

## Resumption of food distributions for refugees in Ethiopia

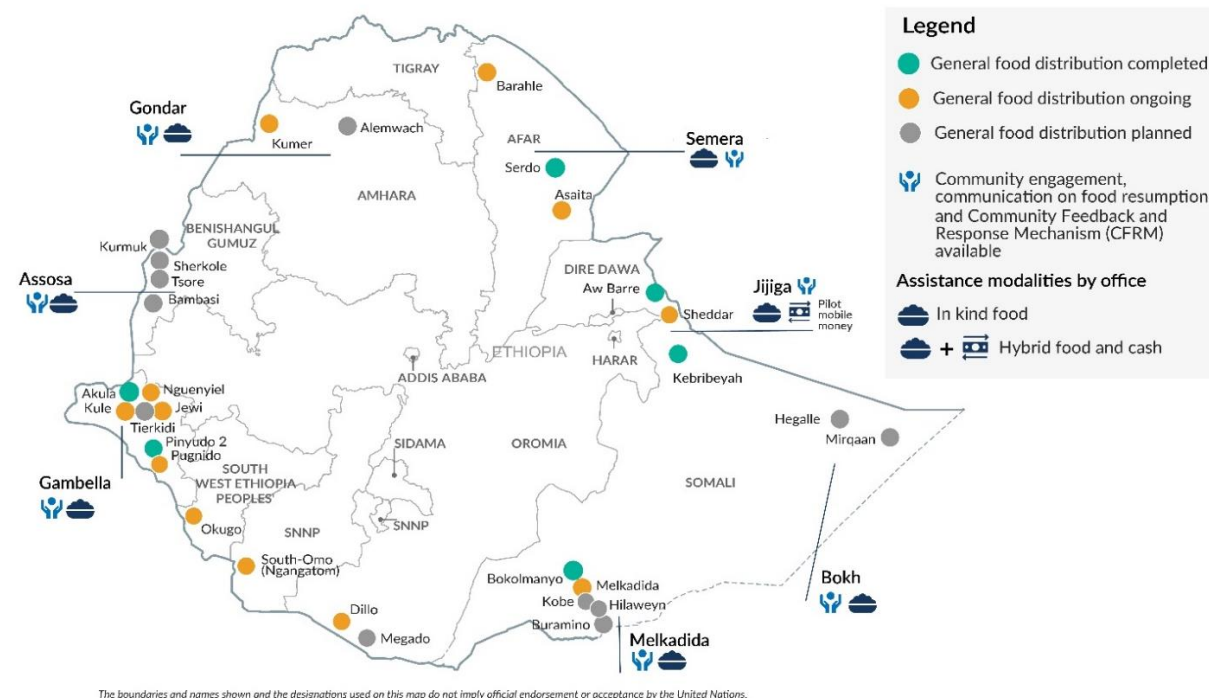
### General context

Since USAID announced the resumption of food assistance to refugee populations on 6 October, UNHCR, WFP, Ethiopia's Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) and its partners have worked intensively to prepare for food distributions in all refugee locations in Ethiopia.

There are 29 refugee camps, sites and settlements across Ethiopia hosting 946,682 refugees, with some 878,320 being dependent on food assistance. As of 23 October, 17 locations have been covered by the distributions, with 218,675 refugees reached (i.e. 25% of the target). Distribution is completed in seven camps; Serdo (Afar region), Akula and Pugnido II (Gambella region), Awbare, Kebribeya and Boklomayo (Somali region), and ongoing in 11 locations.

<b>Refugees targeted for the food distribution</b> 878,320 individuals 203,339 households	<b>Refugees reached by food distributions</b> 218,675 individuals (25% of the target)	<b>Total refugee locations targeted<sup>1</sup></b> 29 <b>Refugee locations where GDT<sup>2</sup> + Mobile collect + stock management available</b> 24
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### Implementation overview, protection related activities and assistance modalities



<sup>1</sup> 21 camps; 1 site (Alemwach) and 7 settlements (Kumer, Akula, Dillo, Megado, South-Omo, Mirqaan and Hegale)

<sup>2</sup> Global Distribution Tool (GDT) is a corporate UNHCR tool that helps operations use biometrics to verify the identity of beneficiaries during the distribution of food and other types of assistance. Currently, the GDT is available in 22 refugee locations in Ethiopia.

## Key improvements in protection and data management

- **Heightened communication with communities:** UNHCR, in partnership with WFP, and their collaborating partners (CPs), RRS and refugee leaders have completed the dissemination of key messages in Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) which began on 22 October 2023 and is ongoing. Feedback from refugees has been received from Jijiga, Assosa, Melkadida, and Gambella. The refugee community have expressed gratitude to the donor for resuming food distribution and have indicated their willingness to work with RRS, UNHCR, WFP and CPs to mitigate the sale of food in camps or settlement or local markets while also explaining that some refugee families are compelled to sell part of their food rations to cover unmet needs. The key concerns raised include lack of soap, bags and containers to collect food, loss/lack of Proof of Registration and ID card, assistance to non-registered refugees, non-retroactive GFD assistance, food support systems for vulnerable groups, incentive payment to refugee leaders. Refugees also called for the roll out of cash assistance, and increased opportunities for livelihoods and for access to farming land.



