentative steps were made to sort out the nationality issues in the two states, with due regard for the wishes of the people involved, a vocal minority in Ethiopia was voicing growing mistrust of people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia. This group complained that people of Eritrean origin in the country controlled important segments of the Ethiopian economy and were working against Ethiopia’s interests and on behalf of the Eritrean government. These critics did not deny that these people still had standing as Ethiopian citizens, but opposed this on strictly chauvinistic grounds. They complained that those of Eritrean origin had yet to be obliged to choose between the one or the other country, and they pressed for the Ethiopian government to declare people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia to be aliens under the law.[...] As the tensions grew in 1997, the rhetoric grew increasingly shrill. [...]

[...]

Controversy over the delineation of the 620-mile common border further exacerbated tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Upon becoming an independent nation in 1993, Eritrea succeeded to 1902 colonization treaty between Italy and Ethiopia, which defined the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia. However, Eritrea’s annexation by Ethiopia in 1962 had muddled the demarcation of the border since the colonial boundaries between the two formerly separate states were replaced

by administrative boundaries within Ethiopia, some of which had shifted slightly over time. After 1993, both Eritrea and Ethiopia claimed sovereignty over three areas where administrative borders had changed: Badme, in the west of the border region, Tsorona-Zalambessa in the central border region, and Bure in the eastern border region.

[...]

In May 1998 the simmering border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia exploded in a military confrontation in the Badme area when Eritrea sent its army to expel Ethiopian troops stationed there and claimed the area as Eritrean. Weeks of skirmishes followed, and by early June the two former allies were at war." (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.11-17)

"Eritrea's *de facto* border in 1991 was that of the Italian colony of Eritrea established in 1890. In line with the OAU principles on the integrity of colonial borders, this border was agreed to be a starting point, but both sides agreed that it was inconclusive and that some details needed to be clarified. The border had never been clearly demarcated and Italy had made several claims on Ethiopian territory prior to its full-scale invasion of Ethiopia in 1936 and five year occupation. There was no border demarcation throughout the subsequent British military administration in Eritrea, the 1952 federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia, or after the removal of Eritrea's federal status in 1962, which set off the Eritrean liberation struggle. In 1991 both Ethiopia and Eritrea accepted that there were inconsistencies in the border but full demarcation was not regarded as a high priority. After an incident in July 1997, in which Eritrea claims that Ethiopian troops occupied Adi Murang, in Bada, eastern Eritrea, a bilateral border commission was set up to address problems as they arose.

[...]

Generally, relations between the two countries were good. There were large numbers of each other's citizens working in each country, who were treated the same as nationals and there was almost free movement of people across the borders. Special arrangements were in place for the use of Assab port, now on Eritrean soil, by Ethiopia (now land-locked) through which most of Ethiopia's imports and exports came. Both countries used the Ethiopian *birr* as a common currency, until 1997 when Eritrea introduced the *nakfa*. The introduction of the *nakfa* and subsequent switch to hard currency transactions between the two countries brought other economic policy differences to the fore and strained relations.

[...]

Ethiopia has a sizeable minority of people of Eritrean origin who, while voting for the independence of Eritrea in the referendum, retained their Ethiopian citizenship and considered themselves Ethiopian [...]. Many people of Eritrean origin worked in the Ethiopian civil service, in sensitive jobs in the telecommunications and aviation sectors, and were also prominent in business, particularly in Addis Ababa." (AI 21 May 1999, sect.1.2)

Both Ethiopia and Eritrea used mass deportations as a weapon of war, 1998-2002

- Ethiopia deported an estimated 75,000 people of Eritrean origin to Eritrea from June 1998
- Eritrea deported an estimated 70,000 people of Ethiopian origin back to Ethiopia during from August 2000
- People deported from Ethiopia on ethnic discriminatory grounds were denied return and often separated from their own children
- Deportees had their identity documents confiscated and became stateless
- Deportees were detained and dispossessed with no recourse to due process of law prior to deportation
- Many people from Eritrean origin were forced to leave Tigray rural areas
- Many were told by Ethiopian authorities they were being deported for having voted in the referendum for Eritrean independence

- Before 2000 Eritrea supported voluntary repatriation of people of Ethiopian origins assisted by ICRC, afterwards it did not inform ICRC prior to deportation
- Many deportees from Ethiopia of Eritrean origin were registered as refugees and attended by the ERREC
- Peace deal signed in December 2000 failed to solve the plight of the deportees
- Some 60,000 expelled Ethiopians who returned from Eritrea live in difficult conditions in northern Ethiopia

“Denied return to Ethiopia, families like that of B.H. were separated on the discriminatory grounds of ethnic or national origin. Children were either left behind with relatives without Eritrean heritage, or more commonly, even though Ethiopian-born, expelled with their parents and denied the Ethiopian nationality that was their birthright under Ethiopian law. Although the authorities of independent Eritrea extended the option of Eritrean nationality to those with ties to that country, most of the uprooted retained the hope that they could return to their homes and families in Ethiopia. Reduced to the status of refugees, they confronted the specter of statelessness.

[...]

In Eritrea, a campaign of roundups, detention, and ultimately expulsion of civilians based on ethnicity and nationality paralleled the concerted nation-wide campaign that began in June 1998 in Ethiopia, but began considerably later. Even before authorities began a program of arrest, detention, and expulsion, ordinary Ethiopians living and working in Eritrea’s towns and cities were attacked by mobs, sometimes with police participation, in apparent retaliation for Ethiopia’s air attacks and battlefield advances. Thousands were subsequently interned in harsh conditions prior to expulsion.

[...]

Hundreds of thousands were internally displaced and over one million became refugees in the course of the war. Many fled or were deported to other countries in the region as both countries used mass population transfers as a weapon of war. The negotiated end of the war, agreed on December 12, 2000, stopped the fighting—but it failed to resolve the plight of those uprooted from their homes and cut off from their livelihood in both countries, in particular those deported from their own country and stripped of their nationality.

While Ethiopia and Eritrea both now appear to be conforming with the requirements of the peace agreement, the settlement deals primarily with the formal separation of the belligerents’ forces, the demarcation of the border, and competing claims for compensation. The issue of the wartime expulsion of tens of thousands of people on grounds of their purported nationality or national origin garnered surprisingly little attention from the international community during the war and remains largely overlooked in the war’s aftermath.

The Deportations

The Ethiopian government is known to have forcibly expelled an estimated 75,000 people of Eritrean origin during the war. The Eritrean government forcibly expelled or took part in the voluntary repatriation of an estimated 70,000 Ethiopians, notwithstanding persistent Eritrean government claims that it had no expulsion policy comparable to Ethiopia’s.

Ethiopia’s Campaign of Deportations

Ethiopian authorities launched a vast campaign to round up and expel people of Eritrean origin from Ethiopia in June 1998. Most had been born in Ethiopia when Eritrea was still held to be a part of that country—and had no other recognized citizenship other than Ethiopian. Most adults had spent all or most of their working lives in Ethiopia, outside of Eritrea. Ethiopian authorities in June 1998 announced the planned expulsion of residents who posed a security risk to the state, to include members of Eritrean political and community organizations, and former or current members of the Eritrean liberation front.

The Ethiopian authorities moved almost immediately to carry out arrests and to expel Eritreans and those of Eritrean origin in a manner that became increasingly indiscriminate over time. No meaningful steps were made to determine “risk” on a case-by-case basis—or to distinguish between those who had formally assumed Eritrean nationality and Ethiopian nationals distinguished only by their Eritrean origin.

The first wave of arrests and deportations began on June 12, 1998, targeting people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia who were prominent in business, politics, or community organizations. In conjunction with this campaign, the Ethiopian government revoked business licenses and ordered the freezing of assets of thousands of individuals of Eritrean origin. Those with bank accounts were informed that their accounts had been frozen and were inaccessible. The government provided no avenue for affected individuals to challenge these actions. The main targets of the deportation campaign after June 1998 were tens of thousands of ordinary people who were deported and dispossessed on the sole basis of their national origin.

[...]

The expulsion of people from Ethiopia’s urban areas generally conformed to a common pattern, with almost all detained and interned prior to being deported—often under very harsh conditions. The majority of the deportees were held for days or weeks, although some were held for as long as several months. A “processing committee” of policemen, security agents, and political officials from the ruling party normally interrogated detainees on their identity, suspected links to Eritrean institutions—and their ownership of property. During the interrogation, the detainees were not given a meaningful opportunity to refute the allegation that they were Eritrean nationals (or security risks), and were denied access to the courts to challenge the legality of their detention or denationalization.

While the detainees were in custody at police stations, officials searched for and confiscated their Ethiopian identification documents, including identity cards, passports, work papers, and driving licenses.

[...]

Individuals of Eritrean origin who lived in rural areas of Ethiopia were also subject to summary deportation or expulsion. Individuals from those rural villages inhabited predominantly by people of Eritrean origins, mostly in the northern Tigray region, typically had to travel on foot from their villages into Eritrea. They were generally not allowed to take personal possessions with them and some were forced to abandon thousands of livestock.

The Ethiopian government arrested, detained, and deported approximately 75,000 people of Eritrean origin without due process of law. Most were told they being detained because they had voted in the referendum regarding Eritrea’s independence—with this cited as evidence they were “Eritreans.” Self-identity with others of the same national origin within Ethiopia’s multi-ethnic, multi-national state, the essential criterion for voting in the referendum, was reinterpreted as having been an affirmation of citizenship. Membership in Eritrean cultural, social, or political community organizations was also cited as evidence that people of Eritrean ethnicity had lost their Ethiopian nationality. Classification as “Eritrean” and decisions to deport appeared to have been determined by the processing committees even before most individuals were called in for questioning—with a space on forms identifying nationality routinely filled in as “Eritrean” in advance. The Ethiopian government also forced deportees to sign away their property rights—by demanding deportees sign powers of attorney under threat.

Eritrea’s Policy of Internment and Deportation

Eritrea pledged at the outbreak of war that Ethiopian residents would not be penalized for the war, and that they were welcome to stay in the country and to keep their jobs, while offering the option of voluntary repatriation to those wishing to depart. There was no evidence during the first phase of the conflict that Eritrea had a policy to expel Ethiopian residents, although Ethiopian residents suffered considerable abuse. As the conflict dragged on, Eritrea’s policy toward

Ethiopian residents became increasingly harsh. Thousands had left the country early in the conflict due to economic hardships related to the war and out of concern for their own safety. Increasingly, large numbers of residents were interned and expelled by the Eritrean authorities.

From August 1998 to January 1999, a period of relative calm on the war front, some 21,000 Ethiopian residents of Eritrea left for Ethiopia with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). While Eritrean authorities insisted that these departures were voluntary, a measure of coercion was involved in a number of cases. Indeed, many individuals in this first wave complained upon arrival to Ethiopia of beatings, rape, and the confiscation of their property.

[...]

Eritrean authorities started expelling larger numbers of Ethiopian residents in earnest in July and August 2000, in several instances without prior information to the ICRC to ensure the safety of deportees as they crossed front lines.

[...]

Overlooking these issues will have grave consequences for thousands of war refugees and displaced persons, many of whom are still living in makeshift settlements and relying for their survival on relief handouts. The peace process has ended the bitter conflict between the two nations. However, the issue of the resettlement or return and the compensation of deportees must be addressed squarely. In particular, the nationality status of those whose citizenship was revoked during the expulsion process must be resolved if lasting peace and reconciliation is to return to the Horn of Africa so that the international peacekeepers can return home.” (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp. 3-7)

“Eritrean government registered the deportees from Ethiopia with the ERREC. Educated deportees from urban background were easily integrated while the fate of those of rural origin was less fortunate. Deportations from Ethiopia were reported as recently as March 2002 mainly from Tigray and Addis Ababa. “The Eritrean government mobilized quickly to assist the deportees. The government-run Eritrean Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (ERREC) was put in charge of assisting the deportees and facilitating their resettlement in Eritrea. A month after the arrival of the first deportees, the ERREC had set up reception centers for them near the main border crossings with Ethiopia. In addition to offering the deportees emergency aid and counseling, the ERREC registered them as refugees.

[...]

The first waves of expellees from Ethiopia, largely made up of urban professionals and business people, resettled in Eritrea relatively quickly and easily. Jobs and government services were much harder to come by for those expelled from Ethiopia in later stages of the expulsion campaign because of the strain on Eritrea’s economy of both the war and the influx of newcomers.

Rural deportees, many of whom are poor and uneducated and have little employment experience beyond farming, have generally fared less well once in Eritrea. Their stay in the temporary resettlement camp was meant to be brief: refugees were required to relocate to areas of Eritrea they had ties, however distant.

[...]

Expulsions from Ethiopia After the December 2000 Peace Agreement

Expulsions from Ethiopia continued after its devastating May 2000 incursion in Eritrea, but gradually decreased over time. During 2000, 911 Eritrean nationals were returned to Eritrea under the auspices of the ICRC delegation in Eritrea. [...] The U.N. secretary-general and the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea strongly protested the forced expulsion in June 2001 of 704 longtime residents of Eritrean origin from Tigray region to Eritrea. Both expressed concerns about the circumstances in which the expulsions took place, and reminded the Ethiopian government that such actions should be carried out only in accordance with international humanitarian law.

[...]

Ethiopia deported another 312 people of Eritrean origin in November 2001. The group consisted of residents of Addis Ababa who sought “voluntary” deportation to join relatives deported in earlier groups. [...] A group of one hundred people of Eritrean origin were later deported on March 16, 2002, ninety-two of them from the region of Tigray, and eight from Addis Ababa and the surrounding area. [...] Members of the groups deported told human rights investigators of the U.N. peacekeeping mission that they were fleeing discrimination in access to employment and services or seeking to join relatives who had been deported before them. [...] (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.28-9;35-6).

“In addition, as a result of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, an estimated 60,000 people deported from Eritrea to drought-affected Tigray still live in difficult circumstances.” (UNICEF, 14 March 2003)

“During 2001, an estimated 25,000 persons of Ethiopian descent voluntarily returned to Ethiopia from Eritrea. Most had lived for many years in and around Asmara, the Eritrean capital. Several thousand of the returnees received transportation and border-crossing assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Ethiopian government accepted “full responsibility for their transport and relocation within Ethiopia,” a UN report declared.

An estimated 20,000 new Ethiopian returnees, however, remained internally displaced in northern Ethiopia at year's end. Nearly all of the displaced returnees struggled to survive on monthly WFP food rations.” (USCR, 1 June 2002)

To access full ‘Report on the Joint UNICEF/Women's Association of Tigray Study of Ethiopian Deportees/Returnees from Eritrea Living in Tigray by Buffoni Laura and Tadesse Ehetemariam , 31 December 2001, click here [\[External Link\]](#)

Regular human rights violations, particularly after the May 2005 parliamentary elections (January 2006)

- In zones of conflicts as well as in urban areas, civilians, killed, tortured and detained without trial
- The crackdown by the Ethiopian government of political dissent after the May 2005 elections has been particularly violent
- The violence is said to have led to the displacement of thousands of people, particularly in Oromiya and Amhara regions

In the wake of the May 2005 parliamentary elections, the repression of opposition groups contesting the election results has been very severe and has caused widespread international concern.

ENC, 24 July 2005:

"Reports filtering out of the Ethiopian countryside confirm that, following what appears to have been its electoral defeat, the EPRDF government has unleashed on the people its special troops, supported by its paramilitary forces and armed local government officials. In what increasingly bears genocidal characteristics, numerous ordinary people are being indiscriminately killed and wounded. Many are being tortured and intimidated.

First hand witnesses confirm that the repression includes the burning of houses and property, and the confiscation of land and farm animals. Terrified by such tactics, hundreds and possibly thousands of individuals and families have been forced to abandon their farms to save their lives – in the middle of the main period for cultivation.

The brute use of force by EPRDF government on innocent farmers is blatant retaliation for rejecting EPRDF's candidates. It also aims to intimidate them so that they will be too afraid to

bear witness against the orchestration of the investigation of vote counting currently underway under the auspices of the partisan National Election Board (NEB).

Although the repression has been all across the nation, farmers in certain parts of the country have been singled out for particularly brutal treatments. For instance, in Borena Zone in Wollo, especially in Kelala Lemi and Debre Sina districts, mass killings have been reported, not to mention loss of property and internal displacements. There are similar reports from parts of Gonder, eastern Gojjam, Shoa, parts of Wollega and Southern Ethiopia.

Residents of the Ethiopian countryside are particularly vulnerable to targeted atrocities due to their remote geography, lack of quick transport and communication infrastructure for rapid exchange of information, absence of human rights monitoring groups and lack of independent media coverage. Knowing this, EPRDF is acting with impunity."

HRW, 13 January 2006

"In the wake of the May 15 parliamentary elections, in which opposition parties won an unprecedented number of seats amidst massive controversy over the election results, federal police in the Oromia and Amhara regions have threatened, beaten and detained opposition supporters, students and people with no political affiliation, often in nighttime raids. Alongside local government officials and members of local government-backed militias, the federal police have taken the lead in intimidating and coercing opposition supporters.

[...]

In Oromia, individuals detained by the federal police are often accused of being supporters of the Oromo Liberation Front, an illegal insurgency group that called for Oromia-wide protests against the government on November 8. Detained individuals were also accused by police of being members of the Oromo National Congress, although it is a registered political party that won seats in the May 15 elections as part of an opposition coalition group.

'The government is deepening its crackdown in Ethiopia's rural areas, far from the eyes and ears of international observers in Addis Ababa,' Takirambudde said. 'People are being terrorized by federal police working hand-in-glove with local officials and militias.' "

For more information on human rights abuses in Gambella since 2003, see ["Targeting the Anuak: Human Rights Violations and Crimes against Humanity in Ethiopia's Gambella Region"](#)

For more information on human rights violations in Ethiopia, see ["Human rights defenders under pressure - International fact-finding mission"](#)

Border standoff in November 2005 threatening border stability (March 2006)

- Hostilities along the Ethio-Eritrean border flared up at the end of 2005, with relation to the border demarcation process
- The Boundary Commission agreed to resume negotiations around border demarcation, in an attempt to solve the tensions politically
- UNMEE's mandate, meant to end on 15 April 2006, will be extended until May 2006 in support of the ongoing diplomatic efforts

"Increasing restrictions on the freedom of movement of United Nations peacekeepers following an Eritrean ban on helicopter flights has made it harder to warn the international community of any new outbreak of hostilities on the tense frontier with Ethiopia, where the two countries fought a two-year border war.

The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) reported today that it had already vacated 17 of 18 outlying posts it has been forced to leave because of the ban. Restrictions on freedom of movement had increased throughout the area which the peacekeepers are still patrolling, about 40 per cent of what it used to be, making it difficult to monitor the tense 1,000 kilometre border, it said.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has warned that the situation could lead to another round of "devastating hostilities," which ended following the Algiers peace accords of 2000. Apart from forcing UNMEE to evacuate posts in the so-called Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), the ban has endangered peacekeepers who need to be evacuated for medical treatment, forcing them to take the long land route.

[...]

Last week, the Security Council threatened actions that could include sanctions if, in the case of Eritrea, it does not immediately rescind its ban, and against both parties if they do not reverse their military build up.

It also demanded that Ethiopia accept the agreed-upon Boundary Commission's final and binding decisions concerning the demarcation of the border between the two countries, and that both parties return to their December 2004 levels of troop deployment within 30 days, refraining from threats or the use of force." (UNNS, 29 November 2005)

"The fragile peace maintained by Ethiopia and Eritrea since they signed a comprehensive agreement at Algiers in December 2000 is fraying dangerously. With a costly two-year war now followed by nearly five years of stalemate, patience on both sides of the border has worn thin, and there are worrying signs that the countdown to renewed conflict may have begun. Neither side appears eager for war, but to dismiss the tensions as mere sabre-rattling could mean missing the last chance to preserve peace in the Horn of Africa. The two parties need help urgently from the Algiers Group – the African Union (AU), European Union (EU), UN and U.S. – who witnessed the original accords. Its members need to work together urgently to forge a "3-Ds" parallel process of de-escalation, border demarcation and bilateral dialogue, using both intensive diplomacy and the credible threat (and employment as necessary) of punitive measures.

The stakes could hardly be higher. The last war cost scores of thousands of lives, severed the economic lifeline between the two countries and ended in a way that confronted both governments with unprecedented domestic challenges. Resumption would destabilise the entire Horn, fuelling flows of weapons to armed groups throughout the region, rekindling a proxy war in Somalia and undermining the fragile peace process in southern and eastern Sudan.

At the heart of the problem is the ruling of the independent Boundary Commission established to delimit and demarcate the contested border. Both sides agreed in advance that its decision would be final and binding, but the ruling produced a stalemate that has brought them back to the brink of war. The primary bone of contention is the small, dusty border settlement of Badme, where the 1998-2000 war started. Having initially welcomed the boundary decision, Ethiopia reversed itself upon learning (after closer examination of the less than clear documentation) that this town – against the expectations of both sides – had been awarded to Eritrea. " (ICG, 22 December 2005)

"The Security Council this morning extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) for a period of one month, until 15 May, demanding, among other things, that Eritrea reverse its decision to ban the Mission's helicopter flights, and that Ethiopia accept the final and binding decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission.

Unanimously adopting resolution 1670 (2006), the Council affirmed its intention, in the event that the parties had not demonstrated full compliance with the Council's demands, as expressed in resolution 1640 (2005) (see Press Release SC/8561 of 23 November 2005), to review the mandate and troop levels of UNMEE, with a view to possible adjustments of the Mission, including a transformation into an observer mission.

The current mandate had been established by resolution 1661 (2006) of 14 March. (See Press Release SC/8659 of that date, which also contains a summary of the underlying Secretary-General's report, document S/2006/140.)" (UNSC, 13 April 2006)

Easy availability of small arms contributes to conflicts (2005)

- The local conflicts in Gambella and in Afar regions are fuelled by small arms
- The arms are being brought in across the border from Sudan (Gambella) and Somalia (Afar)

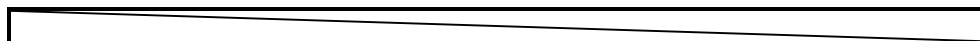
(...) Internal conflict in Ethiopia, as elsewhere in the developing world, are characterized by the widespread use of modern weapons. Firearms are used in the conflict between the Afar and Issa in the Awash Valley, the conflict between the Amhara and the Oromo in North Shoa, the conflict between the Amhara and the Afar also in North Shoa, etc. The fact that lots of firearms are used in the cross-border conflicts between North Kenyan and southern Ethiopian tribes, as well as cross-border fights in Eastern Ethiopia is too well known to need retelling.

2.2 Firearms suppliers equip liberation fronts involved in internal feuds as well as inter-state conflicts in any country

A number of examples can be cited on this point. The absence of government in Somalia and the ubiquitous fighting among warlords have facilitated small arms trafficking across the Ethiopian-Somali borders. For guerilla groups in eastern Ethiopia the most probable supply sources of small arms are warlords who have interests on both sides of the border.

In the regional state of Gambella the Anyuae and the Neur are in a permanent state of conflict over the issue of territorial control. The bone of contention are the rich alluvial plains and the fishing grounds of the Baro River. Since the Anyuae and the Neur tribes within Ethiopia have kith and kin across the border in southern Sudan the tribes in Ethiopia can count on support from their respective fellow tribesmen from across the border.

A very important feature of the Anyuae and Neur conflict is the fact that the contested territory lies adjacent to the provinces of southern Sudan, where war between North and South has been waged for decades. Liberation fronts and other rebel groups receive armament from groups whose interests lie in a destabilized Africa. Necessary armaments are supplied in generous quantities. Relevant actors in liberation fronts or other types of rebels use the trade of their virtually unlimited supply of armaments as a means of additional income.



Causes of displacement

Conflict between Garre (Somali) and Borena (Oromiya) over disputed land (February 2009)

- Conflict between Garre from Somali Region and Borana from Oromiya Region over disputed land displaces thousands.

BBC, March 2009

"Some 70,000 people have fled their homes in a remote part of southern Ethiopia, after a deadly conflict broke out between rival groups - apparently triggered by the construction of a new borehole.

[...]

An attack on the new borehole may have started the fighting, but the causes are deep rooted.

The water scheme was close to the dividing line between two of Ethiopia's ethnically-based regional states - Oromia and Somali regions - a boundary which has never been properly demarcated.

The Oromo regional government thought it was drilling the borehole on its own territory; people in Somali region thought it was on their side of the boundary.

When Somalis destroyed the rig, the Borana mobilised to take revenge, angry at what they saw as years of Somali encroachment..."

Conflict causes displacement of tens of thousands in 2008 (February 2009)

US Department of State, 25 February 2009

[...] EHRCO reported that ethnic conflict made up the majority of its human rights reporting this year. Ethnic conflict in the western, southern, and eastern areas resulted in killings and injuries above levels in 2007 and resulted in the death of hundreds and displacement of tens of thousands of persons. There were also clashes among ethnic groups in the Oromiya, Benishangul-Gumuz, and SNNP regions..."

Somali region (Special Report 2007)

Somali region

The dry, eastern Ethiopian Somali region, officially known as Somali National Regional State and also known as Ogaden after the region's majority clan, is mainly inhabited by ethnic Somali pastoralists and agro-pastoralists whose main income stems from trading in livestock and commercial goods. It is a very poor region, beset by natural disasters and conflict. The most recent droughts of 2000, 2003 and 2006 had significant impact on pastoralist livelihoods, while the floods in 2006 also covered sizeable parts of Somali region. Though the rains in 2006 were considered to be the best in decades and substantially reduced the need for general food aid to the region, the current insecurities counteract to a large extent this positive development.

The regional boundary between the neighbouring Somali and Oromiya regions has remained unsettled for a long time, giving rise to conflict-induced displacement following a 2004 border referendum (see below in the section on Oromiya region). Overall regional displacement and return figures are not available. Insecurity and the poor prospects of rebuilding livelihoods are believed to be the main reason for people not returning, although it appears that most victims of the drought and flooding had returned by mid-2007, with the exception of some population groups described below.

Armed confrontation between the Ethiopian army and the ONLF

Somali region, besides being one of the poorest and least developed in Ethiopia, is also impacted by a long-standing conflict between separatist groups and the government. The currently most prominent rebel group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), was established in 1984 as a political movement and turned to armed opposition in 1994, alleging that the federal government had reneged on its promises of political participation and regional autonomy for the Somali region.

Since the beginning of 2007, Somali region has become more insecure due to the conflict in Somalia. As arms have entered the region from various sources including Somalia, the ONLF has become more active, and bomb attacks in Degehabur zone in April 2007 have prompted an armed response by the army, which has since severely restricted humanitarian and commercial access to Fiq, Warder, Korahey, Gode and Degehabur zones, all inhabited by the Ogaden clan. (UN OCHA, Report on the findings from the UN humanitarian assessment mission to the Somali region, September 2007, p.7)

In late July 2007, the Ethiopian government ejected the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from Somali region, announcing that the organisation had sided with opposition forces and collaborated with western media to paint a false picture of the situation there. (Reuters Foundation, 25 July 2007: "Ethiopian Region Says Red Cross Warned Repeatedly".) A few weeks later, Médecins sans Frontières had to leave the region for security reasons and were not allowed to return. MSF press release, 4 August 2007.

Several international NGOs and UN agencies have expressed grave concern regarding the humanitarian and protection situation in the conflict-affected zones. An unknown number of people have been forced to flee their homes while villages are said to have been burned, wells sealed and livestock confiscated. (New York Times, 18 June 2007: "In Ethiopia, Fear and Cries of Army Brutality"; International Herald Tribune, 21 July 2007: "Ethiopia Is Said to Block Food to Rebel Region".) It is also said that the Ogadeni population is being forced to relocate to designated safe areas. If the conflict continues, more people could be displaced. Although both parties to the fighting deny targeting civilians, a UN assessment mission to Somali region in September 2007 found evidence of serious human rights violations committed against the civilian population. The mission report spoke of an "alarming" protection situation, without providing further detail. (UN OCHA, op. cit., September 2007, p.6.)

Despite some food aid reaching the zones under military control during the months of July and August, the situation regarding food security, nutrition and health remained of great concern and was expected to worsen if access to the region and people's freedom to trade remained limited. Medical supplies were lacking, while poor sanitary conditions increased the occurrence of acute watery diarrhoea in many places. (UN OCHA, op. cit., September 2007, p.5, 6; UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin, 23 July 2007.) In late October 2007, the Ethiopian government and the UN agreed on modalities to cooperate in delivering the much-needed humanitarian aid to the affected population. (UN OCHA, 18 October 2007.)

Besides limited humanitarian access, the most pressing issue facing the civilian population was the trade blockade, in place since May 2007, in reaction to the increased ONLF activities. The blockade affected pastoralists' livelihoods, reducing their opportunities to sell livestock and increasing food prices. (Chatham House: Conflict in the Ogaden and its regional implications, 31 August 2007.) On top of this, the prevalence of landmines endangers people's lives and has further impacts on trading and on humanitarian aid delivery. (UN OCHA, op. cit, September 2007, p.5.)

Because of a very effective information embargo imposed by the army in the regions where it operated, much of the information available was based on assumptions or was not officially

confirmed. International diplomatic attempts to stop the violence and ensure humanitarian access to the affected zones were ongoing as at September 2007, but had so far not been effective in enabling better protection of civilians.

The Sheikash clan: displaced pastoralists in search of political representation

The Sheikash are a Somali clan of some 200,000 pastoralists. Traditionally unarmed, the Sheikash were reportedly armed by the government to fight against the ONLF, but there is no clear evidence to support this claim. (Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007; see also International Herald Tribune, 21 July 2007: "Ethiopia Is Said to Block Food to Rebel Region".) Ensuing animosities with the Ogaden clan forced them to flee to Fafen IDP camp and to Raaso, in Afder zone, from 2000 onwards. The case of the Sheikash furthermore exemplifies the importance of access to political power. Traditionally without a clear territory of their own, and facing the growing importance of regional political representation to ensure access to land and resources, a group of roughly 1,200 Sheikash households set up camp in 2006 some 22 kilometres outside Harar, just over the border from Somali region into Hararghe zone of Oromiya region. According to the camp elder, they had fled Degehabur zone in Garbo district, Somali region, in 2000, due to tensions with the Ogaden clan. As the camp elder expressed it, they and the Ogaden "used to drink from the same river" and intermarriage was common. But as tensions rose, he said the Ogaden began to fill their wells and burn their houses. In 2006, this group of IDPs left Fafen because of lack of food and other assistance. They were surviving through their cattle, by having their children herd cattle for others, and through inter-family and diaspora assistance. Direct government assistance was rare and irregular.

In moving across a regional border, the Sheikash have made their plight more visible, by involving two regions in the search for a solution. However, the group's demand to move to Raaso could cause new tensions. Raaso was traditionally inhabited by the Fiq Omar, a small Ogaden sub-clan. The trend for the Sheikash to move from Garbo to Raaso already led some of the Fiq Omar to leave parts of Raaso to the Sheikash. But the prospect of more Sheikash moving in raised fears among Raaso's inhabitants of a changing local balance of power. According to one observer, in spring of 2007, the chance for a peaceful settlement of tensions in Raaso was slim, and a solution for the Sheikash' search of land and political representation remote. (Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.)

Return of drought-displaced people from Fafen and Hartisheik camps

Fafen camp, a few kilometres off the road from Fafen town, hosted tens of thousands of Somali refugees and, from 2000, thousands of Ethiopians displaced by drought. They also settled in a camp at the nearby town of Hartisheik. Within the framework of the UNDP-sponsored Regional Recovery Programme, and in collaboration with the Somali regional government, the UN country team assessed in 2005 the possibilities of the return and reintegration of some 5,600 drought-displaced people from Hartisheik and Fafen camps to their places of origin in Degehabur zone. By February 2006, this goal was considered to have been met. (UNCT, February 2006.)

However, some people who were involved in the process felt that the assessment of the final resettlement destination, the sensitisation of the local population in the return areas, and the follow-up to the return process had not been as rigorous as they should have been. The return areas are very dry, and it is not certain that all returnees will be able to rebuild a livelihood. Although it was seen as a pilot of a longer-term assistance-recovery-development programme, the follow-up remained inadequate, partially because of lack of funding, and it was felt that there was a risk of the international community only delivering aid, without collaborating with local authorities to eventually hand over responsibility for local development. Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007. As a result, many of those who had returned to their home place moved again, unable to build a livelihood there. In particular Hartisheik camp has become attractive as a trading centre and as a place offering some work opportunities. (Email from UN agency, August 2007.)

Most inhabitants of the Hartisheik IDP camp were Ogaden from Fiq and Gode. While some were relying on support from the diaspora or clan ties in and around Hartisheik, many others were struggling to survive. While 20 litres of water cost 1.5 birr (about \$0.16), garbage collection could earn a child an average of ten birr per week, a woman washing clothes in the village could earn four to five birr on a good day. Many children contributed to earning money, instead of going to school. The camp inhabitants said they needed food, water and healthcare. Food distribution was rare and irregular, but, as several people stressed, the relationship with the local population was good.

At the time of the IDMC visit to Fafen camp, in February 2007, only a couple of hundred Ogadeni from Gode remained. They were not included in the UNDP / UN country team resettlement programme because of the poor security situation in Gode. As of September 2007, the repatriation had still not taken place due to fighting in their home area. (Interview, Ethiopia, May 2007.) There appeared to be mounting tensions between the remaining IDPs and the local population who wanted to claim their land back. Some Sheikash also remained in the camp. The IDPs survive on occasional work, with access to health care mostly unaffordable. While they said they had access to drinking water, food aid only reached them occasionally and unpredictably, with months between deliveries.

Somali region: Root causes of, and background to displacement (August 2003)

- The return of IDPs in the Somali region depends both on the settlement of conflicts and the re-stocking of lost livestock
- Conflict between Oromo and Somali groups are over the definition of their common border, access to water and grazing lands
- Other IDPs fled conflict in Bale since early 90s

"It is well known that the root causes of inter clan conflicts in Ethiopia are claims on ownership rights over scarce resources such as communal grassing lands and watering points. Such clashes have resulted in human lives, destruction of property and human displacements. The two most recent conflicts that have resulted in massive displacement are located in the Somali and Gambella regions. Updates on these events need to be considered.

Regarding conflict in the Somali region, the working group on IDPs in the region reported that some 4,000 Shekash tribesmen from Jeno Gaben area of the Somali region were forced to move to Rasso area in North West part of the Somali region because of conflict with the Ogadenis. Following subsequent clashes in Shekash villages, other families were also displaced. Today, the regional DPPB of the Somali region and the federal DPPC have accepted the figure of 2,800 IDP families/14,200 persons as the current conflict induced IDPs in Rasso area. Hence the previous figure of 4,000 persons in the IDP working group report should be revised upwards to 14,200 persons as far as conflict induced IDP population in the Somali region is concerned." (UN OCHA-EUE, 1 August 2003)

"Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) [...] in these zones are pastoralists or agro-pastoralists either displaced by drought or conflict. [...] People displaced by conflict face even greater difficulties because their return depends on the conflict settlement and on a successful reconciliation process [...]. In addition, many of these people also lost their livestock and other assets.

IDPs settled around permanent settlements or in makeshift camps to benefit more easily from food aid, and to better position themselves to benefit from their meagre income generating schemes or the marketability of their remaining coping mechanisms. Many would not return to their places of origin since they would lose these opportunities offered by population concentrations, and would find it harder to access food aid. Needless to say that these conditions have also attracted other destitute individuals from surrounding areas who now live with the IDPs.

In Liben zone, with approximately 462,000 inhabitants (DPPC, 2001), the mission had the opportunity to visit Haya Suftu with 2,370 IDP households, and Filtu with over 800 IDP households (NCA/Ethiopia, 2001). In Dolo Odo, no camp-like settlements have been set up but IDPs have also established themselves around the town.

In total there are seven IDP camps in Liben zone: three in Filtu and four in Haya Suftu. Two camps in Filtu and one in Haya Suftu include people from Bale. The people in the other four camps all claim to come from Liben Woreda in Borana zone. In all seven camps people claim to belong to various Somali clans and sub-clans. However, the "ethnic origin" of some of the groups from Bale is uncertain. There are reports that for example the *Gurra* call themselves *Oromos* in Mada Wolabo, one of their places of origin, while they claim to be *Somalis* in Filtu and Haya-Suftu. The same applies for other groups from Bale area that are discussed and mentioned further below in this section.

Nearly all IDPs in Filtu and Haya Suftu claim to have left their places of origin due to conflict, with drought and food shortage being additional causes. However, the mission received conflicting information about the relevance of each of these reasons and was not able to substantiate the exactitude of those claims.

The original population of Haya Suftu used to be approximately 600 households. The IDP influx started in 1998. Presently there are 2,370 households registered that settled in 8 kebeles around the Haya Suftu administrative centre. People in Haya Suftu have mainly been living from food assistance provided through Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI) and the DPPD food deliveries. In addition, each day two tanker truckloads of water are dispatched by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY).

Conflict-related displacement originates from a variety of places and local contexts that nevertheless are mostly linked to the inter-relationship between certain Oromo and Somali groups [...]. The most common cause of the conflicts is the dispute over the delimitation of the boundary between the two regions that seems not yet settled in certain limited areas. The discussions and conflicts mainly entail access to natural resources such as water and grazing land.

It was reported that about 1,400 *Degodia* households living now in Haya Suftu, and another 220 *Degodia* families that are now in Filtu, fled from an area south of the Negelle-Filtu road and north of the Dawa river [...]. This area holds the so-called northern *wayama* grazing area and includes the particularly rich *walenso*, a dry season grazing ground which has traditionally served as a sanctuary for both Somali and Oromo groups in times of drought. The conflict here is primarily over land ownership, affecting the rights of access for grazing and watering. However, the question as to how and whether conflict indeed triggered these population movements, and how many of these people are actually non-IDPs, requires further on-the-spot investigations.
[...]

The 510 *Marehan* IDP households in Haya Suftu appear to have an extraordinary history. They voluntarily repatriated themselves from Negelle even though their bitter relationship with the predominant *Degodia* in Haya Suftu did not make the option particularly promising. However, having lost most of their livelihood assets following their conflict with the *Boranas* in 1992, they saw no means of sustaining themselves as IDPs in Negelle and moved on to Haya Suftu in hope for better assistance.

Furthermore, 420 *Gurra*, *Ajuran* and *Karale* households in Haya Suftu and 243 *Wara Dubie* and 289 *Gurra* families in Filtu reportedly fled from conflict areas in Bale. The three groups in Haya Suftu came from Mada Walabu, about 50 km north of Negele near the Genale River. The IDPs in Filtu originate from Dallo Mana, about 100 km north of Negele, along the Welmel River, a tributary of the Genale River. Since early 2000, conflict has occurred there (NCA/Ethiopia, 2001). Overall, these conflicts are part of the wider context along the regional boundary between Oromia and Somali Regions. There definitely is a need to further investigate the role that drought might have played in the displacement of these people. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) is currently re-registering the IDPs from Bale and has approved plans to assist them to move back to their former areas.

[...]

Nevertheless, conflict displacement remains important. An area starting north of Harodibe and stretching about 50 km eastwards into Afder zone is contested between respective *Borana* and *Gurra* groups. Again, this conflict is linked to the regional boundary demarcation. According to IDPs in Cheretti, the main part of this armed conflict took place between approximately 1994 and 1997. However, it flared up again before the last federal elections in 2000. Displacement from this conflict inter alia accounts for about 140 families of the IDPs in Cheretti." (UNDP EUE, 31 March 2002, pp.7-9)

Somali region: clashes between Ethiopian armed forces and ONLF (June 2008)

- Government of Ethiopia engage in forced displacement to cut off support for ONLF
- Tensions between the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) have been ongoing for over 10 years
- They have intensified in April 2007, leading to a military offensive in five zones
- Below a brief background on the federal policy and the ONLF

Human Rights Watch, June 2008; page 33

"In an attempt to cut off civilian support to the ONLF and concentrate its rural support base in designated larger villages and towns, Ethiopia's scaled up counterinsurgency campaign against the ONLF has involved widespread forced displacement, particularly between June and August 2007. The government has ordered civilians to relocate from small villages and pastoralist settlements to designated towns throughout the conflict affected zones, typically ordering the villagers and nomads to move within two to seven days. To secure compliance with the evacuation orders, the Ethiopian army repeatedly implemented a phased system of terror involving the confiscation and killing of livestock, public executions, and the destruction of villages by burning..."

The name Ogaden belongs to the largest Somali sub-clan living in the Somali region, the Ogaadeen, of Ethiopia. Historically, the Somali-inhabited area of Ethiopia has been known as the Ogaden region. It also gave its name to the war between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1977/78. After 1991 it became the Somali Regional State, also known as Region 5.

The population size is highly disputed, with allegations that the 1994 census findings were reduced from as much as 9.2 or 7.5 million to 3.4 million. The number of districts has risen steadily and had reached 52 by the end of 2005. The regional boundary between the Somali region and Oromiya was not settled up to 2003 when referenda to determine the boundaries at district (Woreda) and local (kebele) levels . There has been no official strategic level dialogue between the Ogaden National Liberation Front and the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary

Democratic Front (EPRDF) since the ONLF left the regional government in 1994. There are few Somalis in senior positions in the Federal government of Ethiopia.[...]

II THE POLITICAL SITUATION

A The EPRDF and bad governance in Region 5

[...]

The heightened tension between Government and military against the ONLF dates from the attack in April on the Chinese oil exploration company. The EPRDF approach to Region 5 is dominated by security considerations to the exclusion of all else. Military authorities exert strong influence on aspects of regional government: all local committees include an ENDF presence. Government action is construed as a policy of collective clan punishment against certain Ogaadeen clans. Although the Somali regional government has Ogaadeen clan members, including in key positions, there is still a sense that it is dominated by the interests of other (non Ogadeni) clans. These are favoured allies and have condoned the federal action. The blockade is also a counter-insurgency measure since the ONLF was taxing traders in the areas where it is strong and the government sought to cut it off from its material support base.

The situation is worst for Ogaadeenis, but the rest of the population is also affected. They do not condone what is happening. The current problems come on the back of a long record of misrule in the Region 5, affecting all Ethiopian Somalis. The autonomy that Region 5 should enjoy under the Ethiopian federal system has not been honoured. There is an absence of genuine local political organisations and regional officials are handpicked, upwardly accountable and unable to speak out. State institutions are weak and ineffectual if they exist at all. Parliamentarians have been arrested and civil servants arbitrarily dismissed. Funds have been embezzled. The security forces are irresponsible and unaccountable and the abuse of human rights has been aided by ignorance of the people, expulsion of critics and weak judicial institutions. Starvation has been used as a punishment.

Nonetheless, it was possible to argue that state structures had penetrated Region 5 more than they did under previous Ethiopian governments. Woreda level budgets represent an injection of capital. Fighting over this among the new regional elites has helped to produce instability. Civil service dismissals could be seen as resource conflict. Seen in the longer term, this may represent an attempt by the Ethiopian authorities to reclaim Region 5, incorporate it more fully into the state and create a tax base there.

B The ONLF

Established in 1984, the ONLF had its roots in the Ogaadeen diaspora in Somalia, the Middle East and Western countries. The ONLF headed the Somali regional government from 1991 to 1994, in the initial years in alliance with the WSLF. It was forced out of regional office by EPRDF after it requested the holding of a referendum on selfdetermination/secession in 1994. The nature and extent of the support base of the ONLF is a subject of some controversy. Non-Ogaadeeni sources claim that the organisation has a strong association with certain Ogaadeen sub-clans, notably the Rer Abdille. But Ogadeeni sources dispute this, claiming that ONLF support is not confined to this group and the current crackdown has affected many other Ogaadeen sub-clans. They note that the leadership of the ONLF has always included a variety of Ogaadeen sub-clans. Numbers matter in the ethnic federal system, and the region's non-Ogaadeen clans contest the Ogaadeen claim to represent the majority in Region 5. Ogadeeni clans just as strongly refute charges of hegemonic tendencies. Current pressures have increased infighting among Ogaadeen clans and the ONLF leadership is itself divided.

Eritrea has taken a close interest in the ONLF since 1998, providing support and training. This has weakened earlier Islamist tendencies in the organisation and has resulted in an uneasy

relationship between the ONLF and Islamist groups operating in the region. In the current phase, most of the victims of the conflict are Ogaadeen citizens rather than Ethiopian soldiers or ONLF fighters. The political aspects of the conflict are not new, but the problem was ignored and allowed to fester. Negotiations between EPRDF and Ogadeni elders in 2005 were not encouraged or supported by any external stakeholders.

