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Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia

Building urban solutions

Patricia García Amado, Boel McAteer, Akvile Krisciunaite, Alison Brown

Working Paper
October 2023

Urban

Keywords:
Refugees, Internally Displaced People (IDPs), Humanitarian response, Cities, Forced Displacement

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Protracted displacement in an urban world

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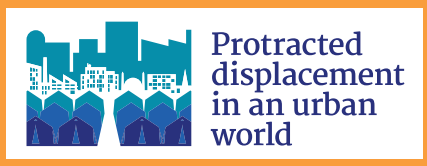
Produced by IIED's Human Settlements Group

The Human Settlements Group works to reduce poverty and improve health and housing conditions in the urban centres of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It seeks to combine this with promoting good governance and more ecologically sustainable patterns of urban development and rural-urban linkages. This paper is an output from a UKRI GCRF funded research project, Out of Camp or Out of Sight? Realigning Responses to Protracted Displacement in an Urban World (PDUW). The project aims to address the bias of policy, programming and funding towards camps by demonstrating how urban areas could be more productive, welcoming and safe spaces for refugees. The ultimate goal is to improve their wellbeing and livelihoods, thereby also benefiting host governments and communities.



Acknowledgements

Project lead: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Lucy Earle, Deena Dajani, Jessica Stewart, Morgan Jennings

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MCMDO, Mothers and Children in Multi-sectoral Development Organization

Expert input: Professor Tegegne GebreEgziabher

Advice and peer review: Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat

Our particular thanks to Tewelde Adhanom for his significant contribution to fieldwork and liaison

Published by IIED, October 2023

García Amado, P, McAteer, B, Krisciunaite, A and Brown, A (2023) Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia: building urban solutions. IIED, London.

http://pubs.iied.org/21866IIED

ISBN 978-1-83759-056-8

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Ethiopia is one of the main refugee-hosting countries in Africa, with more than 900,000 refugees and asylum seekers in 2023. Many live in camps but increasing numbers are moving to cities. Ethiopia's international commitments and new legislation provide scope for policy innovation, to which this working paper contributes. The paper reports findings of the Protracted Displacement in an Urban World project, which examined the wellbeing and livelihoods of people living in protracted displacement in camps and cities, focusing on Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa, Semera Logia and Aysaita Camp. Key findings highlight the potential of urban refugees, and the need to bring local governments into policy debates.

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Summary

This working paper reports on the findings of the Protracted Displacement in an Urban World (PDUW) project[1] in Ethiopia – a project which focuses on the wellbeing and livelihoods of people living in protracted displacement in camps and urban areas.

In 2023, Ethiopia hosted more than 900,000 refugees, with the largest groups originating from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan. Most refugees now live in 21 active camps, but an increasing number are moving to cities. In response the national agency, the Refugees and Returnees Service, set up a new urban refugee unit in 2022.

Ethiopia followed its commitments made under the UN's 2016 Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework with a new 2019 Refugee Proclamation, and three implementing directives. But COVID-19 and the conflict in Tigray have delayed the implementation of these reforms.

Background

The Eritrean refugee cohorts in each location are very different in terms of language and culture, with Tigrinya refugee participants in Addis Ababa, and Afar refugees in the Afar region. Those in the city areas of Addis Ababa and Semera Logia are often better educated and have an urban background, while refugees in Aysaita camp are mainly from pastoralist or agricultural backgrounds with lower levels of literacy.

The war in Tigray affected the wellbeing and the economy of refugees in multiple ways, generating further displacement, increasing refugee presence in Addis Ababa and Semera Logia, delaying aid distribution, increasing tensions with feelings of fear and insecurity for refugees, and threatening closure of refugee businesses run in partnership with Tigrinya Ethiopians.

Outlining the study

The aim of the project was to deepen the understanding of refugees' experiences of life in camps and urban areas through the exploration of two themes: wellbeing and displacement economies.

The project focused on the country's 166,000 Eritrean refugees, who come mainly from two ethnic groups – Tigrinya and Afar. About 68,400 Eritrean refugees are registered in Addis Ababa and more than 57,000 live in the Afar region. The study looked specifically at the refugee experience at three survey sites:

- a city location, the capital Addis Ababa (Gofa Mebrat Haile condominium)
- the regional capital of Afar, Semera Logia, and
- a camp in the Afar region, Aysaita.

Our wellbeing metrics explore five dimensions – bodily, economic, political, social and psychosocial – derived as composite indicators from the quantitative surveys, supplemented by other data.

Displacement economies in PDUW are understood as the: "collective economy created by refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) through their livelihood activities, enterprise, need for services and consumption, and through their mutual support and diaspora inputs".

Key findings

Results in Aysaita camp showed high levels of food insecurity, poor healthcare, and lack of adequate shelter, leading to lower levels of bodily wellbeing than in other locations studied.

Economically, refugees in the Afar region, particularly in Aysaita camp, were significantly worse off than elsewhere, with higher levels of debt and limited savings. Even in Addis Ababa, many refugees are unable to reliably cover household expenses. Many urban refugees receive remittances as a condition for permission to live in the city under the Out-of-Camp Policy (OCP), but remittances are often erratic, and urban refugees struggle to survive with high rents and poorly-paid, informal work.

1 Out of camp or out of sight? Realigning responses to protracted displacement in an urban world www.protracteddisplacement.org/home

In Afar, a shared language and culture between refugees and local communities facilitates social connections and representation through clan leaders, resulting in more flexible support for refugees and better life satisfaction – more evident in Semera Logia town than in the Aysaita camp due to the latter's relative isolation.

In Addis Ababa, the lack of tangible, official support to secure livelihoods and integration pushes refugees in protracted displacement to aspire for resettlement, family reunification abroad, or onward migration – reflected in their poor psychosocial scores. Many however would remain in Ethiopia if prospects for achieving a secure and dignified life improve.

Ethiopian cities generally offer more opportunities for refugees in terms of livelihoods, and a better environment for enterprise than refugee camps.

Strong bonds of shared culture and ethnicity between hosts and refugees in the secondary town of Semera Logia allow for more flexibility in meeting their challenging needs in protracted displacement.

The Livelihoods Assets Index derived from the survey, shows that overall Eritrean refugees in cities are better prepared to access the labour market than those in the camp. Urban refugees are more likely to have had pre-displacement work experience and higher levels of education, particularly in Addis Ababa.

The Livelihoods Outcomes Index shows that Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa have significantly worse livelihood outcomes than hosts in the capital and refugees in Afar, the main reason being insecurity of work and poor working conditions.

The survey data shows that Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa, are mostly employed as mechanics, carpenters, hairdressers/barbers, and in the hospitality businesses (cafés, bars, hotels). In Semera Logia petty trade is more common. In Aysaita, only a few employment opportunities are available with NGOs, or supported by aid-funded, income-generating projects.

A key finding in Addis Ababa was the small proportion of refugees working (38% men and 7% women) despite their pre-displacement work experience (71% men and 40% women). However, importantly 70% of those not working expressed their willingness to work.

Three critical legal and regulatory problems underly this finding. First, most refugees are not able to gain work permits, although some relaxation is now taking place. Second, most refugees cannot register businesses in their own name, which forces refugee entrepreneurs into unstable, informal partnerships with nationals, with no secure future to give them the confidence to expand their businesses. Third, refugees cannot obtain recognition for prior qualifications.

Recommendations

Urban refugees, particularly those in the city of Addis Ababa, have assets and skills which could support their own self-sufficiency, and in turn promote wider economic development in their host communities. Simplified regulations, with local government involvement, are urgently needed. Lack of such support for refugee livelihoods and enterprise represents a waste of their economic potential for urban development.

Local governments should be included in refugee management and programming. The development of Regional Action Plans integrating refugee issues should be resumed, exploring their potential links with local development plans. In the same way, the new Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) urban refugee strategy should define the role of local governments to incorporate refugee response, and give guidance on how to integrate refugee voices, needs and demands into urban planning.

Official processes, registration and documentation should be streamlined to allow refugees to access services, pursue their livelihoods and make decisions about their future in support of long-term solutions to displacement and their own wellbeing.

The poor wellbeing and livelihoods outcomes in Aysaita camp question the suitability of encampment policies to support refugees in protracted displacement situations, and call for innovative solutions such as progressive integration of the camp with Aysaita town.

1

Introduction

For decades, the response by the international community to mass movements of people fleeing war or political persecution has been to provide humanitarian assistance in camps. Despite highly-charged debates on the negative impact of maintaining people in often remote regions and dependent on humanitarian assistance, camps remain the default response to new displacement crises. As short-term emergencies turn into protracted displacement,[2] camp living can erode residents' dignity and increase aid dependency. In response, displaced people are increasingly moving to cities, or avoiding camps to seek autonomy and opportunities over dependency and isolation, and estimates suggest that more than 60% of refugees and at least half of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) now live in towns and cities.

'Out of camp or out of sight? Protracted Displacement in an Urban World' (PDUW) is a comparative mixed-methods research project focusing on the wellbeing and livelihoods of displaced people in camps and urban areas in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Jordan. Our research has sought to deepen understandings of refugees' experiences of life in the camp and the city, elaborating its own analytical framework to explore its two thematic areas: wellbeing and displacement economies.

The **Ethiopia Country Report** summarises the main findings of this research in three different settings in the country: the capital, **Addis Ababa**, and two locations in the Afar region, **Semera Logia**, the regional capital, and **Aysaita camp**.[3] Through the lens of the PDUW analytical framework on wellbeing and displaced economies, we focus on Eritrean refugees to understand their different experiences in main and secondary cities, and the camp. Following a brief introduction to the dataset and research methods, the report offers an analysis of the refugee context in Ethiopia, including refugee figures, an overview of legislation and policy and its implementation, background information on Eritrean displacement, and an approach to the three different settings in which research was conducted. The analysis is then structured following the main thematic areas: wellbeing and displacement economies, to provide an analytical framework which enables the exploration of the collected data. To conclude, the report summarises the main findings in lessons to stir the debate around refugee wellbeing and displacement economies in Ethiopia.

2 Protracted situations are defined by UNHCR as those where more than 25,000 refugees from the same country of origin have been in exile for at least five consecutive years in a host country without achieving a durable solution to their displacement. This definition does not refer to circumstances of individual refugees, but to the displacement situation as a whole.

3 The toponym Aysaita could also be spelled as Asayta or Asayita depending on the source.

2

The project's dataset for Ethiopia

Using a mixed-methods approach, the PDUW project has generated significant new data. The resulting dataset includes quantitative and qualitative data gathered via survey, semi-structured interviews, and in-depth interviews with key informants conducted in Addis Ababa, Semera Logia, and Aysaita Camp.[4]

Our initial aim was to compare Eritrean Tigrinya communities in Addis Ababa and a refugee camp in Tigray, but this was disrupted by the armed conflict in the northern region which started in November 2020. To ensure accessibility and security of research teams and interviewees, and in discussion with the national refugee agency and other consultees, we moved our study to Aysaita camp in the Afar region. Since Tigrinya and Afar Eritrean refugee populations are culturally, socially, and economically different, we collected additional data from Afar refugees living in the town of Semera Logia, the regional capital of Afar. This initial setback allowed us to collect information in a secondary regional city and study the potential for urban refugee integration in smaller towns, an under-researched topic.

2.1 Quantitative dataset

For the survey in Ethiopia, we collected data from 365 Eritrean refugees and 153 Ethiopian hosts in Gofa Mebrat Haile (Addis Ababa), 372 Eritrean refugees in Semera Logia and 366 Eritrean refugees in Aysaita camp – both in the Afar region, for a representative sample in the defined areas of the study. Purposive sampling was used to ensure the same proportion of men and women among Eritrean and Ethiopia survey respondents. Data was collected between March-April (Addis Ababa and Aysaita) and October (Semera Logia) 2021.

The survey covered basic demographic information, migration trajectories and future plans. The wellbeing component then covered: physical health and access to healthcare, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) and shelter; debt and economic comfort; community representation and access to justice; access to social spaces and ability to socialise; hope and aspirations, and the extent to which respondents feel at home and supported in their communities. The livelihood component gathered information around income, assets, individual and household livelihoods, decent job standards, and human, social, physical, natural, and financial capital.

Survey demographics show that respondents from Addis Ababa were on average younger and lived in smaller households than their counterparts in Aysaita and Semera Logia. While most refugees across all three locations were under 40, most Addis Ababa respondents were less than 30 years old. In the capital, the average household size was three, in comparison to five in Semera Logia and seven in Aysaita camp. Nearly all respondents in Aysaita camp grew up in rural parts of Eritrea, whereas the urban refugees interviewed mostly grew up in urban environments.

There are substantial differences in levels of education completed and literacy rates when the camp cohort is compared to both urban locations. While most respondents were literate in Semera Logia (72%) and nearly all (99.7%) in Addis Ababa, in Aysaita camp more than 75% had received no education. Respondents in Addis Ababa were also more likely to have received technical and vocational training (28% of females and 51% of males), in comparison to only 5% of interviewees in Afar (both in the town and the camp).

4 For further information on PDUW research methods and sampling strategy go to annex 1.

There were also variations in the number of years spent in Ethiopia across locations. For example, refugees in our survey had been in the Aysaita camp and Semera Logia for at least five years, whereas most of our respondents had been in Gofa Mebrat Haile between three and four years. More than 90% of Eritreans sampled in Aysaita came directly to the camp after arriving in Ethiopia, while data for urban refugees show that most had gone to other locations before their arrival in the city (50% in Addis and 60% in Semera Logia). This is consistent with refugee management in the country where it is easier for refugees to be registered in camps and then transferred to the city, either through the urban refugee programme or via the award of out-of-camp (OCP) status.

PDUW metrics

To facilitate the comparison between the camp and urban locations, a selection of indicators from the survey has been used to create three metrics. The indexes also demonstrate how life in displacement differs for men and women in each location.[5]

1. **The Refugee Wellbeing Metric** covers five dimensions (bodily, economic, political, social, and psychosocial). This permits a comparison of wellbeing between different cohorts, for example camp/urban, old/young, men/women, educated/non-educated, and those who had spent a long time in the country versus more recent arrivals. As far as the research team can ascertain, the wellbeing metric is the first of its kind to be specifically designed for displaced people. It provides a holistic picture of wellbeing, beyond a typically narrow focus on basic needs.
2. **The Livelihoods Assets Index** is a work-readiness metric designed to ascertain who shows the highest potential for labour market integration. The index builds on the concept of sustainable livelihoods (DFID 1999), based on age, physical and mental health of respondents, education, legal status, housing quality, adequacy of income, financial inclusion, security and social integration.
3. **The Livelihoods Outcomes Index** looks at decent work and labour conditions for those who do have a source of income, in order to study who among those with income from work had the best working conditions. The index builds on the concept of 'decent' work, advocated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity (ILO 2023a). The index includes components on working hours, job security, work satisfaction, fair pay, tax status, working conditions and social protection.

2.2 Qualitative dataset

The qualitative interviews undertaken for this study are not a representative sample but are intended as a deep dive into thematic issues explored in the quantitative survey, furthering our knowledge on refugee wellbeing and displacement economies. A total of 150 interviews (75 on wellbeing and 75 on refugee enterprise) were conducted in the three locations with the support of local research teams speaking Tigrinya, Amharic and Afar languages.

