



ETHIOPIA COUNTRY REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

JANUARY 2020 – DECEMBER 2021

UPDATED FOR 2021

CREDITS:

UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the contributions of humanitarian and development partners in Ethiopia, together with the UNHCR Headquarters, Geneva and UNHCR Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa in the preparation of this document.

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

All statistics are provisional and subject to change. Except where indicated otherwise, all population figures provided in this report are as of December 31, 2020.

PHOTO CONTENT:

A family of Eritrean Kunama refugees have found emergency-temporary shelter in the Mai Aini Secondary School. A convoy arrived from Shire on 11 February 2021 transporting over 600 refugees. Families had fled violence in Shimelba refugee camp, first to Shiraro where they ran out of food, and then to Shire in search of safety and assistance. © UNHCR/Edward Leposky

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CONTEXT

2021 PLANNED RESPONSE

884,216

PROJECTED REFUGEE POPULATION

US\$ 552.6 M

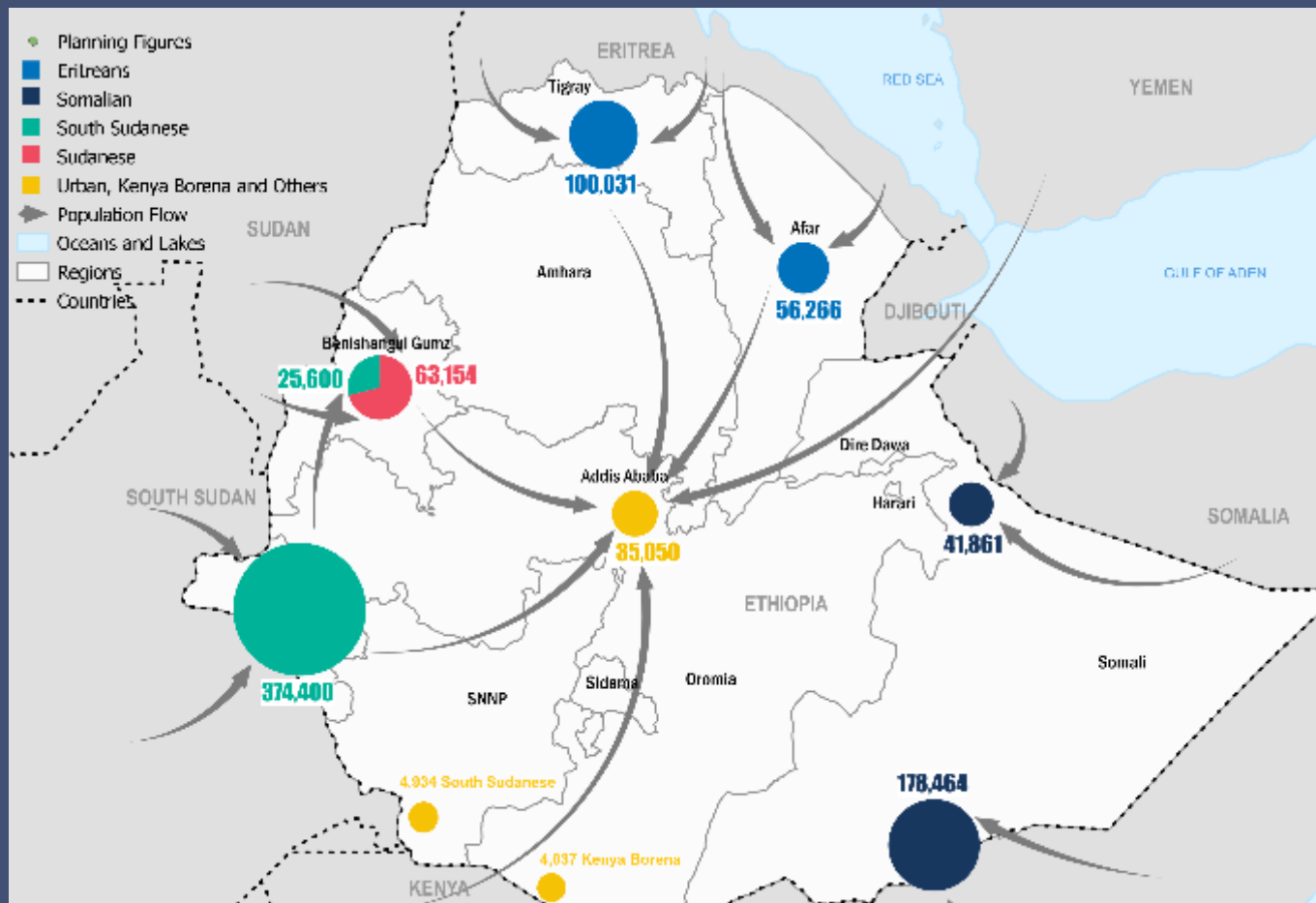
INTER-AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

