

Ethiopia

January 2023

Ethiopia is the third largest refugee hosting country in Africa, generously sheltering over **880,000** refugees, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan. The majority are women and children who need special care and attention.

UNHCR is a key partner in the government-led Inter-Agency response to the plight of IDPs, leading the **Protection** and co-leading the **Camp Coordination & Camp Management** (CCCM) Clusters. UNHCR is also active in the Shelter/NFI, Logistics and Health Clusters.

UNHCR is supporting people affected by conflict & the worst drought in **40 years**. It's also helping the government & communities to build resilience against natural hazards, such as recurrent droughts and flooding.

KEY INDICATORS

100,000 IDPs received shelter support and core relief items (CRIs)

650 vulnerable Somali refugees issued with work permits.

180,000 refugees enrolled in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

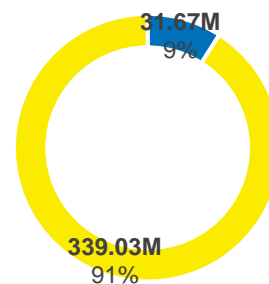
45,000 refugee children immunized.

15.5% prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in refugee camps.

FUNDING (30 JANUARY)

USD 370.7 million

requested for Ethiopia



Registered Population **884,294**

Households **208,208**

Country of origin & Demography

Country of origin	Individual	%
South Sudan	410,727	46%
Somalia	252,496	29%
Eritrea	163,251	19%
Sudan	48,743	5%
Kenya	4,034	
Yemen	2,481	
DR Congo	1,058	
Syrian Arab Republic	668	
Other	836	
Total	884,294	

Children (0-17 yrs)
494,696 (57%)

Women & Children
718,477 (81%)

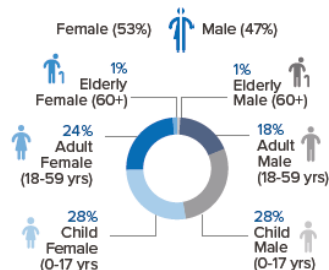
Adolescents and Youth (12-24 yrs)
308,081 (35%)

Women (18-55 yrs)
206,530 (23%)

Percentages represent proportion out of the total registered population

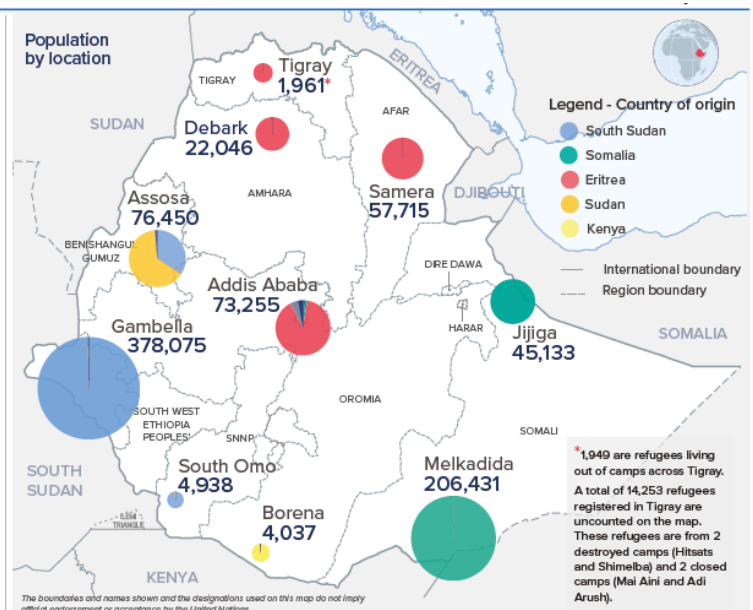
882,079 Refugees 2,215 Asylum seekers

4 Average family size



Persons with Disabilities
2,261

Unaccompanied and Separated Children
40,674



Operational Context

Conflict, drought, inflation, and high food prices have had a cumulative devastating humanitarian impact across the country, driving millions into displacement. According to the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) latest [Displacement Tracking Matrix](#) (DTM), there were 2.73 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 1.88 million returning IDPs in the country, all of them requiring urgent humanitarian support and solutions¹. Ethiopia is experiencing the most severe drought in 40 years, following five consecutive failed rainy seasons in the Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP) and Somali regions. The drought killed millions of livestock, destroyed livelihoods and displaced thousands who left their homes in search of food, water and pasture. UNHCR is providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance in the three regions, improving water systems, distributing cash, and providing support in shelter and income generating activities. In the Benishangul-Gumuz Region, UNHCR is extending protection and humanitarian assistance to over 76,000 refugees, while also supporting thousands of Internally displaced persons (IDPs) as part of the inter-agency response.

