

Ethiopia

May 2023

In May, Ethiopia hosted **916,436** refugees, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. Over **80%** are women and children, including a significant number of minors without parents or caregivers.

The UNHCR-led **Regional Refugee Response Plan** for the Sudan emergency was launched, appealing for US\$ 470 M to respond to the needs of over 1 M people who fled the conflict in Sudan. Ethiopia's requirements for the next six months stand at \$87.6 M.

UNHCR signed an **MoU** with the Somali regional state & RRS to facilitate **integration** of **Kebribeyah refugee camp** and its over **16,000** Somali refugee population into Kebribeyah town.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

25,137 refugees in Gambella protected from malaria through insecticide spraying

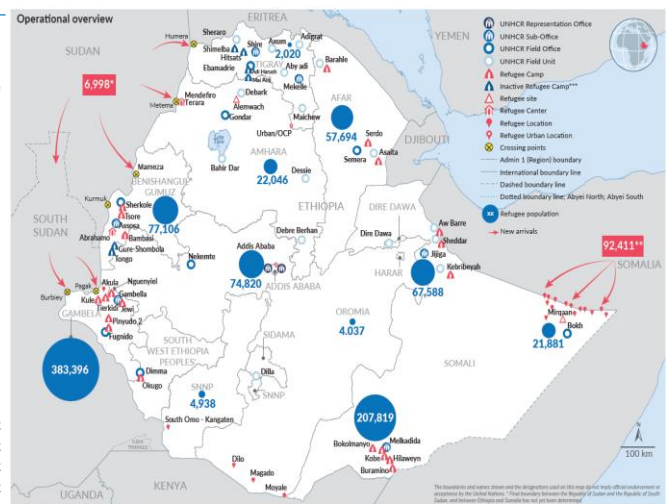
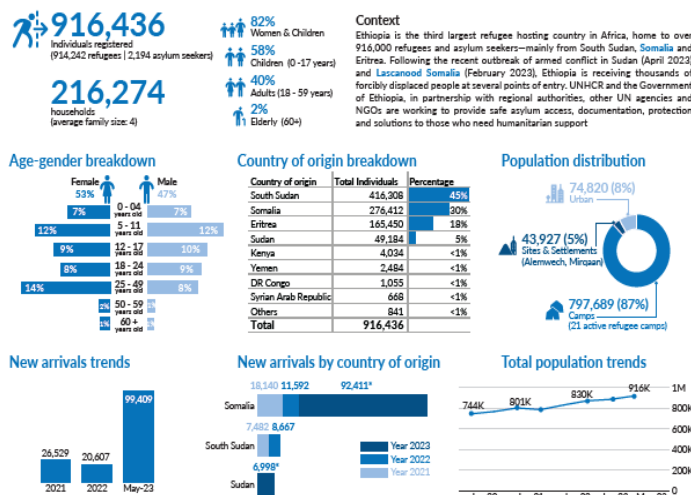
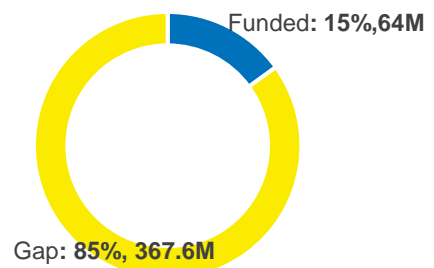
3,300 emergency shelters erected in Mirqaan to accommodate new arrivals from Laascaanood

40 hectares of land made available in Bambasi for refugees and host communities for agricultural cultivation

25,000 IDPs supported to return to north-western parts of Tigray from Abi Adi, Adigrat and Mekelle.

492 refugees referred for resettlement

FUNDING (23 MAY)
\$431.6 million
requested for Ethiopia



Operational Context

Ethiopia continues to face substantial humanitarian challenges, with conflict, inflation and high food prices, and climate shocks driving millions into displacement. According to the [Ethiopia 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#), more than 20 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including an estimated 4.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are also in need of solutions.

Ethiopia hosts over 900,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, predominantly from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. The majority live in refugee camps and settlements established across different regional states. Over 74,000 reside in the capital Addis Ababa as urban refugees. UNHCR maintains a robust field presence including in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia, Somali and Tigray regions, as well as in the city of Dire Dawa. Our work focuses on responding to the protection and lifesaving humanitarian needs of refugees and IDPs, and on promoting self-reliance of refugees and host communities, as well as searching for solutions. UNHCR and partners are also responding to two concurrent refugee emergencies from Somalia and Sudan, which have generated an estimated 115,000 refugees since Feb 2023.

Main achievements



PROTECTION

Protection coordination: UNHCR and UNICEF agreed to streamline their key protection activities in response to the Somali refugee influx in the Doolo zone, including on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Child Protection (PC) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). UNICEF is recruiting incentive workers, establishing three child-friendly spaces, and leading on distribution of 10,000 dignity kits to women and girls of reproductive age. UNICEF has budgeted for these activities until the end of October, while UNHCR will cover expenses for the remaining two months of the year.

