

ETHIOPIA

September 2021

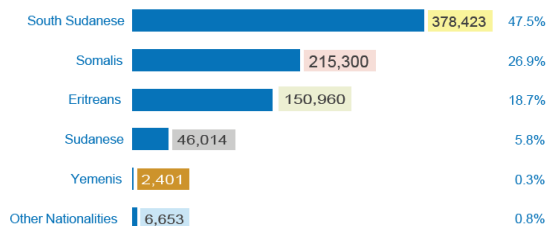
Ethiopia is the **third-largest refugee-hosting country** in Africa, sheltering 799,751 registered refugees and asylum-seekers as of 30 September 2021. The overwhelming majority originate from **South Sudan**, **Somalia**, **Eritrea** and **Sudan**.

6,107 refugees have received COVID-19 vaccines, including **2,807** that were fully vaccinated. UNHCR, the national agency for refugees and returnees (ARRA) and partners, continue to reinforce prevention measures in the refugee camps and sites hosting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

UNHCR continues to respond to the **situation** of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia, leading and co-leading the **Protection** and Camp Coordination & Camp Management (**CCCM**) **Clusters** and providing protection, emergency aid and other support to **IDPs** and **IDP returnees**.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Countries of Origin



At the end of August 2021, Ethiopia hosted nearly 800,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly sheltered in 24 refugee camps established in five Regional States. There is a sizeable group of refugees and asylum seekers living out of camp, including over 50,000 people in the capital Addis Ababa.

FUNDING (As of 28 September 2021)

USD 338.1 M

Requested for Ethiopia

Funded
50%



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

399 National staff

137 International staff

176 Affiliated work force & others

Offices:

1 Representation in Addis Ababa

5 Sub-Offices in Assosa, Gambella, Jijiga, Melkadida and Shire

9 Field Offices in Bule Hora, Debarq, Dire Dawa, Embamadre, Mekelle, Nekemte, Pugnido, Semera, Sherkole and Tongo



Raba Hakim, a Sudanese refugee from Ethiopia, who has won a Mastercard Foundation scholarship, attends an orientation class at the United States International University - Africa's computer lab together with other Foundation scholars. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

Working with Partners

UNHCR's main government counterpart in the refugee response in Ethiopia is the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA). UNHCR works closely with 57 humanitarian and development organizations, managing the so-called 'Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan (ECRRP) 2020-2021. The ECRRP seeks to consolidate a collective multi-partner response in support of the refugees in the country. UNHCR is also part of the "Humanitarian Country Team", where various programmes are discussed strategically to ensure that the refugee needs are effectively addressed across the UN System. UNHCR builds on well-established coordination fora, including the inter-sector Refugee Coordination Group, consisting of national and regional sectorial working groups, coordinating sector-specific responses. To foster refugee inclusion in national services and economic activities, in line with Ethiopia's commitment within the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), UNHCR is strengthening partnerships with Ethiopian line Ministries, regional and local authorities, development partners and the private sector. As part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cluster system for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at national and sub-regional level, UNHCR is leading and co-leading the Protection, Camp Coordination & Camp Management (CCCM) and Emergency Shelter & Non-Food Items (ES/NFI) Clusters.

Main Activities

Protection

- Together with ARRA, UNHCR coordinates activities aimed at protecting and assisting refugees and asylum-seekers in Ethiopia, as well as finding and promoting sustainable solutions. The UN Refugee Agency works to strengthen refugee protection through the expansion of improved community-based and multi-sectorial child protection and programmes addressing gender-based violence (GBV). In addition, UNHCR is engaged in providing protection and assistance to IDPs and IDP returnees in different parts of the country, in collaboration with the authorities, national and international partners, including NGOs and UN agencies. In the Tigray Region focal points from UNHCR and NGO partners have been identified and trained to support in the effort to Protect and Support Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) in line with the Ethiopia PSEA Strategy and Workplan.
- UNHCR provides technical support to ARRA in the registration and status determination of new arrivals. To that end, an advanced biometric registration system (BIMS) is used, providing more reliable means for a more effective identification and protection of refugees and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR is working with UNICEF on a model and transformative "Blueprint" partnership to secure refugee children a fair deal in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), and as reflected in Ethiopia's commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF). The main objectives of the "Blueprint" encompass strengthening existing national child protection systems, including those for birth registration; developing the capacity of national partners on refugee protection; and integrating refugee children in national child protection systems.
- UNHCR is strongly committed to ensure consistent and effective communication with refugee communities. It is actively using refugee social media groups to communicate with refugee communities, regularly disseminating vital information on COVID-19 prevention measures.
- As part of the ongoing COVID-19 prevention campaign, UNHCR set up a Protection Helpline for refugees and asylum-seekers in Addis Ababa to continue to provide services related to protection, resettlement and access to asylum. The helpline numbers have been disseminated to the concerned communities in eight different languages through various communication channels, including the social media and community-based structures.
- UNHCR, in partnership with the ARRA and the Organization for Women in Self-Employment (WISE) concluded the documentation of Eritrean refugees who fled the former Hitsats and Shimelba camps due to the conflict in the Tigray Region. This documentation, valid for three years, will enable them to open bank accounts, gain access to assistance, health services, durable solutions like resettlement or family reunification and provide protection against detention and other risks. UNHCR and partners have continued with issuing ID cards and proof of registration documentation to more refugees in Addis Ababa.

