

# Ethiopia

October 2020

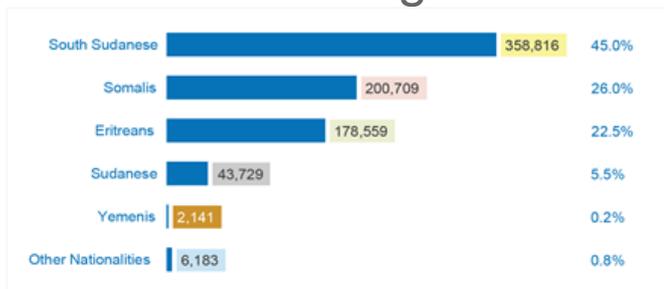
Ethiopia is one of the **largest refugee-hosting countries** in Africa, sheltering **796,437** registered refugees and asylum seekers as of 31 October 2020. The overwhelming majority originate from **South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea** and **Sudan**.

UNHCR continues to scale up **COVID-19** precaution and prevention efforts among refugees and their hosts. It is strengthening community awareness, improving health and sanitation facilities and distributing PPEs for health care workers and first responders.

UNHCR continues to respond to the **IDP situation** in Ethiopia, leading the **Protection Cluster** and providing emergency aid and other support to **IDP returnees** and those displaced by the recent flooding.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Countries of Origin

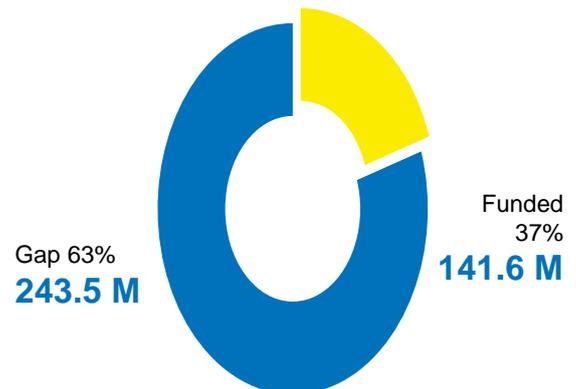


\* [Foot note] Ethiopia currently hosts over 796,400 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly sheltered in 26 refugee camps established in five Regional States. There is a sizeable group of refugees and asylum seekers living out of camp, including over 33,000 who are registered as urban refugees in the capital Addis Ababa

## FUNDING (AS OF 03 NOVEMBER 2020)

**USD 385.1 M**

requested for the Ethiopia Operation



## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

386 National Staff

117 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Branch Office in Addis Ababa

5 Sub Offices in Assosa, Gambella, Jijiga, Melkadida and Shire

5 Field Office in Emba-madre, Mekelle, Pugnido, Sherkole and Tongo



A school in Jewi Refugee camp, Gambella, opens its doors to students, by observing COVID-19 safety precautions. UNHCR/Reath Riek

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR's main government counterpart in the refugee response in Ethiopia is the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA). UNHCR also works closely with 57 humanitarian and development partners and is part of the Humanitarian Country Team where refugee programmes are discussed strategically to ensure the needs of refugees are adequately presented and addressed across the UN System. UNHCR builds on a well-established coordination forum, including the inter-sector Refugee Coordination Group, together with national and regional sector working groups. As part of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), UNHCR is furthering partnerships with government line ministries, regional and local authorities, as well as development partners and the private sector.

## Main Activities

### Protection

- Together with ARRA, UNHCR coordinates the delivery of protection and assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers in Ethiopia as well as the promotion of solutions. It works to strengthen refugee protection through the expansion of improved community-based and multi-sectorial child protection and SGBV programmes. Moreover, UNHCR works with national and international partners, including NGOs and UN agencies to provide protection and assistance to IDPs and IDP returnees in different parts of the country. UNHCR also provides technical support to ARRA in the registration and status determination of new arrivals using advanced biometric registration systems which provide a more reliable means of identification of the refugees and asylum seekers in the country, thereby enhancing their protection.
- UNHCR is working with UNICEF on a model and transformative Blueprint partnership to secure refugee children a fair deal, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, and as reflected in the commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum. The main objectives of the Blueprint include strengthening existing national child protection systems including birth registration systems, developing capacities of national partners on refugee protection, and integrating refugee children in the national child protection systems and plans.
- Movement restrictions, closure of schools, child and youth friendly spaces and loss of income and livelihood due to COVID-19 quickly changed the protection environment in Ethiopia and put children at heightened risk. COVID-19 has either aggravated existing protection challenges or brought new ones such as early marriage, gender-based

violence and child labour. UNHCR and partners continue to work to ensure that children are protected from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation.

