

# Press Release



Embassy of the United States of America  
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## **U.S. Ambassador Visits Humanitarian and Health Assistance Sites in SNNPR**

*Arba Minch, Ethiopia, August 13, 2015* – U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Patricia M. Haslach travelled to the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) on August 13 and 14 to observe U.S.-funded humanitarian assistance activities. During her trip, the Ambassador witnessed the distribution of emergency food commodities to food insecure beneficiaries in Humbo *woreda* (district). As part of a U.S. food assistance program that has helped approximately two million Ethiopians meet urgent food needs this year, 450 beneficiaries in Abela Faricho *kebele* (community) received monthly food rations from the United States including wheat grain, yellow split peas, and fortified vegetable oil.

“We are seeing sharp increases in humanitarian needs this year at a time when contributions from the international community have declined. We must do more to ensure that the most vulnerable among us, and those affected by humanitarian crises, have the resources they need to live their lives with dignity,” said Ambassador Haslach. “The Ethiopian Government is committed to meet the needs of its poorest citizens and the U.S. will continue to support humanitarian operations, while simultaneously supporting the country’s long-term development goals.”

The Ambassador also visited a stabilization center in the Dega Birbir *kebele* of Mirab Abaya *woreda*, where children under age five receive treatment for medical complications resulting from severe malnutrition. These children are at high risk of mortality and receive 24-hour care until their medical conditions have stabilized, usually five to seven days. The ambassador also visited an outpatient therapeutic program at the Laytirga Health Post, where mothers bring their malnourished children under age five for medical check-ups. While there, the mothers receive nutritional counseling and a ration of a specially formulated ready-to-use therapeutic food to feed their children until their nutritional status improves. These emergency nutrition activities are funded by USAID’s [Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance](#) and implemented by GOAL, an international charitable organization.

The United States is the largest donor of humanitarian operations in Ethiopia. Over the past year, USAID’s [Office of Food for Peace](#) provided over 300,000 metric tons of food aid valued at approximately \$234 million to meet the urgent food needs of more than two million vulnerable Ethiopians.

The United States has also provided \$20 million this year to support critical humanitarian interventions in health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene and interventions to protect livestock health and farmer assets in drought affected areas. To find more sustainable solutions to food insecurity in Ethiopia, the United States is working with the Government of Ethiopia, international partners and the private sector through the [Feed the Future](#) initiative to drive agricultural growth-enabled food security and to reduce poverty and hunger.

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