



ETHIOPIA GOFA LANDSLIDE

DISASTER BRIEF

LS-2024-000125-ETH – AFRICA– JULY 2024

DISASTER OVERVIEW

On 21 and 22 July, intense rainfall triggered three successive landslides in the mountainous region of Gofa Zone, South Ethiopia. The death toll has risen to 257, with 183 confirmed, a significant increase from the 157 initially reported. Meanwhile, search and rescue operations are ongoing, and the numbers of casualties is expected to rise up to 500 deaths according to local authorities. A similar, but lower-scale landslide incident had occurred in May 2024 in the same area, where more than 50 people had died.

As of 24 July, the number of people affected has increased up to 15.500 including at least 6.750 people in Koncho Gozji Kebele and 7.765 people in Koncho Wiza Kebele. At least 596 individuals have been displaced and are currently taking refuge with host communities while local authorities reported that up to 5.600 vulnerable people are targete for evacuation.

The situation remains volatile, with ongoing rainfall exacerbating the risk of further landslides. The continued risk of landslides and the large distances involved complicate the rescue and relief efforts. with emergency services facing difficulties in reaching people in need, and search and rescue teams are relying on manual methods, including bare hands and spades, to clear debris.

TOTAL AFFECTED POPULATION

15k

Source: OCHA

TOTAL # OF CASUALTIES

257

Source: Local Authorities

TOTAL # OF IDPs

596

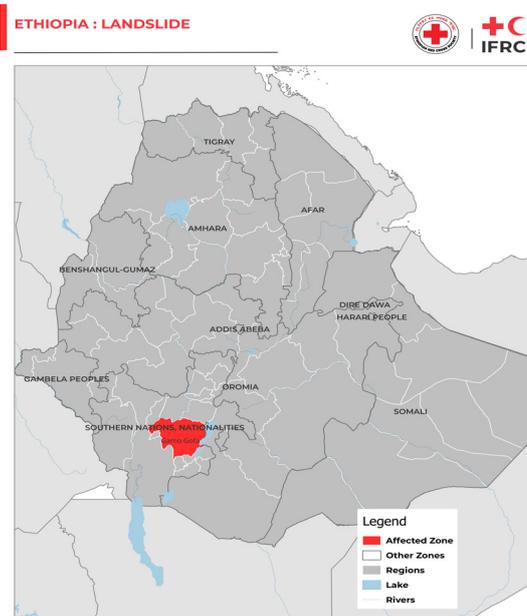
Source: Local Authorities

TOTAL # PEOPLE TARGETED FOR EVACUATION

6k

Source: Local Authorities

Ethiopia Reference Map



Timeline

- 1** 21 - 22 July 2024 – Intense rainfall triggers the first landslide in Gezei Gofa Woreda. Second and Third slide compounding the damage and affecting additional areas, further exacerbating the situation and leading to widespread devastation.
- 2** 23 July 2024 – Local authorities report at least 157 fatalities and approximately 14,000 people affected.
- 3** 24 July 2024 – The death toll rises to 257, with the number of affected individuals increasing to 15,515. Rescue operations continue under challenging conditions, with manual methods being used to clear debris.

The map used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.
Map data source: UN/WHO/IFRC, Ethiopia RC, Local authority, OCHA/IFRC. Map produced by IFRC/Amha Ababa CCD



SCOPE AND SCALE

DRIVERS AND AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Drought. El Niño caused a severe drought in Ethiopia in 2023. The below-average rains between June and August 2023 (kiremt rains), caused a poor harvest, affecting millions of lives and livestock and has triggered an alarming increase in food insecurity and acute malnutrition. Drought has accelerated crop damage, loss of pasture and water sources, resulting in asset depletions, disease outbreaks, and migration.

Floods. Since April 2024, heavy rains and flooding have impacted numerous regions across Ethiopia, including Afar, Amhara, Central Ethiopia, Oromia, Sidama, Somali, South Ethiopia, Southwest Ethiopia Peoples, Tigray, and Dire Dawa City Administration, resulting in widespread displacement and damage. Specifically, starting from early May, intense rainfall has caused severe flooding in various areas. In southern Oromia, nine villages of the Guji community have been particularly hard-hit, alongside reports of flooding in Sidama and Central Ethiopia.