On the topic of wellbeing, interviewees in both camp and city who had participated in the quantitative survey and agreed to be contacted again were selected based on their profiles, to achieve a mix of ages, income, education levels and family situations. The same number of men and women were interviewed in each location. Interviewees were asked to describe the place they live and how they came to be there, as well as their impressions of the camp or the city, or both if they had lived in both settings. They described their main challenges in life, how to alleviate these concerns, and whether they thought they would face the same challenges in the other location. They were asked to describe their daily lives and to talk about things that give them joy, their role in the community and whether they feel at home. They were asked about registration and documentation as well as community representatives and where they can turn to for support. Finally, they were asked whether they would go back to their country of origin if the conflict there were to end.

For work on displacement economies a different approach to qualitative interviewing was undertaken. Following the identification of the main livelihood sectors for refugees from the quantitative survey, 75 semi-structured interviews were conducted with owners of refugee-run and host-run enterprises in Addis Ababa, and with refugees running or owning enterprises in Aysaita Camp and Semera Logia. The interview explored business creation, decision-making, trade networks, enterprise achievements and challenges, as well as the contributions of refugee enterprises to the local economy, refugee self-fulfilment, and self-reliance. More male-run enterprises were interviewed in both urban areas, in line with the findings of the quantitative survey that showed a smaller proportion of women working (38 women for 118 men).

5 For further information on PDUW metrics go to annexes 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1. Breakdown of displacement enterprise interviews

	GOFA MEBRAT HAILE		SEMERA LOGIA		AYSAITA CAMP		TOTAL PER STATUS
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	
Refugee	20	5	19	6	8	7	**65**
Host	9	1	-	-	-	-	**10**
Total per gender	29	6	19	6	8	7	
Total per location	35		25		15		
Total							**75**

Finally, key informant interviews were carried out with a total of 15 institutions in Addis Ababa and 11 in the Afar region, including representatives of the national Refugees and Returnees Service, UNHCR, donors, local governments, international and local NGOs, and refugee representatives, including the Refugee Central Committee in Addis Ababa and Aysaita camp.[6] All key informants were asked to describe their organisation and role in supporting the refugee community, background on refugee policies, encampment situation, and refugee presence and integration in the different locations. They were then asked to describe key challenges for the refugee population from their perspectives, on wellbeing and livelihoods respectively, and what was needed to address those challenges.

6 For a full list of key informants see annex 5.

3

Refugees in Ethiopia

3.1 Overview

Ethiopia has evolved from being one of the main refugee-sending countries in 1980, when more than 2.5 million Ethiopians sought asylum abroad, to becoming the third largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, providing protection to 926,473 refugees in 2023.[7] According to UNHCR (2023d) most refugees are from the Horn of Africa – mainly from South Sudan (416,881), Somalia (284,953), Eritrea (166,097), and Sudan (49,452). From the inception of this project, three years ago, refugee figures have grown by 15.6%, with data showing a sudden increase in arrivals in the first half of 2023 due to the deteriorating situation in Somalia and Sudan.

The Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) – formerly the Administration for Refugee & Returnee Affairs (ARRA) – under the National Intelligence and Security Services, is the national agency in charge of refugee management and policy implementation with the support of UNHCR. Created in 1992, the RRS is responsible for refugee status determination, repatriation facilitation, camp establishment and management, and the protection and wellbeing of refugees, coordinating refugee assistance programmes with NGO partners and other stakeholders.

Refugee issues are coordinated almost entirely at national level, and collaboration with regional and municipal authorities is limited and ad hoc, with no policy or legal guidance supporting decentralisation or the localisation of refugee response. The 2018 National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS) envisaged the development of regional action plans in all refugee-hosting regions and a regional coordination forum, but the initial discussions to elaborate these plans were suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and the document remains a draft.

The RRS is leading refugee response, devising the refugee strategy and drafting directives to enable the implementation of the Refugee Act. In 2022 the agency created the Urban Refugee Unit in Addis Ababa. Initially designed to provide assistance to all cities with urban refugee populations, the new unit at present only provides documentation services and information on service access to refugees in the capital.

A range of international organisations also supports refugees in Ethiopia, predominantly those within the camps. For refugees in cities, aid and services are more limited, often restricted to those within the scope of the UNHCR Urban Assistance Programme, reserved for those that have been resettled to a city for medical conditions or protection needs that could not be addressed in the camp. On the other hand, urban administrations design and implement their own urban development plans and are responsible for managing city services and infrastructure which could include the provision of services to urban refugees. However, the RRS is still responsible for service delivery to refugees, "leaving the local government with little or no formal role" (Nigusie and Carver 2019, 9).

Encampment of refugees and Out of Camp policy

The country has sustained an open-door policy for decades, providing *prima facie* refugee status to all arrivals from the Horn of Africa and Yemen. Encampment has been the default response to refugee arrivals. Most of Ethiopia's refugees live in one of the 21 active camps located in bordering areas across the country – particularly in Gambella and Somali regional

7 In 2022 there were 149,245 Ethiopian refugees and 121,362 asylum seekers. However the forced displacement situation within the country remained alarming, with 2.7 million internally displaced people of concern to the UNHCR (2023f).

states – and only 8% are officially registered as urban refugees in Addis Ababa (UNHCR 2023a).[8] However, the total number of refugees living in cities may be higher, as discussed later in this report.

Notwithstanding the mobility restrictions imposed by the 2004 Ethiopia Refugee Proclamation, which required refugees to live in designated areas close to the border with their country of origin, camps are not fenced in Ethiopia, and refugees often move between the camp and nearby towns for income-earning activities, and to use the market and other services (Carver 2020). The interaction with local communities is facilitated by a shared ethnic background in most contexts. However, camp conditions vary greatly across the country and livelihood opportunities tend to be limited in the camp area and neighbouring towns (Carver 2020).

Most registered refugees living in Ethiopia's cities are refugees with Out of Camp status (UNHCR 2019, 29). The Out of Camp Policy (OCP) was established by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) in 2010 and allowed Eritrean refugees to leave camps if they could prove they had the resources to be self-reliant, often through family remittances or, less frequently, the sponsorship of an Ethiopian citizen who guarantees to cover their living expenses. After receiving an OCP card, refugees were no longer entitled to assistance, and were not allowed to work or to leave the city where they were registered without an RRS permit. As a result of this restrictive policy, only a small proportion of refugees in camps qualified for OCP status and their living conditions were often precarious once in the city, working informally and in poor conditions (Brown et al. 2018; Samuel Hall 2014).

Another group living in cities are refugees ascribed to the UNHCR Urban Assistance Programme, which supports highly vulnerable refugees with serious medical conditions, security, or humanitarian concerns. Refugees are also allowed to live in cities to pursue higher education and some may be authorised to remain after graduating if they find an employment opportunity (Samuel Hall 2014). Finally, some refugee nationalities, like Yemenis and Congolese, are directly granted urban refugee status due to their reduced number and the lack of a common border with their country of origin.

In September 2016 Ethiopia co-hosted the UN General Assembly where the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants was signed, which called for the integration of refugees in hosting countries through a 'whole of society' approach to refugee response, including development actors, local and national governments, international agencies, and donors. Ethiopia committed to nine pledges during the summit, later summarised into six objectives in the Roadmap for the Implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) (ARRA 2017).

Figure 1. Ethiopia's commitments

Ethiopia's nine pledges to the New York Declaration under six thematic areas	
1. Out of camp	1. Expand the 'out-of-camp' policy to benefit 10% of the total refugee population
2. Documentation	2. Provide other benefits, such as issuing birth certificates to refugee children born in Ethiopia, and allowing refugees to open bank accounts and obtain driving licences
3. Work & livelihoods	3. Provide work permits to refugees and those with a permanent residence ID
	4. Provide work permits to refugee graduates in the areas permitted for foreign workers
	5. Make 10,000 hectares of irrigable land available to enable 20,000 refugees and host community households (100,000 people) to grow crops
	6. Work with industrial partners to build industrial parks to employ up to 100,000 individuals, with 30% of the jobs reserved for refugees
4. Education	7. Increase enrolment of refugee children in pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education without discrimination and within available resources
5. Basic & social services	8. Expand and enhance basic and essential social services for refugees
6. Local integration	9. Allow local integration for refugees who have lived in Ethiopia for more than 20 years

8 There is a total of 24 camps in the country, although the three located in Tigray region remained closed at the time this report was drafted.

The work and livelihoods pledges were aligned with the objectives of Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan II 2015-2020, particularly the creation of industrial parks, a pledge that was backed up by the joint commitment of the European Union, UK, and World Bank to provide half a billion dollars to the Ethiopia's Job Compact, supporting industrialisation and employment creation in the country (Nigusie and Carver 2019, 7).

In 2018, the RRS drafted the National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS), a ten-year plan to implement the nine pledges which included the development of Regional Action Plans for every refugee hosting region, as a first step towards the localisation of refugee response. Some progress was achieved with the establishment of a regional coordination platform for CRRF implementation in the Somali region, but GoE's approval of the NCRRS is still pending (Nigusie and Carver 2019). The NCRRS draft further supported the creation of 'village-style development-oriented settlements' mentioned in the Roadmap for the Implementation of the CRRF as an alternative to camps in addition to OCP status, but there is no directive providing guidance on how this should be implemented (ARRA 2017). The recent signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the RRS, the UNHCR, and the Somali regional government to facilitate the integration of Kebribeyah refugee camp, hosting more than 17,000 Somali refugees into Kebribeyah town, could be interpreted as a step in this direction (UNHCR 2023e; 2020e).

At the subsequent Global Refugee Forum (GRF) held in Geneva in 2019, Ethiopia committed to four additional pledges, expanding some of its previous commitments. These were to:

- create up to 90,000 economic opportunities through agricultural and livestock value chains benefitting refugees and hosts
- expand the Technical Vocational Education and Training system and facilities to provide quality and accredited skills training for 20,000 hosts and refugees linked to labour market demand by 2024
- strengthen asylum system and refugees' social protection, and
- provide clean /renewable energy solutions for three million people in refugee hosting areas.

Progress on these pledges has been compromised by insufficient financial and technical support by the international community, the impacts of COVID-19 and armed conflict in Tigray and violence in other regions, and the lack of adequate data to assess GRF impacts and outputs and inform policy (UNHCR and RRS 2023).

A new Refugee Proclamation, a new direction?

In February 2019 the GoE passed a new Refugee Proclamation (no. 1110/2019) to support the shift in policy initiated with the Global Compact and the CRRF commitments. The new legislation recognises refugee rights to movement and to choose a place of residence within the national territory, although it retains RRS authority to designate areas close to the border where refugees may live. It further develops refugee rights to work, stating that refugees could engage in wage-earning activities under the same conditions as other foreign nationals in the country. However, working refugees would only be treated on a par with Ethiopian nationals when they are married to, or have children with, an Ethiopian national; or participate in rural or urban productive projects jointly designed by the government and international partners, for the benefit of refugees and hosts.

Rights to education and healthcare are also recognised, although parity of rights with Ethiopians only applies to pre-primary and primary education. In secondary and adult education, vocational training and higher education, access is conditional on the availability of resources and refugees are treated as other foreign nationals, something that also applies to the validation of academic credentials.

Following approval of this Refugee Proclamation directives were issued to guide implementation of the Act and establish the scope of refugee rights including the conditions for being granted OCP status – with applications now open to all refugees irrespective of their nationality.[9] Nevertheless, the condition requiring proof of self-reliance to leave the camp remains. Beyond external sponsorship or the capacity to cover living expenses without a sponsor or work, OCP status can now be obtained if refugees receive an offer of work contract. In practice, the encampment approach is still the default response – only 12% of refugees live outside camps, and they find it difficult to obtain permits to leave the camp due to complex bureaucratic procedures and backlogs (UNHCR 2023c, 5).

On the right to work, the directive establishes that refugees can only obtain work permits for jobs which cannot be filled by a country national, and are entitled to self-employment only in areas open to foreign nationals. Refugees would also need a letter of support from the RRS to be issued with a work permit by the Ministry of Labour and Skills (MoLS) to allow them only to work for a specific employer in a specific position.

9 The Directive to Determine Conditions for Movement and Residence of Refugees Outside of Camps, Directive No. 01/2019; (ii) the Directive to Determine the Procedure for Refugees' Right to Work, Directive No. 02/2019; and (iii) the Refugees' and Returnees' Grievances and Appeals Handling Directive, Directive No. 03/2019.

Registration of refugee enterprises also requires a letter from the RRS, a residence permit from the Immigration, Nationality, and Vital Events Agency, and a business licence from the relevant government body. Finally, refugees working in joint projects designed by the government and international partners only need a residence permit issued by the RRS and a formal contract for the duration of the project. In addition, participants in joint projects must have lived in Ethiopia for at least three years after their award of refugee status.

In practice, implementation of the new legislation and its directives has been hindered by the need of further negotiations with the MoLS for issuing of work permits, and only refugees participating in INGO livelihood and enterprise programmes have been able to secure a residence permit through the RRS allowing them to work (UNHCR 2023c, 7).[10] The changes introduced in the new Refugee Proclamation and the Directive on the right to work are thus not sufficient to realise refugees' right to work in Ethiopia and require further amendments to national legislation and awareness raising among the relevant government bodies to enable implementation (NRC 2020).

The target of providing 10% of refugees with OCP status has been achieved, although this is far from representing a real alternative to encampment. Joint projects envisaged and implemented are limited in providing refugees with sustainable self-reliance, and many refugees continue to work informally in Ethiopia. The development of regional action plans has stalled since conflict erupted between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian government in Tigray in November 2020.

Today more than 166,000 Eritrean refugees live in Ethiopia, 41% of them in Addis Ababa under OCP or urban-assisted refugee status (43,470) or self-relocated from Tigray (24,873), making up to 92% of the refugees living in the city (UNHCR 2023a). The rest are living in towns, camps, and refugee sites in the Amhara and Afar regions, with a small group remaining in Tigray. Many Eritrean refugees have left their country fleeing forced long-term military service conscription and what the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea (COIE) has described as crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Eritrean government against the population since the country became independent in 1991 (Mekonnen and Palacios Arapiles 2021, 11; UNHRC 2015).[11] According to the UN, Afar Eritreans are victims of persecution as an ethnic and religious minority in their country, have been forcibly displaced from their ancestral lands, prevented from developing their traditional livelihoods (fishing, salt mining, and trade), and are politically and economically marginalised in Eritrea (Feyissa and Dawud 2021, 11; UNGA 2023, 12; UNHRC 2016, 72).

Eritrea is a heavily militarised country that has based its defence policy on the threat of Ethiopian invasion. Since partition in 1991, the government of President Isaias Afwerki has made it mandatory for all citizens to join the National Service Military Programme, extended to an undetermined duration since the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea erupted in 1998 (Mekonnen and Palacios Arapiles 2021). Eritreans are forced to work for the government while on military duty for a nominal salary, which hinders their engagement in other waged employment or enterprise, and leaves families depending on ration coupons provided by the state.

In response to military desertion and high migration rates, hard restrictions on exit movements have been imposed which force Eritreans to risk their lives and savings trying to escape using people smugglers (Ayalew Mengiste 2018). Completed military service is a requirement to become a full citizen with rights to property, to work independently, and to get a passport and have the right to leave the country (Milena and Cole 2022, 5). Leaving the country irregularly is considered treason and Eritreans who do this are banned from returning and find it difficult to access vital documents or validate their academic credentials through embassies and diplomatic delegations abroad (Milena and Cole 2022).

