

## Bi-weekly Operational Update: 16-30 September 2019

**Resumption of all humanitarian activities in Gambella:** UNHCR and the rest of the humanitarian community resumed all humanitarian activities in the refugee camps in the Gambella Region on 19 September 2019, ending movement restrictions over the previous two-week that followed the killing of two humanitarian workers on 5 September. The two aid workers were killed after unidentified men attacked an Action Against Hunger (AAH) vehicle in the outskirts of Nguenyiel Refugee Camp where they were supporting a stabilization centre, providing emergency nutritional support for cases of acute malnutrition. During the suspension period, UNHCR and its partners had ensured the provision of life-saving assistance to refugees through refugee community structures and employed remote monitoring mechanisms. The decision to resume humanitarian activities was taken after a series of consultations with the Regional authorities who gave security assurances to prevent similar attacks in the future.

**Infrastructure support in Gedeo and West-Guji:** In support of the government's reintegration and recovery effort, UNHCR has embarked on rehabilitating schools and health posts in Gedeo and West-Guji areas in south-western Ethiopia that were damaged and vandalized during communal violence in 2018. In most cases, health posts and school blocks were completely destroyed, leaving whole communities without essential educational and health services. In collaboration with its partners, UNHCR is reconstructing the structures and equipping the health posts and school libraries in villages including Baya and Sike Bokosa, together with the construction of a new treatment centre for victims of sexual assault in Bule-Hora town.

**Somali refugees open bank accounts:** In line with Ethiopia's revised refugee law which grants refugees and asylum seekers access to banking and financial services, 592 Somali refugees residing in Kebribeyah Camp, near Jijjiga, capital of the Somali Region, opened bank accounts with the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE). This followed a one-day briefing session by CBE managers who orientated the refugees on the key requirements for opening a bank account.

**Limited shelter forces Eritrean refugees to rent houses:** The limited provision of shelter in Mai-Aini and Adi-Harush camps in the Tigray Region due to funding constraints, has forced some of the Eritrean refugees to move out of the camps and live in rented houses in the nearby town of My-Tsebri. This has resulted in soaring rentals and basic commodity prices in the small town, a development that has worried the host communities. In response, the authorities have requested that the refugees return to the camps, further straining the camps already stretched services.

**Running water in Shimelba secondary school:** The secondary school and teachers' residence in Shimelba Camp was successfully connected to the main water line in the camp, resolving a longstanding water problem that adversely affected the teaching-learning process. The connection is believed to promote a positive school environment during the new academic year.

**Promoting sports in refugee camps:** The Mai-Aini Youth Association distributed 208 sports kits to 13 football teams, including two female teams, as part of the activities under the Community Empowerment Project. Similarly, UNHCR distributed 30 footballs to refugee youth associations in the three camps near Jijjiga to promote sports and foster mutual understanding between and among communities.