Durable Solutions

- As current conditions for voluntary repatriation are not favourable for most refugees in Ethiopia, and local integration programmes are yet to be put in place, securing resettlement opportunities remains UNHCR's top priority. So far in 2021, UNHCR has projected 2,208 individuals for resettlement. At the end of September, UNHCR has processed 1,339 refugees for resettlement, while facilitating the departure of 737 others to different countries. We also supported 377 refugees to be reunified with their families.
- As part of the voluntary repatriation of Ethiopian refugees from Kenya that commenced in February 2020, UNHCR, together with the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya, facilitated the return of 95 refugees in September. This brings the total that have returned so far to 916, with 967 others expected to return before the end of the year. UNHCR has supported the returnees with transportation and cash assistance to help them reintegrate in their areas of return.

Shelter

- Access to adequate shelter remains below the standard, with 46% of the camp-based refugee families living in adequate dwelling. UNHCR and partners continue to work to improve the shelter coverage through the planned construction of 3,273 emergency shelters and 2,358 transitional shelters, as well as by maintaining 1,975 transitional shelters in 2021. So far this year, 2,032 emergency shelters and 826 transitional shelters have been constructed and provided to families. Maintenance work has also been conducted on 970 transitional shelters in different refugee camps.
- Communal shelters are also being constructed in Alemwach, a site in the Amhara region that is being developed into a refugee camp to accommodate some 25,000 Eritrean refugees who are currently sheltered in two camps in southern Tigray region.
- Under the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food-Items (ES/NFI) Cluster, UNHCR continues to respond to shelter and related needs of IDPs in the Tigray Region, as well as in Gedeo, West Guji, Fafan, east and west Hararge, and also east and west Wollega areas. Since April, 750 emergency shelters have been constructed in IDP sites in Shire and Mekelle, with plans underway to scale up the construction. In Gedeo and West Guji areas in the south, construction of 200 shelters for IDP returnees is at an advanced stage; 92 shelters have been provided to IDPs and IDP returnees in the Somali Region and in east Hararge in Oromia.

Education

- Ahead of the reopening of schools in October, UNHCR and partners have been making preparations, including through an assessment of existing school facilities, back-to-school campaigns and community engagement. In some locations, inadequate classrooms for pre-primary, primary and, mainly, secondary education remain to be a challenge.
- Three workshops were facilitated in Assosa, Gambella and Addis Ababa with the aim to draw lessons from the LEGO Foundation's innovative learning model, which focuses on learning through play. The applied concept should alleviate healing processes, increase socio-emotional skills, and build resilience among children.

Health

- UNHCR, in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and partners, facilitates access to primary, emergency secondary and tertiary healthcare services for refugees and asylum-seekers. While primary health services are often provided in health facilities that are located in the refugee camps, patients requiring advanced medical attention are referred to regional or federal health facilities. In urban settings such as Addis Ababa, UNHCR covers the cost of medicines and health check-ups for refugees. Special health screening campaigns are also conducted sporadically, including the recent cataract screening campaign organized in Sherkole, Tsore and Bambasi camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region. As a result, 78 cataract patients were identified for treatment recently in collaboration with ARRA and the Assosa General Hospital.
- In line with the criteria of prioritization set by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, 6,107 refugees have received COVID-19 vaccine, including 2,807 that were fully vaccinated.

- UNHCR, together with ARRA, Regional Health Bureaus and other health partners, implements activities to help prevent COVID-19 infections and to mitigate its consequences in refugee camps and other locations sheltering refugees. Activities include risk communication and community engagement, training of health personnel, case identification and management, contact tracing and referrals, distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and essential medicines and equipment to strengthen health services. 880,000 face masks, 95,000 N95 masks, 800,000 gloves and 190,000 gowns were provided recently to protect healthcare and other frontline workers in the field from COVID-19. UNHCR is also part of the UN Inter-agency COVID-19 response to the IDP situation, providing PPEs and sanitation materials, equipping isolation and quarantine centres and sensitizing community on the risks of the pandemic.

Food Security and Nutrition

- **Nutrition Programs:** UNHCR and ARRA Continue to coordinate with partners to improve the nutrition status of refugees through preventive and curative programmes. In line with the UN Secretary General's Global Action Plan (GAP) on prevention of wasting, UNHCR in conjunction with UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO and in collaboration the Ministry of Health and other key federal line ministries, has developed and validated the Ethiopia chapter of the GAP roadmap (Ethiopia GAP). The roadmap will inform key actions for the next five years, contributing to the World Health Assembly (WHA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** UNHCR has completed its annual Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) in camps in the Afar, Gambella and Somali (Melkadida) regions, while surveys for camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz region and Jijiga (Somali region) are planned to be carried out soon. In all the surveyed camps, Global Acute Malnutrition rate (GAM) is below the WHO emergency threshold of >15.0%¹, with the exception of Kobe, Bokolomayo and Aysaita camps which have recorded higher rates. UNHCR, in collaboration with ARRA, continues to address the needs through holistic multi-sector programming with partners and other key stakeholders.
- **Food assistance:** Refugees in Ethiopia continue to receive food rations meeting only 84% of the minimum standard of 2,100 kcal per person/day. This has been coupled with food supply delays to Mai Aini and Adi Harush camps in Tigray region and Tongo and Gure- Shembola camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, due to insecurity concerns. Food ration cuts are anticipated in all refugee camps from November 2021 on. .

