

HIGHLIGHTS (23 Aug 2024)

- Heavy Kiremt rains bring floods, landslides and destruction across several regions.
- Drier-than-normal conditions projected for the October-December period heightening vulnerabilities in already food insecure areas.
- Preparation for anticipatory action ongoing to allow assistance to reach people before the full effects of the drought are felt in the lowlands of south and southeast Ethiopia.



Impact of floods in Gambella region.

KEY FIGURES

21.4M

People in Need, Overall
(2024 HNO)

15.8M

People in Need, Food
(2024 HNO)

15.5M

People Targeted,
Overall (2024 HRP)

10.4M

People Targeted, Food
(2024 HRP)

\$3.24B

Financial Requirement
(2024 HRP)

FUNDING (2024)

\$3.2B

Required

\$589.6M

Received



FTS: <https://fts.unocha.org/plans/195/summary>

CONTACTS

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BACKGROUND (23 Aug 2024)

Situation Overview

Most areas that benefit from *Kiremt* rains across the country, including Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, western, central and eastern Oromia, Southwest Ethiopia, South Ethiopia, Central Ethiopia, Tigray, Amhara, Afar, northern Somali, Dire Dawa, Harari, and Sidama are receiving normal to above normal rainfall, according to the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI). The season, typically spanning from June to September, has been beneficial for Meher crop production and improved water and pasture availability. Most regions exceeded planting targets as they received adequate rain for

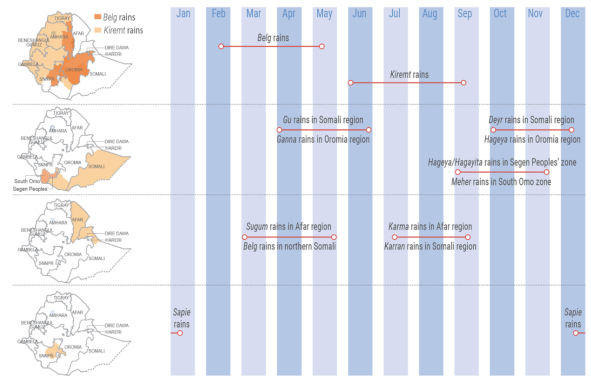
crop growth, according to the Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC)(1). Conversely, there were several reports of overflow of rivers, flash flooding and landslides in at-risk areas since July, leading to displacements, deaths and damages to crops, properties and public infrastructure.

La Niña conditions anticipated to impact rainfall patterns from August 2024 to February 2025

Ethiopia’s diverse topography gives way to variances in temperature and rainfall patterns across different periods and geographic areas (Ref. Figure 1). Climatic phenomenon such as La Niña therefore have different impact on rainfall patterns across these variances.

La Niña condition this year is expected to strengthen *Kiremt* rainfall throughout the month of August. An alert issued by the Ethiopian Metrology Institute on 20 August warns of high risks of further flooding and landslides in most parts of the country until the end of the month, and called for mitigation measures, including timely dissemination of the warning to at-risk communities.

On the other hand, La Niña may induce periods of drought in agro-pastoralist and pastoralist areas reliant on the October–December *Deyr/Hegaya* rainy season.(2) Drier-than-normal conditions are projected by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development’s (IGAD) Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) for the October-December *Deyr/Hegaya* seasonal rains in the lowlands of Somali, Oromia and Southern Ethiopia regions (Ref. Figure 1). The forecasted late onset and below normal rainfall will significantly impact water and pasture availability and the overall food security for an already food insecure population that is also battling several public health concerns such as a cholera and measles outbreaks.



Source: OCHA Ethiopia

Footnotes

(1) Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission, Early Warning Information and Operation Coordination Center. Monthly Bulletin. Volume 11-EMB-2024. Issued August 2024. (2) [Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food in security \(June to October 2024\)](#). (3) [Ethiopia: Flash Update #3 - Update on Landslide in Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia Region \(as of 26 July 2024\)_| OCHA \(unocha.org\)](#).

ANALYSIS (23 Aug 2024)

Several regions are reeling from the impact of floods that occurred in July and August

Several regions are reeling from the impact of floods and landslides that occurred in July and August.

On 11 August, local authorities in the **Gambella Region** reported the latest flood-induced displacements due to heavy rains in the first week of August. More than 16,000 people were reportedly displaced in Gog, Lare, Jor and Wanthwa *woredas* of Anywaa and Nuer zones.

