

Ethiopia- Refugee Emergency Update 07 October 2011



Sudanese refugees from Blue Nile State cross into western Ethiopia through Kurmuk border crossing. UNHCR P/Rulashe.

Sudanese refugees from the Blue Nile State cross into western Ethiopia through Kurmuk. UNHCR/P.Rulashe

Highlights

- UNHCR and ARRA have opened new camp at Tongo for Sudanese refugees
- More Sudanese arriving as aerial bombardments continue across the border
- Upsurge in new arrivals in Dollo Ado
- Crude mortality rate in Kobe camp dropped to below emergency threshold

Update on Sudanese refugees

Background

Since 1969, Sudanese refugees fleeing civil war settled in Ethiopia's western region of Gambella. Successive refugee influxes followed in 1983, 1987 and the early 1990s necessitating the opening of five refugee camps in western Ethiopia-three in the Gambella Regional State and two in the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. The signing of the CPA in January 2005 between the Sudanese Government and the SPLM/A ended more than two decades of conflict in Sudan and paved the way for Sudanese refugees to return home. Since March 2006 UNHCR and ARRA have assisted the voluntary repatriation of over 36,000 refugees. Three camps were closed as a result and, by 31 August 2011, the remaining two camps-Fugnido in Gambella and Sherkole in Benishangul-Gumuz-hosted nearly 27,000 refugees, hoping to return home after the independence of South Sudan. However, fresh hostilities at the beginning of September between the Sudanese army and the SPLM-N have displaced over 27,500 people refugees into Ethiopia.

Current situation

Currently, there are an estimated 54,000 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Ethiopia, some 32,000 of them registered and sheltered in three refugee camps-Sherkole, Tongo and Fugnido. Most of the new arrivals from Blue Nile State are staying with the host communities along the border areas, with UNHCR and ARRA doing sensitization to encourage them to move away from the border to safer locations further inland.

Together with ARRA and other partners, UNHCR opened a new camp in western Ethiopia on Wednesday to accommodate the continuing arrivals of Sudanese refugees fleeing heavy fighting in the Blue Nile State. The new Tongo camp is located about 200 kilometers southeast of the main border entry point at Kurmuk. Since Wednesday 05 October 2011, 533 refugees have been relocated there from Kurmuk as well as from the border areas at Bamza and Almahal. The new camp has capacity for 3,000 people; with a possibility for further expansion should there be need.

With more refugees arriving, and with aerial bombardments still continuing across the border in Sudan, UNHCR is working with the Ethiopian government and the International Organisation for Migration to speed up the relocation of refugees to Tongo and later on to the transit center at Adimazin which is still under development. In recent weeks, more and more refugees are arriving with livestock or household furniture, indicating that they are coming with the intention to stay longer.

At the beginning of the influx, the new arrivals were mainly women, children and the elderly - generally in good health. Men were staying behind to look after properties. Recently, however, UNHCR and partners' staff at the border points have seen larger numbers of men arriving, and more with injuries. Recent cases involved a young man who had sustained bullet wounds and a woman injured by shrapnel and another man had lost his legs in a bomb explosion. All three were taken to the health centre in Sherkole camp for treatment.

UNHCR, ARRA and IOM plan to move around 400 refugees daily from the border to Tongo where protection and emergency assistance, including shelter, water and sanitation as well as food would be provided. As development of the site continues, 80 of the 380 available family sized tents have been erected. Up to 40,000 litres of water per day is ready for use while additional water sources are being sought.

Meanwhile immunization for 438 children, including 410 new arrivals and 28 locals in Kurmuk was completed at the end of last week. Immunizing of children will continue at Tongo refugee camp. The other main camp in the area, Sherkole, reached full capacity (8,785 people) on Tuesday this week.

Update on Dollo Ado refugee emergency

Background

Some 170,000 or almost 66 % of the registered 255,000 refugees in Ethiopia today are Somalis. Most came in the last nine months fleeing conflict and drought in Somalia which drove hundreds of thousands to neighboring countries as refugees and displaced some 1.5 million within Somalia itself. Those in Ethiopia are accommodated in seven refugee camps, three in the Jijiga area and four in the Dollo Ado area where a fifth camp site has been identified.