Notwithstanding its internal challenges, Ethiopia has kept its doors open for over 880,000 refugees and is providing protection and services to those in need. The country is also creating conditions for self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in national development plans and services, such as health and education. UNHCR is working with government partners, development actors, international financial institutions, donor countries, the private sector and others to engage in long-term socio-economic investments in refugee-hosting areas, benefitting both refugees and the communities hosting them.

Main achievements



PROTECTION

In January, UNHCR provided crucial support and assistance to refugees and IDPs to enhance their protection and restore their dignity. In addition to providing counseling and other support to the most vulnerable among them across the country, the following protection interventions were made in the three northern Ethiopia regions:

Women and girls: In Mekelle and Hawzien UNHCR and its partners-Innovative Humanitarian Solutions (HIS) and Action for the Needy in Ethiopia (ANE)-distributed Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) kits to approximately 4,000 women and girls sheltered in different IDP sites. Similarly, in Adwa, Axum, Sheraro and Shire, UNHCR's partners HIS and Development Expertise Centre (DEC) distributed dignity kits to 1,375 displaced women and girls

Child protection: In Dabat and Debark, UNHCR, through its partner World Vision, provided cash assistance to 700 unaccompanied and separated IDP children and their foster families. This will help ensure better protection to the children who either left their homes alone or were separated from their parents/guardians during the flight.

Solutions: UNHCR, together with its partner Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), provided cash and transport support to 520 IDPs who voluntarily returned from Logia to Koneba within the Afar region. January's returns bring to 8,533 the total number of IDPs UNHCR has assisted to return within the region since August 2022.

Free legal aid and service: UNHCR has concluded an agreement with the Jigjiga University (JJU) to extend legal aid and services to IDPs in the Somali region, bringing its partner universities that provide legal aid and services to IDPs to six. In 2022, UNHCR in partnership with the universities of Bule Hora, Dila, Wollega, Arba-Minch and Wollo provided free legal aid and legal awareness to over 34,000 IDPs in the country. The agreement will enable JJU to provide free legal aid and services to thousands of IDPs in Goljano, Awbarre and Dhurwale areas.

¹ The number of IDPs and IDP returnees don't include those in Tigray region due to access constraints at the time of data collection.

**EDUCATION**

School enrollment: Almost 180,000 refugees are enrolled in different levels of education, including 48,617 in pre-primary, 111,776 in primary, and 15,539 in secondary schools. Over 4,600 others have been attending their tertiary education in different parts of the country under the scholarship programmes offered by the governments of Ethiopia and Germany (DAFI).

Inclusion of refugees in national education system: Tsore Arumera secondary school in the Benishangul-Gumuz region has become the first refugee school to be transferred to the management of the Regional Education Bureau as part of the refugee integration programme. Built using funds from the Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the school enrolls a total of 1,426 students, composed of 1,226 refugees and 200 Ethiopians. This transition marks a major milestone in the ongoing drive to ensure the inclusion of refugees into the national education system, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). With support from the World Bank's IDA 19, 13 refugee secondary schools are expected to be transferred to the management of the Ministry of Education and/or Regional Education Bureaus by 2025.

Complementary pathways: Six refugees in Ethiopia won DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) scholarships to study for their master's degrees in Germany. They were among nine selected through a highly competitive screening process involving participants from Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. In addition to opening opportunities for further learning, the scholarships offer refugees complementary pathways to Europe.

**HEALTH**

Basic healthcare: UNHCR, RRS and partners continue to provide basic health services for refugees, including in urban locations. The overall health status of refugees has remained stable. Given budget limitations to cover secondary medical referrals and highly specialized medical care, RRS has called upon public health partners to help bridge the gap while a more sustainable solution is being sought.

In January, more than 52,000 refugees and members of the host communities attended medical consultations in the Outpatient Departments (OPD) of the health centres in the different refugee camps. Upper Respiratory Tract infection (URTI), Malaria and Lower Respiratory Tract Infections (IRTI) were the top three causes of sickness identified.

Immunizations: In partnership with the regional health bureaus, UNHCR and partners provided immunizations to some 45,000 children in refugee camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz and Somali regions. They include some 24,000 children who received measles vaccination, more than 12,600 who received Vitamin A supplements and over 8,300 others that were dewormed. The immunizations boost the children's immunity, contributing to the reduction of preventable illnesses and deaths.

