

Nutrition Situation in Tigray

A Rapid analysis of Nutrition Programme data September 2021

Context

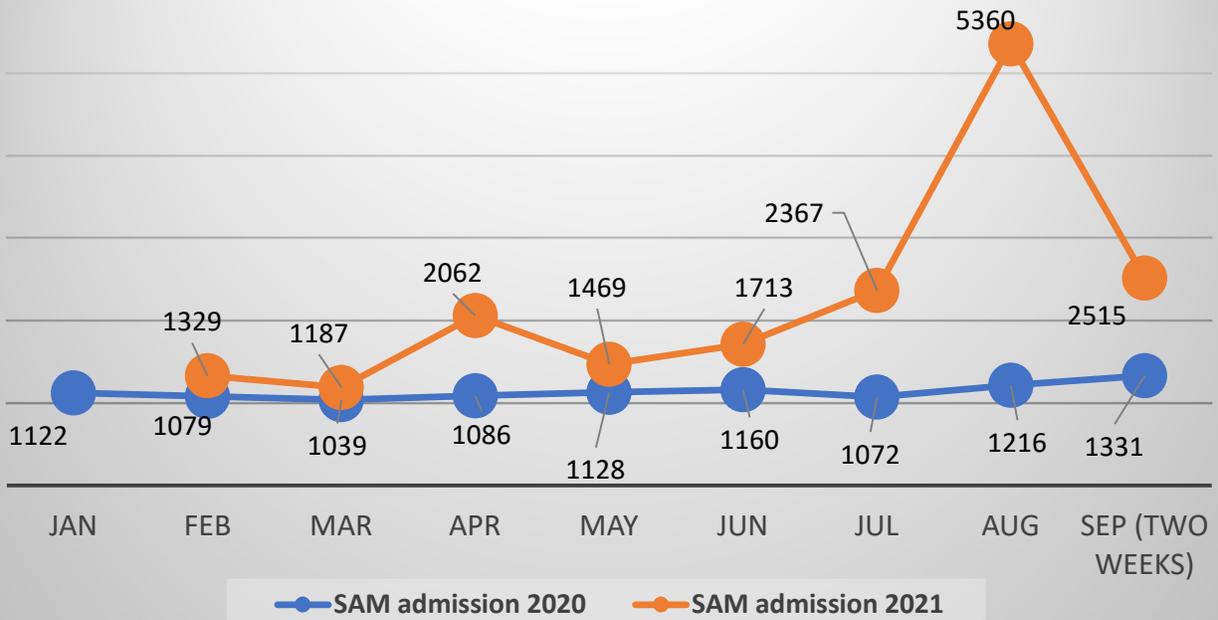
Since the start of the conflict in Tigray, the humanitarian situation across the region has been rapidly deteriorating. Due to limited access and inadequate humanitarian response, the entire population of the Tigray region is exposed to high rate of malnutrition and health problems. The most affected are the children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and elderly people. With the continuous blockade imposed on the region since June 2021, an increasing number of children and PLW are suffering from acute malnutrition due to shortage of food in the household, lack of nutritious food for the children, limited access to clean and safe water and lack of health services with children exposed to infections driving them to become moderately and severely wasted.

Due to the disruption of the health system, the routine nutrition surveillance was disrupted too. Thus the nutrition situation in Tigray is at present monitored through the Nutrition cluster partners programme related data monitoring the trends of **severely malnourished children's (SAM) admissions in treatment centers** and **MUAC screening data** collected from the health facilities with the support of the nutrition consultants, nutrition partners. The Regional Health Bureau (RBH) also collects limited data from the few health centers that have restarted work. The collection of data by RHB however is severely constrained as not all health workforce, and specifically the health frontline workers, have returned to work and the limitations imposed by the lack of fuel, communications and cash. Since February 2021 children have been screened in 74 Woredas and 8 IDP sites.

