

Statement on the Renewed War and Communications Blackout in Tigray

September 25, 2026

Harambee Collective is deeply alarmed by the renewed war in Tigray and its devastating consequences for civilians. The current escalation follows months of intensifying pressure on the region, including renewed [drone strikes](#) on civilians and civilian infrastructure, severe restrictions on [fuel](#) and [medicine](#), disruptions to public services, and crippling constraints on humanitarian assistance. These conditions have compounded the devastation of the previous war, systematically dismantling the very infrastructure that communities depend on for their survival and recovery.

Against this backdrop, the [telecommunications disruption](#) reported across Tigray since September 24 is particularly alarming. In a conflict setting, communication is not a luxury; it is a humanitarian lifeline. People depend on reliable phone and internet services to call for emergency help, reach healthcare workers, locate displaced family members, and coordinate lifesaving assistance. When communications are cut, civilians are isolated precisely when their need for protection is greatest.

For survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), this forced isolation is devastating. Harambee Collective operates the region's only toll-free [helpline](#), providing psychosocial support to GBV survivors and connecting them with health, legal, and essential services. The helpline is often a critical first point of contact for survivors seeking safety, care, and support. With telecommunications disrupted, survivors are now unable to access this vital lifeline. This comes at a time when the region is already struggling to rebuild GBV services following the destruction of health infrastructure, the loss of healthcare workers, and cuts to essential humanitarian assistance.

The impact extends beyond the helpline to the broader humanitarian response. Harambee has lost reliable communication with team members working on the ground, making it difficult to confirm their safety and coordinate urgently needed support. Our ability to transfer funds and sustain our programs has also been severely disrupted, putting essential activities at risk, including the distribution of sanitary kits to displaced women and girls.

These consequences illustrate how the renewed fighting and communications disruption are compounding an already severe humanitarian and protection crisis. When civilians cannot communicate, humanitarian organizations cannot reliably reach the people they serve, and essential services are interrupted, the consequences extend far beyond

connectivity itself. People are left with fewer ways to seek help, access care, and meet their basic needs. Immediate action is needed to stop further harm and restore the conditions necessary for civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, and recovery.

We therefore urgently call for:

- An immediate cessation of hostilities and a credible, inclusive political process to end the renewed war and address the unresolved issues driving it.
- Immediate restoration of telecommunications services across Tigray, including reliable access to phone and internet services, and protection of communications and other public infrastructure from disruption or attack.
- Unhindered humanitarian access, including the freedom for humanitarian organizations to communicate with field staff, transfer operational funds, and deliver aid and services safely.
- Direct, flexible, and sustained funding for organizations with a local presence and trusted networks to ensure the continuity of lifesaving protection and essential survivor-centered services.

Harambee Collective remains committed to supporting survivors in Tigray and delivering essential services wherever and however we safely can. Our helpline, our staff, and the services we provide are lifelines, and those lifelines depend on functioning communications, safe humanitarian access, and protected infrastructure.



A woman displaced due to the conflict in northern Ethiopia sits in front of her shelter at a camp for internally displaced people in Abi Adi, Tigray, June 24, 2023. © 2023 Tiksa Negeri/Reuters

Blurb: Amid a catastrophic return to full-scale conflict, a total telecommunications shutdown has isolated millions of civilians across Tigray, severing the region's only GBV helpline and paralyzing the vital networks required for civilian survival and protection.