Eritreans flee across the borders to Ethiopia and Sudan which are often seen as transit countries in an onward journey to Europe (mainly Germany, Switzerland, or Sweden) or the United States. However, most Eritrean refugees living in Ethiopia have few prospects for resettlement or family reunification, either because resettlement opportunities are scarce, or because they do not have the necessary connections abroad to start the reunification process or support their onwards migration.[12] When they do, they are transferred to Addis Ababa to initiate the process, but face long delays in getting the required documentation (Milena and Cole 2022, 7). This leaves refugees in a perpetual state of limbo with limited livelihood options, incentivising secondary irregular migration as a result. Against this backdrop, evidence suggests that many Eritrean refugees would remain in

10 From 2019, the cumulative number of residence permits which enable refugees to work has reached 2,800, less than 1% of the refugee working age population. 5,000 more were expected to be approved in early 2023 (UNHCR 2023c, 7).

11 Main systematic violations reported by the COIE are: enslavement, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, other inhumane acts, persecution, rape, and murder (UNHRC 2015).

12 UNHCR figures for 2023 showed that only 246 Eritrean refugees hosted in Ethiopia had been resettled by mid-September. Resettlement figures in Ethiopia remain low since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 and have not yet recovered or approached the numbers achieved in the previous decade, with more than 1,000 Eritrean refugees resettled annually between 2009 and 2019 (UNHCR 2023g).

Ethiopia if their right to work were enhanced, allowing them to lead meaningful and productive lives there (Mallet et al. 2017).

Eritrean refugees are not a homogeneous group, and different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds generate significant differences among them. The two largest ethnic groups in Ethiopia are the Tigrinya and the Afar, in addition to a smaller minority group, the Kunama. Generally speaking, Tigrinya Eritreans are better educated, Christian, and have an urban background, while Afar Eritreans are pastoralist, Muslim, with limited access to education, and a rural background. However, PDUW survey data shows that Afar Eritrean refugees in Semera Logia were better educated and more likely to have been raised in an urban environment than Afar Eritrean refugees in Aysaita camp. Tigrinya Eritreans, particularly those living out of camp, tend to be better connected to transnational networks that enable their migration and support them while in displacement. A study showed that 83% of Tigrinya Eritreans in Addis Ababa were transnationally connected, in comparison to only 9% of Afar Eritreans in Aysaita Camp, and 13% of Tigrinya Eritreans in the former Mai Aini camp (Adugna, Rudolf, and Getachew 2022, 4332).

3.2 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia

In January 2020, the GoE decided to stop granting prima facie refugee status to Eritrean nationals and to use instead an undefined hybrid asylum system, which from March 2020 was followed by a virtual stop on new refugee registrations that remains in place (UNHCR 2021; OHCHR 2023). From November 2020 the war in Tigray increased suspicion and security concerns about Eritrean refugees, with many Tigrinya people, both Ethiopian nationals and refugees in Addis Ababa, being harassed or arbitrarily detained by the police and accused of subversive activities supporting the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Camps hosting Tigrinya Eritrean refugees in the north of the country came under attack by the Eritrean army, forcing thousands to flee again and many to seek shelter and protection in Addis Ababa against growing reports of killings, abductions, and forced returns to Eritrea (Miller 2022).

Refugees seeking assistance in the capital were called by the RRS to relocate to Alemwach, a newly-established refugee site in Gondar, Amhara region, hosting refugees fleeing from Tigray.[13] There were some reports of forced relocation of refugees to Alemwach (Miller 2022, Kassa 2022). However, many remained in Addis Ababa where they received support from their relatives and the Eritrean community, according to key informant interviews. Refugee numbers in Addis Ababa have almost tripled, from 27,498 in April 2020 to 75,467 in June 2023. (UNHCR 2023b, 2023d, 2020c, 2023c, 5).

In November 2022, the peace accord between the TPLF and the government of Ethiopia created expectations about the resumption of refugee registration and documentation activities. However this has not fully materialised and worrying UN reports of mass deportation of Eritreans in June 2023 are contributing to a growing sense of insecurity among refugees (OHCHR 2023).

3.3 Refugees in Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa, with an estimated population of 3.9 million and an annual growth rate of 4.45%, is the economic powerhouse of the country (Ethiopian Statistical Service 2022). Refugees in Addis Ababa are a heterogeneous group in terms of origin, legal status, and experiences, who live for the most part without aid (Brown et al. 2018). A total of 74,372 registered refugees are living in the city, including 24,873 refugees self-relocated from Tigray (UNHCR 2023a). By nationality, Tigrinya Eritreans are by far the main group (68,477), followed by Yemenis (2,448), and Somalis (1,032); most are women (55%), while children represent 30% of the population (Ibid). It is estimated that 50,000 refugees in Addis Ababa have OCP status, and that only another 4,000 receive regular assistance under UNHCR Urban Assistance Programme for refugees with special protection needs (UNHCR 2020b). Nevertheless, the registry maintained by the Refugee Central Committee in Addis Ababa estimates the number of refugees in the city to be 145,000,[14] many of them unregistered Eritreans. And the RRS notes that there might be around 100,000 refugees living in the capital, according to key informants.

With an average annual GDP growth of 15%, the city's economy is oriented towards services, with. transport, communications, trade, hospitality, and finance as the main activities, followed by construction and manufacturing as main industries (UNHABITAT 2017). The overall unemployment rate stands at 19.3% in the city, but is 25% for young people aged 15-29, and an estimated 6.6% work in the informal sector, in comparison with a 16.1% at national level (FDRE Central Statitistical Agency 2021). These official figures could be an underestimation since nearly 86%

13 Alemwach hosts 22,046 refugees as of June 2023. UNHCR is implementing an area-based strategy at the site where refugees and hosts share services and the agency plans to reinforce and upgrade existing facilities. However, by 2023 the situation at the site was dramatic with health centres running with limited capacity, absence of a water treatment plant and solid waste management, and documentation and registration on hold (UNHCR 2023b).

14 The Refugee Central Committee is composed of elected refugee representatives who advocate for refugee rights and it is often consulted on issues related to refugee protection. The same structure is often found inside camps where they become the main interlocutors with the RRS and UNCHR.

of existing employment in the country is considered vulnerable by ILO standards, with 86% made up of self-employed workers and more than 38% consisting of family workers, mostly working informally and with limited access to social protection or decent wages (ILO, 2020). Earlier estimates suggest the proportion of informal workers in Addis Ababa could be 69% of the total working population (Fransen and van Dijk 2008). However since the early 2000s, the government has focused on reducing informality rates, enforcing business registration and tax payment for small enterprises and facilitating micro and small businesses access to training, space and microfinance in exchange for registration and affiliation to the ruling party (Weldeghebrael 2021, 5).

The main challenges faced by refugees in Addis Ababa, recorded by UNHCR, are the delays in status determination and documentation, the lack of sustainable livelihoods, deficient child protection (i.e. unaccompanied minors, limited access to education), the prevalence of gender-based violence, arbitrary arrest and detention, and insecurity in irregular onward movements (UNHCR 2022a). Earlier studies show that the absence of employment opportunities and the inability to work or run an enterprise legally in Addis Ababa were the main reasons refugees opt for resettlement or onward migration (Brown et al. 2018, 28; Mallet et al. 2017). As a result of unemployment or poorly-paid jobs, refugee income is on average lower than that of the host community living in the same areas, and their precarious situation is affecting their wellbeing (Betts et al. 2019).

Another problem faced by refugees in the city is access to adequate housing at affordable prices. Many live in overcrowded spaces sharing rent with other refugees, creating 'fictive households' of people who do not belong to the same family but pool resources together (Betts et al. 2019, 5). It is estimated that 70-80% of the inner-city housing stock is dilapidated, and the shortage of affordable housing has contributed to the sprawl of informal settlements on the outskirts of the city, in areas with poor communication and lacking basic services (Weldeghebrael 2021, 7).

Assistance provided in the city aims to support refugees' economic inclusion and self-reliance, and facilitate their access to basic services, such as health and education. But the opportunities to enrol on different programmes and projects are limited, and only a few, such as the GIZ Qualifications and employment perspectives for refugees and the host population in Ethiopia (QEP),[15] offer an integrated platform with links to employers or support for joint business initiatives.

Some good initiatives exist such as the mentorship project under the Danish Refugee Council-led Ethiopian Migration Programme – an excellent example of peer-support used to reinforce refugees' psychosocial wellbeing in Gofa Mebrat Haile, in an attempt to disincentivise irregular onwards migration. However, PDUW researchers' engagement with city stakeholders reveals a lack of coordination between initiatives like this, and the limited awareness by local government about these aid programmes and how they could contribute to, or be embedded into, urban development plans.

Gofa Mebrat Haile

PDUW research was conducted in Gofa Mebrat Haile, a condominium with a large presence of Eritrean refugees, located in Nefas Silk Lafto sub-city, south-west Addis Ababa.[16] The sub-city has a population of more than 445,000 people, and Gofa Mebrat Haile is home to approximately 5,500 households of whom some 50% are Eritrean (Ethiopian Statistical Service 2022). The area was populated by Tigrinya Eritreans before partition in 1991, making it easier for refugees to get established in the area. A study shows that Eritrean refugees in Gofa Mebrat Haile are better connected abroad and in a better financial situation than Eritrean refugees renting in other parts of the city, and that their average stay in the area is three years, in comparison to five years in other city locations (Adugna, Rudolf, and Getachew 2022, 4332).

The condominium was inaugurated in 2009 as part of the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) for people relocated from redevelopment project sites in other parts of the city, and city residents who signed up and were listed for social housing (Bekele 2015, 24–25). Some of these beneficiaries are now renting to refugees – often at inflated prices. Buildings have both residential and commercial uses, with the ground floors of blocks facing the main roads reserved for commercial use, and several buildings and open areas for communal use.

The Condominium Administration Office handles apartment rentals and ensures the appropriate use of communal spaces, collects garbage and security fees from residents, and manages disputes between neighbours. Members are elected from property owners whose interests they represent and, as a result, there are no refugee representatives in the Office. With no municipal budget to finance the construction of communal facilities, such as a health centre, the Office tries to get funds from building owners and residents. The Condominium Administration Office has collaborated with the Danish

15 Qualifications and employment perspectives for refugees and the host population in Ethiopia. (QEP) https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/129878.html

16 The areas with the greatest presence of refugees in the capital are Nefas Silk-Lafto (46% of the total number of refugees in Addis Ababa), Bole (29%), and Yekas (11%) sub-cities (UNHCR 2023a).

Gofa Mebrat Haile condominium in Addis Ababa. Credit: Cardiff University (2022)

Refugee Council to build a community centre, library, and recreational spaces, but complains that refugees do not contribute to their maintenance.

While relations between hosts and refugees are usually good, the Office noted that hosts sometimes complained about the nuisance created by the large number of refugees living together in one apartment ('up to 15'), and increasing rents as a result of refugee residents which was putting pressure on host families with only one income-earner. Working refugees and those running businesses were considered an asset to the community, but the opening hours of bars, loud music and young refugees drinking were deemed a problem. The Condominium Administration Office had tried to address this with refugee representatives, but had not convened a joint meeting for hosts and refugees.

3.4 Refugees in the Afar Region

Located in lowland, north-eastern Ethiopia, the Afar Region is one of the four Developing Regional States in the country with below average socio-economic indicators (UNICEF 2022). With an estimated population of two million people, the region hosts 57,694 refugees in three camps: Barahle (28,616), Aysaita (25,908) and Serdo (3,317) (UNHCR 2023d; Ethiopian Statistical Service 2022).[17] Most of the population in the region belongs to the Afar ethnic group, something that has facilitated the integration of Afar Eritrean refugees. Their shared ethnicity, language and history, together with the political interest of local Afar leaders to maintain demographic dominance in the region, provide opportunities for refugee inclusion, access to employment and local services (Feyissa & Mohamed 2021). However, many people in the business sector, the administration and NGO staff are Amhara and Tigrinya, which are minorities in the region (Ibid 2021).

Afar is the most underdeveloped region in Ethiopia and three quarters of its population are supported by social protection programmes (Feyissa and Dawud 2021, 13). Subsistence livestock and agropastoral activities are the main sources of income, with a small proportion of the population engaged in salt extraction or working in urban centres (Feyissa and Dawud 2021, 15). The overall unemployment rate in the region in 2020 was 20%, and 30% among young people aged 15-29 (FDRE Central Statitistical Agency 2021).

Main income-earning activities for refugees in the region are firewood collection, selling rations, weaving traditional mats (dibora), goat breeding, waged labour, and share-cropping arrangements with hosts who own agricultural land (Feyissa and Dawud 2021, 15). Access to land is facilitated by Afar clan structures – but not all refugees have these connections, particularly those in Aysaita camp (Ibid).

17 On February 2022, Tigray conflict crossed into the northern part of Afar region and fighting affected Berhale camp, forcing some 34,000 refugees to seek refuge in other parts of the region, including the regional capital, Semera (UNHCR 2023c, 4; 2022b). The UNHCR provided assistance to the refugees displaced in several locations and established a refugee site in Serdo (UNHCR 2022b). Regional authorities expanded their Safety Net Programme under the Food Security Directorate to aid the most vulnerable families displaced by the Tigray conflict in Afar, both IDPs and refugees, facilitating 5 months of cash assistance of 1,800-2,000 ETB per household (KI, regional government official, 2022).

Refugees in Aysaita Camp

Managed by the RRS with the support of UNHCR, Aysaita camp was established in 2007 and is mostly populated by Afar Eritreans (UNHCR 2020d). The camp is located 2.5km from Aysaita town, 76km from the regional capital Semera Logia, 140km from the Djibouti border and more than 240km from Eritrea. It accommodates 25,908 people, of whom 49.58% are men and 50.42% are women, and with 58% of its population under 18 (UNHCR 2023e; 2020d).

Livelihood opportunities for refugees in Aysaita are mostly in the agricultural sector. Informal share-cropping arrangements have provided refugees with work and access to land through rental agreements with local farmers and landowners (UNHCR 2020a). The Aysaita Woreda Agriculture Office has provided technical support and monitoring, and these activities have strengthened social cohesion between refugees and host communities (UNHCR 2020a). Additionally, some refugees started businesses and offer services inside camps, such as bakeries, cafeterias, selling vegetables, petty trade, and cart transport service and retail, among others. However, limited access to livelihood opportunities remains a major challenge in the absence of technical and vocational training (UNHCR 2020a).

Only 16% of refugees in Aysaita have adequate shelter, a situation that partially explains why many live outside the camp (UNHCR 2020d). It is estimated that about half of the refugees registered in the camp live elsewhere, with Semera Logia, being the closest refugee-hosting location (UNHCR 2020a; KI government officer). Refugees living outside Aysaita camp have not applied for OCP status and are still eligible for aid, according to the information provided by key informants. Before the camp was opened, the relatively small number of refugees arriving in the region and clan solidarity between Afar refugees and Ethiopian Afar, made it easy for refugees to integrate with the host population (Feyissa and Dawud 2021, 12). While this solidarity remains, previous research suggests that camp refugees could have weaker clan affiliations than those living in town (Feyissa and Dawud 2021).