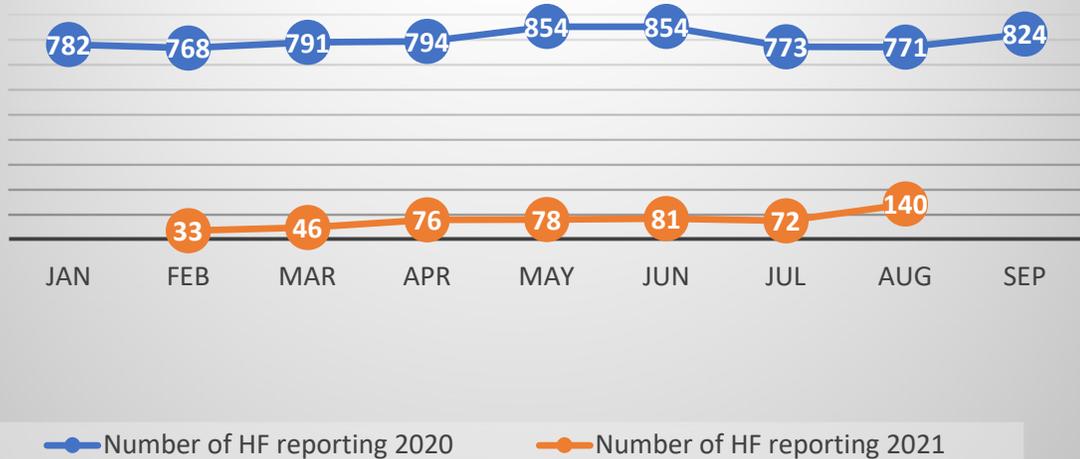
SAM Admissions

The children under 5 (U5) SAM cases that were received for treatment in 2021 are significantly higher than the 2020 admissions for the similar months. Accordingly, from March to August 2020, on average 6,564 severely malnourished children received treatment in 801 treatment centers (with an 88.8% reporting rate). During the same period in 2021, some on average 14,158 severely malnourished children received treatment in 81 treatment centers (with 10% reporting rate) representing already a 216% increase in SAM case treatment. Should the reporting rate has been as in 2020, within the current food shortage situation, the extrapolation of the numbers would indicate that currently there are an estimated 128,870 SAM children or a 19-fold increase in the admission rate in comparison to the same months in 2020 (*See Graph 1: SAM admissions trend 2020 and 2021, and Graph 2: number of health facilities that have reported in 2020 and 2021. Please note that September data are only for 2 weeks period at the beginning of the month*).

Graph 1: Tigray SAM admission trend in 2020 and 2021



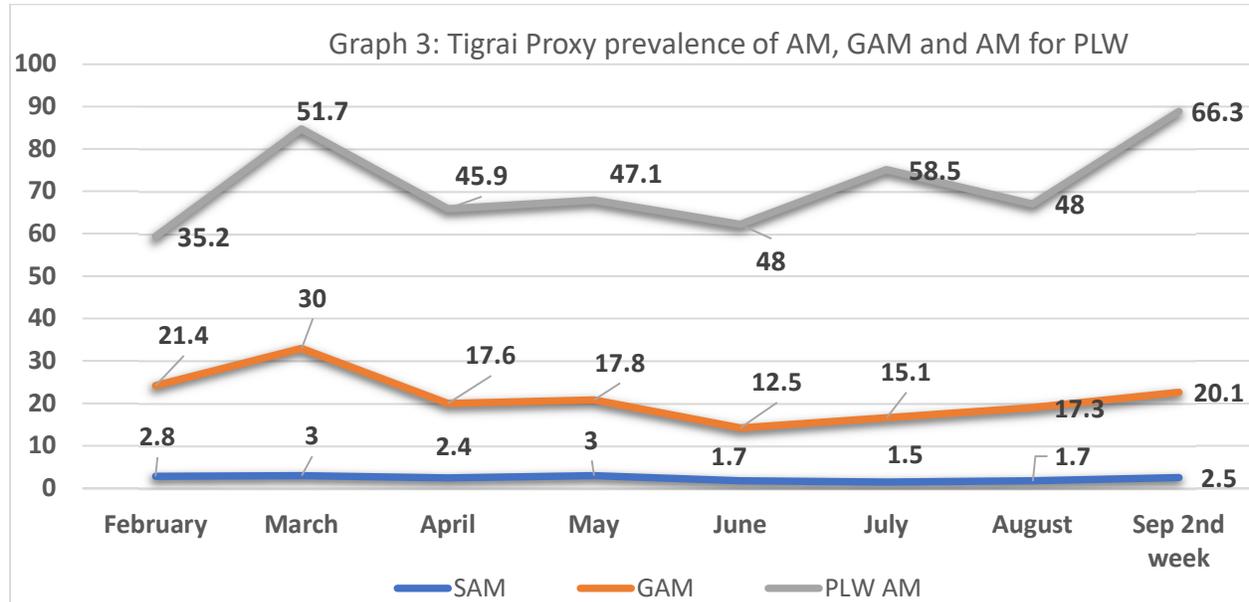
Graph 2: Number of HF reporting in 2020 and 2021