Support to drought-affected communities: The cholera outbreak in Kersadulla and Guardhamole woredas/districts in the Somali region was contained thanks to the Regional Bureau for Health and WHO's leadership for a prompt response. UNHCR's support included training local health workers on cholera outbreak management, facilitating technical monitoring missions and awareness campaigns. However, in January 2023, another cholera outbreak was reported in Mandera region, Kenya, which shares a 100 kms border with Liban zone in Ethiopia where the five refugee camps are located. Amid reports of the spread of infections to bordering areas in Ethiopia, UNHCR is responding as part of the cholera response taskforce team led by the Somali Regional State Government.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

Nutrition Status of refugees: The current food basket meets only 84% of the recommended daily intake of 2,100 kilocalories per person, significantly contributing to a high malnutrition rate in the refugee camps. The average prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) stands at 15.5%, which is above the recommended minimum emergency threshold of 15%. The food basket at its current level can only last until March 2023, calling for an urgent funding to even maintain the current level. The situation among children is alarming with one out of two children under five years of age being malnourished. Similarly, high acute malnutrition among children in the age range of 6- to 23 months and pregnant and lactating women has been observed since November 2022 due to the discontinuation of the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP) owing to funding shortfall. However, UNHCR and RRS- with support from WFP and UNICEF and in collaboration with partners, GOAL, International Medical Corps (IMC), Action Against Hunger (AAH), and Danish Church Aid (DCA), continue to provide curative and preventive nutrition services to refugees and surrounding hosting communities.

There remains a need to find solutions for the high levels of food insecurity for both the immediate and long-term.

Support to drought-affected communities: In response to the worst drought hitting a large part of the country, UNHCR has scaled up support to affected communities in the Oromia, Somali and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) regions. It includes cash support to the most vulnerable families to address their urgent basic needs, including food. In the Somali region, UNHCR is collaborating with RRS and the local government agriculture department in helping farmers in Buramino, Hilaweyn and Kobe irrigation schemes to grow wheat. This is a pilot scheme, which will eventually be scaled up and enhance food security in the area in line with the regional government's 'crop and care' initiative. In the Oromia region, UNHCR distributed goats for breeding purposes to help drought-affected communities generate an income.



WATER AND SANITATION

Water supply: UNHCR and its partners have continued to provide water supply for refugees across the country through an effective management of water systems and the maintenance of associated infrastructure. However, owing to several factors, including population growth, technical challenges and resource constraints, the average daily potable water supply per person remains low at 15 liters against the minimum standard of 20 liters. Emergency water trucking has continued in Alemwach site to meet the needs of the additional refugee families who were relocated to the settlement at the end of 2022.

Sanitation: The sanitation coverage in the refugee camps and sites remains low at 40% against the minimum standard of $\geq 85\%$, calling for more investment in the sector.

WASH in Schools: Experts and sector leads for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Education had a joint meeting during the month to take stock of the state of WASH services in schools across the refugee camps and sites in the country. Among other things, the participants agreed to carry out an assessment of the WASH situation in all refugee schools with the aim to address gaps to ensure that schools remain a safe learning space for children.

Support to drought-affected communities: In response to the worst drought hitting a large part of the country, UNHCR and its partners are improving water systems in the Somali region, rehabilitating shallow wells in Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) region, and distributing water containers and soap and setting up latrines in the drought-affected regions. In Filtu woreda of the Somali region-one of the worst impacted by the drought-UNHCR and UNICEF are working to improve the water supply system in the area, benefitting over 167,000 IDPs and host communities in the area.

SHELTER AND CRIS

UNHCR continues to invest in shelter for refugees and IDPs as a basic human need and key support, providing them security, protection, and the opportunity to lead a dignified life. In January, UNHCR and partners constructed 674 shelters in camps in the Gambella and Somali (Jigjiga and Melkadida) regions. 316 were emergency shelters and 358 transitional ones. Nevertheless, the shelter gap remains wide, with 60% of refugee families continuing to be accommodated in emergency, old and/or overcrowded shelters, which can lead to protection risks.

During the month, UNHCR and partners also provided shelter support and CRIs to over 100,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Amhara, Tigray, and Somali regions. A similar support was extended to 538 IDPs and other affected communities in areas within the Somali region that are severely impacted by the drought.



ACCESS TO ENERGY

Access to alternative energy: In 2023, UNHCR is working with partners to increase refugees' and host communities' access to alternative cooking energy to at least 20% from the current 18%. Accordingly, implementation of the 'Multi-actor Cooking Fuel Strategy' remains a key priority, to be realized through a variety of ways, including the connection of additional common kitchens to the national power grid. Moreover, one of the refugee camps in the Somali Region will have access to electric power using 54kW Solar Mini-Grid system. Installation of Solar Home Systems and Street lighting together with solarization of community facilities will also be scaled up.

