

## Bi-weekly Operational Update: 16-31 October 2019

**Regional Government-to-Government Conference on refugee inclusion:** The Ministry of Peace, in collaboration with the Embassy of Denmark and the UN Refugee Agency - UNHCR, organized the regional Government-to-Government Conference: *'Delivering the Global Compact on Refugees: Local Approaches to Inclusion'*, which was convened in Addis Ababa from 31 October to 01 November 2019. The Conference sought to foster cross-national sharing of experiences and identify forward-looking opportunities to achieve the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. It was attended by government representatives from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, as well as UN agencies, donors and NGOs. There were high level interventions from the Minister of Peace of Ethiopia, the Under-Secretary for Development Policy of Denmark, the African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs, as well as senior IGAD, UNECA and UNHCR officials.

Consultations focused on the following themes: *'Investing in national services to support host communities and the inclusion of refugees'*; *'Advancing the self-reliance agenda for refugees and their host communities'*, and *'Expanding the whole-of- government approach, ensuring local ownership and adequate financing to the Global Compact on Refugees.'* At the close of the conference, the government delegates reaffirmed their commitment to work towards fuller inclusion of refugees in their respective national systems while ensuring support to the communities that host them. The outcomes of the Conference seek to support the preparation of the participating countries ahead of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that will take place from 17-18 December 2019.

**Refugee and Ethiopian graduates secure technical and vocational skills:** Eight hundred and eighty-seven students; 333 of whom were female, composed of Eritrean refugees in Maiaini and Adi-Harush camps and their Ethiopian hosts graduated in different technical and vocational skills, having completed training programmes ranging from three to six months. Facilitated by NRC as part of its Youth Education Pack (YEP) programme, the students were trained in a range of fields including basic metal work, furniture making, basic apparel production, building construction, electrical installation, information technology support services, hotel kitchen operation, and hair and beauty. The programme sought to provide transferable skills for youth to support self-reliance and their future integration in their host communities, in line with the Global Compact on Refugees.

**Pilot 'Digital Education Platform' in Bambasi Camp:** The Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR piloted a new tool known as the **'Digital Education Platform'**, which is used to record students' data by scanning the proof of registration document barcode, which has now been issued to all eligible refugees in the country. Once successfully piloted, the service will be established in all camps, and aims to provide accurate data on school enrollment rate as well as details of the number of out of school children-crucial inputs for planning purposes and to promote Sustainable Development Goal 4, which seeks to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to quality education. The same platform will also be accessible by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education as part of the ongoing work to integrate refugee education data into the national education system.

**Championing social cohesion through sport:** A friendly football match between an under-17 refugee soccer team in Shimelba Camp and their Ethiopian counterparts in Sheraro Town ended with a 5-2 win in favour of the visiting refugee team. In addition to empowering adolescents and young adults through structured sports activities, the initiative is part of a wider national initiative that seeks to foster positive interactions and peaceful coexistence between refugees and their host communities.