

## Situation report: Dollo Ado, Ethiopia

August 17, 2011



*From August 7 – 12, a JRS team visited Dollo Ado in south-eastern Ethiopia to assess the refugee situation and explore possibilities of JRS getting involved. The following report gives a brief overview of the situation.*

Dollo Ado is a 2-2,5 hours flight south-east on a Cessna from the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. It is located in the Dollo Ado District in Liben Zone of the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia.

Somali refugees come into Ethiopia crossing the bridge over the Genale river (see UNHCR map). UNHCR says they walk 18-19 days to reach Dollo Ado. The majority are pastoralists from rural areas in Somalia and the camps in Ethiopia may be the first time they have been in contact with facilities provided by the international community.

Around 80-85% of the refugee population are children below the age of 18. They come to the reception centre south of Dollo Ado town, from where they are transferred to the transit centre north of the town (12,000 refugees by August 9).

Four camps are located along the road to Addis, north of Dollo Ado. The most remote and oldest camp is Bokolmayo (2 hours drive, 96km, 37,286 refugees, set up in 2009), followed by Melkadida (65km, 39,550 refugees, set up in 2010), Kobe (>40km, 24,934 refugees, set up in June 2011) and Helawen (<40km).

All camps except Helawen have reached full capacity. Helawen has only been opened on August 4 and UNHCR transferred 1,000 refugees/day from the transit centre which should be empty by end of August. The estimated capacity of Helawen is 35,000 refugees. The rate of tents being put up in Helawen has slowed down to 30 a day because of a lack of daily labourers in the area as well as a lack of men among the refugees.

More than 118,000 refugees are currently hosted in all facilities in Dollo Ado. UNHCR has already identified a new site for another camp once Helawen has filled up.

Arrivals have gone down from 1,700/day in June to 270/day in July to 100-140/day in August. While UNHCR said this was largely due to food assistance being provided inside Somalia there is also another reason for it. Apparently the Somalis send their elders to check out the services provided in the camps and since the Ethiopian government has been slow in responding to the crisis and in giving work permits to international aid workers, most Somalis now go to Dadaab.

Around 70% of the new arrivals in Dollo are malnourished, 75% are children under five and single women. Blanket supplementary feeding and hot meals are provided by UNHCR and other agencies. In Bokolmayo camp, 60-70 children are delivered every month.

The death rate is still above emergency level but no exact numbers are known for all camps because deaths are not reported since refugees want to keep the food ration cards of those who died. The road from the Somali border, however, is lined with graves, small and big, and animal cadavers.

A recent assessment by UNHCR has revealed that the death rate among new arrivals in Kobe camp has reached alarming levels. An average of ten children under the age of five have died there every day since the camp was opened in June.

While malnutrition is the main reason for the high mortality, a recent measles outbreak is compounding the problem. UNHCR’s health partners are vaccinating all refugees at the transit centre before they are taken to Helowen camp and UNHCR completed a mass vaccination campaign in Kobe camp which is the worst affected. There have been rumours that al-Shabaab is recruiting in the camps but they are not confirmed.

The camps are on rock which makes it difficult to set up the tents and put latrines in place. Excavators have been brought in to complete this task. There is a problem in terms of graves as well because Somalis bury their dead within 24 hours but no one can dig a grave through granite rock. UNHCR is thinking about helping to dig graves with the excavator.

The area is hot, dry, dusty and very windy. There is no vegetation except for thorn trees. Water is trucked from a treatment plant in the river at Melkadida to all other camps. IRC is setting up pipe systems in Bokolmayo, a pipe system in Melkadida is already in place. Though the water is treated it is not of great quality.

Environmental damage is already evident in the camps and ARRA pointed out that there is need for alternative energy sources.

Camp infrastructure is very basic. While nutrition remains the biggest challenge, there is also a huge need for education, youth activities and mental health programmes.

The host community is also suffering from the drought and just as in the camps, there is a large number of “pastoral dropouts” who cannot follow their way of life anymore. For the past three years, there was almost no rain in the area. Most wells are empty and 20 villages around Dollo Ado have requested for water trucking.

More and more people move to the towns and there is a slow circle of impoverishment taking place because of a serious lack of livelihoods. Settlements are popping up everywhere. While all organisations that recently moved in are focusing on the refugees it has been pointed out as a problem that nobody pays attention to the host community.

