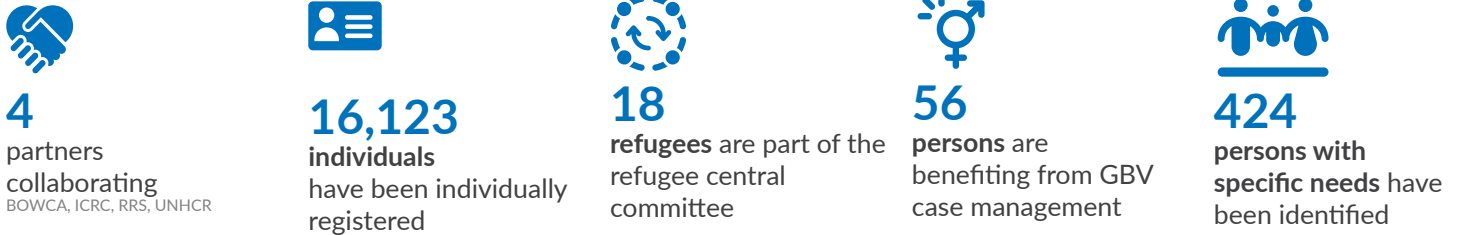


Overview

UNHCR and the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) of the Ethiopian Government have prioritized providing protection services to newly arrived refugees, including establishing mitigation and response mechanisms to gender-based violence (GBV) and exploitation and sexual abuse. Teams have set up **protection desks** to provide

counseling and related support to the most vulnerable refugees. As there are few protection partners on the ground, UNHCR working with RRS, refugees and the host community set up **community structures** in the newly established Mirqaan Settlement to support the efforts to identify protection issues and assist with the relocation of refugees.

Key figures



NEEDS

- Refugees and host communities in the affected three *woredas* do not have adequate access to basic services and therefore require immediate **multi-sectoral assistance** that aims at improving existing facilities and provides targeted support to the most vulnerable.
- People with specific needs lack targeted assistance that align with their vulnerabilities putting them at a **heightened risk**.
- Refugees sheltering with the host community in the border *kebeles* lack **access to humanitarian assistance** and have limited access to registration in Mirqaan.

RESPONSE

- Individual registration of refugees is currently going on in Mirqaan facilitating refugees' access to **non-food items** and other assistance as well as establishing reliable population and demographic data.
- With the establishment of the Refugee Central Committee in Mirqaan, protection teams are now focusing on establishing additional **community structures** including Women, Persons with Specific Needs Association, as well as Child Protection and Zonal Committees that are aimed at enhancing participation of refugees in **protection and assistance delivery**.
- Protection teams are concentrating efforts to reduce risks and enhance prevention of sexual exploitation and gender-based violence by providing **awareness and capacity development** sessions to refugee community leaders and humanitarian partners in Mirqaan with a total of 11 community leaders and 7 personnel from partners have been trained to date.
- Systematic screening of **Persons with Specific Needs** is currently being undertaken at the protection desk to identify and record different vulnerabilities for future targeted programming.
- Protection desk in Mirqaan so far identified **24 unaccompanied and separated children** and best interest assessment procedures have been initiated in collaboration with RRS. Tracing and family reunification processes will be undertaken by ICRC.



Protection teams continue identification of persons with specific needs in the Mirqaan Settlement.
UNHCR/Diana Diaz

GAPS

- Limited partner presence in the Doolo Zone to provide protection services, including **psychosocial support** remains a major challenge.
- Rising humanitarian needs have outpaced the available resources, impacting **access to basic services** for both refugees and the host community.
- Lack of resources in the **existing facilities** including health centres, constraints access to protection services.
- Concrete planning is needed to provide humanitarian assistance and individually register those who are unable to relocate to Mirqaan.

UNHCR thanks donors who contributed earmarked and unearmarked funds for their support to our response to this emergency (As of May 2023)



• Somali Regional Bureau of Women and Children (BOWCA) • International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) • Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)