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HIGHLIGHTS



- The death toll has risen to 257 as of 24 July, up from 157 people reported the previous day, according to local authorities. The death toll is expected to rise to up to 500 people.
- More than 15,000 affected people need to be evacuated. Government is finalizing an evacuation plan
- An inter-agency humanitarian assessment team reached the area and is currently supporting response coordination through the established Emergency Coordination Center.
- The Ethiopian Red Cross has arrived in the area today, 23 July, with four trucks of life-saving supplies.
- The Regional Health Bureau has deployed two cars and medical supplies to the scene and is preparing to send a health team.
- Agencies are allocating financial and in-kind resources for the emergency response. Dispatch of supplies is ongoing across sectors.



Source: OCHA

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The death toll from the three successive landslide incidents following heavy rains on 21 and 22 July in Gezei Gofa Woreda of Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia Region has risen to 257 as of 24 July up from the 157 reported the previous day, according to local authorities. At least 125 people are displaced and currently sheltering with the host communities, while 12 people who sustained injuries were taken to Sawla Hospital for treatment. Search and rescue operations are ongoing under the leadership of local authorities with the support from the Ethiopian Red Cross Society and community members – mainly digging through mounds of mud with their bare hands and spades for lack of other options. The death toll is expected to rise to up to 500 people as per information received from local authorities.

Similarly, the number of people affected rose to 15,515 as of 24 July up from 14,000 reported on 23 July, according to authorities. These people are at high risk of further landslides and need to be evacuated to safe zones immediately. Amongst these are at least 1,320 children under 5 years of age and 5,293 pregnant and lactating women. The Federal Government, in collaboration with regional and zonal authorities is finalizing an evacuation plan.

RESPONSE

The inter-agency rapid assessment team, coordinated by OCHA, including WFP and DSS reached the area in the evening hours of 23 July. Additional agencies such as UNICEF, WHO, IOM, UNFPA, World Vision ECC-SDCO/S and CRS joined the team on 24 July. Initial response is ongoing, while partners are allocating additional emergency supplies. Dispatch of the supplies is ongoing.



Landslide affected area in Kencho Gozdi, Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia Region. 24 July 2024. Credit: UNDSS/Teshale Teshome

The Regional Disaster Risk Management Commission (DRMC) has provided non-food item (NFI) kits to 130 people and supplementary food assistance to over 850 people. The Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) has distributed NFI kits, including jerry cans, soap, and other essential items to 127 individuals. The EDRMC has sent an initial supply of food, emergency shelter and non-food items (ESNFI) to cater for 500 people.

From Humanitarian partners' side:

Food: WFP has secured funding to purchase 492 MT of assorted commodities, including cereals, pulses and vegetable oil. This will cover the needs of 14,500 people for two months. The first portion of food dispatch will start on Friday, 26 July. WFP is engaging with World Vision on the ground to handle the distribution to beneficiaries.

Nutrition: WFP is communicating with teams on the ground to look at the best way to provide nutrition support to children under five years of age and pregnant and lactating mothers. World Vision will handle the distribution of nutrition supplies, along with the food rations.

WaSH NFIs: UNICEF has dispatched WaSH NFIs to the Gofa Zone Health Department on 24 July, including 17,000 laundry soap, 96,000 strips of water treatment chemicals, some 1000 plastic sheets, 1,7000 jerry cans as well as five emergency drug kits. An additional 2,000 buckets will be dispatched from Addis Ababa on 25 July.

Health: WHO has already dispatched health supplies to Sawla on 24 July, including trauma and emergency health kits, medical supplies for cholera, measles and severe malnutrition.

NFIs: IOM has prepared NFIs for dispatch from Addis Ababa warehouse, including 1000 plastic sheets, 500 blankets, 250 NFI bags, 17,500 strips of water purification chemicals amongst others.

Meanwhile, an NGO-organized rapid response mechanism - SWAN (Save the Children, World Vision, Action Against Hunger and NRC) – which is supported by the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund (EHF) is already deployed. Eighteen modules of emergency medical supplies and equipment were ready for dispatch on 24 July. Some 575 Essential NFIs were procured through NRC. Additional interventions planned include deployment of mobile health and nutrition team (MHNT) to provide primary health care and nutrition services; provision of 200 dignity kits for women and girls, supporting 50 women with cash, facilitating psychosocial support and first aid training and provision of emergency water tracking service and latrine/shower construction as per assessment findings.

The Government has also requested additional international technical environment expertise to assist with contingency planning around further risks. OCHA is looking into bringing this expertise, to be embedded in the Government-established ECC and provide the required support.

COORDINATION

The Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC), together with regional and *woreda* governments has established an Emergency Coordination Center at *woreda* level to coordinate the humanitarian response. Senior EDRMC team deployed to the area, including the Commissioner of EDRMC, are providing leadership. United Nations and partners-deployed teams are supporting the ECC.

At Addis Ababa-level, the National Emergency Coordination Center (NECC) will be activated on Friday, 26 July when the first meeting will be held to discuss coordination and response.

Field-level Contacts:

- Ato Atilaw Amare – EDRMC – 0921-93-37-61
- Ato Tamirat Mengistu – OCHA Ethiopia – 0930-22-55-06