

Ethiopia

February 2023

At the end of February, Ethiopia hosted **887,276** refugees, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. This figure does not include the estimated **100,000** new arrivals from Somalia who are still being registered.

Since 6 February, close to **100,000** refugees have arrived in Ethiopia's Somali region, fleeing conflict in Laascanood, in the Somaliland area of Somalia. The majority are women, the elderly, and children, including Unaccompanied & Separated Minors.

UNHCR appealed for **USD 137M** for drought response in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, including USD 33M for Ethiopia. The funds will be used to the urgent needs of affected communities.

KEY INDICATORS

100,000 (estimated) Somali refugees arrived in Doolo zone, Somali region.

180,000 IDPs & affected communities received shelter & CRI support.

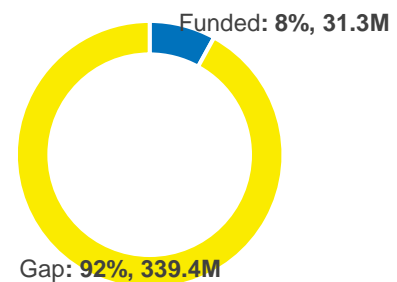
40% of refugee households have access to sanitation facilities.

1 in 2 refugee children under five years of age is undernourished.

FUNDING (28 FEBRUARY)

USD 370.7 million

requested for Ethiopia

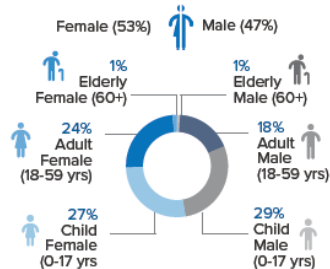


Registered Population **887,276**
 Households **208,365**

885,056 Refugees 2,220 Asylum seekers
 4 Average family size

Country of origin & Demography

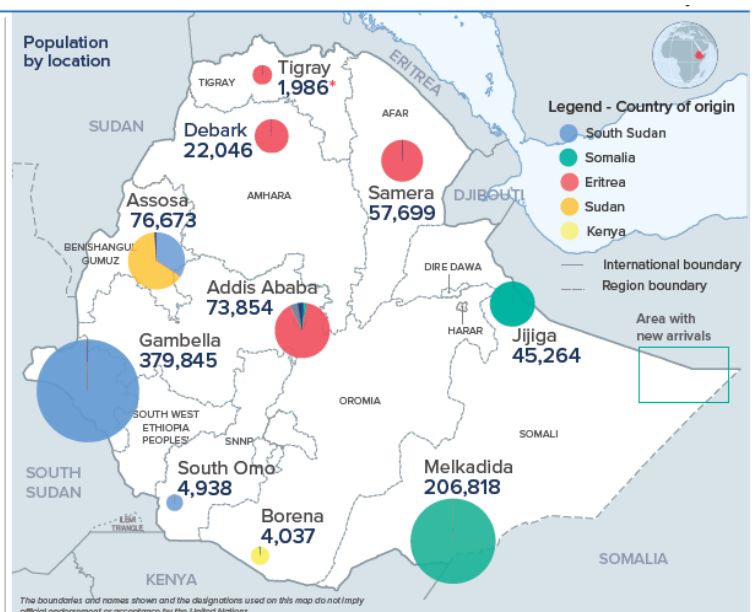
Country of origin	Individual	%
South Sudan	412,594	47%
Somalia	253,069	29%
Eritrea	163,656	18%
Sudan	48,881	6%
Kenya	4,034	
Yemen	2,483	
DR Congo	1,054	
Syrian Arab Republic	668	
Other	837	
Total	887,276	



Children (0-17 yrs) **494,696 (56%)**
 Women & Children **718,477 (81%)**
 Adolescents and Youth (12-24 yrs) **308,081 (35%)**
 Women (18-55 yrs) **206,530 (23%)**

Persons with Disabilities **2,261**
 Unaccompanied and Separated Children **40,674**

Percentages represent proportion out of the total registered population



Operational Context

Conflict, drought, inflation, and high food prices have had a cumulative devastating humanitarian impact across the country, driving millions into displacement. According to the [Ethiopia 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#), more than 20 million people across the country are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including an estimated 4.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are also in need of solutions.

The Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia, continues to experience the longest and most severe drought on record, threatening lives and livelihoods, including those of refugees and IDPs. In support of the government, UNHCR and humanitarian partners are scaling up assistance to meet the growing humanitarian needs of the drought-affected populations in different parts of Ethiopia, including displaced communities. To continue to respond to the situation, with a focus on strengthening local capacities, on 28 February, UNHCR [appealed](#) for USD 137 million for Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, including USD 33 million for Ethiopia.