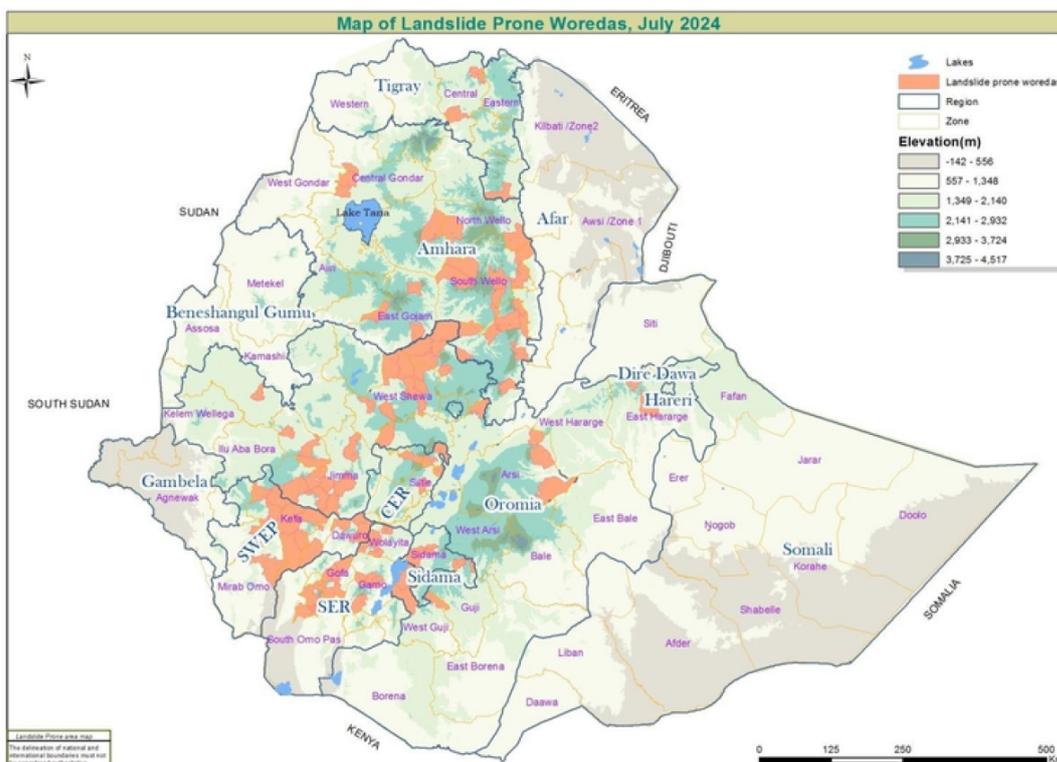
Epidemic. Ethiopia is currently grappling with multiple health crises, including prolonged outbreaks of cholera, measles, and malaria. The cholera outbreak, which began in August 2022, has become the country's longest on record. Recently, Afar and Oromia regions have experienced a significant increase in cholera cases, marking the third wave of outbreaks within the past three months. Meanwhile, the measles outbreak continues to escalate due to insufficient immunization coverage and inadequate awareness among caregivers about the importance of vaccinations, exacerbated by population displacement and limited access to healthcare. Malaria cases have surged to their highest levels in seven years, influenced by disrupted mosquito breeding patterns caused by both droughts and floods.

DAMAGE AND LOSSES

The landslide's impact has grown beyond the initial loss of 257 lives: the disaster has also displaced at least 596 individuals, who are now temporarily sheltered by local residents. Key informants reported that the number of casualties increased as subsequent waves of the mudslide struck those who had come to assist and rescue others, including local administrators, teachers, students, and health and agriculture workers. Among the deceased are the kebele chairperson, a member of the local police, health extension workers, and personnel from the Bureau of Agriculture who were on-site providing support.

Beyond the Gofa zone, the floods situation is most dire in West Guji, where 120,481 people have been affected, leading to the displacement of 102,128 individuals and resulting in five fatalities. Over 3,000 houses have been destroyed or damaged, and 13,779 hectares of farmland have been adversely affected, worsening food security concerns. In South Ethiopia, 4,000 people have been affected with three fatalities, while Central Ethiopia has recorded 4,065 displaced persons and six deaths, along with the destruction of 100 homes and damage to 774 hectares of cropland.