Drought-induced displacements fuel conflicts in east and south, 2002-2005 (February 2005)

- Poor rains in Afar region risk exacerbate tensions among neighbouring ethnic groups
- Some 460,000 people will need food aid in Afar region
- Scarcity of pasture lands and water led to bloody fighting between Afar and Kereyou tribesmen at the border of the two tribes' territories in December 2002
- Issa pastoralists in conflict over scarce resources with Afar and Oromo people in Somali region
- Drought eroded cultural resource-sharing traditions and fuelled conflicts

Afar region:

"Concern is mounting over the likely long-term impact of poor rains in Ethiopia's remote Afar region ...About 1.2 million people live in Afar, a lowland region bordering Djibouti and Eritrea, covering 270,000 sq km. The region, whose pastoral population are mainly nomadic herders living off their livestock, receives less than 200 mm of rain a year, according to government statistics. ... Other humanitarian sources said there were fears that migration could also fuel tensions among neighbouring ethnic groups. Serious fighting between the Afar and neighbouring Issa clans of Somali Region broke out in 2002 as both searched for pasture and water for their animals. ... Tensions were already preventing the Afar from crossing into traditional dry land pasture areas they once used in times of shortages. ... The region was also hard hit in 2002/2003 when more than 12.6 million people in Ethiopia had to depend on food aid for survival. According to the government Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission, more than half of the cattle in Afar died, undermining its fragile local economy. Some 460,000 people are expected to receive food aid in the region, WFP said. A total of 8,500 mt is needed to assist the beneficiaries per month." (IRIN, 12 January 2005)

"Tribal fighting is believed to have left as many as 40 people dead in recent clashes sparked by the severe drought in Ethiopia, humanitarian sources said on Wednesday.

The clashes, which occurred near Fentale in eastern Ethiopia, broke out after Afar pastoralists moved into Kereyou territory to graze their animals.

According to one local source, dozens of Kereyou tribesmen were killed in the fighting with armed Afar men. The clash, which took place in December, is the latest in a series of violent outbreaks over the past few months.

"Kereyou men were killed in the incident," a humanitarian source in the area told IRIN. "It was a fight over pasture on the border of Kereyou and Afar. The pressure of the drought has pushed the Afar into the Kereyou area. The Afar were much better armed and so the consequences were inevitable."

Clashes between rival groups have been erupting with increasing regularity in Afar and neighbouring areas.

In late November, some 16 people were shot dead in Gewane in Afar region. The killing has been blamed on ethnic violence between rival clans. Some 20 Afar women were also shot dead as they returned from a daily market near the town of Shewarobit, about 280 km north of the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. The killing was blamed on a rival ethnic group. Days later 11 Ittus in Kereyou were killed by Afar.

Aid organisations and the UN have warned that the drought has only exacerbated the conflict between groups competing for scarce water resources.

The Ethiopian military is understood to have moved into some areas to try and keep a lid on tensions. Regional government officials have also been involved in talks to try and defuse the situation.

The area has also seen an increase in guns with AK47's being smuggled in from neighbouring Djibouti. " (IRIN, 8 January 2003)

"Where wells dried up and pasture never regenerated, pastoralists moved, often across traditional boundaries and other nations' borders. In some cases, movements resulted in the spread of disease, and in others, the cultural tradition of sharing meagre resources in difficult times was tested to its limits and led to conflict." (UN, 19 November 2002, p.2)

Somali Region:

"A drought-induced exodus of Issa pastoralists and their herds from Shinille zone, Somali region, to the south and east has resulted in confrontations, some violent, over unusually scarce grazing resources with both Afar and Oromo groups. There were unconfirmed reports of 32 Afar women being murdered in North Shewa zone in November. [...]

The expected intensification of famine conditions during 2003 is likely to boost levels of dissatisfaction and, thus, dissent against the EPRDF, while increased population movements, especially among pastoralists, may fuel further ethnic clashes." (SADC, 28 February 2003, p.3)

Somali-Oromo border referendum of December 2004

- Conflicts have been going on between regional states of The Somali National Regional State (SNRS) and Oromiya regional state over the definition of their respective boundaries
- The October 2004 referendum which was supposed to put an end to a decade-old land row between the two regions caused tensions between communities
- Since November 2004, in East and West Hararghe there is increasing pressures on the minorities to flee
- There is fear of new displacements in areas where no referendum was conducted
- Conflicts between factions of the Somali Degodia and the Borana have been caused by competition over land and water resources

"The referendum which was held in October last year, was conducted in about 420 kebeles in 12 districts spilled across five zones of the zones of the Somali Region. According to the official results of the referendum, about 80% of the disputed areas have fallen under Oromia administration though irregularities in voting were heavily complained in many of them. This subsequently triggered mass migrations of the Somali communities in the said areas, particularly in parts of Goro-baqaqsa and Gurodamole districts of Afder zone and in parts of Liban, Shinille and Fik zones. As per the latest updates of the situation, these displacements are the result of increased harassment and subjugation from the Oromo side in the post- referendum period rather

than by direct confrontations. Many of the displacements are in areas that either already transpired to the Oromos or pro-Oromo activities increased to scare out their competitors. A similar situation is potentially looming in areas that have not yet been transferred into the hands of the Oromos. The referendum strained relations and raised frictions and uneasiness in areas where no referendum was conducted. A recent example in this latter case could be the case of western Hudet of Liban where heightened uneasiness prevented pastoral mobility and inter-tribal sharing of resources in the western parts of the district." (Email to NRC from the DPPB of the Somali region, 7 April 2005)

"As a result of the referendum last year between Oromiya and Somali Regions there has been an increase in ethnic clashes in disputed woredas in East and West Hararghe. In November 2004, IDPs began arriving in Mieso town and there are now more than 2,100 people living in temporary shelter. There are now new reports of ethnic clashes in West and East Hararghe. The Doba woreda authorities have requested immediate relief support from NGOs for 12,000 newly displaced people. Reports from the region indicate that five people were killed, 12 others wounded and 447 houses burnt during an outbreak of violence in the last fortnight. Another NGO, Catholic Relief Service has received an urgent request for assistance from the Goro Gutu woreda administration for immediate humanitarian needs such as food, shelter and clothing for 324 displaced persons. The IDPs originally from Erer woreda have fled to Karamille town as result of the violence." (UN OCHA-EUE, 28 January 2004)

Background information:

"Southeast Ethiopia has been a region racked by conflict and has experienced large inflows and outflows of refugees. In 1977/78, the Ogaden war between Ethiopia and Somalia led to huge outflows of Ethiopian Somalis into Somalia. Then in the late 1980's and early 1990's, the civil war in Somalia led to a reverse refugee flow of Somalis, including those who had previously fled from Ethiopia, crossing into southeast Ethiopia to escape fighting in Somalia.

Apart from international factors that destabilise the region, the population of the SNRS also has to sustain the negative impact of conflicts between regional states, primarily Oromia and SNRS, and between fractions of concerned ethnic groups such as the Somali Degodia and the Borana of the Oromo. The change of government in 1991 and the subsequent introduction of the "ethnic federalism" concept brought about the creation of regional states and governments. However, the exact definition of the boundary between the SNRS and Oromia, two entities that have evolved from this process, remains disputed. At the same time, ethnic groups from both sides compete over the ownership and access, particularly to rich grazing land and pasture as well as strategically and historically vital water points along the regional border. Adding to this, there are local conflicts within SNRS that are related to particular issues or commodities such as cattle raiding. Parties to these conflicts frequently define themselves along the lines of clan identities. Furthermore, the semi-arid Somali Region is extremely drought prone. Drought is a recurrent and frequent phenomenon. Pastoralists experience a "mini-drought" each dry season stretching their livelihood to the limits. Both the international, and internal conflicts, and the recurrent droughts lead to population displacement." (UNDP EUE, 31 March 2002, pp.1-2)

Oromiya region (Special Report 2007)

Oromiya region

Oromiya was incorporated into the Ethiopian state (then Abyssinia) at the beginning of the twentieth century. The subjugation of the Oromo included resettlement and villagisation during the Dergue years; of the resistance groups that emerged, the most active today is the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF).

The two most significant displacement situations in Oromiya resulted from the 2004 regional border referendum and the conflict between the Borena, Guji and Gabra clans in south Oromiya.

Displacement of Somali and Oromo on the Somali-Oromiya border

Clashes along the Oromiya-Somali regional border have recurred over the past few years. In December 2003, a conflict over land rights led to the displacement of almost 20,000 people. (UN OCHA Ethiopia, May 2004.) A border referendum conducted in October 2004 along parts of the regional border between Oromiya and Somali to determine the preference for administrative status of border *kebeles* served only to raise levels of violence between the two ethnic groups instead of providing clarity. It forced an estimated 80,000 people on either side of the border to leave their homes during the last months of 2004 and at the beginning of 2005. The result was essentially a division of ethnicities along the regional border. (Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.) Their return seemed unfeasible, as neither side appeared to want to risk losing power in the 2007 regional elections. However, while the Oromo and Somali no longer lived in the same village, they did trade, the Oromo cultivating Qat and selling it to the Somali. According to one source, the interruption of the Qat trade and lack of external aid have forced the communities to settle at least some of their differences. (Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.)

It is not clear how many of the 80,000 people displaced in both regions have returned since 2005, or how many are still in need of assistance. While the federal government does not publish any numbers, there may be as many as 50,000 remaining, including 15,000 in need of emergency food assistance in camps in Afder zone. (Number based on 2007 estimates by various UN sources; unpublished document, August 2007.)

The small town of Mieso, on the railway connecting Addis Ababa and Djibouti, received over 38,000 Oromo IDPs after the October 2004 referendum, according to local officials. When international assistance ceased in early 2005, some 3,000 IDPs remained. In July 2005, new conflicts between the Oromo and Somali in the Mieso area of West Hararghe were reported and more families fled to Mieso. As of 2007, the displaced people have largely integrated locally or resettled, and the IDP camp no longer exists. But according to an unpublished 2007 assessment of the border referendum displacement between Awash and Erer Gota, some 5,000 to 6,000 displaced Oromo households remain in need of some kind of assistance in order to settle elsewhere in the country. While the displaced Oromo received some assistance, the Somali displaced appeared to remain largely unrecorded and unassisted. (Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.)

Mieso's IDPs felt that a lack of consultation had affected the assistance they had received; 800 houses had been built for them by the regional government on the outskirts of Mieso, but they were perceived as being dangerously close to the regional Somali border. In 2007, fewer than 1,000 people lived in these constructions, which consisted of stick walls and a corrugated roof, but no doors. The settlement was without sanitation, and a resettlement allowance paid to some of the displaced was used mostly to finish the walls and install doors. Current livelihoods were firewood collection, work in local house construction, livestock keeping or begging. People said that small loans would be sufficient for them to start a small business and to profit from trading opportunities along the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway. But their appeal to the *woreda* officials for financial aid had not been successful.

Not far from Mieso, on the outskirts of the small town of Karamile, around 200 Oromo IDPs who had left Erer Gota in Somali region during the months following the border referendum lived in small round huts. Food aid distribution by the *woreda* administration was irregular. This food insecurity had particular impact on small children and breastfeeding mothers. The camp's water came from an unprotected source. While most children went to the local school, healthcare was out of reach for most camp residents. These farmers and traders had left their homes because

they felt harassed by the Somali population. As of July 2007, the IDPs had not received any substantive humanitarian assistance.

Borena and Guji zones: ethnic conflicts over zonal borders

Between 2005 and 2007, the two zones of Borena and Guji were particularly affected by conflict-induced displacement. In 2005, ethnic conflicts between the Gabra and the Guji clans, and between the Gabra and the Borena, displaced over 40,000 people. Many of these people remained displaced, and as local authorities did not consider them eligible for emergency food distribution and other basic services and protection, they remained in a very precarious situation. (UN OCHA, 3 January 2006.)

The Borena are pastoralists, the Guji agro-pastoralists who occupy fertile land. In 2006, following changes to the Borena and Guji zonal borders, Guji and Borena leaders started making land claims and counter-claims, which erupted eventually in violent clashes on 30 May 2006, causing up to 150 deaths and forcing some 120,000 people to leave their homes and move to areas where their ethnicities were predominant. (Some sources set the actual number of displaced lower than 120,000, saying that local officials inflated numbers; other sources believe there were more than 120,000 displaced.) Rumours of gold having been found in the region also increased existing land-use tensions between the two groups. Assistance was brought in by a number of international agencies and NGOs but one report, speaking of a severe disruption of livelihoods, warned of signs of undernourishment and illness due to the harsh living conditions in displacement. (Oxfam America: Rapid Public Health Assessment of IDPs Due to the Conflict in Southern Ethiopia, 6 July 2006.) Regional and local officials, in collaboration with clan elders, eventually brokered a ceasefire and a resource-sharing agreement in July 2006. USDS, 6 March 2007, op. cit. The government reported that all the displaced people had returned.

Despite that agreement, clan conflict in Borena zone between the Borena and Gabra flared up again at the beginning of 2007, causing deaths and displacing an unknown number of people. A UN inter-agency team visited Borena and Guji zones in March 2007 to assess the humanitarian impact of the clashes on displaced populations in Arero, Moyale, and Dire *woredas* in Borena zone, and Shakiso *woreda* in Guji zone. (UN OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin of 26 February 2007 and 2 April 2007.) Estimates in 2007 by international organisations speak of some 20,000 people still displaced. (Number based on 2007 estimates by various international sources.)

Gambella: Causes for displacement (2004)

- The fact that the two main groups in Gambella pursue different subsistence economies, pastoralism and agriculture has been both source of complementarity and conflict
- Traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms were undermined when the Ethiopian State placed this responsibility with local administrations and away from clan elders
- Conflicts been exacerbated by population growth and declining availability of lands and particularly since 2002 due to drought
- War in Sudan has increased the number of Nuer crossing the border and staying in Ethiopia
- Anyuak reject the 1994 census arguing Nuer infiltrated across Sudan to over-represent themselves and due to rains Anyuak villages were inaccessible during the census
- Although the Nuer represent 40% of the Gambella population and Anyuak 27%, Nuer language is no longer taught in schools
- Anyuak perceive the Nuer majority as usurpers of power and government posts
- Availability of guns from Sudan and from the Derg regime and difficulty to demobilize the pastoral Nuer has been conducive to conflicts

IRIN, 12 January 2004

“Control over natural resources

Though insignificant in its nature and causality, inter-group conflict between the Anyuua and Nuer can be traced as far back as the early 20th century. Livelihoods pursued by these two groups are one of the major causes for conflict. As mentioned above, while Anyuua are primarily cultivators, the Nuers are mainly pastoralists. Traditionally, the two groups have reciprocal arrangements whereby the Nuers have access to grazing land and the Anyuua benefit from milk and some cattle provisions. Whenever small conflicts arise, elders from both groups gather to arrange for blood payments made in the form of a certain number of cattle as compensation lost human lives. Elders break weapons such as spears symbolizing that no more fighting and revenge will take place [...]. Gradually, however, these traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have started to erode for various reasons. According to some elders, Ethiopian State administration took conflict management responsibilities from clan and group leaders and placed it in the hands of the local 'Kebele' administrations. As populations increased, access to grazing land and water became scarce [...]. Large numbers of Nuer with their cattle encroached on Anyuua territory and remained there for a longer period than the traditionally limited grazing season permits. With time, some started to settle and even inter-married with Anyuua. While this tradition helps in resolving conflicts between the two groups, it is also said that the Nuers in particular benefit from these arrangements because the dowries that are required usually come in form of large numbers of cattle as gifts for the bride. The Anyuua, on the other hand, cannot afford to pay large numbers of cattle as bride wealth because they do not possess large numbers of livestock, they being primarily agriculturalists.

UNCT Ethiopia, 3 January 2003, pp.3-5

The push factors from Southern Sudan including the war between the government of Sudan and Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) has caused large numbers of Nuers to cross borders and settle in Gambella region of Ethiopia.

“Competition over land between the Anyuak [...] and the Nuer [...] is fierce. The Anyuak see themselves as losing land to the nomadic Nuer, whose numbers are steadily rising.

What tribe or ethnic group constitutes the majority in Gambella region?

This question is the second most important factor that has contributed to a constant struggle between the two groups. It is well known that being a majority group means more seats in the government parliamentary system and other political privileges such as, for example, higher budget allocations. According to the 1994 population census, the Anyuua represent 27% while the Nuers represent 40% of the total population in Gambella region. However, the Anyuua do not acknowledge the legitimacy of the census claiming that the number of the Nuers is high because the Ethio-Sudanese border is difficult to control and therefore Sudanese Nuers keep infiltrating into Gambella region. An example is cited for Jikawo woreda where Nuers from Sudan crossed to be counted during the population census in 1994. Many Anyuua also believe that the 1994 [...] census was conducted during the rainy season when most of the Anyuua villages were inaccessible and resulted in many Anyuua being uncounted”.

IRIN, 12 February 2004

“Gambella, a swampy, malaria-infested lowland area, is inhabited by about 228,000 people, of whom 90,000 are Nuer, with 62,000 Anyuak constituting the second-largest ethnic group.”

IRIN, 15 January 2004

The Ethiopian federal system of dividing country's regions along ethnic lines

"The country's regions [...] were divided along ethnic lines, with the largest ethnic groups gaining the most seats in local administrations. People had therefore become more conscious and sensitive of their ethnicity."

AFP, 10 Feb 2004

"Under Ethiopia's federal system, the largest ethnic group in each state -- the Anuak in Gambella's case -- are meant to control local government affairs and dictate the official language.

But recently the Anuak have felt their authority has been undermined by outsiders, the so-called "highlanders" from the capital and other areas, who are accused of lording it over the indigenous population."

UN CT Ethiopia, 3 January 2003, pp.3-5

"What language should be taught

Until recently, this has also caused solemn conflicts between the two groups. Both groups claim that their own language should be taught in schools in Gambella region. Since 1995, both languages have been taught. Eventually, however, Nuer teachers are said to have left the teaching profession to join other government posts. Due to this, books in Nuer language are no longer produced. Currently, only the Anyuua language is taught up to grade 10. The Nuers, on the other hand, argue --- quoting the 1994 population census showing their majority representation in the total population --- that their language should be taught in schools.

Access to arms

As a border area, people in Gambella region have easy access to arms. This is considered to be one of the major reasons why the conflict has escalated with heavier casualties compared to conflicts fought with traditional arms such as spears. Arms are easily accessible owing to the SPLA presence on the other side of the border adjacent to Gambella region and due to frequent movement of people from Southern Sudan into Ethiopia" .

IRIN, 24 January 2003

"[It is] recognised that without peace in war-torn southern Sudan, the conflict in Gambella was likely to continue."

Gambella: Displacement in December 2003 and in 2004

- Sporadic incidence of violence between different Nuer tribes in the west of the region continue to cause displacements
- In December 2003 as they were blamed for the death of eight people, 5,000 Anyuak sought refuge in a church and between 60 and 424 others were killed
- The government blamed as inter alia soldiers blocked the roads out of the town
- Renewed ethnic clashes in January 2004 which killed more than 250 persons in and around the town of Dima led to the displacement of 10,000 people
- In early 2006, up to 3,000 persons were displaced in Nuer zone

"The 50,000 persons reported by regional authorities to have been displaced by ethnic conflict in December 2003 urgently require more shelter and health services. Occasional sporadic incidents of violence are still occurring, resulting in further displacements. There are also reported clashes in the west between different Nuer tribes. The security situation is worsening in the region. Humanitarian presence for effective monitoring of activities in the refugee camps in the region was re-established in October 2004 when UNHCR and WFP returned to Gambella after 10 months' relocation of their staff. In spite of the relocation, UNHCR and WFP continued providing assistance throughout 2004 through the Government partner, ARRA. However many areas where persons affected by the violence and displacement of December 2003 need assistance, remain inaccessible." (UN CT, 21 April 2005)

"[In the Gambella region] since December 2003, there have been numerous reports of attacks leading to massacres of civilians, mass rapes, forced disappearances, torture, illegal arrests and detentions, burning of homes and crops, and the forced displacement of thousands of persons" (OMCT, 13 April 2004).

December 2003

"[...] the more recent clashes had first erupted in December with an attack on a UN-plated vehicle in which eight government refugee workers were killed. The Anyuaks were held responsible and then subjected to reprisals, in which 60 of them were reportedly killed; but British officials say as many as 150 could have died." (IRIN, 12 February 2004)

"According to the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, 93 people were killed then.

[...]

The latest statement spoke of the December unrest as "a tragic riot in Gambella where innocent Anuak civilians were cold-bloodedly killed in their houses burnt down by a mob of hooligans and their supporters, all of whom were non-indigenous." (AFP, 11 February 2004)

"Mesfin went on to say that in the run-up to the attack, 5,000 Anyuaks had sought refuge in one of the town's churches, because soldiers had blocked the roads leading out of the town. "The mob, in collaboration with members of the [government] defence forces, continued to attack those who could not find anywhere to hide. Many were killed or sustained severe and light injuries," added Mesfin, who has been the president of ERCHO for eight years." (IRIN, 15 January 2004)

"Reports indicate that during the period between the 13th and 15th of December, 2003, 424 Anuak were killed by Ethiopian Government troops in uniform along with local people from highland areas, in Abobo, Itang, Gog and Gambella town in the Gambella region. The pretext for these massacres is reported to have been an attack on a van carrying eight UN and Ethiopian Government refugee officials on December 13th, 2003, which was blamed, without conclusive evidence, on members of the Anuak ethnic group.

It is alleged that the troops used this incident to incite the highlanders to commit violence. They also led attacks on Anuak civilians in Gambella and the surrounding areas. The killings were reportedly ordered by the commander of the Ethiopian Army in Gambella, Nagu Beyene, with the authorization of Government official Dr. Gebrehab Barnabas. Mr. Omot Obang Olom, an Anuak Government official is reported to have drawn up lists of individuals within the community to be targeted. Soldiers, using automatic weapons and hand grenades, reportedly targeted the Anuak population, summarily executing civilians, burning houses and looting property. During this three-day period, 424 people were reported to have been killed, with over 200 wounded and approximately 85 people remain unaccounted for." (OMCT, 13 April 2004)

January 2004

"...after a month of relative calm in Gambella, violence re-erupted in the form of a bloody attack on the gold mine, which is near Dima. According to humanitarian sources, highlanders and Anyuaks clashed again a day later, this time in Dima town. Yet more clashes subsequently broke out in Dima refugee camp on 6 February." (IRIN, 12 February 2004)

"Ten thousand people have fled ethnic fighting in western Ethiopia that has claimed more than 250 lives, according to government officials. Clashes had erupted at a gold mine, in which 196 people were killed in a single day; the killings being one of the worst instances of ethnic violence seen in Ethiopia in recent years, the government said on Wednesday.

[...]

The government blamed the renewed fighting on armed elements among the Anyuak – an ethnic group in Gambella which fears it is losing political power there. "These atrocities were conducted by an armed group of over 200 men who claim to be the leaders of the Anyuak," the ministry said in reference to the attack on the gold mine, which Anyuak claim as being on their territory.

Most of the victims originated from the neighbouring Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State. (IRIN, 12 February 2004)

"Almost 200 people were killed on a single day late last month (January) when simmering ethnic tensions in Ethiopia's western Gambella state exploded into an orgy of violence, the federal government said Wednesday.

The ministry of federal affairs said in a statement that 196 people, most of them traditional miners, were killed on January 30 in and around the town of Dimma, about 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) southwest of Addis Ababa, by members of the Anuak ethnic group." (AFP, 11 February 2004)

February 2006

"...Security is still a concern, with continued conflict reported. In Nuer zone, more than 3,000 people were displaced to Nyenenyag due to inter-klan conflict. The DPP&FS office has transported and distributed food items to the displaced people." (UNCT, February 2006)

Human rights violations

"Since late 2003, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has committed numerous human rights violations against Anuak communities in the Gambella region of southwestern Ethiopia that may amount to crimes against humanity. These abuses have taken place in a region plagued by longstanding ethnic tensions to which the Ethiopian military has become a party." (HRW, March 2005, p.1)

"Between 13 and 15 December 2003, mobs of civilian "highlanders" (people originating from the Amhara and Tigray regions of Ethiopia) and federal soldiers reportedly killed hundreds of members of the Anuak (also known as Anywaa) ethnic group in Gambella town. A subsequent government inquiry described how these events were sparked off by the killing of eight people, allegedly by an Anuak armed group, on 13 December. The eight included three staff of the federal government refugee organization and a police officer. Regional police reportedly put the mutilated bodies of the eight people on public display, leading to three days of ethnically-targeted violence. The inquiry reported that 65 people were killed and 75 wounded by civilians and soldiers, and 500 houses burnt down and looted.

Eyewitnesses and survivors have, however, claimed that several hundred Anuak people, including civil servants, teachers and students, were shot and hacked to death with knives and machetes. Many women were raped. Tens of thousands of Anuak people were displaced, many

fleeing to Sudan, before the army restored order some days later. Hundreds were also detained and tortured, and are still in prison without charge or trial. ...

The situation in the region remains tense, with many more people reportedly killed by soldiers in the past year. Twenty-eight leaders of the GPDC, including former regional governor Okello Nyigelo Olam, remain detained without trial in Addis Ababa, and may be prisoners of conscience.” (AI, 17 December 2004)

Gambella: Displacement from 2005 to 2007 (Special Report 2007)

- Gambella region has been the stage of many years of resettlement, forced and economic migration, profoundly changing the ethnic composition
- The civil war in south Sudan also impacted on the region
- The living conditions of IDPs is precarious, with little access to clean water, shelter, health care and education

Gambella region

In the remote south-western Gambella region, which borders on Sudan and was incorporated into the Ethiopian state around the beginning of the twentieth century, multiple ethnic conflicts have been ongoing for decades. Large-scale resettlement and migratory movements and large numbers of Sudanese refugees have continuously changed the ethnic map of Gambella over the last few decades. Under the Dergue and later, large numbers of “Highlanders” from the arid and overpopulated highlands were resettled in Gambella, in order to increase the country’s overall agricultural productivity and to mitigate food scarcity in the highlands. At the same time, Gambella’s own population was subjected to the Dergue’s “villagisation” policy. These exercises of large-scale social and economic restructuring, in addition to vigorous Nuer immigration and the later arrival of Sudanese Nuer refugees, reduced the Anyuak farmers, who had once made up around 80 per cent of the population of Gambella, to a minority. (ZOA op.cit, p.6; Sandra Steingraber, op. cit.)

While the cohabitation of Anyuak, Nuer and Highlanders had been difficult from the outset, violent conflict broke out in 2000 and escalated in late 2003, increasingly involving the Ethiopian army. At least 15,000 people, mostly Anyuak, were forced to flee their homes in December 2003. (HRW, 24 March 2005; IRIN, 12 February 2004.) Since then, and particularly following counter-attacks by Anyuak against Highlanders, the army was reported to have committed widespread human rights violations against the Anyuak throughout the region, so far in a climate of almost total impunity. (UN CTE, 20 April 2005; HRW, 24 March 2005.) In 2004 an independent inquiry commission was established to investigate the alleged killing, rape, and torture of hundreds of Anyuaks between December 2003 and May 2004. As a result of the commission’s findings, six members of the army were arrested and placed on trial, but had not been convicted as at March 2007. (USDS, op.cit. 6 March 2007.)

In late 2004, Gambella was re-organised into two ethnically defined zones: the Anyuak and the Nuer zones. Since then, tensions in the Nuer zone between the indigenous Jikany Nuer and the most recent Lou Nuer immigrants from Sudan have increased. In early January 2006, some 3,000 people had to flee their homes due to Nuer inter-clan clashes, and further thousands fled during raids of Nuer villages in March and April 2006, carried out by Nuer and Anyuak insurgent groups from neighbouring Sudan. (Swisspeace, 1 June 2006, p.5; UNCT, February 2006.) In September 2006, approximately 45,000 persons were reportedly displaced from their homes in the Gambella region due to continued fighting between the region’s three largest indigenous groups, the Anyuak, the Nuer, and the Mazinger. (USDS, 6 March 2007.)

The long-running civil war in southern Sudan was another contributing factor to the conflicts in Gambella, with heavily-armed insurgent groups spilling over into Gambella, using Nuer refugee camps in Itang as recruitment sites. The effects of their armament of Nuer populations and refugee camps were still felt in 2006. (ZOA field report, 3 October 2006, pp.6, 7; SALIGAD, A Proposal for a Preliminary Assessment of the Viability of Undertaking a Study on the Problem of Small Arms Trafficking in the Gambella Area; IRIN, 12 June 2007.) The pastoralist Nuer have tended to push eastwards, in search of new grazing land including the rich alluvial plains and the fishing grounds of the Baro River.

After the situation stabilised briefly around the end of 2006, conflict re-erupted in 2007 with Sudanese Murle carrying out cross-border cattle raids on Ethiopian Anyuak and Jikany Nuer from Akobo *woreda*, killing and wounding dozens of people and displacing over 12,000 from some eight villages, while burning their belongings and huts. (Cattle raiding, itself an old tradition, has grown in scale and brutality, with raiders often well-armed.) The displaced people have found temporary shelter in Chentua, some six hours walking distance from their villages. Gambella's regional government requested assistance for the population affected by both conflict and flooding in six *woredas*, asking for food and non-food items, healthcare and seeds for the upcoming planting season. ZOA field report, op. cit. However this assistance proved difficult to provide as the lack of security was compounded by heavy rainfall and flooding.

The most recent displacement and return movements have not been quantified yet, but estimates speak of some 60,000 IDPs and recently returned IDPs in need of assistance or reintegration support. (Number based on 2007 estimates by various international sources.) Estimates in Gambella vary considerably, partly due to the fact that many people are pastoralists and thus move regularly, and also because of restricted access to parts of the region due to insecurity and difficult travel conditions during rainy seasons. The government was reportedly monitoring and sometimes limiting the passage of relief supplies and access by humanitarian organisations in 2006, arguing that it was doing so for the security of those travelling in the region. (USDS, 6 March 2007, op. cit.)

Most IDPs live, and at times integrate permanently, in host communities as opposed to separate settlements or camps, putting great strain on them. Humanitarian aid to IDPs should address the development needs of the local population, as suggested, for example, by ZOA Refugee Care. (ZOA, op. cit. 3 October 2006, p.4.) Insecurity and lack of livelihood prospects are believed to be the main reasons for people not returning home.

Access to healthcare is often minimal, and the spread of water-borne diseases and AWD is a serious recurring risk in the generally poor sanitary situations. The people displaced by the most recent violence were all in great need of food, water, shelter and healthcare. (UN OCHA Ethiopia Humanitarian Bulletins of 16 April, 14 May, 21 May and 11 June 2007.)

Difficulties of return

In April 2007, an estimated 25,000 IDPs, including communities recently displaced by the Sudanese Murle incursion and others displaced by earlier conflicts, started returning voluntarily from Itang, Jikawo and Wantu *woredas* to their areas of origin in Tiergol and Akobo *woredas*. They were assisted by the regional government of Gambella, with some financial aid from the federal government.

These large movements, particularly at the onset of the rainy season, raised fears of disease outbreaks along transit routes, after thousands of returnees and their cattle became stranded somewhere along the road, in areas with no infrastructure or services to transport them further. After a request by the regional government, both regional authorities and UN agencies provided

humanitarian assistance to the stranded and tried to bring them back to Itang. Some protection response was provided as well, including a response to gender-based violence, but UN agencies remained concerned about the Akobo returnees' security. These concerns centre on the fact that the Lou Nuer, who had displaced the Jikany Nuer, appear still to be living in the villages the Jikany were supposed to return to. As a result, a significant number of Jikany seem to have crossed the border into Sudan. (Unpublished document, 29 May 2007.)

There were also concerns that the return movements of the Jikany Nuer, displaced over the past seven years by the Lou Nuer, were not altogether voluntary. Although the lack of access makes a detailed assessment difficult, there are suggestions that the regional government wanted to return the Jikany Nuer to their villages before the population census to be held at the end of May 2007. (Unpublished document, 29 May 2007.)

Despite this environment of general insecurity, reconciliation efforts between the conflicting parties are still being pursued. As of mid-2007, local authorities and the UN have been successful in bringing representatives of the Lou and Jikany Nuer together for peace talks. Further conflict has so far been avoided and the Lou Nuer have agreed to move back to Sudan after harvesting the crops which they planted in the spring. (UN OCHA Ethiopia, Humanitarian Bulletin, 11 June 2007; Email, July 2007.) While the reintegration process has continued, the August 2007 floods have limited the humanitarian access to Akobo and delayed the returnees' agricultural activities. According to OCHA Ethiopia, the Akobo returnees were expected to be in need of food aid for at least another 12 months. (UN OCHA Ethiopia, Focus on Ethiopia for August 2007, 14 September 2007.)

Tigray and Afar regions (Special Report 2007)

Tigray and Afar regions

Border with Eritrea: 62,000 still displaced as stand-off continues

Despite a history of shared struggle to overthrow the Dergue dictatorship, tensions between the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea – which regained its independence from Ethiopia after a 30-year armed conflict in 1993 – soared during the 1990s, escalating into all-out war between May 1998 and June 2000. The cause was a dispute over a particular section of their common border.

On the Ethiopian side, about 100,000 people were killed in the conflict and over 360,000 internally displaced, of whom 90 per cent were in the Tigray region and the rest in Afar region (GoE, 17 November 2000). Furthermore, Ethiopia deported tens of thousands of people identified as Eritreans, while Eritrea did the same to people identified as Ethiopians.

While most IDPs returned home after the June 2000 ceasefire, which was followed by the December 2000 Algiers Peace Agreement, an estimated 62,000 people remain displaced, in Tigray region, living mostly in host communities, with minimal external support. (Number based on estimates by various international sources.)

Ethiopia's rejection of a border demarcation ruling, issued in April 2002 by the Permanent Court of Arbitration's Boundary Commission, caused renewed tensions between the two states. Ethiopia eventually accepted the ruling on 29 March 2007. (UNSC, 30 April 2007, op. cit. p.7.) Active compliance with the border ruling is seen as the cornerstone of a long-term normalisation of relations between the two countries and the stabilisation of the region. However, border demarcation talks, held in The Hague in early September 2007, collapsed under mutual accusations of non-collaboration. (AFP, 8 September 2007; AFP, 10 September 2007.)

The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), formed in 2000 to monitor the ceasefire, was reduced by 2007 from 4,200 to 1,700 troops, and its monitoring activities along the demilitarised 25-kilometre Temporary Security Zone remain severely restricted. (UNSC, 30 April 2007, p.2.) The border demarcation activity, interrupted in 2003, has not been resumed, and the Addis Ababa liaison office of the Boundary Commission closed on 31 January 2007. (UNSC, 30 April 2007, p.5.) At the same time, tensions continued to mount in connection with the Somalia crisis. In April 2007, Eritrea suspended its membership of the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), claiming that its interests were no longer represented. (Government of Eritrea: Eritrea suspends membership in IGAD, 21 April 2007.) At the end of June 2007, Ethiopia announced that it was increasing its troop presence along the border, to “repel any attack by Eritrea”. (AFP, Ethiopia bolsters army in border dispute: Zenawi, 28 June 2007.) Evidently, a renewed escalation of the border tensions could lead to significant new displacement in both countries.

In Tigray region and, to a somewhat lesser degree, in Afar region, insecurity and landmines in agrarian areas are the main concerns which prevent the remaining IDPs from returning home and becoming self-sufficient there. Landmines currently put at risk over 400,000 people living in the area bordering Eritrea, where most of the remaining two million mines from the 1998-2000 war were laid. Mines killed almost 600 people and wounded over 700 between 2001 and 2004, most of them in Tigray and Afar regions, and dozens of accidents are still reported each year. The government de-mining unit has continued to make some progress in surveying and de-mining of border areas, although UNMEE officials reported that new landmines were planted on both sides of the border with Eritrea during 2006. UNMEE itself has continued its de-mining efforts. (USDS, 6 March 2007; UNSC, 30 April 2007; IRIN, 18 April 2007.)

Tensions between the Afar and the Issa

In Afar region, long-standing tensions between the Somali Issa clan and the Afar continue to trigger sporadic displacement, but very little is known about the numbers, living conditions and protection needs of the people displaced. The Issa appear to be seeking to expand their territory to the fertile area around the river Awash. Insecurity caused by the conflict makes access to displaced populations difficult, particularly as both the Afar and the Issa are well armed. (SALIGAD, op. cit; Addis Fortune: Ethiopia: MoWR Alaydege Conflict Delay, 17 April 2007.)

Tigray and Afar: Chronology of the military confrontations in border areas between Eritrea and Ethiopia, May 1998 – June 2000

- In May 1998 a military confrontation over the border town of Badme exploded between Eritrea and Ethiopia
- The first battle took place between May and June 1998 over the three disputed fronts of Badme, Tsorona-Zalambessa and Bure
- The second battle took place between February 1999 and June 1999 and Ethiopia recaptured Badme from Eritrean troops
- In February 1999 waves of people were driven from their homes because of renewed aerial and artillery attacks in the border areas
- Significant clashes on the Zalambessa frontline area in early September 1999, and armed skirmish between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces took place on the border near Bure on 23 February 2000
- The heaviest Ethiopian offensive reaching deep into Eritrea took place in May 2000

"In May 1998 the simmering border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia exploded in a military confrontation in the Badme area when Eritrea sent its army to expel Ethiopian troops stationed there and claimed the area as Eritrean. Weeks of skirmishes followed, and by early June the two former allies were at war.

[...]

The two countries battled on three fronts over the three disputed areas of Badme, Tsorona-Zalambessa, and Bure. Fighting took place in cycles: short periods of pitched battle alternated with longer periods of relative lull in which only occasional skirmishes took place. The first period of major battle took place from May through June 1998—followed by seven months of relative quiet during which both belligerents rushed to train hastily assembled recruits and conscripts. During this period both countries also engaged in a flurry of new arms purchases. Eager international weapons suppliers supplied arms and military instruction, in often cases to both countries simultaneously." (HRW, 30 January 2003, p.17)

"In May 1998 a border dispute in the Badame area escalated into a major military confrontation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. By early June 1998, the conflict had grown worse and spread into the ZalaAmbesa and Alitena areas in the Debub Region and into the Bure area, west of Assab, in the Southern Red Sea Region. The international airport in Eritrea's capital, Asmara, was bombed, causing the international community to evacuate and the government to briefly close the airport. This conflict caused the first wave of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to flee their homes in search of safety." (UN January 2000, p.1)

"When the fighting resumed in late February 1999, Ethiopia overran Eritrea's defensive lines and recaptured the Badme area, the original flashpoint of the conflict. The Eritreans then repelled an Ethiopian offensive against the southern border town of Tsorona, in the central front, a battle that cost both armies thousands of casualties. This second cycle of fighting came to an end with the approach of the rainy season in late June 1999.

After repeated attempts by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to negotiate a truce failed, the fighting reignited with even greater intensity in mid-May 2000 when Ethiopia launched an attack that reached deep into Eritrean territory. Eritrea, apparently hoping to secure a quick cease-fire, withdrew its forces from all contested border territories and redeployed them within uncontested Eritrean territory. After another round of OAU-sponsored negotiations in Algiers, Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a "cessation of hostilities" accord on June 18, 2000. Finally, the two parties signed a comprehensive peace agreement on December 12, 2000." (HRW, 30 January 2003, p.17-18).

"Intense fighting started up again in February 1999 along the Mereb-Setit front (Badame area) and quickly expanded to the Tsorona area, then spread again to the ZalaAmbesa and Alitena border areas. Aerial and artillery attacks upon civilians living nearby drove additional waves of people from their homes, to both rural and urban centers of the country, including the capital, Asmara, in greater numbers. The displaced people continue to stretch the capacity of existing public services, facilities, and infrastructure.

Adding to the humanitarian crisis, Ethiopia started, and is continuing, to deport people of Eritrean heritage. Over 67,000 deportees have been registered since the eruption of the conflict in May 1998 of whom over 28,000 are Rural Deportees." (UN January 2000, p.1)

"In the aftermath of the heavy fighting that took place in the Badme area during February, the month of March [1999] began relatively quietly amid calls for a ceasefire and an end to the hostilities. Hopes for a quick settlement were raised for a while following the announcement by Eritrea at the end of February that it had accepted the OAU Framework Agreement. Ethiopia later made clear it would not agree to any ceasefire nor engage in negotiations regarding the implementation of the OAU framework until Eritrea agreed to withdraw its troops from border

areas around Egala and Zelambessa-Aiga, on the so-called central front, and Bada-Bure along the eastern border.

The relative lull ended on March 14 with reports that new fighting had erupted on the front line a little to the south of the strategically important town of Tsorona. According to international media reports, following an initial period of shelling using heavy artillery, fighting escalated quickly over a two-day period with the deployment of ground troops, armoured vehicles and warplanes. Given the apparent intensity and limited geographical focus of the fighting, there are concerns that heavy casualties were suffered. The focus later switched back to the western front close to the Mereb river where a series of skirmishes or clashes were reported by the media in the vicinity of the Eritrean town of Shembeko. This latest period of fighting appeared to come to a close with the Ethiopian government saying that it had successfully countered an Eritrean attempt to recapture territory it had lost around Badme during the earlier fighting in February. There have been no reports regarding the situation in the Bure border area, which is adjacent to the Eritrean Red Sea port of Assab." (UN CTE 14 April 1999, p.1)

"On February 23 [2000] an armed skirmish between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces took place on the border near Bure, some 70 kms from the Eritrean Red Sea port of Assab. The fighting was first reported by the Eritrean official media and later confirmed by the Office of the Ethiopian Spokesperson. The Ethiopian statement said that by attacking first and then blaming Ethiopia for initiating the engagement, the Eritrean government was attempting to deceive the international community. Eritrea claimed that Ethiopia was continuing a pattern of attacking whenever a peace envoy comes to the region.

The reports of fighting came after several months of quiet along the common border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The last significant clashes came on the Zelambessa frontline area in early September last year, and, according to Ethiopian radio reports, near the Jerbet river on the left flank of the Badme front in October. Even though there has been relative quiet along the border, the war of words between the two countries has continued unabated with Ethiopia pressing for the redeployment of Eritrean troops away from the remaining contested border areas and Eritrea accusing Ethiopia of preparing for yet another round of fighting. The enmity between the two governments became very evident during the UN General Assembly in October when the Foreign Ministers of the two countries made impassioned speeches condemning the other side and accusing the UN and international community of not doing enough to end the conflict." (UN CTE 10 March 2000)

"After two years of sporadic fighting followed by months of stalemate, Ethiopia launched a major assault against Eritrea on 12 May 2000. During this offensive, Ethiopia entered through the western flank and moved deep into Eritrea capturing Barentu, the strategic regional capital of Gash-Barka. A number of other towns in south and west of the country, including Shambiko and Tokombiya were also captured. Fighting then shifted to the central border town of Zalem Bessa. Although Eritrea has announced the withdrawal of its troops from this contested city as part of its acceptance of the OAU Peace Accord, fighting continues in areas around Senafe, another city to the north of Zalem Bessa." (UNICEF 20 June 2000)

Tigray and Afar: Armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia displaced civilians living along the border, 1998-2000

- Areas up to 50 kilometers along the length of the border became closed military zones after outbreak of war in May 1998
- Populations at risk within a corridor of about 40 kilometres from the respective frontlines encouraged to evacuate because of renewed fighting in October 1998

- In May 2000, 15,000 persons fled their homes in northwest Ethiopia to escape retaliatory artillery bombardments by the Eritrean army

"Up to 600,000 people, mainly small farmers and nomads have been displaced on both sides of the border as a result of the fighting and areas up to 50 kilometres along the length of the border becoming closed military zones. Ethiopia has alleged that civilians have been tortured and forced to flee from their homes in the Badme area since Eritrea took control of the area in May 1998 and that Eritrea systematically destroyed property and looted churches in the disputed areas[...]. UN agencies estimate that over 300,000 people have been displaced in Tigray province as a result of the conflict and 245,000 people have been displaced inside Eritrea." (AI 21 May 1999, sect. 2.2)

"In late October [1998], the situation changed significantly following the Eritrean shelling of Shiraro [in Tigray]. Subsequently, the populations of several border towns began to evacuate as a precautionary measure, moving beyond the reach of artillery fire. Encouraged by the regional government, the people of Shiraro, Humera and Rama and to a certain extent also people from rural areas north of Enticho and Adigrat, started to move south of their respective home areas. With the hosting capacity of local communities having reached its limits by September, the new movements led unavoidably to the establishment of makeshift camps at various locations along Tigray's northern belt (the official displacement figure was 315,000 by mid-December).

[...]

In conclusion it is perhaps interesting to note that the zonal authorities told the mission that the need for precautionary evacuation was only given to the populations at risk (within a corridor of about 40 kilometers from the respective frontlines) as a recommendation. Whoever wanted to stay, was (at least initially up to December) permitted to do so at his or her own risk. This explains why by the time of the mission's visit towns like Humera and Shiraro were not totally evacuated. Furthermore, the zonal authorities told the mission that in West Tigray, but also in areas of Central and East Tigray considered to be exposed to the potential danger of air raids, civil defense measures were being implemented. More and more people have constructed bomb shelters by digging cavities into the ground which are then covered with heavy wooden poles and topped with soil. The mission visited such facilities in Shire and Adigrat and was told the same measures were being undertaken in Axum, Adua and Mekele." (UNDP EUE 8 January 1999, pp. 1, 8)

"[In May/June 2000] An additional 15,000 persons in northwest Ethiopia fled their homes in May to escape retaliatory artillery bombardments by the Eritrean army in response to Ethiopia's military offensive. No further new displacement of Ethiopian residents occurred after the two governments agreed to a cease-fire in June." (USCR June 2001)

Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples region (Special Report 2007)

Southern Nation, Nationalities and Peoples region

Rising tensions among pastoralists in the fight for resources

In the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region (SNNPR) along the south-western border with Kenya and Sudan, armed cattle raids are becoming more frequent. (People are easily armed: According to one interviewee, one AK47 costs about one cow, which is very little, considering that one family owns thousands of cows. Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.) The patterns of raiding and population displacement are complex, with population groups from all three countries crossing borders and displacing each other in turn, even though both the Kenyan and Ethiopian armies appear to have stationed troops along their borders. (According to one interviewee, the Kenyan Turkana have displaced the Sudanese Toposa, who have displaced the

Ethiopian Surma who have in turn displaced the Dizi. Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.) In the remote grassland region there is no infrastructure, no active government institution, and no international community presence.

