



Ireland Contributes €1 million to UNHCR's Work in Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, 14 June 2018: The Government of Ireland today announced the disbursement of €1 million to the office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in support of its work with refugees in Ethiopia. The money, made available through Irish Aid, Ireland's official programme for overseas development assistance, will go to supporting the delivery of international protection and critical services to the over 920,000 refugees hosted by Ethiopia.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, works to ensure the protection of refugees in Ethiopia in collaboration with some 50 humanitarian partners, including the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, UNHCR's government counterpart mandated to oversee refugee matters.

After signing the agreement with H.E. Sonja Hyland, the Ambassador of Ireland to Ethiopia, Clementine Nkweta-Salami, the UNHCR Representative in Ethiopia, thanked the Ambassador and the Government and people of Ireland for the contribution. She noted that the funding will "help protect and restore the dignity of the refugees. Irish Aid funds will support interventions to improve the health and nutritional status of refugees. They will also strengthen child protection and allow for greater access to education and livelihood opportunities".

Ethiopia is host to the second largest refugee population in Africa, sheltering 920,262 registered refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from South Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia.

H.E. Sonja Hyland, Ambassador of Ireland to Ethiopia stated that Ireland recognises Ethiopia's generosity and leadership in hosting the second largest number of refugees in Africa and particularly welcomes the country's support for the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) which will allow refugees to be self-reliant and build sustainable livelihoods. "Empowerment of refugees, in particular women and children, is critical to end poverty and overcome fragility," she said, adding "Ireland plays an important role in the global humanitarian response and we are committed to assisting the poorest and most vulnerable in emergency situations.

Ambassador Hyland said her government will continue its support for UNHCR's work in Ethiopia and is committed to continuing its long-standing partnership with the Government of Ethiopia and the UN Country Team to support those most in need.

The contribution of €1 million reflects Irish Aid's ongoing commitment to respond to the humanitarian needs of refugees in Ethiopia. Irish Aid has contributed over €2 million to the UNHCR in Ethiopia since 2016, as part of an overall cooperation programme with Ethiopia totalling €130 million between 2014– 2018.

UNHCR's financial requirements for 2018 is only 17 percent funded, forcing the agency to focus on life-saving interventions, including food, shelter and sanitation facilities.

Ms. Nkweta-Salami added: "in the last month, monthly food rations for refugees have reduced further, due to a lack of funding. Limited food has significant negative effects. Lack of nutrients can lead to stunted growth in children. Hunger affects students, who struggle to concentrate in school, and adults, making them less productive when working. Simply put, a lack of food can make it even harder for refugees to achieve self-reliance."

Ethiopia currently hosts 920,262 refugees from many countries including 434,352 South Sudanese, 255,943 Somalis and 169,252 Eritreans. Children under 18 years of age make up

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almost 60 percent of the refugee population. This calls for more donor support to ensure better care and protection for these young refugees.

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