

Melkadida/Dollo Ado Zonal Coordination Office

1. The Weredas Hosting the Refugee Population

Dollo Ado and the newly established Boqolmayo weredas/districts/ are the two weredas of Liben Zone of Ethiopian Somali regional state which are home to the five Somali refugee camps, a reception center at Dollo Ado town and the coordination office now moved to Melkadida town. The reception center, Buramino and Hilaweyn refugee camps are located in the Dollo Ado district where as Kobe, Melkadida, Boqolmayo refugee camps and the Zonal refugee coordination office are found in the newly established Boqolmayo wereda. The weredas are located some 862-952 kms south East of Addis Ababa.

The area is characterized by low annual rainfall, often below 500mm per annum. Genale River is the prominent source of fresh water in the area.

2. Melkadida/Dollo Ado Refugee Operation- A Profile

The Melkadida/Dollo Ado Zonal coordination office is home to more than 200,000 Somali refugees originating from Southern and Central Somalia. Current population stands at 214, 273 located in Boqolmayo, Melkadida, Kobe, Hilaweyn, and Buramino refugee camps.

It is the second largest operation to host huge number of refugee population in Ethiopia, next to the Gambella operation. The coordination office is situated at Liben Zone in South-East Ethiopia in the Somali regional state.

Since 2009 Somali refugees have been accepted on a prima facie basis. ARRA has been conducting screening at Dollo Ado Reception Centre to verify their nationality and establish their eligibility as refugees and subsequently registered by UNHCR. All registered refugees are then transferred to the camps with the support of IOM, for which ARRA is responsible for the delivery of basic and social services including safeguarding their wellbeing and security, distribution of Core Relief Items (CRIs) & food , provision of primary health care & nutrition services, primary education, camp management & coordination.

Besides, more than 20 partners including international and national humanitarian organizations are currently engaged in the provision of other basics and social services to the refugees and host communities in the area.

The refugee population mainly fled and crossed to Dollo Ado citing general insecurity due to conflict, drought, lack of livelihood, and inaccessibility to food and other essential services in Somalia. Most of them originated from the Gedo, Bay, Bakol and Banadr regions of central and southern Somalia.

In response to the protection and basic need of refugees, International and National NGOs with a project or program having bilateral or tripartite agreements concluded with ARRA and UNHCR have been working in the area since the onset of the Dollo Ado influx late in 2008 and early 2009. Currently more than 20 implementing partners are actively working in the area.

The ARRA Zonal Coordination office plays the role of both an implementing partner and a monitoring agency overseeing the implementation of partners and evaluating their performance. ARRA currently runs various programs targeting refugees and host communities including registration, protection, camp management & coordination, primary education, food and non-food items distribution, primary health care, nutrition, partners monitoring and evaluation and awareness raising on environmental protection programs in collaboration with UNHCR.

2.1 History of Refugee Camp Establishments

Following reports of new asylum-seekers arrival from Somalia in 2007, ARRA together with UNHCR fielded two consecutive missions to Dollo Ado area in 2008 to come up with a response plan to the unfolding emergency.

Early in 2009, ARRA's presence started with the opening of a reception center in Dollo Ado town followed by the opening of the first refugee camp in the area- Boqolmayo.

Since 2009 ARRA has maintained Field Offices and a Zonal Coordination Office in Dollo Ado District, where financial, technical, logistical and administrative support to program implementation is deployed with a close coordination and direction from its Head Office in Addis Ababa.

At the start of 2011, Dollo Ado area in Ethiopia had been hosting a little over 40,504 Somali refugees in Boqolmayo and Melkadida camps which were opened in April 2009 and February 2010 respectively. Twelve months later, the ensuing conflict and instability coupled with a severe drought which later turned into a famine and a restricted humanitarian access in southern Somalia brought the number of Somali refugees in Dollo Ado area to a total of 167,708. In July 2011, the United Nations declared a famine in six regions of southern Somalia.

At the height of the emergency in July, 2011 up to 2,000 refugees were coming every day, most of them women and children arriving in a very bad state, often traumatized. In 2011, Ethiopia alone received 101,827 Somali refugees through the Dollo Ado corridor.

In less than seven months, the sharp increase in the numbers into Dollo Ado prompted ARRA & UNHCR to open three more refugee camps, Kobe in May 2011, Hillaweyn in August 2011 and Buramino in November 2011 in addition to the two existing refugee camps bringing the total number of refugee camps to five in the Dollo Ado area and eight for the whole of the Somali Region. In just over a year of its establishment, Buramino refugee Camp, the latest camp in the area had already over 38,000 inhabitants.

