

Bi-weekly Operational Update: 16-31 May 2019

Partners invest in water supply network in western Ethiopia: UNHCR, together with UNICEF and IRC are working to improve the supply of water to refugees and asylum seekers in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region. This includes the installation of a permanent water supply system in Gure-Shembola Camp, while defining contingency measures to prevent water interruption in the other four camps in the Region. In Gure-Shembola, a camp of 6,400 predominantly South Sudanese refugees, UNICEF has tested three of the four boreholes that have a combined yield of 57 liters of water per second. In a move to support the long-term sustainability of water infrastructure, the Mao-Komo Special Woreda administration has made land available for UNICEF to develop a water treatment plant, install solar panels and related structures. Similarly, IRC is overseeing the construction of a permanent river intake system in Bambasi Camp, the drilling of a borehole in Tongo Camp, and the integration of solar technology to supply sustainable energy to the borehole in Tsore Camp.

Social protection assessment underway in Jijiga, Somali Region: A team of UNHCR and UNICEF Social Protection experts have undertaken a first joint mission to Jijiga to assess the capacity of Community Care Coalitions (representative local bodies recognized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs that help define and support the response to community needs) to work with refugee community structures in the field of social protection. Broadly defined as constituting: all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor; protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks; while enhancing social status and rights, social protection interventions seek to reduce the economic and social vulnerability of the poor, the vulnerable and other marginalised groups. Defining the approach to social protection that will facilitate the referral of refugees to national service providers is a key priority for UNHCR, following the passage of the revised national Refugee Proclamation in January of this year.

Promoting sport and recreation in the Tigray Region: UNHCR made a symbolic donation of sport materials, including bicycles and recreational equipment to the Tselemti Woreda Sports and Youth office in the Tigray Region, benefiting both Ethiopian and refugee youth. The investment is part of the Youth Initiative Fund, which seeks to further the exchange, collaboration and the capacities of youth from both communities through sport. Part of wider investments in youth groups in the Region, UNHCR has scaled a number of competitive sports tournaments to further the inclusion of refugees within their host communities.

Heavy rains damage refugee infrastructure in Melkadida, Somali Region: Heavy rains have flooded irrigation infrastructure in all the five refugee camps in Melkadida, damaging maize and sesame crops. Transport networks in the area have also been effected. UNHCR, ARRA and partners are currently assessing the extent of the damage.

Betty G visits camps in Melkadida, Somali Region: Ethiopian singer and UNHCR High Profile Supporter Betty G visited Melkadida in Ethiopia's Somali Region where she met with Somali refugees and their Ethiopian hosts. She visited a furniture workshop owned and run by a Somali refugee, a microfinance institution lending money to refugees and Ethiopians starting businesses, as well as a teachers' training college. "Microfinance institutions are a good way of fuelling development in this remote rural location, the lacks access to major financial services such as banks," Betty G said, who called for more international financial support to joint refugee-host community business development projects.

Comprehensive biometric data registration continues throughout the country. During the period 16-31 May 2019, an additional 29,805 individuals completed comprehensive biometric data registration, bringing the overall total to 557,034 persons. Progress by Camp can be tracked on a daily basis via the UNHCR Operational Data Portal, <https://data2.unhcr.org>, and directly at <https://im.unhcr.org/eth/>.