### Education

- Before the nation-wide school closures in Ethiopia in March 2020, 208,880 refugee students were attending classes in pre-primary, primary and secondary levels of education, representing enrollment rate of, 55%, 68% and 17% respectively. The enrollment rate is generally low with the participation of girls drastically dropping between the first cycle (Grade 1-4) and second cycle (Grade 5-8), with a further reduction observed during transition from primary to secondary level for both girls and boys. A partial mainstreaming of refugee education in the national system has been achieved, and UNHCR is working with the Government of Ethiopia and others to ensure refugees are fully integrated in the national school system.
- UNHCR is working to fully reopen schools across the refugee camps, but the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to meet the Ministry of Education's strict precautionary requirements have exerted insurmountable pressure on the already limited existing school infrastructure in Ethiopia. There is a dire need for additional personal protective equipment (PPEs), learning spaces and water and sanitation facilities which UNHCR and its partners are working to address. Some schools have already started classes, prioritizing grades 8 and 12 as they need to prepare for the upcoming national examinations.

### Health

- UNHCR, in collaboration with the government and partners, facilitates access to primary and emergency secondary and tertiary healthcare services for refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR supports the operational costs of primary healthcare services in the different refugee camps as well as referral costs for secondary and tertiary health care services in regional and central referral facilities. In urban settings such as Addis Ababa, UNHCR covers the cost of medications, surgical procedures, laboratory test and other diagnostics for refugees at selected health facilities.
- **COVID-19 Prevention and Response:** UNHCR, together with ARRA, Regional Health Bureaus and other health partners has scaled up preparedness and the response to COVID-19 in refugee camps and other locations sheltering refugees and asylum seekers. These include enhancing communication and hygiene promotion, reducing overcrowding, supplying water and soap, installing handwashing facilities, distributing personal protective equipment and strengthening health services. UNHCR is also supporting the inter-agency COVID-19 response to the **IDP situation** in the country, distributing non-food

items, equipping isolation and quarantine centres and providing community sensitization.

### Food Security and Nutrition

- UNHCR supports preventive and curative aspects of nutrition programmes through the Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) model. It monitors the nutrition status of refugees through Standardised Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) assessments and coordinates with partners in nutrition response programming. Moreover, UNHCR works with the World Food Programme (WFP) on food distribution to ensure refugees have sufficient access to basic food. However, refugees in Ethiopia continue to receive only about 84% of the minimum standard food ration of 2,100 kcal per person per day. This has kept the global acute malnutrition rate in most camps higher than the acceptable standards. UNHCR is working with WFP and ARRA to advocate for additional resources so that refugees can at least receive the minimum standard of food in-take per day.

### Water and Sanitation

- UNHCR works with partners to provide access to water and basic sanitation and hygiene to refugees and asylum seekers. Currently, the average per capita water distribution for the refugee population in the 26 refugee camps stands at 18.4 litres per day, just below UNHCR's desired standard of at least 20 litres. Six camps receive less than 15 litres per person per day, which is the minimum standard in emergencies. UNHCR and partners are working to improve access to water in these camps.
- **COVID-19 prevention:** Prevention activities including provision of adequate water and soap as well as hygiene promotion effort continued in all camps and in urban Addis Ababa. Almost 100% of the refugee population in camps have been reached with COVID-19 related hygiene promotion messages. More than 38,700 handwashing stations are currently functional in the camps.

### Shelter and NFIs

- Only 49 per cent of the refugee population in camps in Ethiopia having access to adequate shelter. UNHCR is working with donors and relevant partners to narrow down the shelter gap through construction of new transitional and emergency shelters and the maintenance of existing ones. UNHCR is also providing shelter support to IDP returnees in different parts of the country. It has constructed 850 shelters in the Gedeo and West Guji zones in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) and Oromia Regional States and distributed to the most vulnerable IDP returnees.

### Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

- A small number of urban-based refugees in Ethiopia receive cash from UNHCR to cover their basic needs, and there is an ongoing effort to expand this assistance modality to those in the different refugee camps in Ethiopia. There are a significant number of urban-based refugees, mainly in Addis Ababa, who previously sustained themselves by working in the informal sector and through remittances, sectors that have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. UNHCR is advocating for this group of refugees to be supported to be able to cope with the current situation.

Following a cash assistance for shelter construction pilot in two refugee camps in Jijiga in 2019, UNHCR is working to expand cash-based assistance to other refugee hosting locations while increasing the beneficiaries in the two camps. UNHCR and ARRA have conducted a cash feasibility assessment and are currently finalizing the implementation plan, while being in discussions with the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia to provide cash to elderly refugees and those with underlying health conditions who have been particularly economically impacted by COVID-19. Cash is also being used as reintegration support for Ethiopian refugees who voluntarily returned to their country. It will also be used to respond to the basic needs of Internally Displaced People (IDP).

### Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- UNHCR and ARRA work in close coordination with partners to ensure efficient and coordinated delivery of protection and assistance to refugees. Zonal and camp level coordination meetings and technical working groups continue to take place.

### Access to Energy

- Although UNHCR strives to improve refugees' access to energy for cooking, lighting and other uses, the gaps remain huge. Less than 11% of the refugee households have access to alternative cooking energy, while access to alternative household lighting is slightly better at 25%. 26% of households have access to street lighting and 24% of the health facilities within the refugee camps have been powered by solar and grid electricity. Distribution of briquettes, wood and solar lanterns as well as installation of grid connected communal kitchens are among UNHCR's main energy interventions in many of the refugee camps. Lately, 793 households in the Afar Region have been successfully connected to the national power grid, joining refugees in two camps in the Tigray Region that are also connected to the national grid. As part of its environmental rehabilitation and re-forestation programme, UNHCR planted more than 800,000 trees in all refugee camps during the rainy season.

### **Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance**

- UNHCR is closely working with the Government of Ethiopia and other stakeholders to promote economic opportunities for refugees and support their eventual inclusion within the host communities. This includes supporting the implementation of Ethiopia's pledges at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019 related to creating economic opportunities and skills development for refugees and Ethiopians. UNHCR is also supporting ARRA to roll out the procedural directives on work permits, residence permits and business licenses under joint programmes that will be designed to benefit both refugees and their hosts. UNHCR continues with the coordination of strategic partners as they implement activities in refugee hosting areas, as well as support opportunities for private sector participation and for financial inclusion of refugees.

### **Durable Solutions**

- Providing resettlement opportunities remains a top priority as conditions for voluntary repatriation are unfavourable for most refugees in Ethiopia and local integration programmes are yet to be put in place. In 2020, the target for resettlement submissions is 1,800 individuals, of which 1,551 individuals have already been submitted. 255 individuals have departed to different resettlement countries so far this year. UNHCR also facilitated the transfer of 89 persons to Italy as part of the Second Protocol of the Italian Humanitarian Corridor and assisted 55 cases through the Family Reunification Project.

## External / Donors Relations

### UNHCR is grateful for the direct contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2020

USA| Denmark | UK (FCDO) | IKEA Foundation| Netherlands | European Union (ECHO)| Ireland| “la Caixa” Banking Foundation | Sweden| | Canada| Education Cannot Wait| Japan| Finland| Latter-day Saints Charities | Spain| Muslim World League| Unilever (UK)| Luxembourg| Country-Based Pooled Fund| UPS Corporate| France| UN Programme on HIV/AIDS| Other private donors.

### Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2020

**Sweden** 76.4 million | **Private donors Spain** 52.9 million | **Norway** 41.4 million | **Netherl**  
**Denmark** 34.6 million | **United Kingdom** 31.7 million | **Private donors Republic of Kore**  
**Germany** 25.9 million | **Private donors Japan** 21 million | **Switzerland** 16.4 million | **Fra**  
**Private donors Italy** 12.4 million | **Italy** 10.6 million | **Private donors Sweden** 10.5 millic

### CONTACTS

**Ann Encontre**, Representative, [encontre@unhcr.org](mailto:encontre@unhcr.org), 

**Juliette Stevenson**, Senior External Relations Officer, [stevenso@unhcr.org](mailto:stevenso@unhcr.org) 

**Kisut Gebreegziabher**, National Comms/PI Officer, [gegziabk@unhcr.org](mailto:gegziabk@unhcr.org) 

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