MUAC screening

Since the beginning of February 2021, a total of 1,006,614 U5 children have been screened. On average **2.0%** (20,175) have been identified as severely acute malnourished (SAM) and **15.1%** (151,941) were identified as moderately acute malnourished (MAM). In first two weeks of September 2021 a total of 38,895 children U5 were screened with 3.1 % SAM and 19.6 % MAM cases identified. Similarly, the nutritional status of PLW has been deteriorating too. Since the beginning of February 2021 acute malnutrition among PLW has been consistently increasing and

reached a current average of **51.2%** from the total of 249,554 PLWs screened across the region. In first two weeks of September 2021 a total of 11,086 PLWs were screened with **70.4%** (7,806) identified as acutely malnourished (See Graph 3- Trend analysis of screening data).



Analysis of IPC 5 woredas

From January till June 2021 the access to the IPC 5 woredas was limited. This combined with the complete disruption of the nutrition surveillance system hampered severely the collection of data on malnutrition. After June 2021, while access to 75 % of the areas in Tigray improved, monitoring of nutrition situation continued to be hampered due to shortage of fuel and the slow pace of reopening of primary health centers. As evidenced by Table 1 below¹ the Nutrition cluster could not obtain full data from all IPC 5 woredas. Similarly, due to access, cash and fuel limitation the Nutrition cluster could not conduct representative mass nutrition screening. Following the three months blockade and the severe dwindling of food availability, coupled with projected low level of harvest (and estimated projected 14% from the normal harvest pattern), and, as evidenced from preliminary Nutrition cluster data reflected under Table 1 below the malnutrition status of children and PLW in the IPC 5 woredas is higher than the emergency threshold level for acute malnutrition (*prevalence of Global and Severe Acute Malnutrition (GAM) above 15 and 3 per cent respectively*).

KEY MESSAGES

- The **nutrition situation in Tigray is already critical and above the emergency GAM threshold**. The continuous blockade, lack of food and limited access to clean waters as a

¹ Preliminary indicative data needing further abnalysis

result of the damage of water system network are projected to further deteriorate and aggravate the malnutrition situation and have **catastrophic outcomes** for children and women in Tigray.

- It is expected that at least 56,000 children will need treatment for Severe Acute Malnutrition in 2021.
- **Every second pregnant and breastfeeding woman is malnourished in Tigray**, leading to poor pregnancy outcome, low-birth weight, stunting and maternal death.
- To prevent the catastrophic outcomes for women and children in Tigray, including child deaths, children and women in Tigray need urgent access to nutrition services, food assistance, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and protection services, which can be achieved through unconditional lifting of the region's blockade and immediate provision of adequate humanitarian assistance supported by uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian supplies, cash and fuel to the region.

