

COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE FRAMEWORK: THE ETHIOPIA MODEL

November 2018

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 Ethiopia. Somali refugee in Hartisheik Camp, Jijiga region. © UNHCR/Liba Taylor



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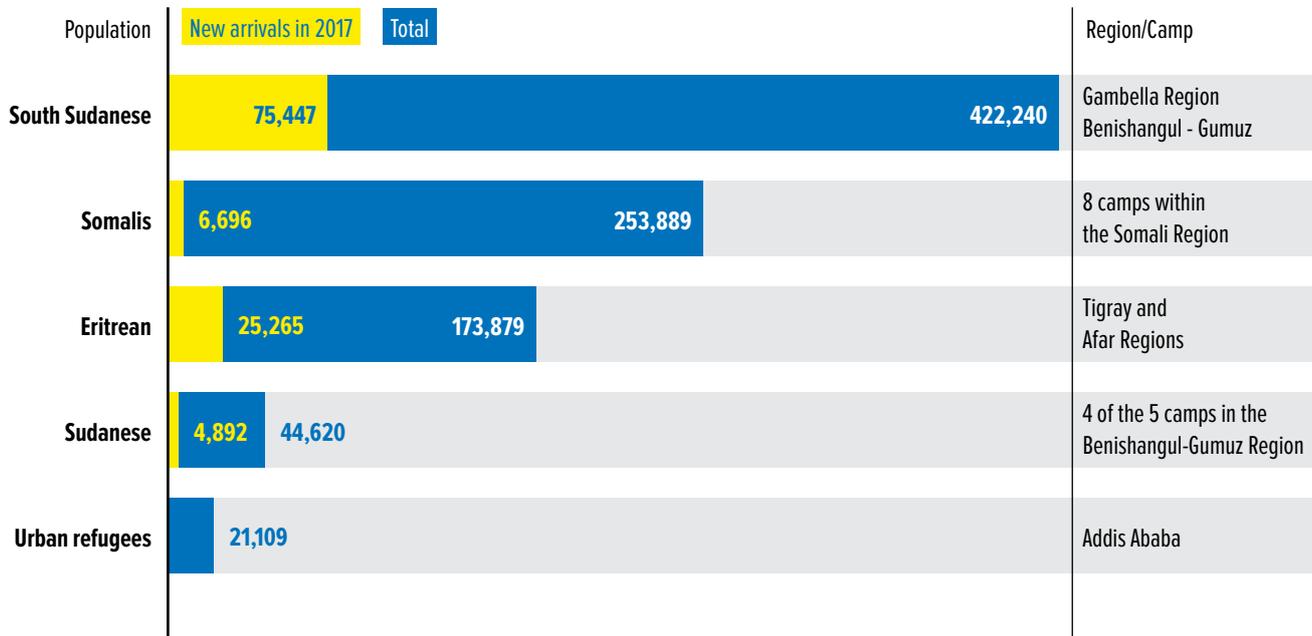
Refugee Context in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is one of the largest refugee hosting countries globally, and the second largest in Africa, with the population totalling close to one million refugees.¹ In addition to large influxes over the last two decades, between 2012 and 2017, the average refugee population was estimated at 640,000 and the annual average increase at 23.2 percent.² The refugee flow to Ethiopia continued during 2017 with 109,851 persons seeking safety and protection within the country’s borders.³ Owing to its geographical location, and the political instability and humanitarian crisis in neighbouring countries, Ethiopia continues to serve as a destination for those seeking international protection, and a transit point for others aiming to undertake journeys towards Europe.

Currently, there are 26 formalised refugee camps in Ethiopia as well as a few settlements across six (6) regions and the capital, Addis Ababa. The majority of refugees in Ethiopia are located within the four Emerging Regions of Ethiopia,⁴ considered the least developed regions in the country, and within the Tigray Regional State.

Ethiopia provides protection to refugees from some 24 Countries. The South Sudanese are the largest group with a total 422,240 persons and 75,447 new arrivals in 2017, with over 86% of the population comprised of women and children.⁵ The majority reside within the Gambella Region, while new arrivals have been relocated to the Benishangul-Gumuz Region to ease the pressure on Gambella. The security situation remains unstable with incidents affecting refugees, host communities and humanitarian workers. The population remains vulnerable with many children arriving unaccompanied and separated, low vaccination coverage, high risk of epidemics and ongoing cholera outbreaks in South Sudan.

Refugee Context in Ethiopia



¹ By 31st August 2018, the nation hosted 905,831 refugees (<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65728>).

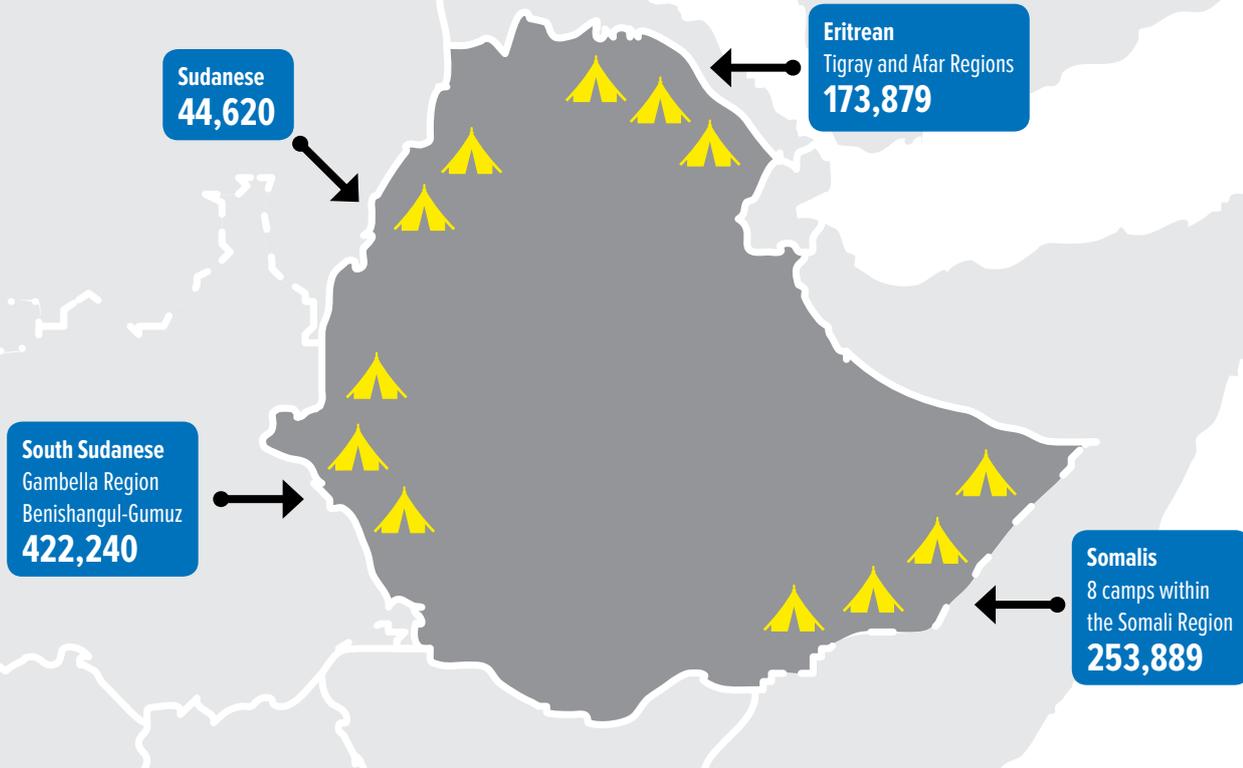
² *National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy 2018-2027*.