In February, an estimated 100,000 refugees have arrived in Doolo zone, Somali region, escaping clashes and insecurity in the city of Laascaanood (Las Anod), in the Sool region of Somalia. The areas where the new arrivals have settled are extremely remote and already severely affected by the ongoing drought, with many members of the host community having lost their livelihoods and suffering the worsening effects of climate change.

Main achievements



PROTECTION

Registration and protection support in Doolo Zone: According to estimates by local authorities, close to 100,000 refugees, the vast majority, women, children and other people with specific needs, have arrived in the Doolo zone in Ethiopia's Somali region after fleeing clashes in Laascaanood in the Somaliland area of Somali since 6 February. UNHCR is supporting the Government's Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) to register them. Protection desks have been set up and over 500 refugees with specific needs have been identified and referred for close follow up and support. The ICRC is working on family tracing and reunification of the children who either arrived alone or were separated from their parents or caregivers during the flight.

PSEA retreat: UNHCR and RRS organized a retreat to discuss and review the RRS draft policy documents on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). Once finalized, they shall provide the legal and ethical framework for the RRS staff to prevent and mitigate SEA risks and respond to sexual misconduct, in line with UNHCR's policy on response to sexual misconduct based on a Victim-Centered Approach. UNHCR has been supporting the RRS in building its PSEA capacity to assume the leadership role in PSEA in the refugee operation across the country.



EDUCATION

School enrollment: Almost 180,000 refugees are enrolled in schools in Ethiopia, including 48,617 in pre-primary, 111,776 in primary, and 15,539 in secondary schools. Over 4,600 others have been attending their tertiary education in different parts of the country under the scholarship programmes offered by the governments of Ethiopia and Germany (DAFI). However, the current academic year has seen the lowest performance in years with only 53 refugees scoring pass marks in the national university entrance examinations, compared to 1,000 in the 2021/2022 academic year and 800 in 2020/2021. This result mirrors the abysmal performance witnessed across the country, with only 3.3% of the 896,520 national students who sat for the national exam scoring 50% marks and above.

Critical underfunding threatens to drive almost 130,000 students out of school, heightening their protection risks and dimming their future. Unless the necessary funds are urgently secured, schools will have to close, leaving 114,306 primary school students and 15,202 secondary school students out of school.


HEALTH

Primary healthcare: UNHCR with its health counterpart, RRS, and in collaboration with partners continued working to provide basic healthcare services for refugees, residing in camps and urban settings. The overall health status of refugees has remained stable with no disease outbreaks recorded during the reporting period. However, the considerable funding cuts have negatively impacted the quality of the primary healthcare services and resulted in inability to refer urgent medical cases for further management in public hospitals. This will have an impact on the quality of life of the people we serve, leading to an increase in excess mortality. In February, refugees and individuals from the surrounding host communities continued to access health facilities in the camps and sites for consultations. Upper Respiratory Tract Infections, Malaria and Lower Respiratory Tract Infections remained the main reasons for refugees and host community members to visit health facilities.

Emergency health response in Doolo Zone: A rapid multi-sectoral assessment conducted in the Doolo zone of the Somali region from 9-15 February, identified protection, health, nutrition, food, and WASH as the priority needs of the newly arrived refugees from Somalia, requiring urgent intervention. The Somali Regional Health Bureau (RHB) is leading the response with support from WHO and UNICEF, and complemented by UNHCR, RRS and other partners.

The Bokh Woreda/District health office deployed mobile health teams to provide basic health and nutrition services to the newly arrived refugees. WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR dispatched nine interagency emergency health kits and kits for the management of severe acute malnutrition, 10 emergency medicine kits including a midwifery kit, and 166 cartons of medicines and medical supplies including medicines for the management of common diseases such as diarrhea, respiratory tract infections and non-communicable diseases.

Cholera mitigations measures: According to the Ministry of Health, more than 55 cholera cases have been reported in three kebeles of Dollo Ado Woreda in Liban Zone, affecting the refugee-hosting communities. No cases have been reported in any of the five refugee camps in the area, but UNHCR and RRS are closely following up on preparations to prevent, early detect and promptly responding to a spread in the near future. UNHCR supported the preparations of the zonal and woreda/district health authorities in Dollo Ado and Bokolmanyoo, through capacity building of health care workers on cholera case management, and with logistics for active surveillance activities, as well as development of communication materials on necessary behavioral change. In support of the efforts to contain the cholera outbreak, UNHCR also deployed an emergency public health response expert to the affected area.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

