



Abdi's Story

Communities across the Somali Region are facing a multitude of challenges, from severe and prolonged drought, sporadic flooding and violent conflict, the consequences have been particularly dire in Siti Zone. Given its location, Siti is a vital artery of export and import, which is located in the north-west of the Somali Region. It is bordered to the south by Dire Dawa and the Oromia Region, to the north-west by the Afar Region, to the north-east by Djibouti, and to the east by Somaliland. Siti Zone has also witnessed recurrent instances of violence with the bordering Afar Region which has caused significant destabilization and displacement as communities fled and now remain in protracted displacement.

To respond to the needs of these highly vulnerable and marginalized communities, ACTED, with its local partner UNISOD, implemented a 10-month EHF-funded project aiming to enhance coordination of the humanitarian response, self-governance of site residents through the establishment of governance structures, accountability and feedback mechanisms, cash for work for site improvements to create a safer and more protective environment which was compounded by the provision of critical inputs to the most vulnerable households.

Provision of shelter

As with many instances of displacement, those most adversely affected are women, the elderly and children. Abdi, a 11-year-old boy, was displaced from Danlahelay Kebele along with his 7 siblings, his mother and his ailing father, who arrived in late 2018 to Afdem Town, Siti Zone, Somali Region of Ethiopia. They have not yet been able to return home due to the frequent escalations of the conflict.

Facing this influx of internally displaced persons, the Afdem Town’s school closed its doors, and the schooling system was interrupted in order to accommodate displaced families within the school. Abdi and his family have taken refuge for four years in the school, sharing a classroom with 9 other families. The men and older boys slept outside while the young children, girls and women were housed inside the classrooms.

ACTED and UNISOD saw that it was critical to provide these families with an adequate, dignified, and safe housing, as such, UNISOD constructed 30 emergency shelters, one of which was for Abdi and his family.



Abdi’s mother beside the family’s emergency shelter at Afdem IDP of Siti Zone.

Going Back to School

At the time of displacement, Abdi was in the middle of the 4th grade when the conflict escalated between the Somali and Afari communities. However, Abdi never lost hope of returning to school, as a result of the shelter rehabilitations, the Afdem Town school officially reopened in November 2022 welcoming both internally displaced and host community children to resume their schooling.

Since his return to school, Abdi is determined to finish his education and regularly completes his homework late into the night, which was made possible thanks to the distribution of solar lanterns by ACTED which supported a total of 600 displaced households.

Abdi “I am afraid that I will not come back to school tomorrow for not sleeping at night.”

Now, Abdi and many of his classmates meet in the evening to study together thanks to the 8 street-solar lights installed by ACTED in communal areas in the sites.