The shared ethnic background and family ties between Ethiopian Afar pastoralist and Eritrean Afar refugees provide opportunities for social and economic interaction and integration. Refugees move freely out of camps in the region and have relatives in the local communities (Yigzaw 2013). They interact with the local population in the weekly market, where they sell some of their food rations and other items to hosts and buy food and other products (Yigzaw 2013). Proximity to the Djibouti border has allowed for informal cross-border trade, particularly of clothing, which the government has repeatedly attempted to suppress – but it is not known whether refugees participate in this activity (Yigzaw 2013).

There are four international partner projects currently supporting the implementation of the CRRF in the Afar camps, and "local authorities have started to engage further in the CRRF approach, including direct capacity-building with the EU Trust Fund for Africa and UNHCR to facilitate the inclusion of refugees in their regional and local development plans" (UNHCR 2020a). However, priorities may have shifted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and instability in Tigray.

Refugees in Semera Logia

Semera Logia has two urban centres or sub-towns: the new regional capital, Semera, home to the government administration; and Logia, a town seven kilometres away which is more densely populated and with an active commercial sector. The combined urban population is estimated at 41,000 people of whom two thirds live in Logia (FDRE Ministry of Water and Energy 2023). The working population is mostly engaged in medium, small and micro-enterprises (such as in hospitality, retail, grain trade, flour mills, clothing or cattle rearing), as daily labourers in a major irrigation scheme in the Awash river or in the Tendaho sugar factory, or are public servants. Some 34% work for the government, 17% for the private sector, and 23% are business owners, with an unemployment rate of 21.3%, slightly higher than the regional average (FDRE Central Statitistical Agency 2021; FDRE Ministry of Water and Energy 2023).

Information on refugees in Semera Logia is very limited. Estimates from 2019 suggest that around 2,700 were living in the town, although the figure could be much higher (UNHCR 2020a). Data collected by the PDUW project could contribute to fill this knowledge gap.

4

Refugee wellbeing

The approach taken to understanding and measuring wellbeing in the PDUW project offers an alternative to the standard vulnerability analyses most often used to profile refugee populations. These are often narrowly focused on basic needs – nutrition, access to shelter, WASH and health – and do not give a full picture of life in protracted displacement.

Building on a framework developed by the University of Bath Wellbeing in Development research project in the 2000s (White 2015, 2009, 2010), the PDUW study has generated a holistic refugee wellbeing framework, based on five dimensions: bodily, economic, political, social and psychosocial wellbeing. This framework has been used to code qualitative interviews, and it has also informed the creation of a refugee wellbeing metric, composed of indicators from the survey that correspond to these five dimensions.[18]

Principal Component Analysis was used to give each respondent a score using the metric in Table 2. This section presents wellbeing metric scores in more detail for displaced respondents surveyed in Aysaita camp, and the cities of Semera Logia and Addis Ababa, considering these scores alongside data from qualitative interviews with refugees in both locations. Scores from the host population in Addis Ababa are included for comparison, but not analysed in detail as our qualitative interviews focused on the displaced population only.

4.1 Bodily wellbeing

The dimension of bodily wellbeing is based on indicators relating to physical health and safety. It combines access to a range of basic services including water, sanitation, healthcare, and pharmacies, with subjective assessments including respondents' own rating of their general health, their housing situation, quality of healthcare in the area, and perceptions of safety. A measure of food security scale was also included in the dimension – the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rSCI) (IPC Global Partners 2021).

Our quantitative findings point towards significantly higher overall bodily wellbeing scores in both Semera Logia and Addis Ababa compared to Aysaita camp. While there may be some degree of self-selection in that younger and more able-bodied refugees may be more likely to leave the camp, refugees also leave due to poor sanitation, living arrangements, and healthcare, as reflected both in the survey and qualitative interviews.

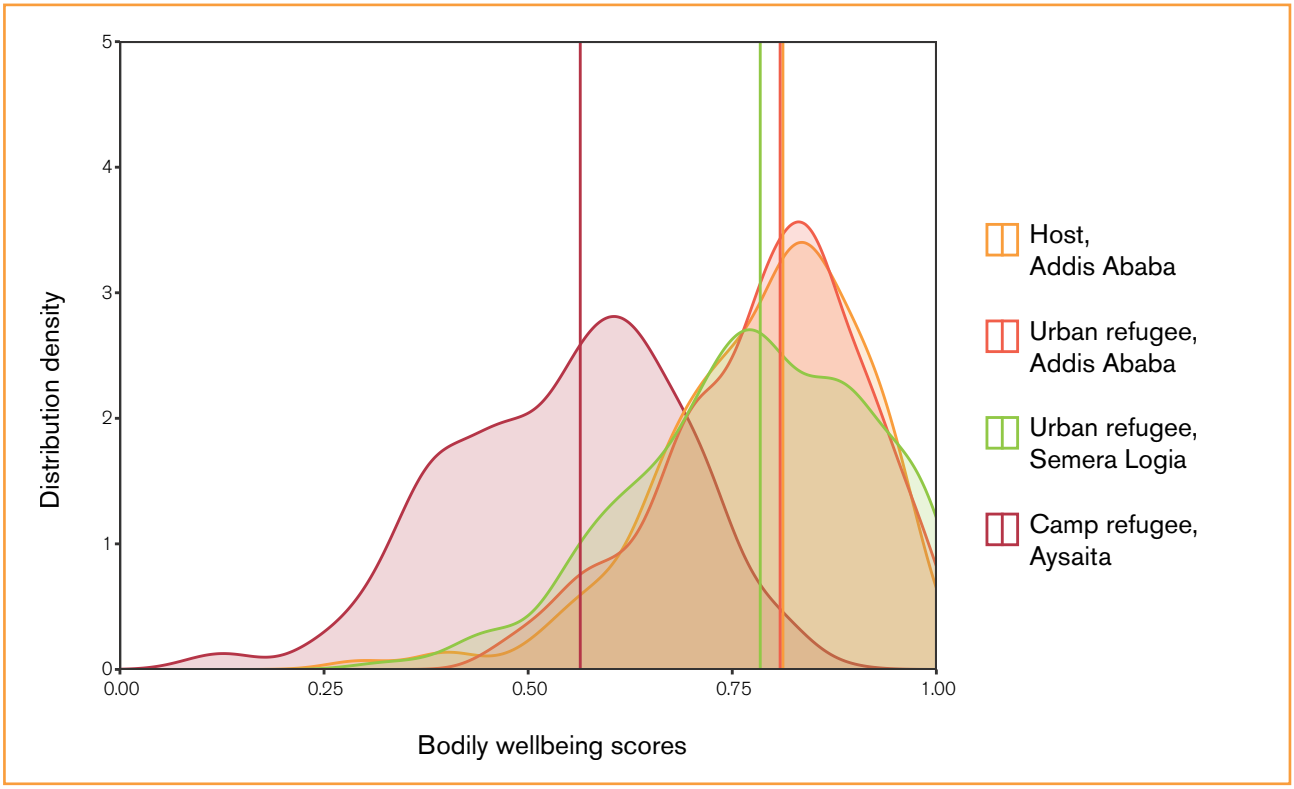
18 For an in-depth exploration of the literature on wellbeing and its application (or lack thereof) in displacement contexts see Earle, Dajani, Barratt and McAteer (forthcoming). See Barratt and Earle's (2023) IIED working paper for a detailed explanation of the construction of the refugee wellbeing metric.

Table 2. Indicators and dimensions used in the wellbeing metric

BODILY WELLBEING	ECONOMIC WELLBEING	POLITICAL WELLBEING	SOCIAL WELLBEING	PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING
Respondent health	Financial situation of the household	Perceived ability to work legally	Access to a place of worship	Life satisfaction
Quality of healthcare in the area	Income stability	Perceived ability to start a business legally	Access to community and sports facilities	Optimism (life in one year)
Access to healthcare in the area	Household ability to cover expenses	Perceived freedom of movement	Ability to attend social gatherings	Feeling purposeful
Access to a pharmacy and health centre	Earner ratio	UNHCR refugee status	Ability to meet friends and family	Feeling independent
Food security using reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)	Household savings	Legal documentation for residence	Ability to partake in group activities	Feeling that own time is spent constructively
Access to safe drinking water	Absence of concerning debt	Access to information on rights	Getting along with the displaced/ non-displaced community	Expected future living standards of children
Access to sanitation	Ability to borrow	Perceived degree of representation	Perceived advantages of living in the area, such as social networks	Mental wellbeing (Warwick-Edinburgh 7-Item Mental Wellbeing Scale)
Quality of housing	Wealth by proxy of household asset index	Perceived ability to make a difference in the community		Feeling respected in the community
Perceived safety of area	Access to finance	Quality of courts and perceived availability of justice		Feeling at home
	School attendance of children	Perceived treatment by police		
		Perceived availability of support if in danger		
		Access to education		

Figure 2 clearly shows these differences, with the camp population in red considerably lower than displaced respondents living in Semera Logia (green) and Addis Ababa (purple). While the scores of displaced respondents in Addis Ababa are equal to those of the host population (blue), the displaced population in Semera Logia scored significantly better than the camp-based respondents, despite issues of food security and underdevelopment across the Afar region (UNICEF 2022).

Figure 2. Distribution of bodily wellbeing scores by location/migration status



Looking at individual elements within the bodily wellbeing scores, food security appears to be a shared issue across the Afar region. Within our quantitative findings, approximately half of the refugees sampled in both Semera Logia and Aysaita camp noted that there were times in the last seven days when they did not have enough to eat. The corresponding figure in Addis Ababa was less than a quarter of displaced respondents. Using the Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) designed to capture the quantity and sufficiency of food intake, average scores categorise both Aysaita and Semera Logia as food-security 'stressed', while the average score in Addis Ababa was in the category of minimal food insecurity (IPC Global Partners 2021).

For residents in Aysaita camp, hunger and poor healthcare were key concerns raised in qualitative interviews. Interviewees describe a severe lack of food, caused by reduction in food subsidies since the beginning of the conflict in Tigray. Food distribution and cash transfers by humanitarian agencies were reported to be less frequent and smaller in quantity. The rations of grain and oil per person have been halved and are only provided every few months. "We think about it daily", one interviewee said. Many stated that they cannot eat three meals a day and that they constantly worry about how to feed their families. In Semera Logia, interviewees also remarked on the reduced aid provisions in the camp, which they attributed to the Tigray war. Displaced people registered in Aysaita camp commonly live elsewhere (UNHCR 2020a), and several displaced interviewees in Semera Logia regularly travel the 76km from the city to the camp to collect aid. However, the price of transportation to the camp had become higher than the value of the support, some interviewees explained.

"We have to go to the camp [Aysaita] to receive the aid. But often we do not go to collect the rations, since travel costs are higher than the aid they provide. They give us 250 birr per month and this does not cover the transportation from Logia to the camp and back. Instead of going to camp to receive that 250 birr, we prefer to work here and earn 250 birr."

Refugee man (aged 32), Semera Logia

Makeshift shelters in Aysaita camp. Credit: Samuel Hall (2022)

Regarding health and healthcare, the camp again fell behind both urban locations. When asked to rate their own health, respondents in Aysaita camp were notably less likely to state that their health was good or very good compared to their peers in Semera Logia and Addis Ababa. Camp-based respondents were also more likely to state that their health limits them in certain physical activities like walking or engaging in paid labour. Again, this sample could include some level of self-selection, as respondents limited by poor health may be more likely to remain in the camp rather than moving to an urban area. However, the healthcare quality and availability are also perceived as worse in the camp compared to Semera Logia.

Around 70% of survey respondents in Aysaita stated that they have some type of healthcare available to them (compared to 90% in both urban locations), but a majority of camp-based respondents stated that they were dissatisfied with their access to both health centres and pharmacies, which was not the case in the cities. The reported quality of healthcare in Aysaita is low compared to the other locations, and poor healthcare was perceived to be one of the main difficulties by 40% of survey respondents in Aysaita, compared to 0% in Addis Ababa and 4% in Semera Logia.

Our qualitative interviews painted a similar picture, as all interviewees in Aysaita camp reported a severely under-resourced health clinic. Interviewees thought that the clinic did not perform proper examinations and had no capacity to do blood tests, and that patients were often offered paracetamol or cough syrup and sent away. Interviewees who insisted on other medication were told to buy it from the pharmacy in Aysaita town, which many could not afford to do.

Women in the camp rated health as a problem somewhat more frequently than men, which could potentially be linked to poor maternal health provision in the camp reflected in our qualitative data. Some interviewees in Aysaita stated that women in need of medical support during childbirth had to get to the hospital on their own, which in most cases would mean walking to Aysaita Hospital during labour.

"Ambulance access is not available for pregnant women. They got to Aysaita Hospital by foot while giving birth. Some of them give birth before arriving at the hospital. Many mothers gave birth in their home here in the camp. No medical service was provided for a newborn baby for seven or eight months if she gave birth in her home."

Refugee woman (aged 60), Aysaita Camp

Shelter is another realm where camp-based respondents were at a disadvantage, with many refugees living in makeshift shelters, compared to Semera Logia and Addis Ababa where most or all respondents lived in apartments or houses. Respondents in Aysaita were also much more likely to use insanitary toilet facilities, with more than 30% using a bush or open field.

Despite sampling by going door-to-door, a small number of respondents in Aysaita and Semera Logia stated that they had no shelter at all. According to qualitative interviews, homelessness in the camp is caused by delays with refugee registration. Some camp-based interviewees said that the registration process used to be smoother when the camp had just opened, whereas at the time of the interviews people often had to wait weeks or even months or years. In addition to new arrivals there were also reported delays in registering new births. Some interviewees highlighted that other refugees had to take care of those not registered, and mentioned the culture of support where unregistered people did not have family to stay with.

"The lives of refugees who are registered and not registered are very different. Refugees who are not registered have nothing in this camp and refugees who are registered have many benefits such as food, money, resettlement, education, healthcare, housing, and every aid that comes to this camp for refugees, whether it is enough or not. You know our people have a good culture of helping each other, so they just lived with their families or other refugees in the camp and in the town."