Nutrition programmes: UNHCR, RRS and partners continued to provide curative and preventive nutrition programmes to refugees in 22 active camps and sites. So far, 3,580 children are being treated for severe and moderate malnutrition in all camps and sites. The performance indicators of the nutrition programmes are in line with UNHCR/SPHERE standard in all camps. The current food basket meets only 84% of the recommended daily intake of 2,100 kilocalories per person, significantly contributing to a high malnutrition rate in the refugee camps. Per the results of the 2022 standardized, expanded nutrition surveys, the average prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) stands at 15.5%, which is above the recommended minimum emergency prevalence rate of 15%. The findings show one in two children under five years of age is undernourished. Given the critical nutrition situation, UNHCR, RRS and WFP have resumed the blanket supplementary feeding programmes targeting children 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women in locations where the prevalence of GAM is critical whilst long term solution on access to food is being prioritised. 12,365 people, including 6,998 children under five, 4,762 pregnant and lactating women, and 605 other social and medical cases have been admitted in Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programmes.

Emergency Food & Nutrition Response in Doolo Zone: As part of the multi-partner response in the Doolo zone, UNHCR dispatched nutrition screening equipment, including height boards, digital weighting scales, Mid Upper Arm Circumference tapes (MUAC) to reinforce the capacity on the screening of malnutrition. UNICEF dispatched therapeutic milk for the treatment of acute malnutrition, while WHO donated kits for the management of severe acute malnutrition. WFP prepositioned 65 MT of high energy biscuits and dates for distribution and general food ration for over 95,000 refugees with a 15% contingency. GOAL, which is currently supporting the host community through a mobile health and nutrition team, is scaling up to include the refugee needs.

Support to drought-affected communities: UNHCR continues to respond to the humanitarian impact of the worst drought mainly affecting the Oromia, Somali and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) regions. Support provided includes cash assistance to most vulnerable families to buy food and other basic needs and supporting farmers in the Somali region to grow wheat, thereby enhancing food security in the area. In February, UNHCR distributed core relief items (blankets, sleeping mats, collapsible jerry cans, plastic sheets and solar lanterns) to 2,521 families that have been displaced in the Afder zone of the Somali region due to the severe drought. However,

given the scale of the needs, much needs to be done to reach the nearly 650,000 displaced people in Liban, Afer and Daawa zone of the region.



WATER AND SANITATION

Water supply: UNHCR and its partners continued to provide water supply for refugees across the country through an effective management of water systems and the maintenance of associated infrastructure. In February, the average daily potable water supply per person has increased to 16 liters compared to 15 liters in January, due to an ongoing rehabilitation, upgrading and solarization of some of the water systems in the camps in the Somali (Kebribeyah, Shedder) and Gambella (Pinyudo I and Pinyudo II) regions.

Emergency WASH response in Doolo Zone: UNHCR was working closely with relevant partners to ensure that emergency WASH facilities are put in place, benefiting both the new arrivals and the communities hosting them. UNICEF, through its partner, has distributed WASH kits, including jerry cans, buckets, and soap, for 3,000 people in the Danod district.

In the Alemwach settlement, Amhara region, four water tanks, with a capacity of 10,000 liters each, were installed to alleviate the water shortage and to enhance water accessibility. Additionally, a 50m³ capacity reservoir was completed to strengthen the water supply for the surrounding host communities. Similarly, in Gambella, a water storage tank with a 1,000 m³ capacity was installed at the booster station in Turpham, Itang woreda/district to benefit the refugee-hosting communities.

Sanitation: The sanitation coverage in the refugee camps and sites remains low at 40%, against the minimum standard of $\geq 85\%$, calling for more investment in this sector. In February, 107 household latrines and 21 communal latrines were completed across the five camps in Melkadida, Somali region. Similarly, construction of two blocks of latrines, three water points, a hand-washing station and a laundry area was completed at the Dollo Ado transit center, where new arrivals are received and registered before they are eventually transferred to the refugee camps.

SHELTER AND CRIS

Support to refugees: In February, UNHCR and partners completed the construction of 222 transitional shelters in Alemwach (217) and in the camps in the Somali region (Jijiga). Nevertheless, in February, 60% of the refugee families were accommodated in emergency and old and/or overcrowded shelters, increasing protection risks. To narrow the gap, UNHCR and partners aim to construct over 3,000 new shelters in 2023. An additional 850 existing shelters will be renovated this year.

In the Doolo zone of the Somali region, UNHCR distributed CRIs, including blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, plastic sheets, and mosquito nets. - to over 1,500 most vulnerable families as of the end of February, with 9,000 prepositioned for distribution in the coming weeks.