³ *Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan*, UNHCR, January-December 2018.

⁴ Afar Regional State; Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State; Gambella Regional State; and the Somali Regional State.

⁵ *Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan*, UNHCR, January-December 2018.

Refugee Context in Ethiopia



Somalis constitute 28.4 percent of registered refugees (253,889) with 6,696 new arrivals in 2017, accommodated across eight (8) camps within the Somali Region (3 camps in Jigjiga, 5 in Melkadida). Protection challenges faced by Somali refugees include *inter-alia* harmful practices and SGBV, alarming rates of malnutrition rates (74.1% of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among newly arrived children, and 37% among pregnant and lactating women ⁶), the encampment policy and restrictions to social and economic rights, insufficient documentation, limited access to justice (detention, legal counselling, and access to courts) and inadequate access to energy/fuel.

Eritrean refugees total 173,879, with 25,265 new arrivals received in the Tigray and Afar Regions in 2017. Of particular concern is the high number of unaccompanied and separated children, who make up 25% of all children residing in the Tigray camps, and the high rate of onward movement including to urban centres within Ethiopia and outside the country (80% in 2016, with 300 unaccompanied and separated children per month). New arrival rates, near 2,300 persons per month, closely match the rate of onward movement, thus maintaining an overall stable camp population despite the high rate of arrivals.

Ethiopia also hosts 44,620 Sudanese, who arrived in Ethiopia mostly between 1997 and 2011, and with 4,892 new arrivals in 2017. They are hosted in four of the five camps in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region. Overall, the structure in the camps is poor and underfunded. The reduction in food rations in 2017 has resulted in serious protection risks including exploitation. Access to education remains a challenge due to limited classroom space and insufficient number of teachers. There are limited prospects for integration, and resettlement.

Urban refugees in Addis Ababa total 21,109, with 80% Eritrean benefitting from the ‘Out-Of-Camp Policy’. The majority of registered urban refugees can access national education and health services, however are generally not able to meet their basic needs, and cash is only provided to approximately 50% of them.⁷

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ For refugees who access the Out of camp policy, self-sufficiency is a requirement.

Ethiopia’s refugee legal context

Despite the ongoing large movement of refugees into its territory, Ethiopia maintains an open door asylum policy. As stated in the *CRRF Road Map for the implementation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Government Pledges and the practical application of the CRRF*, Ethiopia’s policies are based on three key principles: ‘to maintain its longstanding history of hospitality in hosting refugee, to meet its international obligations as a signatory to both the UN and OAU refugee conventions and to materialize its foreign policy goal of building sustainable peace with all of its neighbours through strengthening people to people relations’.

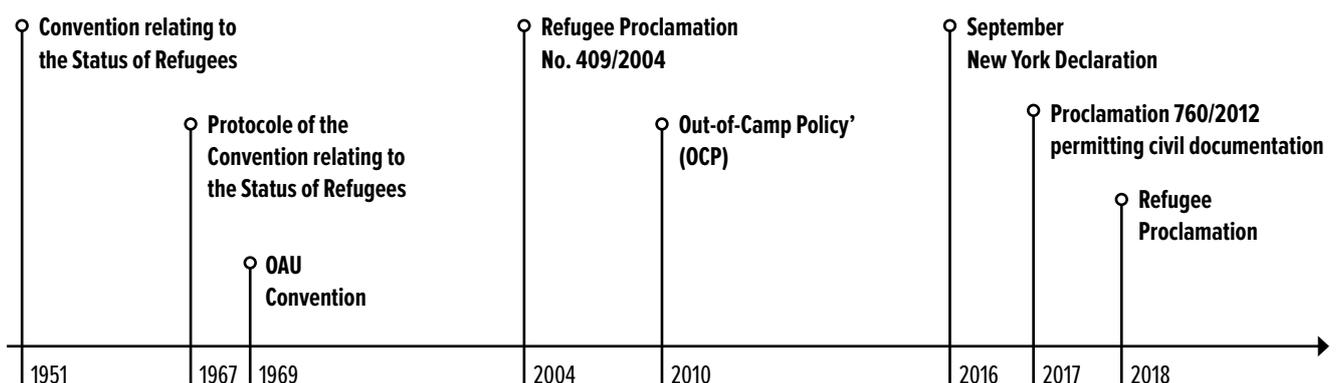
Ethiopia has signed and ratified the **1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees** as well as its 1967 Protocol. The country has as well signed and ratified the **1969 OAU Convention** Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. It is as well State party to numerous other international treaties which provide protection for nationals and refugees alike.

National refugee regulations are set forth within **Refugee Proclamation No. 409/2004 of 2004**. Policy and legal reforms are now underway to further support refugee inclusion in national systems and host communities in refugee responses. A new **Refugee Proclamation**, with many positive protection advances, was endorsed by the Council of Ministers in May 2018, a significant step in creating an enabling environment. For example, under the new Refugee Proclamation, refugees who are married with Ethiopians may be able to enjoy the same basket of rights of other foreigners, including the right to work. The Proclamation is currently in the process of being considered for ratification by Parliament.

Ethiopia recognizes prima facie refugees from South Sudan, Eritrea, Yemen, and for Somalis originating from South and Central Somalia. For others, individual refugee status determination is conducted by the Government, with UNHCR sitting as an observer on the eligibility committee. The ‘**Out-of-Camp Policy**’ (OCP) introduced in 2010 has provided some Eritrean refugees opportunities to live in Addis Ababa and other non-camp locations. Eligibility criteria include the availability of necessary means to financially support themselves, relatives or friends who commit to supporting them, and also an absence of a criminal record.