Water and Sanitation (WASH)

- UNHCR works with partners to provide access to clean water and sanitation and improve hygiene practices through the construction and upgrading of WASH facilities and awareness raising. An average of 18 litres/per person per day of potable water was provided to refugees across all camps during the reporting month.
- Under the ongoing emergency response in the North, UNHCR and partners have continued with preparation and development of the new Alemwach refugee camp site in Dabat, Amhara region. Construction of emergency WASH facilities is ongoing at the reception area, including water points, latrines and bathing facilities.
- UNHCR and partners continued with the implementation of the COVID-19 prevention and hygiene promotion activities, such as the provision of safe water supply, monthly blanket distribution of soap (500g per person per month), installation of handwashing facilities and routine community sensitization on personal and environmental hygiene in all the refugee camps.

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

- UNHCR continues to provide monthly cash assistance to some 4,400 urban refugees in Addis Ababa to cover their basic needs, with an additional amount for extra hygiene and sanitation support

¹ The Global Acute Malnutrition rates are as follows: Gambella camps: Pinyudo I 5.5%, Pinyudo II 11.4%; Kule 12.1%, Tierkidi 12.7%, Jewi 4.1%, Nguenyiel 14.4%. Melkadida Camps: Bokolomayo 19.6%, Buramino 14.4%, Helaweyn 12.5%, Kobe 15.9% and Melkadida 12.4%. Afar Camps: Aysaita 19.8%.

for the prevention of COVID-19. There are ongoing efforts to expand this assistance modality to different refugee and IDP hosting areas in Ethiopia. Cash assistance is also being implemented to support IDPs in the Tigray and Benishangul Gumuz regions, as well as to support reintegration of Ethiopian refugees who have voluntarily returned from Kenya. Additionally, some 1,700 elderly refugees in the Melkadida camps who are with serious medical conditions received cash assistance to supplement their monthly food ration.

- In Awbare and Sheder refugee camps near Jijiga, UNHCR has already piloted the viability of CBI, and is working to scale up the service to 400 households. Some 100 refugee households have already received cash-based assistance so they can locally purchase materials for the construction of shelters. Second and third rounds of instalments will be released in the coming months to finish the construction. By providing cash directly to beneficiaries to build their shelters, UNHCR reduces support costs and ensures that refugees have more control over the final design. In addition to shelter component, a roll-out of more CBIs is planned in the coming months, including for the local purchase of school uniforms and women's underwear.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR has engaged the NGO "Organization for Women in Self Employment" (WISE), to implement the project "Employment Linkage and Medium and Small Enterprises (MSE) start up Challenge Fund" for urban refugees and host communities. This initiative aims to support refugees and local population in Addis Ababa in gaining access to employment opportunities, including by facilitating the issuance of work permits for refugees and the registration and licencing of small businesses owned by refugees and host community members working with them. This will alleviate the processes of licencing of MSEs and the issuance of residence permits for refugees. Thanks to the support of the Challenge Fund, 80 refugee and host community MSEs will either start-up or scale-up and secure registration certificates from local administrations. 30 MSEs will benefit from tailored financial services from local micro-finance service providers; 1,000 refugees and host community members will be able to profit from viable employment opportunities.

Access to Energy

- UNHCR is part of the multi-actor partnerships working to improve refugees' access to energy for cooking, lighting and other purposes. The Energy and Environment Working Group (EEWG) is preparing a "Multi-actor National Cooking Fuel Strategy" guiding the implementation of access to sufficient, safe, sustainable and clean cooking energy to refugees and host communities. Energy and Environment is also one of the result areas for the Multi-Year Strategy (MYS 2022-2024) of the UNHCR Ethiopia operation. As part of these efforts, UNHCR is working to cater to the energy needs of refugees through the production and distribution of briquettes and firewood, distribution of stoves and connection of more communal kitchens to the national power grid. More than 825,000 multipurpose tree seedlings were raised and transplanted in camps in the Gambella, Somali (Melkadida & Jijiga), Afar and Benishangul-Gumuz regions this year as part of UNHCR's environmental rehabilitation and natural resource management intervention.

External / Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the direct contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2021


US| Germany| Denmark | IKEA Foundation | European Union (ECHO)| Japan |Netherlands | Education Cannot Wait | Country-based Pooled Funds| The Lego Foundation| Canada| Norway| Ireland| Sweden| Switzerland | "la Caixa" Banking Foundation| Italy| CERF| Czechia | UN Children's Fund| Spain| UNO-Fluechtlingshilfe| Luxembourg| UN Foundation| UN

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Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2021

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