Unable to load the textboxThe displaced have been relocated to dry lands within their respective *woredas*; some are given temporary shelter in schools. Communities in at-risk areas were warned of additional flooding during this rainy season and advised to take mitigation measures. Regional authorities advised against conducting a rapid needs assessment in the flood affected areas, citing lack of response from partners following a recent rapid assessment in conflict-affected Itang Special *Woreda*. Minimal or no response following rapid assessments – for lack of resources – is likely to lead to increasing grievances with community members and authorities in Gambella and elsewhere in the country. So far, partners’ response to the 2024 floods has been hampered by limited resources - overall, the Ethiopia HRP is 18.2 percent funded. Food for 24,000 people, as well as shelter, NFI, WASH, protection and education are priority needs.



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Meanwhile, Gambella Region is still recovering from the impact of last year’s flooding (September 2023) when several thousands were displaced and extensive damage to public service infrastructure was reported. The regional Government received equipment donation from a WaSH partner last week to repair 169 water schemes destroyed by the floods last year, restoring access to clean water for over 70,000 people, including IDPs, in the Anywaa and Nuer zones, as well as the Itang Special *Woreda* after nearly one year. Last year’s flood destroyed 189 water schemes according to a multi-agency assessment report. The Regional Water and Energy Bureau expressed readiness to repair additional 83 water sources if additional equipment support is availed by partners.

In the **Afar Region**, a Multi-Agency Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) was conducted on 29-30 July to assess the impact of the flooding in Awash Fantale and Dulecha *woredas*, Zone 3. The assessment identified 3,411 displaced households (approximately 20,466 individuals) requiring urgent assistance, the majority women, children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and the elderly. Amongst the priority needs are shelter and non-food items (NFIs), including plastic sheeting, mattresses, blankets, kitchen utensils, clothing for adults and children, hygiene items, sanitary kits/dignity kits, and construction materials. The assessment team observed many of the displaced families sharing inadequate shelter and insufficient NFIs with the host community.

Although there is no outbreak reported so far, there is an increased risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera, due to contaminated water sources and a rise in malaria cases due to stagnant flood water and lack of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs). Mental health issues are also reported prevalent due to the trauma and anxiety caused by the sudden flood incident and displacement. There is an urgent need for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) intervention, including the provision of safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene materials, such as jerrycans and soap. Livestock losses of the pastoralist communities have impacted the food security of people in the area. Chemical residues from a nearby sugar factory have also polluted grazing lands, leading to livestock mortality and morbidity, and decreasing agricultural productivity. Food availability has drastically declined in the post-flood emergencies period. Affected communities have started to resort to coping mechanisms to survive, including selling remaining assets, borrowing money, selling labor and reducing meal portion sizes.

Heavy rains on 14 August in the **Amhara Region** led to the overflow of Rib River, inundating riverine communities in Dera, Fogera, and Libo Keme Kem *woredas* of South Gondar Zone. A rescue team deployed by local authorities used canoes to evacuate the flood-affected people, most of whom had climbed to the roofs of their houses. More than

6,600 people (at least 2,400 female) were affected. The displaced people are currently sheltered in four schools waiting for the flood water to recede before going back to repair their damaged shelters and recuperate their cropland for which they need assistance. A total of 6,205 hectares of farmland, more than 400 livestock, 3,000 poultry, and 1,000 beehives are reportedly damaged. The Amhara authorities have distributed an initial lifesaving response of 80 quintals of wheat flour to the flood-affected families and appealed to humanitarian partners to conduct a rapid needs assessment to determine the scale of needs and mobilize response. Earlier in the month, on 5 August, floods in Kokit Kebele in Fogera *Woreda* of South Gondar Zone had displaced 200 people (80 female). The displaced people had travelled by boat to the nearby Shaga *Kebele* where they are being sheltered by host communities. Food, water, medicines, and shelter are amongst the priority needs.

In the **Somali Region**, assessments conducted on 15 August in flood-affected Afder and Shabelle zones identified more than 112,000 people affected across both zones, of whom 24,000 are displaced in Ferfer, Kelafo and Mustahil *woredas* of Shabelle Zone. There were no displacements in Afder Zone. The flood incidents occurred when the Shabelle and Weib rivers overflowed following heavy rains. All the affected areas can only be accessed by boat. Urgent food, water purification, and shelter assistance is required. Responses are ongoing, with significant gaps. The Somali Disaster Risk Management Bureau has distributed 600 blankets, 300 plastic mats, 1,600 quintals of maize, 250 quintals of corn soya blend (CSB) and 125 quintals of wheat flour to 3,000 most vulnerable households in the three *woredas* of Shabelle Zone. The Regional Health Bureau has also dispatched six cartons of Ringer's lactate solution to the three health facilities these three *woredas*. Meanwhile, one partner will distribute multi-purpose cash for 440 households in three rounds and WASH NFIs to 400 households in Kelafo *Woreda* of Shabelle Zone. There are no responses in Afder Zone, nor in Mustahil and Ferfer *woredas* of Shabelle Zone. Emergency shelter, food, WaSH and fuel for rescue boats are critical needs.