Entire *woreda* populations have been displaced, specifically from Surma and Dizi *woredas* in Bench Maji zone. As many as 50,000 Kenyan pastoralists are reported to have arrived at the end of 2006, displacing between 25,000 and 32,000 people. (Interviews, Ethiopia, February 2007.) As reported by UN-OCHA in Ethiopia, the DPPA dispatched 512 tonnes of various food commodities in February 2007 to 27,580 conflict-induced IDPs in Amaro and Burji *woredas*. (UN OCHA Ethiopia, Humanitarian Bulletin, 26 February 2007.)

Afar: tensions between the Afar and the Issa (2007)

Special Report: *Tensions between the Afar and the Issa*

In Afar region, long-standing tensions between the Somali Issa clan and the Afar continue to trigger sporadic displacement, but very little is known about the numbers, living conditions and protection needs of the people displaced. The Issa appear to be seeking to expand their territory to the fertile area around the river Awash. Insecurity caused by the conflict makes access to displaced populations difficult, particularly as both the Afar and the Issa are well armed.

Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR): Thousands displaced due to ethnic clashes in the southern region, 2002-2003

- In Yeki District in the Southern Region ethnic clashes over the move of the Shekicho zone to the Gambella Region, killed about 800 people, displaced 5,800 and over 2000 homes were destroyed in 2002
- Government refused to allow independent investigation
- The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) criticized the EPRDF government's ethnic policy for fuelling conflict in SNNP and displaced over 1,000 Dizzi people

USDS, 31 march 2003, Section 4:

"Ethnic clashes during the year resulted in a number of deaths, injuries, and the displacement of thousands of persons [...]. For example, in January 92 ethnic Somalis were killed during regional clashes over grazing and water rights. Banditry and lawlessness continued to prevail in the region at year's end.

In March between 600 and 800 persons were killed during clashes between the Sheko-Mejjanger and Manja and the Sheka and Bench-Majjii in and around the town of Tepi, capital of the Yeki District, in the Southern Region. Government officials reported 128 deaths; however, the SEPDC reported more than 1,700 deaths. More than 2,000 homes were destroyed and 5,800 persons were displaced as a result of the violence. The clashes involved local officials and members of each of these communities, and resulted from the dissatisfaction of many Sheko-Mejjanger who had wanted autonomy following an unsuccessful attempt in 1993 to move the Shekicho zone from the Southern Region to the Gambella Region. The Government claimed to have arrested 41 policemen, 39 militia members, and 11 administrative officials for their involvement in the clashes. However, the Government refused to allow an independent investigation of the incident and put the Federal Police in charge of the government's internal investigation."

IRIN, 12 March 2003:

The Southern Nations and Nationalities People's Region:

"Ethnic conflict is "spreading like wildfire" in Ethiopia because the government is failing to tackle the problem, according to a national human rights organisation. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) urged the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) to crack down on tribal clashes. In its latest report, the organisation laid the blame for recent troubles between the Surma and Dizzi tribes who live in southwest Ethiopia at the door of the government.

The latest clashes in the Bench and Maji zone occurred after a member of the Dizzi tribe was killed. In a revenge attack, two Surma were killed. The nomadic Surma then carried out another attack on Dizzi groups living in at least four local districts. More than 1,000 Dizzi tribe members fled their homes and some 31 people were killed in the clashes which broke out last July [2002], according to the report.

"The ethnic policy pursued by the EPRDF government badly undermined the culture and tradition of mutual respect and concern that held the two tribes together for years on end," the report said. EHRCO said that groups carrying guns in areas where ethnic clashes occur should be disarmed and that elders should be used to calm down tensions. It also said that talks between the Dizzi and Surma tribes could ensure "an environment of mutual respect, peace and tranquility".

IDPs around Addis Ababa (August 2003)

- About 15,000 people remained displaced around Addis Ababa as of August 2003
- 17,000 people of Eritrean origin displaced before Eritrean independence settled in 11 camps around Addis Ababa receive no assistance

"A residual caseload of an estimated 3,000 IDP families/15,000 persons currently residing in temporary shelters in Addis Ababa is also categorized under conflict induced IDPs. The group fled from the seaport of Assab during fighting between the Ethiopian army and EPLF fighters to control of the port before Eritrea formally gained its independence." (UN OCHA-EUE, 1 August 2003)

"It has also been reported that about 17,000 IDPs who were settled in 11 camps near Addis Abeba have been asked by the government to move. They came from Eritrea before its independence and they haven't received any help for sometime. Despite being given money by the government as compensation for moving, some of the IDPs who had moved out returned to the camps. They were too frightened to live on the streets once they had spent the compensation money. The Ethiopian Human Rights council has condemned the decision to close the camps (IRIN, 12/09/02)." (RNIS No 39, October 2002, p.8)

"There are at least 11 camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) housing more than 17, 000 people around the capital Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian government has cleared 3 camps and given notice that those in the remaining 11 camps must leave by September 19th. Many of the camps' residents fled from Eritrea shortly before independence in 1991." (OCHA, 31 August 2002, p.26)

Peace efforts

Federal government asked to help contain regional conflicts (August 2009)

- Regions complain that the Federal government less supportive in helping Regions deal with conflicts

The Reporter

"Governance, conflict management and resolution were the highlights of the fourth joint consultative meeting between the House of the Federation and regional states held this week in the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State.

Attended by representatives from the nine regional states, the meeting discussed the challenges that regions were facing in strengthening federalism in Ethiopia and share best practices of resolving disputes and conflicts between inhabitants of neighboring regions.

The supportive role played at federal level in resolving disputes and conflicts between peoples of neighboring regions has been far less than it ought to have been, the two-day joint meeting of the House of the Federation and regional councils heard this week.

"Our two regions have made efforts and spent a lot of human and material resource to resolve disputes and conflicts that arise between our peoples who inhabit bordering areas. That being said, however, the support that we have gotten at federal level from the institutions that were established to handle such matters - the House of the Federation and the Ministry of Federal Affairs - has not gone beyond mere listening about, and mention of the conflicts," advisor to the Somali Regional President, Mohamed Issak, told a gathering in Assosa, Benishangul – Gumuz.

Mohamed was speaking on the activities undertaken by the Somali and the Oromia regional governments to resolve conflicts that occurred between the inhabitants living in areas bordering both regions.

The consultative meeting held on Monday and Tuesday was focused more on conflict resolution mechanisms and intergovernmental relations.

Another challenge raised by the regional representatives was governance and the role played by inefficient and corrupt administrators at various levels.

Head of the Administrative and Security Affairs Bureau of the Southern Nations and Nationalities and Peoples Region, Assefa Abiyu, said that among the root causes of the disputes and conflicts were unclearly defined borders, inequitable distribution of resources, unaddressed questions of identity, individual and group rows escalating and assuming the form of ethnic conflict.

"In addition to these, however, we have found that officials at various levels of the government structure, and particularly those at the woreda and kebele levels, have been exacerbating and complicating the disputes and conflicts for a number of personal and political motives. As part of the conflict resolving process, we have exposed such officials and we are still pursuing that direction," Assefa said.

Economic-related crimes such as the increase in illegal trade of arms, cattle rustling, particularly in areas inhabited by pastoralists, were also part of the challenges that the meeting discussed.

"There is this widely held misconception about pastoralists and their culture. Why do pastoralists carry weapons? Why do they steal cattle from one another? Is it because that is the culture? No. It is not. The reason why a pastoralist carries an automatic rifle, and buys it for an exorbitant price that goes as high as seven to ten thousand birr, is because he does not have a security guarantee. Either because the government has not provided that guarantee or for some other reason, pastoralists do not have a security guarantee....," Lemma Megersa, Administrative and Security..."

Border impasse between Eritrea and Ethiopia poses serious challenges for peace (July 2008)

- Ethiopia-Eritrea border impasse may ignite hostilities and lead to conflict

UN News Centre, 24 January 2008

"Warning that the continuing military build-up by Ethiopia and Eritrea in their border areas, where the two countries fought a deadly two-year war that ended in 2000, creates the risk of reigniting hostilities, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is urging the neighbouring States to urgently de-escalate the situation.

Ethiopia and Eritrea should end their exchange of hostile statements, return to December 2004 levels of deployment in the border areas and provide the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) with the necessary assistance, support and protection so that it can fulfil its mandate, Mr. Ban says in his latest report to the Security Council on the work of the mission..."

International Crisis Group, 17 June 2008

"The Ethiopia-Eritrea impasse carries serious risk of a new war and is a major source of instability in the Horn of Africa, most critically for Somalia. Following Ethiopia's refusal to accept virtual demarcation of the border by the now disbanded Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC), Asmara unilaterally implemented it and forced out the UN peacekeepers (UNMEE), significantly raising the stakes and shattering the status quo. Its insistence on recovering territory the Commission awarded it – Badme in particular – could lead to unilateral military action by either side but is only one of several war scenarios. The Security Council and key individual states (the U.S., in particular) must recognise the dangers of their inaction and advance a reconfigured political process with new determination if there is to be a change in the calculations of the parties, who appear to be dangerously content with trying to maintain a level of simmering but unpredictable hostility.

The 2000 Algiers agreements, which provided a ceasefire and the institutional mechanisms to resolve the border dispute, have not been fully implemented. The EEBC was unable to bring Ethiopia to accept the physical demarcation foreseen in Algiers, leading to political stalemate. In the absence of adequate support from Security Council members, the EEBC dissolved itself on 30 November 2007, after providing a demarcation by coordinates. Its disappearance removed an important forum where, even if they disagreed, the parties exchanged views regularly before a third-party arbiter.

In January 2008, Eritrea began deploying its army in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) and forcing UNMEE off its territory by blocking fuel supplies. It considers the EEBC's virtual demarcation the end of the border dispute and argues that the continued presence of UNMEE or Ethiopian troops on its territory is tantamount to occupation. Furious at the lack of international support for the EEBC ruling, Eritrea tried to provoke a reaction by expelling UNMEE. Ethiopia views the EEBC's virtual demarcation as "legal nonsense" and continues to insist on the need for a dialogue on normalisation of relations ahead of physical demarcation. Asmara in turn perceives

dialogue and normalisation of relations as Ethiopian stratagems to undermine the EEBC ruling and, ultimately, its sovereignty.

Ethiopia and Eritrea have had no incentive to resolve the frozen border conflict. Indeed, both regimes have used it as an excuse to enhance their domestic power at the expense of democracy and economic growth, thus reducing the attractiveness to them of diplomatic compromise. They support the other's domestic rebels, and each is convinced that the fall of the other's regime is imminent and the only real solution to the border dispute. At the same time, the key international actors have allowed this situation to remain frozen because of overriding concerns, such as Washington's concentration on its counter-terrorism priorities. However, the significance of the bilateral dispute has been magnified by its impact on the region, especially the conflict in Somalia, where insurgents backed by Eritrea battle Ethiopian troops that support the Transitional Federal Government (TFG).

The departure from the scene of the EEBC and the de facto expulsion of UNMEE have made this conflict much more dangerous, removing the means of continuing dialogue between the parties and its "brake lining". A miscalculation on either side could lead to a disastrous return to conflict. The likely alternative to a solution to the border dispute and other bilateral issues is not continued frozen conflict but a war that would produce chaos in the region and quite possibly result in the loss of power of both contestants' leaders (President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia).

The international community urgently needs to take a number of steps, including acceptance by the Security Council of the virtual demarcation of the border; transformation of UNMEE into a more mobile, fasterreacting tripwire mechanism with a lighter footprint patterned after one of several models that worked well in Sudan in the 2002-2005 period; and appointment by the UN of a senior and widely respected special negotiator to set up and manage an alternative forum..."

UN Security Council Report, 31 July 2008

"Recent Developments

On 30 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1827 terminating, without a follow-on mission, the mandate of the UN Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) with effect from 31 July.

Background On 3 July, the Council asked the Secretary-General to engage the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments on the options available for a follow-on UN presence after the expiration of the mandate of UNMEE. Ethiopia had earlier indicated that it would be ready to host such a mission provided its mandate did not include references to the Algiers Agreements. (The Algiers Agreements comprise two pacts—the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 and the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000—which were to form the basis of the normalisation of relations between Ethiopian and Eritrea.)

Following consultations by the Secretary-General with both countries, he informed the Council on 29 July that the UN had consulted the parties about three possible options:

- a small military observer mission in Ethiopia;
- a small political and military liaison office in Ethiopia; and
- a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General based in New York.

The Secretary-General indicated that both Ethiopia and Eritrea responded that they would not accept any of the options. In effect, there had been a hardening of both countries' positions and in particular a fundamental change in the Ethiopian government's earlier position of relative amenability to hosting a UN presence on its territory. To further complicate matters, Ethiopia expected the Council to act to require Eritrea to withdraw from the Temporary Security Zone, while Eritrea called for the Council to require withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from its territory.

In response to these developments, on 29 July Belgium—the lead country on this issue—circulated the draft resolution proposing termination of the mandate of UNMEE. The key elements of the resolution draft were:

- to terminate UNMEE's mandate without prejudice to the obligations of Ethiopia and Eritrea under the Algiers Agreements;
- to remain seized of the issue and request a report from the Secretary-General on the situation between the two countries on a regular basis, with appropriate recommendations; and
- to urge the parties to explore further options to find a closure to the situation.

In a practical sense the termination had only a limited impact as far as the troop contributing countries were concerned. Most contingents had been relocated from Eritrea on a temporary basis in February and March pending a decision on the future of the mission. (An exchange of letters between the Secretary-General —S/2008/368 of 5 June 2008—and the president of the Council—S/2008/427 of 30 June 2008—had confirmed that the troops of UNMEE who were temporarily relocated from Eritrea to their home countries should be considered as repatriated.)

Key issues

The underlying issue—the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea over the border delimitations—remains. UNMEE had been seen as a moderating effect on the two former belligerents. (The Secretary-General's April report had indicated that complete withdrawal of UNMEE “could result in an escalation of tensions in the border area, with the risk of a resumption of open hostilities, despite declarations by the two parties that they have no intention of restarting the war”.) The complete removal of UNMEE may therefore increase the overall risks in the region, which is complicated by recent fighting on the Eritrea/Djibouti border and the involvement of both Ethiopia and Eritrea in the conflict in Somalia...”

Organization of African Unity mediation efforts resulted in 2000 cease-fire

- The US, European Union and U.N. provided substantial support to OAU's mediation efforts
- Already in 1998 the OAU proposed an eleven-point framework agreement to settle Eritrean-Ethiopian war
- While Ethiopia accepted the agreement, Eritrea refused to withdraw troops from Badme and requested that the modalities of the framework agreement included compensation for the expelled
- The August 1999 modalities accepted by Eritrea and rejected by Ethiopia required parties to stop displacing and deporting people, to facilitate human rights monitoring and peace keeping mission to include grievance resolution mechanisms
- June 2000 parties signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities which required Ethiopia to withdraw to its pre-war position of control
- UN peace-keepers would be deployed under the auspices of the OAU
- 12 December 2000 both parties signed a Peace Agreement based on three issues: border demarcation, compensation and investigation on causes of the conflict
- The Agreement established a boundary commission and a claims commission

“Despite the mediators' increasing frustration, intense truce efforts continued unabated led by the OAU, the U.N., the United States and the E.U., as well as by several other bilateral mediators.” (HRW, 30 January 2003, p.37)

“The OAU’s Framework Agreement - November 1998

A high level delegation of African heads of state and government took over from the Rwandan-U.S. facilitators. [...] On November 8, 1998, the delegation proposed an eleven point framework agreement to Eritrea and Ethiopia for a peaceful settlement of their conflict. The OAU’s framework agreement provided for the redeployment of “forces presently in Badme town and its environ” to be supervised by an OAU military observation mission supported by the U.N. It also offered general provisions to address the socioeconomic impact of the crisis on the civilian population.

Ethiopia accepted the OAU framework agreement shortly after it was tabled. Eritrea expressed a number of reservations and ultimately refused to withdraw its troops from Badme as called for under the agreement, saying that its withdrawal would be an acknowledgment of Ethiopia’s sovereignty over Badme and other disputed territories. One of the main elements of the OAU document that Eritrea found contentious, according to Haile Woldensae, then Eritrea’s foreign minister, was its position on the issue of human rights. The official said that the proposal must include a reference to the expulsion of citizens and specifically provide for the compensation of “illegally-expelled” Eritrean nationals.

[...]

Eritrea unexpectedly declared its acceptance of the OAU’s framework agreement on February 27, 1999 after Ethiopia overran its defenses and recaptured the disputed Badme plains. However, differences of interpretation of the document kept the two countries at odds. Hostilities soon escalated, leading to a renewed escalation of the fighting in May and June 1999.

Modalities for the Implementation of the OAU’s Framework Agreement - July 1999 [...]

While both countries declared their acceptance of the modalities, each continued to question the other’s commitment to peace. The Eritrean insistence that people of Eritrean heritage expelled from Ethiopia be compensated appeared to add a precondition to acceptance since the modalities didn’t address the issue.

[...]

Technical Arrangements for the Implementation of the OAU’s Framework Agreement and its Modalities - August 1999

The OAU presented the two countries with detailed “technical arrangements” for the implementation of the OAU’s framework agreement and its modalities in August 1999. Worked out by experts from OAU, the U.N., and the governments of Algeria and the U.S., the technical arrangements were presented as an integral and final part of the OAU settlement plan. The document mandated a peacekeeping mission, established under the authority of the U.N. Security Council, to monitor and assist with the implementation of the OAU’s peace package. Paragraph 9 required the parties inter alia to commit themselves to the prohibition of displacement and deportation of civilian populations and to facilitate human rights monitoring. It also addressed the security needs of local populations in and returning to areas where the civilian administration was restored, and empowered the peacekeeping mission to establish as necessary, and in consultation with the parties, local liaison and grievance resolution mechanisms accessible to the population.

[...]

Eritrea immediately accepted the technical arrangements. Ethiopia first signaled its dissatisfaction with some of the document’s provisions, and ultimately rejected it altogether, citing its failure to ensure Ethiopia’s sovereignty as main reason.

[...]

Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities - June 2000

Ethiopia’s major offensive of May 2000 was clearly meant to consolidate its negotiating position. Not only did the offensive lead to Eritrea’s withdrawal from all disputed border territories, but it placed Ethiopian troops in undisputed Eritrean territories well inside Eritrea. Ethiopia gained

considerable leverage as a result of this military advantage and the pressures resulting from the flight of at least a million Eritrean civilians ahead of the fighting.

Following these shifts, the OAU negotiators presented in early June a “revised, consolidated” peace proposal to representatives of the two parties. In the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities they finally signed on June 18, 2000, the two parties reaffirm their “acceptance of the OAU Framework Agreement and the Modalities for its Implementation,” signaling by omission that the technical arrangements were moot. The agreement required Ethiopia to withdraw to positions it controlled before the start of the war in 1998, but only after the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers in a 25 km wide buffer zone running along the border from which Eritrean troops would be withdrawn. The U.N. peacekeeping force would operate under the auspices of the OAU to monitor the parties’ compliance with the agreement and allow the neutral demarcation of the border.

[...]

Comprehensive Peace Agreement - December 12, 2000

On December 12, 2000, the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a comprehensive peace agreement in Algiers in which they committed themselves to the full implementation of the provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, and to permanently terminate military hostilities between themselves. The agreement addressed the same three key issues as the OAU’s Framework Agreement on which it was based: delimitation and demarcation of the border, compensation, and investigation of the origins of the conflict. The agreement provided for the establishment of a neutral boundary commission to “delimit and demarcate the colonial treaty border”; established a neutral claims commission mandated to decide on all claims of loss, damage, or injury from either side; and set the ground for an independent and impartial investigation into the origin of the conflict. Article 2 of the December 12 agreement also provided for confidence building measures, such as the early release of prisoners of war and all other persons detained in connection to the conflict.

[...]

The claims commission

[...]

Immediately after signing the December agreement, Ethiopia invited any of its citizens and foreign residents who had suffered material loss or whose human rights have been violated as a result of the war to present their claims to a National Committee for Collecting Compensation Claims. [...]

On January 26, 2001, Ethiopia and Eritrea met the first deadline established by the December 12 agreement by announcing their respective appointments to the neutral Boundary Commission and neutral Claims Commission. [...] One month later, the four arbitrators appointed by the parties to the Claims Commission selected a chairman for the commission. [...] The Claims Commission was to commence its work in The Hague within fifteen days of this formation. This brisk pace hit a snag when by mid May each side had rejected arbitrators nominated by the other. A May 14-15 informal meeting of the commission broke the impasse by agreeing to replace the contested nominees. [...] The commission later provided general information on the progress of its work for inclusion in the secretary-general’s June 2001 report to the Security Council. [...] However, the three subsequent quarterly reports of the secretary-general did not annex updates from the Claims Commission.

The international bureau of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which serves as the registry for the claims commission, announced that claims were submitted to the commission by the deadline of December 12, 2001. [...] Under the peace agreement, the commission is to endeavor to complete its work within three years of the deadline for filing claims.” (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.39-43)

"The 15-point plan, brokered by the OAU in Algiers, provides for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in a buffer zone extending 26 km into Eritrea, and the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from areas occupied inside Eritrea since 6 February 1999. Demarcation of the border will follow later." (IRIN-CEA 19 June 2000)

Provisions of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities:

"2. Under the Agreement, which was circulated on 19 June 2000 as a document of the Security Council (S/2000/601), the parties have committed themselves to:

(a) Resolving the present crisis and any other dispute between them through peaceful and legal means in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charters of OAU and the United Nations; (b) Rejecting the use of force as a means of (c) Respecting the borders existing at independence, as stated in OAU resolution AHG/Res 16 (1), adopted in Cairo in 1964, and in this regard determining them on the basis of pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law, making use, to that end, of technical means to demarcate the borders and, in case of controversy, to resort to the appropriate means of arbitration.

3. The Agreement commits the parties to an immediate cessation of hostilities and stipulates that, starting from the signature of the Agreement, all air and land attacks are to cease. The parties have also reaffirmed their acceptance of the OAU Framework Agreement and the modalities for its implementation.

4. Under the Agreement, the parties called upon the United Nations, in cooperation with OAU, to establish a peacekeeping operation to assist in the implementation of the Agreement and guaranteed to ensure free movement and access for the peacekeeping mission and its supplies, as required, through their territories and to respect its members, installations and equipment.

5. Under the Agreement, Ethiopia shall submit to the peacekeeping mission redeployment plans for its troops from positions taken after 6 February 1999 which were not under Ethiopian administration before 6 May 1998. This redeployment is to take place within two weeks after the deployment of the peacekeeping mission and is to be verified by it. For its part, Eritrea is to maintain its forces at a distance of 25 kilometres (artillery range) from positions to which the Ethiopian forces are to redeploy. This zone of separation is to be referred to as the 'temporary security zone'." (SC 30 June 2000, paras. 2-5)

The Boundary Commission, 2000-2005

- The Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) was established at the Algiers peace agreement of December 2002
- The Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission drew an internationally recognized and legally binding border between the two countries on 13 April 2002
- Ethiopia accept in principle the April 2002 ruling of the Boundary Commission and both countries claim Badme belongs with their countries but refuse demarcation to continue
- Boundary Commission decides to close down its field offices due to lack of progress in the physical demarcation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border

The Boundary Commission:

"In April 2002, an independent border commission issued its decision on boundary delimitation between the two countries following their destructive border war from 1998-2000. According to the Algiers peace accord of December 2000, which officially ended the war, the sides agreed that

any border ruling would be "final and binding". Both countries claim to have been awarded the now-symbolic village of Badme, where the conflict erupted in May 1998. (IRIN, 14 March 2003)

"Demarcation Process"

On November 11 2002, the EEBC told Ethiopia to comply with its July 17th 2002 ruling that Ethiopia removes its settlers from Eritrean territory who had encroached 400 metres into Dembe MenGul near Badme. The Commission reiterated that its April 13th 2002 decision is final and binding. The EEBC voiced concern in March 2003 that Ethiopia had constantly sought variations to the delimited borderline. The Commission submitted to the parties the completed map of the border map for technical comments in December 2002. Both parties continue to insist that the disputed town of Badme belong with their countries. In its eighth report, the EEBC cautioned that it appeared that Ethiopia was moving to reject the Commission's April 2002 decision if variations sought would not be granted, and indicated that any such variations can only be done with the mutual consent of both parties and not by the Commission. A March 4 2003 Ethiopian Ministry of Information statement expressed grave concerns about the EEBC's ruling on the government's comments on the map and the April 2002 border ruling ..." (OCHA, 31 March 2003, p.28-9)

"The Boundary Commission has been unable to resume the demarcation process, despite continued efforts to do so. As described in the sixteenth report on the work of the Commission (see annex I), Eritrea insists on adherence to the April 2002 delimitation decision. The Commission also states that Eritrea is not prepared to accept the proposal made by Ethiopia some time ago for the completion of demarcation in the Eastern Sector unless there is at the same time a clear assurance from Ethiopia that the rest of the boundary will also be demarcated.

According to the Boundary Commission, Ethiopia is not prepared to allow demarcation to continue in the manner laid down in the demarcation directions and in accordance with the timeline set by the Commission. It now insists on prior dialogue, but has rejected the opportunity for such dialogue within the framework of the demarcation process. In the assessment of the Commission, this is the latest in a series of obstructive actions taken since the summer of 2002, which belies the frequently professed acceptance by Ethiopia of the delimitation decision.

In view of this situation, the Commission has indicated that it is taking immediate steps to close down its field offices for the time being. These can be reactivated (though subject to some months of lead time) when circumstances permit the resumption of demarcation work. As for the Commission, it remains ready to proceed with and complete the process of demarcation.

The Commission concludes its report by stating that the line of the boundary was legally and finally determined by its delimitation decision of 13 April 2002. Though undemarcated, the Commission reports this line is binding upon both parties, subject only, unless the parties agree otherwise, to the minor qualifications expressed in the delimitation decision." (SG Report, 7 March 2005, para.13-16)

"JRS Ethiopia has accompanied many of the war displaced and is also concerned about the Commission's proposals. "Although the parties agreed to abide by the ruling, if it is seen as very unjust by the local people, there will not be peace. And this is the case at present", reports JRS. "The Ethiopian Prime Minister has said he will not go to war but local 'incidents' can escalate to take people to where they would rather not go. Another war like the previous would be a huge disaster", JRS Ethiopia reported." (JRS, 31 October 2003)

"The Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process remains deadlocked despite a recent announcement by Ethiopia that it would, "in principle", accept the April 2002 Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission ruling. Ethiopia's proposal for re-opening of dialogue between the two countries, with the view to normalizing relations, has been rebuffed by Eritrea. As a precondition, Eritrea demands Ethiopia's withdrawal from territory along the 1000km border awarded to it by the ruling. Although the international community has welcomed this move forward, it remains to be seen whether they

will apply sufficient pressure on either side to further implement the border agreement.” (OCHA, December 2004)

The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the Temporary Security Zone, 2000-2005

- The Security Council authorised in September 2000 the deployment of an initial 4,200 troops for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)
- The Mission monitors the redeployment of troops from both sides and monitor the temporary security zone (TSZ)
- The core operations are observation, reporting, analysis, identification of potential flash points and preventive action
- Established within the UNMEE, the Mine Action Coordination Centre monitors threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance and gives mine action support
- As of March 2005 the Mission force reduced from 3 to 2 battalions of some 3,344 military personnel
- Until the second quarter of 2001 the UNMEE did not have a human rights component in its mandate
- UNMEE's mandate was extended until 14 September 2005

"The Security Council today [15 September 2000] authorized the deployment of 4,200 troops for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), with an initial six-month mandate to carry out a range of verification tasks, including monitoring the ceasefire between the two countries. Unanimously adopting resolution 1320 (2000), the Council expanded not only the size but also the mandate of UNMEE, which was originally established at the end of July with a strength of 100 military observers. The newly authorized troops will be responsible for helping to ensure that the parties adhere to their security commitments. In a simultaneous effort, the Mission will monitor the redeployment of troops from both sides. Ethiopian troops will be redeployed from positions taken after 6 February 1999 which were not under Ethiopian administration before 6 May 1998, while Eritrean forces will redeploy in order to remain a distance of 25 kilometres from the position of the redeployed Ethiopian troops. Also as part of its mandate, the Mission will monitor the temporary security zone, and provide technical assistance to mine action activities there and in adjacent areas. In addition, it will coordinate with the humanitarian and human rights work of others in the zone and adjacent areas." (UN DPI 15 September 2000)

"As at 18 February 2005, the total strength of the UNMEE military component stood at 3,344, comprising 3,049 troops, 87 headquarters staff officers and 208 military observers. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1560 (2004) of 14 September 2004, the adjustment of the Mission and streamlining of its operations commenced in December 2004 and was completed at the end of January 2005. As planned, the force has been reduced from three to two battalions. The former Sector East has now been reorganized into a subsector under the operational command of Sector Centre. Some 250 troops from the Indian battalion, with a standby reserve of 30 to 40 troops, are now deployed in the new Sub-Sector East.

The core operations under the revised concept, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1320 (2000), remain observation, reporting, analysis, identification of potential flash points and preventive action. The concept also includes selective aerial reconnaissance of particular areas." (UN SG, 7 March 2005, para. 9-11)

"Besides closely monitoring the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance in all Sectors, the UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Centre also continued to provide the necessary mine action support to the Mission in the Temporary Security Zone, ensuring that a consistent and well-

coordinated UNMEE mine action response was maintained. During the period under review, the Force's small demining assets, together with the commercial contractors for route clearance and integrated demining operations, destroyed 81 mines and 79 items of unexploded ordnance, and cleared 148,291 square metres of land and 222 kilometres of road." (UN SG Report, 7 March 2005, para.18)

"UNMEE's Human Rights Component

In a remarkable omission, the advance team dispatched by the U.N. in July 2000 to prepare for UNMEE did not include a representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. Furthermore, UNMEE's mandate as Set forth in resolution 1320 (2000) also omitted the monitoring of ongoing human rights conditions. The persistence of reports of wide-scale human rights abuses by both parties, even after the cessation of hostilities, appeared to have led the U.N. secretary-general to announce, on September 18, 2000, that he intended to establish a "small" component within UNMEE to follow human rights issues. [...]

UNMEE's human rights component became operational during the second quarter of 2001. The mission's human rights officers were by then visiting the various sectors of the Temporary Security Zone and conducting investigations on the treatment of vulnerable groups of Ethiopians in Eritrea and of Eritreans in Ethiopia. The officers' assignment also included the monitoring of the return of displaced persons.[...] In particular, UNMEE's human rights workers interviewed persons repatriated or deported to both countries and documented their treatment. Their reporting as of June 2001 was included in the human rights section of the secretary-general's quarterly reports to the Security Council on the progress of the implementation of the peace agreement, providing the Security Council with an effective tool for pressing the two parties to afford humane treatment to each other's nationals. One factor contributing to the scaling down of deportations from both countries would thus appear to have been the combination of UNMEE's field monitoring and the periodic opportunity for the secretary-general to publicly disclose reported abuses of these vulnerable groups.[...]. (HRW, 30 January 2003, pp.42-3)

"The UN Security Council extended UNMEE's mandate on March 14 2003 for a further six months to September 15th 2003. UNMEE continues to assist the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) with preparations in readiness for the physical demarcation of the two countries common borders [...] and with the clearance of mines through its Mine Action Coordination Centre." (OCHA; 31 March 2003, p.28

2006: Prolonged UNMEE mandate hoped to support diplomatic efforts

"Although there has been little change in the situation since the Commission's report of 5 December 2005 (S/2006/1, annex I), the Commission considers that a further attempt should now be made to secure the consent of both parties to the resumption of the demarcation process that was interrupted in 2003. It is, therefore, seeking to arrange a meeting with the parties to that end in early March 2006." (UNSC, 6 March 2006, Annex II)

"UNMEE's mandate is due to expire on April 15, and some members of the UN Security Council have called for the force to be scaled back if the peace process remains deadlocked. But diplomats here say the council is likely to extend the mandate for another month to let diplomatic efforts continue. " (Xinhua, 7 April 2006)

The Temporary Security Zone, 2000-2005

- The TSZ is the controversial demilitarised area established in April 2001 between armed force of both countries
- Concern raised over Ethiopian build up of troops south of the TSZ

- Eritrea considers the Ethiopian redeployment provocative.
- Threat to military stability due to political stalemate

"The parties agreed in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601) to create a Temporary Security Zone, which would be a demilitarized area between the armed forces of both countries. The redeployment of Ethiopian forces from the future Temporary Security Zone was verified by UNMEE on 7 March 2001, and was followed by the rearrangement of the Eritrean forces, which was concluded on 16 April. This allowed my Special Representative, Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, to declare the formal establishment of the Temporary Security Zone on 18 April, which marked a milestone in the peace process. The declaration of the Zone gave an additional momentum to the peace process and has made possible the return of civilians seeking to resume their lives in their places of origin. (UN SC 19 June 2001, paras.2)

"On 21 and 22 June 2001, UNMEE presented its final map of the Temporary Security Zone to the Eritrean and Ethiopian authorities, respectively. My Special Representative, Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, urged the parties to accept the map despite their objections to some parts of the boundary of the Zone as established by UNMEE.

Following the establishment of the final map of the Temporary Security Zone, Ethiopia stated that the map was unacceptable because of two "errors". It asserted that an 8-kilometre-wide pocket at the eastern end of Sector East should be returned to Ethiopia; and that the Zone should be uniformly 25 kilometres wide, which is not the case in Sector Centre, north of the Irob area. For its part, Eritrea has indicated that it could not accept the map as it was a departure from the proposals originally presented to the parties on 30 January 2001. In particular, the Eritrean authorities have indicated that the Zone could not be considered as "fully established" until their concerns regarding the southern boundary of the Zone had been addressed. However, while neither party has formally accepted the map, so far they have in fact based their operations on it, and have cooperated with UNMEE on the ground in the management of the Zone, in accordance with the parameters established in the map." (UN SC 5 September 2001, paras.1-2)

"The situation in the Temporary Security Zone and in the adjacent areas remains generally calm and stable. Following the announcement of the five-point proposal by Meles Zenawi, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, on 25 November 2004 (see S/2004/973/Add.1), there has been a steady increase of troops of the Ethiopian armed forces south of the Temporary Security Zone. This development, which began on 16 December 2004, after advance notice by the Ethiopian Government, appears to be continuing. Ethiopia describes the build-up of troops as part of the reorganization of its armed forces intended to improve its defence capability. So far, UNMEE has confirmed that Ethiopia has redeployed six to seven additional divisions at points ranging from 25 to 45 kilometres from the southern boundary of the Zone. This move has been characterized by Ethiopia as purely defensive. Eritrea considers the deployment provocative. At the same time and to the extent that UNMEE is able to monitor the situation, there has been no significant movement or redeployment of troops of the Eritrean Defence Forces, except for some adjustments in areas adjacent to the Zone to cover the main roads linking Eritrea with Ethiopia.

I am concerned about a possible rise in tensions along the border in view of the build-up described above, as well as the training of Ethiopian troops in the adjacent areas south of the Temporary Security Zone and Ethiopian troop movements in Sector West. I appeal to the Government of Ethiopia to redeploy its troops away from the vicinity of the southern boundary of the Zone, in order to reinstate the situation that pertained before 16 December 2004.

During the reporting period, both parties generally cooperated with UNMEE. However, as indicated in my previous report to the Security Council, the threat to military stability due to the lack of progress on the political front remains. This threat has increased with the recent military

"reorganization" as well as the hostile rhetoric from both capitals. It should also be noted that the success of monitoring and verification of the military situation on the Eritrean side is somewhat qualified because of the serious measures described in paragraph 5 below. The present political stalemate notwithstanding, I am pleased to note that UNMEE has been able to maintain the integrity of the Temporary Security Zone. (SG Report, 7 March 2005, para. 2-4)

"In December [2004], more than 40,000 extra Ethiopian troops began to move up towards the border area for reasons that are still not altogether clear. Ethiopia described the move as "defensive"; Eritrea called it provocative." (IRIN, 5 April 2005)

The UNMEE [Internet Site](#) provides updated information about the operation.

Stability along the border shaky as both Ethiopia and Eritrea sharpen their rhetoric (2007)

Reuters Foundation, 25 September 2007:

Ethiopia said on Tuesday it may terminate the pact ending its border war with Eritrea, accusing its smaller neighbour of breaching the deal on several fronts including coordinating "terrorist activity". Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin in a letter to his Eritrean counterpart said Addis Ababa would be forced "to consider its peaceful and legal options under international law" if Eritrea continued.

Those options include terminating the pact or suspending part or all of it, Mesfin wrote.

Relations between the two Horn of Africa nations are at their lowest since a 1998-2000 border war killed 70,000 people, which ended with an agreement in Algiers in late 2000.

Earlier this month, Ethiopia said its soldiers were just metres apart from Eritrean soldiers who had moved into what is supposed to be a neutral buffer zone, sparking fear of a renewed conflict.

The Algiers pact said both sides would have to abide by an independent ruling over the 1,000-km (620-mile) frontier, which has never been implemented since Ethiopia initially rejected it when it was made in April 2002.

Eritrean officials had no immediate comment, but earlier this month accused Ethiopia of sinking talks at The Hague to push the deal forward.

In his letter, Seyoum accused Eritrea of occupying a 25-km (15-mile) buffer zone patrolled by peacekeepers from the U.N. Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), which has drawn condemnation from the U.N. Security Council.

[...]

"Eritrea has also made repeated public threats against Ethiopia. It has imposed severe restrictions on UNMEE. Eritrea has also been coordinating the activities of terrorist groups to destabilize the region," Seyoum wrote.

Eritrea backed Somali Islamists when they fought Somalia's Ethiopian-backed government, and is hosting opposition figures who have vowed to fight Ethiopian troops backing the Somali government.

Ethiopia has repeatedly accused Eritrea of harbouring what it calls "terrorists", including Somali hardline Islamist Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys and other rebel groups opposing Addis Ababa.

Asmara denies it supports such groups.

Reuters, 26 September 2007:

Eritrea maintains its demand that Ethiopia implement a border ruling agreed under a pact to end their 1998-2000 war, a minister said on Wednesday after Ethiopia threatened to call off the peace agreement.

In a letter to Eritrea's Foreign Minister on Tuesday, Ethiopia accused Asmara of violating the deal on several fronts including coordinating "terrorist activity".

Addis Ababa said as a result it was considering terminating or suspending all or part the Algiers agreement that ended the two-year border conflict that killed 70,000 people.

Government of Eritrea, 21 April 2007:

The foreign Ministry announced that Eritrea has suspended membership in IGAD.

The Government of Eritrea was compelled to take the move due to the fact that a number of repeated and irresponsible resolutions that undermine regional peace and security have been adopted in the guise of IGAD. As such, the Eritrean government deemed it fit not to be party to developments that hold one accountable both legally and morally, the Ministry added.

Traditional reconciliation mechanism: Peace efforts in Gambella (2007)

- Traditional reconciliation is easier within an ethnic group than between groups

Special Report 2007: Traditional reconciliation mechanisms

Successful peace and reconciliation negotiations are crucial to finding solutions to conflict-induced displacement. The peoples of Ethiopia have been involved in conflicts for thousands of years and have developed traditional reconciliation procedures. Today, those traditional reconciliation mechanisms should lie at the heart of ongoing peace-building and recovery efforts. In a number of situations, reconciliation between conflicting parties has been successful in the absence of external diplomacy. The example of the Oromo and Somali groups resuming trade relations following the border referendum is a case in point. In a number of other peace building activities, such as in Gambella in 2007, the UN, NGOs and local authorities have been engaged as mediators.

Their impact, however, and the possibilities of traditional reconciliation generally remain limited because some of the main factors creating inequality and triggering conflict are rooted in the current justice and governance system, particularly affecting issues of land policy and land distribution. This situation keeps alive the possibility of further conflicts and displacement.

IRIN, 12 June 2007:

Authorities in Akobo, Southern Sudan, and Tiergol in the Gambella region of Ethiopia are planning talks to defuse tensions between communities living in the border region, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Ethiopia reported.

The tension around Akobo is between two subgroups of the Nuer ethnic group - who predominantly live in Sudan but also have significant numbers in Gambella - the Lou Nuer and the Jikany Nuer.

A study released on Monday by the Geneva-based Small Arms Survey concludes that despite efforts by the Southern Sudanese military to disarm Nuer-dominated militia, loosely known as the 'White Army' in southeastern Sudan, "the pacification of South Sudan has brought the social crises within Lou and other peoples increasingly to the fore".

The two pastoralist Nuer groups have frequently clashed over land, cattle, water and grazing, but in the 1990s were also caught up in opposing southern factions during the Sudan civil war.

A dialogue between the communities is being planned with of PACT International - an NGO with a background in local peace initiatives in the region.

"The Lou and Jikany have had conflicts for a long time over grazing land and access to water points," Julie Brethfeld of PACT Sudan said. While inter-clan fighting between the two had subsided, there were concerns that with potentially large increases in population and cattle, border conflicts may again arise.

Apart from tensions between the Nuer groups, both have complained to local authorities of raids by the Murle ethnic group, which lives to the west.

The Lou Nuer, say humanitarian sources, crossed into Ethiopia several years ago to avoid conflict in Sudan and access more land in Ethiopia, and in the process pushed Jikany off some of their traditional land.

According to aid workers, hundreds of Lou Nuer originally from Sudan are moving from western Gambella into southern Sudan, as the Jikany Nuer take back the land the Lou are vacating.

ACT, July 2005:

A very important feature of the *Anyuae and Neur* conflict is the fact that the contested territory lies adjacent to the provinces of southern Sudan, where war between North and South has been waged for decades. Liberation fronts and other rebel groups receive armament from groups whose interests lie in a destabilized Africa. Necessary armaments are supplied in generous quantities. Relevant actors in liberation fronts or other types of rebels use the trade of their virtually unlimited supply of armaments as a means of additional income.

According to a recent study on traditional mechanisms of conflict management in the Anyuae Society, undertaken by Yacob Arsano, it was shown that traditional mechanisms were by and large effective in the management of intra-Anyuae conflict, and virtually non-effective in conflict situations outside the Anyuae society. The Neur seem to have the upper hand because of the asymmetrical distribution of firepower.

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global figures

Difficulties in identifying and counting IDPs (Special Report 2007)

In the absence of a national definition of IDPs and policy for their protection, the Ethiopian government does not officially recognise all conflict-induced situations of internal displacement. There has never been a country-wide IDP assessment. However, the 2007 Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia, written in collaboration with the government, includes as vulnerable groups "populations affected by natural disasters such as prolonged drought, flooding and other shocks, as well as by localised conflicts, [as well as] women, children under five, youth, adolescents, the elderly and emergency induced displacements.". Certain displacement situations, such as in Tigray and in Gambella following the conflict of early 2007 (both described below) were recognised as such by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA). Nevertheless, some disagreement persists between the Ethiopian government and the international community on who may be defined as an IDP and at what point a person ceases to be displaced (as for example in the Borena-Guji displacement situation below).

Displacement figures from various international agencies indicate a total of some 200,000 conflict-induced IDPs. Number based on 2007 estimates by various international sources. Those numbers should be considered only as best available estimates, as no concerted data collection has so far been carried out. Another complicating factor is the general absence of information with regard to return movements. Regional government figures corroborate the estimates for Gambella and Tigray regions and the Somali border referendum displacement. The federal government has only confirmed the displacement figures for Tigray region.

According to current estimates, some 60,000 people remain displaced by the 2004 border referendum along the Somali-Oromiya regional border. This number includes Somali and Oromo IDPs. There are no numbers available with regard to the displacement in Somali region due to the 2007 clashes between the military and the ONLF.

As at September 2007, an estimated 20,000 people in Borena and Guji zones (Oromiya region), 60,000 in Gambella region and 62,000 in Tigray remained displaced. No estimates are available on displacement in Afar, or in SNNPR, although informal information suggests that there are between 25,000 and 30,000 IDPs in SNNPR.

An estimated 200,000 conflict-IDPs (September 2007)

September 2007:

An unpublished inter-agency document established the rough estimate of 200,000 conflict-IDPs. An estimated 60,000 people remain displaced by the 2004 border referendum along the Somali-Oromo regional border. This number includes Somali and Oromo IDPs. There are no concrete indications as to the 2007 displacement in Somali region due to the military activities against the ONLF.