A major shift towards inclusion and protection of refugees in Ethiopia was made during the Leaders’ Summit on Refugees in September 2016 in New York, when the Government of Ethiopia, the day after the adoption of the New York Declaration, made **Nine Pledges committing to expand protection and solutions for refugees**. The Pledges are in line with the global CRRF objectives and represent the **key focus areas and priorities for the application of CRRF in the context of Ethiopia**. The Pledges are also aligned with the Government of Ethiopia’s Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II), and with the current UNDAF. Following the pledges, additional legislative reforms to Proclamation 760/2012 **permitting civil documentation for refugees** was passed in July 2017, and the first birth certificates for refugees were issued in October 2017.

Refugee Context in Ethiopia





📷 Ethiopia. Local farmers share land with Somali refugees with bountiful results. © UNHCR/Diana Diaz

The Pledges by thematic areas:

Out of Camp Pledge

- Expansion of the “Out-of-Camp” policy to benefit 10% of the current total refugee population.
- Almost 75,000 eligible refugees will have permission to reside in rural and urban non-camp locations. The figure committed to under the OCP process is in addition to those refugees who already possess OCP status and those who will be eligible to live outside of the camps through other commitments made throughout the Pledges e.g. university students, employees in the industrial zones and farmers in crop production.

Education Pledge

- Increase enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education to all qualified refugees without discrimination and within the available resources.
- Increase enrolment of pre-school aged refugee children from 46,276 (44%) to 63,040 (60%).
- Increase enrolment of primary school aged children from 96,700 (54%) to 137,000 (75%).
- Increase enrolment of secondary school aged refugees from 3,785 (9%) to 10,300 (25%).
- Increase opportunities for higher education enrolment from 1,600 to 2,500 students.

Documentation Pledge

- Issuance of birth certificates to refugee children born in Ethiopia
- Possibility of opening bank accounts, obtaining driving licenses and all the other benefits to which any foreigner with a legal permanent residence permit is entitled to

Work and Livelihoods Pledges

- Provision of work permits to refugees / those with permanent residence ID, within bounds of domestic law.
- Provision of work permits to refugees in the areas permitted for foreign workers, by giving priority to qualified refugees. This cuts-across the entire refugee population, both in camps and out of camps.
- Making available 10,000 hectares of irrigable land to allow 100,000 people (amongst them refugees and local communities) to engage in crop production by facilitating irrigation schemes.
- Development of infrastructure for industrialization to generate job opportunities for both refugees and host communities. Building industrial parks that could employ up to 100,000 persons, including 30,000 refugees

Social and Basic Services Pledge

- Strengthen, expand and enhance basic and essential social services such as health, nutrition, immunization, reproductive health, HIV and other medical services provided for refugees within the bounds of national law

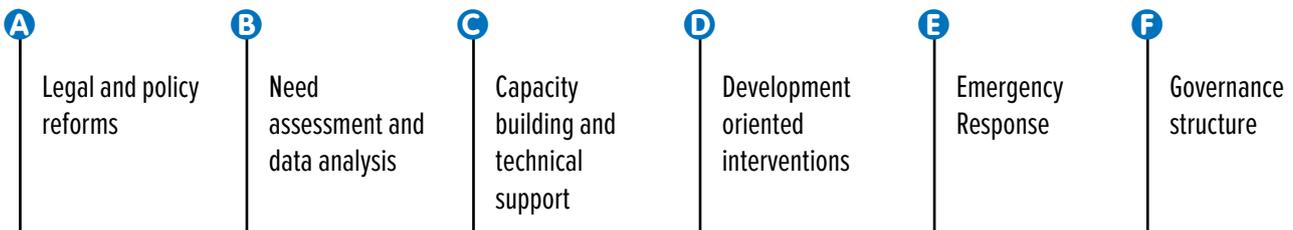
Local Integration Pledge

- Allowing for local integration for those protracted refugees living 20 years or more in Ethiopia.
- The number of refugees that will benefit from this pledge will amount to at least 13,000 persons who have been living in camps already identified by ARRA.

Strategies and programmes enabling CRRF in Ethiopia

The *Roadmap for the implementation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Government Pledges and the practical application of the CRRF in Ethiopia* was published in November of 2017. It is the Government-led collective response to operationalize the Nine Pledges, and was developed through participatory consultations involving stakeholders at different levels, such as donors, line ministries, partners, NGOs, ARRA⁸ and UNHCR. The document includes activities on the following areas: a) Legal and policy reforms; b) Need assessment and data analysis; c) Capacity building and technical support; d) Development of oriented interventions bridging the humanitarian and development nexus; e) Emergency response and initial life-saving assistance to refugees; f) Governance structure and expansion of partnerships with existing and potential stakeholders.

The Government of Ethiopia-led collective response to operationalize the Nine Pledges includes the following activities:



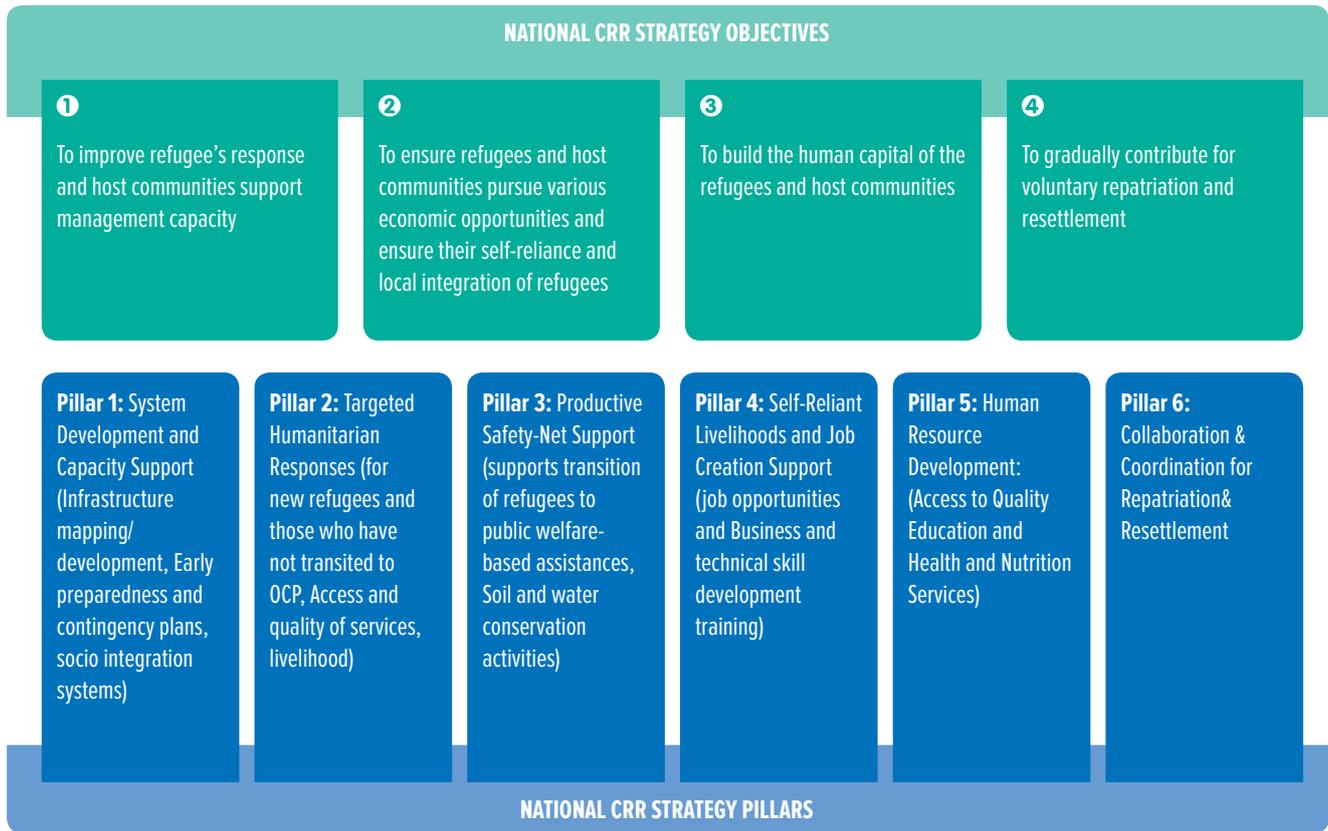
The Roadmap lays out the levels of responsibility for Governance structures related to the CRRF in Ethiopia with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) at the highest level, supported by a Steering Committee with a broad membership and three co-chairs, including UNHCR. A National Coordination Office, including a secretariat function, is also designated to support coordination processes (see more details below). Designed to guide the realization of the Pledges and the application of the CRRF in Ethiopia, including the designation of necessary coordination bodies, mechanisms, and partnership, the Roadmap provides some description of interventions planned for the implementation of each pledge. It does, however, stop short of defining aspects such as financial mechanisms and how technical coordination will practically proceed.

In April 2018, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia released a draft *National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS) 2018-2022* – for which comments from stakeholders are being sought and incorporated. As with the Roadmap, the strategy ‘aims to gradually phase-out refugee camps and to ensure socio-economic integration of refugees and host communities, thereby contributing to the national socio-economic development and international commitment’.⁹ The strategy has a 10-year timeframe, providing strategic direction and support to the Government in achieving its comprehensive refugee and host communities support. It aims to: 1) send a common perspective to stakeholders on the refugee response vision, objectives and directions; 2) identify response pillars, including steps to translate the strategy into concrete actions; 3) indicate the collaboration and coordination mechanisms for partnerships; and 4) set the success factors and requirements to efficiently and effectively operationalize the strategy.¹⁰

⁸ The Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs agency is responsible for the overall refugee response in Ethiopia, including protection, security and camp management.

⁹ *National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy 2018-2027*.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*



The UNHCR *Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan (RRP) January-December 2018* aims to improve coordination mechanisms to ensure timely and effective protection and solutions. It analyses specific needs by refugee groups and by sector, and presents strategic objectives and intervention areas for the provision of complementary services to refugees and their host communities. To guide the implementation of the Pledges, the Plan focuses on the collective engagement of the Government and development actors, the inclusion of the refugee response in the development agenda and in the national systems and development plans such as the GoE’s Growth and Transformation Plan II and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

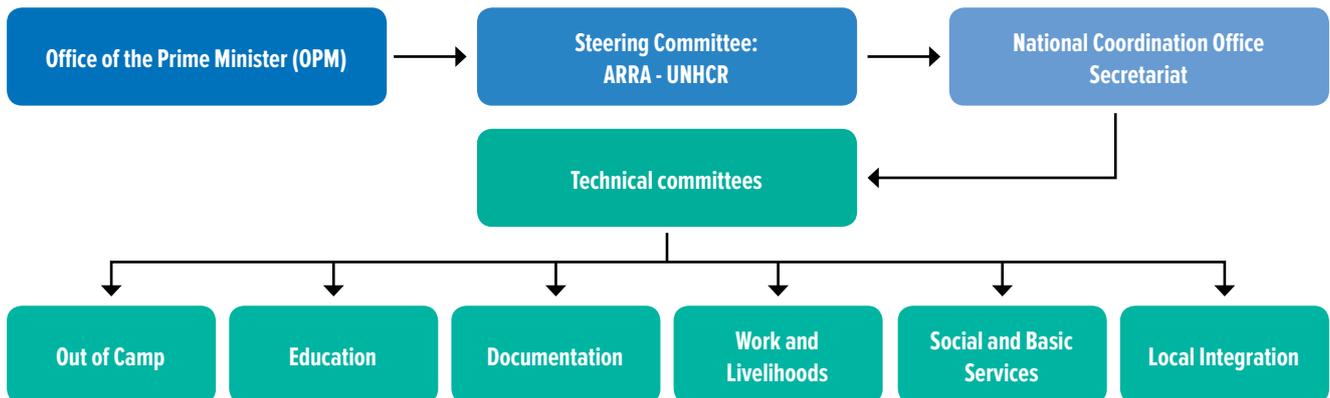
The UNHCR’s Operating Plan (OP) for the refugee response in Ethiopia is only partially funded. Although little CRR-related funding is expected to come directly to UNHCR, some partners have sizable programmes commencing which are related to migration and displacement issues globally. Ethiopia benefits already from a **World Bank US\$100 million fund under the Development Response Displacement Impact Program (DRDIP)** to improve access to basic social services, expand economic opportunities, and enhance environmental management for communities that host refugees (with refugees themselves as secondary beneficiaries). Ethiopia is also receiving funds from the **Bank’s IDA-18 regional sub-window for refugees** and host communities in the sectors of Work and Livelihoods and Education. The **European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) on migration** is also being applied in Ethiopia.

