Somali Refugee Influx
Ethiopia

Update N.1 | As of 26 May 2023

Around 100,000 refugees fled into Ethiopia following clashes and violence in Lascaanood city, Somaliland area of Somalia. 91,000 of them were pre-registered at the family level across the remote Doolo Zone in Ethiopia’s eastern Somali Region, while biometric registration has begun in Mirqaan.

Many refugees have found a home in host communities. Others without this safety net and in dire need of support have been relocated to Mirqaan settlement where they can build a home. To date, nearly 18,000 refugees have been screened and moved to Mirqaan, with support from the Government’s Refugees and Returnees Service.

Nearly 84,000 refugees have benefitted from food distribution with the support from the Government of Ethiopia, WFP and UNHCR in the three main refugee-hosting kebeles. Plans are underway to provide rations for the second month.

Since February 2023, clashes in Somalia’s Lascaanood city displaced thousands of people, 100,000 of whom sought safety in the Somali region of Ethiopia. While some are being hosted by welcoming Ethiopian families in their homes and communities, many remain in overcrowded shelters or are sleeping outdoors and require urgent assistance.

As part of the response and in line with the all-of-society approach, the Government of Ethiopia and humanitarian partners are assessing needs in all locations to provide targeted assistance to those opting to settle within host communities. For others, the Government has generously allocated land to set up Mirqaan settlement where over 17,700 people have been relocated to as of 26 May, with the support from the Government’s Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and partners.

However, with the increasing number of refugees in need across the Doolo Zone and insufficient resources to respond, partners are struggling to deliver critical aid, including WASH, shelter and health services. Appealing partners require urgent support to continue delivering lifesaving assistance to refugees and to the local communities hosting them.
Timeline of key events

- **6 February**: Refugee arrivals to Doolo zone
- **9-15 February**: Rapid needs assessment
- **24 February**: Pre-registration at the family level. Distribution of emergency assistance
- **22 March**: Launch of inter-agency appeal $116M
- **28 March**: Start of general food distribution
- **8 April**: Start of voluntary relocation to Mirqaan

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**RESPONSE & CRITICAL GAPS***

**Protection**

- **% of refugees registered on an individual basis**
  - Registered: 12%  
  - Gap: 88%

  **Achievements and Impact**
  
  RRS, with the support of UNHCR, has begun nationality screening, individual and biometric enrollment of refugees.

  **Identified Needs and Gaps**
  
  Connectivity in Mirqaan has hindered the general registration process. With refugees scattered across several communities, registration is to be extended to other locations where refugees wish to settle.

**Protection**

- **# of people reached with GBV and rights awareness raising and community-based activities**
  - Assisted: 840  
  - Gap: 30,205

  **Achievements and Impact**
  
  840 women, girls and boys have been counselled on types of gender-based violence (GBV), early reporting within 72 hours for rape cases, reporting mechanism as well as GBV services in Mirqaan settlement.

  **Identified Needs and Gaps**
  
  Lack of additional protection partners and resources limit the reach of GBV prevention and response actions across the entire refugee-hosting areas. Lack of protective shelters, inadequate WASH facilities and lighting in and around the settlement further heightens risks of GBV.

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*Non comprehensive and based only on selected indicators with critical needs. For more information on sectors and gaps, consult the sectoral updates in the UNHCR Data Portal.*
Achievements and Impact

2,100 emergency shelters have been provided, with an additional 2,600 underway to accommodate refugees in need of shelter and relocated to Mirqaan. 30 communal hangars (for 50 people each) have been established.

Identified Needs and Gaps

Limited funding is an obstacle in delivering support for the transition from emergency to semi-permanent shelters and to provide support for refugees in the host communities.

Achievements and Impact

Core relief items (CRIs) for around 9,000 families have been prepositioned in Mirqaan settlement for families who have undergone biometric registration and received documentation.

Identified Needs and Gaps

Technical issues have hindered registration and the delivery of documentation, which has further postponed the delivery of CRIs. Furthermore, current resources will only be sufficient to cover 45% of the needs.

Achievements and Impact

Support has been provided to health centres, including basic medicine, 1 ambulance in Mirqaan, support to vaccination campaigns in Mirqaan and Hegaale, among others, to detect and respond to outbreaks. Plans are underway to hire staff and procuring medicine for some health facilities to support the response to health needs, including measles.

Identified Needs and Gaps

Existing health facilities lack human and material resources, like key medical equipment and supplies, medication, mass meausles vaccination campaigns and electricity to respond to outbreaks. In addition, the outbreak is exceeding the current capacity, thus limiting the response across the Doolo Zone.

Achievements and Impact

Partners are currently providing at least 10 litres of water per day to each of the 11,000 refugees living in Mirqaan settlement through daily water trucking, while plans are underway to repair the local borehole and drill others.

Identified Needs and Gaps

Water trucking is costly and meant only as a temporary measure. With current resources and considering the growth of Mirqaan settlement, partners would be able to deliver water during an additional 4 months. In addition, limited resources do not allow to reach the standard of 15 litres per person per day. Building and rehabilitating boreholes in refugee-hosting areas is essential in the longer term to support refugees and their hosts.

Achievements and Impact

58 communal latrines have been built and an additional 20 are in construction for refugees living in Mirqaan settlement. Hence, at least 50% of refugees in Mirqaan are accessing appropriate emergency sanitation services. Partners are also engaging refugee leadership in promoting care for sanitation infrastructure and promotion of hygiene practices.

Identified Needs and Gaps

The increase in refugees requiring shelter in Mirqaan settlement will render the current communal WASH infrastructure insufficient. Additional resources are required to find longer term solutions, including family latrines.

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*Plus gap referring to rate exceeding the maximum standard rate.