

Ethiopia

September 2020

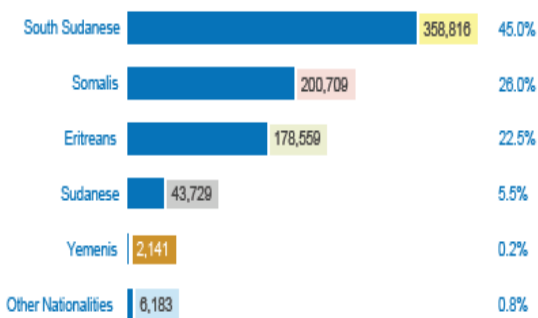
Ethiopia is one of the **largest refugee-hosting countries** in Africa, sheltering **792,030** registered refugees and asylum seekers as of 30 September 2020. The overwhelming majority originate from **South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea** and **Sudan**.

UNHCR continues to work on **COVID-19** precaution and prevention efforts among refugees and their hosts. It is strengthening community awareness, improving health and sanitation facilities and distributing PPEs for health care workers and first responders.

UNHCR continues to respond to the **IDP situation** in Ethiopia, leading the **Protection Cluster** and providing emergency aid and other support to **IDP returnees** and those displaced by the recent flooding.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Countries of Origin



Ethiopia currently hosts over 792,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly sheltered in 26 refugee camps established in five Regional States. There is a sizeable group of refugees and asylum seekers living out of camp, including over 33,000 who are registered as urban refugees in the capital Addis Ababa

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

385 National Staff

118 International Staff

Offices:

1 Branch Office in Addis

Ababa; 5 Sub Offices in Assosa, Gambella, Jijiga, Melkadida and Shire; 5 Field Office in Emba-madre, Mekelle, Pugnido, Sherkole and Tongo

FUNDING (AS OF 29 SEPTEMBER 2020)

USD 385.1 M

requested for the Ethiopia Country Operation

Gap 65%
251M



Funded
35%
134.1 M



UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Betty G receiving watermelons grown in Melkadida as part of livelihoods projects including Somali refugees and their Ethiopian hosts. ©UNHCR/Helle Degn

Working with Partners

- UNHCR's main government counterpart in the refugee response in Ethiopia is the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA). UNHCR also works closely with 57 humanitarian and development partners and is part of the Humanitarian Country Team 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 Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), UNHCR is furthering partnerships with government line ministries, regional and local authorities, as well as development partners and the private sector.

Main Activities

Protection

- Together with ARRA, UNHCR coordinates the delivery of protection and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers in Ethiopia as well as the promotion of solutions. Moreover, UNHCR works with national and international partners, including NGOs and UN agencies to provide protection and assistance to IDPs and IDP returnees in different parts of the country. UNHCR also provides technical support to ARRA in the registration and status determination of new arrivals using advanced biometric registration systems, which provide a more reliable means of identification of the refugees and asylum seekers in the country, thereby enhancing their protection.
- Despite the closure of all land borders by the Government in April due to COVID-19, small numbers of asylum seekers continue to arrive in Ethiopia through informal border crossings. UNHCR is supporting ARRA in registering the new arrivals, mainly in Gambella, Afar and Tigray Regions.

Education

- Before the nation-wide school closures in Ethiopia in March 2020, 208,880 refugee students were attending classes in pre-primary, primary and secondary levels of education, representing enrollment rates of, 55%, 68% and 17% respectively. The enrollment rate is generally low, with the participation of girls drastically dropping between the first cycle (Grade 1-4) and second cycle (Grade 5-8), with a further reduction observed during transition from primary to secondary level for both girls and boys. Mainstreaming of refugee education in the national system has been achieved in some part of the country and UNHCR is working with the Government of Ethiopia and others to ensure refugees are fully integrated in the national school system throughout the country.
- UNHCR is now preparing to reopen the camp-based schools following the Government's decision for a phased reopening of all schools across the country, starting from 19 October 2020. The Ministry of Education requires school administrators to ensure key precautionary measures are in place before reopening. Accordingly, class sizes should not exceed 25 students; students and

teachers alike must wear face masks; schools must set up adequate handwashing facilities and temperature screening devices. Registration of students and ‘back-to-school’ campaigns are ongoing in all camps. Observing the COVID-19 protocols issued by the Ministry of Education will have significant resource implications for areas such as building additional classrooms, recruiting additional teachers, and the procurement of personal protective Equipment (PPE).

