

Ethiopia

February 2020

Ethiopia is one of the largest refugee-hosting countries in Africa, sheltering **748,448** registered refugees and asylum seekers as of 29 February 2020.

UNHCR and ARRA launched the **2020-2021 Country Refugee Response Plan** appealing for **\$US 658M** to support over **750,000** refugees and more than **half a million** of their Ethiopian hosts this year. The plan outlines the collective response of **57** partners, covering both humanitarian activities and the implementation of long-term resilience and self-reliance programmes.

UNHCR welcomes Ethiopia's ratification of the **Kampala Convention**, describing it as a significant achievement for a country that has had to recently manage its own internal displacement situation. UNHCR has offered its support to the Government in implementing the tenets of the Convention.

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

379 national staff, **127** international staff (including JPOs)
143 individual contractors; **33** deployees & IUNVs

Offices:

1 Branch Office in (Addis Ababa), **5** Sub-Offices - Melkadida, Gambella, Shire, Assosa and Jijiga, **4** Field Offices – Embamadre, Tongo, Pugnido and Mekelle.

Funding (As of 29 February 2020)

USD 350.1 M requested for Ethiopia



Working with partners

- UNHCR's main government counterpart to ensure the protection of refugees in Ethiopia is the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA), within the Ministry of Peace. UNHCR also works in close coordination with 57 humanitarian and development partners and is part of the Humanitarian Country Team in Ethiopia where refugee programmes are discussed strategically to ensure the needs of refugees are adequately presented and addressed across the UN System. UNHCR builds on a well-established coordination forum, including the inter-sector Refugee Coordination Group, together with national and regional sector working groups. As part of the GCR/CRRF, UNHCR is furthering partnerships with line ministries, regional and local authorities, as well as development partners and the private sector.

Main Activities

Protection

- UNHCR and ARRA with the support of IOM organized the return of 76 Ethiopian refugees from Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya on 19 February 2020. UNHCR provided the returnees with a reintegration package which included transportation allowances to support them to travel to their places of origin in the Somali and Oromia regions.
- UNHCR renovated and handed over a Health Post and related infrastructure to the authorities in Digdiga, a remote village in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region for use by IDP returnees and other residents. The facility was destroyed in September 2018 following the communal violence that displaced 3,500 of the village's residents.

Education

- Preliminary enrolment data (pending final data analysis using the Education Management Information System (EMIS)), show a total of 212,722 refugee students are attending school at the pre-primary (59,846), primary (138,249) and secondary (14,627) levels. This is in addition to 255 refugee students who joined public universities in Ethiopia this academic year and hundreds of others who are in their sophomore and advanced levels. The Digital Education Platform - a new tool for recording students' data and provide accurate information on school enrolment rate and out of school children - has been rolled out in all refugee camps in the country.

Health

- In February, there were no confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ethiopia. However, intensive preparations were going on with emphasis on early warning, quick diagnosis, isolation and care, awareness creation and leadership and coordination. UNHCR participated in COVID-19 preparedness initiatives at national and regional levels and is advocating for refugees to be fully integrated into the national and regional response plans. It is also undertaking a detailed assessment of the capacity of partners to respond to the health emergency in the refugee camps and related settlements. The general health status of the refugees is stable with mortality indicators remaining within acceptable limits. Comprehensive primary and secondary healthcare services continue to be provided, with no outbreaks reported.

Food Security and Nutrition

- The prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in 85% of the refugee camps remains higher than the 10% UNHCR standard for stable operations. This is due to household food insecurity contributed to by limited access to livelihoods, reduced food assistance (refugees continue to receive only 84% of the minimum recommended 2100Kcal/day) and inappropriate feeding practices, among others. UNHCR is working to improve the nutrition status of refugees by strengthening the ongoing nutrition programmes and their monitoring, together with continued

advocacy with donors for the reinstatement of the full food ration with 2100Kcal/person/day. Training on Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) was given to relevant personnel in order to strengthen ongoing nutrition programmes.

Water and Sanitation

- Out of the 26 refugee camps in Ethiopia 67% receive the acceptable standard of 15 litres and above of water per person per day, while the remaining 33% receive less. Similarly, 82% of the refugee camps have met the minimum standards of 20 persons per latrine, while only 40 percent of the refugee households have access to family latrines.

Shelter

- The National Shelter Strategy (2017-2020) informs a collective and coherent response, based on available resources, to enable refugees to access shelter solutions. 54 percent of the refugees in Ethiopia need transitional shelter solutions and UNHCR and partners are working to narrow down the gap. UNHCR has completed some 60% of the 850 shelters it has been constructing in the Gedeo (SNNPS) and West Guji (Oromia) Regions for the benefit of vulnerable returnees who were previously displaced due to communal violence.

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

- Following the successful piloting and subsequent positive assessment results of the Cash Based-Interventions (CBI) in camps around Jijiga, UNHCR is working to scale up the use of cash to the other locations. Cash will be used in lieu of a range of in-kind aid supplies including non-food aid items. A multipurpose cash assistance continues to be implemented to refugees in Addis Ababa. Cash will also be used to respond to the ongoing IDP situation as well as reintegration support for Ethiopian refugees who voluntarily return to their country.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- UNHCR and ARRA work in close coordination with partners to ensure efficient and coordinated delivery of protection and assistance to refugees. Camp coordination meetings and technical working groups have been taking place both at the zonal and camp levels.

Access to Energy

- While UNHCR strives to improve refugees' access to energy for cooking, lighting and other uses, the gaps remain huge. Less than 8% of the refugee households have access to alternative cooking energy, while access to alternative household lighting is slightly better at 25%. Twenty-six percent of the households have access to street lighting and 24% of the health facilities within the refugee camps have been powered by solar and grid electricity. The plan for 2020 is, resource permitting, to make a significant improvement in ensuring access to alternative energy for different uses, including the electrification of health facilities and solarization of schools and water infrastructure. Close to a million seedlings will be raised and transplanted during the year to mitigate environmental degradation.

Livelihoods and Self-Reliance

- In 2020, UNHCR will continue to work with the Government to promote economic opportunities for refugees and support their eventual inclusion within the host communities. This will include supporting the implementation of Ethiopia's pledges at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019 related to creating economic opportunities and skills development for refugees and Ethiopians. UNHCR supports the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs, ARRA, to roll out the procedural directives on work permits, residence permits and business licenses under joint programmes that will be designed to benefit both refugees and their hosts. UNHCR continues with the coordination of strategic partners as they implement activities in refugee hosting areas, as well as support opportunities for private sector participation and for financial inclusion.

Durable Solutions

- Providing resettlement opportunities for refugees remains a top priority as conditions for voluntary repatriation are unfavourable for most refugees in Ethiopia and local integration programmes are yet to be put in place. In 2020, 1800 individuals will be referred to the UNHCR Regional Bureau in Nairobi for onward submission to resettlement countries. As of 29 February 2020, 360 individuals have been submitted to different resettlement countries while seven others have been processed for family reunification. In February, 176 individuals have departed to different resettlement countries in addition to the 77 who have gone to Italy as part of the second phase of the Italian Humanitarian Corridor.

External / Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the direct contributions to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation from:

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