Community groups set up to help address IDP community challenges: UNHCR's partner, Action for the Needy in Ethiopia (ANE), established four IDP community groups in Gog, Lare, Jikawo and Wanthoa woredas in the Gambella region. Made up of 44 members, including seven women, the community groups shall help strengthen community-based protection structures and address some of the pressing challenges that the IDPs face, such as documentation, shelter and conflict resolution. To ensure the participation of and support from the local administration, groups include representatives from the local Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO), Women and Social Affairs Office (WSAO), Kebele and community, as well as faith-based institutions.

Support to IDP returns: In April and May, the Protection Cluster assisted over 25,000 IDPs to return to their places of origin in Northwestern Tigray, including over 16,000 from Mekelle, over 6,300 from Adigrat and over 2,400 from Abi-Adi. They were all provided with cash for transportation and reintegration package, including Core Relief Items (CRIs).



EDUCATION

Lack of funding threatens to drive 130,000 refugee children out of schools: Serious underfunding severely threatens provision of education for refugees in Ethiopia. UNHCR's education gap analysis warns that if \$ 2.9 million are not made available urgently, almost 130,000 refugee students will be out of school before the end of the 2023 academic year. They include over 114,000 children who will no longer be able to attend primary schools and over 15,000 who will not be able to complete secondary education. Similarly, UNHCR will not be able to support 1,700 university students to continue with their studies unless the necessary funds are urgently secured.

Scholarships workshop: UNHCR organized a 'scholarships workshop' and deployed ICT materials to educate qualifying candidates from the refugees and host communities in Kebribeyah and Shedder (Somali region) about scholarship opportunities, including by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Graduate students attended the workshop benefitting from practical sessions on what the scholarships entail, how to prepare compelling applications and how to fill out the application forms. A similar workshop was later organized in Awbarre, targeting graduate students from both refugee and host communities.

**HEALTH**

Critical funding gap affects health service delivery: Due to a substantial funding gap, UNHCR and its health partners will not be able to ensure continuity of health services for refugees and host communities unless urgent funding is secured. Medical referrals are already suspended, and unless \$5.5 million is made available as soon as possible, close to one million refugees and host communities will have no access to essential medicines as of June 2023. This is very likely to increase morbidity and exacerbate the already dire nutrition situation in the camps, where one in two children below the age of five years is undernourished.

Primary healthcare: UNHCR and the Government Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), in collaboration with partners, continued to provide basic healthcare services for refugees residing in camps, settlements and urban settings. The overall health status of refugees has remained stable with no disease outbreaks recorded during the reporting period.

Emergency health response: UNHCR and partners continued to provide emergency health response to new arrivals from Somalia and Sudan. In the Doolo zone of the Somali region, which is hosting an estimated 100,000 refugees who fled violence in Somalia's Laascaanood city, UNHCR provided medicines and an ambulance to the health centre in Mirqaan, where both refugees and their Ethiopian hosts receive healthcare services. Some 6,500 arrivals fleeing the ongoing violence in Sudan also received medical support in health facilities in the Metema (Amhara region) and Kurmuk (Benishangul-Gumuz). The services included comprehensive health and nutrition screenings, as well as COVID-19 vaccinations.

Malaria mitigation in Gambella camps: The Gambella Regional Health Bureau (RHB) in collaboration with the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) conducted an Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) campaign in Okugo and Pinyudo II camps in Gambella, protecting over 25,000 refugees from malaria. IRS involves spraying insecticide that is safe for humans. The campaign will also be conducted in the other camps in the region.

Eye-care outreach in Benishangul-Gumuz: An eye-care outreach was conducted for refugees residing in camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, screening 1,179 individuals: 472 of them were diagnosed with various eye diseases, including 14 who underwent cataract surgeries and 68 others who received eyeglasses.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

Food assistance: Funding shortfall has forced WFP to further reduce the monthly food rations for refugees from 84% to 60%. Without urgent funding to reinstate the full food basket, the reduction will lead to increased malnutrition and anaemia, stunted child growth, the deterioration of the general health status of refugees and a myriad of protection risks.

Emergency nutrition response: UNHCR and partners provided hot meals to 6,500 new arrivals from Sudan, both at the Metema and Kurmuk transit sites, as well as at the Kumer site in Metema. 89% of Somali refugees hosted at the Mirqaan site in the Somali region received food rations. The most vulnerable among them also benefitted from the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP).

**WATER AND SANITATION**

Water supply: UNHCR and its partners continued to ensure sustainable water supply in refugee sites across the country through an effective management of water systems and maintenance of associated infrastructure. Refugees continued to have access to an average of 16 liters of water per person per day (l/p/d), which is still lower than the required minimum standard of 20 l/p/d. 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.

Emergency WASH response: UNHCR and partners were providing 10 liters of water per person per day to 11,000 Somali refugees at Mirqaan. This is significantly lower than the emergency threshold, and UNHCR and partners are working to bring it to an acceptable level. Total of 58 communal latrines were built at the site, while construction of additional 20 latrines was ongoing. The plan is to repair and strengthen existing water systems and drill new boreholes in Mirqaan as a sustainable solution. In Kurmuk and Metema, UNHCR and WASH partners put in place emergency water and sanitation facilities – both at the transit sites in the border areas and at the Kumer site, which is intended

to host refugees from Sudan on a longer-term basis. Pending the development of a permanent water source, water supply at Kumer and at the two transit sites is being implemented through water trucking.