Current situation

As of 06 October, there were a total of 127,425 Somali refugees in the four Dollo Ado camps (Bokolmanyoo, Melkadida, Kobe and Hilaweyn), including some 2,000 at the transit centre waiting to be relocated to Hilaweyn. Nearly 87,000 of them arrived so far this year. Hilaweyn, with nearly 22,000 refugees, is approaching its full capacity of 25,000 persons and UNHCR and ARRA are already working to set up the fifth camp at Buramino.

UNHCR and its government counterpart ARRA, together with a number of NGO partners and several UN agencies are involved in extending international protection and emergency assistance to the refugees in sectors including shelter, food, non-food relief items, water, health and education.

Measures are being taken to identify and assist more unaccompanied and separated children while parallel efforts are going on to protect refugees against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). Humanitarian workers were trained on how to identify and manage SEA issues. A meeting took place in Melkadida on Tuesday regarding the sharing of information on SGBV and using a common form for incident reporting. This is expected to improve monthly reporting and trend spotting.

Enhanced health and nutrition interventions by UNHCR and partners have resulted in further reduction of the crude mortality rate (CMR) in Kobe camp from 1.1/10,000 per day over the past weeks to 0.4/10,000/day since last week. This is finally within the acceptable level, though continued monitoring and control measures are needed to ensure the levels remain below the emergency threshold of 1/10,000/day. Kobe had experienced its worst mortality rates in July with up to 10 children dying every day.

Dollo Ado has seen a slight upsurge in new arrivals during the first six days of October with nearly 400 people arriving every day as opposed to an average of 200 daily arrivals in September. UNHCR is closely monitoring the situation to establish the reason behind this sudden increase in the numbers.

ZOA distributed over 2,000 fuel-efficient stoves in Kobe camp, greatly contributing to the household energy needs of the refugees and significantly reducing the risk of women getting attacked during firewood collection. The stoves can now save nearly 50% of firewood consumption but environment experts say with proper training on how to use it, the new stove can save up to 80% of normal firewood consumption.

Coordination arrangements in Dollo Ado:

In addition to the Government refugee agency-ARRA- and UN agencies, a number of NGOs and other partners, are part of the implementation arrangement in providing protection and assistance to the refugees in the three Dollo Ado camps as well as in the temporary sites. Most have signed sub-agreements with UNHCR as implementing partners while some are operational partners. In consultation with partners, UNHCR and ARRA have come up with the below accountability matrix defining which particular agency is accountable for which particular activity in which particular camp.



Accountability Matrix - Dollo Ado Operation

ARRA

	Bokolmanyo	Melkadida	Kobe	Hilaweyn	Buramino	Transit	Reception
Camp Capacity/Population	40,000	40,000	25,000	25,000	40,000		
Registration	ARRA/UNHCR						
Camp Management	ARRA						
NFI distribution	ARRA & UNHCR						
Food distribution	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA		
Hot Meals	N/A	N/A	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA
Blanket feeding	SC US	IMC	IMC	ACF	IBD	SC US	SC US
Nutrition SFP	SC US	IMC	IMC	ACF	TBD		
Nutrition TFP	SC US	MSF-S	MSF-S	MSF-H	MSF-H	MSF-H	
Primary Health Care & Health Promotion	ARRA	ARRA	MSF-S	MSF-H	MSF-H	MSF-H	MSF-H
Mental Health	IMC	MC	IMC	MSF-H	MSF-H		
School Feeding (pre/primary)	ARRA & SC US	ARRA & WVI					
Emergency Education	X	X	SC US	SC US	WVI		
Primary Education (1-8)	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA	ARRA		
Environment	PAPDA	PAPDA	PWO	PWO	WVI	PWO	LWF
Livelihood	PAPDA	PAPDA	ZOA	LWF	WVI		
SGBV	PAPDA	MC	IMC	IRC	IRC	IMC	IMC
Shelter	AHA	AHA	AHA & NRC	NRC & DRC	NRC & DRC	UNHCR	UNHCR
Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion	ARRA	MC	IMC	Oxfam-GB	LWF	LWF	LWF
Water	IRC	RC	RC	Oxfam-GB	LWF	LWF	LWF

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