

## Influx from Ethiopia to Sudan

14 January 2019

1,100

Approx. Ethiopian arrivals  
to East Sudan

60

Ethiopian individuals  
expressed intention  
to return

303

Ethiopian individuals  
expressed intention  
to seek asylum so far

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **On 10-12 January 2019**, a total of **389 Ethiopian individuals** (330 males, 33 females and 26 children) **fled to Sudan** through two crossing points in Gedaref State in East Sudan, due to renewed inter-communal disturbances between some Ethiopian ethnic groups along the western Ethiopian borders with Sudan. Of all new arrivals, 140 are now being hosted in temporary shelters in Kuneina locality, 135 kilometers from Gedaref town, while the other 249 are hosted in Basunda village, some 165 kilometers from Gedaref town.
- **On 12 January 2019**, UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) visited the new arrivals to assess their situations and ascertain their willingness to seek asylum in Sudan. Out of the total arrivals, **303 individuals expressed intention to seek asylum in Sudan**, all from Kament ethnic background, while 60 individuals expressed intention to return (39 of Tigray and 21 of Kament ethnicity). The remaining 26 individuals, who are sheep-herders and fled with heads of cattle belonging to cattle breeders, stated that they would seek asylum after returning to the border to give back the animals to their owners.
- **On 14 January 2019**, local authorities informed UNHCR that approximately **700 Ethiopian individuals** newly arrived in Jebel Halawa and Fazra bordering areas. This brings to about **1,100 individuals** the total new arrivals since 10 January 2019. The new arrivals reported that up to 3,000 people might cross the border in the coming period due to the disturbances at the border.
- **On 15 January 2019**, an **inter-agency assessment mission**, including governmental and UN agencies, is planned to visit the new arrivals, in order to agree on the specific response by each agency.

### ARRIVALS AT KUNEINA LOCALITY

Between 10 and 12 January 2019, a total of 140 Ethiopian individuals arrived via Taya crossing point into Kuneina village, in Gallabat locality, Gedaref State. These include 101 individuals from Kament background and 39 individuals from Tigray ethnicity. The group arrived with some 1,185 cattle, sheep and goats, under the custody of 26 individuals working as sheep-herders.

The new arrivals are currently accommodated in a school in the area, where they are receiving food assistance from local authorities.

Of the new arrivals of Kament ethnicity, 75 individuals have expressed intention to seek asylum in Sudan. The remaining 26 individuals stated that they would also seek asylum if they find a way of returning the cattle under their custody to their owners on the other side of the border with Ethiopia.

The 39 individuals from Tigray background have expressed their intention to return to Ethiopia and were provided with travel permits on 14 January.

They will be assisted with transportation via Ludgi crossing point.



*More than 100 Ethiopian individuals have sought safety in Kuneina village in Gedaref State following renewed ethnic clashes at the other side of the Sudanese-Ethiopian border. Photo: ©UNHCR*

## ARRIVALS AT BASUNDA LOCALITY

Between 10 and 12 January 2019, a group of 249 individuals, all from Kament ethnic background, crossed the border to Basunda village, Gedaref State. They are currently hosted in temporary shelters in the area.

Of these, 228 individuals, expressed their intention to seek asylum in Sudan, while the other 21 individuals, all males, expressed their intention to return back to Ethiopia as soon as the security situation improves.

## ARRIVALS ON 13-14 JANUARY 2019

According to information received from local authorities on 14 January 2019, approximately 700 Ethiopian individuals crossed the border into Sudan after 13 January 2019.



*About 250 Ethiopian individuals fled inter-communal disturbances along the western Ethiopian borders with Sudan to Basunda village in Gedaref State, Sudan. Photo: ©UNHCR*

The individuals are currently transported from the border crossing point to Al Fazra for easier access to services.

## RESPONSE

- **On 12 January 2019**, UNHCR and COR in Gedaref visited Kuneina and Basunda localities and registered the new arrivals. The arrivals were clearly briefed by UNHCR and COR on their rights in case they decide to seek asylum in Sudan. UNHCR and COR are currently working with the local authorities to provide the arrivals with urgent food assistance and transport asylum-seekers to Shagarab refugee camp in Kassala State to benefit from the existing services. The Emergency Committee of Gedaref State has provided the new arrivals with urgent food assistance.
- **On 14 January 2019**, COR, the UN inter-agency team (including UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNDSS), and the local partners Sudanese Red Crescent (SRC) and Talaweit Organization for Development (TOD) met to discuss the current situation.
- **On 15 and 16 January 2019**, a UN inter-agency assessment mission is planned to Kuneina and Basunda localities to assess the needs of new arrivals, as well as to agree on how to handle the issue of the cattle in custody of the group.
- The new arrivals who wish to seek asylum will be transported to the Shagarab camp, and those wishing to return will be provided with necessary travel documents by the authorities to return to Ethiopia via Lugdi crossing point once the situation stabilizes.
- UNHCR and partners are working on a contingency plan to be prepared for an influx of up to 5,000 people.

## CONTACTS

**Mohamed Elfatih**, Assistant Communications Officer, UNHCR Sudan  
elnaiem@unhcr.org, Tel: +00249 183 471013, Cell +00249 912308842

**Zasha Millan**, Associate Reporting Officer, UNHCR Kassala  
millan@unhcr.org, Tel: +00249 183 471013, Cell +0024912167016