

ETHIOPIA

May 2021

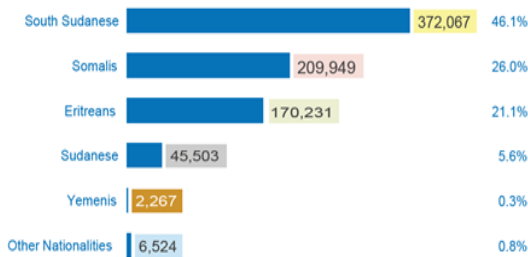
Ethiopia is the **third largest refugee-hosting country** in Africa, sheltering **806,541** registered refugees and asylum-seekers as of 31 May 2021. The overwhelming majority originate from **South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan.**

UNHCR continues to provide protection and critical services to Eritrean refugees in **Mai-Aini** and **Adi-Harush** camps that were temporarily inaccessible at the peak of the Tigray conflict. The two camps now accommodate an additional 8,359 refugees who previously resided in Hitsats and Shimeba camps.

UNHCR continues to respond to the **situation** of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia, leading and co-leading the **Protection** and **CCCM Clusters** and providing protection, emergency aid and other support to **IDPs** and **IDP returnees.**

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Countries of Origin



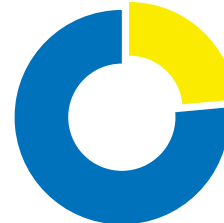
At the end of May 2021, Ethiopia hosted over 806,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly sheltered in 24 refugee camps established in five Regional States. There is a sizeable group of refugees and asylum seekers living out of camp, including nearly 48,000 people in the capital Addis Ababa.

FUNDING (As of 01 June 2021)

USD 323.1 M

Requested for Ethiopia

Funded
19%



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

388 National staff

116 International staff

172 Affiliated work force & others

Offices:

1 Representation in Addis Ababa

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

9 Field Offices in Bule Hora, Dire Dawa, Embamadre, Mekelle, Nekemte, Pugnido, Semera, Sherkole and Tongo



Some of the 157 Ethiopians who returned home at the beginning of the month from Kenya where they were refugees for many years. ©UNHCR/Hanna Qassis

Working with Partners

UNHCR's main government counterpart in the refugee response in Ethiopia is the Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA). UNHCR works closely with 57 humanitarian and development organizations, managing the 'Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan (ECRRP) 2020-2021', which defines the collective response of all the partners in support of the refugee response in the country. UNHCR is also 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 coordinates within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cluster system for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at national and sub-regional level, leading and co-leading the Protection, Camp Coordination & Camp Management (CCCM) and Emergency Shelter & Non-Food Items (ES/NFI) Clusters.

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 GBV programmes. Moreover, UNHCR works with government, 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 an advanced biometric registration system (BIMS), which provides a more reliable means for the identification of refugees and asylum-seekers, 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 (GCR), and as reflected in the commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF). The main objectives of the Blueprint encompass strengthening existing national child protection systems, including those for birth registration; developing the capacity of national partners on refugee protection; and integrating refugee children into the national child protection systems.
- UNHCR is strongly committed to ensure consistent and effective communication with refugee communities. It is actively using refugee social media groups across the operation to communicate with refugee communities, particularly in the context of COVID-19 and the need to disseminate prevention messages on a regular basis.
- As part of the continued COVID-19 preventive measures, UNHCR set up a Protection Helpline for refugees and asylum seekers in Addis Ababa to continue to provide services related to protection, resettlement, access to asylum and refugee status determination. The helpline numbers have been disseminated to the communities in eight different languages through the various communication channels including social media and community-based structures.

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 2021, UNHCR's resettlement submission target so far is 2,335 individuals, subject to ever changing country pledges. UNHCR has already processed 579 refugees for resettlement whilst 343 others departed to different countries. It also supported 219 refugees in family reunification cases. Moreover, support has been provided to refugees applying for UNICORE scholarships as they compete for 43 placements in Italian universities.