In the **Oromia Region**, humanitarian partners on the ground confirmed on 1 August flood incidents in Deder, Goro Gutu, Kersa and Melka Belo *woredas* of East Hararghe Zone and in Shashamane and Nensebo *woredas* of West Arsi Zone. On 12 August, reports from an assessment team deployed to Melka Belo *Woreda* of East Hararghe Zone identified more than 7,000 people affected by flooding in the *woreda*, and some 723 hectares of food and cash crops destroyed. At least 27 houses were also damaged by landslides. Partners' response has been limited – for lack of resource – with mostly community assistance provided to families whose houses were damaged. Only one partner is operating in the *woreda* providing nutrition support. The *woreda* has an estimated 32,000 people in acute food need due to prolonged drought in the lowland areas, according to the *woreda* Busa Gonofa.

Overall, according to reports received from Oromia Busa Gonofa and partners operational in some of the affected *woredas*, 32 *woredas* across the zones in the Oromia Region are so far affected by flooding and landslides during this *kiremt* season, including in Kelem Wollega, Jima, West Shewa, East Shewa, West Arsi, Arsi, West Guji, South West Showa, West Hararghe and East Hararghe. More than 113,734 people were affected, 40,600 displaced and four dead. At least 6,367 hectares of cropland were damaged, 278 livestock have died, and 873 houses destroyed. Damages to roads has compromised access to affected people. The number of affected communities will likely increase with recent reports of increasing volume of the Awash River. The Ethiopian Red Cross Society provided NFIs for 1,400 households and multi-purpose cash for 1,400 households in West Guji Zone.

In the **South Ethiopia Region**, the most recent flooding was registered on 19 August in Dasenech *Woreda*, South Omo Zone. Heavy rains in the upstream highlands in the South and Southwest Ethiopia Regions, mainly Gamo, Goffa, Wolayita, Konso, Dawuro and Keffa zones and the backflow of water from Lake Turkana resulted in the overflow of the Omo River flooding five *kebeles* in Dasenech *Woreda*. An estimated 12,000 people are reportedly displaced, while additional flooding is expected in the next days given intensifying rains in upstream *woredas*, putting several other

areas at risk, including the Dasenech *Woreda* capital, Omorate Town. Partners are supporting Government flood-mitigation and response efforts, including two partners funding dike constructions, and one partner providing food for 54,000 people in the *woreda*. With a total population of 79,000, South Omo Zone has been recurrently affected by flood due to the overflow of the Omo River and discharge of water from Gilgel Gibe 3 dam.

In addition to floods, several regions have reported landslide incidents caused by heavy rains in mountainous areas. The landslide incident in Geze Gofa *Woreda* of Gofa Zone, **South Ethiopia Region** on 21 and 22 July claimed the lives of 243 people – an additional six people are missing(3). The Government has evacuated more than 6,600 people from the two affected *kebeles*, and 17,400 people were evacuated from the 15 other *kebeles* identified as being at-risk. Overall, at least 24,000 people at-risk of landslide across 20 of the 29 *kebeles* in Geze Gofa *Woreda* are targeted for relocation to safer areas. Two environmental experts were deployed to the affected areas by UN OCHA, with the support of the Swiss International Cooperation, and the embassy of Sweden through the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism managed by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). Their deployment provided timely expert support to the Government-led response to the landslide emergencies. It became evident that the high number of deaths was not a direct result of the initial landslide, but of lack of awareness of the people who came out in masses to the landslide area to look for survivors, and unfortunately perished while doing so, following a second landslide. In addition to long-term land management in at-risk areas, the joint observation identified that building awareness of risks is a key element of mitigating the impact of landslides.

