



## KEY FIGURES

**761,302**

Total number of refugees (as of 30 Sept 2016)

**5%**

Percentage of Somali refugees wishing to return when conditions allow

**2,000**

Target for 2016 pilot for Somali returns

**6,465**

Resettlement submission target for 2016

**7,500**

Expected resettlement submission target for 2017



## HIGHLIGHTS

UNHCR's core objectives are to provide refugees and other persons of concern with international protection, and seek **durable solutions** for them.

A **durable solution** for refugees is one that ends the cycle of displacement by resolving their plight so that they can lead normal lives.

**Seeking and providing durable solutions** to the problems of refugees is an essential element of international protection, and a central part of UNHCR Ethiopia's work

Ethiopia maintains open borders for those seeking protection, and among the over 761,000 refugees hosted as of the end of September 2016 there are approximately:

- 300,000 South Sudanese,
- 255,000 Somalis
- 160,000 Eritreans
- 39,000 Sudanese
- 3,200 Kenyans
- Small numbers from Yemen, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other countries.

Due to renewed conflict in South Sudan, Ethiopia had over 32,000 new arrivals from South Sudan in September, with hundreds continuing to arrive daily.

# ETHIOPIA

## Durable Solutions Factsheet

October 2016

Ethiopia is a State party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, and has issued a National Refugee Proclamation in 2004.

However, Ethiopia did not accept the provisions on the right to wage earning employment and access to elementary education as legally binding, which restricts refugees' access to the labour market.

Refugees do not have freedom of movement in Ethiopia and most reside in the 24 refugee camps or seven community based settlements. However approximately **19,150** are currently permitted to **reside in urban areas** either for medical, security or humanitarian reasons, or under the government's **Out of Camp policy**, which allows Eritrean refugees who have the means to support themselves to live in Addis Ababa and other locations.

## WHAT ARE THE DURABLE SOLUTIONS?

The three traditional durable solutions are:

- **Voluntary repatriation**, in which refugees return in safety and with dignity to their country of origin and re-avail themselves of national protection;
- **Resettlement**, in which refugees are selected and transferred from the country of refuge to a third State which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status; and
- **Local integration**, in which refugees legally, economically and socially integrate in the host country, availing themselves of the national protection of the host government.
- All three solutions are complementary in nature, and are pursued together.

Not a solution itself, but an important precursor to solutions is **self-reliance**. UNHCR and partners support refugee livelihoods development to reduce vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian and external assistance. Refugees who actively participate in supporting themselves are better equipped to take on the challenges of voluntary repatriation, resettlement, or local integration.

Recognizing the stress that the presence of refugees places on already impoverished host communities, UNHCR is also working closely with development actors and regional governments to ensure complementarity of services for refugees and host communities, and partner inclusion of refugee hosting areas in their intervention plans.

Furthermore UNHCR Ethiopia is committed to assisting refugees to access **alternative legal pathways** including family reunification and other humanitarian migration programmes, such as private sponsorship; study and employment possibilities.

## VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION

Due to continued instability in their countries of origin, the majority of refugees in Ethiopia have no immediate prospect of voluntary return.

- Human rights violations continue to be widely reported in Eritrea.
- General security situation in Mogadishu and the regions of southern and central Somalia remains volatile, and there is no effective State protection
- There is continuing generalized violence and targeting of minority groups in Sudan
- The political and security situation in South Sudan has degenerated in recent months.

UNHCR therefore does *not currently* promote or facilitate repatriation to Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan or South Sudan.

However, under the office's comprehensive approach to solutions, UNHCR tracks spontaneous returns and administers intention surveys; actively monitors the feasibility of returns, including through cross-border monitoring; and participates in regional dialogue.

The UNHCR Ethiopia country operation is part of the Regional Technical Level Task Force on Voluntary Repatriation to Somalia, and a Tripartite Agreement on voluntary repatriation has been drafted.

In July, UNHCR Ethiopia and UNHCR Somalia and organized a Cross-Border Meeting to prepare for the support of voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from the Melkadida camps who have expressed interest in return to Somalia. The meeting served to foster dialogue among key

stakeholders to ensure that protection and security safeguards are in place for refugees to be able to return to Somalia in a dignified and safe manner.



The Return Help Desk in Buramino is gathering intentions of Somali refugees. Approximately 5%, mostly recent arrivals, are interested in returning. A Working Group was established at the Cross-Border meeting to prepare the support for approximately 1,000 returnees to certain areas of Somalia (predominantly Luq and Baidoa) in 2016. It is estimated that 5,000 may return in 2017.

Although UNHCR was monitoring the intention to return to South Sudan earlier in 2016, returns are no longer anticipated due to the renewed conflict in the country.

The population of just over 3,000 Kenyan Borena refugees also have indicated their desire to repatriate. UNHCR continues to engage the Kenyan authorities to establish the conditions necessary for the facilitation of voluntary return. This includes: systematic information sharing on the progress of peace-building and reconciliation, cross-border meetings, and planned facilitation of "look and see missions" when a suitable area of return has been identified.