- UNHCR, together with the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya, facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 157 Ethiopians who were refugees in Kenya for a long time. Part of 1,688 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya who have voluntarily signed up to return home, the returnees were welcomed at the Dire Dawa International Airport and issued with transport money and a reintegration package to help them restart their lives.

Shelter

- Access to adequate shelter remains below the standard in all the refugee camps with only 46% of the camp-based refugee families living in adequate dwelling. UNHCR and its partners continue to improve the shelter coverage in all refugee camps including through the planned construction of 2,712 emergency shelters and 1,710 transitional shelters as well as the maintenance of 1,775 transitional shelters in 2021. So far this year, 1,480 emergency shelters and 82 transitional shelters have been constructed together with the maintenance of 206 transitional shelters in the different refugee camps.
- UNHCR continues to respond to the shelter needs of Internally displaced persons (IDP) in the Tigray Region as part of the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster. To date, it has constructed 750 emergency shelters in IDP sites in Shire and Mekelle, with plans underway to scale up the construction. In Gedeo and West Guji areas in the south, construction of 200 shelters for IDP returnees is at an advanced stage.

Education

- To date, a total of 164,631 refugee students are attending classes, including 48,841 in pre-primary, 105,101 in primary and 10,689 in secondary schools. 58 percent of them are females. However, meeting the minimum guidelines set by the Ministry of Education to curb the spread of coronavirus in the schools remains a challenge for most schools. Shift systems and alternate learning are being used as a temporary measure to maximize the use of available resources. Despite the good efforts, over 60% of all refugee schools in Ethiopia do not meet the standards of safe learning environments.
- 796 of the 924 refugee students who sat for the 12th grade national examinations in the current academic year in Ethiopia scored university entrance marks. This represents an 86% promotion rate compared to 50 - 60% in the past several years. The success rate in the Gambella camps is even higher at 92.4%, with 461 of the 499 students scoring passing marks.

Health

- UNHCR, in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and its partners, facilitates access to primary and emergency secondary and tertiary healthcare services for refugees and asylum-seekers. It supports the operational costs of primary healthcare services in the different refugee camps, as well as the referral care costs for secondary and tertiary health services in regional and central referral facilities. In urban settings such as Addis Ababa, UNHCR covers the cost of medicines and investigations. As part of the prioritized group for COVID-19 vaccination, frontline health workers and refugees fulfilling the national prioritization criteria, including frontline healthcare workers, individuals aged 65 years and above and people with severe underlying conditions, are being vaccinated.
- UNHCR, together with ARRA, Regional Health Bureaus and other health partners continued to carry out prevention and response to COVID-19 in refugee camps and other locations sheltering refugees. Activities and action taken include risk communication and community engagement, service reorientation, training of health personnel, case identification, contact tracing and referrals, distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and essential medicines and materials to strengthen health services. UNHCR is also supporting the Inter-agency COVID-19 response to the IDP situation by providing PPE and sanitation materials, equipping isolation and quarantine centres and providing community sensitization.

Food Security and Nutrition

- UNHCR contributes to 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. UNHCR works with the World Food Programme (WFP) on food distribution to ensure refugees have sufficient access to basic food. However, they continue to receive only on average about 84% of the minimum standard food ration of 2,100 kcal per person per day across refugee populations. This has kept the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate in most camps higher than the acceptable standards. UNHCR is advocating for additional resources to ensure refugees receive the minimum standard of food in-take per day.

Water and Sanitation (WASH)

- UNHCR works with partners to provide access to clean water and sanitation and improve hygiene practices through hygiene awareness support to refugees and asylum-seekers. An average of 17.5 liters of water per person per day was provided across all the camps during the reporting month. However, in some camps, water supply was quite low averaging around 6-14 liters per person per day against the desired standard of 20 liters. This is due to fuel shortage as well as some system breakdown, reducing the capacity of some boreholes to pump enough water. UNHCR and partners are working to solarize some of the systems to reduce dependence on fuel together with the strengthening and maintenance of essential water systems to provide the desired 20 liters of water per person per day across all camps.
- COVID-19 prevention activities such as the provision of hand washing facilities, water, and soap as well as hygiene promotion activities continued to be strengthened in all refugee camps.