More specifically, the experts' recommendation focused on four key points: 1) build public awareness regarding natural hazards, landslides, floods, etc.; including preparedness and training on those topics, 2) develop early warning systems (EWS) further, to reach the end of the road villages; 3) mapping of natural hazards, specifically on landslides, at a scale usable at the village level; and 4) soil rehabilitation and slope remediation to reduce the risks for local inhabitants. The Government has developed a costed Emergency Response and Recovery Plan for the Geze Gofa incident and requests the support of recovery and development partners.

Also in the **South Ethiopia Region**, a new landslide incident on 15-16 August in Melokoza and Demba Goffa *woredas* claimed the life of one person and led to the evacuation of some 3,000 people in Demba Goffa, as well as more than 1000 people in Melokoza, who are currently sheltered in schools, churches, and Farmers' Training Centers (FTCs). A Government and partners' team is on the ground to determine response needs. Earlier in the month, on 2 August, a landslide incident in Wolayita Zone killed 13 people and displaced more than 12,600 people.

Similar landslide incidents were also reported from Gamo Zone of South Ethiopia Region on 15 August, killing four people and displacing 1000 people, and in Central, Northern and Eastern zones of Sidam Region on 28 July, killing eleven people and displacing 11,000 people.

In the **Southwest Ethiopia Peoples Region**, landslides on 24-31 July killed five people and displaced 519 people. The Regional Government has allocated some resource (~US\$100,00) to mount an initial life-saving response. Additional assistance by partners is required.

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Footnotes

(3) [Ethiopia: Flash Update #3 - Update on Landslide in Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia Region \(as of 26 July 2024\) | OCHA \(unocha.org\)](#)

FORECAST (23 Aug 2024)

Preparation for anticipatory action ongoing ahead of the projected drought in southern and southeastern lowlands

Key numbers on the impact of the kiremt - induced floods and landslides



A drought alert was issued by global bodies for the Horn of Africa, including southern and eastern lowlands of Ethiopia during the October–December *Deyr/Hageya* rainy season. The Government and humanitarian partners are making headway on anticipatory action to mitigate the worst of the drought impacts. This is the start of an exceptional crisis. An estimated 7.8 million people (akin to the entire population of Hong Kong) across 123 *woredas* are projected to be at risk of 'severe' drought conditions during the season. Many of them are still reeling from the 2020-2023 drought.

A national Common Framework on Drought Anticipatory Action has been developed. The Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) is looking into contributing to the anticipatory action before the full effects of the drought are felt, mitigating the anticipated impact on people's health, nutritional status and protection. Evidence, especially from Somali Region, underscores the importance of acting early, as past deteriorations of the nutrition situation of affected people, have stemmed from late or insufficient responses.

FEATURE (23 Aug 2024)

The story of Gamish Obole - loss and resilience following Gofa Zone landslides

25-year-old Gamish Obole, lived with her husband and four children in the mountainous area surrounded by steep cliffs and lush vegetation in Kencho Shacha Gozdi *Kebele*, Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia Region. Their home lay directly in the path of the deadly landslides that took place on 21 and 22 July.

When the first landslide struck, Gamish and her family were buried under the mud and debris. Rescuers from the community and neighbouring *kebeles* rushed to their aid. "I survived because I was able to stick my hand out of the mud so they could see me," Gamish recalls. The effort to save her broke her hand, leaving it hanging limply at her side. Tragically, her husband and two of her children, aged 2 and 9, did not survive. The other two children were rescued.

"Many of our rescuers were killed when the next landslide hit," Gamish says. The second landslide buried the brave individuals fighting to save their neighbours.

Now, still in shock and grappling with the immense trauma of losing her home and over half her family, Gamish is staying with her father along with her surviving children.

Survivors, people from nearby areas, and Government officials have gathered to mourn the victims and express their condolences to those who lost loved ones. Right next to the mourning site, a mobile clinic has been set up to treat survivors. "Most people are suffering from severe trauma," says a doctor working in the clinic. "People come to the clinic and faint from shock." Increased psychosocial and mental health support is critical to help those impacted by the crisis.

Local authorities have also established a support site and committee to assist those affected and coordinate the distribution of aid from various sources, including the local community. At this site, people can find essential items such as food and water. Women on the committee have been cooking hot meals for those in mourning, offering a



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small comfort during this difficult time.

Gamish Obole's story is one of survival amid overwhelming loss, a poignant reminder of the human cost of natural disasters. Her resilience and that of her community underscores the urgent need for continued support and proactive measures to safeguard vulnerable populations in high-risk areas. It is also a story of lack of awareness of the dangers of living in areas prone to landslides.

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