

Bi-weekly Operational Update: 1-15 December 2019

Increase in new arrivals at Pamdong Reception Centre: On 12 December, an inter-agency meeting was held at the Pamdong Reception Centre to review the operational response. Registered new arrivals at the Centre have reached 4,175, comprising of 1,053 families who await relocation to the Benishangul-Gumuz Region. The first relocation of 300 individuals, from an initial caseload of 1,000 individuals scheduled to relocate will commence on 20 December. There is an additional caseload of some 1,000 persons who have expressed a willingness to relocate, pending their registration. The majority of the new arrivals are from Jonglei and Upper Nile states in South Sudan.

UNHCR and partners continue to enhance service delivery to meet the needs of the new arrivals in Pamdong. Teams from the Regional Health Bureau vaccinated a total of 1,097 children from 0-15 years of age for Polio and 1,041 children from 6 months to 15 years were vaccinated for measles. Vitamin A supplementation and deworming tablets (albendazole) were also provided to 561 children of 6-59 months and 423 children of 2-5 years respectively to improve their health status and reduce the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases. Clinical consultation activities taking place five days in a week, including the emergency referrals, have continued. The daily potable water supply delivery to the Centre has double to respond to increased demand, with two water points established to minimise over-crowding. A comprehensive WASH Joint Field Assessment concluded last week, with additional prioritized water, sanitation and hygiene services; and promotion activities, to be further expanded.

Rate of new arrivals places strain on humanitarian services in northern Ethiopia: A total of 2,808 new arrivals from Eritrea were registered in the Tigray and Afar regions. The rate of arrival is in line with a monthly average of some 6,000 persons throughout 2019. The majority of new arrivals continue to be accommodated within existing camps in the Tigray Regional State (70 percent), with a remaining caseload assisted in the Afar Regional State. Reception and registration services are being reinforced, together with investments in WASH and shelter services.

Children account for 44 percent of the total refugee population residing in the Tigray camps, of whom 27 percent arrive unaccompanied or separated from their families. Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) continue to arrive at an average of 30 per day, requiring immediate care arrangements, first at the Endabaguna Reception Centre and upon referral to the camps. This has placed a strain on reception facilities; including emergency education and individual counselling and psycho-social support services, with the Endabaguna Reception Centre accommodating upwards of 1,000 children at any one time until appropriate care arrangement can be identified. UNHCR with the support from RefugePoint, conducted a one-day workshop on Best Interest Procedures in which 40 staff members from UNHCR, and those of partner organizations participated. The training workshop sought to strengthen understanding of fundamentals of child protection, as well as reviewing essential case management practices.

The response to Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) in Aysaita Camp in the Afar Region has continued, with the establishment of an isolation centre within the camp's primary health care clinic, together with the provision of related supplies, and the construction of sanitation and hygiene facilities. While the camp population has reached 21,106, contributing to the potential for communicable disease outbreaks, no new AWD cases were reported during the previous week. In the Tigray Region, while sanitation services have made incremental gains in improving overall household latrine coverage; with only 36 percent of households currently able to access a drop-hole latrine or drop-hole toilet, the construction of emergency latrines to support new arrivals has been prioritized. Transitional shelter coverage continues to remain low, at 33 percent due to resource constraints. Nonetheless, new shelter construction reached 194 units in Barhale Camp, with the annual target of 216 expected to be achieved by the end of year.