Refugee woman (aged 48), Aysaita camp

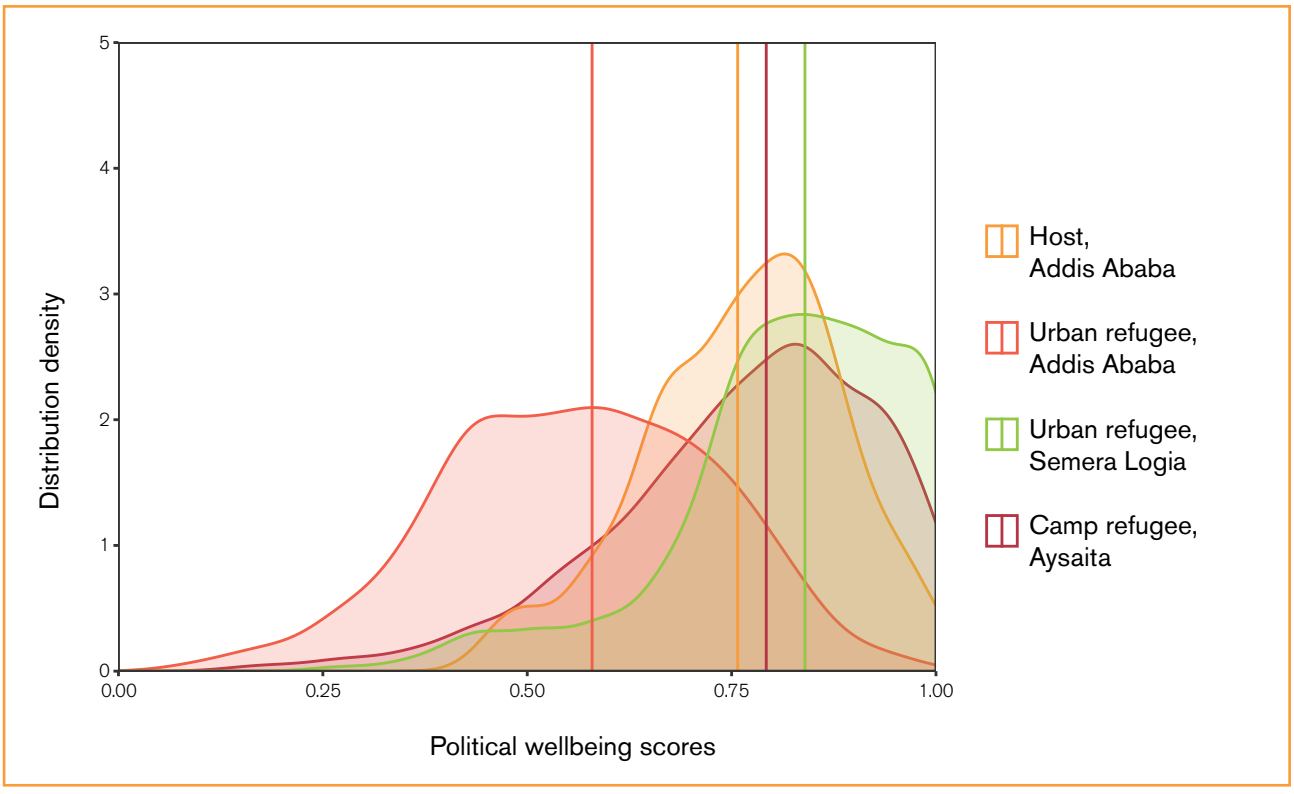
Finally, safety is the only indicator within the bodily wellbeing dimension where respondents in Addis Ababa scored worse than other displaced respondents. In the capital, 60% of women and nearly 80% of male respondents in the survey found it unsafe to walk the streets after dark. In Aysaita camp the corresponding figure was 30-40%, but was only 15% in Semera Logia. Some qualitative interview testimonies reflected fears of safety and police inaction in Addis Ababa and camp-specific security factors, although most qualitative interviewees in both Aysaita and Semera Logia were positive about security, referring to peace and lack of conflict in the area.

4.2 Political wellbeing

Refugees do not have the right to vote and are not officially represented by members of parliament. However refugees are still affected by public affairs within the host country, particularly concerning their own rights as displaced people and their representation within local communities. To reflect this, the political wellbeing dimension is based on indicators relating to rights to movement, education and work, documentation and legal status, access to justice and information on rights, relationships with institutions and people in authority, and perceived degree of representation.

The composite political wellbeing score showed Addis Ababa at a disadvantage compared to Aysaita and Semera Logia, which both displayed similar patterns. Notably, hosts in Addis Ababa[19] scored worse than displaced populations in Aysaita and Semera Logia, which could indicate issues with community representation and access to information and justice that go beyond displacement. Additionally, there were gendered differences in political wellbeing scores among displaced respondents across the different locations. On average, displaced women in Addis Ababa scored better than men, while women in Aysaita and Semera Logia scored slightly worse than men. Age showed a small but significant negative correlation with political wellbeing across all locations.

Figure 3. Distribution of political wellbeing scores by location/migration status



19 Most of whom were Amhara.

The disadvantage for displaced people in Addis Ababa was evident across most political wellbeing indicators. Only 43% of displaced respondents in Addis Ababa believed (rightly or wrongly) that they had the legal right to work or open a business, compared to 73% in Semera Logia and 65% in Aysaita camp. Respondents in Addis Ababa were, however, more likely to state that they believed they had legal rights to reside in Ethiopia. It is worth noting here that most Eritrean refugees living in the capital have the Out of Camp Policy (OCP) status. A requirement for receiving OCP status is to demonstrate sufficient income to live in the city without working, either through family remittances from abroad or through an Ethiopian sponsor (UNHCR 2019). Within our sample, 76% of displaced respondents in Addis Ababa stated that they had OCP status, which likely accounts for some of these differences.

Displaced respondents in Addis Ababa were the most negative when judging the quality of dispute-solving mechanisms available to them. They were also more likely to judge their access to information about their rights and legal status to be poor, and to consider themselves unfairly treated by local police in the area. Additionally when asked who, if anyone, represented them in their community, 41% of survey respondents in Addis Ababa noted that they did not feel represented by anyone. This was the case for less than 10% of respondents in both Aysaita and Semera Logia.

Considering that host respondents in Addis Ababa scored worse than the displaced respondents in the Afar region, there were notable differences in some indicators. Interestingly, displaced respondents in both Semera Logia and Aysaita (63% and 53% respectively) were more likely than the host population in Addis Ababa (34%) to state that they felt well or very well represented in their communities.

Despite the relatively good political wellbeing scores concerning representation in the Afar region, our qualitative interviews include statements from refugees in all locations who did not feel well represented. In Semera Logia, many interviewees pointed out that there was no refugee-specific representation in the city. They mentioned the local city administration or Afar elders, but for refugee-specific issues they had to resort to Aysaita camp for representation.

"I think we don't have a community leader here in Logia, but in the camp there is a community leader who represents us as refugees. But even if they are in that position, they did not do anything for us because in the camp there is a lot of bureaucracy and if you want to fix a single document it takes weeks. Sometimes we cannot find them in their office, and they don't answer their phone, and they hide somewhere in town chewing khat. For this reason, I said we do not have a nice leader who actively participates and is responsible for this community."

Refugee man, Semera Logia (age not specified)

"Here I represent myself. My good behaviour, my good manner is my leader. My manner is my representative. Nobody here in this town officially represents the refugees. But there are Afar elders, as we are Afar, we go to Afar elders if we feel insecure here. ARRA does nothing here for us, they only provide us a little aid monthly or every two months."

Refugee man (aged 32), Semera Logia

Camp-based qualitative interviewees appeared to have very limited contact with local authorities. According to the latest UNHCR's camp profile on Aysaita in 2018, community structures within the camp include a Refugee Central Committee (RCC) as well as a Women's Association, a Youth Association, and an Association of Persons with Disabilities (UNHCR 2018). Our interviewees refer to the Refugee Central Committee, as well as camp, zone, or block administration. According to a key informant interview, this structure is made up of five administrative zones and around 30 blocks. Refugees select representatives for their blocks, and another election is then held to select a zone representative from the relevant block representatives.

Men in the qualitative interviews in Aysaita often named the head of the RCC camp administration as the leader who represents them, and some also mentioned the leader of their zone. However, interviewees often felt these leaders lacked authority to resolve the problems presented to them. Some stated that this system had prevented them from approaching RRS (formerly ARRA) directly, as they were told to always go through their representatives.

"There is three levels of administration and representatives in this camp. The first is camp administration which is led by AA. He is refugee like us and understands our problem. He is a good person. He listens to us and gives solutions immediately. Second is zone administration and the last is block administration which contains ten houses. There are leaders in each level. But the whole camp activity is controlled by the RRS."

Refugee woman, Aysaita (no age specified)

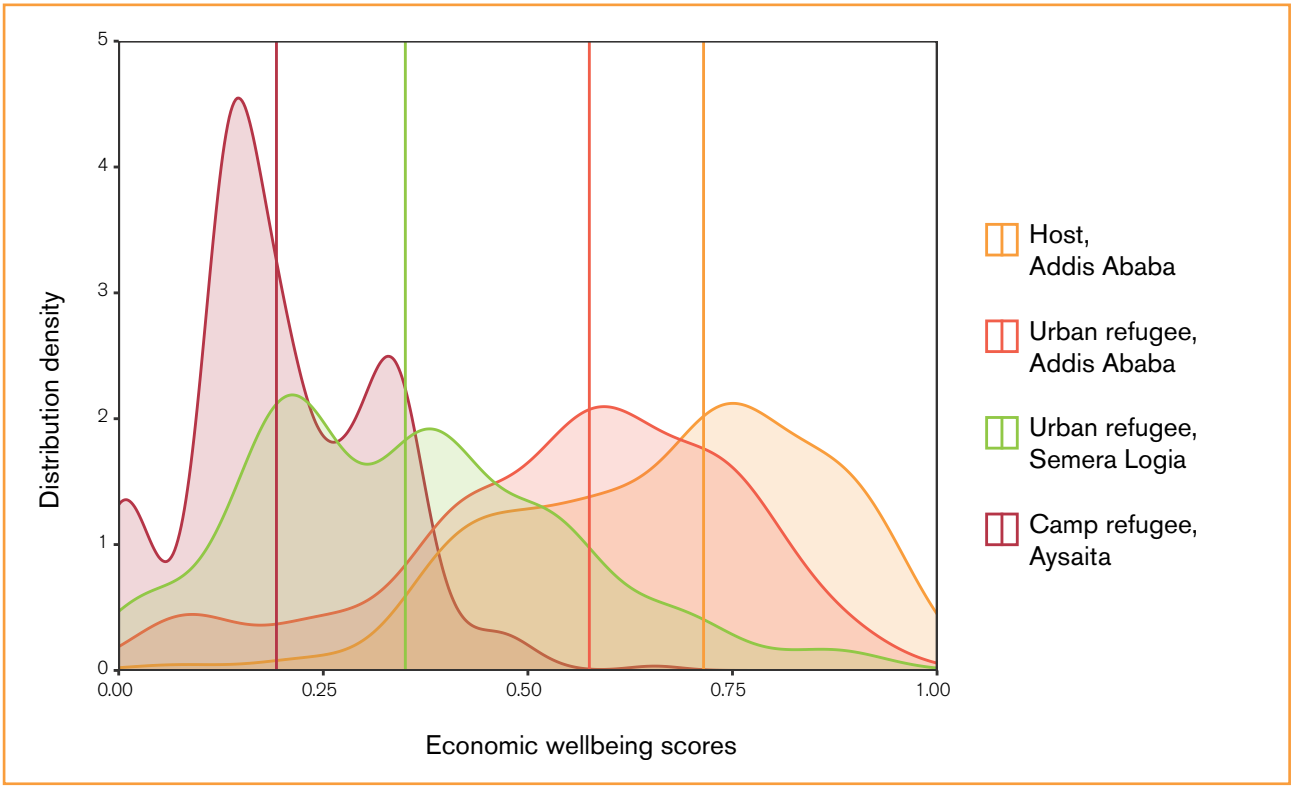
The women interviewed in Aysaita were less likely than men to name a specific person who represented them. According to a key informant interviewed in the camp, this problem was also reflected in the Refugee Central Committee where 11 out of 12 representatives were men at the time, which made it difficult to get a majority vote on anything perceived as a women's issue. The key informant stated that most people in the camp community did not trust female representatives, and that more broadly in Afar there is a culture of distrust against women in leadership positions. They would say "your leader is sleeping", meaning that women risk being absent because of children or other home-based duties.

4.3 Economic wellbeing

In addition to the displacement economies component of this study, the wellbeing metric includes an economic dimension, which is defined as being in a comfortable financial situation. This includes a stable and predictable income, the ability to cover one's expenses from work, savings, the capacity to borrow when needed, absence of concerning debt and access to finance. It also includes the earner ratio (number of household earners/ number of household members) and approximate wealth using a household asset index.[20]

In our composite metric score from the survey on economic wellbeing, displaced respondents scored higher in both Semera Logia and Addis Ababa compared to Aysaita camp. Unsurprisingly, given work restrictions for many refugees in Addis Ababa with OCP status as well as the comparative underdevelopment of the Afar region (UNICEF 2022), hosts in Addis Ababa scored higher in the economic wellbeing dimension than all the displaced populations.

Figure 4. Distribution of economic wellbeing scores by location/migration status



20 Asset index includes assets such as cars, motorcycles, bikes, TVs, radios, fans, mobile phones, fridges, computers and internet connections. The index is variance-based so that assets owned by fewer people are more heavily weighted than those more commonly owned; for example, if most people have a cell phone, it is not assumed to be an indicator of relative wealth.

Survey respondents were asked to assess their household's financial situation, from very difficult or difficult, to neutral, comfortable, or very comfortable. These responses show disadvantages for camp-based refugees compared to both urban locations, but especially compared to Addis Ababa. It was rare for displaced respondents in any location to describe their economic situation as comfortable, but respondents in Addis Ababa were considerably more likely than their peers in Aysaita and Semera Logia to consider their income mostly stable and predictable from month to month. Although remittances from family and friends abroad or in Addis Ababa may contribute to income stability for refugees with OCP status in Addis Ababa, remittances were often irregular or unreliable, and it was more common for displaced respondents in Addis Ababa to cover household expenses through income from work than in the other two locations.

The economic wellbeing metric dimension includes a household asset index, which was constructed as a proxy for wealth for each individual respondent. The components considered for this metric in Ethiopia were assets including a car, motorcycle, bike, TV, radio, fan, mobile phone, fridge, computer, internet connection, as well as certain livelihoods assets such as agricultural tools, sewing machine, and so on. When comparing the score distribution, we find that asset wealth scores are significantly lower in Aysaita camp than in the two urban locations.

Savings were more common in the capital, with 73% of displaced survey respondents in Addis Ababa stating they had some, compared to only 3% in Aysaita and 5% in Semera Logia. The opposite was true of debt. Only 11% of displaced respondents in Addis Ababa stated that they hold debt, compared to 56% of respondents in Aysaita camp and 39% in Semera Logia. Debt levels among displaced survey respondents in the capital (11%) can also be compared to 19% of host respondents holding debt in Addis Ababa. Among displaced respondents holding debt, the vast majority considered their level of debt to be of concern, compared to around half of the host respondents with debt in Addis Ababa. Access to finance was another area with stark differences, as 80% of displaced respondents in Addis Ababa held a formal account (bank or microfinance) for savings or borrowing, compared to around 50% in Semera Logia and 0.2% in Aysaita.

The qualitative interviews provide further evidence of the connections between economic conditions and economic wellbeing, and explored how respondents feel about their economic situations and how it impacts their lives. In Aysaita camp there was a strong consensus among qualitative interviewees that not enough work was available within the camp and that it was a struggle to earn enough to survive, particularly in combination with reduced aid and rising prices – also mentioned by interviewees in Semera Logia. In Addis Ababa, the high cost of rent was raised by many interviewees. Despite the comparatively higher economic (and bodily) wellbeing scores among displaced respondents in Addis Ababa, qualitative interviewees identified several people who did not have enough to eat because of the economic pressure to afford rent. The lack of employment opportunities, the lack of work permits, the inability to register their own enterprise, and low income from informal jobs appeared to be central concerns for refugee respondents in the capital.

Economic discrimination was another issue highlighted in qualitative interviews across all locations. In Afar, this was reported in the form of salary discrimination, where refugees received less money than hosts for the same work. In Addis Ababa, interviewees reported both salary discrimination and price discrimination, where displaced respondents stated they would regularly pay more than Ethiopians for the same goods and services, which importantly included rent prices.