## Education

According to UNHCR population statistics, most young refugees have never attended formal schooling and many start grade 1 at the age of 17. The majority has not completed primary education. In Melkadida and Bokolmayo 35-40% of the children are below the age of 5. The percentage of the population aged 5 – 17 enrolled in school is at 19,3% in Bokolmayo and 17,7% in Melkadida. The students to teacher ratio in the two camps is 50 and 137 respectively. In Bokolmayo 50% of the teachers are qualified while it is only 11% in Melkadida. There is a sudden drop in the education level after grade 8.

The school-age population in the camps is as follows:

Camp	Age 5-11		Age 12-17		Sub-Total		Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Bokolmayo	5,896	6,207	4,144	2,637	10,040	8,844	<b>18,884</b>

Melkadida	6,617	6,984	4,935	2,943	11,552	9,927	<b>21,479</b>
Kobe	4,475	4,952	3,671	2,449	8,146	7,401	<b>15,547</b>

According to a UNHCR assessment the educational needs in the camps are huge:

	<b>Bokolmayo</b>	<b>Melkadida</b>	<b>Kobe</b>	<b>Helowen</b>
<b>Needs</b>				
Additional classrooms	63	73	50	50
Additional teachers	77	107	70	70
Training of teachers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Textbook to student ratio	2	2	2	2

UNHCR's budget for child protection and education has largely been shifted to crisis response. Out of 12 refugee camps in Ethiopia the greatest needs are in the four Dollo camps. Education needs are up to seven times higher than in the other camps.

Bokolmayo is the only camp where primary education is provided. A primary school has just been constructed, another one is still under construction in Melkadida.

There are 1,650 students and 25 teachers (20 refugees, 5 local) at the primary school in Bokolmayo. Lessons have taken place in temporary structures so far but the two four-classroom blocks have been constructed. There are only 30 students in grade 5 but around 1,500 in grade 1 because most of the children never had a chance to go to school before. There is a school feeding programme with WFP providing food twice a day. Lessons take place in a double shift in the morning and in the afternoon. There are around 10-15 dropouts/year/classroom. Around 50 refugee students attend the local primary school (from grade 6), together with 250 locals. There are secondary students in the camp who have accomplished primary education in Somalia but exact numbers are not known.

The only secondary school in relative proximity to the camps is in Dollo Ado. So far, no refugee students are attending that school.

### **Humanitarian landscape**

Most NGOs are based in Dollo Ado town which is about 2km from the Somali border. COOPI and SC-US are the only organisations that have been present in the area before the crisis, working in development. UNHCR has been in Dollo since 2009 when the influx of refugees first started.

There are now 18 IPs present in Dollo Ado most of which have arrived during July (DRC, NRC, MSF, IMC, IRC, Oxfam GB, Rado, SC-USA, Goal, AHA, Papda, PWO, LWF, ZOA, ACF, THW etc.). Coordination is a major task. There is little infrastructure in place and living conditions for aid personnel are very basic. New organisations arrive on a regular basis.

There is no Ethiopian telephone network coverage in the Dollo area but Somalia Telecom SIM cards can be bought in town and work well.

There have been no security incidents reported in Dollo Ado area. The Ethiopian military has a strong presence in the area and even around 60-100km into Somalia.

NGO Matrix for Dollo Ado (August 9, 2011):

Sector	Implementing agency(ies)
Registration	ARRA/UNHCR
Camp management	ARRA
Water	IRC/LWF/Oxfam GB
Sanitation & hygiene promotion	ARRA/Oxfam GB/LWF/IMC
Nutrition (TFP & SFP)	MSF-S/IMC/ACF
Blanket feeding	ARRA/IMC/SC-US
School feeding	ARRA/SC-US
Hot meals	ARRA
Primary health care & health promotion	ARRA/MSF-S/MSF-H
Mental health	IMC
Child friendly spaces	SC-US
Emergency education	SC-US
Primary education (1-8)	ARRA
SGBV	PAPDA/IMC/IRC
Environment	PAPDA/PWO
Food supply	WFP
Food distribution	ARRA
NFI distribution	ARRA/UNHCR
Shelter	AHA/NRC/DRC/UNHCR
Shelter production	AHADA
Transporting refugees	IOM
Coordination on Refugees	UNHCR/ARRA

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