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS

Support to refugees: UNHCR and partners set up 1,200 emergency shelters in Mirqaan, Somali region, to accommodate new arrivals from the Laascaanod area of Somalia. This brings the total number of emergency shelters erected there to date to 3,300. In addition, 24 communal hangars were erected to temporarily host refugees until they move to family tents. Similarly, 34 communal hangars and 100 emergency shelters were completed in Kurmuk (Benishangul-Gumuz region) and Metema (Amhara region), to shelter thousands of people fleeing the violence in neighboring Sudan. Additional 346 transitional shelters are in different phases of construction at the Alemwach site, in Amhara, and in several camps in Gambella.

Despite efforts to address the shelter gap, 60% of the refugee families in Ethiopia continued to be accommodated in emergency and old and/or overcrowded shelters, increasing the protection risks. Additional resources are required to narrow down the shelter gap.

Support to IDPs: In May, UNHCR and its partners provided shelter support and core relief items (CRIs) to over 66,000 IDPs in the Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Somali and Tigray regions. This brings the number of people reached with these types of assistance so far this year to over 350,000.

Support to drought-affected IDPs: UNHCR provided multi-purpose cash assistance to 8,325 most vulnerable IDPs in Darsoo IDP site near Melkadida, as a pilot project to help the most vulnerable among them to cope with the impacts of the catastrophic drought in the Somali region. Elsewhere within the Somali region, UNHCR, in collaboration with Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO), conducted assessment, registration and verification of over 20,000 individuals who have been affected by drought and floods in Shabelle and Korahe zones. Over 17,500 of them have been identified, based on their vulnerabilities, to receive multi-purpose cash assistance.



ACCESS TO ENERGY

Distribution of firewood for the most vulnerable: In Bambasi refugee camp (Benishangul-Gumuz region), UNHCR partner Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection (NRDEP) distributed 25kg of firewood for cooking to each of the 500 most vulnerable families. Nearly 700 families in Tsore camp also received firewood for cooking purposes.

Additionally, NRDEP raised 90,000 different seedlings to be planted in and around the Tsore refugee camp during the ongoing rainy season.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Resumption of farming in Melkadida: Three of the nine agricultural cooperatives in Melkadida (Somali region) resumed agricultural activities after recovering from the devastating impact of the recent flash floods on their land and crops. UNHCR, RRS and partner Women and Pastoralist Youth Development Organization (Wa-PYDO) provided them with 8,75 tons of fertilizers and 4,000 liters of fuel to support the cultivation of 86 hectares of land (onion planting). The remaining six cooperatives are expected to follow suit after concluding the ongoing damage assessment on irrigation infrastructure, to be followed by land clearance and preparation.

22 refugee entrepreneurs received business expansion loans: After receiving training and advisory services by Inkomoko, 22 of the identified 54 refugee entrepreneurs in Kebribeyah camp (Somali region) received sharia-compliant loans to expand their small businesses. The remaining 32 will receive loans after meeting requirements by the bank that is disbursing loans on behalf of Inkomoko, an advisory firm and impact investor that helps entrepreneurs, including refugees. Host community entrepreneurs are also partaking in this financing scheme, benefiting from related training programme.

Acquisition of farmland in Benishangul-Gumuz: The Bambasi Woreda Agricultural Office in the Benishangul-Gumuz region made available 40 hectares of land by refugees and host communities for farming/livelihood activities. In parallel, UNHCR Partner International Committee for the Development of People (ICDP) started facilitating the provision of agricultural tools, fertilizers and seeds for agricultural activities to start as soon as possible.

**DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

Resettlement: Facilitating resettlement as a protection tool and a durable solution remains UNHCR's top priority in Ethiopia. (In May, 492 refugees were submitted to various resettlement countries for consideration, bringing the total submissions so far in 2023 to 1,889). This month, 670 individuals departed on resettlement and other legal pathways to different countries bringing the total departures so far this year to 1,651. During the reporting period, UNHCR counseled 70 individuals on family reunification, education pathways and labor mobility, and facilitated issuance of travel documents.

Repatriation support: During the reporting period, UNHCR provided a six-month reintegration cash assistance to 77 former Ethiopian refugees who returned by their own means from Yemen.

Solutions from the onset: In response to the refugee emergencies from Sudan and Somalia, UNHCR and partners pursue solutions from the onset by reinforcing existing services and systems to facilitate the inclusion of refugees in national systems, but also to benefit communities hosting them.

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 as well as to communities that are affected by the worst drought in decades.

Financial situation

As of 23 May, the UNHCR Operation in Ethiopia has received **USD 64 million**, representing only **15%** of the requirements. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors that have contributed to its work, as well as to those that have contributed to UNHCR programmes globally with unearmarked or softly earmarked funds.

Contributions to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2023

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

Other softly earmarked contributions in 2023

Canada

Unearmarked contributions in 2023

Sweden 69 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

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