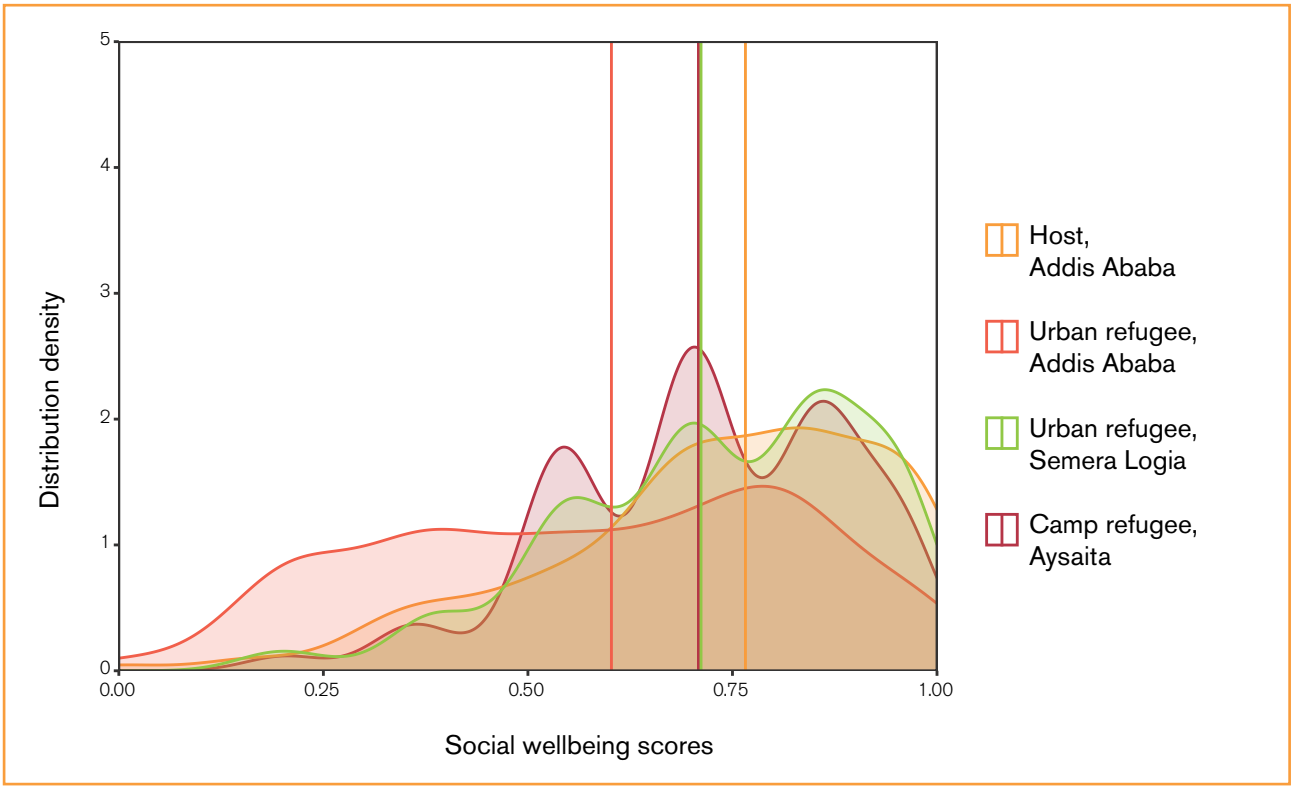
In Addis Ababa, some interviewees provided examples of salaries which were often less than half of the amount needed to cover their monthly rent. In Afar, refugees working in camp management, for example as cooks or cleaners at the health clinic or doing construction and maintenance work, reported being paid around 10-20% of what Ethiopian workers were earning for the same job. In both places, interviewees spoke about this as a well-known and accepted issue. In Addis Ababa, they referred to assumptions that refugees often receive remittances, but our survey also showed that many struggle to cover expenses. In Aysaita, the assumption was that refugees receive enough food aid and cash support, in addition to not paying rent in the camp, to make up for the smaller salaries, but the reduced aid provisions have diminished that comparative advantage.

4.4 Social wellbeing

The social wellbeing dimension incorporates indicators relating to social interactions – the ability to spend time with friends and family and to partake in group activities, alongside access to a place of worship, community centre and/or sports facilities. It also includes perceptions of whether the displaced and non-displaced get along well in the community and the presence of social networks. The overall distribution of scores in the dimension of social wellbeing shows that displaced respondents in Afar (both Aysaita and Semera Logia) do better than those in Addis Ababa. In fact, there was complete consistency in average scores across the Afar region. In Afar, refugees and hosts share language and ethnicity, and this is likely to play a big part in these differences.

The shared identity in Afar was illustrated by many of the qualitative interviewees. Displaced people in both camp and city stated that "we are all Afar", and "Afar people help each other." Others mentioned that it is not possible to distinguish a refugee from a local without asking for an ID, which was perceived as a benefit by interviewees. Shared religion was also mentioned as an important component, and at least some of the community social life in Afar was organised around mosques, through the regular prayers but also specific events like religious lectures for women.

Figure 5. Distribution of social wellbeing scores by location/migration status



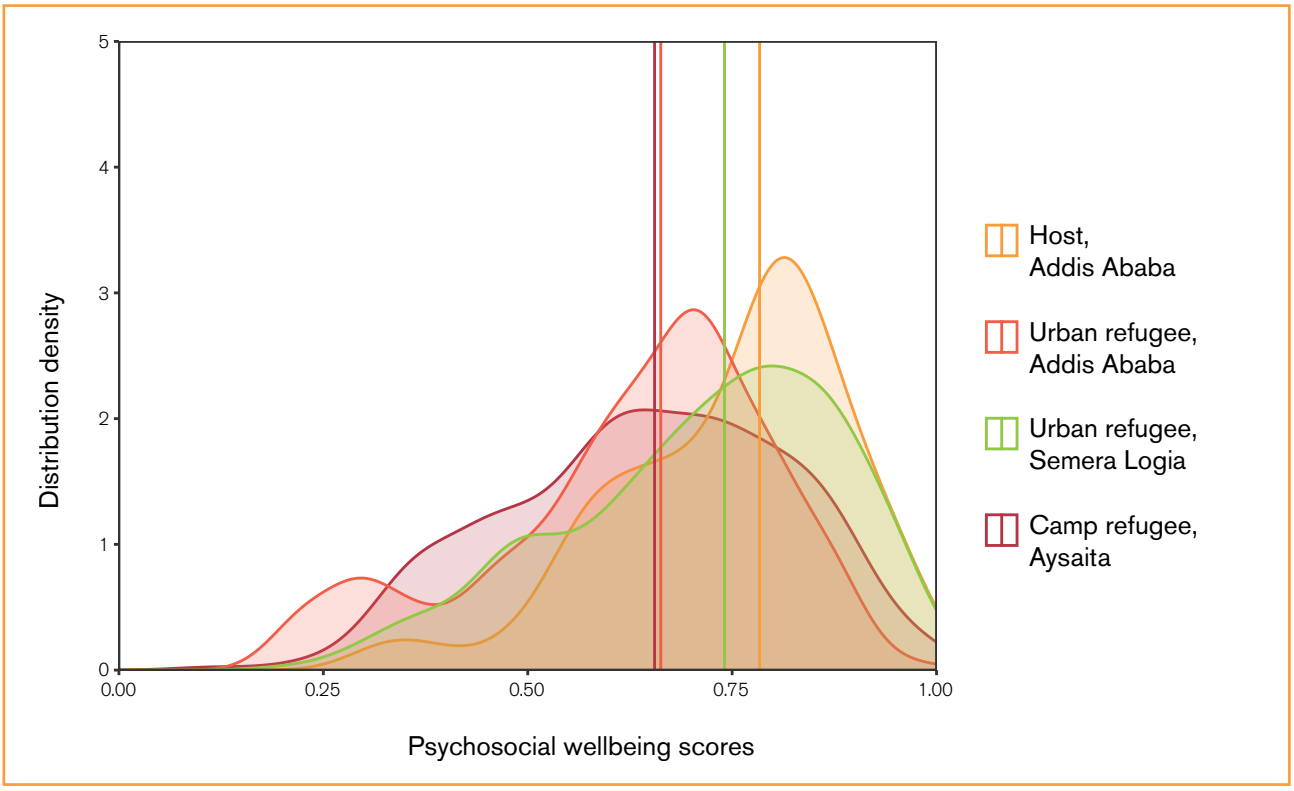
Our survey data shows that Addis Ababa appears to be a difficult place for refugees to thrive socially. Displaced respondents in the capital were the least likely to be satisfied (somewhat or very) with their ability to attend social gatherings outside of their homes. Survey respondents in Addis Ababa were also the least likely to state that displaced and non-displaced people got along well in their area (56%, compared to 93% in Semera and 97% in Aysaita). This could be linked to the conflict in Tigray and subsequent growing suspicion against Tigrinya speakers (HRW 2021).

The qualitative interviews painted a more nuanced picture, where many displaced respondents in the capital stated that they did feel like a part of the communities where they lived, but that there were language barriers preventing them from socialising with locals. There were some positive examples from Addis Ababa, where displaced interviewees described being supported by neighbours and communities. One interviewed woman said she ought to move to another neighbourhood (because of rent being too expensive) but felt reluctant to leave the community that she felt was her new family. Many of our interviewees mentioned living in Addis Ababa without any immediate family, which made such connections especially important to them. However, qualitative interviewees in the capital also expressed strong feelings of being discriminated against by locals, especially economically (see above) which could explain some of the negative social wellbeing scores.

4.5 Psychosocial wellbeing

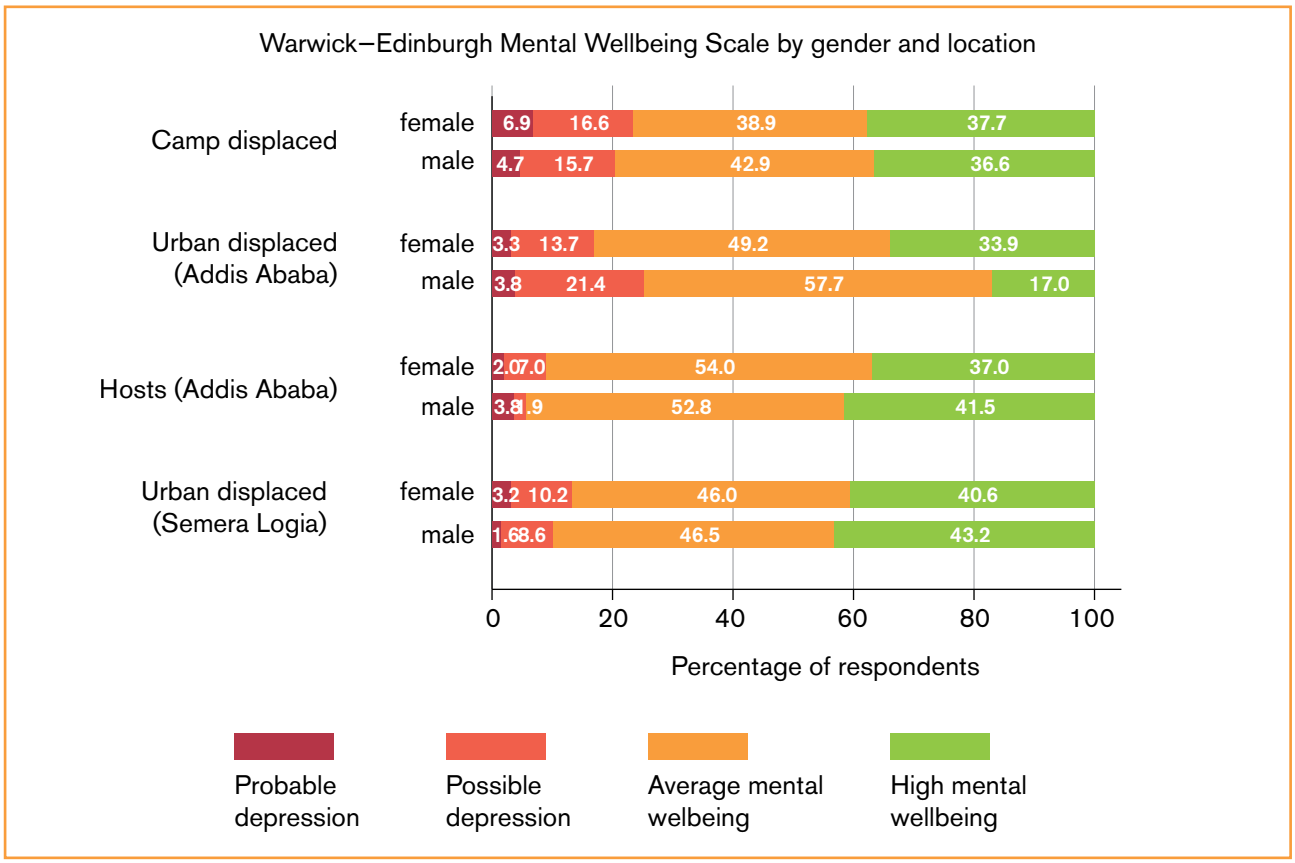
Psychosocial wellbeing is defined here as a composite of life satisfaction, feeling at home, optimism for the future for the respondent and the next generation of their community, feelings of independence and agency and being treated with respect. It also includes the Warwick-Edinburgh (7-item) Mental Wellbeing Scale, where respondents are rated from high or average mental wellbeing down to possible or probable depression (Ng Fat et al. 2017). Overall, Addis Ababa and Aysaita Camp score lower than Semera Logia in terms of psychosocial wellbeing. Women had higher psychosocial wellbeing scores than men among displaced respondents in Addis Ababa, while women respondents in Semera Logia had slightly lower scores than men in the same location.

Figure 6. Distribution of psychosocial wellbeing scores by location/migration status



Displaced respondents in Aysaita camp had the worst scores when it comes to overall life satisfaction, with 31% of survey respondents stating they were somewhat or very dissatisfied with their lives, compared to 18% in Addis and 21% in Semera Logia. They were also far less likely to be optimistic about their prospects in the coming year. Interviewees in Addis Ababa, on the other hand, were the least likely to feel at home in their communities compared to the two Afar locations, which is likely linked to the social factors discussed in the section above. According to the Mental Wellbeing Scale, particularly displaced men in Addis Ababa were somewhat more likely to have possible or probable depression, and less likely to have high levels of mental wellbeing.

Figure 7. Displaced respondent scores on the Warwick-Edinburgh (7-item) Mental Wellbeing Scale, by gender and location



These findings were reflected in the qualitative interviews. While people in Aysaita camp and Semera Logia felt a part of the community around them and had a strong sense of shared identity with the people of Afar as well as other refugees, there was little reported optimism and life satisfaction, particularly within the camp. Some interviewees stated that these circumstances make it difficult to plan ahead, although Afar refugee respondents were more likely to report feeling at home in Ethiopia.

"We are here only for survival. It is hard to think about change in this place."

Refugee man (aged 40), Aysaita camp

Interviewees in Afar did however report feeling at home, while the ones in Addis Ababa did not.

Quantitative data shows that refugee respondents in Addis Ababa were, overall, the most likely to state that they had a clear plan and could achieve their goals. However, it was not clear to what extent they were moving towards this goal – they were less likely than their peers at both other locations to state their time was well spent, in a constructive manner, and not wasted. Qualitative interviewees in Addis Ababa mentioned mental health concerns within the refugee community, often related to this feeling of lacking a purpose in life. Some referred to addiction to alcohol or khat as a coping strategy among young people, and even some cases of suicide in the community. Some refugees who do not work at all reportedly struggle with their mental health, and cope by sleeping most of the day and drinking at night. Refugee survey respondents in the city were additionally the least likely to feel respected by their neighbours and community. In the qualitative interviews, many had experienced a sense of disrespect towards Eritrean refugees (and especially young men) from the host community for this reason. Some interviewees mentioned that refugees were perceived by locals as a public disturbance, especially when living in groups, which many stated doing to be able to afford their rent.