The displacement in Borena and Guji zones is estimated to still amount to some 20,000. Further estimates are 60,000 IDPs in Gambella and 62,000 in Tigray. No estimates are

available on displacement in Afar, nor in SNNPR. Informal information suggests some 25,000 to 30,000 IDPs in SNNPR.

February 2006:

As of February 2006, the estimates of conflict-induced displacement by UN OCHA in Addis Ababa was:

Region	Estimated number of IDPs
Tigray	62,000*
Somali	15,000**
Oromiya/Somali border displ.	50,000
Oromiya (Borena)	43,000***
Gambella	50,000
Afar (Bure conflict)	1,000

* The government claims that all people in Tigray are currently covered under the PSNP starting in 2006. There was no verification of this on the ground.

** IDPs in Somali region are estimated by regional authorities to be around 75,000, of which 20 per cent are believed to be conflict IDPs.

*** Numbers reported from local officials, displacement due to conflict between Gabra's and Guji's

UN agencies in Ethiopia caution that some of the figures may be exaggerated as local authorities may expect some gain in reporting high IDP figures. Also, it is very difficult to monitor return movements and it is not clear how many of the people originally displaced have returned. Any IDP figure remains an estimate until the planned IDP survey has been carried out. In 2006, the federal government estimated that there were no internally displaced people in Ethiopia, since they have either returned, are receiving food aid or are locally integrated.

Geographical Distribution

Inter-ethnic conflict in southern Ethiopia displaces thousands of people (February 2009)

BBC, 26 February 2009

"Tens of thousands of people have reportedly fled their homes as a result of fighting between rival groups in a remote part of southern Ethiopia.

The BBC's Elizabeth Blunt says 300 people may have been killed - mostly in a major battle on 5 February.

People are moving away to safer areas following the clash between the Borana people and the Gheri, a Somali clan.

While the fighting has now stopped, the area is still tense and some reports estimate more than 100,000 displaced.

Ethiopia's Minister of State Responsible for Emergency and Disaster Planning Mitiku Kassa acknowledged the existence of the problem but said the figure of 100,000 was an exaggeration.

The fighting, which took place near the town of Moyale, was so severe that for a time the main road to the Kenyan border was closed.

Immediately after the peak of the clashes on 5 February, the Gheri people began moving away from the area in large numbers.

The BBC's Elizabeth Blunt in Addis Ababa says armed conflicts, particularly over water, are not unusual in this part of southern Ethiopia.

They have been increasing in recent years because of boundary changes, and because of drought which has made control over wells and water points even more critical.

A long term observer of the area told the BBC it was tragic that something like this happens virtually every year, and is now considered almost normal."

BBC, 13 March 2009

"Some 70,000 people have fled their homes in a remote part of southern Ethiopia, after a deadly conflict broke out between rival groups - apparently triggered by the construction of a new borehole. The BBC's Elizabeth Blunt has been to visit the affected areas.

Wamo Boru and his family used to live in Kafa, one of the many small ethnic Borana communities scattered across the arid borderlands of southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.

The hard red earth shows through the thin grass of the sun-baked landscape, a wide expanse of thorny scrub, flat-topped thorn-trees and tall red anthills.

The Borana lead a hard life, especially in the past year or two, when rains have been poor.

But the community had its livestock - cattle and camels and goats - and was expecting to have a better water supply when the Oromia regional government finished work on a new borehole in the area.

But at the beginning of February they had - quite literally - a rude awakening.

"It was nine o'clock at night, we were sleeping when we were fired at," said Wamo.

"We just had to jump from our sleep and protect ourselves. Because it was night, we didn't see who was attacking us, but we think they were the people called Gherri from Somali regional state.

"They came on foot, without vehicles, but they had bombs and missile launchers, and at that time we didn't have guns, only sticks to defend ourselves."

Wamo, his family and neighbours fled with just the clothes they stood up in.

They managed to bring some of their stronger livestock with them, but they had to leave the weaker ones behind to be taken by the raiders.

Now they are camped close to the dirt road that runs east from Yabelo, the administrative headquarters of Ethiopia's Borana zone.

Wareba, the village teacher, is there too; he lost one of his in-laws in the raid.

"This was a war no-one was prepared for," he says.

"That was how the Somalis could come and destroy so much."

The children he used to teach are scattered across the area, and, he says, "not in good condition".

Wamo says three members of their community died during the attack, another seven were badly injured.

Their community is now just another group of displaced people - 2,000 of them among nearly 70,000 estimated to have been driven from their homes by the fighting."

Somali region: Over 15,000 conflict-induced IDPs (February 2006)

- In Raso area, IDPs have been in temporary shelters for the last 3 to 4 years
- Some 2,835 displaced families are mainly located in Bordone and Mieso areas of the Shinille zone
- IDPs in Bordode and Mieso areas fled fighting between Oromos and Somalis in December 2003 over land ownership

- 14,900 people displaced mainly by conflict over land ownership between Oromo and Somali tribesmen in the Rift valley
- IDPs are from four peasant associations in Kato Obensale, Hardim, Goljenno and Kora areas
- IDPs are sheltered temporarily in areas on Somali side of the border with Oromia

In February 2006, OCHA Ethiopia assessed the number of conflict-related displaced people at around 15,000 (20 per cent of a total of 75,000 displaced due to conflict and drought)

"8. The Somali region is impacted with some 87,995 drought and conflict induced IDPs. These are scattered throughout the region. The drought affected IDPs constitute 79 % of the current IDP population in the Somali region while 21 % are conflict induced. The drought affected IDPs have been in temporary shelters for the last 3-4 years including the conflict induced IDPs in Rasso area.

9. The majority of conflict induced IDPs in the Somali region are located in Bordode and Mieso areas of the Shinille Zone. The IDPs in Bordode and Mieso areas are displaced because fighting between Oromos and Somalis in December 2003. Although the figure on IDPs in the above two localities have not yet been registered by the regional DPPB and the federal DPPC, two independent missions from WFP, OCHA, SC – USA, Hararge Catholic Secretariat and Shinille Zonal Administration to conflict areas have confirmed the presence of some 2,835 IDP families. The cause of conflict is reported to be claims on land ownership right. Reconciliation efforts are in progress with the involvement of community elders from both sides.

11. [...] The locations of the IDP shelters in the Somali region are shown in table 4 below and Map 3 attached.

Table 4 Current Locations of conflict induced IDPs in the Somali Region

IDP Shelter	Zone	Wereda	Persons	Cause	Year
Bordode	Shinille	Mieso	1,810	Conflict	2003
Gennod	Shinille	Mieso	3,075	Conflict	2003
Lebiley	Shinille	Mieso	7,715	Conflict	2003
Mieso	Shinille	Mieso	2,300	Conflict	2003
Rasso	Afder	West Imi	4,000	Conflict	2002
		Total	18,900		

[Link to the map](#)

(UN OCHA Ethiopia, May 2004)

"12. The IDPs in Bordode and Mieso areas are Somali tribesmen from Hawiye, Gurgura and Ogadeni tribes whose livelihood depended on irrigated farming before the conflict. The groups are displaced from four-peasant associations in Kato, Obensale, Hardim, Goljenno and Kora areas. The cause of the conflict is reported to be dispute on land ownership. In terms of composition, the IDPs in Bordode are Hawiye; Gurgura and Ogadenis while those in Mieso are exclusively Hawiye. The Gurgura speak both Somali and Oromo languages. The IDPs are temporarily sheltered in safe areas on the Somali side of the border with Oromia.

13. The situation of IDPs in Bordode/Mieso was first assessed in February 2004 by a joint rapid assessment team mentioned in paragraph (4) above. The mission reported that some 2,300 families have been displaced. [...]

14. According to Bordode and Mieso Wereda administration, 41 people were killed from both sides and 198 houses were burned and an unknown number of livestock was looted during the conflict. Regarding figure on displaced persons, Wereda officials in Bordode/Mieso informed OCHA Field Officer that there are some 2,835 families/14.900 persons. The breakdown by IDP shelter is shown in table 1 below:

Table 1 IDP Population in Bordode/Mieso Areas

IDP Camp	Families	Persons
Mieso (Somali part)	315	2,300
Lebiley	1,543	7,715
Gennod	615	3,075
Bordode	362	1,810
Grand Total	2,835	14,900

(Note: Please note that the total number of persons in the above table except for Mieso is estimated by OCHA Field Officer by assuming an average of 5 persons per family. The figures on Mieso were provided by the Wereda Administrator and community elders)." (UN OCHA Ethiopia, 24 March 2004)

Somali/Oromiya regions: Displacement due to 2004 Somali/Oromiya border referendum continues to be of concern (February 2006)

- In Oromiya estimates suggest that 21,520 people have been displaced but federal authorities say that the number is overstated by as much as 11,000
- In Doba in Oromiya region, the district administration reports 17,641 IDPs, but OCHA and CARE put in doubt such number and the federal authorities put the number at 6,000 IDPs
- Probably between 25,000-35,000 people newly displaced in the Somali region according to the regional DPPB
- MSF-Belgique found between 10,000-15,000 living in six camps in the southern area of the Somali region
- CARE registered 2,557 IDPs in Mieso town
- In February 2005 a joint DPPC/USAID/UN agencies mission found more than 4,400 IDPs in Mieso town

"The region (of Oromiya) reports that displacement is a persistent problem in West Hararghe zone and to date there are 39,371 and 14,564 IDPs in Mieso and Doba woredas respectively in relation to the Somali/Oromiya referendum related conflict." (UN OCHA, February 2006)

"The referendum conducted in October 2004, to determine the preference for administrative status of kebeles bordering Oromiya and Somali Regions resulted in pressures on the minorities to move. As a consequence, many people have been displaced from the two regional states since November 2004. In Oromiya, estimates compiled from figures given by local woreda and kebele authorities, suggest that a total of 21,520 people have been displaced in different border woredas, namely Mieso, Doba, and Erer in West and East Hararghe zones. Federal authorities

have indicated that this number may be overstated by as much as 11,000. In Doba woreda, the Ministry of Federal Affairs put the number of IDPs at 6,000. There are also more than 2,500 displaced persons in Mieso town, of which 452 are not registered and another 444 from Erer woreda now living in Kara-Mille town of neighbouring Goro Gutu woreda in East Hararghe zone. CARE and other NGOs are in the area providing food and non-food assistance up to May 2005." (UN CTE, 20 April 2005)

"MSF-Belgium which conducted a rapid nutritional assessment in the last week of March estimate that there are between 10,000-15,000 IDPs living in six camps in this southern area." (UN CTE, 20 April 2005)

"Confusion continues over the number of IDPs in Doba in west Haraghe. The district administration has reported 17,641 IDPs but an OCHA mission that was accompanied by field staff from CARE found no evidence of this level of displacement. 6,000 most affected IDPs have received food and non food assistance from the government." (UN OCHA, 14 March 2005, p.2)

"The recent land referendum held in areas disputed by the Somali and Oromia Regions have produced large numbers of new IDPs on the Somali side. The specific number of people displaced in connection with the referendum remains still undetermined but preliminary views on the situation are stating the number could be in tens of thousands. Probably between 25000 - 35000 people." (Email from the DPPB Somali region, 7 April 2005)

"Near Mieso town up to six people were killed and many more injured after renewed conflict on 15 February. Other incidences have been reported nearby in Boredede and Mulu, with the number of casualties and displaced unknown. According to the NGO CARE, there are now 2,557 IDPs registered in Mieso. A full month ration of food was distributed on February 12, while non-food items were distributed to the 425 new arrivals. CARE has sufficient resources to continue its support of food and non-food items until May 1. CARE conducted a Reintegration Survey of all IDP households between February 6 and 11, to ascertain whether they had any plans for reintegrating themselves into society and where, but the results were inconclusive." (UN OCHA-EUE, 21 February 2005)

"Joint DPPC/USAID/UN agencies mission, which conducted an assessment of IDPs in East and West Hararghe during the first week of February also visited Mieso Town to monitor IDPs status in the area following the recent referendum between Oromiya and Somali Regions. According to the team there are now more than 4,400 IDPs in the town, of which 452 are newly arrived and not registered. The team reported that there is over-crowding in the tents and more shelter is required. Signs of malnutrition and diarrhea were observed amongst children. CARE, one of four NGOs assisting the IDPs, report that they have received food and funds from USAID and Norway which will enable them to continue assistance in the form of food, water and basic services for another two months. CARE has also conducted a survey to find a resolution for the IDPs living in the town's temporary accommodation. Last week it interviewed 520 heads of households in the camp to find out whether they intended on returning to their place of origin, what their livelihoods are and their plans for the future. The data is currently being analysed and will be available shortly." (UN OCHA-EUE, 14 February 2005)

Oromiya region: Ethnic conflict between Gabra, Guji and Borena displace over 40,000 since April 2005 (June 2006)

- In June 2006, over 23,000 people fled their homes, following clashes between Borena and Guji

- Ethnic tensions between the Gabra and Guji, and between Gabra and Borena in Borena zone (Oromiya) caused the displacement of up to 43,000 in 2005
- Thousands of people are still displaced without the necessary food assistance by the government

IRIN, 19 June 2006:

More than 23,000 people have fled their homes in southern Ethiopia following clashes triggered by disputes over land ownership between neighbouring ethnic groups in the area last week, according to Oxfam.

The fighting, which pits the Guji community against the Borena erupted about two weeks ago in the territory between the towns of Yabello and Finchewa, some 400 km south of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

"Regional authorities have reported that overall more than 23,000 people have been displaced after the inter-clan clashes over the past 15 days in the south of Ethiopia," said Liz Lucas, spokeswoman for Oxfam. "Elders, traditional leaders, and local government officials are meeting to settle the conflict. Oxfam is also working with local partners on peace-building in the area."

Another humanitarian sources who asked not to be named said 23,400 people from the districts of Arrero and Yabello had been displaced. "Of these, 20,400 people have settled in Shakiso, a Guji gold mining district 100 km northeast of Yabello. Food assistance is needed. Sporadic clashes were still going on this week," the source added.

Humanitarian organizations last week reported that between 100 and 150 people had been killed in these clashes, that started when land formerly belonging to Borenas was awarded to Gujis by the government.

The dispute started simmering on 23 May and turned violent a week later when the Guji started claiming the land that was previously occupied by the Borena clan."

OCHA, 3 January 2006

"Due to the occurrence of drought in northern parts of Kenya and tribal conflicts between the Gabra and Borena many people are migrating to the zone with their livestock putting pressure on the scarce pasture and water resources. Conflict between the Borena, Hamar and Erboke tribes is feared as the Borena have migrated to the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Region in search of pasture and water for their livestock. Several thousand people that are displaced due to the tribal conflicts between Gabra and Guji and Borena and Gabra are still in the area waiting for assistance. However, the allocation made by the FDPPA does not include these beneficiaries that are in a serious condition. In addition, non-food interventions are also equally important in this zone."

Daily Monitor, July 19, 2005

Ethnic conflict between Gabras and Gujis which erupted early in April 2005 in the Oromia region of Borena zone continues in the area, UN agency said on Monday. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) however says that intensity of the conflict has decreased in the last week. So far, according to the agency, over 43,000 people from both ethnic groups have been displaced since April due to the conflict. The agency believes that the number is expected to rise unless calm is restored.

"The on-going conflict between Gabras and Gujis in Borena zone, Oromiya region that displaced 43,700 people has not been resolved. It is becoming a humanitarian problem in the area," UNOCHA said. The report indicated that in April, thousands of people in Hagere Mariam, Yabello and Arrero were displaced, and several thousand huts were burnt. The agency also expressed its

concern that the number of beneficiaries requiring urgent food and non-food assistance will increase when the belg assessment results are released this week.

After an assessment last May, the DPPC provided some food and non-food assistance for 2,000 IDP the majority of which were Gabras in Yabello. The number of people who died due to the conflict is yet to be confirmed, but there were casualties in the area. OCHA also added that although the same ethnic group maybe involved--the Gabras-- the two incidents are completely unrelated. Attempts made by The Daily Monitor to get comments from the concerned federal government office were not successful."

Gambella: Internal displacement (February 2006)

- Important human rights violations coupled with forced displacement occurred in late 2003 and early 2004
- The Ethiopian armed forces allegedly carried out numerous human rights violations
- A Commission of Inquiry installed by the Ethiopian government in 2004 came to the conclusion that the armed forces had done no wrong
- IDPs moved to temporary shelters in Anyuak and Nuire Zones and in the outskirts of Gambella town
- Some IDPs have moved to the refugee camps along the border with Sudan
- Parts of Gambella are still inaccessible and it is currently unclear how many of the 50,000 displaced have still not returned home
- Ethnic clashes have been causing displacement since at least early 2002, when clashes between Anyuak and Nuer occurred over power sharing

According to OCHA Ethiopia, some 50,000 displaced will be receiving emergency food assistance in 2006. Given that assistance, the government appears not to consider them IDPs anymore.

"Security is still a concern, with continued conflict reported. In Nuer zone, more than 3,000 people were displaced to Nyinenyag due to inter-clan conflict. The DPP&FS office has transported and distributed food items to the displaced people." (UN OCHA, Focus on Ethiopia, Monthly Update, February 2006)

"Since late 2003, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has committed numerous human rights violations against Anuak communities in the Gambella region of southwestern Ethiopia that may amount to crimes against humanity. These abuses have taken place in a region plagued by longstanding ethnic tensions to which the Ethiopian military has become a party.

On December 13, 2003, a brutal ambush allegedly committed by armed Anuak sparked a bloody three-day rampage in the regional capital in which ENDF soldiers joined "highlander" mobs in the destruction of the town's Anuak neighborhoods. As many as 424 people were killed, almost all of them Anuak. The mobs burned over four hundred houses to the ground and ransacked and looted many of those left standing. The December 2003 massacre was not the first time ENDF soldiers had committed human rights abuses against civilians in Gambella, but it was a turning point in Gambella's long history of conflict and insecurity.

In the fourteen years since the overthrow of the brutal Derg dictatorship in 1991, the new age of prosperity and peace promised by the government has eluded the people of Gambella. Long-simmering ethnic tensions have repeatedly boiled over into violence that has left hundreds dead and thousands homeless, while federal and regional authorities have taken almost no effective action to protect victims or punish their attackers. The prevailing state of insecurity throughout

the region and the instability of areas along Gambella's long border with Sudan have led to an ever-increasing Ethiopian military presence in the region.

Until December 2003, the garrison of ENDF soldiers stationed in Gambella had not become involved in the region's increasingly frequent ethnic clashes. It became more difficult for the army to remain uninvolved, however, as longstanding tensions between Gambella's Anuak population and its large community of onetime migrants from other parts of Ethiopia, known locally as "highlanders," began to escalate. A series of attacks attributed to Anuak gunmen left more than twenty highlander civilians dead in the second half of 2003, and Gambella's mainly Anuak regional authorities proved unable or unwilling to bring the situation under control. The vast majority of the military personnel in Gambella are drawn from the same ethnic groups that make up the region's highlander community and December 13 marked the moment the Ethiopian military entered into the conflict against the Anuak. What had been a situation marked by long-simmering tensions that erupted sporadically into violence was transformed into a broad-based assault by the Ethiopian army against Gambella's Anuak population.

Since December 2003, the military has set about finding and destroying the disparate groups of armed Anuak collectively referred to as *shifita*—organized Sudan-based rebels, farmers carrying out isolated revenge attacks in retaliation for past military abuses, and a small number of radicalized gunmen—it believes to be responsible for attacks on the highlander population. This has become a pretext for numerous bloody and destructive raids on Anuak villages and neighborhoods; more than 100 Anuak men, women and children were killed since the December 2003 massacre in the nineteen communities surveyed by Human Rights Watch alone, entire villages were burned to the ground and thousands of families were driven from their homes.

The prevailing climate of impunity that now exists in Gambella has allowed ENDF soldiers to prey upon and terrorize the Anuak communities they patrol. In dozens of communities, soldiers have raped Anuak women, beaten and tortured young men to the point of serious injury or death and looted homes and public buildings. Ordinary people now flee upon spotting approaching ENDF soldiers, and thousands of Anuak have been displaced or driven out of the country as refugees.

The Ethiopian government's efforts to halt these abuses or punish those responsible have been grossly inadequate. A commission of inquiry set up to investigate the December 2003 massacre absolved the military of any wrongdoing, and federal authorities have taken no apparent action to investigate ongoing human rights violations in the region. When community leaders complain about these abuses to ENDF officers they are sent away with empty promises or even threats of further violence. Only a handful of soldiers have been held to account for any of the crimes ENDF forces have committed since December 2003. To date, higher-ranking ENDF officers have been effectively beyond the reach of justice because of the federal government's refusal to investigate persistent complaints of ENDF abuse.

The motivations behind the military's assault on the Anuak population—and the government's failure to address it—remain unclear. Many victims' testimonies seem to indicate that ENDF officers and soldiers, frustrated by their inability to find and destroy the armed Anuak groups they are looking for, have come to believe that the entire Anuak population is colluding with their elusive enemies. Other abuses, including many of the reported rapes and incidents of looting, seem to be crimes of opportunity fueled by the near-total lack of accountability. Federal authorities, meanwhile, eager to see the troublesome region pacified, have at the very least shown themselves willing to turn a blind eye to what is happening. Whether or not federal officials are actively complicit in ongoing abuses or aware of precisely how widespread and serious they have been, they have certainly given the military a green light to employ tactics that could only be expected to result in a human rights disaster. The government should know what its military is doing to the Anuak and take steps to prevent it." (HRW, March 2005)

1. There are about 51,000 IDPs in Gambella region. These are affected by the recent conflict in the region. The IDPs are located in the outskirts of Gambella town and temporary shelters in Anyuak and Nuer Zones. The IDPs are being assisted by the federal DPPC, the regional government and the ICRC. In order to ensure improved emergency response, the regional DPPB of Gambella regional state has recently prepared draft emergency plan of action for the federal government. [...]

2. The main challenges to the delivery of coordinated humanitarian assistance to the IDPs in Gambella are security for aid workers and regaining access to the IDPs. [...]

"In Gambella region, an estimated 2,000 IDP families/10,000 persons from Annuaq tribe that were displaced since early 2002 because of conflicts with Nuuers have been residing in Ilaa Village in Itang Wereda. However, it is now confirmed with the regional DPPB of Gambella region that some of the IDPs have returned home. The residual caseload of 1,000 families/4,811 persons are currently being assisted by the federal DPPC as conflict induced IDPs in Gambella region." (UN OCHA-EUE, 1 August 2003)

"Engagements between government forces and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) continued across Oromia region, and in January the OLF claimed to have put 1,639 government troops out of action across the region during 2002. In Gambella region, following clashes in July between Anyuak and Nuer ethnic groups which prompted Federal intervention, the death of a Nuer student sparked off new confrontations killing a further five and resulting in 80 arrests. The unrest has generated 10,000 Anyuak IDPs; some of them clashed in the Fugnido camp in November with Nuer and other refugees from fighting between SPLA and Sudan Government across the Sudan border. Forty people were killed according to a December UN-EUE report." (SADC, 28 February 2003, p.3)

"During the year, there were numerous clashes between the Anuak and Nuer clans. For example, on July 7, 60 persons were killed and 41 were injured during ethnic conflict between Nuer and Anuak tribesmen in the Gambella region over political power sharing. EHRCO reported that all houses in eight kebeles were burned to the ground, and 8,760 persons were displaced from their homes. The situation remained unstable at year's end. There were no reports that the Government investigated the conflict." (USDOS, 31 March 2003 Sect.4)

Tigray: 62,000 still displaced since the Ethio-Eritrean war (January 2006)

- IDPs are located in the North, North West, Central and Eastern Zones of the region, with highest concentration in Eastern Zone
- They are not considered IDPs by the Ethiopian government, as they are supposed to be included in the national Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) as of early 2006

1. The 62,000 conflict induced IDPs in Tigray are presently located in four zones, namely North, North West, Central and Eastern Zones of the region. The Eastern Zone hosts the highest IDP population, as it is the border with the Afar region where serious fighting took place during the Ethio-Eritrean war. The IDP caseload in Tigray could not be returned to their villages of origin because of fluid security situation and the presence of landmines in their villages of origin including their farmlands and communal grazing areas.

2. [...] The locations of the residual caseload of IDPs in Tigray region are shown in table 2 below and **Map 1 attached**.

Table 2 Residual IDP Caseload in Tigray Region

IDP Shelter	Zone	Wereda	Persons	Cause	Year
Adebai	West	Kafta Humera	466	War	1998
Shiraro	North West	T. Adiyabo	6,187	War	1998
Adihagerom	North West	T. Adiyabo	3,991	War	1998
Adi Nibhit	North West	L. Adiyabo	3,222	war	1998
Badme	North West	T. Adiyabo	1,164	War	1998
Rama	Central	Mereb Lehe	4,093	War	1998
Chila	Central	T. Maychew	2,468	War	1998
Gerhu S.	Central	Ahiferom	7,362	War	1998
Idaga R.	Central	Ahiferom	3,850	War	1998
Fatsi	East	Gulumahda	7,095	War	1998
Sebeya	East	Gulumahda	4,985	War	1998
Dohan	East	Erob	9,781	War	1998
Zalambesa	East	Gulumahda	7,427	War	1998
Total			62,091		

[Link to the map](#)

(UN OCHA Ethiopia, 24 May 2004)

Three main areas of displacement along the Eritrea/Ethiopia border (April 2003)

- In Tigray Region's Eastern Zone the displaced are now located in Adigrat town and the surrounding rural areas
- IDPs from the disputed Yirga triangle (in the Western zone) are located in areas south of the triangle up to and including the town of Shire (Endaselassie)
- IDPs from the Central zone are presently residing in Adwa town and its environs
- Most IDPs in the Afar region are living near Bure and Elidaar
- An estimated 20,000 out of the 25,000 expelled Ethiopians who returned from Eritrea became IDPs in northern Ethiopia by end 2001
- In 2003 the government registered 60,806 families as war-affected IDPs in Tigray
- WFP assists 1,000 ethnic Kunamas displaced from a military strategic area

"More than 90% of the IDPs are to be found in a belt of land due south of the border that runs from Bereket on the Sudanese border in the west to Adigrat in the east. They lead a precarious existence on food handouts distributed by the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), a local NGO. The remainder of the IDPs are to be found along Ethiopia's southeastern border in Afar Region." (RI 22 June 1999)

"Currently, there are three main areas of tension along the 1,000 km border between Ethiopia and Eritrea: Badme and Sheraro, in the western border area known as the "Yirga Triangle" between the Tekezze and Mereb rivers (Western Zone of Tigray Region); Tsorona - Zalambessa - Alitena, in the central border section (Eastern Zone of Tigray Region) near the main road leading from Ethiopia to the Eritrean capital Asmara, and Bure in the eastern border section (Zone 1 of Afar Region) on the main road to the Eritrean Red Sea port of Assab.

In the Tigray Region's Eastern Zone, the displaced originate from the conflict areas in Irob and Gulomeheda weredas and are now located in Adigrat town and the surrounding rural areas. In the Central zone, most people have been displaced from the town of Rama and the surrounding areas and are presently residing in Adwa town and its environs. In the Western zone, most of the displaced originate from the disputed Yirga triangle and are presently in areas south of the triangle up to and including the town of Shire (Endaselassie); the balance have been displaced from Humera town and its environs and have moved further south to the villages of Bereket and Ba'eke.

In Afar, most of the displaced are living near Bure and Elidaar. They are being served by the government, Médecins du Monde, and the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (a local NGO), and also indirectly supported by UNICEF, WHO and other UN agencies.

In Tigray, there has been some shifting in displaced populations during 1999. Following the fighting in the Badme area in February 1999, many of those who had been displaced to Zeben Gedena from Sheraro town returned. The town is now bustling with activity, and has in fact become a host community for other IDPs who remain displaced from Badme and other areas close to the border. A new settlement, known as Wahla Ni'hibi, has been opened, and is a priority for providing shelter, water, health and sanitation services." (UNCTE 28 January 2000, pp. 30-31)

"During 2001, an estimated 25,000 persons of Ethiopian descent voluntarily returned to Ethiopia from Eritrea. Most had lived for many years in and around Asmara, the Eritrean capital. Several thousand of the returnees received transportation and border-crossing assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Ethiopian government accepted "full responsibility for their transport and relocation within Ethiopia," a UN report declared.

An estimated 20,000 new Ethiopian returnees, however, remained internally displaced in northern Ethiopia at year's end. Nearly all of the displaced returnees struggled to survive on monthly WFP food rations." (USCR, 1 June 2002)

"To date, the ERP has registered a total of 60,806 families as war-affected IDPs in Tigray Region. The figure includes all people from Zalambassa area. The IDPs are dispersed in four zones bordering Eritrea (Central, East, West and North West Tigray)." (UNDP EUE, 2 April 2003, p.4)

"The findings of this assessment revealed the need to provide continued assistance to a residual caseload of approximately 76,500 people.

[...]

1,000 ethnic kunamas living in Northern Tigray [...]

Ethiopian Kunamas:

As recommended in the February 2002 DPPC-led assessment, a WFP nutritionist undertook a rapid assessment in of ethnic Kunamas living in Northern Tigray in March 2002. This revealed some cases of obvious *marasmus* and found that, in general, the nutritional status of this group did not appear to be as good as that of other IDPs. While Ethiopian Kunamas settled in Kafta Humera (see par 32) some years ago, they are regarded as a marginalized group, with no tradition of seeking out labour opportunities in time of stress and are regarded as being less effective in working on large farms than others inhabitants of the area. Having been displaced from a militarily strategic area, they will not be able to return to their land for the foreseeable future." (WFP, 1 May 2002, pp.9)

IDPs in Afar:

"Though a good main rainy season was reported last year, according to a recent article in the official *Ethiopian Herald* newspaper (April 17, 1999) the DPPB has distributed 2,180 metric tonnes of relief food to a total of 130,000 drought affected people in Zone 2 and Zone 4. While the latest update on needs issued by the Federal DPPC does not record any beneficiaries due to

natural causes, the total number of people displaced by the conflict with Eritrea is given as 29,275. According to the regional DPPB in Asayita, the increase over the figure of 27,720 given in the February Afar Regional Contingency Plan was due to an additional episode of displacement which took place in March. Reportedly, the new caseload consists entirely of non-Afar urban dwellers from Bure ('now completely evacuated') and Manda ('mostly evacuated'), joining 16,290 earlier displaced persons of Afar ethnicity in Su'ula, a locality on the main highway some 15 kilometers south of Manda and some 50 kilometers north of Eli Dar. The DPPB told the mission that the other groups of displaced people, 'originating from both sides of the border' were to be found in Zone 2: Berhale (2,720), Afdera (3,710) and Dalol (5,000). Reportedly, some 290 people from Su'ula and 710 people from Afdera had moved in March to areas around Logia where possibly some of these 1,000 people might have used the so called 'Soger-Camp', which served in earlier times as part of the transit facilities for returnees and expellees coming from Eritrea (Assab).

[...]

In a recent 'urgent joint statement' issued both by the DPPB and APDA, it is stated that the Afar Region 'continues to hold some 24,000 displaced Afar in total'. This figure differs somewhat from the current official figure of 29,000. The statement went on to formulate a request for immediate assistance covering the sectors of shelter (2,500 palm mats and 300 blankets), food (supplementary food for 6,000 women and children), household goods (water containers and cooking utensils for 300 families) and medicines (for 20,000 people). (UNDP EUE 12 April 1999, pp. 4, 5)

Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region: ethnic conflict base for internal displacement (March 2003)

- In the SNNP Region about 7,000 people were displaced in 2002
- 5,800 people were newly displaced during 2002 in Yeki District of SNNP Region due to clashes over Shekicho zone's status
- Government refused to allow independent investigation over the conflict despite that about 800 people were killed
- 1,000 Dizzi people were displaced following clashes between Dizzi and Surma groups in July 2002

"Ethnic clashes during the year resulted in a number of deaths, injuries, and the displacement of thousands of persons (see Section 2.d.). For example, in January 92 ethnic Somalis were killed during regional clashes over grazing and water rights. Banditry and lawlessness continued to prevail in the region at year's end.

In March between 600 and 800 persons were killed during clashes between the Sheko-Mejjanger and Manja and the Sheka and Bench-Majjii in and around the town of Tepi, capital of the Yeki District, in the Southern Region. Government officials reported 128 deaths; however, the SEPDC reported more than 1,700 deaths. More than 2,000 homes were destroyed and 5,800 persons were displaced as a result of the violence. The clashes involved local officials and members of each of these communities, and resulted from the dissatisfaction of many Sheko-Mejjanger who had wanted autonomy following an unsuccessful attempt in 1993 to move the Shekicho zone from the Southern Region to the Gambella Region. The Government claimed to have arrested 41 policemen, 39 militia members, and 11 administrative officials for their involvement in the clashes. However, the Government refused to allow an independent investigation of the incident and put the Federal Police in charge of the government's internal investigation." (USDOS, 31 March 2003 Sect.4)

"Ethnic conflict is "spreading like wildfire" in Ethiopia because the government is failing to tackle the problem, according to a national human rights organisation.

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) urged the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) to crack down on tribal clashes.

In its latest report, the organisation laid the blame for recent troubles between the Surma and Dizzi tribes who live in southwest Ethiopia at the door of the government.

[...]

The latest clashes in the Bench and Maji zone occurred after a member of the Dizzi tribe was killed. In a revenge attack, two Surma were killed. The nomadic Surma then carried out another attack on Dizzi groups living in at least four local districts.

More than 1,000 Dizzi tribe members fled their homes and some 31 people were killed in the clashes which broke out last July, according to the report.

[...]

EHRCO said that groups carrying guns in areas where ethnic clashes occur should be disarmed and that elders should be used to calm down tensions.

It also said that talks between the Dizzi and Surma tribes could ensure "an environment of mutual respect, peace and tranquility"." (IRIN, 12 March 2003)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

Historic and general overview of causes of displacement (2003)

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"This refers to the correspondences and telephone conversations made between Ms. Cathy Benetti, Information Officer at NRC in Geneva, Mr. Max Bonnel of OCHA Geneva and Mr. Paul Hebert regarding data on internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia.

It should be noted that this summary note does not consider deportees from Eritrea and families of deceased soldiers who are assisted under the World Bank project on recovery and rehabilitation to those affected by the recent Ethio - Eritrea war.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia can be classified into three main categories. These are war displaced, drought and conflict induced IDPs. The war displaced are mainly located in Tigray and Afar National Regional States while drought and conflict induced IDPs are concentrated in the Somali region, Gambella and Addis Ababa.

WAR INDUCED IDPS

Regarding war induced IDPs in Tigray National Regional State, the [regional office for Emergency Recovery Programme (ERP) in Mekele is responsible for proper screening, registration and provision of cash assistance to the IDPs supported under the World Bank project. The office has confirmed to OCHA Addis Ababa that the figure on IDPs in Tigray region remains unchanged since the last filed report dated 2 April 2003 (report prepared by Ahmed Ali and Dechassa Lemessa of OCHA Addis Ababa covering their field assessment in Tigray between 9 – 22 February 2003). The report indicated that 60,806 families with an estimated population of 304,030 persons were registered as war induced IDPs in the region.

Concerning IDPs in Afar National Regional State (ANRS), the regional office for Social Rehabilitation Fund (SRF) in Asaita; the regional capital has been nominated as the government-implementing partner for providing the IDPs in region with cash grants approved by the World Bank similar to the package considered for IDPs in Tigray region. In this connection, SRP office in Asaita has informed OCHA Addis Ababa that a total of 5,002 IDP families with an estimated population of 25,010 persons have also been registered for assistance under the current World Bank project.

[...]

Concerning the 75,949 IDPs reported to be under WFP and ICRC emergency food assistance programme in Tigray region, it has been confirmed with WFP Sub-Office Mekele and the regional ERP of Tigray that the individuals are not sheltered in separate camps but rather dispersed in different villages located in war affected zones in Eastern, Central and North-Western region. These IDPs are unable to return to their villages of origin because of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) and because for some their land is being used by the Ethiopian army for defence purposes. Out of the above 75,949 IDPs (persons) mentioned above, 12,936 persons are being provided with food assistance by the ICRC at Dowhan along with other drought affected people of Erob Wereda.

DROUGHT INDUCED IDPS

Drought induced IDPs are mainly found in the Somali region in huge numbers and the majority has been residing in temporary shelters for the last three years. In the year 2000, the UN-EUE took the initiative in establishing a realistic figure on IDPs in the Somali region. It was estimated that there were about 25,000 families/125,330 persons in various locations. The figure was later updated in 2002 by a regional IDP task force comprising the federal DPPC, the regional DPPB of the Somali region and UN-EUE. It was estimated that some 91,820 persons were residing in IDP shelters including about 4,000 Shekash tribesmen who fled their traditional areas of residence because of conflict with the Ogadenis. The task force recommended that a detailed screening be done to establish exact figure and map out areas of origin for project planning for durable solution. As a follow up to the above recommendations, UNDP/IOM are now designing pilot projects for repatriation of the IDP caseload in Fafen and Hartishiek.
[...]

CONFLICT INDUCED IDPS

It is well known that the root causes of inter clan conflicts in Ethiopia are claims on ownership rights over scarce resources such as communal grazing lands and water points. Such clashes have resulted in loss of human lives, destruction of property and displacements. The two most recent conflicts that have resulted in massive displacement are located in the Somali and Gambella regions.

Regarding conflict in the Somali region, the working group on IDPs in the region reported that some 4,000 Shekash tribesmen from Jeno Gaben area of the Somali region were forced to move to Rasso area in North West part of the Somali region because of conflict with the Ogadenis. Following subsequent clashes in Shekash villages, other families were also displaced. Today, the regional DPPB of the Somali region and the federal DPPC have accepted the figure of 2,800 IDP families/14,200 persons as the current conflict induced IDPs in Rasso area. Hence the previous figure of 4,000 persons in the IDP working group report should be revised upwards to 14,200 persons as far as conflict induced IDP population in the Somali region is concerned.

Similarly, in Gambella region, an estimated 2,000 IDP families/10,000 persons from Annuaq tribe that were displaced since early 2002 because of conflicts with Nuuers have been residing in Ilaa Village in Itang Wereda. However, it is now confirmed with the regional DPPB of Gambella region that some of the IDPs have returned home. The residual caseload of 1,000 families/4,811 persons are currently being assisted by the federal DPPC as conflict induced IDPs in Gambella region.

A residual caseload of an estimated 3,000 IDP families/15,000 persons currently residing in temporary shelters in Addis Ababa is also categorized under conflict induced IDPs. The group fled from the seaport of Assab during fighting between the Ethiopian army and EPLF fighters to control of the port before Eritrea formally gained its independence.

WFP, 15 July 2003, p.2

“8. Of the current total IDP caseload of 76,500 people, 13,000 people in eastern Tigray (Irob zone) are receiving food from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ICRC is providing relief food assistance in the Irob zone for both drought affected persons and IDPs until November, when the next harvest is expected to improve the food security of the drought-affected population in 2003. Consequently, the number of WFP beneficiaries from July to November will be 63,500. In December, the IDPs of Irob zone will revert to WFP and the beneficiaries will total to 76,500 people. In addition, this Budget Revision includes a contingency stock for an additional 29,500 IDPs. The buffer is for a five-month period, from August to December, as the demarcation related population movements may occur even before September, when the demarcation is due to start.”

Source: (OCHA, Affected Populations in the Horn of Africa Region, as of 31 March 2003)

Reports on displacement due to repression by government in rural areas (January 2006)

- Reports suggest that the Ethiopian government suppresses rural populations, especially in Oromiya
- Government actions may have led to forced displacement of thousands of people during 2005

"Reports filtering out of the Ethiopian countryside confirm that, following what appears to have been its electoral defeat, the EPRDF government has unleashed on the people its special troops, supported by its paramilitary forces and armed local government officials. In what increasingly bears genocidal characteristics, numerous ordinary people are being indiscriminately killed and wounded. Many are being tortured and intimidated.

First hand witnesses confirm that the repression includes the burning of houses and property, and the confiscation of land and farm animals. Terrified by such tactics, hundreds and possibly thousands of individuals and families have been forced to abandon their farms to save their lives – in the middle of the main period for cultivation.

The brute use of force by EPRDF government on innocent farmers is blatant retaliation for rejecting EPRDF's candidates. It also aims to intimidate them so that they will be too afraid to bear witness against the orchestration of the investigation of vote counting currently underway under the auspices of the partisan National Election Board (NEB).

Although the repression has been all across the nation, farmers in certain parts of the country have been singled out for particularly brutal treatments. For instance, in Borena Zone in Wollo, especially in Kelala Lemi and Debre Sina districts, mass killings have been reported, not to mention loss of property and internal displacements. There are similar reports from parts of Gonder, eastern Gojjam, Shoa, parts of Wollega and Southern Ethiopia.

Residents of the Ethiopian countryside are particularly vulnerable to targeted atrocities due to their remote geography, lack of quick transport and communication infrastructure for rapid exchange of information, absence of human rights monitoring groups and lack of independent media coverage. Knowing this, EPRDF is acting with impunity.

We appeal to all Ethiopians, and to humanitarian and international agencies to raise their voices so as to put a stop to the killings of our people. The EPRDF government is engaged in ruthlessly revenging and reshaping the outcome of the May 15 elections. It has lost all fear of the consequences after premature adulatory comments by certain groups of the international community about the conduct of the elections.

The irresponsible and brutal measures of the EPRDF government must be stopped before we lose many more lives, and before the government causes further displacements of people from their birth places, destruction of their properties, confiscation of their assets, and the consequent danger of starvation. We ask all peace loving people around the world, including human rights organizations, to make their voices heard at the earliest opportunity to stem the killings and brutalities. We urge experienced international agencies to conduct assessments as a matter of the greatest urgency. Most Ethiopians are deeply distressed by the genocidal scale of what seems to have been set in train by EPRDF as much as by the apparent silence of the international community." (Ethiopian National Congress, July 2005)

Resettlement Programmes and economic migration (Special Report 2007)

The current situations of conflict-induced internal displacement should be seen in the context of broader population movements, because economic migration and resettlement programmes also influence the composition and cohabitation of populations, as well as the stability of regions.

In early 2003, as part of its National Food Security Programme, the Ethiopian government launched a new resettlement programme, intending to resettle 2.2 million people, or 440,000 households, from the chronically food-insecure highlands to more fertile agricultural lowland areas within three years. The resettlement programme was planned for four regions: Tigray, Oromiya, Amhara and SNNPR, and implemented in three phases of 100,000, 150,000 and 190,000 households each. Potential resettlers were identified during awareness-raising campaigns at both the *woreda* and *kebele* levels, and host *woredas* were identified based on the availability of arable land. In an attempt to mitigate resentment by the host community and to ease the transition, basic infrastructure (such as health services, water supply, primary schools and roads) was to be established, and the people resettled were to receive an eight-month food ration.

The government suggested that the scheme was successful and mostly led to self-sufficiency, and that past failures had been due to uncontrolled self-resettlement. Other reports suggest that resettlement was often experienced as a heavy burden. Critics said the programme did not always respect four core principles: the resettlement was not always voluntary, the land allocated was not always suitable for planting, host communities were not always properly consulted, and the resettles were not always properly prepared. It was said that in certain cases the resettlement led to severe malnutrition, as the highlanders were not accustomed to the agricultural techniques required in the lowlands. A considerable number of resettled people eventually had to move on, this time unassisted. As mentioned above, past resettlement programmes, particularly the large-scale resettlements under the Dergue government in the 1980s, were fraught with problems and caused widespread suffering.

One interviewee said that the radical changes in demographic equilibrium induced by resettlement programmes and economic migration should be taken into account more in federal planning. For example, Gambella's neighbour region to the north, Benishangul Gumuz, is confronted with similar demographic issues as Gambella. The region, fertile and sparsely populated, faces a looming crisis: in 1994, only 55 per cent of the inhabitants were indigenous, and since then, large numbers of people moving in from other regions have become a source of growing concern for the regional government. Informal resettlement and economic migration, including urban migration, could also have a destabilising effect. Development-related displacement could do the same, for example in Afar where a big dam for irrigation has reduced the land for the Afar people, or where the creation of national parks as tourist attractions has forced people out of their home area.

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Physical security

Somali Region: Serious human rights violations against population in Ogaden, and economic restrictions (August 2009)

- · Armed confrontation between Ethiopian army and ONLF had serious impact on the population
- · Humanitarian access was severely restricted to the five zones where the army was operating
- · Different sources report serious human rights violations from both sides against the civilian population, including forced relocation, looting and rape
- · Trade restrictions had serious impact on food prices and livelihoods of pastoralists
- · The reports of HR abuses never investigated by an independent body
- · Army forces restrict the freedom of movement for the civilian population

Aljazeera, 9 August 2009

In Ethiopia a separatist war is taking place far from media headlines around the world.

The Ogaden conflict has claimed thousands of lives and is being called the next Darfur by some.

The Ogaden region of Ethiopia lies between Oromia to the west, the Republic of Djibouti to the north, Kenya to the south and the Somali Republic to the east.

It is home to approximately five million people, who are for the most part ethnic Somali nomads.