2.2 Camp Distances from the Zonal Office

From the Zonal coordination office at Melkadida, the camps are stretched within a distance of 70 km, i.e. from the nearer Boqolmayo to the furthest Buramino. The total distance from Dollo Ado town to Boqolmayo district is almost 90 kms. The zonal refugee coordination office is located in Melkadida town where Melkadida refugee camp is located.

Melkadida town is nearly 886 km away from Addis Ababa and 66 from Dollo Ado district where the Dollo Ado refugee registration and reception center is situated. The zonal coordination office is 23 kms far from Boqolmayo district and some 163 kms far from Filtu town- the administrative capital of Liben Zone.

The Zonal Coordination Office, via the Dollo –Gode -Jigjiga route, is 1000 kms away from the regional capital- Jigjiga.

2.3 Population Profile

Ethnically, members of the Rahan-weyen clan constitute the majority in all the camps, followed by Merehan and Hawiye.

2.4 Basic and Social Service Provision to Refugees and Host Communities

A number of humanitarian organizations are currently engaged in various basic and social projects to ensure delivery of essential services to refugees. ARRA, UNHCR, WFP, IOM and several other international and national NGOs are currently running a number of multi-faceted refugee programs targeting refugees as well as host communities.

For ease of comprehension, we can categorize the services as follows:

- Protection: Security, GFD, SGBV, PSEA, PWDs, Old Age support, Child Protection, durable solutions, etc.
- Education: ECCE, ABE, Primary Education, Secondary Education, YEP, Functional Adult Literacy, VST, etc.
- WASH, Health and Nutrition
- Transitional Shelter Construction – New construction and rehabilitation of older ones.
- Environment – Protection and Rehabilitation.
- Livelihood – Cash and material grants, loan, IGA, agriculture, skill trainings, etc.

3. Social and Basic Services

3.1 General Food Distribution

ARRA supports the refugee population through its General Food Distribution (GFD) and School Feeding for primary school program in partnership with WFP, Nutrition programs in partnership with different INGOs.

3.2 Health, Nutrition and WASH

Primary health care service is provided within health center, health post and as outreach health services in all five camps .

Nutrition projects in Dollo Ado camps have been implemented by various partners including ARRA. In 2017, International Medical Corps (IMC) has been responsible in the five camps and MSF-Spain at the reception center for nutrition projects. The clinical part of the nutrition program is implemented by ARRA.

Since January 2016, it is the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and International Rescue Committee (IRC) which are responsible for WASH services.

Dollo Ado Woreda is considered a ground water scarcity area and water supply is largely reliant on water from Ganele River – either through filtration or direct abstraction. All camps are now served with a reliable permanent water systems that conform to safety standards. Water supply across all refugee camps is relatively good. There still remains the challenge of storage and water collection containers across all camps.

3.3 Sanitation

Latrine construction is progressing across all camps. Various modes of latrines are being constructed. Kobe, Boqolmayo and Melkadida have a double pit composite latrine type while Urine Diversion and Dry Toilet (UDDT) and dome shaped latrines are common in Hilawayne whereas Buramino has UDDT. Much of the latrines across all refugee camps are part of the communal latrines project constructed in the past years by various implementing partners.

3.4 Education

Building on the Ethiopian curriculum, the education program in Dollo Ado aims to equip refugee and host community students with necessary literacy and numeracy skills, life skills, under ECCE, ABE, Primary Education, YEP, and Secondary Education.

ECCE – Early Childhood Care and Education- combines education, healthcare and nutrition with long-term positive benefits for children 3 -6 years old.

ABE – Alternative Basic Education- helps 11-14 years aged students to catch up the regular schooling program who were denied of formal schooling opportunities.

Primary Education – targets children aged 7 - 14 years old.

YEP – Youth Education Program/Vocational Skills Training benefits youth between the age of 15 and 25 years old. The programme is focused on enhancing the protection of the youth and improving their livelihood.

Secondary Education – includes adolescents between the age of 15 – 18.

Adult Literacy - 18 years and above are given the opportunity to learn functional literacy and numeracy according to their needs.

3.5 Livelihood

Financially supported by IKEA Foundation, livelihoods program are currently being implemented by Relief Society of Tigrie (REST) where it is responsible in the construction of irrigation canals, crop production and microfinance service for host communities and refugees. Pastoralist Welfare Organization (PWO) is also another domestic partner engaged in agricultural interventions.

Irrigation canals were constructed in Melkadida, Kobe, Kole (by REST in 2016), Hilaweyn (by NRC in 2015) and Buramino (by DRC in 2015) aimed at the cultivation of 490 hectare of land-50% for the host communities and 50% for refugees.

3.6 Services to People with Specific Needs

Services to people with specific needs are focused mainly at improving the quality of life of People with Disabilities (PWDs) but also women, SGBV survivors, children and the youth through addressing their medical, physical, psychosocial and mental problems.