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

- UNHCR continues to provide monthly cash assistance to a small number of urban refugees in Addis Ababa (some 4,400 individuals) to cover their basic needs, with an additional amount for extra hygiene and sanitation support for the prevention of COVID-19. There are ongoing efforts to expand this assistance modality to the different refugee and IDP hosting areas in Ethiopia. Cash assistance is being implemented to ensure protection solutions and meet basic needs of IDPs in various locations including in the Tigray and Benishangul Gumuz regions.
- UNHCR also advocates for provision of cash assistance to other vulnerable groups including to: **a)** the significant number of 'out-of-camp' refugees mainly in Addis Ababa, who previously sustained themselves by working in the informal sector and/or received remittances, but whose income has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, **b)** Eritrean refugees who were recently displaced from Tigray to Addis Ababa and have since been living in challenging conditions.
- Following the piloting of cash assistance for shelter construction in two refugee camps -Awbare and Shedder- in Jijiga in 2019, UNHCR is working to scale up the intervention in the two camps and expand the same to other refugee hosting locations. CBI is also used to provide reintegration support to Ethiopian refugees who voluntarily return to their country, including the recently returned Ethiopians who have received cash assistance through the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia.
- UNHCR is utilizing locally available services and continues to explore such partnerships to ensure that cash assistance is provided to vulnerable populations in hard-to-reach areas, in the most appropriate manner while ensuring dignity of the cash recipients.

Access to Energy

- UNHCR continues to be part of the multi-actor partnerships working to improve refugees' access to energy for cooking, lighting, and other uses. The Energy and Environment Working Group (EEWG) is preparing a "Multi-actor National Cooking Fuel Strategy" guiding the implementation of access to sufficient, safe, sustainable and clean cooking energy to refugees and host communities. As part of the support for cooking energy, 67,754 pieces of briquettes and 1,356m³ of firewood were distributed for selected beneficiaries in the refugee camps of Benishangul Gumuz Region. In the camps in the Afar Region, operationalization of five grid connected communal kitchens is ongoing together with the expansion of briquette production in Aysaita and Barahle camps. More than 586,000 multipurpose tree seedlings are raised in camps in the Gambella, Somali (Melkadida) and

Benishangul-Gumuz regions which will be transplanted during the upcoming rainy season as part of UNHCR's environmental rehabilitation and natural resource management intervention.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR, ARRA and the Federal Cooperatives' Agency (FCA) are scheduled to work towards developing a national guiding framework to formally accommodate refugees into primary cooperative structures in line with the provisions of the refugee proclamation which grants refugees the right to work in recognized employment pathways.
- UNHCR has engaged the Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE), to implement an employment linkage and medium and small enterprises (MSE) start up challenge fund for urban refugees and host communities. This initiative aims to strengthen support functions around employment linkages and MSEs business development services and will benefit urban refugees and host communities in selected refugee hosting woredas in Addis Ababa. With the focus on both wage and self-employment pathways, the initiative will address the complexities around licensing of refugee MSEs and the issuance of residence permits. It is anticipated that 80 MSEs will be supported to either start-up or scale-up through the challenge fund, 80 refugee and host community owned MSEs will secure MSE registration certificates from local woreda administrations, 30 MSEs will access tailored financial services from local micro finance service providers and 1,000 refugees and host communities will access viable wage employment opportunities.

External / Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the direct contribution to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation in 2021

US| Denmark | IKEA Foundation | Japan| European Union (ECHO) |Netherlands | Education Cannot Wait |The Lego Foundation| Canada| Ireland| Norway| Sweden| Switzerland| "la Caixa" Banking Foundation| Czechia | UN Children's Fund| Country-based Pooled Funds| UN Programme on HIV/AIDS| Toyota Tsusho Corporation| Band Aid | CERF| Other private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2021

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | Private donors Spain 28.3 million | Germany 26 million | France 20 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 14.3 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Private donors Japan 10.9 m

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