**Displaced persons and host communities in Ethiopia to benefit from**

**new 2,7 billion birr support from European citizens**

**11 January 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** – The European Union (EU) and its partners launched a three-year programme to provide sustainable support to displaced persons and their host communities in the Ethiopian regions of Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz and Tigray. The programme is coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and jointly implemented with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), the Danish and Ethiopian Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The 43.5 Million Euro (2.7 Billion Birr) programme aims to improve the living conditions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities affected by conflict and natural disasters.

Prolonged internal conflicts and natural disasters have taken a toll on Ethiopia’s economy and exacerbated food insecurity in parts of the country. Incidences of gender-based violence have increased, as well as widespread displacement and limited access to basic services.

This intervention will benefit populations directly, focus on communities and target marginalized groups such as female-headed households, elderly persons, persons with special needs and people with disabilities.

In each region, the target zones will be the areas most affected by conflict and with the highest concentration of IDPs or returnees, and those with highest needs of access to basic services and livelihoods.

*“As one of the major international partners for Ethiopia, the EU continues to provide developmental support to the people of all Ethiopian regions in times of need. This action is another timely contribution to complement humanitarian support and ensure the Humanitarian, Development and Peace work reinforce each other,”* said Roland Kobia, Ambassador of the European Union to Ethiopia.

The programme will improve livelihoods through skills and vocational training in agriculture and other sectors, access to financial services and better access to jobs. It will also support Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, including infrastructure rehabilitation/construction, adequate management and maintenance of WASH services, capacity building and improved hygiene and sanitation practices.

*“Providing these basic services such as livelihoods and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) for IDPs and host communities are essential for the recovery of crisis-affected populations, it will enhance the very difficult situation many of our beneficiaries have to endure,”* says Abibatou Wane, IOM Ethiopia Chief of Mission, highlighting the timeliness of the project.

The programme will also strengthen social cohesion and protection services through an area-based approach. This includes setting up community centres, youth empowerment and promoting community dialogues. Moreover, partners will facilitate access to services on psychosocial needs, mental health as well as Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). Legal documentation and multi-purpose cash to facilitate solutions for IDPs will also be supported. Protection monitoring and solutions will underpin the implementation of the project and ensure that beneficiaries access services in a safe and protective environment.

The action will be implemented through the joint efforts of EU Member States’ development agencies, UN agencies, and the Danish and Ethiopian Red Cross in close collaboration with Ethiopian partner institutions at district, zonal and regional levels.

The programme is financed by the European Union (EUR 40 Million (2.5 Billion Birr) EU contribution), with contributions from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), UNHCR, the Danish Red Cross (DRC), and IOM.

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