Over the past two years, the conflict has escalated following the Ogaden National Liberation Front's (ONLF) attack on a Chinese-run oil exploration field that resulted in the death of 74 Ethiopian guards and Chinese workers.

Since then, the area has been closed off by the Ethiopian army.

The armed ONLF resistance began in 1994 when they broached the idea of splitting from Ethiopia.

The central government then imprisoned Ogadeni leaders and has since labeled them as terrorists, linking them to al-Qaeda.

The Ogadeni allege assassinations, torture and rape at the hands of the Ethiopian soldiers.

AI, 28 May 2009

"Reports, dating back to 2007, of beatings, rape and other forms of torture, forcible conscription and extrajudicial executions in the Somali Region were investigated by a government-contracted body but not by an independent international body..."

HRW, January 2009

The Ethiopian government denies all allegations of abuses by its military and refuses to facilitate independent investigations. There have been no serious efforts to investigate or ensure accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Somali Region and in neighboring Somalia in 2007 and 2008..."

USDoS, 25 February 2009

In June HRW issued a report alleging that the ENDF committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Ogaden area of the Somali Region. The report claimed a "brutal counter-insurgency" campaign was conducted in the Ogaden involving systematic forced relocation, burning of villages, arbitrary killings, mass detentions, torture, rape and assault, livestock confiscations, and restrictions on civilian movements. In response to the allegations the government conducted its own investigation into the alleged abuses and found that there were no systematic human rights abuses but rather "evidence of one or two cases of abuse, and one of torture." The selection of former ruling party insider Lisan Yohannes to lead the investigation, however, opens questions about the independence of the investigation. The government stated that the officer responsible for the said abuses was summoned to court..."

USDS, 2 October 2007:**THE SITUATION IN THE OGADEN**

In a reflection of the challenges encountered throughout Ethiopia, the conflict in the Ogaden region is complex. In early September, I had the opportunity to visit Gode, a bleak and desolate area of the Ogaden, to see first hand the problems and what more needs to be done to bring relief to this region.

The GOE is facing a genuine security concern in the Ogaden region and has an obligation to respond. An increasingly violent insurgency is operating from the Ogaden, where Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the United Western Somalia Liberation Front (UWSLF), extremists affiliated with the Ogaden faction of al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), and terrorists affiliated with the extremist al Shabaab militia and remnants of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) are stepping up their attacks against government targets. While this is not a new conflict, in fact it dates back to before the Meles government took office, in the last year the ONLF has become more aggressive and violent. In April 2007, the ONLF conducted an attack that killed nine Chinese oil workers and 77 Ethiopians, many of whom were civilians.

Regrettably the actions of rebel groups, extremists, and government troops alike have all taken a damaging humanitarian toll on the local civilian population. The challenge for the GOE and international partners is to mitigate the civilian impacts of these events. The current situation in the Ogaden reflects the combined result of continued humanitarian crisis and years of conflict driven by a violent insurgency and fighting between government and rebel forces, as well as government restrictions on commercial trade and on mobility of civilians and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), recurrent drought and flooding, and general insecurity.

Ethiopia's Somali Region, which includes the Ogaden, has a population of approximately 4.5 million people, of which approximately 1.8 million live in five zones (Degehabur, Fik, Gode, Korehe and Warder) with severe humanitarian needs. Unfortunately, three of these zones - Degehabur, Korahe and Warder - are also where the insurgent activities are the most prevalent.

In May 2007, in response to the increase in ONLF attacks, the Ethiopian military initiated a new counter-insurgency campaign. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) conducted military operations, restricted humanitarian food aid and commercial traffic to certain areas, and restricted movement of rural communities. The ONLF has also planted landmines throughout roads, impeding large scale movements and disrupting the commercial trade in food and humanitarian assistance. On July 29, three aid workers were killed when their vehicle struck a landmine, which was placed by the ONLF.

The United States has seen allegations of human rights abuses conducted by all parties, including reports of burned villages and population displacements. While we cannot confirm these incidents, it is clear that the local population is suffering from the insurgency and counter-insurgency campaigns. The United States has raised our strong concerns in this regard with the leaders of the GOE, including Prime Minister Meles. The GOE is working with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission to investigate allegations of human rights abuses in the Ogaden. The United Nations has also recommended that an independent probe be undertaken into alleged human rights violations in the region.

To address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations in the Ogaden region, the United States is working closely with the GOE to open commercial trade routes between the Ogaden and Somalia, which has historically provided approximately 80% of local food, and new routes through Dire Dawa, and to resume distributions of emergency food assistance in the region. The U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa leads efforts to clarify the scope of the humanitarian situation in the Somali Region, coordinates donor meetings with representatives of the international and NGO communities, and works closely with senior GOE officials to identify and respond to the areas of greatest need.

The United Nations recently conducted an assessment of the Somali region. According to the UN World Food Program (WFP), approximately 600,000 people will require food assistance for the next three months to alleviate current humanitarian needs, address food insecurity, and avoid a humanitarian crisis. The GOE has responded positively to the UN recommendations and has requested assistance from donor partners to respond to humanitarian needs in the region. Medical supplies are also in great demand and health care, and the international community is seeking to respond to the GOE's request for assistance.

The U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia announced on August 24 that the United States is providing \$18.7 million in humanitarian assistance for the Somali region. The U.S. government provided more than \$200 million to support humanitarian programs throughout Ethiopia in fiscal year 2007. U.S. food aid is currently available in Ethiopia and will be distributed over the coming months. Additionally, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) plans to provide \$25 million as an initial contribution in fiscal year 2008. This contribution will be made through WFP in anticipation of greater food needs in January and February, traditionally the most food insecure months in the region..."

REGIONAL INSTABILITY - ERITREA AND SOMALIA

The situation in the Ogaden is also impacted by conflicts outside of Ethiopia's borders. Continued instability in Somalia has reduced the level of commercial trade with the Ogaden, exacerbating the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia. The ONLF also receives support and assistance from the Eritrean government, and ONLF fighters cross the border into Somalia. The Eritrean government also provides support and assistance to extremist elements in Somalia, including some with links to al-Qaida's transnational terror network who are alleged to be supporting the ONLF.

The past war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and unresolved border dispute is negatively affecting Ethiopia, the Ogaden, and the entire Horn region. The unresolved border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea remains an ongoing threat to regional stability.

[...]

CONCLUSION

The Administration has made Africa a foreign policy priority, and that includes the promotion of conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, strengthening governance capacity, cooperation with international organizations, and counterterrorism efforts. All of these elements are part of the picture when we consider the Horn of Africa sub-region and Ethiopia in particular.

These and other issues facing us in Ethiopia and throughout the Horn of Africa are complex and not easily resolved. Bottom line: A political solution is needed in the Ogaden that will both end the region's historic marginalization and restore the commercial trade with Somalia to prevent a humanitarian crisis. The United States will continue to promote respect for human rights and democratic principles in our dialogue with Ethiopia, while serving as a partner in addressing the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations and in seeking to resolve longstanding regional conflicts, and prevent terrorists from establishing a foothold in the Horn and East Africa.

Human Rights Watch, 3 October 2007:

The Conflict in the Somali Region of Ethiopia

In June, the Ethiopian government (the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, or ENDF) launched a major military campaign in the Ogaden, part of Ethiopia's Somali Region, a sparsely populated and remote area on Ethiopia's border with Somalia. There are 4 million Ethiopians of Somali ethnicity living in the Somali Regional State, one of the poorest in Ethiopia. The area known as the Ogaden, where the majority Ogaden clan reside, is at the heart of this area. An estimated 1.8 million live in the five zones where current military operations are ongoing.

The counter insurgency operation was aimed at eliminating the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a rebel group that has been fighting for years for self-determination. The ongoing Ethiopian military campaign was triggered by several recent high-profile ONLF attacks in the region, including the April attack on an oil installation operated by Chinese personnel at Obole and attacks in May in Dhagahbur and Jigjiga, the regional capital, which nearly killed the Regional State President, Abdullahi Hassan. Although the Ethiopian government has frequently called for the ONLF to be placed on terrorism lists, the ONLF is widely viewed as a secular nationalist group; indeed, prior to Ethiopia's demand that US forces withdraw from the Ogaden, the US military apparently cooperated with the ONLF in efforts to monitor the region for alleged terrorist activity.

The current campaign in Somali region is also linked to Ethiopian military operations in south-central Somalia. Ethiopia has justified military action in Somalia on the grounds that it was removing a "terrorist threat," and that militant groups in Somalia were connected to the rebellion in Ogaden. One motive for Ethiopia's ouster of the Union of Islamic Courts in December 2006 may have been to cut what the Ethiopian government believed to be links between the ONLF, the ruling Islamic Courts and Eritrea, including arms and logistical supply lines from Eritrea and Somalia to the ONLF in Ethiopia's eastern region. While Ethiopia may have legitimate security concerns about Eritrea's support to Ethiopian insurgency groups, the rhetoric of counter terrorism is increasingly being used in the region to camouflage domestic or regional political and military agendas..."

Abuses by Ethiopian Forces in Ethiopia's Somali Region

In July, Human Rights Watch warned of serious violations occurring in the Somali region of Ethiopia. Predictably, the government of Ethiopia denied our findings. On September 7, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, also dismissed our findings of abuse by the ENDF as "unsubstantiated."

Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding these statements, our ongoing investigation has only deepened our concern. Our investigators on the ground have been able to substantiate many killings by the Ethiopian forces; the burning of villages; widespread sexual violence; the arbitrary detention and torture of thousands in military custody; denial of access to wells; confiscation of livestock and hostage-taking to compel families to turn in family members suspected of ONLF involvement.. This is the situation we are finding:

In less than three months, Ethiopia's military campaign has triggered a looming humanitarian crisis.

Human Rights Watch has learned that hundreds of civilians have been killed in what appears to be a deliberate effort to mete out collective punishment against a civilian population suspected of

sympathizing with the rebels. Overall, the killings probably number in the hundreds since the beginning of 2007, with a sharp escalation following the attack on the Chinese oil installation—and they continue to date. Many of the killings have been demonstration killings: the Ethiopian army gathers all of the local population, and then selects a few people suspected of having ties to the ONLF, and then kill them in front of the crowd by either shooting or strangling them.

Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread, and seems to be openly countenanced by the ENDF. We have spoken to several rape victims who were gang-raped to the point of unconsciousness by Ethiopian soldiers who took them from their homes and raped them either at their army bases --suggesting that the army allows such abuses--or in the bush. Some of the girls were killed after the rapes, and a few suffered such serious injuries and infections that they later died.

Ethiopian troops are destroying villages and property, confiscating livestock and forcing civilians to relocate to urban centers, in an apparent attempt to separate the civilian population from the ONLF rebels operating in remote rural areas. Villagers are threatened if they refuse to relocate.

Eyewitnesses told Human Rights Watch that Ethiopian troops burned or ordered civilians to vacate at least a dozen villages around the towns of Dhagahbur, Qabridahare and Wardheer. In Wardheer zone, many of the residents of villages located within a 100-kilometer radius of Wardheer town were forced to relocate to other towns because of attacks on their villages, orders from the Ethiopian military or – less frequently – fighting between the Ethiopian army and the ONLF.

Witnesses described Ethiopian troops burning homes and property, including the recent harvest and other food stocks intended for the civilian population, confiscating livestock, killing herders in unauthorized areas, and, in a few cases, firing upon and killing fleeing civilians. Ethiopian security forces are also responsible for arbitrary detentions and torture of thousands, detaining students, shopkeepers, and relatives of suspected ONLF members.

Ethiopian troops have confiscated or destroyed livestock, thus jeopardizing the basic livelihood of the region's large pastoralist population. A partial trade blockade has been imposed on the region leading to serious food shortages. Almost all commercial traffic from Somaliland and out of Ogaden, the main commercial route, has been prohibited, making it virtually impossible for foodstuffs to reach the area; traffic between village and towns has been severely restricted and has become very dangerous; nomadic livestock herders have been prohibited from freely grazing their camels and other livestock and are often killed if encountered by the army; even access to water holes has been restricted or prohibited. The main purpose of these restrictions seems to be an attempt to prevent any foodstuffs from reaching the ONLF, but the restrictions are so severe that they may also be trying to force people to leave their homes.

Whatever the military strategy behind them, these abuses violate the laws of war. International humanitarian law, or the laws of war, requires that all warring parties distinguish between military and civilians, protect civilians and their property and take all feasible steps to minimize the harm of military operations on civilians. Starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare is also a violation of international law.

Collective punishments – or the punishment of one or more individuals for the acts of others – is also prohibited by international humanitarian law. Hostage taking, which is the holding or use of a person to compel a third party to act or refrain from acting, is also prohibited. Detaining the family member of a combatant to compel the combatant to surrender would thus be unlawful.

While the Ogaden is not Darfur yet, it is probably only a few months away from sliding over the edge into a full-blown humanitarian crisis of massive proportions. In a statement released just

days ago, the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warned that "Humanitarian conditions within the conflict areas have deteriorated substantially over the past several months. The nutritional status of the population will rapidly worsen within two or three months if only limited quantities of commercial food continue to be available."

As you know, the Ethiopian government expelled from the Ogaden the International Committee of the Red Cross, a rare neutral observer of the crisis left in the region. Only a few independent humanitarian organizations remain on the ground trying, with great difficulty and in the face of continuing government obstruction, to access civilians in desperate need of relief.

If we are to avert this looming humanitarian crisis, the US should use all the means at its disposal to press the Ethiopian government to immediately end its abuses, including its commercial blockade of the Ogaden and allow independent humanitarian relief to reach vulnerable civilians..."

Reuters AlertNet, 4 September 2007:

Villages are burned and deserted, locals are fleeing to the bush, and basic health needs are going unmet during conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, an international aid agency said on Tuesday.

"We found a very precarious situation in a very harsh environment," Medecins Sans Frontieres' (MSF) Ethiopia coordinator Loris De Filippi said of the group's recent assessment missions to the remote region of east Ethiopia.

He was speaking at a news conference called by MSF to protest against what it said was Ethiopia's blocking of further access for MSF to provide humanitarian aid to an estimated 400,000 people in three of the worst-affected areas. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's government has denied blocking MSF, saying it does not maintain any no-go zones in Ethiopia. It has been waging a campaign against Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) rebels in the zone for several months. De Filippi said three attempts by MSF staff to enter Ogaden's critical zones in recent days failed, while repeated appeals to Ethiopian authorities had fallen on deaf ears.

Two prior assessment missions to the region at the end of June and start of July had been deeply worrying, MSF staff said. "I saw burned out villages. I remember passing a number of villages that were empty other than the elderly and sick," Eileen Skinnider, assistant coordinator for Ethiopia, told the news conference via an Internet link from Canada. "We didn't pass one commercial vehicle ... I saw women and children chased away (by soldiers) trying to collect water from wells ... I saw small groups of men living in the bush."

MSF's departure from Ogaden came after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said last month it had pulled out of the region following a government order. With journalists effectively blocked from the region, it is hard to verify the humanitarian situation, or the frequent claims and counter-claims of mass casualties and human rights abuses between the government and ONLF.

[...]

De Filippi said: "I think we are missing a big thing that is happening under our eyes."

"We asked, as a desperation measure, for a humanitarian corridor for 24 hours. They (Ethiopian authorities) said they needed to finish operations first. But we said humanitarian aid is not bringing flowers to graves."

In the three worst-affected areas now off-limits to MSF, he added, there was one doctor for 400,000 people. Drugs were scant, natal care was minimal, and there were problems of respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malnutrition and tuberculosis in an area already prone to famine, De Filippi said.

Ethiopia calls the ONLF -- whose numbers are estimated at several thousand -- a terrorist group backed by foe Eritrea. ONLF rebels say they are fighting for greater autonomy for their homeland, an arid region on the Somalia border which is mainly populated by nomadic herdsman..."

**Chatam House, 31 August 2007:
THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION**

The key issue at present is the trade blockade, which was imposed in May 2007 following a sharp escalation in ONLF attacks. Trade is the lifeblood of the population – no trade, no livelihood. Its impact is most severe in a specific area corresponding to the Ogaadeen clan area. But the trade clampdown affects everyone – pastoralists cannot live off their animals and have to trade to survive.

The districts affected by the blockade are Degahbur, Korahe, Warder, Fig and Gode, with a (1994) population of about 1.4 million. In the affected areas, food prices have doubled and livestock prices have fallen (approximately halved), the effective cost of obtaining food therefore increased by 400%, if there is a market for livestock and foodstuffs. Vulnerable householders have to sell their assets to cope with the situation, lessening their ability to cope with any future economic shocks. Sugar prices are now falling, which suggests some easing of the situation. But information is hard to come by. It was not possible to access some districts during food security surveys. MSF-Holland was denied access to Warder.

Lack of humanitarian access to Region 5 is not new, but it has gotten much worse lately. The absence of humanitarian space is not just the government's fault. NGOs have made mistakes, the ONLF has been hostile at times and Islamic militants distrust the activities of Western aid agencies. For the two main protagonists - the government and the ONLF - politics matter more than people. Both sides reject the concept of neutrality. They both use and abuse food aid. They both know about the strategic value of information, including information about human rights abuse. The ONLF (like other insurgent groups) has its eyes on strategic NGO assets and their insurgency has blocked development in the areas they control.

Shutting down trade will create dependence on food aid. The amounts entering the region so far are much too small for the affected population. Some preferential lifting of the blockade may now be occurring, with access under military escort for favoured commercial traders bringing goods, including foodstuffs, into the area. But the all important export of livestock, on which the pastoralists depend, has yet to be restored. The new business operations engaged in the transport of food can expect to profit from the humanitarian crisis (in the short term) and may attempt to displace Somali traders in longer term..."

Displacement-specific humanitarian and protection challenges (Special Report 2007)

This section refers to general protection issues. On the humanitarian and protection situation in the Ogaden (Somali region), please go to "[Somali region: serious human rights violations against population in Ogaden](#)"

Special Report: Displacement-specific humanitarian and protection challenges

In a context of widespread poverty, where millions among a total population of 74 million people struggle to access sufficient food and clean water, healthcare, education and livelihoods, focusing on some 200,000 people displaced by conflict may seem surprising, all the more so since conflict-displacement is but one of the many forms of involuntary internal migration or displacement, whether caused by large-scale government resettlement, economic hardship, natural disaster, internal conflict or international war, all of which feature as an intrinsic part of Ethiopia's history.

However, people forced to flee their homes due to conflict face a number of specific protection challenges. They therefore need a specific and consistent humanitarian response and, where

possible, a political process towards finding a solution to their plight. Conflict-induced internal displacement is a continuing phenomenon in numerous areas of the country, which could take on larger dimensions in crisis situations.

Access to land

Inter-ethnic rivalry, the main cause of conflict-induced displacement in Ethiopia, is often based on competition for scarce resources, in particular land and water. A large part of Ethiopia's population in the south and east is pastoralist, and over the past few years, existing tensions among pastoralist societies, and between pastoralists and agricultural or agro-pastoralist societies have intensified.

Land in Ethiopia is government-owned, and the government allocates user rights, including for resettlement, while private ownership is limited. According to the government, this practice of government ownership has prevented uncontrolled urban migration, since peasants are reluctant to lose existing land rights by migrating to towns. However, the practice may create tensions, particularly among pastoralist societies, when official land-use designation may not necessarily correspond with people's historic sense of land ownership. Varying tax systems between administrative regions impede the pastoralists' freedom to trade, Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007. which further accentuates tensions.

The arrival of significant numbers of IDPs in an area allocated to a particular group of people may also threaten to disrupt land use. This is exemplified in the case of Sheikash IDPs arriving in Raaso which is discussed below. Allocating land to groups of IDPs for resettlement is similarly complex.

Access to food, water and services

Up to ten per cent of Ethiopia's population is considered chronically or temporarily food-insecure, and the majority of people live below the poverty line. In such a situation, droughts, floods and conflict situations have devastating long-term effects on fragile livelihoods. Malnutrition rates are high in many parts of the country and the lack of nutritious food affects the growth of half of all children. Overview on the Unicef Ethiopia website: www.unicef.org/ethiopia/overview.html.

According to the 2007 Joint Humanitarian Appeal, a total of 8.6 million people are in need of assistance, of whom 1.3 million qualify for emergency food assistance, mostly in Somali and Oromiya regions, and 7.3 million are included in the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Government of Ethiopia and Humanitarian Partners: 2007 Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia, 12 February 2007, p.4. The PSNP, introduced in 2005, is a pillar of the government's food security strategy and is supported by both the highest levels of government and the international donor community. The programme, which aims to help food-insecure populations build a sustainable livelihood over the course of three to five years, is relatively inflexible and has yet to be effectively implemented among migrating populations. The PSNP has not been implemented in Somali region, due in part to the difficulty in designing an appropriate programme for pastoralist communities. Source: Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.

Unrecognised groups of IDPs often remain excluded from emergency food service schemes, and they often lack the crucial support of regional officials. *Woreda* and *Kebele* officials have great influence on the distribution of goods and services which they can request in writing from the central government's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA). The discrimination which may ensue, added to the lack of traditional coping mechanisms such as family ties, means that IDPs often suffer from lack of food and water. This has been a reported problem in Borena and in the Somali/Oromiya post-referendum displacement situation in Afder, Liben and Shinile zones. Drought-displaced people in Somali region have in the past been officially considered to

be locally integrated after five years and have been taken off the assistance beneficiary list, even though they have had little chance of returning home. UN OCHA, 18 April 2005; 3 May 2005, cited in the IDMC Ethiopia overview of May 2005.

Newly displaced populations have found it difficult to access the PSNP resources. In past years, inhabitants of a *woreda* only received access to food aid after being resident for three years; and *woredas* that had not been under the PSNP when it was introduced in 2004, because they did not need assistance at the time, have not been able to join the programme at a later stage.

Provision of food aid has in some cases had adverse consequences on communities hosting displaced groups, disrupted agrarian populations' livelihoods and forced them to leave their home areas. The Anyuak in Gambella were affected by food aid in this way: see ZOA, Assessment of the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons in Gambella region, 3 October 2006, p.7. Because of chronic food shortages, the diversion of food aid to militias, rebel groups and local food markets – where it depresses food prices paid to farmers – appears to be significant, in particular in Somali region. It was also suggested to IDMC that where food aid had not been distributed, the conflicting parties had had an additional incentive to engage in peace negotiations (as in one of the Somali-Oromiya border referendum situations described below). Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.

Health

IDP camps and settlements often lack access to clean water and sanitation, and their inhabitants are at particular risk of water-borne diseases and conditions such as acute watery diarrhoea (AWD). Only an estimated 38 per cent of Ethiopians, and as few as 13 per cent in some rural areas, have access to clean water, while community health education is rare. AWD is currently widespread in numerous regions, including Oromiya, SNNPR, Afar, Amhara, Somali and Harar. Since April 2006, almost 200 *woredas* countrywide have reported AWD cases, and between 65 and 70 *woredas* reported cases in mid-2007. The condition spreads in particular during the rainy season when the drinking water and sanitation situation is often worst. UN OCHA Ethiopia Humanitarian Bulletins, www.ocha-eth.org.

Protection during return and reintegration

Conditions in return areas must be conducive to sustainable return and reintegration. In Ethiopia, return processes have at times been difficult because of the problem of finding suitable land for the displaced to settle, but there have also been situations, for example that of Mieso on the Somali-Oromiya border, in which IDPs were not sufficiently consulted about their return or resettlement. Where their return was successful, reintegration has in some cases been difficult because there have not been enough resources to sustain the increase in population; this was the case with the return of drought-displaced IDPs from Hartisheik and Fafen camps to their homes in Degehabur zone in Somali region. As documentation is essential in Ethiopia to access health care and other social services, a durable solution for IDPs necessarily includes providing them with new documentation, where it has been lost during displacement.

Return must always be voluntary. In Gambella, doubts were raised about whether the return of thousands of Itanyi Nuer during April and May 2007 was in fact voluntary.

Physical security of IDP women and children are a protection concern (2007)

- Conflict and drought undermined social cohesion and protection

- Displaced women and children are particularly vulnerable to physical and psychological trauma
- There has been some reports of sexual abuse and forced labour of displaced women and children

IDMC Special Report, October 2007:

Gender-based violence, including abduction of girls, early forced marriage and female genital mutilation, leads to health complications and an extremely high maternal mortality rate throughout Ethiopia. It affects the entire population and is partly due to a social structure which places women and children at the bottom of the hierarchy. Most women whose rights have been violated do not dare seek legal help, particularly in rural areas.

The protection of women and girls and of children in general, is included as a cross-cutting issue in the 2007 Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia, which recognises that such social inequalities can be reinforced in humanitarian situations. Government of Ethiopia and Humanitarian Partners: 2007 Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia, 12 February 2007, p.14. Displacement as a result of conflict is one such humanitarian situation; it can therefore be presumed that gender-based violence, and the health hazards which result from it, increase in displacement situations, due to increased stress and vulnerability of the displaced. While some studies are available on gender-based violence in Sudanese refugee camps in Gambella region, UNFPA has released a report on a gender-based violence (GBV) assessment conducted in a number of refugee camps in February and March 2007. A broader project aims at improving knowledge, attitudes and practices on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health for over 14,000 refugees and approximately 14,000 people living in the surrounding host communities. Source: "UN agencies team up to end refugee gender-based violence in Ethiopia", The Reporter, accessed 2 August 2007. very little is known about the phenomenon among IDPs.

Many children do not attend school or only follow primary education. Child labour is widespread, with 40 per cent of children working before the age of six to support the family ILO report from 2001, cited by USDS, 6 March 2007., and school drop-out rates are accordingly high. This pattern has also been encountered in the IDP sites visited, particularly in Somali region, where child labour is culturally acceptable among the Somali population. In Fafen and Hartisheik camps, children were being "hired out" to local people to herd their animals or to do household chores. In the absence of education information in situations of conflict-induced displacement, it appears that the majority of IDP children do not go to school, mostly because they need to help provide for the family.

UN, 3 June 2003, p.8

"The effects of drought have impacted across Ethiopia and exacerbated pre-existing threats to the survival and well being of women and children. Drought and displacement have undermined traditional family and community cohesion. Traditional capacities and patterns of protection and care have been disrupted or destroyed placing women and children at heightened risk of physical and psychological trauma and exploitation. Documented instances of sexual exploitation of women and children, steetism and child labour have already occurred amongst a small number of IDPs."

UNCTE 28 January 2000, pp.34-35

"Out of the estimated 349,837 internally displaced people more than 75 per cent are assumed to be children and women. Among displaced populations, women, children and the elderly generally suffer the most. They often have fewer income generation opportunities, and thus are more likely to be impoverished, particularly in areas such as Tigray and Afar which are among the poorest parts of one of the poorest counties in the world. Women and children (including a number of

orphans) who are separated from other family members and find themselves in a strange social environment are often traumatized and disorientated. They are consequently more vulnerable to abuse, marginalisation and discrimination. Situations of social dislocation, such as that prevailing in northern Ethiopia, pose particular dangers to women during pregnancy, childbirth, or post-partum recovery. These situations also expose women and adolescents to greater risks of sexual exploitation, abuse and violence. Displaced people, particularly women, are also more at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, since families are often split and increasing poverty and lack of other income generation opportunities forces many displaced women into prostitution."

"Fear of sexual violence within Bale IDP camps was clearly an issue which UNICEF raised with both local administration and NGOs operating in the camps." UNICEF 14 March 2003)

NEW Human rights record remains poor in Ethiopia (2003)

Freedom of press considerably restricts flows of information concerning the situation of people displaced from ethnic conflicts

Violations of human rights are exacerbated by the fact that lawful protection mechanisms such as the Human Rights Commission or the Office of the Ombudsman were not operational during 2002
32 Nuer IDPs were abducted and little investigations have been carried on the disappearance

Somali region: Serious human rights violations against population in Ogaden, and economic restrictions (2007)

- Armed confrontation between Ethiopian army and ONLF had serious impact on the population
- Humanitarian access was severely restricted to the five zones where the army was operating
- Different sources report serious human rights violations from both sides against the civilian population, including forced relocation, looting and rape
- Trade restrictions had serious impact on food prices and livelihoods of pastoralists

USDS, 2 October 2007:

THE SITUATION IN THE OGADEN

In a reflection of the challenges encountered throughout Ethiopia, the conflict in the Ogaden region is complex. In early September, I had the opportunity to visit Gode, a bleak and desolate area of the Ogaden, to see first hand the problems and what more needs to be done to bring relief to this region.

The GOE is facing a genuine security concern in the Ogaden region and has an obligation to respond. An increasingly violent insurgency is operating from the Ogaden, where Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the United Western Somalia Liberation Front (UWSLF), extremists affiliated with the Ogaden faction of al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), and terrorists affiliated with the extremist al Shabaab militia and remnants of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) are stepping up their attacks against government targets. While this is not a new conflict, in fact it dates back to before the Meles government took office, in the last year the ONLF has become more aggressive and violent. In April 2007, the ONLF conducted an attack that killed nine Chinese oil workers and 77 Ethiopians, many of whom were civilians.

Regrettably the actions of rebel groups, extremists, and government troops alike have all taken a damaging humanitarian toll on the local civilian population. The challenge for the GOE and international partners is to mitigate the civilian impacts of these events. The current situation in the Ogaden reflects the combined result of continued humanitarian crisis and years of conflict driven by a violent insurgency and fighting between government and rebel forces, as well as

government restrictions on commercial trade and on mobility of civilians and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), recurrent drought and flooding, and general insecurity.

Ethiopia's Somali Region, which includes the Ogaden, has a population of approximately 4.5 million people, of which approximately 1.8 million live in five zones (Degehabur, Fik, Gode, Korehe and Warder) with severe humanitarian needs. Unfortunately, three of these zones - Degehabur, Korahe and Warder - are also where the insurgent activities are the most prevalent.

In May 2007, in response to the increase in ONLF attacks, the Ethiopian military initiated a new counter-insurgency campaign. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) conducted military operations, restricted humanitarian food aid and commercial traffic to certain areas, and restricted movement of rural communities. The ONLF has also planted landmines throughout roads, impeding large scale movements and disrupting the commercial trade in food and humanitarian assistance. On July 29, three aid workers were killed when their vehicle struck a landmine, which was placed by the ONLF.

The United States has seen allegations of human rights abuses conducted by all parties, including reports of burned villages and population displacements. While we cannot confirm these incidents, it is clear that the local population is suffering from the insurgency and counter-insurgency campaigns. The United States has raised our strong concerns in this regard with the leaders of the GOE, including Prime Minister Meles. The GOE is working with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission to investigate allegations of human rights abuses in the Ogaden. The United Nations has also recommended that an independent probe be undertaken into alleged human rights violations in the region.

To address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations in the Ogaden region, the United States is working closely with the GOE to open commercial trade routes between the Ogaden and Somalia, which has historically provided approximately 80% of local food, and new routes through Dire Dawa, and to resume distributions of emergency food assistance in the region. The U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa leads efforts to clarify the scope of the humanitarian situation in the Somali Region, coordinates donor meetings with representatives of the international and NGO communities, and works closely with senior GOE officials to identify and respond to the areas of greatest need.

The United Nations recently conducted an assessment of the Somali region. According to the UN World Food Program (WFP), approximately 600,000 people will require food assistance for the next three months to alleviate current humanitarian needs, address food insecurity, and avoid a humanitarian crisis. The GOE has responded positively to the UN recommendations and has requested assistance from donor partners to respond to humanitarian needs in the region. Medical supplies are also in great demand and health care, and the international community is seeking to respond to the GOE's request for assistance.

The U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia announced on August 24 that the United States is providing \$18.7 million in humanitarian assistance for the Somali region. The U.S. government provided more than \$200 million to support humanitarian programs throughout Ethiopia in fiscal year 2007. U.S. food aid is currently available in Ethiopia and will be distributed over the coming months. Additionally, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) plans to provide \$25 million as an initial contribution in fiscal year 2008. This contribution will be made through WFP in anticipation of greater food needs in January and February, traditionally the most food insecure months in the region.

REGIONAL INSTABILITY - ERITREA AND SOMALIA

The situation in the Ogaden is also impacted by conflicts outside of Ethiopia's borders. Continued instability in Somalia has reduced the level of commercial trade with the Ogaden, exacerbating

the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia. The ONLF also receives support and assistance from the Eritrean government, and ONLF fighters cross the border into Somalia. The Eritrean government also provides support and assistance to extremist elements in Somalia, including some with links to al-Qaida's transnational terror network who are alleged to be supporting the ONLF.

The past war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and unresolved border dispute is negatively affecting Ethiopia, the Ogaden, and the entire Horn region. The unresolved border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea remains an ongoing threat to regional stability.

[...]

CONCLUSION

The Administration has made Africa a foreign policy priority, and that includes the promotion of conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, strengthening governance capacity, cooperation with international organizations, and counterterrorism efforts. All of these elements are part of the picture when we consider the Horn of Africa sub-region and Ethiopia in particular.

These and other issues facing us in Ethiopia and throughout the Horn of Africa are complex and not easily resolved. Bottom line: A political solution is needed in the Ogaden that will both end the region's historic marginalization and restore the commercial trade with Somalia to prevent a humanitarian crisis. The United States will continue to promote respect for human rights and democratic principles in our dialogue with Ethiopia, while serving as a partner in addressing the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations and in seeking to resolve longstanding regional conflicts, and prevent terrorists from establishing a foothold in the Horn and East Africa.

Human Rights Watch, 3 October 2007:

The Conflict in the Somali Region of Ethiopia

In June, the Ethiopian government (the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, or ENDF) launched a major military campaign in the Ogaden, part of Ethiopia's Somali Region, a sparsely populated and remote area on Ethiopia's border with Somalia. There are 4 million Ethiopians of Somali ethnicity living in the Somali Regional State, one of the poorest in Ethiopia. The area known as the Ogaden, where the majority Ogaden clan reside, is at the heart of this area. An estimated 1.8 million live in the five zones where current military operations are ongoing.

The counter insurgency operation was aimed at eliminating the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a rebel group that has been fighting for years for self-determination. The ongoing Ethiopian military campaign was triggered by several recent high-profile ONLF attacks in the region, including the April attack on an oil installation operated by Chinese personnel at Obole and attacks in May in Dhagahbur and Jigjiga, the regional capital, which nearly killed the Regional State President, Abdullahi Hassan. Although the Ethiopian government has frequently called for the ONLF to be placed on terrorism lists, the ONLF is widely viewed as a secular nationalist group; indeed, prior to Ethiopia's demand that US forces withdraw from the Ogaden, the US military apparently cooperated with the ONLF in efforts to monitor the region for alleged terrorist activity.

The current campaign in Somali region is also linked to Ethiopian military operations in south-central Somalia. Ethiopia has justified military action in Somalia on the grounds that it was removing a "terrorist threat," and that militant groups in Somalia were connected to the rebellion in Ogaden. One motive for Ethiopia's ouster of the Union of Islamic Courts in December 2006 may have been to cut what the Ethiopian government believed to be links between the ONLF, the ruling Islamic Courts and Eritrea, including arms and logistical supply lines from Eritrea and Somalia to the ONLF in Ethiopia's eastern region. While Ethiopia may have legitimate security concerns about Eritrea's support to Ethiopian insurgency groups, the rhetoric of counter terrorism is increasingly being used in the region to camouflage domestic or regional political and military agendas.

Abuses by Ethiopian Forces in Ethiopia's Somali Region

In July, Human Rights Watch warned of serious violations occurring in the Somali region of Ethiopia. Predictably, the government of Ethiopia denied our findings. On September 7, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, also dismissed our findings of abuse by the ENDF as "unsubstantiated."

Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding these statements, our ongoing investigation has only deepened our concern. Our investigators on the ground have been able to substantiate many killings by the Ethiopian forces; the burning of villages; widespread sexual violence; the arbitrary detention and torture of thousands in military custody; denial of access to wells; confiscation of livestock and hostage-taking to compel families to turn in family members suspected of ONLF involvement.. This is the situation we are finding:

In less than three months, Ethiopia's military campaign has triggered a looming humanitarian crisis.

Human Rights Watch has learned that hundreds of civilians have been killed in what appears to be a deliberate effort to mete out collective punishment against a civilian population suspected of sympathizing with the rebels. Overall, the killings probably number in the hundreds since the beginning of 2007, with a sharp escalation following the attack on the Chinese oil installation—and they continue to date. Many of the killings have been demonstration killings: the Ethiopian army gathers all of the local population, and then selects a few people suspected of having ties to the ONLF, and then kill them in front of the crowd by either shooting or strangling them.

Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread, and seems to be openly countenanced by the ENDF. We have spoken to several rape victims who were gang-raped to the point of unconsciousness by Ethiopian soldiers who took them from their homes and raped them either at their army bases --suggesting that the army allows such abuses--or in the bush. Some of the girls were killed after the rapes, and a few suffered such serious injuries and infections that they later died.

Ethiopian troops are destroying villages and property, confiscating livestock and forcing civilians to relocate to urban centers, in an apparent attempt to separate the civilian population from the ONLF rebels operating in remote rural areas. Villagers are threatened if they refuse to relocate.

Eyewitnesses told Human Rights Watch that Ethiopian troops burned or ordered civilians to vacate at least a dozen villages around the towns of Dhagahbur, Qabridahare and Wardheer. In Wardheer zone, many of the residents of villages located within a 100-kilometer radius of Wardheer town were forced to relocate to other towns because of attacks on their villages, orders from the Ethiopian military or – less frequently – fighting between the Ethiopian army and the ONLF.

Witnesses described Ethiopian troops burning homes and property, including the recent harvest and other food stocks intended for the civilian population, confiscating livestock, killing herders in unauthorized areas, and, in a few cases, firing upon and killing fleeing civilians. Ethiopian security forces are also responsible for arbitrary detentions and torture of thousands, detaining students, shopkeepers, and relatives of suspected ONLF members.

Ethiopian troops have confiscated or destroyed livestock, thus jeopardizing the basic livelihood of the region's large pastoralist population. A partial trade blockade has been imposed on the region leading to serious food shortages. Almost all commercial traffic from Somaliland and out of Ogaden, the main commercial route, has been prohibited, making it virtually impossible for foodstuffs to reach the area; traffic between village and towns has been severely restricted and has become very dangerous; nomadic livestock herders have been prohibited from freely grazing their camels and other livestock and are often killed if encountered by the army; even access to water holes has been restricted or prohibited. The main purpose of these restrictions seems to be

an attempt to prevent any foodstuffs from reaching the ONLF, but the restrictions are so severe that they may also be trying to force people to leave their homes.

Whatever the military strategy behind them, these abuses violate the laws of war. International humanitarian law, or the laws of war, requires that all warring parties distinguish between military and civilians, protect civilians and their property and take all feasible steps to minimize the harm of military operations on civilians. Starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare is also a violation of international law.

Collective punishments – or the punishment of one or more individuals for the acts of others – is also prohibited by international humanitarian law. Hostage taking, which is the holding or use of a person to compel a third party to act or refrain from acting, is also prohibited. Detaining the family member of a combatant to compel the combatant to surrender would thus be unlawful.

While the Ogaden is not Darfur yet, it is probably only a few months away from sliding over the edge into a full-blown humanitarian crisis of massive proportions. In a statement released just days ago, the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warned that "Humanitarian conditions within the conflict areas have deteriorated substantially over the past several months. The nutritional status of the population will rapidly worsen within two or three months if only limited quantities of commercial food continue to be available."

As you know, the Ethiopian government expelled from the Ogaden the International Committee of the Red Cross, a rare neutral observer of the crisis left in the region. Only a few independent humanitarian organizations remain on the ground trying, with great difficulty and in the face of continuing government obstruction, to access civilians in desperate need of relief.

If we are to avert this looming humanitarian crisis, the US should use all the means at its disposal to press the Ethiopian government to immediately end its abuses, including its commercial blockade of the Ogaden and allow independent humanitarian relief to reach vulnerable civilians.

Reuters AlertNet, 4 September 2007:

Villages are burned and deserted, locals are fleeing to the bush, and basic health needs are going unmet during conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, an international aid agency said on Tuesday.

"We found a very precarious situation in a very harsh environment," Medecins Sans Frontieres' (MSF) Ethiopia coordinator Loris De Filippi said of the group's recent assessment missions to the remote region of east Ethiopia.

He was speaking at a news conference called by MSF to protest against what it said was Ethiopia's blocking of further access for MSF to provide humanitarian aid to an estimated 400,000 people in three of the worst-affected areas. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's government has denied blocking MSF, saying it does not maintain any no-go zones in Ethiopia. It has been waging a campaign against Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) rebels in the zone for several months. De Filippi said three attempts by MSF staff to enter Ogaden's critical zones in recent days failed, while repeated appeals to Ethiopian authorities had fallen on deaf ears.

Two prior assessment missions to the region at the end of June and start of July had been deeply worrying, MSF staff said. "I saw burned out villages. I remember passing a number of villages that were empty other than the elderly and sick," Eileen Skinnider, assistant coordinator for Ethiopia, told the news conference via an Internet link from Canada. "We didn't pass one commercial vehicle ... I saw women and children chased away (by soldiers) trying to collect water from wells ... I saw small groups of men living in the bush."

MSF's departure from Ogaden came after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said last month it had pulled out of the region following a government order. With journalists

effectively blocked from the region, it is hard to verify the humanitarian situation, or the frequent claims and counter-claims of mass casualties and human rights abuses between the government and ONLF.

[...]

De Filippi said: "I think we are missing a big thing that is happening under our eyes."

"We asked, as a desperation measure, for a humanitarian corridor for 24 hours. They (Ethiopian authorities) said they needed to finish operations first. But we said humanitarian aid is not bringing flowers to graves."

In the three worst-affected areas now off-limits to MSF, he added, there was one doctor for 400,000 people. Drugs were scant, natal care was minimal, and there were problems of respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malnutrition and tuberculosis in an area already prone to famine, De Filippi said.

Ethiopia calls the ONLF -- whose numbers are estimated at several thousand -- a terrorist group backed by foe Eritrea. ONLF rebels say they are fighting for greater autonomy for their homeland, an arid region on the Somalia border which is mainly populated by nomadic herdsmen.

Chatam House, 31 August 2007: THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

The key issue at present is the trade blockade, which was imposed in May 2007 following a sharp escalation in ONLF attacks. Trade is the lifeblood of the population – no trade, no livelihood. Its impact is most severe in a specific area corresponding to the Ogaadeen clan area. But the trade clampdown affects everyone – pastoralists cannot live off their animals and have to trade to survive.

The districts affected by the blockade are Degahbur, Korahe, Warder, Fig and Gode, with a (1994) population of about 1.4 million. In the affected areas, food prices have doubled and livestock prices have fallen (approximately halved), the effective cost of obtaining food therefore increased by 400%, if there is a market for livestock and foodstuffs. Vulnerable householders have to sell their assets to cope with the situation, lessening their ability to cope with any future economic shocks. Sugar prices are now falling, which suggests some easing of the situation. But information is hard to come by. It was not possible to access some districts during food security surveys. MSF-Holland was denied access to Warder.

Lack of humanitarian access to Region 5 is not new, but it has gotten much worse lately. The absence of humanitarian space is not just the government's fault. NGOs have made mistakes, the ONLF has been hostile at times and Islamic militants distrust the activities of Western aid agencies. For the two main protagonists - the government and the ONLF - politics matter more than people. Both sides reject the concept of neutrality. They both use and abuse food aid. They both know about the strategic value of information, including information about human rights abuse. The ONLF (like other insurgent groups) has its eyes on strategic NGO assets and their insurgency has blocked development in the areas they control.

Shutting down trade will create dependence on food aid. The amounts entering the region so far are much too small for the affected population. Some preferential lifting of the blockade may now be occurring, with access under military escort for favoured commercial traders bringing goods, including foodstuffs, into the area. But the all important export of livestock, on which the pastoralists depend, has yet to be restored. The new business operations engaged in the transport of food can expect to profit from the humanitarian crisis (in the short term) and may attempt to displace Somali traders in longer term.

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

Ethiopian State accused of hiding famine, depriving needy of food aid (September 2008)

- GoE accused of 'politicising' food aid
- GoE hiding famine conditions in the country

BBC, 19 September 2008

"Emergency food aid is not getting out fast enough to the people who need it in Ethiopia's troubled Somali region, a top US official says.

Michael Hess, of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), says only 41% of the food allocated for July has reached its intended recipients.

The US supplies nearly all of the aid, and Mr Hess says such distribution is not good enough.

Ethnic Somali rebels have been fighting an insurgency in the region for years.

In a drought like this one, Ethiopia depends heavily on food aid - and that means that it depends on the generosity of the US.

As the man in charge of this aid, Mr Hess has been to see for himself how the system is working.

Big changes expected

Ethiopia's Somali region does have particular problems.

An armed rebellion and an army counter-insurgency operation have been going on for more than a year across the centre of the region.



Even so Mr Hess, who is a former military man himself, was clearly not very impressed.

"[In] the Somali region, the food is not getting out fast enough," he said.

"We estimate that 41% of the July distribution has reached the population. There is a lot of reasons for that.

"Certainly there was some concerns over access, it is a difficult area as you all know, the Somali region.

"But we were concerned primarily about making sure that it got out to the end user, the beneficiaries. And 41% is not enough."