29

APPEALING-OPERATIONAL
PARTNERS

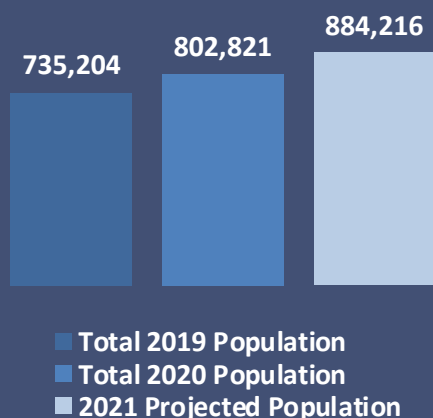
288,246

ASSISTED HOST COMMUNITY



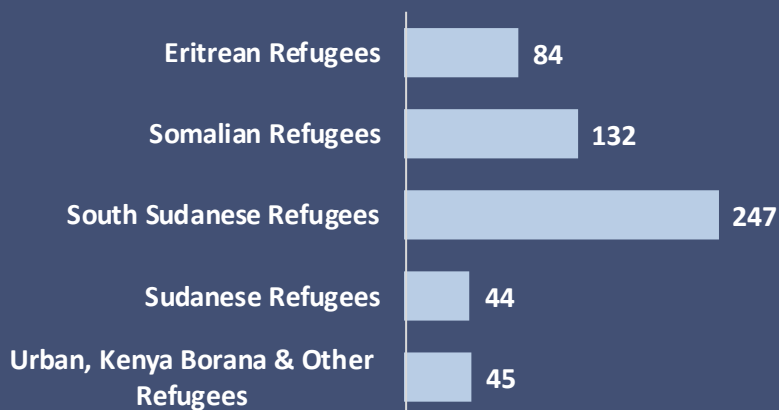
The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Arrows shown on this map are only indicative of displacement movements, and the refugee locations used only indicative of the refugee-hosting areas.

Refugee Population Trends



Requirements by Refugee Population

In millions \$



Country Overview

Background

Ethiopia has a long-standing history of hosting refugees and is currently the third-largest refugee operation in Africa and one of the largest refugee asylum countries worldwide, reflecting the ongoing fragility and conflict in the East and Horn of Africa region. The country has provided protection to refugees and asylum seekers from some 26 countries. Among the principal factors are predominantly the conflict and food insecurity in South Sudan, the prevailing political environment in Eritrea together with the conflict and drought in Somalia.

The Government of Ethiopia continues to strive to implement its commitments made at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, as well as the nine Pledges made during the Leader's Summit in 2016 to support the gradual inclusion of refugees in national services. Through the Pledges, which serve as a vehicle for implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in the country, Ethiopia seeks to expand its Out-of-Camp policy (OCP); provide work permits to refugees; increase enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education; provide access to irrigable land for crop cultivation; facilitate local integration in instances of protracted displacement; earmark a percentage of jobs within industrial parks to refugees; and provide access to vital events documentation to facilitate increased access to basic and essential social services.

In this connection, Ethiopia's parliament adopted revisions to its existing national refugee law on 17 January 2019, making it one of the most progressive refugee policies in Africa. The Law provides refugees with the right to work and reside out of camps, access social and financial services, and register life events, including births and marriages. Fulfilling these considerable and measurable Government commitments to further its duty of care to refugees relative to its existing national resource constraints will inevitably be based on the scale-up of equitable responsibility-sharing between UN Member States and other key stakeholders.