Addis Ababa was described in the qualitative interviews as a place Eritrean refugees pass through on their way somewhere else, often getting stuck in Ethiopia for much longer periods of time than they had originally envisioned, while awaiting resettlement or family reunification abroad. Our survey revealed that around 55% of refugees in Addis Ababa and Semera Logia had plans to move abroad in the next 12 months. However, figures for resettlement and complementary pathways in third countries showed these plans were highly unrealistic, since only 0.15% of Ethiopia's refugee population left the country to secure a durable solution abroad in 2022 (UNHCR 2023c, 7).

Qualitative interviewees spoke of coming to Addis Ababa specifically because it would enable them to achieve family reunification elsewhere. Many described feeling their lives were on hold during the prolonged waiting period, during which they were trying to support themselves in a hostile environment. Some interviewees brought up career aspirations and dreams that would not be realisable in Ethiopia, including a woman who wanted to become a pharmacist. This resonates with the poor psychosocial wellbeing scores among displaced respondents in the capital.

"I would prefer to go to a better country where I can work and change my life. You don't know here what will happen tomorrow. Now I am 29 years old. I was 10 years old when I come to Ethiopia. So, my future is dark here. I am looking for a future where I could live safely, work, and change my life."

Refugee man (aged 29), Addis Ababa

There are also gendered differences to this prolonged waiting in Addis Ababa. In our random sample, 83% of men respondents are unmarried compared to 56% of women. Most married women were head of household, and around 60% had plans to go abroad. This was reflected in our qualitative interviews, where many interviewed women were waiting for family reunification with husbands who had gone abroad ahead of them. Some had been waiting for years, often having to take care of children alone in the meantime. In some cases, they had lost contact with their spouses and feared that their family reunification cases would never be finalised. Interviewed men, on the other hand, were more likely to be unmarried and planning to go abroad to join another close family member through family reunification, or on their own.

4.6 Wellbeing findings

The PDUW team initiated this work expecting to find higher levels of wellbeing in the urban areas compared to the camps. The bodily wellbeing scores in Ethiopia do confirm this hypothesis, as camp-based respondents score significantly worse than the displaced in the urban locations. However, this country analysis cannot be framed only as a camp-urban comparison, due to the differences between the populations sampled. As discussed in the background section, there are known economic disparities between the Eritrean Tigrinya population in Addis Ababa and the Eritrean Afar population, which are evident in the resulting economic wellbeing scores. For political and social wellbeing, displaced respondents in Addis Ababa show worse scores than their counterparts in Afar, which again is likely a reflection of the shared language, ethnicity and clan structures between refugees and host in Afar (Feyissa and Dawud 2021). It is worth noting, however, that refugee respondents in Aysaita camp scored significantly worse in the bodily wellbeing metric than their urban-based counterparts in Semera Logia and, as such, low scores in the refugee camp cannot be attributed solely to underdevelopment in the Afar region (Feyissa and Dawud 2021).

Despite the differences between sample populations, we can draw some conclusions about what it means to live in a camp. The exceptionally low scores within the bodily and economic wellbeing dimensions, coupled with qualitative testimonies of deprivation, poor healthcare and a lack of income earning opportunities, show that camp residents fare significantly worse than urban refugees in the same region. The otherwise free movement between the camp and urban areas was negatively affected by rising transport prices, making it less worthwhile for urban residents to travel to the camp for aid access, and less feasible for camp residents to travel to towns for work or other services.

On the other hand, social and political wellbeing was notably better in Afar compared to Addis Ababa. The shared cultural and social background of displaced and hosts in Afar resulted in better wellbeing scores, which were confirmed by qualitative interviews where people frequently refer to themselves as at one with the hosts. Likewise, higher political wellbeing scores in the Afar region were attributed to established camp systems for representation that are shared between refugees and hosts, as well as the management structure in the camp. However, qualitative data also points towards gendered issues with representation in Afar, and refugee respondents based in Semera Logia reported lacking refugee-specific representation altogether.

Our data paints a mixed picture of refugeehood in Addis Ababa. While social and political wellbeing scores were particularly low for displaced respondents there, qualitative interviews demonstrate good examples of community support both among refugees and between refugees and hosts. The discrepancy could potentially be linked to length of displacement, which for the quantitative sample is between three and four years on average, while all qualitative interviewees had lived in Ethiopia for more than five years at the time of interview.

Semera Logia in many ways comes across as the best location for refugees when it comes to overall life satisfaction and psychosocial wellbeing. This is telling since the location scores relatively low on food security, but much higher on social and political aspects. It appears that camp-based respondents suffer more from the low bodily and economic wellbeing, and the relatively better scores on social and political aspects in the camp do not make up for that in overall quality of life. Conversely, in Addis Ababa, the psychosocial wellbeing scores are very similar to those of Aysaita camp, despite much better bodily and economic wellbeing scores.

5

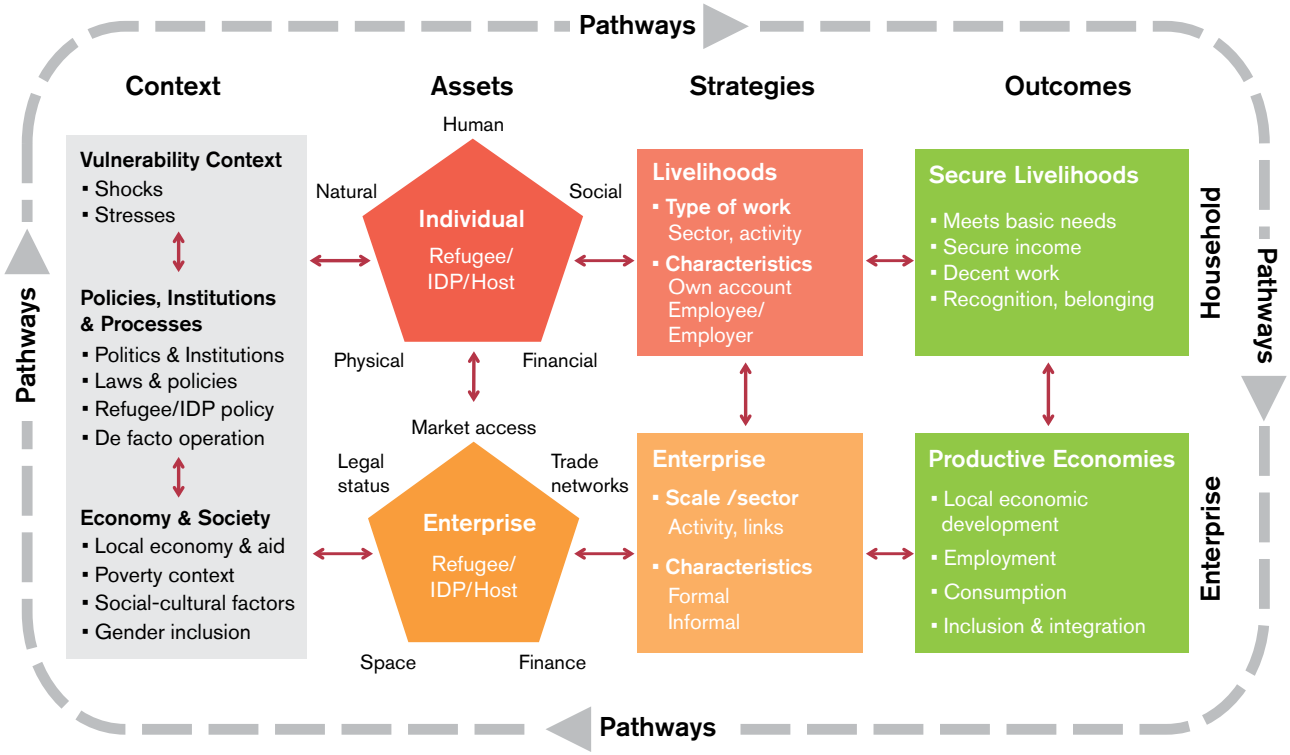
Displacement economies: livelihoods and enterprise

Alongside a new, more holistic approach to refugee wellbeing, the PDUW project has also devised a framework for considering the economic activities of refugees. By introducing the concept of 'displacement economies', the PDUW project brings together displaced people's livelihoods and entrepreneurial activity, as well as their contributions to society. In this project, displacement economies are understood as the collective economy created by refugees and IDPs through their livelihood activities, enterprise, need for services and consumption, and through their mutual support and diaspora inputs. The Displacement Economies Framework (DEF) has been developed as an expansion of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (DFID 1999) to look beyond the usual focus on refugee livelihoods and self-reliance found in both academic literature and humanitarian response, to include both individual livelihoods and refugee-run enterprises, their dynamic links, and collective impacts, revealing the extensive connections between displaced, local, national, and international markets.

The findings in this section have been organised following the Displacement Economies Framework, as illustrated in Figure 8.

Displacement economies are rooted in a context (grey rectangle) that combines structural and dynamic factors (such as legislation, policies, cultural norms) and unexpected or recurrent events (shocks and stresses). The DEF then frames the analysis of displacement economies in two interconnected themes: individual livelihoods and enterprise. The first theme explores refugee livelihoods based on the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Chambers and Conway 1992). The top pentagon illustrates refugee assets in terms of human, social, financial, physical, and natural capital. Based on these assets, and their own experience, priorities and aspirations, refugees make decisions on the type of economic activities to pursue in that context, generating strategies for subsistence and accumulation. The resulting livelihood outcomes could be economic (for example higher income) or non-economic (such as self-esteem or social status). Data on refugee livelihoods was collected through the household survey and the results have been condensed in two composite indices, the livelihoods assets index and the livelihoods outcomes index, which provide the basis for our discussion on refugee livelihoods in the following section.

Figure 8. Displacement Economies Framework



The second theme of the DEF captures the creation and evolution of refugees' enterprises (own-account work, or enterprises established or run by refugees). The bottom pentagon illustrates the assets of refugee-run businesses in terms of market access, trade networks, financial resources, space access, and legal status (degree of formality). It also shows the enterprise strategies adopted by refugees based on their assets and aspirations, and the outcomes and how they contribute to refugees' lives and local economic development. The analysis of displacement enterprises in section 5.3 draws on the analysis of 75 semi-structured interviews conducted with refugees and hosts in Addis Ababa, and with refugees in Semera Logia and Aysaita Camp, and further elaborated with the insights and discussions held with key informants in the three locations.

5.1 Refugee livelihoods: assets and outcomes

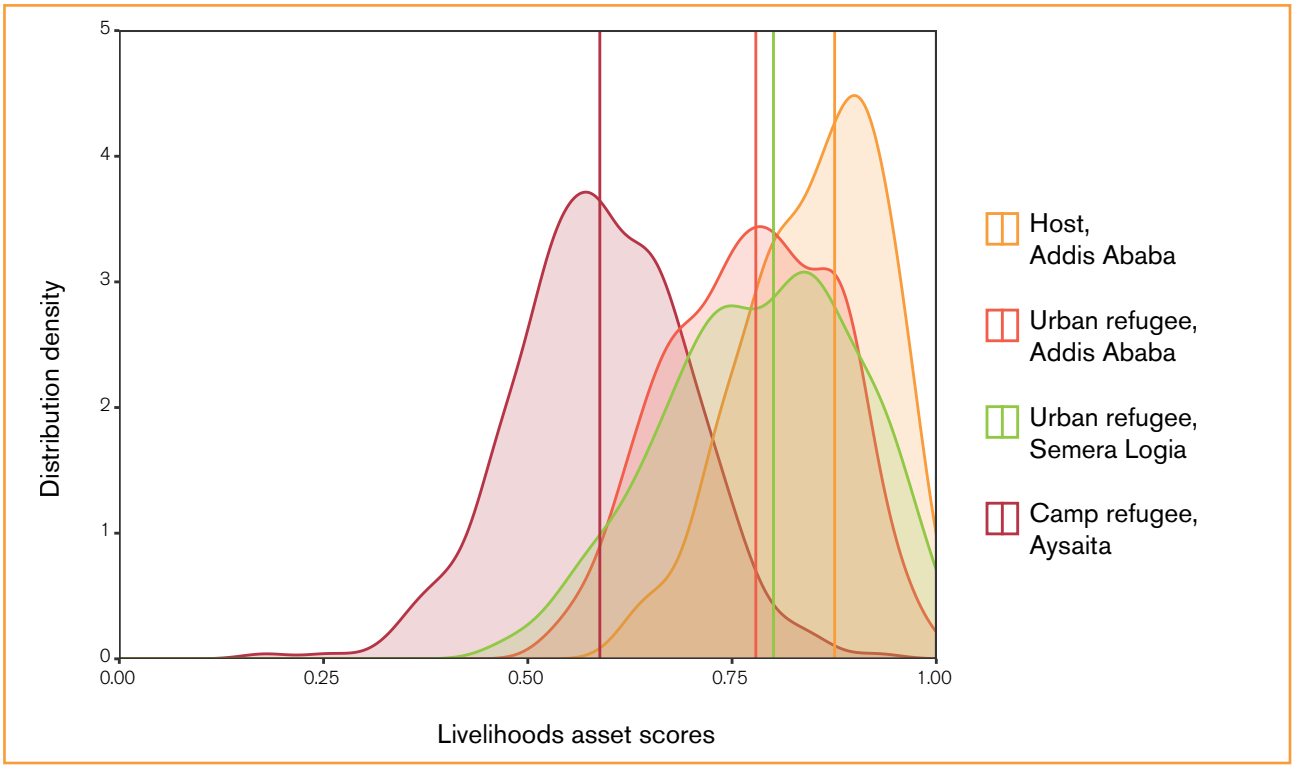
Debates on the economic capabilities and performance of refugees in camps and cities have mostly revolved around their contributions to the local economy, but far less effort has been devoted to measure their potential and the extent to which this is fully realised in countries in the global South. The livelihood assets and the livelihood outcomes indices illustrate the potential that refugees hold to perform economic activities and is the extent to which this is being harnessed in host countries. The following analysis draws mainly on the findings of the quantitative survey of refugees and hosts in Addis Ababa, and refugees in Semera Logia, and Aysaita camp.

Livelihood assets

The Livelihood Assets index is based on a range of variables extracted from the quantitative survey which reflect human, natural, physical, financial, and social capitals relevant in finding employment.[21] A higher livelihood asset score means the respondent is more likely to be prepared for work. A principal component analysis was used to maximise the variance and create a score for each individual respondent.