Much of the problem is logistic.

Deliveries for food aid are hugely extended, with consignments starting at depots outside the Somali region and often having to travel right through conflict affected areas where no food is allowed to move without an army escort.

The World Food Programme, which brings in the food, has been pressing the government to allow it to set up depots within the region and to distribute food from there.

Now finally permission has been given. Mr Hess said he was expecting to see some big changes after 1 October when this so-called hub-and-spoke system comes into operation".

Timesonline.co.uk, 18 September 2008

"Ethiopia has been accused of deliberately underestimating the scale of a deadly drought facing millions of its people, some of whom are being deprived of emergency food aid by the country's military.

The humanitarian crisis, caused by three years of failed rains, currently affects about 4.6 million people, though the official number could jump to as high as 6.7 million this week.

United Nations agencies say that the real number at risk is above 8 million, an estimate disputed hotly by Addis Ababa, which is insisting on publishing a much lower figure.

"The figure has risen very substantially, maybe even doubled," said Sir John Holmes, the UN's emergency relief co-ordinator, who visited Ethiopia earlier this month. "Any government doesn't want to be perceived as always in the position of receiving aid..."

Drought causes enormous strain on Ethiopia's south-east (April 2006)

- Humanitarian aid to Afar, Somali and Borena are ongoing to counter the worst effects of the drought
- Slow funding of the January 2006 Humanitarian Appeal could jeopardise the entire south-east of Ethiopia
- Aid is desperately needed but arriving late
- Malnutrition and diseases, in particular measles, already pose a very serious problem
- Water distribution is essential, as over half of the region's water wells are broken or unusable
- nomads entering Ethiopia from drought-struck Somalia and Kenya increase the pressure on resources
- Ogaden has been conflict-struck for many years; insecurity endangers food and water distribution

Of the 2.6 million people requiring emergency food assistance in Ethiopia, 1.5 million are in Somali Region and 155,000 are in Borena zone (Oromiya Region). These areas are affected by the same drought as the neighboring parts of Kenya and Somalia. WFP aims to cover around two-thirds of the overall emergency food requirements, which would be up to 1.7 million people, with the remainder covered through bilateral contributions to the government or NGOs. The needs of the chronically food insecure population will be addressed through food and cash transfers under the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) (covering 7.2 million people in the first half of the year and 8.3 million in the second half).

In Afar Region, most of the food insecure population is to be covered by the PSNP; it is essential to start food transfers for this region as soon as possible, as there are needs in the early part the year. Meanwhile, emergency food stocks are sufficient to address the immediate emergency food needs in the country.

Food dispatches for Somali Region and Borena zone are continuing and food distributions are ongoing. For Somali Region, 10,000 tonnes were allocated to the worst-affected woredas in December and transport and distributions of these allocations continued in January. Some 29,000 tonnes of WFP food has been allocated in January and so far up to one-third has been dispatched. Borena received over 2,000 tonnes in December and 2,900 tonnes have been allocated in January. Emergency distributions include "general" rations of cereals, pulses and vegetable oil. Fortified corn soya blend is also being dispatched for blanket supplementary feeding as preliminary results of nutrition surveys indicate "serious" levels of malnutrition in Somali Region. This is an additional ration for the 35 percent of the population considered to be at particular risk (children under-five, pregnant and nursing women, the sick and the elderly). In

the meantime, UNCT has completed a logistics mission to Gode to facilitate an expansion of its presence in the zone in order to ensure effective response." (OCHA, 20 March 2006)

"In January, the government, the United Nations and other aid agencies appealed for US \$166 million in emergency food and non-food assistance to help 2.6 million Ethiopians. However, only \$19 million of the \$111 million earmarked for health and nutrition and water and sanitation has been received so far.

According to the UN, at least 1.7 million Ethiopians are struggling to survive, with limited access to water in the eastern Somali region and in the southern Borena zone. About one in five children in southeastern Ethiopia is malnourished, and two out of every 10,000 die every day, making the need for therapeutic feeding and water access extremely urgent, according to Paul Hebert, the head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Ethiopia.

"We have already identified critical malnutrition rates in the Somali region, with 20 percent of malnourished children. If resources are not made available quickly, we will be unable to feed them and we fear that children might start to die," Hebert said. "If we don't receive new funding quickly, it might jeopardise the whole crisis in the region."

Measles and diarrhoea - which infect weakened children who have no access to clean water - are the main killers during a drought. In the last major drought in 2000, one-fifth of all deaths of children under the age of five were measles-related, according to the UN. At least 34 people have died of measles in eastern Ethiopia over the last six months.

The food-relief situation does not look good, according to the DPPA and OCHA. Food pipelines will be full only until the end of May, and no new contributions have been announced. "The available stock of food has already been nearly totally distributed. Unless we get new funding, we don't know," said Wodayehu from the DPPA. "We need more support from the donor community if we want to keep the current crisis under control."

"It is worrying that you never get anything [funding] until kids start dying in huge numbers," said Bjorn Ljunqvist, head of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ethiopia. UNICEF lacks nearly 50 percent of the \$10 million urgently needed for additional emergency water tankers and the vaccination of some 1.5 million children against measles. "If the rain doesn't come in adequate amounts, there are a lot of signs that the crisis will spill to the north, that the 1.7 million will jump to 2.5 or three million."

"We don't have precise figures yet, but we expect the needs to increase a lot," OCHA's Hebert said.

The UN has provided \$1.7 million to the World Health Organization through its newly created Central Emergency Response Fund to be used to provide aid to the Horn of Africa region, of which Ethiopia will receive \$350,000 for life-saving programmes." (IRIN, 10 April 2006)

"The area around Denan, a dry, dusty village in the extreme southeast some 1,400 km from the capital, Addis Ababa, is where the messengers of widespread hunger have made their first call. 'If there is no intervention, then we could be talking about the same disaster we had in 2000,' said Abdullahi Ali Haji, the government's health officer for the area. As many as 98,000 people died during a drought in Ethiopia in 2000, according to estimates by the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Around Denan, the effects of that drought and its impact on communities are still visible. Some 10,000 people continue to live in a makeshift camp on the outskirts of the village, having moved there six years ago in search of food.

'The drought is already here. This is our warning that without immediate help...there will be deaths. We are still assessing the situation rather than making emergency interventions,' Haji added. 'We have to move quickly.'

Although some aid is beginning to arrive in this remote region, local residents said it was too little, too late. Aid workers said although urgent appeals for food, water and medicine had been made, often it took weeks, if not months, before the aid arrived. Yet the widespread food shortage in Denan had announced itself before arriving in the area.

While land degradation, overcrowding and global warming have been blamed for the successive droughts that afflict Ethiopia's desolate Ogaden region, poor rains over the last nine years have left many families living on a knife edge. This year the rains failed completely, leaving the area, whose landscape is ribbed and rutted like a crocodile's back, with dried riverbeds and sun-parched valleys.

Food prices have gone up by as much as 50 percent, while the value of livestock has plummeted, affecting mostly nomads, who rely on cattle, sheep, goats and camels for food and income. With livestock deaths on the increase, many people have started migrating to nearby towns in search of aid. Some of those who have recently been displaced have walked 200 km into the Ogaden from across the borders of neighbouring Kenya and Somalia, where the situation is said to be worse.

In this area alone, about 1.75 million people - mainly nomads - need help, say aid workers.



[...] In good times it is one of the busiest caravan routes in Africa, as daily processions of camels packed with wares travel from Somalia to Ethiopia along the edge of the Rift Valley, their traders making tidy profits. Unfortunately, an earlier crackdown by the authorities on smugglers, coupled with Saudi Arabia's continued ban on meat imports from the region out of fear of Rift Valley Fever, had already left many families without reliable incomes.

'Without urgent help the drought could spiral,' said Bjorn Ljungqvist, the country director for the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ethiopia. 'Urgent emergency intervention in the form of food, water, and vital medicines for women and children is needed to avert an impending disaster.'

For this area alone, the UN needs US \$6 million to help - and not just to avert hunger. In 2000, a fifth of all deaths of children under the age of five were measles-related. At the moment, almost half of the region's water wells are broken or unusable, according to UNICEF, and at least 637,000 people depend on emergency water supplies.

[...]

Ogaden, with a population of four million, has yet more problems. Administratively, it is the weakest of Ethiopia's federal regions, with its huge area and sparse population. A long-running conflict between the government and a rebel secessionist group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front, has also severely hampered any real development in the region. In recent months the insecurity has taken a menacing turn, with trucks of food aid being attacked and in some cases burnt. Violent clan disputes - a spill over from the feuding factions in neighbouring Somalia - have also deterred the work of aid workers in the region.

Hospitals are virtually non-existent and schools are too far for children to attend. Gode Hospital, for example, is the only such facility for a population of one million people.

IDP needs in Doba Woreda in Oromiya region (February 2005)

- Shelter needed for 2,770 households
- Clothing and utensils needed for 2,874 households
- Full rations needed for at least 16,615 people

"A DPPC/USAID/UN mission to assess the region's request for emergency food assistance estimates more than 16,600 IDPs in and around Doba woreda. Due to the urgency of the situation, a request for immediate assistance has been sent from the field to the federal DPPC. Immediate assistance is requested in the form of shelter for 2,770 households, clothing and utensils for 2,874 households, full rations for 16,615 people and supplementary food for 5,815 people. This is additional to the 2,100 IDPs who moved to a temporary camp in Mieso in late 2004 and does not include the IDPs reported in Goro Gutu woreda, East Hararghe." (OCHA, 4 February 2005)

Tigray IDPs live on meagre resources, government response to include them in PSNP (February 2006)

- The Ethiopian government says to have included IDPs in its Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) in Tigray
- Displaced in Tigray live in overcrowded dwellings with high mortality rates and little access to food and clean water

The Ethiopian government says to have included all people in Tigray into its Productive Safety Net Programme. It could not be verified yet whether this includes IDPs. (OCHA Ethiopia, email 7 February 2006)

"I recently had an occasion to visit Tigre, northern Ethiopia with the Country Director, Br. Stephen Power. It was evident that the many displaced are trying to settle to a new life, while still cherishing the dream of returning to their former homes some day.

Small dwellings erected to house families of seven are now occupied by as many as 15. Food is in short supply due to the parched land condition and because much of the land that used to yield a good harvest has had to be cleared of landmines before it is safe for farming.

Unfortunately, among the IDPs, there are many suffering from the additional burden of the HIV virus, but call forth the understanding and compassion of their hosts.

For a people used to moving from place to place, to find suitable grazing place for their cattle, displacement was normal. But the type of displacement they are experiencing today is different-what was home is no longer so, for some, their former dwellings have been destroyed and their villages are non-existent.” (JRS, 17 April 2003)

“Tigray Region, which borders Eritrea, has a population of approximately 4 million people and typifies the extremely harsh conditions faced by the majority of Ethiopians. The crude death rate is 13.7 per 1,000, infant mortality rate is 102 per 1,000, while under 5 mortality is 148 per 1,000. The percentage of the population with access to clean and safe water is less than 20 percent (MoH, Health and health related indicators 2001).” (WFP, 1 May 2002, pp.1-3)

IDPs needs in Miesso in Oromiya region (December 2004)

- IDPs leaving in deplorable conditions on the soccer field in the centre town
- IDPs are living with no food, water and shelter
- IDPs are receiving very limited assistance

“Following the recent referendum to determine the administrative status of contested kebeles in Oromiya and Somali Region, 2,600 victims of inter-ethnic conflict from Bike Town are currently living as IDPs in Meisso Town. CARE Ethiopia sent an assessment team to the area at the request of the Zonal Administration, which reported that the IDPs were living in deplorable conditions on the soccer field in the centre of town, 50 meters from the livestock market, with no food, water, shelter, blankets or latrines. No assistance had been given to them other than 39 ten person Red Cross tents which had been donated the week after their arrival, along with 2.5 MTs of wheat and a water trailer which is now empty. The site is on a flood plain and night-time temperatures have dropped as low as seven degrees. CARE in consultation with the Zonal and Woreda Administrators and USAID is addressing the immediate needs. The camp is being relocated, pit latrines dug, two roto tankers placed at the site are receiving water daily, and blankets, jerry cans, wood and charcoal, sleeping mats and soap have been purchased to meet their immediate needs for a month. OFDA has release 52 MTs of maize, oil, pulses and CSB to distribute to these IDPs in two half-monthly rounds of distribution in the next month. Concerns remain regarding shelter and the inadequate health clinic service. CARE, International Medical Corps (IMC), Federation of Red Cross Society (FRCS) and Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) are closely monitoring the situation in order to alleviate the problems and an OCHA field officer accompanied by Oromiya DPPB is also assessing the situation.” (UN OCHA-Ethiopia, 17 December 2004)

Conflict induced newly displaced people in acute humanitarian situation in Somali and Oromiya regions (March 2006)

- There is a growing number of IDPs in a very remote part of Afder zone in Guradamole district
- Concerns raised as IDPs were not planned in the relief food beneficiary number
- There is no water at all in the district

In the extremely food-insecure situation in Somali and Oromiya regions, tribal conflicts kept occurring at the beginning of 2006. (FEWSNET, March 2006)

"In Afder zone deteriorating conditions are reported in West Imi district and among IDPs arriving in Guradamole district from bordering areas in Oromiya Region.

[...]

Due to the referendum, a number of IDPs have moved into Afder, Liben and Shinile Zones, and this poses problems for the on-going relief operation, as these displaced people were not planned in the original relief food beneficiary number. There are serious concerns for a growing number of IDPs in a very remote part of Afder zone in Guradamole district. [...]

There is a critical shortage of food as the last food delivery to the area was in December 2004. Pastoralists Concern Association Ethiopia (PCAE) recommends the IDPs be supported by the DPPB monthly ration allocation. In Guradamole town there is no water at all. ICRC has distributed tarpaulins and agricultural tools for almost 1,200 IDP households and has started a full two month food ration. MSF-Belgium is starting nutritional and medical interventions shortly. The combination of all of these aggravating factors are triggering a very acute humanitarian situation, which is on the way to becoming an emergency if urgent assistance is not provided." (UN CTE, 20 April 2005)

Conflict induced IDPs in Bordode/Mieso areas (Somali) in need of planned humanitarian assistance (April 2004)

- Durable solutions necessary to address long standing problems such as the return of IDPs in their village of origin
- Plastic jerry cans and borehole needed to address the difficulty of access to clean water for IDPs in Bordode Woreda
- IDPs most vulnerable because they lack shelter facilities and their areas of locations are particularly infested by malaria
- IDPs need more cooking facilities

"The most urgent issue of concern to the IDPs in Bordode and Mieso is relief assistance in food and non-food items." (UN OCHA Ethiopia, 24 May 2004)

"UN OCHA-Ethiopia undertook a field mission to the Somali region to assess the situation of IDPs in Fafan, Hartishiek, Mieso and Bordode IDP shelters. The IDPs in Fafen and Hartishiek are mainly drought induced while the caseload of some 14,900 persons in Mieso/Bordode areas are displaced mainly because of conflict over land ownership between Oromo and Somali tribesmen in the Rift valley. Major conclusions and observations of the mission are: 1) IDPs in the region are in need of humanitarian assistance such as food, water, health, shelter materials and clothing. 2) Improved planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance is essential. 3) The IDPs in the areas visited have expressed their interest to return to their villages of origin. Funding of the UNDP/IOM project to return 6,000 of the IDPs needs to occur soon if a durable solution for the long standing problem of IDPs in the region is to be found." (UN OCHA, 30, April 2004)

The problem of access to clean water

"Bordode/Mieso

21. The IDPs in Bordode Wereda collect water from a seasonal river that is 5 – 7 KM away from their current settlements. The IDPs need plastic water jerry cans. Based on the recommendations made by the joint rapid assessment mission referred to in paragraph (4) above, the HCS has delivered 100 pieces of plastic jerry cans of 20 liters and 2 units of hug plastic water containers

of 5,000 litres each to the Wereda Administration in Bordode for the emergency. UNICEF has also released 2,400 pieces of plastic jerry cans of 10 litres capacity from its stock in Jijiga for onward dispatch to IDPs in Bordode/Mieso areas. However, the combined assistance made to the IDPs is far too short of the actual requirements.

22. In order to improve the problem of water with the IDPs and the local population, the regional Bureau for Water Resources Development has drilled a new borehole near the checkpoint at Bordode. Although the productivity of the borehole has been tested and certified as potential, the technicians deployed for this purpose have returned to Jijiga without finishing the remaining installation works. It was confirmed with local government authorities in Bordode that the required equipment and construction materials are available on site for completion.

23. The reporting OCHA Field Officer and the Head of the regional Bureau for Water Resources Development (RBWRD) of the Somali region have discussed the possibility of re-deploying the technicians back to Bordode to complete the remaining elements of the civil works. The Head of the RBWRD has assured OCHA that the necessary action will be taken through the Shinille based water construction crew as quickly as possible.

Action Points

- The quantity of plastic water jerry cans made available to the IDPs by the HCS and UNICEF is not sufficient. It is recommended that additional units be provided for distribution to the remaining IDP caseload in Bordode/Mieso.
- The construction works of the borehole in Bordode be completed. This is to ensure that the borehole facility is put to a productive operation so that the IDPs and the local communities in the surrounding areas could access to drinking water.

Health – malaria causing serious concern

- The IDP areas in Bordode/Mieso in particular are malaria infested. The problem is complicated by lack of shelter facilities. SC – USA field office in Dire Dawa has allocated Birr 5,000 for the procurement and delivery of 277 pieces of impregnated mosquito nets to Bordode/Mieso. It is estimated that some 5,400 pieces of mosquito nets and medicine are additionally required for distribution at the rate of two pieces per family.

Action Points

- It is suggested that 5,400 pieces of impregnated mosquito nets and medicine be made available for distribution to 2,697 IDP families in Bordode/Mieso.

Shelter Materials – urgent assistance required

24. OCHA Field Officer has noticed the problem of shelter materials and clothing with IDPs in Fafen, Hartishiek and Bordode/Mieso during the mission. The problem will be rather difficult during the current rains. Although the HCS and UNICEF have provided 1,300 pieces of plastic tarpaulins of 4 x 5 meters to Bordode/Mieso, the quantity is not sufficient. The problem of clothing and blankets with children, lactating mothers and the elderly is critical. The possibilities of providing sufficient shelter materials, blankets and clothing need to be considered by the federal/regional governments, humanitarian aid agencies and donors.

Action Point

- The additional requirements of 1,535 pieces of plastic tarpaulin of 4 x 5 meters be made available for IDP in Bordode/Mieso who have not received shelter materials and some 2,600 IDP families in Fafen and Hartishiek (1,200 families in Fafen and 1,400 families in Hartishiek) be also assisted with shelter materials. It is also recommended that sufficient pieces of blankets be provided for the IDPs in the above camps.

Kitchen Utensils – need for urgent supply

25. As mentioned above, the IDPs abandoned their villages spontaneously because of conflict. Most of the families do not have basic cooking facilities. The Hararge Catholic Secretariat has dispatched 100 sets of kitchen utensils. UNICEF has also delivered 1,000 units of utensils for Bordode/Mieso. It is estimated that some 1,750 more sets of kitchen utensils are required for distribution in Bordode/Mieso.

Action Point

- It is suggested that IDP families in Bordode/Mieso who have not received assistance in kitchen utensils be provided with the package on family basis and in line with UNICEF standard.

(UN OCHA Ethiopia, 26 April 2004)

Food

High malnutrition in IDP producing areas (July 2009)

- Four out of five regions facing malnutrition
- GoE accused of hiding famine and starvation
- Extremely precarious food security situation in Somali region due to fighting and trade restrictions
- IHT says that significant amounts of the food aid are being confiscated by troops

IRIN, 27 July 2009

"Ethiopia is facing challenges in providing food, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, emergency shelter, agriculture and livelihoods, according to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Fidele Sarassoro.

To counter these challenges, the UN has allocated US\$6 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

"I have directed the humanitarian community jointly to agree on priority areas in which this new money can immediately be put to use," Sarassoro said.

At the same time, the federal Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) has announced that rising malnutrition and food insecurity were a growing concern and likely to lead to 6.2 million Ethiopians relying on food aid, out of a population of approximately 77 million.

At present, 4.9 million people in the country benefit from relief food.

According to the DRMFSS, the country has a shortfall of 176,000T of food. However, this is likely to increase to 390,000T in the months up to December 2009.

"Because of the existing shortfall, only three of the six planned rounds of food allocations have been distributed to date," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said in a statement on 20 July.

Initial reports show that the UN CERF funding should prioritize five sectors in order to address growing malnutrition and food security, outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and refugee needs.

Reports indicate that four out of five regions have recorded increasing malnutrition. A poor Belg (long rains) season, from mid-February to mid-May, contributed to food insecurity.

The below-normal Belg performance also left many vulnerable families in even more difficult conditions, according to OCHA, leading to an increase in the provision of therapeutic feeding programmes in Oromiya, Somali, Amhara and Southern regions.

The health bureaus of Oromiya, Amhara and Southern regions have already started implementing the national therapeutic feeding programme (TFP) roll-out plan, with support from NGOs.

"The aim is to achieve full coverage of hotspot woredas [districts] with out-patient therapeutic programmes [OTPs] and TFUs [therapeutic feeding units]," OCHA said.

To achieve full coverage, 28 TFUs and 457 OTPs will need to be opened in Oromiya and 15 TFUs and 502 OTPs in Southern region. Amhara region should also have 35 TFUs and 555 OTPs.

In addition to easing the growing malnutrition and food security problems, the CERF funding will be used to strengthen the fight against AWD outbreaks..."

Timesonline.co.uk, 18 September 2008

"Ethiopia has been accused of deliberately underestimating the scale of a deadly drought facing millions of its people, some of whom are being deprived of emergency food aid by the country's military.

The humanitarian crisis, caused by three years of failed rains, currently affects about 4.6 million people, though the official number could jump to as high as 6.7 million this week.

United Nations agencies say that the real number at risk is above 8 million, an estimate disputed hotly by Addis Ababa, which is insisting on publishing a much lower figure.

"The figure has risen very substantially, maybe even doubled," said Sir John Holmes, the UN's emergency relief co-ordinator, who visited Ethiopia earlier this month. "Any government doesn't want to be perceived as always in the position of receiving aid."

The crisis is at its most worrying in the vast deserts of the Ogaden region, where the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) says in a confidential alert to donors that it is receiving "increasing reports of hunger-related mortality". About two million people are at risk until the main rains fall next spring – if they fall at all. The Ogaden is Ethiopia's biggest and most remote state.

The WFP has told donors that it blames Ethiopia's "delays in recognising the extent of need" for causing the rapid depletion of existing food stocks. But a *Channel 4 News* investigation tonight claims that the army has withheld food from villages in the Ogaden deliberately as part of a "scorched earth" policy against separatist rebels of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

Herdsmen in villages almost completely cut off from the outside world said that many of their animals had been killed by Ethiopian soldiers, who also deprived them of water.

"We walk for eight hours to collect water," said Abdi, a villager about three hours from Jijiga, the regional capital. "Then the military take the water from us. They say the rebels pass through our villages and that we give them supplies. But what can we give? We are dying of hunger. We have nothing to give to our own children."

[...] The UN says that it has negotiated with the Ethiopian army for the military's role in food distribution to be kept to a minimum. "If there is a situation where food is taken by the military, we protest," said Mohammed Diab, the WFP's Ethiopia director.

However, a confidential investigation by USAid, the US Government's disaster relief agency, complained in March that "literally hundreds of areas . . . have neither been assessed nor received any food assistance", with "populations we met terrorised by the inability to access food".

"This situation would be shameful in any other country," the report concludes. "The US Government cannot in good conscience allow the food operation to continue in its current manifestation." The US is spending more than £230 million on food aid for Ethiopia this year but is hamstrung from being too critical in public; Washington sees Meles Zenawi, Ethiopia's Prime Minister, as an ally in the War on Terror after Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia in 2005, which ousted an Islamist administration from power..."

FEWS Net, 20 September 2007:

Continued restrictions on trade and movement in Somali Region are worsening food security among already extremely food insecure pastoral and agropastoral populations in Warder, Koraheand, parts of Fik, Degehabur and Gode zones (Figure 1). These restrictions, which began in mid-June, have prevented livestock trade and impeded the movement of food and other commercial goods to rural areas. To date, food aid dispatches to and distributions within the region have not met the needs of affected populations.

Because most people living in the affected areas of Somali Region are pastoralists or agro pastoralists, they rely heavily on the sale of livestock and livestock products to purchase cereals and other imported food items (Figure 2). But, trade and movement restrictions make it nearly impossible for these populations to access livestock markets to sell their animals. In addition, prices for those cereals and other imported food items that are still available in restricted areas are up to three times their normal levels because of the limited supply and flow of goods. Populations in these areas are reportedly consuming wild foods and, in the most food insecure households, slaughtering livestock – their main source of income – for consumption. If trade restrictions continue, these negative coping strategies will lead to destitution, increasing and further protracting the already extreme food insecurity of affected populations. [...]

During the second week of August, military convoys began transporting some commercial food to the restricted areas within Somali Region, but the amounts of food dispatched are reported to be insufficient to meet all of the areas' needs. The Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency has also dispatched relief food aid to these zones, though most actual distributions have not yet taken place. While the movement of some commercial and relief supplies into these areas will alleviate food shortages slightly, the amount of food currently being sent through these channels is much lower than the needs in the zones. In addition, even if commercial food was allowed into these areas without restriction, continued prohibitions on the movement livestock and livestock products for sale in markets outside restricted areas will not allow affected populations to earn sufficient income to buy cereals and other goods. Restrictions, therefore, need to be lifted completely. Until then, the amount of relief food provided should be increased to cover the needs of pastoral and agro pastoral population living in these areas."

International Herald Tribune, 21 June 2007:

The Ethiopian government is blockading emergency food aid and choking off trade to large swaths of a remote region in the eastern part of the country that is home to a rebel force, putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk of starvation, Western diplomats and humanitarian officials say.

The Ethiopian military and its proxy militias have also been siphoning off millions of dollars in international food aid, and using a United Nations polio eradication program to funnel money to their fighters, according to relief officials, former Ethiopian government administrators and a member of the Ethiopian Parliament who defected to Germany last month to protest the government's actions.

Humanitarian officials say the ban on aid convoys and commercial traffic, intended to squeeze the rebels and dry up their bases of support, has sent food prices skyrocketing and disrupted trade routes, preventing the nomads who live there from selling their livestock. Hundreds of thousands of people are now sealed off in a desiccated, unforgiving landscape that is difficult to survive in even in the best of times.

Ethiopian government says the blockade covers only strategic locations, and is meant to prevent guns and matériel from reaching the Ogaden National Liberation Front, the rebel force that the government considers a terrorist group. In April, the rebels killed more than 60 Ethiopian guards and Chinese workers at a Chinese-run oil field in the Ogaden.

"This is not a government which punishes its people," said Nur Abdi Mohammed, a government spokesman.

[...]

Though good rains this year have fed the few crops in the area and provided a little cushion, "The most these people can last without facing serious problems is one month, maybe two," said David Throp, country director for Save the Children UK.

Even if relief trucks are allowed in to all the critical areas, the food might not reach the people who need it. According to humanitarian workers and several former Ethiopian officials, including Kalif, food aid is embezzled in two stages. First, soldiers skim sacks of grain, tins of vegetable oil and bricks of high-energy biscuits from food warehouses to sell at local markets.

"The cash is distributed among security officers and regional officers," a former government administrator from the Ogaden region said in a recent telephone interview on condition of anonymity because he still works with government officials.

Then the remaining food is hauled out to rural areas where the soldiers divert part of it to local gunmen and informers as a reward for helping them fight the rebels.

[...]

Western humanitarian officials estimated that 20 to 30 percent of the donor countries' food aid to the Ogaden — aid that last year was valued at more than \$70 million — routinely disappears this way. To cover their tracks, the soldiers and the government administrators who work with them tell the aid agencies that the food has spoiled, or has been stolen or hijacked by the rebels, humanitarian officials said.

Relief workers in Ethiopia have known about these problems for several years, a humanitarian official said, and have tried to set up committees of local elders to oversee distribution. But that did not work either, and aid officials eventually concluded that as long as the majority of the food was getting through, they would not stop the shipments.

When informed about these allegations, Diab of the World Food Program said, "This is the first I've heard of them."

Mohammed, the government spokesman, denied that Ethiopian troops were pilfering or mishandling foreign aid. "We don't do that," he said.

Over 6 million Ethiopians need food aid (October 2008)

- UN warns of food insecurity in Ethiopia

UN News Centre, 10 October 2008

“The United Nations’ humanitarian arm has warned that food insecurity is worsening in Ethiopia, with over six million people now in need of emergency aid to stay alive.

That figure marks a 40 per cent increase since June, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Increased deaths of livestock – including cattle and camels – have been reported in several areas in the Horn of Africa nation, and the situation is expected to deteriorate as the haggaa, or short dry season, progresses.

In the Somali Region of the country, the drought, combined with soaring food prices and declining livestock incomes, has led to increased migration from rural to urban areas in search of food.

OCHA says that three logistics hubs have been set up to feed nearly two million people.

It also noted that acute watery diarrhoea continues to sicken Ethiopians, with the UN World Health Organization (WHO) warning that it is spreading.

The Government, WHO and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) are collaborating to help contain the disease.

Last week WHO appealed for an additional \$8 million to fund its humanitarian preparedness and response operations in Ethiopia”

IRIN, 17 September 2008

“The Somali region of south-eastern Ethiopia is facing critical food and water shortages, with many families eating only one meal a day and others migrating to urban areas, the UN and aid agencies said.

As a result, malnutrition levels are increasing, especially in Korahe, Warder, Degehabur, Gode, Fiiq and parts of Liben and Afder zones, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), reported...”

GoE and Humanitarian Partners, Humanitarian Appeal, p.4:

Ethiopia enters 2007 with anticipation of improved food security situation due to the increased harvest expected in many parts of the country. The good food security prospect has led to a new approach in the way the Government, with assistance from the humanitarian partners, is addressing emergency needs and allocating resources. In 2007, allocation of resources will be determined following more specific area-by-area- and case-by-case assessments, in order to ensure those in most need of relief items are reached. The assessment results, however, will be used as a broad national estimate for the purpose of planning and resource mobilization for emergency needs. As part of the new approach, emergency beneficiaries identified in Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) woredas will be addressed through the existing safety net mechanism. Despite the improved food security prospects, however, an estimated 1.36 million

people will require emergency food assistance, due to the severe impacts of flooding, localized agricultural production failure and other shocks.

Health

Therapeutic Feeding Centres in vulnerable regions (July 2009)

- Agencies and Health Bureaus setting up TFCs

IRIN, 27 July 2009



[...] The below-normal Belg performance also left many vulnerable families in even more difficult conditions, according to OCHA, leading to an increase in the provision of therapeutic feeding programmes in Oromiya, Somali, Amhara and Southern regions.

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To achieve full coverage, 28 TFUs and 457 OTPs will need to be opened in Oromiya and 15 TFUs and 502 OTPs in Southern region. Amhara region should also have 35 TFUs and 555 OTPs.

In addition to easing the growing malnutrition and food security problems, the CERF funding will be used to strengthen the fight against AWD outbreaks.

According to the World Health Organization, 579 new cases of AWD have been reported in Addis Ababa,

Somali, Oromiya, Harari and Southern regions. The disease has so far claimed 11 lives in these regions..."



Drought posing health risks to children (January 2006)

Children face high and rising malnutrition rates in the dry, not easily accessible and poorly serviced area. More than 56,000 under-five children are facing malnutrition in the Somali and Oromiya regions of southern Ethiopia – a number that is expected to rise sharply as the drought worsens. Kenya estimates that between 40,000 – 60,000 children and women in the 27 affected districts are malnourished. It is expected that as many as 3 out of 10 children in the drought-affected areas of Somalia will be malnourished.

The combination of high malnutrition rates or wasting with generally low measles immunization rates portends the real possibility of a major measles outbreak. Children weakened by malnutrition are at gravely higher risk of any infection and measles is one of the most virulent, spreading lethally and quickly among the unimmunized. During the last drought in 2000, measles accounted for 22 per cent of all deaths of under-five children in Ethiopia, for example.

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Health risks in relation to the 2006 drought (April 2006)

"Clean water, adequate sanitation, immunization, health education and access to primary care health services are also key to curbing disease and death, to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and to treat those who are ill.

In the Horn of Africa, people are at increased risk of malaria, diarrhoea including cholera, acute respiratory infections, tuberculosis, measles and meningococcal meningitis. Experience from previous droughts has shown that measles, when combined with malnutrition, is the biggest risk for children, sometimes accounting for up to half of under-five mortality. Estimated immunization coverage for many areas in the region is low, with, for example, Somalia at 30%, Djibouti at 64%, and Ethiopia at 66%. To prevent major outbreaks of measles, at least 95% of all children between 6 months and 15 years of age need to be vaccinated.

Preliminary assessments show that 20 out of every 100 children under the age of five in the region are suffering from malnutrition, putting them at increased risk of death. This is above WHO's emergency threshold of 15%. Children who are severely malnourished require special care. Other vulnerable groups include people with HIV/AIDS, whose immune systems are already

weakened. Malnourished women who are pregnant or who are breastfeeding are at increased risk of anaemia. This can lead to complications and death during childbirth.

WHO has begun supporting the countries' Ministries of Health in helping to coordinate the health response of the many humanitarian actors already working in the region. WHO is helping to promote disease prevention and surveillance, monitor malnutrition to help identify cases of moderate malnutrition before they become severe, train health workers in proper diagnosis and treatment of disease and malnutrition and deliver essential drugs and medical supplies. WHO is also working with UNICEF and Ministries of Health to promote immunization campaigns, and to deliver measles immunization and vitamin A supplementation." (WHO, 7 April 2006)

HIV/AIDS prevalence exacerbated by frequent population movements (March 2003)

- 2.2 million people live with HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia, including 200,000 children
- Drought and destitution may accelerate HIV/AIDS transmission through recourse to sex work as a survival strategy

"With 7.3% of the adult population infected by HIV/AIDS, Ethiopia is one of the most severely affected countries in the world. This has reduced family and community cohesion, disrupting the traditional patterns of protection and care, placing children and women at heightened risk of trauma and exploitation.

[...]

With an estimated 2.2 million people living with HIV/AIDS, including 200,000 children, Ethiopia has one of the largest HIV/AIDS affected populations in the world. Clearly the drought may accelerate the transmission of HIV/AIDS given the population movements, potential for increased sexual violence and sex work as a survival strategy." (UNICEF, 14 March 2003)

Water and Sanitation

Somali Region facing food and water crisis (August 2009)

- Critical food water shortage in Somali region as rain fails
- Pastoralists hardest hit
- Humanitarian access a problem as government restricts movements

OCHA, 10 August 2009

"Critical water shortages have been reported in parts of the Somali Region, particularly in Warder, Gode, and parts of Afder and Shinile zones, with the onset of the dry haggga season, following on the poor performance of the gu rains. Local

communities are reporting that the situation is unusually bad as there is no water in the areas to which they usually migrate during the dry season, while water shortages are also occurring much earlier than usual. Haphazard internal and external migration has been reported, particularly from Kelafo, Mustahil, Dolobay and Cherati woredas, with individuals from the worst-hit areas migrating to the few areas receiving water tankering. In addition to the lack of adequate water and pasture regeneration, crops have been damaged by the worst dust storms in 20 years, leading residents of at least three villages in Adadle woreda to flee from their homes. Additionally, reports indicate that farmers are harvesting premature crops to use as fodder for animals. Humanitarian

partners are increasingly of the view that water tankering operations, although expensive and unsustainable, are required in the driest areas, alongside more sustainable interventions, including rehabilitation of boreholes and birkads. A joint report on water situation in Gode zone has been drafted by humanitarian partners and is awaiting regional level endorsement. The report is intended for advocacy and response planning."

IRIN, 17 September 2009

"The Somali region of south-eastern Ethiopia is facing critical food and water shortages, with many families eating only one meal a day and others migrating to urban areas, the UN and aid agencies said.

As a result, malnutrition levels are increasing, especially in Korahe, Warder, Degehabur, Gode, Fiiq and parts of Liben and Afder zones, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), reported.

"Concerns are growing about the potential exacerbation of existing drought conditions as the Karan [July-September] rains in Jijiga and Shinile zones are [close to failing]," OCHA said on 15 September.

"Immediate interventions in food, income and livelihood protection support, feed and water supply are among priority responses identified by the regional DPPB [Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau]."

The Somali region has experienced successive rainfall failure in recent years. In the southern areas, livelihoods have also been affected by conflict between the government and the rebel Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

Aid workers say the conflict has disrupted trade, transport and social services, and hampered humanitarian access. Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland (MSF-Swiss) recently withdrew from the region, saying repeated administrative hurdles and intimidation had prevented the provision of medical care to vulnerable people in Fiiq.

The government, which has previously cited insecurity in the region, denied the MSF-Swiss claims. The NGO, it suggested, might instead have had its "own double agenda".

More recently, access to vulnerable populations has improved, with more NGOs being allowed to operate in the region, according to OCHA. But the ONLF disputes this and insists the situation remains grim.

"The Ethiopian [government] continues to severely restrict humanitarian assistance to our people while using what little food aid that gets through as a political weapon aimed at collectively our villagers and nomads," the rebels said on 15 September.

Last year, Human Rights Watch said both the government and rebels were responsible for atrocities in the remote region. "There are no clean hands among the hostile parties in the Ogaden conflict," it said, adding that its researchers had documented serious abuses of civilians, including summary executions by the ONLF.

Poor rains

This year, the "gu" [mid-April to June] rains performed poorly throughout the region, leading to widespread water and pasture shortages, and affecting crops in agro-pastoral and riverine areas.

Rains started three to four weeks late in Jijiga and Shinile zones, and not at all in other areas. But halfway through the season, the rains ceased in some parts of the region.

"The overall prospect for gu crop production is a total failure in all parts of the region," according to the regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency. Presenting preliminary findings of a July assessment at a meeting in Jijiga, the agency noted significant livestock deaths in Gode, Shinile, Jijiga and Warder Zones because of lack of pasture and water.

"Huge livestock migrations driven by feed and water scarcity have been seen since mid-May 2008," it said. "These migrations have created huge concentrations into the few districts and pocket areas that currently have some pasture as a result of better rains during May.

"The migrations are very unusual from the point of distance (50-250km) and scale as they involve the largest number of animals in the last seven years. In many areas these also include entire household movements, which is [also] unusual."

Throughout the region, food prices have sharply increased due to limited cereal supplies. Many water ponds and seasonal streams have dried up..."

People in need of emergency water assistance increased from 2.6 to 4.2 million during 2003 (June 2003)

- In Ethiopia only 28% of the population has access to water supplies and only 17% to sanitation services
- As of June 2003, 4.2 million people are in need of emergency water supply, and 381,000 of them were in need of water tinkering
- IDPs will need longer tinkering support
- Six regions worst affected by drought in need of water assistance are Somali, Oromiya, Tigray, Afar, Amhara, and SNNPR
- Many previously functioning schemes have been damaged in Tigray
- About 290,000 IDPs were in need of water and sanitation improvements in 2000

"Ethiopia is among the least developed countries in the world with regard to water and sanitation coverage, with 28% coverage for water and 17% for sanitation countrywide. Actual coverage is even lower if we consider that, due to over-use and lack of adequate maintenance, an estimated 30 to 60 % of the existing water schemes at times are not functional.

[...]

In the context of the current drought crisis, a recent Emergency Water Supply need survey by UNICEF, in cooperation with Ministry of Water Resources and Regional Water Bureaux, in the 6 Regions most affected by drought, has revised the figures of people in need of emergency water supply as of end of April, from the originally estimated 2.7 million to 4,241,447. 381,942 of them were earmarked for emergency water tankering, of which 120,979 (i.e. 32%) have been served by UNICEF funded tankering during the period January-May. If rains continue in sufficient quantity, the need for water tankering should gradually reduce, releasing more resources for long term solutions. However IDPs and newly resettled populations, will need longer tankering support, as well as many of the recently opened Therapeutic Feeding Centers in various locations.

[...]

Six regions with the most affected population have been selected for special attention. They are Somali, Oromiya, Tigray, Afar, Amhara, and SNNPR." (UN, 3 June 2003, p.7)

"About 25% of the total IDP population are women and children. They have not only been displaced but have been subjected to very difficult living conditions through the last two years. Many are still living in caves and open fields under plastic sheets. Supply of domestic water to these people has been one of the most difficult tasks for the Regional Administration.

Already many returnees are returning to parts of Irob, Tahtay Adiabo, Laelay Adiyabo and Atsbi Weredas in Tigray Region. A recent assessment of the water supply situation in these areas revealed that many of the previously functioning schemes have been damaged. Hence, rehabilitation and/or construction of new water points is a prerequisite to the return of many displaced people." (UN CTE 22 August 2000, sect. 5.5)

"The living conditions of IDPs in 1999 have worsened in many areas due to lack of water supply and poor sanitation. Strains have been placed on host communities already coping in many areas with the effects of drought. It is reported that an additional 290,000 IDPs still need assistance to improve water supply and environmental sanitation conditions in their living areas. The Bureau of Health in Tigray has reported that the morbidity and mortality is steadily increasing in places where there is lack of water supply and poor environmental sanitation conditions." (UNCTE 28 January 2000, p. 46)

Education

Children in pastoralist and conflict areas face poor access to education (October 2008)

- CRC notes in 2006 that primary education is still not free nor compulsory
- Access to informal education for vulnerable groups, including children in conflict areas and camps remains inadequate
- Literacy rates show discrepancies in access to education between rural and urban areas and a clear gender bias In Somali region service delivery, including education, remains extremely limited; the ongoing conflict has decimated enrolment in schools

Telegraph, 17 October 2008

School teacher Abdi Wahadi tried vainly to hide his embarrassment that his class size had been reduced to just six pupils, claiming that 70 were expected to enrol by the end of the week, even though the year started in September.

SSRC, 21 September 2007

The failure of ethnic federalism to deliver in the Somali periphery

EPRDF conceived ethnic federalism as the institutional strategy to achieve development and 'self-determination', yet it failed to deliver the widely expected benefits for a majority of region 5's inhabitants. In terms of public infrastructure and service delivery (education, health, roads, security etc.) the region fares worse than both Ethiopia's highland regions and neighboring Somaliland and Somalia. While progress has been achieved in expanding local government, administrative capacity for service delivery remains extremely limited.

WFP, 6-10 November 2006, para.6

Poverty and food insecurity also impede efforts to improve performance in the education sector. In spite of significant progress in the past decade, the net enrolment rate for 2003/04 was 52 percent, with considerable regional disparities. Literacy rates demonstrate high urban/rural disparities and a clear gender bias: male literacy is 49.9 percent and female literacy 26.6 percent. Dropout rates of 19.3 percent at primary level, poor attendance leading to a 9.9 percent rate of repetition and lack of household income result in only 3.8 percent of the population attaining higher education. There are attempts to address the particularly low enrolment in pastoralist areas through a system of alternative basic education centres, but it is essential to maintain the gains made in highland areas through continued support to these still-fragile regions. Total recurrent and capital spending of US\$4.1513 per student per year and underdeveloped community capacity mean that progress on enrolment achieved in many areas has placed pressure on limited school infrastructure, threatening the quality of education.

CRC, 1 November 2006, para. 63, 64

[...] the Committee continues to be seriously concerned that primary education is still not free nor compulsory and that net enrolment is still very low. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned at the large number of school dropouts, the charging of fees in primary education, the overcrowding of schools, the limited provisions for vocational training, the low transition rate to secondary school, the insufficient number of trained teachers and available school facilities, the absence of budget allocations for pre-primary schools and the poor quality of education. Considerable challenges remain in order to overcome inequalities which impact on children's access to education, in particular in rural regions, and on the basis of ethnicity and sex.

[...]

The Committee recommends that the State party, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 1 (2001) on the aims of education:

[...]

Undertake additional efforts to ensure access to informal education to vulnerable groups, including street children, orphans, children with disabilities, child domestic workers and children in conflict areas and camps, inter alia by addressing indirect and hidden costs of school education [...]

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Self-reliance

IDPs likely to be disadvantaged in local allocation system (January 2004)

IDPs can depend less on their habitual networks. Given the great power by kebele officials in terms of access to basic services, identity cards and land, and given the fact that obtaining these goods and services depends a lot on the good relations with kebele officials, it must be presumed that IDPs often have a distinct disadvantage over the local population in getting access to these services.

"The State at local level is experienced through the wereda, kebele and nus kebele (subkebele) executives, committees, assemblies, and associations, along with other state or stateinitiated organizations. These include: the local offices of government bureaux, encompassing development and extension agents, health workers and tax collectors; local social court judges and officers, police and militiamen. The objectives of the state sector structures are to ensure the implementation of government laws, policies, and programmes (including those intended to bring about socio-economic development), and to see that government taxes and other dues are collected. A point of concern is the frequent conflation of the role of tax collector with that of the agricultural development agent: even where extension agents are not explicitly involved in tax collection, they are often associated with pressure for repayment of credit loans related to the extension packages, and these involvements, usually perceived as repressive and negative, do little to enhance their capacity to play a positive part in animating communities for social change. State structures have been closely accompanied in the core EPRDF-administered areas by the less visible party structure of cadres, officers, and local cells. There is evidence that the local administration is normally conceptualized by the villagers as a fusion of both state and party authority. Ethiopians are well aware of the wide-ranging powers of these administrative bodies and are conscious of the fact that they need to maintain good relations with their officials. Observers describe how all who are dependent on the support or approval of the state, rely on their contact with kebele (and to a lesser extent wereda) officials.