The national asylum procedures are established by the Law, and the Government of Ethiopia has thus far maintained their traditional policy of granting *prima facie* refugee status (group-based recognition) to South Sudanese, Sudanese originating from the Blue Nile and South Kordofan region, Yemenis arriving in Ethiopia after 1 January 2015, and Somalis originating from South and Central Somalia, while nationals from other countries undergo individual refugee status determination. However, in January 2020, the Government of Ethiopia announced a change in policy away from granting *prima facie* refugee status for Eritrean nationals towards a hybrid asylum system whose content is yet to be communicated to UNHCR. Some 3.8 percent of the refugee population in Ethiopia lives in a protracted situation for over 20 years, including mostly South Sudanese and Somali refugees.

The refugee flow to Ethiopia continued during 2020 with 26,417 persons seeking safety and protection within the country's borders. At the start of 2021, Ethiopia hosted 802,821 refugees, who were forced to flee their countries of origin as a result of insecurity, political instability, military conscription, conflict, conflict-induced famine, and other challenges. The majority of refugees in Ethiopia are located in the Tigray region (although some have been forcibly displaced outside of the region due to the ongoing conflict as described below) and the four emerging regions of Ethiopia: Afar; Benishangul-Gumuz; Gambella and Somali regions. The emerging regions are the least developed regions in the country characterized by harsh weather conditions, poor infrastructure, low administrative capacity, a high level of poverty and poor development indicators. The arid physical environment in the Afar and Somali regions and the small and scattered nomadic populations make it more challenging to provide services to refugee and host communities alike. Many parts of the four regions are inaccessible with limited, poor or no road infrastructure. A majority of Eritrean refugees granted the OCP status reside in Addis Ababa and are largely dependent on financial remittances from abroad, as they are not entitled to humanitarian assistance outside of the camps and also find it difficult to achieve full economic self-reliance due to limited livelihood opportunities.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) dominated 2020 and continues to have a direct impact on the humanitarian situation in the country. Ethiopia confirmed its first case of COVID-19 on 13 March 2020. The pandemic then spread across regions including those hosting refugees and internally displaced persons. While there was no

2020 New Arrivals 26,417

Age group	% of total 26k	Female % of total 26k	Male % of total 26k
00-04 y.	19%	9%	9%
05-11 y.	21%	11%	11%
12-17 y.	13%	6%	7%
18-59 y.	45%	26%	19%
60+ y.	2%	1%	1%
Total	100%	53%	47%

2020 End-Of-Year Population 802,821

Age group	% of total 802k	Female % of total 802k	Male % of total 802k
00-04 y.	16%	8%	8%
05-11 y.	26%	13%	13%
12-17 y.	18%	9%	10%
18-59 y.	38%	21%	17%
60+ y.	2%	1%	1%
Total	100%	51%	49%

large-scale outbreak in the refugee camps and settlements, refugees, as well as their host communities, remained at risk and the delivery of humanitarian assistance was affected. The land border closure put in place to curb the spread of the pandemic has affected access to territory and asylum for a majority of newly arriving asylum seekers. To date Ethiopia has not formally resumed admission of new arrivals, while applying exceptions depending on humanitarian situations. The registration of new arrivals is currently suspended. As at 3 January 2021, a total of 125,622 cases had been confirmed in the country and 1,948 deaths reported¹. The first case among refugees was reported on 5 June 2020 from one of the camps in the Tigray region hosting Eritrean refugees. In total, 19 out of 26 camps confirmed 349 cases and 03 deaths amongst the refugee population in Ethiopia, as at 31 December 2020. Since the onset of the pandemic, preparedness and response activities have been underway in all refugee camps and Addis Ababa.