*Community Communication Session on GFD resumption in Okugo Camp*

- **Strengthened feedback and response mechanisms:** Specific mechanisms are deployed by the Protection Help Desk at FDPs. To date, 328 complaints were recorded, mainly relating to refugees not receiving cash, under scooping and lack of items to carry the food. While 125 complaints have been closed, 203 are still in the process of being resolved. The Community Feedback and Response Mechanisms (CFRM) KoBo tool is being updated based on Protection Staff feedback, while the harmonization of the various tools is ongoing.
- **Enhanced referrals and adjudication:** Litigation desks established at FDPs for facilitated referrals of urgent protection cases and prompt resolution of biometric adjudication cases or changes in the food collectors, especially for people with specific needs.
- **Reinforced data management:** Biometric data and Global Data Tool is being used in all refugee locations. Only individuals with biometrics can access food assistance. In alignment with the data sharing agreement with WFP and the revised Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), UNHCR has provided WFP with refugees' beneficiary data to enable the planning of the GFDs, which will take place in November 2023.
- **Social Cohesion:** The resumption of food aid has brought relief and positively impacted peaceful coexistence between the refugees and host communities. During the pause, refugees resorted to negative coping mechanisms, including looting, theft, and intruding on host community farms, to survive and feed themselves and their families. These were the main causes of tensions between communities. UNHCR continues to closely monitor the impact of the resumption of food assistance on social cohesion.

**Food distributions: state of play by refugee location**

Locations		Start date for the dispatch of food	Start date of the GFD	Expected end date of GFD	Refugee population	Comments
<b>Somali region</b>						
<b>Melkadida</b>	Bokolmayo	9 Oct	13 Oct	19 Oct	33,3042	Completed
	Melkadida	12 Oct	20 Oct	27 Oct	43,371	Food is still being transported from WFP's warehouse in Jijiga.
	Kobe	17 Oct	tbc	tbc	39,195	
	Buramino	tbc	tbc	tbc	51,261	
	Hilaweyn	tbc	tbc	tbc	48,556	
<b>Jijjiga</b>	Kebribeyah	6 Oct	7 Oct	11 Oct	18,043	Completed
	Aw-barre	15/16 Oct	17 Oct	20 Oct	13,387	Completed
	Shedder	21/22 Oct	23 Oct	27 Oct	14,700	On-going
	Mirqaan	17 Oct	tbc	tbc	42,325	
	Hegalle	17 Oct	tbc	tbc	28,930 <sup>4</sup>	
<b>Gambella region</b>						
<b>Gambella</b>	Pinyudo II	10 Oct	11 Oct	18 Oct	11,563	Completed
	Pinyudo I	10 Oct	12 Oct	26 Oct	52,008	On-going
	Akula	12 Oct	12 Oct	13 Oct	1,946	Completed
	Okugo	13 Oct	21 Oct	27 Oct	14,163	On-going
	Nguenyiel	16 Oct	18 Oct	8 Nov	113,680	On-going
	Jewi	16 Oct	20 Oct	3 Nov	68,914	On-going
	Kule	23 Oct	24 Oct	31 Oct	53,753	On-going
	Tierkidi	23 Oct	24 Oct	10 Nov	73,525	On-going
<b>Benishangul Gumuz</b>						
<b>Assosa</b>	Kurmuk	tbc	tbc	tbc	16,461	
	Tsore	tbc	tbc	tbc	43,380	
	Sherkole	tbc	tbc	tbc	20,555	
	Bambasi	tbc	tbc	tbc	15,296	
<b>Amhara</b>						
<b>Amhara</b>	Alemwach	16 Oct	25 Oct	tbc	22,046	
	Kumer	15 Oct	17 Oct	23 Oct	9,712	Completed
<b>Afar</b>						
<b>Afar</b>	Serdo	9 Oct	10 Oct	13 Oct	8,745	Completed, though with limited turn out
	Berhale	13/14 Oct	15 Oct	26 Oct	26,396	On-going
	Assayita	18/19 Oct	20 Oct	02 Nov	23,198	On-going
<b>SNNP</b>						
<b>SNNP</b>	South-Omo (Ngangatom)	tbc	23 Oct	25 Oct	4,933	On-going

Oromia						
Oromia	Dillo	tbc	23 Oct	25 Oct	1,494	On-going
	Megado	tbc	27Oct	29 Oct	2,536	

### Next steps

- **Reinforcement of infrastructure capacities in some locations:** Waiting sheds to protect refugees from exposure to harsh weather conditions (such as intense heat and rain) are needed in some locations.
- **Visibility materials:** Although banners and posters were in place at the FDPs as part of the efforts to strengthen communications with communities, additional materials will be produced to ensure increased awareness of the GFD and related issues.
- **Logistics:** Some variation in the planned delivery of food and the initial distribution date have led to to rescheduling of the start of GFD in Mirqaan (Somali region) and Assosa (Benishangul Gumuz region).