GRF pledge: Ahead of the second Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December 2023, UNHCR continues to support the government to meet its energy-related pledge which was made at the first GRF in 2019. Among other things, the government made a commitment to provide refugees and host communities access to "market-based sustainable, reliable, affordable, culturally acceptable, environmentally friendly clean/renewable energy solutions". To date, some 90,000 refugees were provided access to alternative cooking fuel, representing a significant increase from only

23,000 at the end of 2021. More than 28,000 refugees also have access to modern lighting energy, triple the number since the end of 2021. Thanks to the support from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), 150,000 refugees and host communities in Gambella region have access to health services following the solarization of two health centres in Ngunyyiel camp and in Itang woreda. Installation of a solar mini grid has started in Sheder refugee camp to generate electricity for the benefit of both refugees and the communities hosting them.

Environmental rehabilitation: To rehabilitate and protect the natural environment and contribute to the country's "Green Legacy" initiative, UNHCR and partners seek to plant one million seedlings in 2023 through a programme known as "One Refugee One Tree".



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Inclusive development activities: In the Somali region, UNHCR and RRS, with support from IKEA Foundation, continued to promote inclusive long-term development and climate adaptation through investments in the agriculture, livestock, and energy sectors. UNHCR and partners are working to support the different cooperatives in the Melkadida area to cope with the adverse impact of the drought on their performances. In January, UNHCR, RRS and livelihood partner Women and Pastoralist Youth Development Organization (Wa-PYDO), together with the concerned local administration, had consultations with the Meat Sellers Cooperative on how to help them cope with the adverse impact, including through emergency cash support by UNHCR.

Public-Private Dialogue: In collaboration with the Investment & Industry Bureau of the Somali region and SHARPE project, UNHCR facilitated a public private dialogue in Jigjiga at the end of January. Attended by key government sectors, development partners and representatives of the private sector, the dialogue sought to promote the participation of the private sector in refugee and host community economies for the benefit of all involved. The dialogue foresees a strong cooperation between the public and private sectors, with the government creating a conducive investment climate, where equal economic opportunities would be available for refugees.

Refugees issued with work permits: In January, RRS started issuing work permits to 650 Somali refugees in Awbarre and Kebribeyah camps in the Jigjiga area, in the Somali region, granting them the right to work and helping them to become self-reliant. The recipients, who are heads of 358 vulnerable families in Kebribeyah and 292 others in Awbarre, expressed their happiness and requested that the same opportunity be extended to the rest of the refugees in the region. They will be part of a project funded by the ILO and aimed at helping vulnerable families, to become self-reliant.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Facilitating resettlement as a protection tool and durable solution remains one of UNHCR's main priorities in Ethiopia. In January, 547 refugees were submitted to various resettlement countries for consideration, representing 15.8% of the year's quota of 3,450 places. 238 individuals departed for resettlement and other legal pathways, including 165 who left for Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Moreover, during the month, UNHCR counseled 62 individuals on family reunification, education pathways, and labor mobility, and facilitated issuance of travel documents for six refugees.

Working in partnership

Together with its main government counterpart, the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), UNHCR coordinates the response to the refugee situation in the country, extending protection, providing assistance and promoting sustainable solutions. UNHCR works closely with 80 partners in the refugee response and is part of the Humanitarian Country Team, where refugee programmes are discussed strategically to ensure their needs are adequately presented and addressed across the UN System. UNHCR builds on well-established coordination fora, including the inter-sector Refugee Coordination Group together with national and regional sectorial working groups. Committed to pursuing refugee inclusion in national services and economies, as per the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), UNHCR is furthering partnerships with Ethiopian line Ministries, regional and local authorities, development partners and the private sector.

UNHCR is an active part of the government-led Inter-Agency response to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), leading and co-leading the Protection and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters, contributing to the shelter and non-food items clusters, and strengthening sub-national coordination with better information sharing and communication. It distributes emergency aid supplies and related support to IDPs and IDP returnees across the country.

Financial situation

As of 30 January, the UNHCR operation in Ethiopia has received **USD 31.7 million**, representing only **9%** of the requirements. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors that have contributed to its work, as well as those that have contributed to UNHCR programmes globally with unearmarked or broadly earmarked funds.

Contributions to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2023

Denmark| Japan| IKEA Foundation| Netherlands| CERF| Switzerland| Canada| Germany| Luxembourg| Children's Fund| UN Programme on HIV/AIDS| MasterCard International Incorporated.

Other softly earmarked contributions in 2023

Canada | Norway | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions in 2023

Sweden | Norway | Denmark | Netherlands | Germany | Switzerland | Belgium | Ireland

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