Model and structure

Ethiopia currently follows a policy of encampment, with exceptional provisions for out-of-camp (Eritreans and those with special verified protection or medical needs). However, the Government is committed to further out of camp, local integration, and other measures to gradually phase in a more comprehensive response.

Since 1992, the Government’s **Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA)** agency has managed emergency responses and the overall protracted refugee and returnee situations. It also advises on refugee-specific legislation and policies in the interests of refugees and hosting communities. ARRA is responsible for overseeing security and camp management, providing protection and general food distribution, implementing primary healthcare and education services in refugee camps. It is also the main liaison with line ministries that administer national programmes. Ethiopia has a well-established refugee response and coordination process in place, based on the **Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)**.¹¹ The interagency Refugee Coordination Group comprise of the heads of agencies and other senior staff and meets quarterly.

As noted above, existing coordination mechanisms are commencing to be complemented by a **specific CRR governance structure** under OPM: the CRRF Steering Committee, a National Coordination Office – with a view that some form of Technical Committees will guide implementation of the CRRF. At the time of writing, with the NCRRS commencing to become a broader, more encompassing framework for the application of the CRRF, such mechanisms created to support the Pledges are being adapted.



The **Steering Committee (SC)** provides overall direction, guidance and recommendations on the implementation of the Pledges and the application of CRRF in Ethiopia, with support from humanitarian and development actors. It intends to ensure alignment with Ethiopia’s Growth and Transformation Plan II and the UNDAF. Under the leadership of the OPM, co-chairs of the SC are: ARRA, FDRE Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC), and UNHCR. Members represent many stakeholders: line ministries, development and humanitarian partners, UN, WB, local and INGOs. Implications on the SC for an expanded role in relation to the NCRRS, such as with support to financing the CRRF, are currently being considered.

The **National CRRF Coordination Office (NCO)** provides a solid secretariat function to the SC and overall supports Pledges implementation through a multi-stakeholder approach. NCO capacities help monitor, evaluate, and report on progress, document learning and challenges, commission studies and evaluations, and ensure a broad consultative process. As with the SC, it is expected that the role of the NCO will change in some respects in relation to the NCRRS.

¹¹ The Refugee Coordination Model was developed in 2013 to make refugee coordination predictable, inclusive and collaborative. The RCM used the Regional Refugee Coordinator and the Regional Refugee Response Plan to ensure that there is one agreed refugee protection and solutions strategy with one plan, one coordinator and one budget, and to establish consensus among partners.



UNHCR continues lifesaving assistance to over one million internally displaced Ethiopians. © UNHCR/Anna Hellge

Technical Committees (TCs) are foreseen as an important part of the overall support to the application of the CRRF in Ethiopia. With the roll out of the CRRF in early 2018, TCs were being considered for organization into six thematic groups, to coordinate the implementation of the pledges: out of camp policy, education, work and livelihoods, documentation, social services and local integration. With the coming of the NCRRS, initial work on TCs has been put on hold in order to allow a more considered approach to TC formulation, including alignment with regional (local) coordination mechanisms and buy in from central and local authorities.

The refugee response in Ethiopia is comprised of over **50 operational partners**, including government agencies and ministries, development and humanitarian actors, UN agencies, international and national NGOs, the World Bank and the private sector. OPM has requested **ARRA to facilitate a coherent effort in the delivery of the Pledges and the CRRF approach**, with MoFEC and related line ministries and regional bureaus. Active **sector working groups** include Protection, Health, Education, WASH, Shelter, Energy and the Environment, together with a Child Protection/SGBV sub-working group who meet monthly. The **Humanitarian Country Team** is also part of the consultation forum on the refugee response, together with UNDAF working groups that relate to refugees. **UNHCR** joins up support from the UN system, related to UNDAF and SDG delivery.



📷 Ethiopia. South Sudanese refugees open their own coffee shop. © UNHCR/Petterick Wiggers

Early achievements and emerging good practice from the Ethiopia CRRF

Progressive developments in the legal and policy framework enhance protection of refugees

While the CRRF builds on existing UNHCR/Government commitments for inclusion of refugees and existing experiences, **the Pledges, the new Refugee proclamation and now the NCRRS, represent major achievements and opportunities. Together they represent a major shift in Ethiopia’s refugee response and legal and policy framework.**

Although much of the work related to the above is process-laden and time consuming, it is fair to say that much CRRF-related progress is also underway in Ethiopia. Evidence of commitment to the Pledges is already seen across several sectors. **Refugees are now able to legally document their vital life events** and receive birth, death and marriage certificates just as Ethiopian nationals, a, encouraging development for refugee protection in Ethiopia, paving the way for enhanced access to national services.

Recognizing the importance of building one system, the Ethiopian Parliament approved a **revised Proclamation of the Federal Vital Events Registration Agency (FVERA)** to allow refugees to be included in the national system. UNHCR and the UN’s Children Agency (UNICEF) collaborated with the Government of Ethiopia in the preparation of the amendment. Civil registration offices have also been established in each of the 26 refugee camps, as well as in the seven locations with a high concentration of refugees.

The **Biometric Information Management System (BIMS)**, in line with a Multi-Year Registration Strategy supports improved operations management accountability. Refugees in Ethiopia are commencing to benefit from level 3 registration, to be completed by the end of 2019, as per the Multi-Year Registration plan of action. Further to the multi-year strategy, all registered refugees will receive a proof of registration document, as well as a refugee identification card. Registration will be a rolling process, and each of the refugee camps in Ethiopia will be virtually linked for real-time, dedicated access. Level 3 registration with biometrics began in Gambella with 80,000 persons in Ngunyiel camp. The Ethiopian national census will include refugees and offer an opportunity for harmonization and clarity in terms of refugee and host community population statistics.

Registration is also addressing **protection** issues of the 70,000 refugee children born over the last ten years without **birth certificates** and the 42,900 unaccompanied or separated refugee children. Progress towards protection mechanisms have also be made through the UNICEF and UNHCR jointly commissioned research in 2016 to review the legislation, policies and practices and identify potential entry points for the inclusion of refugee children in national legal and policy frameworks, child protection services and in Eastern Africa and the Great Lakes.¹²

Moreover, the Pledges and the NCRRS are expected to enhance the socio-economic opportunities of the refugees with more focus among others to ensure that refugees have access to education and other basic and social services, can move around freely within the country, can work and learn new skills.¹³ The new Refugee Proclamation is a step on this direction, granting the right to work to refugees who are married with Ethiopians.

