

GOOD PRACTICE



"I work at the solar cooperative and I love my job"

Hany,
Somali refugee

MELKADIDA, ETHIOPIA

Hany works at Melkadida's solar mini-grid cooperative as a storekeeper. They provide electricity to both refugee and host communities, as well as clean energy free-of-charge to the most vulnerable, such as the elderly and disabled people, and maintain the solar street-lights in the camps. © UNHCR/Giulia Naboni

A collective approach to build resilience.

What do solar power trainings, local production of cookstoves, clean cooking fuel, agroforestry initiatives and flood prevention measures for refugee and host communities all have in common? All are aimed at improving the environmental situation and its resilience, while adopting an integrated approach to business and sustainable livelihoods. A strategy which requires a coordinated collaboration of a wide variety of actors, from refugees and host communities, to UNHCR's humanitarian and development partners, the Ikea Foundation, governmental authorities and international organizations, all active on Melkadida's grounds. The projects' foundations lay in well-equipped and professionally trained cooperatives made of refugees and their host communities setting solid grounds of collaboration in key livelihoods and environmental issues of common concern, and lately playing a key role in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly the approach complements recent preventative efforts to reduce the impact of floods on agricultural lands, thus preventing any crop loss due to inundations, a flood protection system UNHCR is piloting.



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

CLIMATE ACTION



Melkadida

Over 164,000

Somali refugees

The area, in the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia, close to the borders with Somalia and Kenya, is extremely dry and particularly affected by climate change. Changing rainfall patterns and land degradation affect pastoralist and farming activities, thus aggravating poverty and reducing food and water security among both the refugee and host communities. Risks such as flooding, agriculture pests such as fall army worm and locusts continue to discourage farmers from undertaking agriculture production mainly due to lack of coping measures to manage during crop loss, increasing their dependency on external aid. Placing a further strain to this degraded environment, widespread use of firewood for cooking has caused deforestation, while forcing families to walk over 6Km to fetch firewood sticks and impacting the refugees' protection and education of women and girls as main firewood collectors, preventing them from going to school and exposing them to GBV risks.



5

refugee camps



159

Hectars of land
damaged by floods in
2020



2.1 M

people in Somalia faced
food shortages in 2020 without
humanitarian aid (WB)

The Cooperatives Employ

| | |
|--|------------------|
| 5 Solar Mini Grids Cooperative | 62 people |
| 1 cooperative for cookstoves production | 11 people |
| 1 bio-gas cooperative | 12 people |
| 2 cooperative for cooking fuel | 40 people |



Ilyas received a practical and theoretical training on solar mini grids. Since then, he works for the cooperative. Facing the COVID-19 pandemic, they installed new solar systems in the health center that serves the refugee and host communities in Melkadida. They also provided ten schools that were used as quarantine centers with clean energy by using the instant class solar systems as a power source. © UNHCR/Giulia Naboni

Integrated solutions

UNHCR has developed a social business-oriented model and is implementing three integrated solutions to ensure the sustainability of the interventions and create livelihood opportunities.

Prosopis Juliflora Transformation Centers: by eradicating and carbonizing an invasive and environmentally harmful tree, cooperatives produce firewood, charcoal and charcoal briquettes using a local supply chain of materials.

Cookstoves production: by using natural resources and locally supplied materials, this cooperative produces efficient, less smoky, environmentally friendly and affordable cookstoves. They are currently being distributed through a CBI to 500 vulnerable households, while being sold on local markets. The cookstoves are compatible with the Prosopis charcoal briquettes and have been developed jointly with communities.

Biogas pilot project: A10m3 bio-gas digester connected to a slaughterhouse and a school latrine to reduce firewood dependency and develop clean energy cooking solutions. The cooperative relies on the biogas for cooking and sells their food at the refugee market.

Partners

The Ikea Foundation | Save the Environment Ethiopia (SEE) | Ethiopian Government Agency for Refugees and Returnees Administration (ARRA) | Action for the Needy (ANE, Ethiopia) | Local authorities

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