## RESETTLEMENT

**Resettlement remains the main durable solution available for refugees in Ethiopia** due to the continued instability in neighbouring countries, and the restrictive national legal framework.

### Resettlement:

- is an invaluable protection tool for UNHCR Ethiopia.
- addresses the [specific needs of individual refugees](#) who are vulnerable due to their experiences in their country of origin, and/or whose safety, health or other fundamental rights are at risk in Ethiopia, and
- provides an opportunity for refugees to rebuild their lives in a new country.

UNHCR Ethiopia maintains a very active resettlement programme, identifying and addressing needs within all refugee populations. These include:

- Somalis with individual needs and those with protracted stay in the camps,
- Eritreans with protection needs (including torture survivors, women at risk and unaccompanied and separated children) and long-term displacement,
- Sudanese with specific needs from unstable areas,
- vulnerable South Sudanese including those multiply displaced, and
- other refugees of diverse nationalities and needs including those in the urban areas.

### Growing Submission Targets:

- 2015 submission target – 5,965
- **2016 submission target – 6,465 refugees**
- 2017 submission target set at 7,500
- Growing target is a recognition of the compelling needs among the refugee population of Ethiopia.

In 2016 the United States of America is the country of submission for all but a few cases submitted to Australia, and urgent and emergency cases submitted on a dossier basis. In previous years submissions were also made to Canada and countries that accept dossier submissions.

### 2015 Departures: 3818 refugees

|             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| AUSTRALIA   | 25 Cases ( 82 persons)        |
| CANADA      | 43 Cases ( 180 persons)       |
| NETHERLANDS | 3 Cases ( 6 persons)          |
| NORWAY -    | 1 Case ( 2 persons)           |
| SWEDEN -    | 3 Cases ( 5 Individuals)      |
| U S A -     | 1108 Cases (3543 Individuals) |

*For more details on UNHCR Ethiopia's current resettlement programme, see the fact sheet on resettlement.*

## LOCAL INTEGRATION

Local integration is a legal, economic and socio-cultural process aiming at providing the refugee with the permanent right to stay in the country of asylum, including eventual naturalization.

Local integration is impossible for most refugees in Ethiopia for the foreseeable future:

- The government places limitations on the refugees' right to work and freedom of movement.
- The requirement to remain in isolated camps prevents refugees from being able to contribute to the economic well-being of their families.
- Separation from the social and economic life of host communities force refugees to remain dependent on international assistance.

However, local integration is a gradual process to acquire legal, economic, social and cultural rights and UNHCR Ethiopia has increased its emphasis on facilitating refugees' access to these rights.



Measures undertaken by UNHCR include:

- Advocacy to expand the government's Out of Camp Policy (OCP) to nationalities other than Eritreans;
- advocacy for the removal of obstacles to self-reliance;
- assisting refugees to use legal pathways to apply for work permits, long term legal stay and potential naturalization for those married to Ethiopian nationals, and
- the expansion of training, livelihoods, and self-reliance opportunities with the support of partners both in the camps and the urban areas.

These activities assist in promoting dignity, contribute to deterring secondary movements, and ease the reliance on blanket assistance. Host community engagement and support are also recognized to be essential elements of the longer-term efforts to reduce tensions, and allow out-of-camp activities.

### September 20 Leaders' Summit on Refugees:

UNHCR welcomes the pledges made by the Government of Ethiopia at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees to improve protection and create more opportunities for refugees in the country, and will work closely with the government to support their implementation. These include commitments to expand the Out of Camp policy, create job opportunities and access to employment, provide primary, secondary and tertiary education without discrimination, and expand and enhance basic and social services.

### FUNDING:

- **UNHCR is grateful for the direct contributions to the UNHCR Ethiopia Operation so far in 2016 from:** USA|IKEA Foundation |Japan | Canada| CERF |Germany| Educate a Child Programme-EAC| Denmark| France| Sweden |International Olympic Committee| Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation| Italy| Band Aid| Private Donors Australia| Private Donors Spain.
- **Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016:** Sweden | United States of America | Netherlands | Norway Australia | Denmark | Priv Donors Spain | Canada Switzerland | Germany

UNHCR is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have given unremarked and broadly earmarked contributions to UNHCR.

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A crucial element required to achieve the government's pledges is the mobilization of support from donors and other stakeholders including the private sector.

## REFUGEES WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

As part of the United Nations Country Team in Ethiopia, UNHCR is committed to the achievement of national development priorities towards equitable and sustainable growth, transformation and realization of human rights under the UN Development Assistance Framework for Ethiopia-UNDAF. UNDAF further supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including ending poverty and fighting inequality and injustice at all levels. This collective engagement of the governments and development actors helps ensure that the needs of refugees are actively considered in the development agenda, and that complementary services are provided to refugees and their host communities

In collaboration with the Government, UNHCR continues to advocate for the need for more partners to provide assistance to refugees and to refugee hosting and impacted communities, complementing programs planned by UNICEF, the IKEA foundation and the World Bank.

Overall, UNHCR Ethiopia and its partners provide refugees with international protection and ensure their basic needs are met, but also strive to promote peaceful co-existence while seeking durable solutions.