Increased partners' coordination and collaboration with line Ministries in the refugee response

Since Ethiopia began rolling out the CRRF, the collaboration of ARRA, UNHCR, UN agencies and NGO partners has grown to deliver basic services to refugees in key sectors, such as education, health, child protection, and water and sanitation.

Examples of collaboration are joint technical missions and potential projects, such as with UNHCR and UNDP in Gambella, focused on UNDP's Community Security, Protection and Access to Justice Project (CSAJP). Discussion of future collaboration include joint access of livelihood projects such as goat farms, poultry and other ventures for refugees and host communities.

Strengthening of humanitarian and development nexus include **collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to assist refugee and host communities in Gambela**. A recent mission explored how support from FAO could increase agricultural production and a supply of agricultural products in markets accessible to refugees.

EU's additional support to the CRRF was confirmed. Ahead of an agreement to release €4.2 million funding from the EU's DEVCO, a joint mission EU-UNHCR travelled to Jijiga in the Somali Region to discuss needs, challenges and opportunities with regional and local authorities, host community leaders, refugee representatives and the private sector. The €4.2million are part of a wider EUTF contribution of €20m to the CRRF in Ethiopia over four years.

Four (4) Technical Committees workshops (education; basic and social services; documentation; and work and livelihoods) have been conducted during early 2018. ARRA officially agreed to include UNICEF and UNDP on

¹² Mariana Muzzi, Bridging the Humanitarian-Development Divide for Refugee Children in Eastern Africa and the Great Lakes: UNHCR & UNICEF Formative review of legislation, policies and practice vis-à-vis inclusion of refugee children in National Child Protection Systems in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, publication forthcoming in May 2017.

¹³ Road Map for the implementation of Ethiopia Government pledges and practical application of CRRF in Ethiopia.

the organizational group for education and social services workshops, marking a significant opening for UNCT partnerships in the strategic pursuit of the pledges and CRRF. The education and social services events saw representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, as well as regional representation from the relevant water, health and education bureaus. The wide participation led to in-depth discussions on the understanding of the pledges, issues arising in respect to implementation, specific knowledge gaps and potential co-ordination mechanisms that could drive each pledge. The recommendations, including action plan and proposed field coordination mechanisms, were developed by expert groups and jointly approved.

Whilst all workshops were effective in the way that they included a broad range of stakeholders and garnered much communication and understanding between parties concerned, the optimal outcome of the events themselves has not yet been realised in terms of defining CRRF technical coordination mechanisms. This is largely because, sector-by-sector, line ministry roles are not yet clear in the areas that ARRA has a major influence in – namely education and health. Participants (e.g. from the ministry of health) have not yet been fully delegated within the ministry on CRRF matters, and, thus, have not fully participated in formulating technical committees for the way forward. Hopefully, with the imminent publication of the NCRRS, government roles will become clearer and participation more active and joined-up.

From 30 April to 11 May 2018, **CRRF Regional Launches** took place in Assosa, Gambella, Mekelle, Jijiga and Samara with broad participation from refugees, host communities, donors, NGOs, development partners, woreda officials and the regional president. The purpose of the launches was to disseminate information on the CRRF from the federal level to the regions and to garner the support of local officials and regional bureaus – and in this regard the launches succeeded. UNHCR views the events as heralding in a new era, allowing UNHCR staff in the field to engage directly with line ministries and regional bureaus. Expectations from regional authorities and communities alike have been raised, and will present some challenges for UNHCR and partners to deliver upon.

Partnership is ongoing with the **Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC)** particularly in respect to the '**Jobs Compact**' including finalization of funds from DfID, agreement on relevant indicators with the EU, release of the Refugee Skills Survey. Collaboration with **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** includes the World Bank with ongoing discussion on a potential project on education within the IDA18 sub-window, and the Payment for Results (**P4R**) programme on 'Safeguards Systems Strengthening' for the Jobs Compact, a protection mechanism for refugees undertaking economic opportunities outside of camps. The programme uses **Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs)** to link funds to the achievement of results related to the proclamation. Engagement with the **private sector** is also being explored, along with **innovative approaches**. UNHCR and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) scoped out Gambella for local cloud-based connectivity to expand access to educational opportunities using ICT, as a platform for digital skills training and distance learning for tailored and transferable skills for refugees.

Inclusion of refugees in the national systems of Ethiopia and host communities in refugee responses

Progress was made towards the **inclusion of refugees in the national systems**, ensuring a more holistic, cost-efficient and coordinated response that benefits both host and refugee populations alike.¹⁴

In the **health sector**, refugees are not a separate population but are in all national public health campaigns to interrupt disease transmission. **ARRA and UNHCR collaborate with the Federal Ministry of Health (MoH) on emergency preparedness and response**, as well as on the control of major disease burdens such as malaria and tuberculosis. For example, the MoH has since 2017 **included refugees in Gambella and Assosa in the national programme** for the elimination of neglected tropical diseases. Moreover, a formal agreement was signed between ARRA, UNHCR and the MoH in 2012 to ensure the sustainable supply of vaccines and related supplies. Refugees have access to the national health care system at the same costs as Ethiopians. Primary health care facilities in refugee camps are also accessible for host community members at no costs. In 2016, of 868,746 consultations provided, 109,895 (12.6%) were for host community members.

In the **education sector**, collaboration between the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE), Regional Bureaus of Education, UNHCR and ARRA has resulted in the **adoption of the national curriculum in all schools operating in refugee camps and in the establishment of the Education Management Information System**. The EMIS now tracks progress of refugee and national students in the same way.¹⁵ Current legislation allows for the inclusion of refugee children in national schools and host community children also can access refugee schools. The Ministry of Education has included a sub-sector on refugee education in its latest Education Statistics Annual Abstract (for the period 2016-2017). The Abstract provides data on pre-primary, primary, secondary education and other indicators in refugee settings. The publication of integrated education data supports the alignment of refugee education management with national systems.

The MoE has shown commitment and leadership in co-chairing the **Education Technical Working Group** together with UNICEF and has also joined the Refugee Education Working Group co-chaired by ARRA and UNHCR. ARRA, the MoE, UNHCR and UNICEF will have their first opportunity to develop a proposal together with the new 15 million USD programme “Education Cannot Wait” Initiative and within the DFID funded “Building Self-Reliance Project (BSRP) for refugees and host communities” with focus on school expansions, teacher development, education quality improvement.

Progress towards inclusion on education were also made with the MoE issued Directives for refugees higher education (Somali refugees in Somali region are allowed to continue secondary education in Ayowole secondary school) and Provision of services inclusion primary education to refugees.