Health

- UNHCR, in collaboration with the government and partners, facilitates access to primary and emergency secondary and tertiary healthcare services for refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR supports the operational costs of primary healthcare services in the different refugee camps and supports referral costs for secondary and tertiary health care services in government-run facilities. In urban settings such as Addis Ababa, UNHCR covers the cost of medications, surgical procedures, laboratory test and other diagnostics for refugees at selected health facilities.
- COVID-19 Prevention and Response: UNHCR, together with ARRA, Regional Health Bureaus and other health partners has scaled up preparedness and the response to COVID-19 in refugee camps and other locations sheltering refugees and asylum seekers. These include enhancing communication and hygiene promotion, reducing overcrowding, supplying water and soap, installing handwashing facilities, distributing personal protective equipment and strengthening health services. UNHCR is also supporting the inter-agency COVID-19 response to the IDP situation in the country, distributing non-food items, equipping isolation and quarantine centres and providing community communication.

Food Security and Nutrition

- UNHCR supports preventive and curative aspects of nutrition programmes through the Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) model. It monitors the nutrition status of refugees through Standardised Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) assessments and coordinates with partners in nutrition response programming. Moreover, UNHCR works with WFP on food distribution to ensure refugees have sufficient access to basic food. However, refugees in Ethiopia continue to receive only about 84% of the minimum standard food ration of 2,100 kcal per person per day. This has kept the global acute malnutrition rate in most camps higher than the acceptable standards. UNHCR is working with WFP and ARRA to advocate for additional resources so that refugees can at least receive the minimum standard of food in-take per day.

Water and Sanitation

- UNHCR works with partners to provide basic access to water, hygiene and sanitation to refugees and asylum seekers. Currently, the average per capita water distribution for the refugee population in the 26 refugee camps stands at 19 litres, just below UNHCR’s desired standard of at least 20 litres. Three camps receive less than 15 litres per person per day, which is the minimum standard in emergencies.
- COVID-19 prevention: Almost 100% of the refugee population in camps have been reached with COVID-19 related hygiene promotion messages and more than 37,500 handwashing stations are currently functional in the camps.

Shelter and NFIs

- With only 49 per cent of the refugee population in camps in Ethiopia having access to adequate shelter, UNHCR is working with donors and relevant partners to narrow the shelter gap through construction of new transitional and emergency shelters, and maintenance work on existing ones. UNHCR is also providing shelter support to IDP returnees in different parts of the country. It has constructed 850 shelters in the Gedeo and West Guji zones in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) and Oromia Regional States, respectively, distributed to the most vulnerable IDP returnees.

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

- The smaller caseload of urban-based refugees receive cash from UNHCR to cover their basic needs, and this will be expanded to refugees in the different refugee camps in Ethiopia following a pilot project in three camps around Jijiga in late 2018. UNHCR and ARRA have conducted a cash feasibility assessment and are currently finalizing implementation plans to provide cash to elderly refugees and those with underlying health conditions who have been particularly economically impacted by COVID-19. Cash is being used as reintegration support for Ethiopian refugees who voluntarily return to their country. It will also be used to respond to the ongoing Internally Displaced People (IDP) situation.

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. Zonal and camp level coordination meetings and technical working groups continue to take place.

Access to Energy

- Although UNHCR strives to improve refugees' access to energy for cooking, lighting and other uses, the gaps remain huge. Less than 11% of the refugee households have access to alternative cooking energy, while access to alternative household lighting is slightly better at 25%. 26% 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. Distribution of briquettes, fuel wood and solar lanterns as well as installation of grid connected communal kitchens are among UNHCR's main energy interventions in many of the refugee camps. Lately, 793 households in the Afar Region have been successfully connected to the national power grid, joining refugees in two camps in the Tigray Region that are also connected. As part of its environmental rehabilitation and re-forestation programme, UNHCR planted more than 800,000 trees in all refugee camps in the past rainy season.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR is closely working with the Government of Ethiopia and other stakeholders to promote economic opportunities for refugees and support their eventual inclusion within their host communities. This includes 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 also support 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 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, the target for resettlement submissions is 1,800 individuals, of which 1,457 individuals have already been submitted. 255 individuals have departed to different resettlement countries so far this year. UNHCR also facilitated the transfer of 89 persons to Italy as part of the Second Protocol of the Italian Humanitarian Corridor and assisted 21 cases through the Family Reunification Project.

External / Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the direct contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2020


USA| Denmark | UK (FCDO) | IKEA Foundation| Netherlands | European Union (ECHO)| Ireland| “la Caixa” Banking Foundation | Sweden| | Canada| Education Cannot Wait| Japan| Finland| Latter-day Saints Charities | Spain| Muslim World League| Unilever (UK)| Luxembourg| Country-Based Pooled Fund| UPS Corporate| France| UN Programme on HIV/AIDS| Other private donors.


Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2020

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