

Moyale Emergency
Inter-agency SitRep #4

Overview

The security situation in and around Moyale remains volatile following armed clashes that erupted on 22 October. The use of heavy weaponry has been reported, with clashes continuing on a daily basis. New arrivals are reporting that homes, buildings and neighbourhoods have been damaged and destroyed. Initial estimates from sources in Ethiopia estimated some 80,000 people may be internally displaced in Ethiopia. There are reports that the armed forces have regular pauses to allow for humanitarian passage for civilians to leave. Displacement is ongoing within Ethiopia and across the border into Kenya. The Kenyan Defense Forces are securing the border.

Based on the latest estimates from local authorities, the number of new arrivals has now reached approximately 50,000 individuals, underscoring the scale of the crisis and the rapidly growing pressure on local infrastructure, public services, and host communities. Most new arrivals are reported to be women and children, alongside older people and persons with disabilities who may face heightened risks.

Sporadic gunfire continues to be reported, including stray fire crossing into Kenya and causing injuries among Kenyan civilians. The situation remains fluid, with displacement into Kenya continuing on a daily basis. Refugees are currently sheltering in informal locations, including public buildings, open spaces and with host families in Moyale town. Of particular concern are refugees staying in areas close to the border, where continued insecurity and the risk of stray fire raise significant protection concerns. UNHCR is working with the authorities to move refugees away from these high-risk areas to safer locations. Local authorities have identified schools as temporary accommodation sites, which will become available once ongoing examinations are completed.

The continued influx is also placing increasing pressure on host communities and already limited services in Moyale County. Local residents continue to demonstrate considerable solidarity, with one village elder hosting more than 80 refugees. However, the presence of refugees in open spaces and along roadsides has contributed to congestion and heightened protection and public health concerns. Open defecation has been reported, increasing public-health risks, particularly where people are living in crowded sites. There are also concerns that people with pre-existing medical conditions may run out of essential medications.

The Sub-County has dispatched additional healthcare staff and police patrols to monitor the situation in the town. Continued arrivals are expected to further strain local capacity and increase community tensions, underscoring the urgent need to support the government and county response of safe shelter and humanitarian assistance.

Marsabit County Governor visited Moyale town on 29 October, called for an immediate ceasefire and raised continued concern about violence affecting communities on both sides of the border.

A small number of new arrivals have approached UNHCR for support to return to their areas of origin in other parts of Ethiopia, such as Gambella. Protection partners are on the ground assessing the feasibility of support.

Humanitarian Response

Humanitarians have not been able to access some border areas in and around Moyale County due to continued insecurity. Once security improves, the UN and NGO partners are ready to respond in support and alongside the government.

In Kenya, UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and WFP are supporting the government, through the Department of Refugee Services (DRS), and Marsabit County led response, mainly through the Kenya Red Cross Society. Additional NGOs are also arriving, supporting assessments and developing humanitarian action responses. UNHCR is supporting Department of Refugee Services (DRS) and County Officials to put in place a 3W mechanism to better coordinate the response.

Marsabit County officials, with support from six organizations, are leading a rapid needs assessment to identify current and emerging humanitarian needs and inform the response. IOM has deployed 33 trained enumerators to support data collection across the targeted five displacement sites. The assessment aims to reach approximately 700 respondents, including displaced populations and host communities. In addition, DRS has begun a profiling and level one registration exercise of new arrivals to gain a deeper understanding of the protection needs.

There are currently six known informal sites, with Oriental Mission Church school hosting the largest number with approximately 5,000 new arrivals. The other known sites are Arosa Mixed, St Mary's, Sessi, Somare and Taqwa. UNHCR has begun distribution of non-food items, such as mosquito nets and sleeping mats to these sites. As displacement continues and school exams finish, UNHCR and authorities will support new arrivals to move away from high-risk areas to the empty schools turned temporary accommodation sites. Malnutrition screening and treatment is ongoing in all six sites with 190 children under five screened - 18 were identified with MAM and four have SAM with oedema. One child with complicated SAM was referred to Moyale Sub-County Referral Hospital. Ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) are being prepositioning with 149 cartons dispatched from Nairobi. There are 70 cartons available at the Moyale Sub-County hub and 1,739 cartons available at the KRCS Isiolo hub.

Food support is being provided by Kenya Red Cross, Food for the Hungry, World Vision and PACIDA and local donations. WFP have dispatched food rations for 16,000 people for three months, which is expected to arrive within the coming days.

UNICEF, together with the County Department of Health and partners, has developed a health and nutrition response plan. As part of the response, UNICEF is supporting the Moyale Sub-County Health Management Team with additional personnel and logistical assistance. Five health workers and two community health promoters per camp are being deployed, working alongside KRCS volunteers.

Outreach teams treated 37 sick children: 22 with respiratory infections, eight with fever and seven with diarrhoea, 31 children received vitamin A, 28 were dewormed and four were vaccinated against measles. Referral mechanisms have been established to ensure identified cases requiring further care can be referred to Moyale Sub-County Referral Hospital.

Needs

With daily arrivals continuing against the backdrop of ongoing clashes, humanitarian needs are expected to remain acute. The United Nations is appealing for **USD 8.9 million** to address the most critical life-saving needs for the next three months.