

# ETHIOPIA

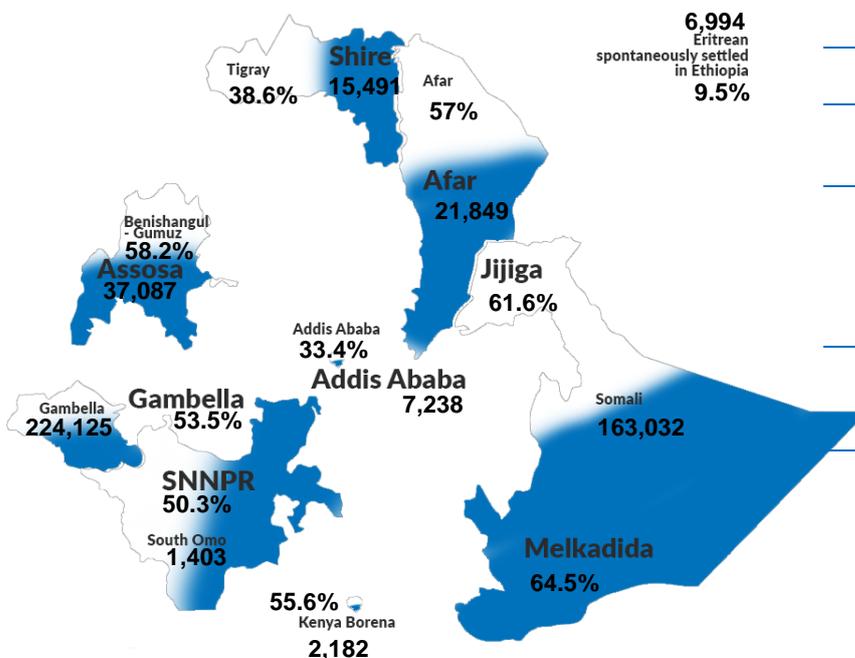
December 2018

Refugee children are at **greater risk** than adults **of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect**, including human trafficking or forced recruitment into armed groups

**54,715** refugee children in Ethiopia are **unaccompanied** or **separated**, with nearly **17%** of all children in the refugee camps in Tigray region being separated from their primary caregivers

The **Ethiopia national Child Protection Strategy (2017-2019)** outlines **six** goals and intervention areas for Child Protection which UNHCR and partners are working towards.

## REFUGEE CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA



Location	UNHCR Child Protection implementing and operational partners
Melkadida	Save the Children International (SCI)
Assosa	Plan International (PI)
Jijiga	International Rescue Committee (IRC)
Shire	-Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (IHS) -Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Gambella	-Save the Children International (SCI) -Plan International (PI) -Danish Refugee Council (DRC) -Bethany Global
Mekelle	African Humanitarian Action (AHA)
Urban	Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Reflection exercise on the national Child Protection Strategy:** As part of a stock-taking exercise on the implementation progress of the national Child Protection Strategy, field offices and camps across UNHCR Ethiopia operation have conducted reflection exercises on the same. UNHCR, ARRA, Child Protection (CP) and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) partners reflected on key achievements, challenges, opportunities, and developed interventions plans to achieve the six goals of the Strategy. The report of the reflection exercises will inform further planning and adjustment of the CP interventions towards achievement of the goals.
- SGBV mainstreaming in the Child Protection sector:** As part of UNHCR's efforts to mainstream SGBV across all sectors, UNHCR Child Protection experts participated in a National Workshop on SGBV Prevention, Mitigation and Response Mainstreaming, in December which culminated in the development of National Action Plans on SGBV mainstreaming in child protection. The Action Plans are expected to be implemented across the operation to ensure SGBV mainstreaming throughout the project cycle.

**Vital events registration for refugees:** As part of the pledges made at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in 2016, the Government of Ethiopia has been undertaking country-wide civil registration of refugees since October 2017. Refugee children born in Ethiopia are now able to obtain birth certificates issued by the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) on behalf of the Federal Vital Events Registration Agency (FVERA) in all refugee camps and urban centres. The approximately 70,000 refugee children born in Ethiopia over the past 10 years and who have not received birth certificates can obtain these retroactively. The inclusion of refugees in the national civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system constitutes a milestone for refugee protection in Ethiopia. In situations of displacement, birth registration is an important protection tool and facilitates refugees' access to essential basic services, such as education and health care.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Bridging the humanitarian-development nexus Comprehensive Refugee Response-CRRF:

- With the aim to deliver more comprehensive and predictable response for refugees, UNHCR and partners strive to support national institutions to be able to serve both the refugee and the host communities. In the area of refugee child protection, greater emphasis is being placed on the need to strengthen national child protection systems and services. A key strategic priority and good example is the ongoing inclusion of refugee children in the civil registration and vital statistics system of the Government. An approach aimed at strengthening existing systems in Child Protection is furthermore expected to enhance access to services for refugee children within the national education, social services as well as the judicial systems.

### Family-based alternative Care

- UNHCR and partners strategically promote family-based care for unaccompanied and separated refugee children. This is based on the recognition that compared to institutional care or other forms of care arrangements, the family is the basic unit of society and a natural environment for the growth, wellbeing and protection of children. Every child and young person should live in a supportive, protective and caring environment that promotes their full potential. Children with inadequate or no parental care are at special risk. In northern Ethiopia half of the children who are unaccompanied (50.4 %) are living in a semi-institutional care referred to as 'community care' due to limited options for family-based care. The goal is to raise the number of UASC in family-based care to 100% (from 49.6 % currently) by promoting family reunification and supporting kinship and foster care arrangements. Studies conducted in the refugee operation in Tigray region have shown that children living in family-based care are 30% less likely to move onward from the camp. A pilot to provide foster families in Shire with cash support was highly successful as it provides children with valued family-based support which more adequately caters for their needs. Nearly 1000 kinship/foster families are currently supported on a monthly basis.

### Strengthening community-based approach to Child Protection

- Community-based approaches to strengthen the protection of children are strategically promoted by UNHCR and its partners. Community-based structures include parents, caregivers, community elders, teachers and children themselves that help to promote safe homes, learning and recreational areas, and safe public spaces. Successful examples of community-based protection initiatives are the **Child & Youth Protection Refugee Outreach Volunteers** in Addis Ababa and the **Religious Leaders' Forum** and the **Anti-FGM Task Force** in the refugee camps near Jijiga, Somali Region. As part of the initiative in Addis Ababa, 24 volunteers from six refugee communities support between 40-50 vulnerable children and their caregivers during home visits on a monthly basis. Similarly, the community structures in the Jijiga camps are actively involved in efforts to eradicate FGM, particularly to break the taboo surrounding the practice.

## CHALLENGES



## External / Donors Relations

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