



April 2022

Gambella

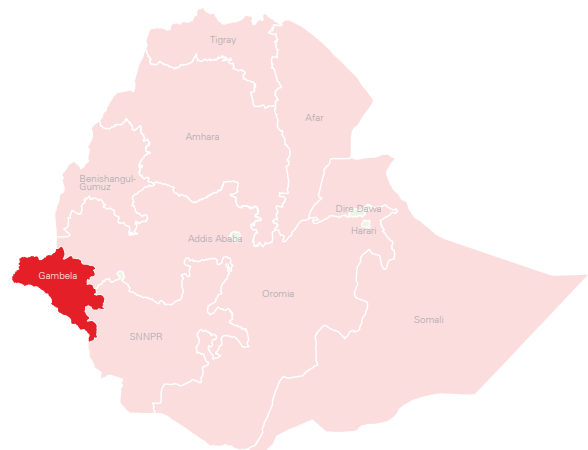
Regional Brief

General Overview

Gambella Region is located in the South Western part of Ethiopia with an estimated population of 463,000.¹

Gambella is rich in resources and arable land. However, the region is prone to floods and drought, and hosts 337,421² refugees from South Sudan, a population almost equal to its own.

Some 66 per cent of the refugee population is under the age of 18 years.



Population data based on a projection from the 2007 census



Total Population
463,000



Capital: Gamblla

There are three administrative zones, 13 woredas (districts), one special woreda, one city administration and a total of 262 kebeles (sub-districts) in the woredas of the region.

¹ Population data based on a projection from the 2007 census
² UNHCR 2021

Programme Overview



WASH

While access to safe water is generally better in most rural areas in Gambella, improved urban water supply remain very critical in most medium towns like Gambella town, and during the dry seasons many people must travel far in search of water. Moreover, maintenance of the water schemes that have been put in place remains a challenge.

Like in the rest of the country, hygiene and sanitation are poor; EDHS, regional water and health bureaus data shows that the percentage of households in Gambella using improved water sources was 73.3 per cent at the end of June 2020, while improved sanitation facilities slightly increased from 8 per cent in 2016 (EDHS) to 16.2 per cent in 2020. Only 7 per cent of women and 4 per cent of men in Gambella know the practice of handwashing at critical times.



73%

of the population use improved water sources.



16.2%

have access to improved sanitation facilities



Health

Gambella has made significant progress in maternal healthcare with 86 per cent of pregnant women receiving antenatal care compared to 54 per cent in 2011, and 70 per cent having their births assisted by skilled healthcare workers compared to 27 per cent in 2011.³ Gambella has also managed to increase vaccination coverage from 16 per cent in 2011 to 38 per cent in 2019. Yet, recurrent emergencies, poor living conditions and shortages of safe water during the dry season have contributed to the region's high child mortality rates; children die mostly from diarrhoea, malaria and acute respiratory infections.

Compared to other regions, adolescents lack platforms to discuss their sexual and reproductive health rights. The HIV prevalence rate among people aged 15-49 is relatively high at 4.8 per cent compared to a national average of 0.9 per cent.⁴



The neonatal mortality rate is 36 per 1,000 live births.



The under-five mortality rate is 88 per 1,000 live births.



The infant mortality rate is 56 per 1,000 live births.



Nutrition

Gambella has reduced stunting rates in recent years and today, at 18 per cent Gambella has the second lowest rate in Ethiopia after the country's capital, Addis Ababa. Yet, disturbingly, the number of children who are wasted (low weight for age) has been increasing since 2005. According to the EDHS 2016, children aged between 9 and 12 months of age are the most likely to be wasted (48 per cent) probably due to recurrent emergencies, poor feeding practices and diseases, particularly malaria and diarrhoea.



18%

of children under 5 years of age are stunted



13%

of children under 5 years of age are wasted



18%

of children under 5 years of age are underweight



Education

Many children start off disadvantaged, not accessing any form of early learning. Then the low quality of education, including unskilled teachers, lack of educational materials and basic learning equipment, inadequate support from parents and an irrelevant curriculum contribute to poor learning, resulting in many children failing to muster even basic literacy and numeracy.

Moreover, flooding in some areas in Gambella means the school terms often start late and internal and cross-border conflicts cause many children to drop out because it is unsafe to travel to school. Others drop out as they live too far from school and are cut off from transport routes due to poor infrastructure.



Primary Net Enrolment Ratio is

97.4%



Gender Parity index for primary education is

0.94%



Gender Parity index for secondary education is

0.74%



Child Protection

Reducing child marriage in Gambella is still a challenge. In 1991, the Gambella region had the highest prevalence of child marriage with nearly one in four women aged between 25 to 49 married before the age of 15. While there has been some progress over the years, since 2011, the median age has stagnated at 17.4 years. Similar to other regions, in 2016, only 2.6 per cent of children under the age of 5 years were

registered with civil authorities of whom 1.6 per cent had a birth certificate. Since August 2016, a national registration system has been operating although awareness about civil registration in rural communities is still very low. Refugees and displaced people urgently need to be linked with appropriate services particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual violence and trafficking.



17.3%

is the median age of marriage among women aged 20-49



33%

of women aged 15-49 years undergo FGM/C (2016)



2.5%

of children under 5 have their births registered



Social Policy

Over the past two decades, Gambella has demonstrated a consistent decline in monetary poverty and now at 23 per cent, the number of people living in monetary poverty is just below the national average. As in other regions, rural poverty at 26 per cent is higher than urban poverty at 17 per cent. The region's urban population is relatively large at 36 per cent.

Regarding multidimensional poverty, 23 per cent of children under 18 are deprived of at least five basic needs or services compared to 43 per cent of children across Ethiopia. The federal government implements the Protective Safety Net Programme (PSNP), targeting selected vulnerable woredas in food-insecure and disaster-prone rural areas.



26.1%

of the population live in monetary poverty



23%

of the population are deprived of at least five basic needs

Key results achieved in 2021

UNICEF reached an estimated:



100,000 children with nutritional services



55,000 children (nearly half of them girls) with educational support



135,000 children with basic health services



11,000 children (nearly half of them girls) with basic WASH services



2,000 children and women with child protection services



300,000 people with life-saving emergency assistance in response to conflict/drought/floods. (Health reached 100,000 people and WASH 200,000)

Key targets in 2022

UNICEF plans to reach an estimated:



120,000 children with nutritional services



50,000 children with educational support



165,000 children with basic health services



30,000 children (nearly half of them girls) with basic WASH services



6,000 children and women with child protection services



6,000 flood affected population with social protection services



165,000 people with life-saving emergency assistance in response to conflict/drought/floods (Health target to reach 100,000 people and WASH 65,000)