📷 Ethiopia. UNHCR continues lifesaving assistance to over one million internally displaced Ethiopians. Residents and returnees are building temporary shelters for those who were internally displaced. © UNHCR/Anna Hellge

¹⁴ Side by Side: Working on Refugee Inclusion in the National Systems of Ethiopia, Documenting the cooperation between the Federal and State Ministries of Ethiopia, the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR, UNHCR 2018.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*



📷 Ethiopia. Refugee and host community women farmers say hello at the irrigation scheme. Here, refugees and host communities share land to grow crops. © UNHCR/Diana Diaz

Sustainable water management benefits host communities as well, and helps to mitigate conflict

Ethiopia is willing to **include refugees in the national water supply system** and to consider new models for water provision to refugees and host communities. Following the Refugee Coordination Model, Government, humanitarian and development actors agreed to **pilot a new water supply scheme in Gambella region**. Based on UNHCR and UNICEF economic analysis of the costs of two years of water trucking, ARRA, UNHCR, UNICEF and the Regional Water Bureau built a large scale water infrastructure scheme for two new refugee camps (Kule and Tierkidi) and two towns (Itang and Thurfam).

The **Itang integrated water system connects refugee camps with the local communities**¹⁶ and ensures water at reduced tariffs for host communities, helping to **mitigate conflict and to create a positive narrative about the arrival of refugees**, who are often blamed by host communities for depleting natural resources.

In Melkadida in the Somali region, when the five (5) refugee camps were established, UNHCR and ARRA built water systems also to serve host populations with the support of IRC. Focus is now on **ensuring sustainability through a community-based- water management model** with efforts since 2015 in the gradual handover of the operations of the systems. In order to further reduce costs, UNHCR, IRC and ARRA have also commenced to move away from a fuel-based powered systems to solar (photo-voltaic) power. Currently there are five water schemes in the refugee camps in Ethiopia using solar energy for pumping. IKEA, KFW and the EU have committed funding to implement additional solar projects.

¹⁶ The system, once completed will serve 250,000 people (75% or more are refugee beneficiaries).

Examples of good practice in applying CRRF in Ethiopia:

The IKEA funded “Towards Sustainable and Life Changing Refugee Protection Environments in Dollo Ado”.

The first grant (2012-2014, 47M€) focused on Emergency Response and Infrastructure. The second grant (2015-2017, 33M€) shifted from long-term care and maintenance to self-reliance and solutions-oriented planning and programming, with main focus on Education, Livelihoods, and Renewable energy. A recent assessment of the project highlighted promising results in line with CRRF approach:

UNHCR leadership and engagement with Government led to successful **Effective Project Management**: projects have been delivered in good time and quality. Infrastructure projects ranging from markets to slaughter houses, from irrigation canals to the energy center have been constructed with quality standards. In the medium and long term, the integration of services to national structures is being set with a sense of ownership emerging from local authorities.

Sustainability of the projects is supported through **community engagement and self-management**: refugees and host communities are the key implementers and co-owners of the programme. Farmers’ cooperatives, solar energy cooperatives and livestock **cooperatives were established with members from both refugees and host communities**, paving the way for livelihood and peaceful coexistence.

A revived integrated and **multi-functional monitoring system** has improved reporting on the projects progress and **communication and information sharing** among the various units in the office.

Ethiopia Operational Data Portal

The UNHCR Operational Data Portal¹⁷ provides a unified platform for visualizing, coordinating and disseminating information on a persons of concern in Ethiopia. The portal has been developed to display the latest important data, maps, population statistics, demographic graphs, humanitarian and development partner planning documents and reports, operational highlights and situation and sectorial updates, plus quick links to

related web sites. The portal serves to centralize all operational data and information products on a refugee response, to be accessed by implementing and operational humanitarian partners, together with donors and governments, who constitute the primary audience. Together with Humanitarian partners, UNHCR external relations unit is responsible for gathering, managing and coordinating the portal’s content. The portal will have aggregated data on population statistics and arrival trends, key documents, social media content, audio-visual, data visualization tools.

Livelihood activities benefiting both refugees and host communities:

As part of the EU’s Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in the Shire region, IRC established self-help groups for refugee and host communities to engage in grinding mill, groceries, fuel distribution, cart transportation, bakery, diary production and animal in Adi Harush to support host and refugee community youth in livelihoods. IRC also delivered 10 desk top computers to the Mai Tsebri TVET College to strengthen integrated delivery of education services.

ARRA and the Refugee Central Committee (RCC) in Shimelba camp mobilized around 900 refugees to undertake water and soil conservation activities for the purpose of easing the existing tension between the host and refugee communities by reducing the level of environmental degradation. In Adi Harush camp a further 2,347 refugees were mobilized through the RCC to take part in land terracing activity to conserve soil erosion in the surrounding areas of the camp with a view to sustaining peaceful coexistence.

ILO livelihood project assessment in Jijiga

UNHCR Jijiga facilitated a scoping mission for ILO to conduct an assessment for a new project to promote livelihoods of refugees and host communities in the Jijiga region. The project is financed by the German government through GIZ. The initial assessment focused on the overall environment, legal and socio-economic situation of refugees and host communities, markets in particular sectors and value chains with potential in order to inform interventions of the project.

¹⁷ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/eth>

Remaining challenges and lessons learnt

The majority of refugees are located within the least developed regions in Ethiopia¹⁸ where continuous droughts are experienced and where investments in infrastructure and administrative capacity have been limited. The arid environment in the Afar and Somali regions and the small and scattered nomadic populations make it more challenging to provide services. Many parts of the four regions are inaccessible with poor or no roads.¹⁹

Emergency preparedness, early planning and investment are essential to strengthen capacity of the hosting regions and districts and also reduce refugee pressure on national services and infrastructure and to lessen tensions within host communities.

Health and nutrition are still a major problem in Ethiopia and refugees remain mostly dependent on the monthly food ration and cash. In 2016, nutrition surveys conducted by UNHCR, ARRA and partners revealed that **10 out of 24 camps had global acute malnutrition prevalence**.²⁰ Malnutrition is often linked to the limited availability of food, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, poor infant and young child feeding practices, and access to health facilities. As food rations have gone down in recent years, refugees have reported 5-10 days of monthly food gap, and even longer for single households.²¹

Financial sustainability is an area of concern. While humanitarian and development financing is decreasing, **service delivery for refugees remains largely financed through humanitarian aid.** Support capacity of local government to have appropriate resources and full capacity for leadership of the refugee response and to be able to deliver quality services for inclusion is key for the long-term sustainability and for CRRF application at field level.

