



## **ARRA, UNHCR, UNICEF sign Letter of Understanding on assistance to refugees**

Addis Ababa, 21 August 2007-The Administration for Refugees/Returnees Affairs of the Government of Ethiopia (ARRA) today signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) wherein the three defined the responsibilities and partnership that should exist among them in their coordinated assistance to women and children in refugee situations in Ethiopia.

ARRA as an implementer and UNHCR and UNICEF as suppliers of a package of assistance to refugees and refugee-hosting communities in Ethiopia agreed to work in close coordination in the provision of education, health and other assistances to refugees and refugee-hosting communities. The assistance package to be made available by UNICEF mainly targets women and children.

ARRA and UNHCR have already been working together in protecting and assisting the more than 80,000 refugees in Ethiopia and today's agreement brings UNICEF on board.

Under the present agreement, vulnerable children and women-both refugees and Ethiopians living in areas where refugees are hosted- will benefit from the provision of education (school materials, capacity building), health (essential drugs, training and assessment of qualitative care including reproductive health). Unaccompanied and separated children, physically and mentally handicapped children as well as those susceptible to gender-based violence will get special attention. Further, the agreement provides for the expansion of basic social services in (health, water, sanitation and education) for the local refugee hosting communities in Ethiopia.

The agreement shall enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007 when signed by all parties and will remain in force unless either party decides to terminate the agreement by writing an official termination letter.

Ethiopia currently hosts more than 80,000 refugees in seven refugee camps in different regions of the country including Tigray, Banshangul-Gumuz, Somali and Gambella. South Sudanese make up the majority of the refugee population in the country.

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