Anyone who wants health services, tap-water and electricity, or who is applying for a job in the public sector, needs a letter from the kebele to the concerned authorities, showing that they are citizens entitled to the services or employment. The kebele owns houses, which are rented out to residents. Kebele officials issue the identity cards, which Ethiopians require to be able to move around freely and get access to all kinds of services.

This system which resulted in a degenerate and largely uncontrolled situation was, as noted above, radically revised from late 2001, following changes to professionalize local government. It remains to be seen whether wereda and kebele administration can be reformed to any appreciable degree by these means. Any such change would have to militate against the weight of three decades of abusive tradition, built on top of centuries of moribund and hierarchical local administration in the imperial period. In pastoralist areas, the state is significantly less visible or present than in settled agricultural areas. Whilst some attempts have been made to design mobile service delivery arrangements, initiatives are embryonic. Given the prevalence of conflict in pastoral zones, the primary pastoralist experience of the state has often been of its security forces." (Writenet, January 2004, p. 33 ff)

IDPs self reliance particularly disrupted by loss of assets and access to farmland (May 2002)

- Landmines and unexploded ordnances remain a serious problem
- Cross-border petty trade activity was brought to total halt particularly impoverishing people closest to the border
- Displaced families unable to support themselves split in search of cash-opportunities exacerbating women and children's vulnerability
- Lack of access to their farmland, livestock and other productive assets make most displaced completely dependent upon relief assistance
- Most of the displaced come from areas that are chronically drought affected

"Owing to their displacement, people were not able to plant or harvest the main season (*meher*)² crop for three years. In addition, they suffered from the loss of cross-border trade. A recent report stated that *'With the obvious and tragic exception of the lives lost, the interruption of economic relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia is probably the most devastating result of the war [...].*

9. While the consequences of conflict affect all people in society, it is women who have borne the disproportionate burden of displacement. Many males joined militia groups while others were recruited into the army, thus leaving women solely responsible for the household during the period of the conflict. It is estimated that, following the cessation of the conflict, the number of female headed households among the IDP population was approximately 37 percent, which is in line with the national average [...]. While many men returned to their homes following demobilization, they were faced with the destruction of their former holdings and thus, were unable to recommence productive activities.

10. The coping mechanisms employed by women include petty trading, such as selling firewood, borrowing, the production and sale of 'tella' (local beer), and begging. The small income generated from these activities is used to pay for rent and to purchase spices, condiments and non-food items, such as soap,

11. The vast majority of those displaced were hosted by local communities, who were also extremely poor, with a significant number requiring relief food assistance for many years to meet minimum food needs.

12. WFP assistance to IDPs began in March 1999 in response to the Government of Ethiopia's request for emergency assistance for Ethiopians internally displaced by the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. A Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in June 2000, which was followed by a Peace Agreement in December 2000. A Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) was established between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and with the deployment of over 4,000 UN Peacekeepers, many IDPs gradually began to return to their areas of origin and rebuild their livelihoods. However, as it was not possible to plant for the Meher harvest, WFP food assistance was extended to end November 2001, with provision to assist up to 322,500 IDPs and deportees, although the actual number of beneficiaries never exceeded 307,500. Between March 1999 and November 2001, over 135,000 tonnes of food aid was distributed through EMOP 6080.0/6080.1 at a cost of almost US\$70 million. During this time, those displaced depended solely on WFP food assistance, with no other sources of food available. Therefore, a full food basket was provided to meet the minimum caloric requirements." (WFP, 1 May 2002, pp.3-4)

"Altogether throughout the war, seven woredas were severely affected: people had to leave and infrastructure was destroyed, either because they were directly occupied by Eritrean military forces or because of precautionary evacuations. Some 42 tabias, suffered damage or destruction

of houses, schools, clinics along with the laying of landmines and proliferation of UXOs, affecting farmland, pastureland and water points.

[...]

Approximately 10 percent of the total population of Tigray was displaced and lost the agricultural production, livestock, sources of livelihood, homes and belongings. Cross-border petty trade, an important source of income in the border areas, which included the selling of vegetable, spices, livestock, locally brewed drinks came to a complete halt. Access to cash reduced dramatically and though the presence of the military accounted for some economic activity (especially purchase of goats and sheep), people living around the border areas experienced a loss of their purchasing power and became generally poorer. Once away from their areas of origin, IDPs were not able to support themselves, their children and the elderly members of the family. As a consequence, families split and women and children became the most vulnerable amongst the displaced. As the authorities in Tigray did not promote settlement in organized camps and encouraged the IDPs to integrate in the communities outside the conflict areas, many IDPs joined families or relatives, or just tried to make a living in the host communities. These were communities already under stress due to the drought and the failure of harvest seasons during 1999/2000. Many displaced people however, were forced to live in caves, under bridges and in makeshift shelters in extremely harsh conditions. In some areas of high IDP density – at various locations of Tigray's northern belt – camp-like settlements emerged." (Buffoni, 31 December 2001, pp. 7-8)

"As a result of the war with Eritrea, some 500 civilian deaths were reported in Tigray, 750 children were orphaned and the whereabouts of 641 civilians remains unknown. Schools, hospitals and other parts of the community infrastructure have been destroyed or damaged. Four farming seasons have already been lost, and more than 70,000 hectares of land rendered uncultivable and unproductive due to the presence of landmines. Although the Ethiopian Government and humanitarian partners are anxious to support the return of the remaining internally displaced persons to their homes in border areas, landmines and unexploded ordnance remain a serious impediment to resettlement activities. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 167 people, mostly children, have been reported killed or injured by landmines since February 2000." (SC 9 August 2000, para.10)

"The agricultural activities in all the weredas along the border with Eritrea were affected by the war. While the main impediment for the returning farmers is the risk of landmines, farmers are also short of seeds, oxen, farm tools, fertilizer, and storage facilities. The period when planting long-cycle crops for the *meher* – or main cropping – season in Tigray Region has passed and the only crops which still can be planted at this late stage are crops such as teff and chickpea whose planting dates may be extended to early September if rains are adequate and continue into October. It is critical, however, to begin mobilizing resources now for the 2001 planting season to ensure that the maximum area is planted so that recovery can begin.

As agricultural production has been severely disrupted among the displaced, food assistance to most IDPs and returnees will be required through November 2001, at which time the next *meher* harvest is expected. To support the return of IDPs to safe areas, food assistance will be a major component of the relief and rehabilitation plan." (UN CTE 22 August 2000, sect. 3.1)

"Most displaced are completely dependent upon relief assistance, since they lack access to their farmland and many have lost their livestock and other productive assets. Although some water, sanitation and health support has been provided, the conditions in the displaced settlements and areas hosting significant numbers of integrated displaced are precarious and in need of improvement. In addition, in order to halt further environmental destruction, alternative sources of fuel (besides wood or charcoal) are needed. Even if a peace settlement is reached during 2000, most people will be unable to return to their homes due to the threat of landmines in and around

their homes and farms, as well as the fact that they have lost their access to their property and assets. They are expected to continue to be dependent upon assistance throughout the year.

[...]

In addition to the loss of agricultural production, many of the displaced have lost their other means of livelihood as well. Many people left their homes with few personal belongings, including livestock. Most are unable to support themselves. Cross-border petty trade, which previously made up a significant portion of the local economy in border areas and included livestock sales as well as sales of vegetables, spices, and *gesho* (used in brewing local drinks), has been completely suspended. This has dramatically limited the ability of those living close to the border to have access to cash. To some extent, the livestock trade has been buoyed by the demand from the military, but in general a decline in purchasing power of the local residents has been observed.

In addition to the stress created by the war environment, most of the displaced come from areas that are chronically drought affected, and many have been dependent upon external assistance for many years. Many host families, who are now at the end of their coping strategies, are relying upon assistance as well due the fact that they have suffered from crop failure this year." (UNCTE 28 January 2000, pp. 29, 30-31)

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

General

Access to land, identity cards and public services goes through local kebele officials (January 2004)

"Anyone who wants health services, tap-water and electricity, or who is applying for a job in the public sector, needs a letter from the kebele to the concerned authorities, showing that they are citizens entitled to the services or employment. The kebele owns houses, which are rented out to residents. Kebele officials issue the identity cards, which Ethiopians require to be able to move around freely and get access to all kinds of services." (Writenet, January 2004)

See also under

IDPs likely to be disadvantaged in local allocation system

ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

General

Traditional Ethiopian social structure is hierarchical (January 2004)

- Ethiopian culture is fundamentally hierarchical and vertically oriented
- It does not lend itself naturally to democratisation
- Democratisation is a long term process which must focus on every level of social and political structures

Traditions of hierarchy and community. “Abyssinian” (i.e. highland Amhara/Tigrayan) political culture emphasizes a strictly hierarchical understanding of a vertically stratified society, where each member's socio-political position and status is clearly defined and respected. Social and political interaction and behaviour are guided by an elaborate set of norms and rules, which establish socio-political order on the basis of a rigid collective system of deference and sanction. This is not to say that all Ethiopian cultures accord with highland norms. However, since control of the Ethiopian state has historically been associated with the Amhara/Tigrayan socio-political tradition, it provides the context for the formation of the dominant trends in the political culture of contemporary Ethiopia.

Customary leaders, family relations, and community organization. Indigenous processes of socialization commonly teach that people are not equal, and assign different roles and differential status to individuals on the basis of class, ethnicity, gender, age and property. This provides cultural validation for an unequal distribution of power and resources that is entrenched and resistant to change. The character of the Amhara household as “less a family unit than ... a vertically ordered set of status-roles”,⁶⁴ means that it continually reaffirms patterns in which men are superior to women, and elders to younger. Moreover, religious or political office gives added authority, whereas members of certain despised groups (craftsmen, potters, tanners, hunters) will always be classified as inferior. As a result, male household heads mediate family affairs, and representatives of the state at each level mediate public affairs, with little likelihood of challenge from their subordinates or plain citizens, in either case. Male power-holders, including religious leaders, define the norms of social conduct that limit the social space of women. In particular, religious leaders, Christians, Muslims and traditional believers, have power to define appropriate social behaviour and conduct, a capacity that, for instance, severely limits the social space of women in Ethiopia. In every village of Orthodox Christian Ethiopia, the highland areas of Amhara and Tigray in particular, several priests and deacons ensure that the norms and rules of the church are followed, a set of precepts that, *inter alia*, puts restrictions on when farmers can work in their fields (in order to uphold the prohibition of physical labour on saints days), and confines women to narrowly defined gender roles. In the Muslim communities of the lowlands, and highland pockets, the Imams and other religious leaders also wield strong influence over appropriate social behaviour. Afar and Somali communities, in particular, have strong and elaborate customary codes, which work in parallel with *sharia* and state law.

All across Ethiopia, **elder age is accorded a high socio-political value in the local community.** *Shimagile* (elder) councils are frequently used to settle local disputes (over land or grazing rights, for instance) by formal and informal means, and it is male elders who are first heard in community meetings. In some Ethiopian communities, as for instance among Borana

Oromo, particular age groups have traditionally defined roles in society in relation to administration, protection, and arbitration.⁶⁵ Although the institution of elders can play a positive role in mediating power relations at the local level, elders are not in themselves representative of the local community as a whole. Not all elders achieve the status of respected *shimagile*: women are excluded, as are also elders from despised occupational minorities. The associational life of peasant communities is focused on the accomplishment of practical tasks. Several common types of local association offer forms of mutual socio-economic support to members, particularly at times of stress or expense, such as weddings or funerals: the almost ubiquitous *senbete*, a Christian religious association to take care of church affairs; *idir*, which is a burial network for mutual support in relation to deaths and funerals; *equub*, a credit and savings collective; and *mahaber*, which binds together smaller groups of villagers to celebrate a common guardian saint, but which also serves as a socio-economic welfare network. The leadership of these organizations is selected by and among the villagers themselves, normally bringing existing peer groups together for practical purposes. As such they tend to be instruments less of social transformation than of reconstitution of the – often iniquitous - *status quo*.

Perceptions of competition, pluralism, and “democracy”. Whatever the formal progress towards democratization, a system of social classification along the lines described continues to be widely reproduced, imbuing new generations with cultural notions that individuals are rightly ranked according to a set of criteria which invest some people with greater worth than others – both in social and political terms – and determine, moreover, that one should always be subservient to any individual regarded as superior. This sustains a hierarchical stratification of society, where one is constrained by a system of collective sanctions to obey the orders from above, be they paternal instructions, or a demand from the *kebele* to attend a political meeting. In terms of the decentralization of access to decision-making, and control over material resources, this situation has profound implications. If relations are to be democratized and transformed, these transformations must take place at every level and in every sphere of social relations and expectations. Similarly, the corollary of this position is that there is a powerful weight of inertia in the pre-existing social and cultural arrangements, which counteracts the attempts of any force (be it ruling or opposition party, or civil society group) committed to their reform. The fundamental dynamics of socio-political development in Ethiopia do not naturally favour democratization, but the perpetuation of hierarchy and authoritarianism at every level of interaction. Many of Ethiopia's rural citizens do not imagine that they should debate and select from alternative means of asserting control over their own lives. Nor do they consider it appropriate that their peers should do so, let alone those they regard as inferior. Rather, the major source of the political agenda remains the central government. In this kind of socio-political context, there is little realistic alternative to the communication of political programmes from the top down, and from centre to periphery, whatever the aspirations or protestations to the contrary of those responsible for their promulgation.

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

Law and Policy

Federal and Regional Land proclamations introduce a system of land registration and certification (Jan 2008)

- Changes of federal law in 1997 and 2005 provide the basis for land registration and certification
- The government decentralizes some of the land policy responsibilities to the regional level
- Based on new law some regions strengthen the role of traditional way of conflict resolution through local mediation

Norwegian Institute of Life Sciences, January 2008; pgs 20, 28-29, 33-35

"The federal land proclamation, Proclamation No. 89/1997 part one, article (2)(3), has been one of the important options of access to land for the landless, land-poor and others, and has been means of earning income by those who rent out land.

The federal Land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005, contains a number of changes compared to the earlier one it replaced. These include Article 6 that gives the basis for the land administration system. It says that the size of rural land shall be surveyed (by cultural or modern surveying equipment) and that any holder of rural land shall be given a holding certificate (indicating the size, land use type and cover, level of fertility and borders, as well as obligations and rights of the holder).

Decentralisation causes diversity in implementation of proclamations across regions

The new government decentralised some of the land policy responsibilities to the regional level and regional land proclamations were developed, following but not undermining the federal land proclamation. This resulted in some diversity across regions in the proclamations, implementation rules, and timing of land registration and certification processes.

[...]

Each regional council is responsible for developing regional land proclamations and additional regulations or implementation rules that will guide the competent organs at regional, district (woreda) and community (kebele) levels. The regions are also responsible for developing competent land administrations and providing the necessary resources for their activity.

[...]

Different approaches to land registration have been chosen in the different regions in Ethiopia. Only Oromiya region introduced the unique parcel identifier (PI) system giving every parcel of land a unique number. The different regions also are not using the same format to record land registration information.

Some regions (SNNPR) formalize the traditional way of solving land disputes

According to the new land proclamation LACs will have a more instrumental role in relation to conflict resolution in SNNPR. Parties who need help to solve their land-related disputes will first have to contact the LAC. The LAC will then assign conflict mediators to help resolve the case. If this does not work out the case will be forwarded to the woreda court. This new law strengthens the role of local land conflict mediators and reduces the LACs and Woreda Land Administrations' responsibility for resolving land disputes.

[...]

Traditionally conflict resolution has been dealt with through local mediation where the parties involved in a dispute sought help from local elders (conflict mediators) if they could not resolve the conflict themselves or they went to the kebele level social court.

[...]

With the new land proclamation of 2007 increased emphasis is put on local mediation as it is realised that local mediation is the best especially in cases like border disputes.

[...]

However, we see from the new land proclamations of 2007 for SNNP and OR that these again emphasize to use local elders for conflict mediation. This may be seen as a formalisation of the traditional practice with local conflict mediation.

[...]

Rahmato (2007) found that more households had more trust in the traditional way of conflict resolution than in conflict resolution through the formal court system. This implies that local conflict mediators also should have a better perspective of what is going on on the ground than court judges in woreda courts may have. Holden et al. (2007c) also found that the woreda court files did not reflect well what was going on on the ground. They found an increase in the number of land-related cases handled by woreda courts in Tigray but explained that primarily by an increase in the capacity of the courts to handle cases while a survey of local conflict mediators and households indicated that the number of land-related disputes had been reduced during and after the land certification. The large majority of cases never reached the woreda courts..."

Compensation for land inadequate and possibly putting at risk those without land certificates (January 2008)

- · Evictions for public purposes are increasing
- · Low probability of compensation and corruption leave the poor at risk of losing their land without any or proper compensation
- · New compensation laws may put those without land certificate in a disadvantage

Norwegian Institute of Life Sciences, January 2008; pp 35-36

"The number of cases related to land takings for public purposes is increasing and particularly so in peri-urban areas.

[...]

The municipalities tend not to compensate or give very little compensation to those who have lost their land and the rural kebelles that have lost land to the municipalities also may lack alternative land to provide to those that lost the land. If land is available and used for compensation, it is often of poorer quality than the land lost. The municipalities also typically lack funds to compensate households with cash.

[...]

One of the consequences of the low probability of compensation and a high probability of losing land if you live in such an area, is that many households resort to illegally selling their land. They may then get a better price than the compensation they are entitled to (but may not get). Those who buy such land typically have connections such that they can make sure they can keep

the land when the municipality takes over the land. The legal security is, however, very weak for the poor in such locations.

[...]

New compensation laws (FDRE, 2005; 2007) have recently been introduced but they have not been implemented yet and they do not solve the liquidity problems of the local authorities. [...] An important element of the regulation is that any person who claims compensation shall produce proof of legitimate possession of the expropriated landholding and ownership of the property entitling compensation. This means that households that have not received land certificates may face problems getting compensation if their land is taken for public purposes. But as we have seen, even people with certificates face a high risk of being evicted without compensation as local governments appear ignorant about acting according to the law..."

Land Proclamations an attempt for enhanced gender equality (January 2008)

- · The change in the tenure system in the past three decades has affected women differently from men
- · There is still a gap between the policy level and the implementation of gender issues
- · At woreda level women possibly in unfavourable position due to their low participation in the land rights registration process
- · Recent land proclamations strengthen women's inheritance rights
- · Women in disfavorable position in land disputes

Norwegian University of Life Sciences, January 2008, pp11,32

"However, recent federal and regional land laws (proclamations) (FRLAUP 1997; 2005; OR 2002; SNNPR 2003) have strengthened inheritance rights in form of use rights of land within the family, giving equal rights to inheritance for sons and daughters. Furthermore, the new laws imply that land should be shared equally between the husband and wife upon divorce and the wife and children should take over the land if the husband/father dies. The new laws also deal with polygamy as polygamy is quite common in Southern Ethiopia and the polygamous wives may live separately and have their own land.

[...]

The committees should have been established by popular vote and required inclusion of at least one female member. [...] The field survey revealed that female participation was low in OR (8% of surveyed LACs had female members) and this may be due to the heavy work- load and the need to stay away from home much of the time during registration.

Social court judges typically make decisions based on traditions rather than according to the law. This may make it difficult for women to get support according to the law. It may also be difficult for women to take their case to the woreda court. Social pressures on women may be very heavy if they take their cases to court and many give up for that reason..."

IIED, November 2005, p.6, 17

The change in the land tenure system in the past three decades has affected women differently from men. First, although the 1974 revolution had empowered women in many different ways, after the land reform women could only access land through their husbands. This policy weakened women's land rights, because the majority of women are married. [...] In contrast to this, the land redistribution of 1991-96, despite its weak implementation, has provided equal access to women. Women's access to and control of land in the region has improved considerably.

[...]

The absence of women's participation in the land rights registration process is an indication of the absence of gender implementation guidelines. Women were not included in the land registration process because the work was perceived as being too difficult for them. More recently, the desk officers have realised the impact of the lack of women's participation and have instructed the communities to include at least two women in the Kebele LUAC. Women's participation in land administration activities is very low, despite their significant role in agricultural production activities. Though gender equity has achieved support and respectability in high-level policy making, as witnessed by the constitution and other both national and regional policies, concerns remain over the persistent gap between government intentions as provided for in legislation or in policy documents and their implementation.

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

Return

Return movements difficult to monitor (2005)

There are estimated to be between 150,000 – 200,000 IDPs in Ethiopia due to conflicts alone. These figures include 62,000 people displaced by the 1998 – 2000 Ethio-Eritrean border war, around 50,000 displaced in Gambella due to inter-ethnic clashes, as well as over 85,000 people forced to leave their homes as the result of Somali-Oromo clashes around Bordode/Mieso areas and Guji-Gabra conflict in Borena zone of Oromia. These estimates do not include displacements due to other causes like drought, floods and economic shocks. As of September 2005, it is not clear at all how many of these displaced have been able to return to their places of former residence and to re-establish their livelihoods. What is clear, is that many of these people remain displaced and many are in need of assistance.

The above estimates should be treated with caution because they are provided by different authorities at federal and regional levels, and by NGOs and international agencies. The Government of Ethiopia does not have a policy on IDPs and no single authority in Government has responsibility for IDPs. Data collected at different levels is often the subject of much debate and dispute without any central mechanism for resolution. In addition, often the estimates are not revised when displaced populations return home or move to other locations.

Gambella: return movements in 2007

- Returns of Jikany and Lou Nuer to Akobo and across the border to south Sudan are ongoing, but encounter problems, not least remaining latent tensions among populations.
- 2007 return movements may not all have been based on a free and informed decision of the displaced
- The 2007 return movements stalled because of bad road conditions during the rainy season, raising fears of disease outbreak

Special Report: *Difficulties of return*

In April 2007, an estimated 25,000 IDPs, including communities recently displaced by the Sudanese Murle incursion and others displaced by earlier conflicts, started returning voluntarily from Itang, Jikawo and Wantu *woredas* to their areas of origin in Tiergol and Akobo *woredas*. They were assisted by the regional government of Gambella, with some financial aid from the federal government.

These large movements, particularly at the onset of the rainy season, raised fears of disease outbreaks along transit routes, after thousands of returnees and their cattle became stranded somewhere along the road, in areas with no infrastructure or services to transport them further. After a request by the regional government, both regional authorities and UN agencies provided humanitarian assistance to the stranded and tried to bring them back to Itang. Some protection response was provided as well, including a response to gender-based violence, but UN agencies remained concerned about the Akobo returnees' security. These concerns centre on the fact that

the Lou Nuer, who had displaced the Jikany Nuer, appear still to be living in the villages the Jikany were supposed to return to. As a result, a significant number of Jikany seem to have crossed the border into Sudan. Unpublished document, 29 May 2007.

There were also concerns that the return movements of the Jikany Nuer, displaced over the past seven years by the Lou Nuer, were not altogether voluntary. Although the lack of access makes a detailed assessment difficult, there are suggestions that the regional government wanted to return the Jikany Nuer to their villages before the population census to be held at the end of May 2007. Unpublished document, 29 May 2007.

Despite this environment of general insecurity, reconciliation efforts between the conflicting parties are still being pursued. As of mid-2007, local authorities and the UN have been successful in bringing representatives of the Lou and Jikany Nuer together for peace talks. Further conflict has so far been avoided and the Lou Nuer have agreed to move back to Sudan after harvesting the crops which they planted in the spring. UN OCHA Ethiopia, Humanitarian Bulletin, 11 June 2007; Email, July 2007. While the reintegration process has continued, the August 2007 floods have limited the humanitarian access to Akobo and delayed the returnees' agricultural activities. According to OCHA Ethiopia, the Akobo returnees were expected to be in need of food aid for at least another 12 months. UN OCHA Ethiopia, Focus on Ethiopia for August 2007, 14 September 2007.

Planning for 5,000 returnees

Aid agencies based in Southern Sudan are preparing to assist the Lou returnees once they cross into Sudan, according to a Juba-based official familiar with the situation, who told IRIN: "Our immediate response is to provide enough assistance for 5,000 people. This includes enough food for three months and non-food items."

Some 700 returnees have been registered after crossing the border since May, but humanitarian sources say the number of Lou Nuer who may return to Sudan could top 20,000. According to OCHA, the ongoing movements of displaced Jikany Nuer from Itang to Akobo and other areas in western Gambella were of concern. "Latent tensions remain," OCHA Ethiopia reported in its humanitarian bulletin of 11 June.

"There's a lack of water, of boreholes," Brethfeld added. Other aid sources said the health situation could deteriorate should diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria escalate. Brethfeld said discussions about the move out of the area by the Lou Nuer had been ongoing for about a year, but the timing was questionable. "They have already begun to cultivate their fields in Tiergol and they have their shelter there," she added.

It might be too late to begin cultivation again when they resettle in Southern Sudan and that materials for building shelter are harder to find at this time of year, Brethfeld explained. The same problems could be faced by the Ethiopian Jikany when they moved into areas vacated by the Lou.

Thousands of drought-IDPs assisted to return in Somali region (2007)

- Some 6,000 IDPs have lived in Fafen camp since 2000
- Reintegration into home communities has been assessed in summer 2005 and carried out later in the year
- by February 2006, the return of 6,000 IDPs from Fafen has been successfully carried out

Special Report, 2007:***Return of drought-displaced people from Fafen and Hartisheik camps***

Fafen camp, a few kilometres off the road from Fafen town, hosted tens of thousands of Somali refugees and, from 2000, thousands of Ethiopians displaced by drought. They also settled in a camp at the nearby town of Hartisheik. Within the framework of the UNDP-sponsored Regional Recovery Programme, and in collaboration with the Somali regional government, the UN country team assessed in 2005 the possibilities of the return and reintegration of some 5,600 drought-displaced people from Hartisheik and Fafen camps to their places of origin in Degehabur zone. By February 2006, this goal was considered to have been met. UNCT, February 2006.

However, some people who were involved in the process felt that the assessment of the final resettlement destination, the sensitisation of the local population in the return areas, and the follow-up to the return process had not been as rigorous as they should have been. The return areas are very dry, and it is not certain that all returnees will be able to rebuild a livelihood. Although it was seen as a pilot of a longer-term assistance-recovery-development programme, the follow-up remained inadequate, partially because of lack of funding, and it was felt that there was a risk of the international community only delivering aid, without collaborating with local authorities to eventually hand over responsibility for local development. Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007. As a result, many of those who had returned to their home place moved again, unable to build a livelihood there. In particular Hartisheik camp has become attractive as a trading centre and as a place offering some work opportunities. Email from UN agency, August 2007.

Most inhabitants of the Hartisheik IDP camp were Ogaden from Fiq and Gode. While some were relying on support from the diaspora or clan ties in and around Hartisheik, many others were struggling to survive. While 20 litres of water cost 1.5 birr (about \$0.16), garbage collection could earn a child an average of ten birr per week, a woman washing clothes in the village could earn four to five birr on a good day. Many children contributed to earning money, instead of going to school. The camp inhabitants said they needed food, water and healthcare. Food distribution was rare and irregular, but, as several people stressed, the relationship with the local population was good.

At the time of the IDMC visit to Fafen camp, in February 2007, only a couple of hundred Ogadeni from Gode remained. They were not included in the UNDP / UN country team resettlement programme because of the poor security situation in Gode. As of September 2007, the repatriation had still not taken place due to fighting in their home area. Interview, Ethiopia, May 2007. There appeared to be mounting tensions between the remaining IDPs and the local population who wanted to claim their land back. Some Sheikash also remained in the camp. The IDPs survive on occasional work, with access to health care mostly unaffordable. While they said they had access to drinking water, food aid only reached them occasionally and unpredictably, with months between deliveries.

OCHA, February 2006:

The United Nations Country Team's Recovery Programme moved the last caseload of IDPs comprising approximately 1,414 individuals (237 Households) from Fafen camp to Degehabur zone in the region. The strategy aims at repatriating and reintegrating 6,000 IDPs from Hartisheik and Fafen camps to their place of origin in Somali Region.

IDPs from other zones in Somali Region still remain in the two camps. The UNCT is now looking at post return activities especially livelihood strategies and interventions to ensure the sustenance reintegration of the IDPs in Degehabur."

OCHA, February 2005

"In Fafen, according to official figures the number of IDPs is 6,000. These IDPs came to Fafen as it was one of the few fertile places in the region where people could survive the 2000 drought.

These people have been more or less dependent on the host community. Recently though, the community of Fafen has been expressing signs of fatigue with the IDPs, who are draining their increasingly depleted resources.

A joint UN Country Team mission is currently working towards the permanent reintegration of camp dwellers to their home communities. The principal partners in the UNDP led joint mission are IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR, OCHA, FAO and WFP. The regional government is also actively supporting the reintegration efforts within the overall framework of the UNDP-sponsored Regional Recovery Programme and the Pastoralist Community Development Programme, funded by the World Bank. The DPPB and Food Security Coordination Bureau (FSCB) have also initiated processes of reintegration by selecting camps in Hartishek town and Fafen Valley, Jijiga zone, as pilot sites for the reintegration exercise. Subsequently, UNDP and IOM selected a 5,600 IDP caseload who will be moved from Hartishek and Fafen camps to Deghabur zone, as most of the IDPs are from the zone (Degahabur, Aware and Degahamadow woredas).

Prior to securing movements the UNCT tried to assess short to medium term needs of the returning population and their home communities. It also tried to link these needs with longer term recovery needs of developing sustainable livelihoods that effectively prevent further displacements. The communities in the return areas are increasingly turning to agro- pastoralism, and as such characterise a dramatic cultural shift amongst these people away from nomadism towards a more sedentary lifestyle. The IDPs do not want to return to pastoralism either. To this end, Ogaden Welfare Development Association (OWDA) and the Government Line Bureaus have conducted assessments in terms of social services and priority actions in the areas of return.

The socio-economic situation of the region is characterised by a low level of development, low income, high level of mortality, low level of nutritional status, limited access to health services, low rate of school participation and lack of clean drinking water. The integration program has been delayed for a number of reasons including lack of funds, severe drought in the areas of return and the recent floods. In addition, the IDPs status is also problematic: it has not been possible to easily determine those who are IDPs, that is, those who voluntarily moved due to drought, from voluntary migrants.

After the April flood waters subsided, the favourable gu rains improved the situation in the region, including areas of return, and using UNDP's allocated US\$ 400,000 and in-kind support from the region and the UNCT, it was agreed to kick start the project. Meanwhile, funds needed to cover additional requirements will be complemented by collaborating partners and a mobilisation of additional resources. However, since distinctions between IDPs and other vulnerable populations are difficult to produce and particularly problematic to apply, it is recommended to first urgently revalidate who are IDPs.

In March 2005 a joint DPPB/Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit and SC-UK survey indicated critical malnutrition rates, 24.2 percent GAM and 5.1 percent SAM in Hartishek and 15.5 percent GAM and 1.2 percent SAM in Fafen camp. Even though the situation in terms of water and medical access has improved, neither camp has received food since last 'Ramadan' eight months ago. "We need food" said Fituma. "We are so weak; we need to get our strength back before moving". Consequently, the team recommends general food rations for both camps urgently, before the reintegration operation begins. The April flood also worsened their situation as the rains damaged their temporary homes and left them in deplorable conditions. Malaria and diarrhoea are serious threats and there is immediate need for distribution of Insecticide-Treated Nets. In addition there is a need to establish sanitation facilities for both camps.

These factors and the fact that they are depending on the host community, who have little to share has made the IDPs desperate to return. Abdi Jebriil Mohammad, spokesman of the Fafen IDPs said "just put me in a truck and let me die in my birth place." According to reports, some

households have already started to migrate from Hartishek, escaping the poor conditions there, to Togwajale in search of labour, since Hartishek is no longer active for trade due to the ban on contraband by the government.

[...]

While there is consensus that the IDPs should return to their original locations, the process should not be a desperate measure. There is need to sensitise the IDPs prior to movement and a revalidation exercise is needed in the camps, as previous experiences show that reintegrated camp dwellers often appear at a later date on food distribution lists in the camps. There is also need to mobilise resources to fill the 78 percent funding gap as the overall operation needs US\$ 3,710,000 to return the first caseload of 5,600 IDPs. As a result serious attention should be paid to the finalisation of the operation plan and necessary preparation should be done before the move of the first cluster of 950 IDPs selected as part of the first case load scheme."

Obstacles to return

Tigray: Return constrained by presence of landmines Tigray (2007)

- The resettlement of populations of both countries displaced by border conflict in Tigray and Afar hampered by mines, lack of services and water rehabilitation
- As many as 100,000 landmines may have been planted during the war in the Badme area (Western Zone of Tigray)
- Most of casualties are children herding cattle

Special Report:

In Tigray region and, to a somewhat lesser degree, in Afar region, insecurity and landmines in agrarian areas are the main concerns which prevent the remaining IDPs from returning home and becoming self-sufficient there. Landmines currently put at risk over 400,000 people living in the area bordering Eritrea, where most of the remaining two million mines from the 1998-2000 war were laid. Mines killed almost 600 people and wounded over 700 between 2001 and 2004, most of them in Tigray and Afar regions, and dozens of accidents are still reported each year. The government de-mining unit has continued to make some progress in surveying and de-mining of border areas, although UNMEE officials reported that new landmines were planted on both sides of the border with Eritrea during 2006. UNMEE itself has continued its de-mining efforts.

SG Report, 7 March 2005, para.17, 19

"Landmines and unexploded ordnance continue to constitute a major threat in the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas, hindering the resettlement of the population of both countries. During the period from December 2004 through February 2005, there were five reports of incidents concerning mines and/or unexploded ordnance in the Temporary Security Zone, three in Sector Centre and two in Sector West, in which three people were killed and 11 injured.

The Mine Risk Education field teams, established by the Mine Action Coordination Centre, continued to focus their outreach activities on populations in both Sectors, especially those living in areas suspected to be dangerous. During the reporting period, the teams provided mine-risk education, assistance and advice to almost 4,000 people."

UN November 2001, p. 4

Ethiopia is a country suffering a high degree of contamination from landmines and other ordnance left over from a sequence of conflicts dating back to the Italian occupation of the mid-1930s. Contamination in the former combat zones of the more recent war between Ethiopia and Eritrea

pose a threat to IDPs returning home and to the deployment of UN peacekeepers. During the recent conflict with Eritrea, it is thought that as many as 100,000 landmines may have been planted in the Western Zone of Tigray alone.

Resettlement programmes

Government resettlement plans for 2006 in Amhara (February 2006)

- Many of the resettled people in Amhara did not stay at the resettlement site
- The regional Food Security Programme Coordination and Disaster Response Office prefers improvement of existing resettlement sites in 2006 to resettling new families

"An OCHA team together with government partners has assessed the humanitarian situation in Amhara Region from 31 January to 15 February 2006. The mission's main objective was to assess the humanitarian situation in drought and landslide affected areas and to follow up on progress made by the government and other partners following the recommendations of the joint UN mission to west Amhara resettlement sites in November 2005. The team reported that almost half of the settlers have not remained in the resettlement sites. So far the government has no controlling mechanism in place to screen people but has acknowledged the problem. Meanwhile, the regional Food Security Programme Coordination and Disaster Response Office (FSPCDPO) has shown an interest to form a regional resettlement forum which could involve the wider humanitarian agencies (UN, donors, NGOs, etc) for constructive discussion and information exchange that enables agencies to help avert possible humanitarian crises in the future.

Preparation for 2006 resettlement is ongoing in host areas. Activities underway include: consultations with the hosting community, road construction, transporting food and household items, surveying works to delineate settlers housing and farm sites, water point development, establishing satellite health posts, etc. The regional council has decided to resettle 50,000 households but the RFSPCDO says the number could reduce and the main focus in 2006 will be on consolidating works in old settlement sites." (OCHA, February 2006)

A number of studies show the successes and failures of resettlement programmes which were often carried out without proper preparation. Instead of providing a relief from malnutrition and insufficient harvests, poorly planned resettlement can lead to increased malnutrition (See in sources: Forum for Social Studies)

Government's resettlement programme gives mixed results (December 2004)

- Concerns raised over lack of food, health, water, shelter, agriculture and resources capacity of regional and local authority to manage the programme
- High level of malnutrition and access problems to the resettlement sites are reported
- Until 2006 the Government plans to resettle approximately 2.2 million people in response to food insecurity
- Experts say resettlement programmes could lead to 'colossal' deforestation and other environmental damage if not properly administered
- A joint resettlement working group assessment found that sufficient planning, preparation and capacity is needed to avoid situations of 'serious' concern

- Death rates are high at a resettlement site in the Amhara region in the north

“The government’s five year resettlement programme has continued during the reporting period, with mixed results. Concerns continue over food, health, water, shelter, agriculture and the resource capacity of regional and local authorities to manage the programme. Access to the sites and high levels of malnutrition, especially in Oromiya have been reported. As a result, there have been calls for increased assistance, including the provision of non-food items, especially oral rehydration salts and medicines. In addition, it has been recommended that a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation be established in order to streamline the programme.

In June, pre-positioning of food in the lead-up to the rainy season (mid-June-September) was undertaken by WFP in Oromiya (where 262,000 have been resettled) and other sites. Regional authorities procured cereals. The DPPC has continued to conduct assessments of humanitarian needs in these sites during the reporting period to identify needs and intervene as appropriate. A visit to the Illubabor resettlement sites in mid-July revealed an improvement in the condition of resettled population and access to the main resettlement sites. However, the mission confirmed that 49 smaller sites continued to experience access problems due to poor roads.

A joint Government and UN assessment of resettlement sites in Oromiya in November revealed continuing problems, with reported food shortages arising out of crop failure, cases of diarrhoea and high malnutrition rates and in some sites, a three-month lag in the delivery of supplementary food because of lack of access. The main Meher rainy season rendered many of the resettlement sites inaccessible. OCHA is continuing to work with the Oromiya Regional Authorities to develop a plan of action for assistance requirements in the coming months.” (UN OCHA, December 2004, p.20)

“The massive resettlement scheme - under which 2.2 million people will be moved over a three-year period - has drawn criticism from the international community. But the government says the US \$220-million programme, which is a central plank of its effort to slash dependency on foreign aid, has already achieved success” (IRIN, 12 January 2004)

“The resettlement programme is part of the government’s \$3.2-billion rescue package aimed at reversing years of dependency in the country. With funding from the international community, the government is trying to slash food dependency for 15 million people in the country.” (IRIN, 8 June 2004)

“However, the UN’s Emergency Unit for Ethiopia (EUE) has commented that whereas resettlement can bring benefits it must be properly managed. It warned at a recent conference on resettlement that the project could lead to “colossal deforestation” and other environmental damage if not properly administered.

Meanwhile, a study by the EUE on resettlement in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State has also warned of dangers of malaria in the camps.

Médecins Sans Frontières - Holland (MSF-H) has also raised concerns. It criticised one resettlement programme in the south where 15,000 people were moved with “inadequate planning and implementation”.

It also expressed alarm over the numbers of deaths at a resettlement camp in the Amhara region in the north, where a nutritional survey it carried out in late October had shown that at least 69 people had died there over the last six months.” (IRIN, 12 January 2004)

“(a) The UN Country Team in Ethiopia has been participating in a resettlement working group, together with donors and the World Bank, set up to monitor current humanitarian conditions at the

sites of the government voluntary resettlement programme in various parts of the country. Three teams from the working group have returned from visits to resettlement areas in Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya regions. Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region was separately assessed. [...]

(b) While regional governments are currently responsible for covering food needs in resettlement areas, some areas may need additional support, especially with fortified blended food, until regional governments have effective procedures in place for procurement and timely delivery of food. There is some urgency for food to be pre-positioned in the resettlement areas, many of which are in remote locations, ahead of the long rainy season of July-September. [...]

(d) A key finding of the assessment by the joint resettlement working group teams is that in areas where there has been adherence to the principles and guidelines set by the government, i.e. sufficient planning, preparation and capacity, this has resulted in a better resettlement programme.

(e) However, a recent WFP rapid nutritional assessment, conducted with the Oromiya regional Government's Emergency Nutritional Coordination Unit (ENCU) and the district health office, found worrying levels of malnutrition among 205 surveyed children in the Chawaka resettlement site in Illubabor zone of Oromiya region. The preliminary results of the resettlement working group team show similar findings in other parts of the Chawaka site." (WFP, 2 April 2004)

"Resettlement is not a new phenomenon in Ethiopia. The former military regime, which was overthrown in 1991, resettled 600,000 people during its 17-year rule. About 33,000 people are believed to have died during the then forcible translocation. But it is the scale and size of the current programme that has caused concern." (IRIN, 8 June 2004)

"The international medical relief organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has discovered very high rates of mortality and malnutrition among the settler population in Tach Armachaho, situated in the Amhara region of Ethiopia.

A nutritional survey carried out by MSF in late October has revealed that, in the remote area of Abrihigira, at least 69 people have died over the last 6 months. Thirty-two of these were children under the age of five. This equates to an under-five mortality rate of 5.5 per 10,000 per day - a catastrophe against any benchmark indicator. [...]

Children aged one to three years have been affected primarily - which increases the likelihood that the poor nutritional status is disease related.

MSF has been working in Tach Armachaho for the past year treating Kala Azar, a little known disease that is endemic in this area. An initial analysis in Abdurafi and Abrihigira shows that the trigger for the current crisis is likely to have been the lack of access by road to these areas in combination with a lack of monitoring by the Ethiopian government for a relatively small population of 3,000 settlers the majority of which are adults. [...]

The lack of year round access to the area [Tach Armachacho], especially in the rainy season, has exacerbated an already dire situation. Poor access to drinking water due to water pumps breaking down and not being fixed has forced the population to rely on river water, resulting in high rates of diarrhea. The inaccessibility of the area has caused ruptures in the drug supply, no monitoring and reporting of morbidity or mortality data, and a total inability of the health services to refer and treat emergency cases." (MSF, 1 December 2003)

Badly planned resettlements in severely drought-affected Oromiya (June 2003)

- Ethiopian people from the Hararghe province are being moved by authorities for the third time
- 850 households resettled in Sera have nothing: insufficient shelter, water, food and no health and other facilities
- Nothing was prepared for the resettlement and people are worst off than where they came from

“For the third time, within a short period of time, a group of Ethiopians from the Hararghe province will be moved by the authorities. It concerns 850 families which belong to a larger group that moved from Hararghe to a former army base near Bale - and from there were moved by the authorities to a location near Biddre, both in the Oromiya district.

Because of the bad preparation of the resettlement by the authorities, the living conditions for the displaced in Biddre are dire; there is insufficient shelter, a limited water supply, a lack of health care and insufficient food distribution.

Heavy rains have worsened the health and access situation, and respiratory infections and diarrhoea are common. Also at the new location (Sera) nothing was prepared for the 850 families, and the water supply is even worse than in Biddre. The reason for the move is so that people can start planting in time for the next harvest.” (MSF, 3 June 2003)

To hear the view of the chairman of 15'000 families resettled in the Oromiya savannah without adequate land, services, water, seeds and food see: 'Ethiopia: Interview with Amin Alishu, the head of resettled families' (IRIN, 6 May 2003) [[External Link](#)]

For further information about resettlement in Oromiya: 'MSF alarmed at dramatic situation at Ethiopia resettlement site' (MSF, 12 May 2003) [[External Link](#)]

Also see 'Ethiopia: Feature - Pitfalls of resettlement' (IRIN 29 April 2003) [[External Link](#)]

Resettlement of drought affected people in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (July 2003)

- 100,000 heads of household will be moved from eastern zone of SNNPR to its western zone
- At the first stage only household heads are resettled to prepare the sites for the whole family and resettled families can keep their lands in areas of origin for three years
- Some critical of the schemes request land re-distributions in their areas of origin instead of being sent away
- Hosts request that problem of land shortage for next generations is sorted as precondition to resettlement

“It is reported that the regional government planned to resettle a total of 100,000 heads of households within three years (2003-2005), out of which 20,000 will be resettled this year. The resettlers come predominantly from eastern zones and special woredas of the region where population pressure is greatest and food insecurity is most chronic, e.g. Sidama, Gedeo, Wolaita, Kambata & Tambaro, and Hadiyya Zones as well as Konso and Derashe Special Woredas (see map below). These selected resettlers will be mainly hosted in the zones and special woredas in

the western parts of the region, considered as possessing ample space with productive land such as Sheka, Kefa, Bench-Maji, and Dawuro Zones as well as Basketo and Konta Special Woredas [...].

[...]

Most available spaces meant for resettlement in the receiving areas are located at remote and marginal lowland areas infested with malaria and trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness).

[...]