Table 1 – IPC priority 1 woredas
(Preliminary indicative data needing further abnalysis)

Nutrition Situation in IPC Priority 1 woredas (Programme data)

February - September 2021

| Zone | Woreda | Total population | Children U5 | Children U5 screened | Percentage | Children U5 MAM | Percentage | Children U5 SAM | Percentage | GAM | PLW | PLW Screened | Percentage | PLW MAM | Percentage |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Central | Abergele (TG) | 71,099 | 9,207 | 8,857 | 96% | 2,199 | 25% | 151 | 2% | 27% | 3,199 | 2,217 | 69% | 1,076 | 49% |
| Central | Adet | 83,235 | 10,779 | 19,014 | 176% | 3,961 | 21% | 168 | 1% | 22% | 3,746 | 2,992 | 80% | 2,317 | 77% |
| Central | Adet | 83,235 | 10,779 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0% | 3,746 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Central | Ahferom | 74,955 | 9,707 | 14,748 | 152% | 2,516 | 17% | 258 | 2% | 19% | 3,373 | 3,222 | 96% | 2,683 | 83% |
| Central | Ahsea | 40,033 | 5,184 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0% | 1,801 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Central | Chila | 73,419 | 9,508 | 2,088 | 22% | 427 | 20% | 63 | 3% | 23% | 3,304 | 281 | 9% | 281 | 100% |
| Central | Edaga arbi | 66,698 | 8,637 | 4,481 | 52% | 594 | 13% | 52 | 1% | 14% | 3,001 | 1,633 | 54% | 729 | 45% |
| Central | Egela | 107,864 | 13,968 | 2,545 | 18% | 281 | 11% | 93 | 4% | 15% | 4,854 | 596 | 12% | 316 | 53% |
| Central | Emba Siemeti | 50,544 | 6,545 | 1,572 | 24% | 431 | 27% | 71 | 5% | 32% | 2,274 | 635 | 28% | 453 | 71% |
| Central | Endafelasi | 53,463 | 6,923 | 9,876 | 143% | 966 | 10% | 154 | 2% | 11% | 2,406 | 2,697 | 112% | 1,459 | 54% |
| Central | Hahayle | 31,320 | 4,056 | 4,998 | 123% | 427 | 9% | 198 | 4% | 13% | 1,409 | 300 | 21% | 295 | 98% |
| Central | Keyhe Tekli | 92,872 | 12,027 | 15,333 | 127% | 4,349 | 28% | 241 | 2% | 30% | 4,179 | 1,493 | 36% | 995 | 67% |
| Central | Kola Temben | 80,450 | 10,418 | 23,781 | 228% | 2,983 | 13% | 334 | 1% | 14% | 3,620 | 7,736 | 214% | 3,728 | 48% |
| Central | Laelay Maychew | 74,493 | 9,647 | 6,628 | 69% | 1,315 | 20% | 88 | 1% | 21% | 3,352 | 893 | 27% | 1,005 | 113% |
| Central | Rama | 60,077 | 7,780 | 2,841 | 37% | 345 | 12% | 112 | 4% | 16% | 2,703 | 370 | 14% | 274 | 74% |
| Eastern | Geraleta | 64,198 | 8,314 | 15,846 | 191% | 1,639 | 10% | 193 | 1% | 12% | 2,889 | 3,340 | 116% | 2,055 | 62% |
| Northwestern | Asgede | 104,408 | 13,521 | 3,286 | 24% | 239 | 7% | 14 | 0% | 8% | 4,698 | 632 | 13% | 224 | 35% |
| Northwestern | Dima | 34,068 | 4,412 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0% | 1,533 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Northwestern | Seyemti Adyabo | 54,741 | 7,089 | 3,416 | 48% | 491 | 14% | 40 | 1% | 16% | 2,463 | 497 | 20% | 295 | 59% |
| Northwestern | Tselemti | 128,533 | 16,645 | 5,985 | 36% | 1,948 | 33% | 66 | 1% | 34% | 5,784 | 2,332 | 40% | 764 | 33% |
| Northwestern | Tsmiaba | 70,962 | 9,190 | 1,329 | 14% | 130 | 10% | 67 | 3% | 15% | 3,193 | 53 | 2% | 43 | 81% |
| Northwestern | Zana | 69,755 | 9,033 | 1,042 | 12% | 228 | 22% | 16 | 2% | 23% | 3,139 | 321 | 10% | 144 | 45% |
| Total | | 1,570,423 | 203,370 | 147,666 | 73% | 25,469 | 17% | 2,379 | 2% | 19% | 70,669 | 32,240 | 46% | 19,136 | 59% |