

## Bi-weekly Operational Update: 1-15 July 2019

**Cholera prevention measures in Tigray and Afar Camps:** Following the Ethiopian Public Health Institute's declaration of the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in at least five regions, including Tigray and Afar, woreda-level multi-partner health task forces in both regions are working to prevent the spread of the virus to the refugee camps. This includes the close monitoring of the situation across the camps with disease surveillance conducted on a regular basis. Routine hygiene promotion and awareness raising activities have also been strengthened, together with the provision of anti-cholera vaccines to the six refugee camps in Tigray (4) and Afar (2) regions. To date, no cases have been detected in the camps.

**Relocation of Somali refugees to Dollo Ado:** UNHCR, in partnership with ARRA, WFP and IOM, has begun relocating to Dollo Ado; in the Somali Region, 1,047 Somali refugees who have recently arrived in northern Ethiopia and sought asylum, after having been refugees in Eritrea. So far 252 of them have been moved by road from Zalambessa to Mekelle and then by air to Dollo Ado for registration and relocated to the camps where they would be issued with shelters and relief items. The remaining group is currently residing in schools in the border town of Zalambessa where UNHCR and ARRA are providing basic services including fresh food. The new arrivals reported they were pre-empting the formal closure of Umkulu Camp in Eritrea in early July. In a statement issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019, UNHCR appealed to Eritrea not to close Umkulu Refugee Camp but to continue to work with the Agency to ensure protection and solutions for refugees who remain in the country.

**Spontaneous returns to South Sudan:** A report issued by the UNHCR office in South Sudan revealed that a total of 163,157 South Sudanese refugees have spontaneously returned home from neighboring countries as of May 2019, including 47,433 from Ethiopia. The figure includes 27,171 refugees who have returned during the first five months of 2019, mainly from Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan. The majority were reported to have returned to Eastern Equatoria (61,430), Jonglei (41,137), Upper Nile (18,557), Lakes (15,407), Central Equatoria (13,448) and Unity (10,268) States.

**Refugees graduate with degrees:** 163 refugees were among the thousands of people who graduated with degrees in diverse fields of study following the conclusion of the academic year in Ethiopia. They included 137 students who won scholarships under the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) programme and 26 others who were sponsored by the Ethiopian government. They were enrolled in public universities throughout the country, including Addis Ababa, Jijiga, Gambella, Harmaya, Assosa and Adigrat Universities, graduating in Public Health, Law, Veterinary Science, Engineering and Education, among other fields. The scholarships enable young refugees to unlock their potential by addressing key barriers to higher education while motivating refugee children to stay in school and succeed academically.