Tension between the Federal Government and Tigray's ruling party (TPLF) has been escalating in recent years. This escalation eventually led to armed conflict from 4 November 2020. Since the beginning of the conflict, civilians have been significantly affected, including local populations and refugees, in particular Eritreans, and other persons of concern who are being hosted in the region. At the same time, monitoring of the situation in the refugee-hosting areas remains a challenge due to lack of access of humanitarian workers. Further, any disruption in the distribution of humanitarian supplies is contributing to the worsening of the humanitarian context, as it prevents timely and adequate assistance to vulnerable communities in the region. The four refugee camps in the Tigray region that hosted Eritrean refugees were seriously affected. The Government has decided to close two of these camps (Hitsats and Shimelba) and consolidate refugees in the other two (Adi Harush and Mai Aini) which need considerable rehabilitation and expansion, especially considering the protection priorities and needs that have been exacerbated by the conflict and related further internal mass displacements of people.

Inter-agency Response

Humanitarian and development partners in Ethiopia continue working together to address the needs of all the refugee population groups in the country. This joint effort is grounded in the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees and is contributing to the ten-year National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy for Ethiopia, which seeks to ensure the self-reliance and resilience of refugees and host communities and to prepare refugees for durable solutions by supporting their socio-economic integration and a phased transition out of the current camp-based model of assistance.

The **Inter-agency Country Refugee Response Plan (CRP) for Ethiopia** has been updated for 2021 to outline the multi-agency comprehensive response strategy and financial requirements of 29 humanitarian and development partners supporting the Ethiopian authorities to provide protection services and humanitarian assistance, as well as development opportunities, to 884,216 refugees and asylum-seekers by the end of 2021. It is anticipated that, among others, Eritrean, South Sudanese, Sudanese and Somali refugees will continue to arrive in Ethiopia in 2021.

The updated CRP for 2021 aims to ensure an increased coherence and alignment of all planned interventions supporting refugees against a common set of sectoral objectives and performance targets, to improve coordination and further timely and effective protection and solutions, including in emergency settings. In that regard, CRP partners will also work to keep the services running in camps and if camps are consolidated, there will be considerable additional needs that would affect the whole population in the refugee-hosting areas. This plan is also targeting some 288,246 members of the affected local population and host communities for assistance through the inter-agency response mechanism.

The updated CRP includes elements from the Inter-agency Refugee Emergency Response Plan (RRP) for the Eritrean Refugees in Tigray, which was developed at the beginning of the Tigray crisis and in the context of the joint emergency response of humanitarian partners for a three-month period (November 2020-January 2021). In addition, the updated CRP is included in the 2021 UN Humanitarian Response Plan for Ethiopia. During 2021, the updated CRP will be fully revised as needed and complemented with further activities necessary to scale up the inter-agency response, including also from new partners, depending on developments in the context and needs.



Ethiopia, Tigray region. Eritrean refugees exercising social distancing awaiting the WFP food distribution conducted by ARRA and UNHCR in Shimelba camp. © UNHCR/Edward Leposky

¹ Ministry of Health-Ethiopia & Ethiopian Public Health Institute

Beneficiary Population

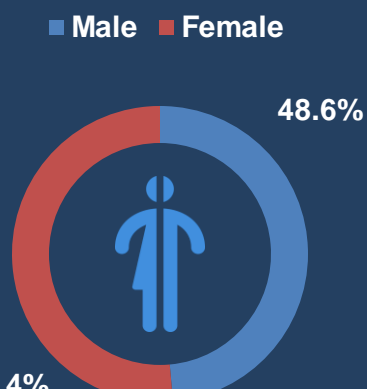


	Population as of December 2020	Projected population by December 2021 ²
Refugee Population Groups		
Eritrean Refugees	151,379	156,297
Somali Refugees	203,040	220,325
South Sudanese Refugees	347,178	400,000
Sudanese Refugees	57,203	63,154
Urban/Kenya Borena/Others ³	44,021	44,440
Total	802,821	884,216

Assisted Host Population	
Total	288,246

Disaggregated Data of 2021 Projected Refugee Population

Age group	% of total 884k	Female % of total 884k	Male % of total 884k
00-04 y.	16.2%	8.0%	8.2%
05-11 y.	25.5%	12.7%	12.9%
12-17 y.	18.5%	8.6%	9.8%
18-59 y.	37.7%	20.8%	16.9%
60+ y.	2.1%	1.2%	0.8%
Total	100%	51.4%	48.6%



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