In principle, the regional government intends to implement 'low scale integrated resettlement schemes', providing only basic relief support (until they produce their first harvest) and social services such as health, education, potable water, credit, feeder roads, and grain mills. The approach adopted by the regional state to move only the heads of households initially and then other family members will follow after having established basic needs in the receiving area. The resettlers are entitled to maintain their land usufruct right in the home areas for three consecutive years. Except selling or mortgaging, they can either sharecrop or cultivate the land by using either part of the family labour left behind or making institutional arrangements through social networks.

[...]

Criterion for selection:

Primarily, resettlers are from chronically food insecure areas that depend on regular relief support. Ideally, those targeted are the landless, food insecure, healthy, young adults, and peasant farmers capable of producing enough (if possible surplus) by enduring the inevitable initial hardships in the new sites. Resettlement is restricted only to smallholder farmers at productive age.

[...]

Views of settlers:

Resettlers rather preferred to resettle in nearby locations than a long distance from their places of origin. Many volunteered to resettle within their kebele as a first priority. If this is not possible, their preference is progressively to resettle within the respective woreda or zone. However, the choice for resettlement outside one's zone and special woreda is opted as a last resort.

[...]

Some reportedly argued against the resettlement scheme itself. Instead, they requested land redistribution by reducing from those who possess plenty rather than sending them away on the pretext of lack of land, which induced them to opt for "voluntary" resettlement. They are rather sceptical about the potential for many successes. Some seem psychologically not ready to leave their origins, which they consider 'an area where one's umbilical cord is buried'. Besides, the excessive failure of past resettlements in the country has had an adverse influence on the new recruits.

[...]

Perception of hosts:

The host communities are very keen and sensitive about the adverse effects of the scheme on their local natural resources, particularly forest upon which their livelihood is embedded. They seem rather suspicious of the planned scheme and of the newcomers and have insisted on setting a precondition to accept resettlers so long as the latter do not destroy their forest resources. They demand closer consultations and understanding between the sending and receiving areas. Orientation about the hosts' traditional natural resource management practices should be provided to the resettlers before relocating them.

Some hosts are sceptical and hesitant, stating that any available space in their area is meant for their own next generation. The host communities want to set preconditions to address the land shortage problems their own children will have to face and only then would they welcome resettlers. In other words, they are willing to accept the newcomers from disaster prone areas so long as their internal land holding problems are solved simultaneously.

In the mean time, the hosts expect the resettlers to be hardworking farmers who can contribute to the improvement of the new setting. They warned the authorities to be careful not to bring

resettlers who may drag-in social problems. In receiving areas such as Sheka, the local people leave their livestock in the jungle and fetch them only when needed. Their beehives stay in the forest from where they also collect wild coffee and spices. Hence, host communities emphasized that introduction of any form of social misbehaviours with the arrival of resettlers might flare-up tensions as a consequence. They meanwhile expect resettlers to be sensitive to the local people's socio-economic and cultural set-ups. Instead of resettlers who attempt to make profit at the expense of the local communities, the hosts preferred to accommodate smallholder subsistence farmers.

The hosts overwhelmingly expect the government to provide infrastructure and social services (such as rural roads, health services /human & livestock/, water points, schools, grain mills, inputs, etc.) facilities alongside the arrival of resettlers. If expectations are not met in terms of basic infrastructure and social service provision, disillusionment and negative attitudes of hosts may be more destructive than constructive to the success of resettlement." (OCHA, 3 July 2003)

75,000 people including war-displaced to be resettled in Humera in Tigray (April 2003)

- 75,000 people to be moved from central to western Tigray by September 2003 despite no adequate water supply, shelter materials, health services and food shortages
- Despite lack of preparation in areas of resettlement people were mobilized in February 2003
- Zonal officials in April 2003 reported continued lack of shelter-materials, inadequate water supply and health services, and food shortages
- As of April, food aid promised until resettled people can harvest their first crops had still not been delivered
- Land in areas of origin will be kept for two years and in the first stage, only heads of households will be resettled to prepare for permanent living

"Some 75,000 people are expected to be moved from central Tigray to western areas of the region within the next five months. Several thousand started moving in late February.

[...]

"Nevertheless zonal officials reported gaps in the present resettlement programme such as lack of roof thatching materials for new houses, inadequate water supply and health posts, and shortage of food that should be supplied to the new settlers until they bring in their own first harvest," it said." (IRIN, 7 April 2003)

"Tigray region suffered from prolonged civil war and the Ethio-Eritrea border conflict being the most recent conflict that inflicted heavy social, economic and material damages to the country as a whole. Furthermore, like most parts of the country, the region has been hit by recurrent droughts and has been suffering and still is from the 2000 and 2002 droughts.

[...]

As a matter of fact, large areas and population segments of Tigray Region have been under constant humanitarian assistance due to food insecurity both chronic and acute for the last 12 years.

[...]

Voluntary resettlement programme underway in Humera

According to the Rural Resettlement Programme Desk Officer for Tigray Region, the Zonal Administrator of West Tigray Zone and the Kefta Humera Woreda council in Humera, preparations are well underway at all levels to resettle 15,000 households (about 75,000 persons) this year until September 2003. The major objectives of current resettlement initiatives are mainly to reduce environmental degradation in areas of origin by transferring drought-affected people to more fertile and less populated areas for increased food production and subsistence farming.

People affected by the Ethio-Eritrea border conflict that are said to have shown interest for resettlement may also be included for resettlement. One of the potential areas selected for resettlement is the Humera district of West Tigray Zone.

[...]

Most of the people will be moved from Central Tigray Zone and will settle along the Tekeze River and the Shiraro-Humera road that is currently under construction and planned to be finished in June. Nevertheless, zonal officials reported gaps in the present resettlement programme such as lacking roof thatching materials for new houses, inadequate water supply and health posts, and shortage of food that should be supplied to the new settlers until they will bring in their own first harvest. Nevertheless, resources were not confirmed from any source so far. One option suggested by the zonal administrator was contributions from the local people. Despite these gaps, reportedly, mobilization of the people started end of February 2003. Certainly, it is unlikely that enough preparation is made to make the start of the resettlement smooth enough to begin with. The resettlement is to be conducted in phases and the first phase started at the end of February when 5,000 households (only heads of households will move initially) will be moved voluntarily to the new sites. The officials reported that the settlers would be allocated 2 hectares of land per household, which they have to clear and prepare with their own labour by using farm implements to be provided by the regional government. The settlers are expected to construct their own houses after their arrivals, but they will be provided seeds and an ox on credit. Officials at all levels are hoping that the resettlement programme will become successful this time with a different voluntary approach. The land holding of settled families in areas of origin will remain unchanged for at least two years to give the settlers the opportunity to return or to leave part of their family behind while preparing the resettlement farm for a permanent living." (UNDP EUE, 2 April 2003, pp. 1, 3,4)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Humanitarian access limited by conflict, government restrictions (October 2008)

- Government restricts humanitarian assistance in Somali region
- Donors raise concerns with the government on problems of humanitarian access

IRIN, 17 September 2008

"The Ethiopian [government] continues to severely restrict humanitarian assistance to our people while using what little food aid that gets through as a political weapon aimed at collectively our villagers and nomads," the rebels said on 15 September.

Last year, Human Rights Watch said both the government and rebels were responsible for atrocities in the remote region. "There are no clean hands among the hostile parties in the Ogaden conflict," it said, adding that its researchers had documented serious abuses of civilians, including summary executions by the ONLF... "

Telegraph, 17 October 2008

[...] This presents the international community with its greatest dilemma. Aid agencies have only recently been granted permission to deliver food to the bleak desert region. Convoys must still be accompanied by the army, which dictates the safety considerations that allow a delivery to go ahead. The movement of aid workers is severely restricted.

Despite the burgeoning presence of relief agencies in Kebri Dehar, famine is not allowed to show its human face. Mr Meles says he cannot separate the food crisis from the struggle to crush the ONLF.

"I don't believe that it's an effective strategy by the government of Ethiopia to starve the people in that area when we are trying to defeat an armed struggle," he told Mr Alexander. "My military are under clear instructions to facilitate the distribution of food."

Eager to paint himself as a regional leader, Mr Meles has viewed Ethiopia's latest drought and famine as a return to the humiliations of the 1980s when its name was a byword for suffering. Only this week, the government acknowledged that 6.4 million people were threatened with starvation. Oxfam warned that the figure could be higher..."

BBC, 19 September 2008

"Emergency food aid is not getting out fast enough to the people who need it in Ethiopia's troubled Somali region, a top US official says.

Michael Hess, of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), says only 41% of the food allocated for July has reached its intended recipients.

The US supplies nearly all of the aid, and Mr Hess says such distribution is not good enough.

Ethnic Somali rebels have been fighting an insurgency in the region for years.

In a drought like this one, Ethiopia depends heavily on food aid - and that means that it depends on the generosity of the US.

As the man in charge of this aid, Mr Hess has been to see for himself how the system is working.

Big changes expected

Ethiopia's Somali region does have particular problems.

An armed rebellion and an army counter-insurgency operation have been going on for more than a year across the centre of the region.

Even so Mr Hess, who is a former military man himself, was clearly not very impressed.

"[In] the Somali region, the food is not getting out fast enough," he said.

"We estimate that 41% of the July distribution has reached the population. There is a lot of reasons for that.

"Certainly there was some concerns over access, it is a difficult area as you all know, the Somali region.

"But we were concerned primarily about making sure that it got out to the end user, the beneficiaries. And 41% is not enough..."

Reuters, 27 February 2008

[...] The need for aid workers in Ogaden is great. Food and water are in short supply and medical supplies in the Somali area ran out long ago. The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights still has no access to investigate allegations, and the World Food Programme's food aid distributions have been hampered by conflict in the area.

"You always come down on the same side," the director of one organisation operating in the region said to the Monitor. "It's better to keep yourself operational and to do something."

Some frustrated aid workers are beginning to speak out discreetly, but it's dangerous. International staff run the risk of being expelled or seeing their operations closed down, but the stakes are even higher for local staff. Many said they didn't want to say anything to the Monitor for fear they might be imprisoned or killed..."

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

General

UN and Regional Health bureaus deal with health problems (August 2009)

- UN, INGOs and Regional Health Bureaus responding to health problems

OCHA, 10 August 2009

[...] WHO reports that the national average case fatality rate (CFR) for acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) continues to be above international threshold, i.e. 1.1 per cent, indicating the need for improved case management and prevention activities. The situation is very serious in Somali Region, where the CFR is above 2 per cent. The Somali Regional Health Bureau, UNICEF, Oxfam-GB, MSF-B and Hararghe Catholic Secretariat are currently responding to the AWD outbreak in Shinlie zone. Samaritan's Purse, IRC and IMC are also finalizing preparations to start interventions in response to a request by the region. The regional CFRs in Addis Ababa, Oromiya, Harari and SNNPR in the past four weeks has been encouraging as they have remained below the WHO recommended standard of 1 per cent. WHO continues to provide formative supervision in the AWD affected woredas to further advance the case management. Meanwhile, major risk factors including poor water and sanitation facilities and poor hygiene practices remain unaddressed, contributing for the continued spread of the disease. According to official reports from the Public Health Emergency Management/Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (PHEM/EHNRI), a total of 736 additional cases of AWD and eight deaths have been reported from 22 woredas in Afar, Somali, Oromiya, Amhara and SNNPR from 20 to 26 July 2009.

The meningitis outbreak remains contained with no new cases reported during the week, according to official reports from EHNRI. A team comprising of the federal, regional and WHO assisted in the vaccination of 19,393 people between the ages of 5 and 30 years in the affected communities in Amhara Region. The joint team also conducted epidemiological investigation with active case search and provided community awareness support on prevention and control activities..."

UN provides \$6 million to alleviate suffering (July 2009)

- UN provides \$6 million from CERF towards health and WASH

IRIN, 27 July 2009

"Ethiopia is facing challenges in providing food, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, emergency shelter, agriculture and livelihoods, according to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Fidele Sarassoro.

To counter these challenges, the UN has allocated US\$6 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

"I have directed the humanitarian community jointly to agree on priority areas in which this new money can immediately be put to use," Sarassoro said.

At the same time, the federal Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) has announced that rising malnutrition and food insecurity were a growing concern and likely to lead to 6.2 million Ethiopians relying on food aid, out of a population of approximately 77 million.

At present, 4.9 million people in the country benefit from relief food.

According to the DRMFSS, the country has a shortfall of 176,000T of food. However, this is likely to increase to 390,000T in the months up to December 2009.

"Because of the existing shortfall, only three of the six planned rounds of food allocations have been distributed to date," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said in a statement on 20 July.

Initial reports show that the UN CERF funding should prioritize five sectors in order to address growing malnutrition and food security, outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and refugee needs.

Reports indicate that four out of five regions have recorded increasing malnutrition. A poor Belg (long rains) season, from mid-February to mid-May, contributed to food insecurity..."

Government agency helps in food distribution (August 2009)

- Government completes food distribution in areas of vulnerability

OCHA, 10 August 2009

[...] As of 29 July, Disaster Risk Management Food Security Sector (DRMFSS) completed the allocation of a total of 25,368 MT food commodities for distribution to approximately 1.5 million beneficiaries in Afar, Tigray, Beneshangul-Gumuz, Gambella Amhara, SNNP, Oromiya (including the Arsi and West Hararghe zones addressed by Joint Emergency Operation Programme, (JEOP), and Somali regions (only for Afder and Liben zones). Allocation of the fourth round relief food for beneficiaries (fifth round for Somali Region) has been completed. However, due to resource shortfalls, only 10 kg of cereals (decreased from 15 kg normally) will be distributed, with full rations for the other food commodities in WFP/DRMFSS covered areas. Between August and December 2009, WFP is expecting the arrival of 251,878 MT of food, of which 143,000 MT will be used for loan repayments to the Ethiopian Food Security Reserve Administration (EFSRA), leaving a balance of about 109,000 MT available for all operations, including relief. Meanwhile, EFSRA free stocks stand at 84,239 MT of food, and total outstanding repayments to the Administration amounts to 320,761 MT. As of mid-June, DRMFSS in-country free stock stands at 17,088 MT, including 11,667 MT for productive safety net programme and 5,421 MT for relief."

National response (Special Report 2007)

Special Report: National response

As noted above, the Ethiopian government does not officially recognise conflict-induced displacement, but has included in the 2007 Humanitarian appeal "populations affected by ...localised conflicts". It recognises, for example, the Tigray and the 2007 Gambella conflict-induced displacements.

Nevertheless, in the absence of a coherent national IDP policy, the national and international responses to internal conflict-induced displacement remain rather unpredictable. Many small-scale conflict situations are unrecognised, and not all conflict-displaced populations have received assistance and protection, or can rely on the assistance being consistent.

The DPPA is the main government institution responsible for humanitarian response to the emergency needs of people displaced by conflict and natural disasters, in collaboration with relevant ministries. It does not explicitly deal with IDP protection or policy issues. Its early-warning system, designed to respond to disaster-induced displacement, does not include conflict-induced displacement. IDPs are thus only included in the government response if they fall within a specific emergency response. In those cases, the DPPA works in close cooperation with regional governments, local NGOs and IDP committees, international and UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, ICRC and the World Food Programme, and international NGOs. It is reported that the government is developing a policy to deal with inter-ethnic tension in the country, which may have some effect on the pattern of response to conflict-induced displacement.

Emergency response in displacement situations

Ethiopia's disaster response has been developed mainly in response to the drought-induced famines to which the country is regularly exposed. It therefore follows a slow-onset crisis response pattern, which is in many ways inadequate for sudden-onset disaster response.

In the case of an emergency, the government's first step is to have DPPA carry out an assessment. Upon receiving the results, the government may agree to provide an emergency response. The regional government can also request assistance, which must then be endorsed by the DPPA.

In reaction, particularly, to the 2006 nationwide flood disaster, modalities for quick-onset emergency response were being developed in the course of 2007. The process was led by the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. Until 2006, a general, country-wide assessment at the end of each year determined the emergency needs and resource allocation for the following year. As of 2007, the needs for food aid will be determined in more detailed, area-specific assessments. Furthermore, the UN and DPPA were at this point in discussion over the need for standard assessment and response procedures for all partners. Email correspondence, July 2007. These developments can be significant for situations of conflict-induced displacement where humanitarian aid and protection must be delivered quickly.

Traditional reconciliation mechanisms

Successful peace and reconciliation negotiations are crucial to finding solutions to conflict-induced displacement. The peoples of Ethiopia have been involved in conflicts for thousands of years and have developed traditional reconciliation procedures. Today, those traditional reconciliation mechanisms should lie at the heart of ongoing peace-building and recovery efforts. In a number of situations, reconciliation between conflicting parties has been successful in the absence of external diplomacy. The example of the Oromo and Somali groups resuming trade relations following the border referendum is a case in point. In a number of other peace building activities, such as in Gambella in 2007, the UN, NGOs and local authorities have been engaged as mediators.

Their impact, however, and the possibilities of traditional reconciliation generally remain limited because some of the main factors creating inequality and triggering conflict are rooted in the current justice and governance system, particularly affecting issues of land policy and land distribution. This situation keeps alive the possibility of further conflicts and displacement.

Civil society and IDP organisations

National civil society groups and NGOs are important actors in community work. Most civil society groups are organised in membership associations, typically for women or youth work. They do not, however, have a structural role in relief work, and apparently none work specifically with IDPs. Most IDP groups are organised locally, and in every organised settlement, there are IDP committees interacting with local authorities.

Ethiopian civil society organisations have faced problems with the government when engaging in human rights advocacy, in particular where they have expressed criticism of government policies or actions. The government appeared to be developing a national NGO law in the course of 2007. The law's impact on civil society activities is as yet unclear. A potential champion of Ethiopia's IDPs might be the Ethiopian Human Rights Committee (EHRCO), an independent NGO which monitors human rights issues from its head quarters in Addis Ababa and some 15 small offices countrywide. However the organisation lacks the resources needed for the huge task encompassed within its remit. International funding to such organisations would be beneficial, although limitations to the freedom of expression would remain as an obstacle to active national advocacy on behalf of IDPs.

National response is inconsistent and ad hoc (February 2006)

At the national level, the Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency ([DPPA, formerly DPPC with 'C' for Commission](#)) is the main government actor responsible for the emergency needs of IDPs, in collaboration with relevant ministries such as Health, Agriculture and Water Resources. There is however no coordination mechanism and no government policy dedicated particularly to IDPs and issues related to them. The early-warning system maintained by the government to allow early response to drought-induced displacement does not cover conflict-induced displacement. The DPPA mandate only includes assistance and not protection, return, resettlement or finding durable solutions. IDP issues are dealt with on an ad hoc basis unless it seems politically expedient to deal with them officially.

Thus, the main obstacle to a more systematic and comprehensive national response to IDP needs is the absence of a government institution clearly mandated to coordinate development and reintegration assistance to IDPs. The scope of IDPs programmes would include "root causes of displacement and a definition of the scope of prevention and protection, as these are broad terms which are difficult to quantify." (OCHA, 24 May 2004)

DPPA works in close cooperation with national and international NGOs, the UN agencies and regional authorities. In collaboration with the DPPA, regional governments, local NGOs and IDP committees, ICRC, [UNICEF](#), [WFP](#) and international NGOs such as Care International, Save the Children provide protection and assistance to IDPs in Ethiopia. For instance, the DPPA in collaboration with the WFP have been assisting people internally displaced by the Ethiopian-Eritrean border conflict in the Tigray region since 1999. As of 2006, all Tigrayans should fall under the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which provides food or services for work. So far, it could not be verified if the PSNP reaches all of the estimated 62,000 remaining IDPs in Tigray.

In other areas, the government is reluctant to give the attention required to address IDP protection needs. Following the displacements of recent past months in disputed lands between Oromiya and Somali regions, the DPPA, the UN, USAID and other NGOs carried out missions to assess IDPs humanitarian situation in the areas affected of the displaced. However it is not yet clear how the response has been organised in order to address the root cause of displacement

and to find durable solutions to IDP needs. It is known that at least until May 2005, Care International will be providing food and non-food assistance to some 2,500 newly displaced in Mieso in Oromiya (OCHA, 28 March 2005).

There are serious gaps in the response to the needs of IDPs in Somali region as illustrated by the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in IDP camps. The provision of assistance to IDPs in the region has been erratic and irregular. Since January 2005, the Ogaden Welfare and Development Association mandated for food distribution in IDPs camps has exhausted its stocks (OCHA, 4 February). UNICEF which has been assisting IDPs in the country for years is planning to start nutritional activities in the camps. The [ICRC](#) have provided aid that will guaranty food security for the next two months to 1,200 displaced families and 800 families who have been hosting the displaced in Guradamole in the Somali region (ICRC, 19 April 2005). Conversely, there are other displaced people with little option to return home in the Somali region who have been taken off the assistance beneficiary lists after 5 years and the government is reluctant to continue to deal with them as IDPs (OCHA, 18 April 2005).

In the Gambella region since the violence which exploded in December 2003 and which forced thousands of people to flee their homes, the UN carried out the first assessment mission in October 2004. Recently, the government announced that six soldiers will be tried for their role in the massacre which took place in Gambella region. As the security situation is tense, many areas of displacement in the region remain inaccessible and persons affected lack assistance (UN CT, 20 April 2005; IRIN, 18 March 2005). Some 3,000 newly displaced receive food aid from the government (OCHA, February 2006)

In addition to coordination, the general funding crisis, a common concern to humanitarian actors in the country, is also one of the main obstacles to planned systematic and comprehensive response to IDP needs in Ethiopia (WFP, 12 April 2005).

International response (Special report 2007)

Special Report: International response

The international response to IDPs is closely tied to the national response, in that international organisations, including UN agencies and NGOs, generally only operate in emergency situations that have been recognised and assessed by the government. ICRC is the exception, as it works independently of the government.

UN agencies and the humanitarian cluster approach

The UN response to conflict-induced internal displacement in Ethiopia is not provided by a single lead agency. The Ethiopia UN Country Team is led by a Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) supported by UN-OCHA, which ensures coordination between UN agencies and NGOs, and which is also responsible for implementing the humanitarian cluster approach. UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) are particularly active in emergency relief, with UNICEF focusing on child nutrition, health and education and WFP providing food aid in collaboration with DPPA. The World Health Organization has a large health programme, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization supports animal health and agricultural programmes. Unforeseen emergencies are often covered by emergency funds such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF), to fill gaps between pledge and response. Both funds supported IDP programmes in 2006. CERF finances a number of NGO programmes.

In May 2007, the UN's humanitarian cluster approach, which aims to improve the emergency response in collaboration with the government, was formally launched after more than a year of discussion and consensus-building. While the Ethiopian government has endorsed the cluster approach in principle, it had not, as of September 2007, designated a lead department for the protection cluster or formally agreed to the terms of reference proposed for the cluster.

The protection cluster includes protection of populations displaced by conflict. It also aims to support the government in ongoing protection work, for example on behalf of refugees and people with HIV/AIDS. While UNHCR has committed to facilitating the protection cluster working group, it can only do so with the cooperation of the government, UNICEF, OHCHR, UN-OCHA and other partners of the humanitarian country team. The challenges are broader than the mandate and capacity of any single organisation, and the protection needs of people will be most effectively met by means of responsive and flexible government and inter-agency approaches, which are adapted to the realities on the ground. This is particularly important in the fields of new displacement and sexual and gender-based violence. It is understood that the government will maintain the lead role in emergency response, and will be supported by the protection cluster to provide protection to its citizens, including those displaced by conflict, and in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which are based on the relevant international humanitarian and human rights law.

Within the cluster approach, UNDP is the designated lead agency for bridging the relief-development gap. This role is of great importance in Ethiopia, where early recovery strategies are not consistently implemented in emergency situations. As the budgets of both emergency funds continue to increase, the international community may need to consider early recovery more consistently, in order to create a balance between relief and recovery. UNDP's greater involvement in such early-stage initiatives could be a particularly important factor in ending the dependency of IDP populations who need to completely rebuild their lives and livelihoods. UNDP sees economic instability as the fundamental root cause of conflict and focuses on early recovery on the institutional level, to enable local, regional and national institutions to provide for their citizens themselves. Interview, Ethiopia, February 2007.

IOM has taken the responsibility to lead the cluster on camp management for natural disaster situations, while UNHCR will maintain the lead for camp coordination for IDPs displaced by conflict. The emergency shelter and non-food items cluster is led by UNICEF and IOM.

Assistance provided to IDPs living among the local population should, when possible, be combined with development aid to local populations, for example in terms of building infrastructure or providing basic social services. Ongoing attempts to provide assistance to refugees within community programmes, as explored by UNHCR, could well be applied more frequently in IDP situations. Email, June 2007. Also, ZOA Refugee Care explicitly tries to provide about one quarter of its facilities to local populations, where they assist IDP populations in Gambella. See ZOA, op. cit.

Non-governmental organisations

There is a large community of international NGOs in Ethiopia, including CARE, IRC, Merlin, Concern, Goal, MSF, Oxfam, ZOA Refugee Care, World Vision, Save the Children UK and others. ICRC is also operational. Many of those NGOs have very large relief and development operations, but only a few have emergency response funds, and most need to raise funds for each specific emergency response, which adds to the slow response already dictated by the government's approach.

While in fact there are already several collaboration mechanisms between UN agencies and NGOs, the impending humanitarian reform cluster approach foresees closer collaboration, and

coordination on a more equal footing. At the beginning of 2007, some NGOs expressed reservations about the cluster approach, fearing that the UN system would not be able to take on the required decisive leadership role. Other NGOs prefer to remain independent.

International response

There is a wide range of international agencies - both NGO and UN - active in Ethiopia, providing humanitarian and development aid. As stated in an OCHA document proposing a country-wide IDP assessment, assistance for IDPs is incoherent:

"Lack of reliable information on the numbers of IDPs, profile, location, categories (disaggregated by gender and age), causes of displacement, and ambiguities over who is an IDP and who is not are often cited as the major factors constraining effective and timely humanitarian response to these people. As a result IDPs in Ethiopia are generally considered to be the most vulnerable groups in the community. Without an authority with central responsibility for IDPs there is no clear coordination or aid delivery mechanism to address their issues and needs. Assistance is ad hoc at best. The basic needs for food and non food items are not provided to IDPs in a regular manner leading to an appalling humanitarian situation in many camps. DPPC does provide food assistance to IDPs in some circumstances upon written request by relevant regional authorities. In some cases, ICRC or NGOs have provided assistance upon request by local authorities. Commitment to coordinate development and reintegration assistance to IDPs in a manner that mirrors the mechanism for emergency aid is largely missing.

The *Guiding Principles* set out a number of principles relating to the rights of IDPs to protection from displacement, humanitarian assistance, return, resettlement and reintegration. Primary responsibility for promoting the security, welfare and liberty of people rests with the state. In order to apply the *Guiding Principles* effectively in Ethiopia there is a need to raise national awareness of the problem and develop a national policy on internal displacement. The belief is that by so doing a better commitment and capacity will be developed to respond to future displacements and to address the current outstanding IDP cases across the country by the government with support as appropriate by humanitarian partners.

Specifically, the government should be in a position to take the following key steps in line with the framework for national responsibility, so as to meet its obligations towards displaced people.

1. Prevent displacement and minimize its adverse effects
 2. Raise national awareness of the problem
 3. Collect data on the number and conditions of the IDPs
 4. Support training on the rights of the IDPs
 5. Create a legal framework for upholding the rights of IDPs
 6. Develop a national policy on internal displacement
 7. Designate an institutional focal point on IDPs
 8. Encourage national human rights institutions to integrate displacement into their work
 9. Ensure the participation of IDPs in decision-making
 10. Support durable solutions
 11. Allocate adequate resources to the problem
 12. Cooperate with the international community when national capacity is insufficient"
- (OCHA, 2005)

ICRC attempts to provide non-food items and water to newly displaced who are not recognised by the government. Many other organisations engage in development aid, to the point that the

head of OCHA Ethiopia had to call for an increase in emergency food aid, particularly in the view of the drought that had hit the Horn of Africa in the first months of 2006.

Coordination mechanisms

Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia 2007

p.12: As in previous years, response will give priority to addressing acute needs of vulnerable populations affected by natural disasters such as prolonged drought, flooding and other shocks, as well as by localized conflicts. In Ethiopia, vulnerable segments of society that are in need of specific attention include women, children under-five, youth, adolescents, the elderly and emergency induced displacements. Mechanisms will be designed to address both food and non-food needs of these populations so as to support longer term development objectives of affected communities to the greatest extent possible. Furthermore, continued close monitoring is required in pastoral areas.

Cross-cutting issues are HIV/AIDS and Gender and Child Protection

Humanitarian Appeal for Ethiopia 2006

The 2006 Humanitarian Appeal, a document presented jointly by the Ethiopian government and humanitarian agencies, "focuses on life-saving and livelihoods protection activities in the four key sectors of food, agriculture, health and nutrition, and water and environmental sanitation" (p.5). The Appeal is led by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA, formerly DPPC).

The Appeal mentions IDPs as one of the most vulnerable groups, along with women, small children, youth and adolescents (p.10). However, the document generally does not refer to IDPs, nor does it seem to target IDPs specifically with the proposed programmes. It must be presumed that IDPs are included in the 'vulnerable populations'.

The Appeal identifies three cross-cutting issues: HIV/AIDS (prevalence of 4.4%), gender and child protection, and education (p.10, 11) It will focus specifically on alleviating the effects of the drought in Western Somalia.

Reference to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

African Countries set to adopt Convention to provide rights to IDPs (June 2009)

- Some 53 African Countries set to adopt AU Convention on IDPs in October 2009
- In 2003, Ethiopia signed the Khartoum Declaration on internal displacement

Reuters, 26 June 2008

"African countries are set to adopt a ground-breaking convention providing rights to millions of people forced to flee their homes because of conflict.

Africa has some 12 million internally displaced people (IDPs) who are uprooted within their own country. Unlike refugees -- people who have fled to another country -- IDPs benefit from little or no protection.

The convention, the brainchild of the African Union, will for the first time provide them with similar rights to refugees, according to a draft seen by Reuters.

U.N. refugee chief Antonio Guterres welcomed the initiative and hoped other regions would follow suit.

"This will be the first international legally binding instrument in relation to internal displacement and we hope that this can become an example to be followed in other parts of the world," he said.

"We are talking about ... a full range of rights that up to a certain extent are similar to those granted by the 1951 (U.N.) convention to refugees when they live in a foreign country."

The African Union, which groups 53 countries, expects the convention to be adopted at a summit on refugees and IDPs opening in the Ugandan capital Kampala on Oct. 19.

Although refugees and IDPs have often fled their homes for the same reasons, there are crucial differences in how the two groups are treated..."

KHARTOUM DECLARATION

Ministerial Conference on Internally Displaced Persons in the IGAD Sub-Region

We, the Ministers representing the Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) meeting in Khartoum,

Noting the conclusions and recommendations of the Experts Meeting from 30th August to 1st September, 2003;

Considering the situation of internally displaced persons, (IDPs) in the sub-region;

Recalling the decision taken by the IGAD Council of Ministers during the AU Summits in Durban and Maputo in 2002 and 2003 respectively, to convene an IGAD ministerial meeting on the issue of internal displacement caused by natural and man made disasters;

Cognizant of the fact that the aims and objectives of IGAD include promoting peace, stability and development in the sub-region, and determining that finding durable solutions to internal displacement is an indispensable step to realizing lasting peace stability and development;

Reaffirming the undertaking by the IGAD Member States to facilitate the voluntary return, reintegration or resettlement of displaced persons in cooperation with relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations in accordance with the existing national, regional and international instruments;

Recognizing that the problems of internal displacement affect all Member States in the sub-region and constitute a threat to socio-economic development, political stability, national security and the environment;

Noting with great concern that displaced women, children, elderly and disabled persons constitute the majority of the internally displaced and are often among the most vulnerable;

Noting with deep concern also that resources made available by the international donor community are still below the basic needs of the IDPs;

Reaffirming that the primary responsibility of protecting and assisting the internally displaced and finding durable solution lies with the national Governments and that the role of the international community is to complement the national effort ;

Taking note of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as a useful tool for developing and evaluating appropriate national policies and legislation on internal displacement and noting also that the Principles compile the existing international law related to internal displacement;

1. Express our concern over the persisting problem of internal displacement in the region, and the growing deterioration of the humanitarian situation of the IDPs, due to the recurrence of natural disasters and intra- and interstate conflicts;

2. Take note with appreciation of the efforts of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons and commend him for promoting prevention of internal displacement, assistance to internally displaced persons, and durable solutions to their plight;

3. Commend the efforts of the Member States, UN agencies, other international agencies, donors as well as national and international NGO's which have continued to provide assistance to IDPs;

4. Call upon the international community to continue providing support for meeting the urgent needs of IDPs and in implementing rehabilitation, recovery and sustainable development programmes;

5. Call for the strengthening of co-operation between IGAD, AU, the UN and its agencies, particularly the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other humanitarian organizations, with a view to coordinating their programmes and activities related to IDPs and streamlining their actions in the struggle to mitigate disasters in the sub-region;

6. Reiterate our commitment to continue to address the root causes of the problem of internal displacement and to continue creating conditions conducive for voluntary return and reintegration, local integration or resettlement of IDPs;

7. Agree to cooperate in encouraging the development of comprehensive national policies on internal displacement and in this regard,

i. Acknowledge that such policies must be consistent with international human rights and humanitarian law;

ii. Note that the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement can serve as a useful tool for addressing IDP issues;

iii. Commit ourselves to continue directing particular attention to the development of policies ensuring the protection of the internally displaced and to addressing the needs of especially vulnerable groups, such as women heads-of-household, children, disabled and elderly persons;

iv. Reaffirm that such policies should take into account the needs and rights of internally displaced persons as well as the host communities;

v. Call upon the international community to support Member States in developing such policies;

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8. Pledge and urge all concerned actors to provide humanitarian access to internally displaced persons for humanitarian organizations and to protect the safety and security of humanitarian workers;

9. Call upon the international community and member states to provide the necessary funds for the IGAD Executive Secretary to establish a unit on forced displacement within the IGAD Secretariat to, inter alia, collect data on displacement in the region, disseminate the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, provide technical assistance to member states in developing and monitoring policies on internal displacement, and explore further means of sub-regional cooperation to address issues of forced displacement;

10. Endorse the proposal of the Current Chairman of IGAD Council of Ministers to declare the 2nd of September of each year as IGAD IDPs Day;

11. Reiterate the need for firm commitment of all authorities in the IGAD sub-region to intensify their efforts with a view to finding lasting and durable solutions to the problems of displacement in order to enhance the prospects for long-term peace, security and development;

12. Urge Member States and all authorities in the IGAD region to continue to ensure the full participation of all segments of the displaced populations, in particular women and children, in decision-making on issues which affect their rights and welfare, including voluntary return, reintegration, local integration, resettlement and peace building programmes;

13. Appeal to Member States and the International Community to provide support and resources for reconstruction, resettlement and rehabilitation efforts of countries emerging from conflicts;

14. Intensify efforts aimed at enhancing democracy, rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and international humanitarian law in order to ensure stability and security in the sub-region;

15. Call on Member States to take the necessary steps to implement the relevant provisions in the Declaration and Recommendations adopted by the OAU Ministerial Conference on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons held in Khartoum, Sudan from 13-14 December 1998;

16. Invite Member States to work out modalities to ensure the implementation of this Declaration and to report progress on implementation to the 23rd Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers.

Khartoum, Sudan
2 September 2003

Known references to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (as of July 2004)

- References to the Guiding Principles Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other references to the Guiding Principles

None

Availability of the Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles are widely available in Arabic. Published by OCHA.
Source: OCHA; Mr Francis Deng, the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons; Mr Sergio Vieira De Mello Assistant to the Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs,
To download the full document click here: [External Link] http://www.unhchr.ch/pdf/principles_arab.pdf
Date: 11 April 2001

Training on the Guiding Principles

About 30 Representatives of national and regional governments, UN agencies, as well as international and local NGOs participated in the workshop on internal displacement in Ethiopia which took place in Addis Ababa on May 24-25, 2004. See the document containing

conclusions and recommendations.

The workshop was organized by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Pastoral Communications Initiative Project (PCI), with the support and facilitation of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Global IDP Project

Date: 24-25 May 2004

Document: OCHA, DPPC, IOM, PCI, NRC, Training on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Addis Ababa, 24-25 May 2004.

Recommendations

Recommendations of Human Rights Watch on Somali Region of Ethiopia (June 2008)

Human Rights Watch, June 2008; pages 125-129

[...] To the federal government of Ethiopia

- Issue clear public orders to military commanders, regional police, and other members of the security services to cease extrajudicial killings, rape, torture, and the unlawful forced relocation of civilians. Serious violations of Ethiopian and international human rights and humanitarian law should be investigated and prosecuted as appropriate. Senior officials implicated, including as a matter of command responsibility, should be prosecuted regardless of rank.
- Ensure fundamental due process guarantees to persons in detention, including the right to be charged with an offense before judicial authorities, to have access to legal counsel, family members, and medical care, and to receive a trial before an independent court meeting international fair trial standards; allow access to persons in detention by independent humanitarian organizations; and adopt measures to improve the criminal justice system, such as by creating sufficient federal and regional courts and providing appropriate training in human rights to judicial staff and police.
- Immediately end restrictions on commercial trade and livestock movement imposed on relevant zones of Somali Region (Fiiq, Korahe, Gode, Wardheer, and Dhagahbur), including the restrictions on cross-border trade with the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland. Ending these restrictions would immediately improve civilian access to food and other essential commodities, in addition to reducing the short and long-term damage to livelihoods caused by the blockade.
- Ensure independent humanitarian organizations have full and unimpeded access to civilians in need of humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected areas of Somali Region; permit independent nutritional assessments to evaluate needs of drought and conflict-affected areas; and support an independent evaluation of the humanitarian response, particularly the distribution of food aid. Establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate crimes in violation of international law committed in Somali Region and seek international assistance to investigate the crimes.
- Invite the media, national and international human rights groups, and UN human rights entities (including the UN Special Rapporteurs or Special Representatives on Internally Displaced Persons, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and Extra-Judicial and Summary Executions; the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances; and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) to investigate and report on allegations of abuses by all parties to the conflict and the general human rights situation in Somali Region.

- Cease harassing and threatening victims and witnesses of human rights abuses in Somali Region and cooperate with efforts to improve protection of civilians, including by the United Nations.
- Provide appropriate human rights training to all members of the Ethiopian armed forces, including the federal, regional, and local police operating in Somali Region, and seek international support for such training programs.

To the United Nations Security Council

- Publicly urge that the Ethiopian government conduct a thorough, transparent, and independent investigation into abuses by all parties to the conflict in Somali Region. Closely monitor the progress of government investigations and take prompt and appropriate action in response to their findings.
- Privately and publicly urge the Ethiopian government to implement immediately the above recommendations, and insist that implementation of these steps will be used to assess Ethiopian willingness to improve the human rights situation in Somali Region.
- Call for the government to permit full, unimpeded access to the region to independent humanitarian agencies, national and international human rights groups, the media, and diplomatic representatives.

To foreign governments with influence, including the US, UK, China, and European Union

- Publicly call upon the Ethiopian government to conduct a thorough, transparent, and independent investigation into abuses in Somali Region. Closely monitor the progress of government investigations and take prompt and appropriate action in response to their findings.
- Privately and publicly urge the Ethiopian government to implement immediately the above recommendations, and insist that implementation of these steps will be used to assess Ethiopian willingness to improve the human rights situation in Somali Region.
- Call upon the Ethiopian government to permit full, unimpeded access to Somali region by independent humanitarian agencies, national and international human rights groups, the media, and diplomatic representatives.
- Urge the Ethiopian government to support independent nutritional assessments to evaluate the needs of drought and conflict-affected areas and independent monitoring of food distribution, and insist on an independent evaluation of the humanitarian response, particularly the distribution of food aid, that includes an external audit.
- Monitor development funding to ensure that it is not used for Ethiopian security operations, including by regional, wereda and kebele level administrations.
- Make military assistance to Ethiopia contingent on the government's adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law and exclude any assistance to units implicated in abuses. All suppliers should actively monitor the use of any weapons and non-lethal items to ensure they are not being utilized to commit or facilitate abuses.
- If providing military assistance, pressure the government to abide by its commitments under international law. Donor states should publicly condemn specific violations, particularly the forced displacement of villages, extrajudicial executions, and torture committed by the armed forces, and urge the government to address them.
- Demand that civilian and military officials implicated in human rights violations be held accountable, including as a matter of command responsibility..."

Recommendations of IGAD expert meeting, Khartoum, September 2003

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERTS MEETING

(adopted by the Ministerial Conference, 2 September 2003)

A. Member States

1. Develop national policies on internal displacement using the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as a useful reference, much as some member states have already begun to do. Such policies should:

- a. Comprehensively address all phases of displacement: prevention, protection and assistance during displacement, and durable solutions;
- b. Specify the institutional arrangements for addressing IDP issues;
- c. Address the protection, assistance and reintegration needs of displaced women and children, who make up the majority of the displaced, with special attention to women heads of households, adolescents and other especially vulnerable groups;
- d. Ensure that the particular needs of elderly and disabled persons are adequately addressed;
- e. Integrate protection into programming for IDPs;
- f. Support and strengthen the efforts of host communities;
- g. Integrate humanitarian and development approaches that promote self-reliance and support the coping mechanisms of IDPs;
- h. Promote durable solutions, i.e. return, resettlement or integration, and ensure that they are carried out voluntarily and in conditions of safety and dignity;
- i. Provide the necessary support so that chosen durable solutions remain viable for the long term;
- j. Give access to land and facilitate abandoned return of property of IDPs;
- k. Involve the displaced in decisions related to their assistance, protection and durable solutions and, in particular, ensure that women, children, the disabled and the elderly are given a voice;

- l. Protect the natural environment in areas of displacement.
2. Empower the community and work in cooperation with national civil society and the international humanitarian community to address IDP issues;
3. Establish national human rights institutions and encourage them to address the issue of internal displacement;
4. Ensure compliance with international humanitarian law, human rights law and regional standards by all military and civilian personnel;
5. Take the necessary steps to implement regional, i.e. OAU/AU and IGAD decisions and plans of action relating to displaced persons, and take note of the AU's interest in developing a specific protocol on IDPs, using the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement among the references;
6. Commit themselves to work together towards sustainable peace in the region as a durable solution to the problem of displacement, including by supporting peace-building initiatives and the development of a "culture of peace"
7. Support and encourage the use of traditional methods of dispute settlement and conflict resolution in a manner consistent with international humanitarian and human rights standards;
8. Provide humanitarian access to internally displaced persons for humanitarian organizations and to protect the safety and security of humanitarian workers;
9. Provide for security in IDP encampments and settlements;
10. Address human rights abuses, such as sexual assault, exploitation, enforced prostitution, ill-treatment and other gender-related security issues;
11. Address abduction and recruitment of children;
12. Address the dangers of landmines, in particular through clearance and mine safety awareness campaign;
13. Compile accurate and timely data on the internally displaced, disaggregated by age and gender;

14. Ensure that IDPs are included in HIV/AIDS prevention and response strategies and programmes;
15. Allocate resources in national budgets to respond to internal displacement;
16. Provide a progress report to the IGAD Secretariat on the implementation of these recommendations on a semi-annual basis.

B. IGAD

17. Develop a regional strategy on internal displacement;
18. Develop regional strategies to address phenomena that exacerbate problems of internal displacement, including small arms proliferation and cattle rustling;
19. Assist member states in developing national policies, plans and strategies on issues of IDPs;
20. Integrate consideration of internal displacement into IGAD's Disaster Risk Management, early warning, and peace promotion programmes;
21. Provide a forum for states to discuss IDP issues and exchange information and to incorporate these issues into the existing IGAD Civil Society Forum as well;
22. Disseminate and provide information to Member States about the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and best practices;
23. Facilitate in developing regional projects / programmes in mitigating disasters and formulation of rehabilitation projects / programmes based on the IGAD regional Disaster Risk Management Programme that has been developed with the member States;
24. Accelerate and strengthen the implementation of CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning) in support of preventing further displacement;
25. Compile, analyze and disseminate data on internal displacement;
26. Study and assess situations of internal displacement in IGAD member states and make recommendations;
27. Convene a meeting with donors to address the return and reintegration needs of IDPs.

To implement these recommendations, it is further recommended that IGAD:

28. Establish a Unit within the Secretariat to handle issues of forced displacement;
29. Seek resources from the member states and the international community for IGAD to carry out the recommended activities and fund the Unit.

C. The International Community

30. Support the strengthening of national capacities, both governmental and non-governmental, for addressing the protection, assistance and recovery needs of internally displaced persons;
31. Strengthen the institutional capacity of the IGAD secretariat in developing programmes for addressing internal displacement;
32. Respond to humanitarian crises quickly and with adequate assistance;
33. Devote greater efforts and resources to bridging the relief to development gap, including by developing flexible funding mechanisms to support transitional strategies;
34. Find ways to break down institutional barriers to a holistic approach to the problems of internally displaced persons, refugees, demobilized combatants, and other persons affected by conflict, that also ensures attention to their specific needs;
35. Make greater efforts to work in full partnership with governments and national NGOs to address IDP issues.

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