The specific context of the Ethiopia refugee response with almost 1 million refugees with very different origins, needs, languages and supported through very different operations presents a challenge in itself to the implementation of the CRRF and requires extra efforts on coordination for a successful integrated approach. In the past year this challenge was increased by a State of Emergency in place until August 2017 and a further **State of Emergency** on 16 February 2018, tensions in the country and the conflict in the Somali region creating considerable internal displacement coupled with cross-border movements in the country.

The developments in the legal and policy framework represent good progress, however they need to be operationalized. Procedure for the implementation of the **legal aspects and the type of documentation** related to local integration, education inclusion and graduation, work permits are not clear yet.

The application of the CRRF requires a shift in the mind sets, the skills and the approach on the way of working at all levels and by all stakeholders. While good progress has been made in establishing coordination mechanisms and making the system more inclusive, more efforts are needed in **providing practical direction** on operational procedures and implementation of the CRRF and the Pledges, particularly in the field, and to **coordinate the new partnership of humanitarian and development actors.**

¹⁸ Mostly in the four Emerging Regions of Ethiopia: Afar Regional State; Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State; Gambella Regional State; and the Somali Regional State.

¹⁹ Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan, The Integrated Response Plan For Refugees From Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan And Somalia, UNHCR, January – December 2018.

²⁰ UNHCR, SENS (nutrition) surveys, 2015/ 2016.

²¹ ARRA, UNHCR, WFP, Ethiopia Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) 2016 Report.



📷 Ethiopia. Young returnees stand outside their recently built shelters. © UNHCR/Anna Hellge

All stakeholders, including UNHCR, are not yet well adapted to the new approach internally, and they still need further clarity on what needs to be changed and how, particularly in terms of financial systems, budgeting and planning structures, on how to pursue effective advocacy, and how what should be the entry/exit points of all partners. In the most remote parts of Ethiopia, humanitarian aid has become a substitute for development, making the services of the camps accessible for both the host population and refugees, while in other cases, development investments made by agencies such as UNICEF have shown the value of more sustainable and nationally owned approaches.²² Using these experiences to **clarify roles and responsibility of humanitarian and development partners** is a priority.

Lastly, a comprehensive and whole of society approach require a **strong Monitoring and Evaluation system** and present a much higher amount of data to be analysed and reported, challenging the already limited capacity of partners on this area.

²² Side by Side: Working on Refugee Inclusion in the National Systems of Ethiopia, Documenting the cooperation between the Federal and State Ministries of Ethiopia, the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and UNHCR, UNHCR 2018.

Opportunities and way forward

For a successful delivery of vital events certificates to refugees, additional resources will be needed for trainings to ARRA staff, registers, certificates and directives. Moreover, **awareness-raising** among refugees about the need to have birth notifications recognized birth certificates is crucial.

The water infrastructure projects in Gambella could be documented for replication in other regions (e.g. in Shire and Jijiga), together with solarized water systems to reduce the unit cost of water and the adoption of professionalized community-based management models. The innovations in the water sector can be extended to the sanitation and hygiene sectors by integrating the refugee WASH coordination mechanism into the ONE WASH programme (under the emergency sector co-chaired by UNICEF and the Ministry of Water).

Long-term development and investment in the national health system and to improve infrastructure and staffing capacity in the refugee health facilities are highly needed as well as **further inclusion of refugees in national plans and policies on health**, like the Health Sector Transformation Plan, and the upcoming grant for 2019-2020 of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.²³ As advised by the BSS Technical Committee experts group, mapping of social service infrastructure in refugee and host areas, including all health institutions and related administrative bureaus, should be done to assess the capacity and needs, and ensure informed planning.

Further inclusion of the refugee education in the national planning process and system can be sustained by **integration into the education sector plans and budgets of the Woreda Education Offices, Regional Education Bureaus and the MoE**.²⁴ Responsibilities and joint collaboration between ARRA and the MoE need to be outlined to also **standardize teacher management and development policies across refugee and host community schools** and secure additional resources to support the building of additional schools and the recruitment of additional qualified staff. As a starting point, mapping of all schools (ECH, Primary and Secondary, tertiary institutions and TVETS) need to be planned, to assess capacity and needs, and identify opportunities to progressively unite the current parallel systems.

Specific Government Directives need to be released to clarify procedures and documents required for implementing local integration each sector (education, health, work) and for access to services such as opening a bank account, getting a driving license, etc.

Mapping of good practice in implementing the Pledges (and now the NCRRS) and in the engagement of host and refugee communities can be supported to **identify scalable projects to be piloted in one or two operations**, where the context and the structure allow for easier coordination and integration, followed by documentation of tangible results and lessons learnt, and scaling up in other operations.

Support resource mobilization for the implementation of the Pledges and the NCRRS, including through the development of a Private sector engagement strategy.

Strengthen national and local capacity for ownership, leadership, and coordination, supporting the work of the Steering Committee led by the Government and **supporting local (regional, zonal, woreda) level line ministry capacity for the implementation of local development plans** through training, short-term expertise, equipment. Greater coordination will harmonize efforts of national and regional government entities, civil society and private sector actors on the ground. This can be done through standardization and operationalization of local institutional capacity and by supportive multi-sector coordination platform for technical coordination and strategic field partnership.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Collaboration of humanitarian and development partners can also be strengthened through joint data collection. Refugees data are currently managed in an internal UNHCR health information system updated through assessment like the nutrition survey, done annually. In the future, data collection on refugees could be harmonised in other national level data collections efforts by **establishing a clear M&E framework** with roles and responsibilities of all partners. The NCRRS also aspires to have a robust management information system (MIS) that can be harmonized with the existing similar systems used by stakeholders to ensure quality and coherence of information, interdependence among stakeholders and ease information sharing and learning. Integration and use of M&E systems and current data models will ensure data reliability through rigorous data collection, analysis and verification and also support knowledge, learning, and information sharing. Technical expertise can be explored for supporting the alignment of existing frameworks (CRRF Road Map Dashboard, IGAD, UNHCR, all partners) and to measure the response along the Pledges.

More focus is also needed on **long-term solutions**: voluntary returns under current conditions will only be possible for a very limited number of people and the opportunities are limited for third-country resettlement particularly with a growing population of unaccompanied/separated children. **Complementary pathways** need to be established and expanded complementary for family reunification and family-based mobility; labor mobility schemes; scholarships and education programmes; and regional mobility schemes.