Support to IDPs: In February, UNHCR and partners provided shelter support and CRIs to over 80,000 IDPs in the Amhara, Tigray, and Somali regions. So far in 2023, UNHCR and partners have reached 180,000 IDPs, IDP returnees and host communities with these types of assistance.

A similar support was extended to 1,831 drought-affected IDP families in Dubluk, in the Borena zone of the Oromia region.



ACCESS TO ENERGY

Access to clean energy: UNHCR, RRS, the Petroleum and Energy Authority (PEA) and the Somali Region's Bureau of Finance (BoF) on 14 February launched the installation of a solar mini-grid in Shedder refugee camp to generate small-scale electricity for the benefit of refugees and host communities. Upon its finalization by the end of the year, the 254KWp off-grid system is expected to provide clean and reliable electricity to more than 12,000 refugees and members of the communities hosting them. This is in line with the government's commitment at the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019 to provide refugees and host communities with the access to clean, reliable and affordable energy. The installation is undertaken by Humanitarian Energy PLC (HumEn), which, with the support from Mercy Corps Ethiopia, has become the first agency to secure a license to install a solar mini-grid in a refugee camp in Ethiopia.

In the Nguenyiel refugee camp (Gambella), within the “Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings” project (ESDS) the German agency for internal cooperation’s (GIZ), in collaboration with UNHCR and RRS, installed a solar-powered ‘Energy Kiosk’ enabling a selected group of refugees and host community members to run small businesses. Beneficiaries will use the 100% solar-powered kiosk to buy beverages, charge their phones, cut their hair, or watch TV shows upon payment. The collected rental fees will be used to provide fuel saving stoves to the most vulnerable groups. ESDS is commissioned by the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ).



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Crop diversification in the Somali Region: For the first time, refugee and host community farmers in the Melkadida area produced wheat and rice as part of the IKEA Foundation-supported climate-smart pilot project. The project, which is in line with the regional government’s ‘Crop and Care’ initiative, is seen as an opportunity to increase food security and promote productivity and climate resilience in the face of a severe drought.

PROSPECTS partnership: UNHCR, UNICEF and ILO conducted a joint mission to the Alemwach refugee settlement and host community area in Dabat, in the Amhara region, to identify livelihoods needs and gaps in services, in order to collaboratively address them, with the financial support through the Dutch PROSPECTS. The findings of the mission, which included discussions with refugees, host community representatives, local authorities and partners, will inform a joint plan by the three agencies to advance job creation and income generation activities and ensure refugees’ access to the local public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Resettlement: Facilitating resettlement as a protection tool and a durable solution remains UNHCR’s top priority in Ethiopia. In February, 369 refugees were submitted to various resettlement countries for consideration, bringing the total submissions so far in 2023 to 26.5% of the year’s quota of 3,450 places. This month, 422 individuals departed for resettlement and other legal pathways, bringing the total departures during the first two months of the year to 680. During the reporting period, UNHCR counseled 83 individuals on family reunification, education pathways and labor mobility, and facilitated issuance of travel documents.

Repatriation support: In the reporting period, UNHCR provided a reintegration cash assistance to 121 former Ethiopian refugees who returned from Yemen (119) and Somalia (2).

Working in partnership

Together with its main government counterpart, the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), UNHCR coordinates the response to the refugee situation in the country, extending protection, providing assistance and promoting sustainable solutions. UNHCR works closely with 80 partners in the refugee response and is part of the Humanitarian Country Team, where refugee programmes are discussed strategically to ensure their needs are adequately presented and addressed across the UN System. UNHCR builds on well-established coordination fora, including the inter-sector Refugee Coordination Group together with national and regional sectorial working groups. Committed to pursuing refugee inclusion in national services and economies, as per the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), UNHCR is furthering partnerships with Ethiopian line Ministries, regional and local authorities, development partners and the private sector.

UNHCR is an active part of the government-led Inter-Agency response to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), leading and co-leading the Protection and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters, contributing to the shelter and non-food items clusters, and strengthening sub-national coordination with better information sharing and communication. It distributes emergency aid supplies and related support to IDPs and IDP returnees across the country.

Financial situation

As of 28 February, the UNHCR operation in Ethiopia has received **USD 31.3 million**, representing only **8%** of the requirements. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors that have contributed to its work, as well as those that have contributed to UNHCR programmes globally with unearmarked or broadly earmarked funds.

Contributions to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2023

Denmark| Japan| IKEA Foundation| Netherlands| CERF| Switzerland| Canada| European Union| Germany| Luxembourg| Children's Fund| UN Programme on HIV/AIDS| MasterCard International Incorporated.

Other softly earmarked contributions in 2023

Canada | Norway | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions in 2023

Sweden 77.6 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

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