Source: EDRMC

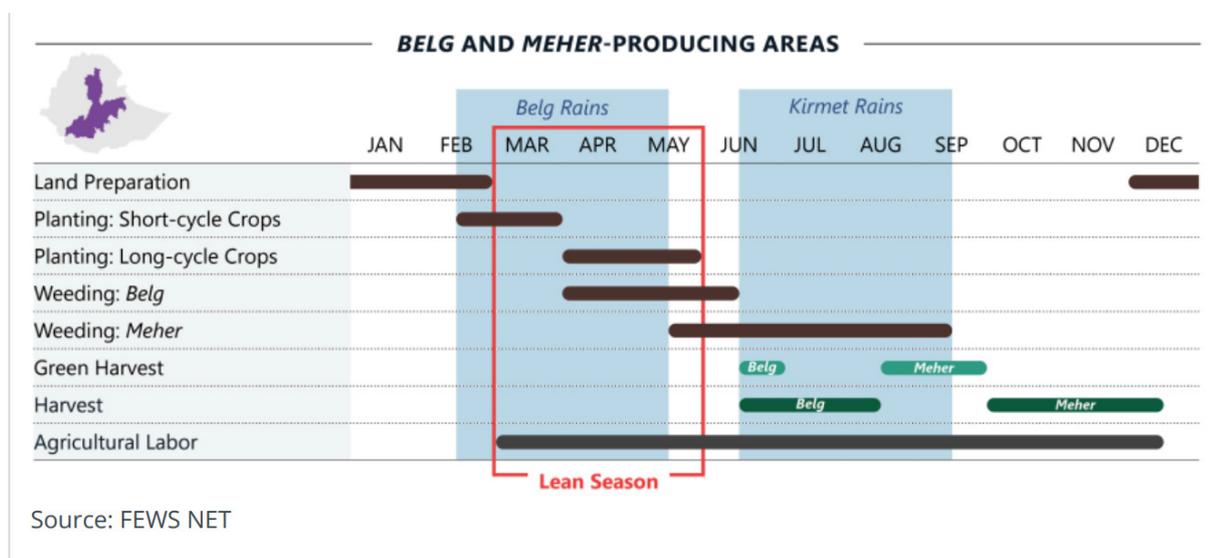


Humanitarian Conditions

Shelter & NFIs. The landslide and floods floodwaters destroyed peoples' houses with properties, thus leaving at least 600 individuals homeless, with people sleeping outside in the cold while others live in temporary shelters in the surrounding communities. As the floods water destroyed all household items, including beddings, clothing, cooking utensils, furniture etc, this left the affected households without necessities to support the most vulnerable among the 15.000 people affected. Moreover, 5.600 people will likely be relocated, possibly increasing the caseload for temporary or transtional shelters and NFIs.

Health. In the immediate term, there is an urgent need for basic emergency services focused on search and rescue operations and maternal healthcare, with a particular emphasis on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). The recent landslides and flooding in Gofa Zone have led to extensive waterlogging, which significantly increases mosquito breeding sites. This poses a heightened risk of vector-borne diseases, particularly malaria, in the affected areas. Additionally, these regions are susceptible to annual cholera outbreaks due to poor sanitation and personal hygiene practices among the local population. If not properly managed and monitored, a similar outbreak could occur following this disaster. Should a cholera outbreak ensue, local healthcare services would likely be overwhelmed by the surge in cases. The mudslides and floodwaters have also destroyed pit latrines and compromised safe water systems, exposing affected households to a high risk of waterborne diseases due to inadequate sanitation facilities and contamination of wells and rivers with fecal matter from the destroyed latrines. While no cholera cases have been reported yet, the impact of the floods on safe water and sanitation facilities could potentially trigger an outbreak.

Food & Livelihoods. Despite improvements following the 2020-2023 drought and ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia, rural areas like Gofa Zone still face significant humanitarian food assistance needs. Gofa Zone is primarily agricultural, with the local economy heavily dependent on crop production and livestock rearing. Major crops include maize, teff, cereals, coffee, and various fruits and vegetables. Livestock farming also plays a vital role, although agriculture is the predominant livelihood. In the context of losing access to land and productive assets, combined with pre-shock socio-economic duress and existing food insecurity, vulnerable groups will struggle to access sufficient quality food in the coming months. Over 1,300 children under five and 427 pregnant and lactating women are in critical need of nutrition support.



Projected Outlook

The humanitarian situation in Gofa Zone is likely to deteriorate significantly without immediate aid assistance. The widening soil cracks and increased rainfall forecast indicate a high probability of further landslides and compounded flooding events, which could affect larger areas and displace more residents. This ongoing natural threat, combined with pre-existing food insecurity and socio-economic duress, places the most vulnerable populations, including over 1,300 children under five and 427 pregnant and lactating women, at critical risk.

In the immediate term, the risk of additional landslides and flooding from predicted showers and thunderstorms in the next days is likely to exacerbates the situation. This will likely result in new internal displacements and further strain on already limited resources, highlighting the urgent need for coordinated humanitarian assistance to prevent further deterioration and mitigate the impact on the affected communities.