

# Ethiopia

**December 2018**

**167,695** refugees in Ethiopia are between the ages of **15-24**, representing **18.5 %** of the registered refugee population in the country

**63,495** refugee youth are South Sudanese sheltered in camps in the Gambella region. They make up **38 %** of the youth refugee population in Ethiopia

In Pugnido camp, Gambella, a **'Youth Peace Education Club'**, comprising of young people from the host and refugee communities, work on initiatives aimed at fostering peaceful co-existence and peace-building

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The Refugee Camps in the Gambella region- hosting over 400,000 South Sudanese refugees- shelter the largest number of refugee youth, representing 38% of the overall refugee youth population in the country. In the Shire camps, the youth constitute 41% of the total refugee population.
- Displaced youth have the ability to play a significant role in the protection and development of their communities as well as those hosting them. Despite the important role refugee youth play, their concerns are rarely reflected in the programmatic responses of UN, NGOs and other organizations working in humanitarian response. Youth have skills, abilities and needs that are rarely fully recognized. Their engagement in peaceful coexistence interventions and in preventing intra- and inter- communal conflicts is crucial.
- UNHCR and partners are engaging adolescent girls in the Melkadida camps in learning and making handicrafts such as baskets, mats, artificial fans, and brooms. The programme aims at girls' empowerment through socialization and skills development which contributes to their protection from various risks mainly from Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Besides, the youth are benefiting from skills and Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) training as well as psychosocial programmes with the overall objective of empowering them and addressing their psychosocial needs.
- UNHCR and partners continue engaging the youth in different awareness-raising activities on the risks of onward movement of refugees. Such activities were undertaken mainly in camps in the Tigray region as well as in Addis Ababa. In the former, UNHCR and partners support sport and recreational activities and help to address the psychosocial needs of refugee youth. In Shemelba camp, information centers (mini-media) and migration desks (mini library) have been established in the refugee youth centers aimed at helping the youth to make informed decisions regarding onward migration.
- In Assosa camps, community-based youth initiatives (Clubs) have been established in thematic areas of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), Music and Drama, Peace and Education. These clubs are actively participating in learning and recreational activities with the refugee community and in awareness raising on reproductive health and HIV AIDS, child protection, SGBV as well as peaceful coexistence between the refugee and the host communities. The initiatives provide the youth with opportunities to become change agents while creating forums for their engagement and participation, eventually contributing to reducing the likelihood of the youth's involvement in anti-social activities.
- UNHCR is currently implementing youth-led projects supported by UNHCR Department of International Protection's 'Youth Initiative Funding'. The projects are being implemented specifically in refugee camps and surrounding host communities under UNHCR's Sub Office Jijiga and those under Field Office Pugnido.
- As part of the project's implementation in Jijiga, boys and girls drawn from both the refugees and host communities participate in basketball and volleyball activities, which are also strategically linked with awareness raising and skills training covering topics such as Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Child Protection (CP), irregular migration and peaceful co-existence. In line with the CRRF, the project promotes integration of refugee programming within the national system through collaboration with the Regional Youth and Sports Bureau.

- In Pugnido (Gambella) where the ‘Pugnido Peace Education Club’ has been running since 2017, the community-based peace-building initiative continues, focusing on peaceful co-existence. The initiative is owned and led by the youth and has contributed towards addressing key protection issues of young people, including fostering peaceful co-existence between the two communities.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- UNHCR Ethiopia has mainstreamed youth protection into the strategies of Livelihood, Education, Child Protection and the overall Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Strategies of the different refugee population groups in the country. A key priority is improving youth access to livelihoods opportunities and life-skills as well as vocational training to promote their self-reliance and inclusion into the Ethiopian hosting communities. Furthermore, UNHCR is a member of the UN Youth Taskforce which was established by the United Nations Country Team in Ethiopia. UNHCR uses the opportunity to advocate for broader inclusion of refugee youth into a multi-sectoral response for sustainable youth development programming.

## CHALLENGES



## External / Donors Relations

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