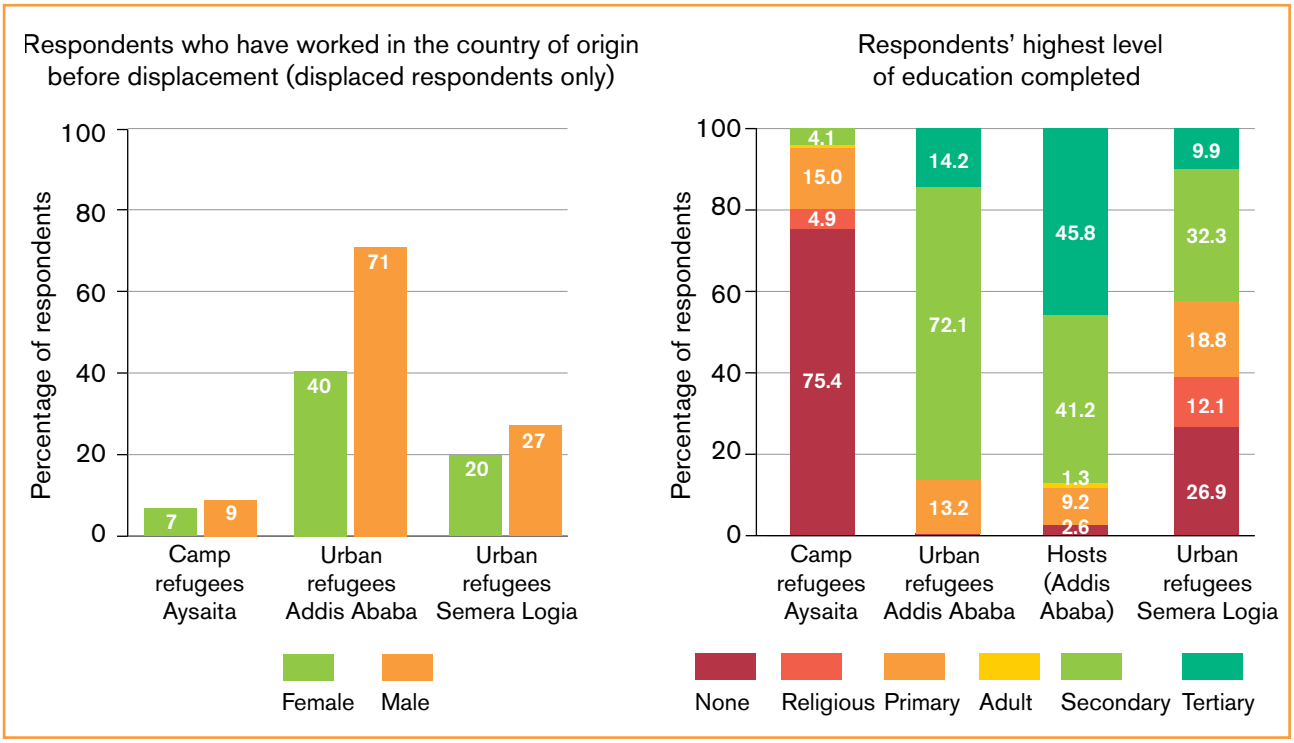
21 See annex 2 for a detailed explanation of the index variables.

Figure 9. Distribution of Livelihood Assets Index scores by migration status and location



Overall, Ethiopia index scores (Figure 9) show how Eritrean refugees in cities are better prepared to access the labour market than those in the camp. Higher index scores are explained by human capital indicators, as urban refugees are more likely to have pre-displacement work experience and higher levels of literacy and education, particularly those in Addis Ababa (Figure 9). Meanwhile, refugees in Semera Logia reported a higher sense of security (85%), an ability to speak the local language fluently (93%), and being more confident they could legally work in the country (73%) than refugees in Addis Ababa (39%, 30%, and 43% respectively). Lower levels of debt, better housing and access to services also creates a nurturing environment for refugee skills and knowledge to flourish in Ethiopia's cities.

Figure 10. Respondents who worked in country of origin by gender, and highest level of education completed by refugee location

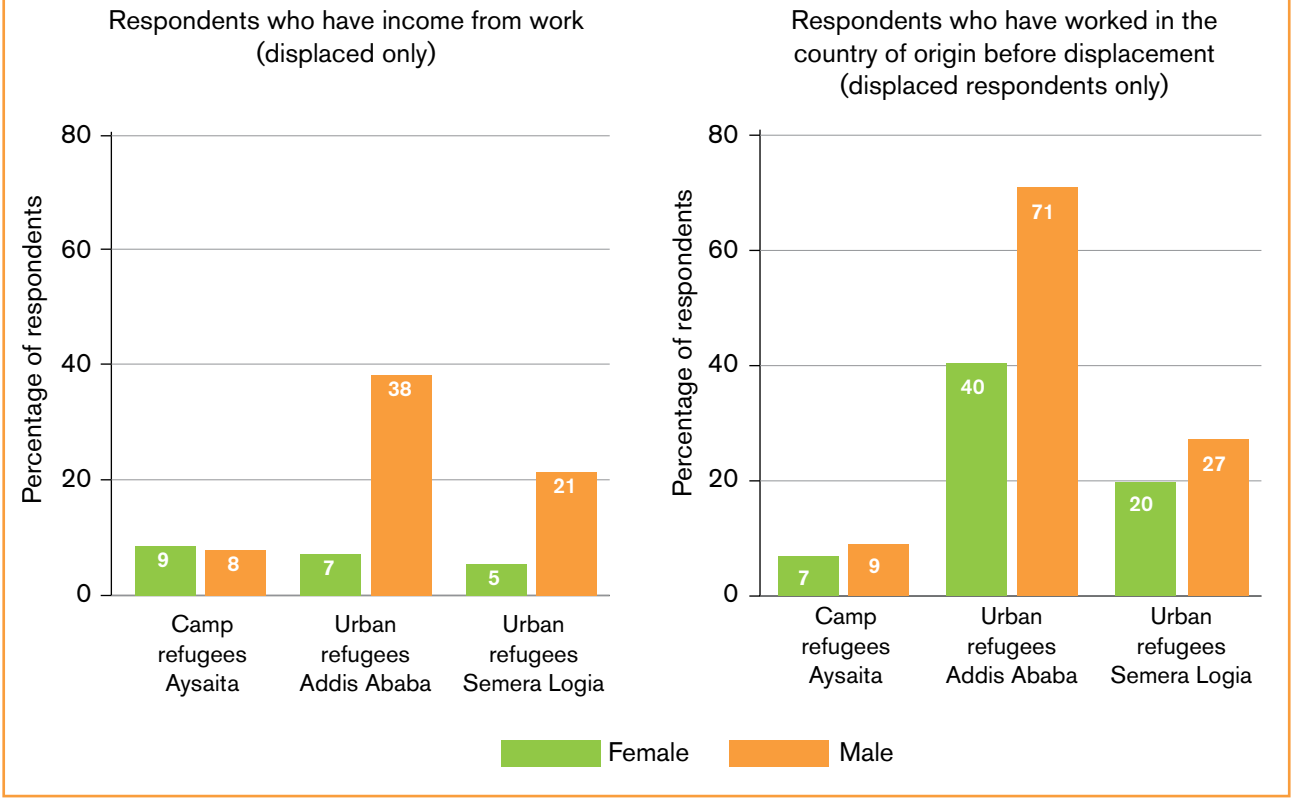


Regression results suggest that living in the camp has a statistically significant negative effect on livelihoods assets scores. Being female also has a negative impact, particularly in the Afar locations where women were more likely to have no education (88% in Aysaita camp and 39% in Semera). Meanwhile, years spent in Ethiopia has a small positive effect, with those who have spent more time in the country being more likely to have higher livelihood assets scores.

Livelihood outcomes

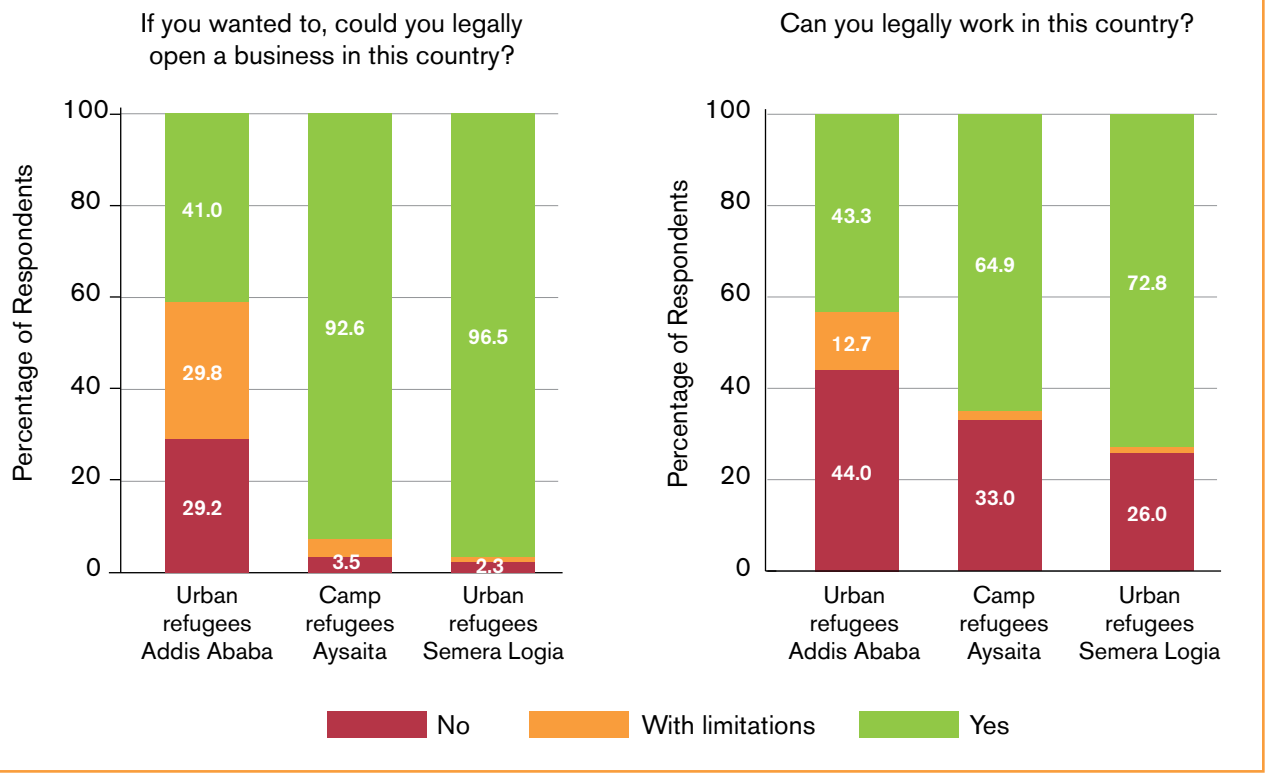
For a better understanding of refugee livelihoods, we need an accurate picture of the main income- earning activities of refugees and the quality of those activities in terms of decent work standards. Work is the main source of income for many refugees, particularly in cities where aid distribution is relatively low in comparison with camps. However, the proportion of Eritrean refugees working was generally small in all three locations surveyed (Figure 11). This result was expected since OCP status was, until recently, only awarded to Eritrean refugees who could prove they had the resources to be self-sufficient without working. Urban areas appear to be more conducive for refugees to work, with less than 9% of refugees working in Aysaita Camp. Of those not working, around 80% of refugees were willing, but unable, to work, with roughly 65% looking for employment in Addis Ababa and Aysaita camp, and 79% in Semera Logia.

Figure 11. Refugee respondents' income from work now and before displacement



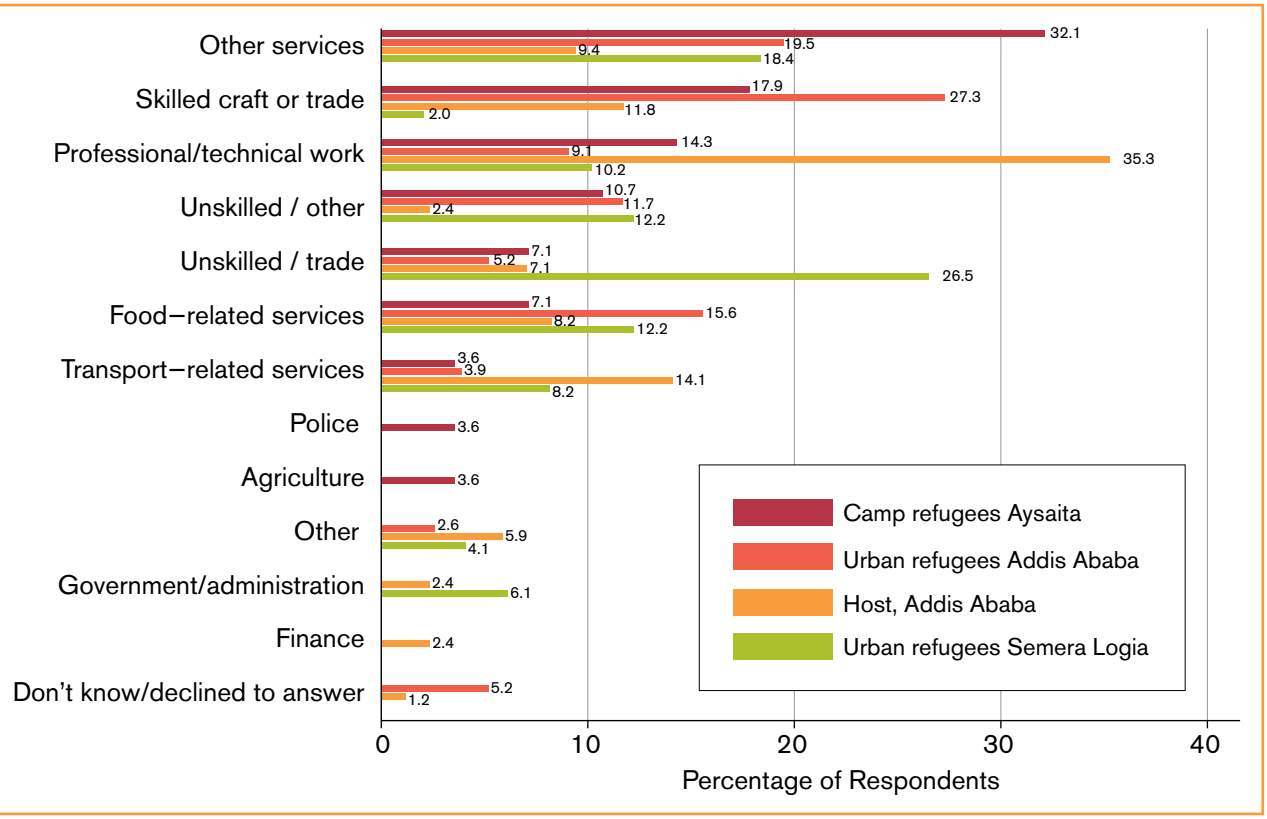
Data in Addis Ababa shows a great difference in the proportion of refugees who had previously worked in their country of origin (71% of men, and 40% of women interviewed) and those who are working now (only 38% of men and 7% of women). This could be explained by legal concerns, with 57% saying they were not entitled to work or could only do so with limitations, and 59% stating it was not possible to legally open a business, or only possible with limitations (Figure 12 overleaf). In the Afar region, refugees were more positive about their prospects to be legally employed or run their own business, and our qualitative interviews with refugee entrepreneurs reveal greater support for labour market incorporation by local authorities, both formal and informal.

Figure 12. Refugees' perception of their legal right to open a business and to work



The survey showed considerable differences in the sector in which respondents worked across the three locations (Figure 13). Refugees in Addis Ababa were working mainly in skilled craft and trade, while in Semera Logia they worked mainly in unskilled trade (such as small shops), and in the camp the few working refugees were providing services to NGOs and camp authorities, mainly as security guards.

Figure 13. Working respondents per sector

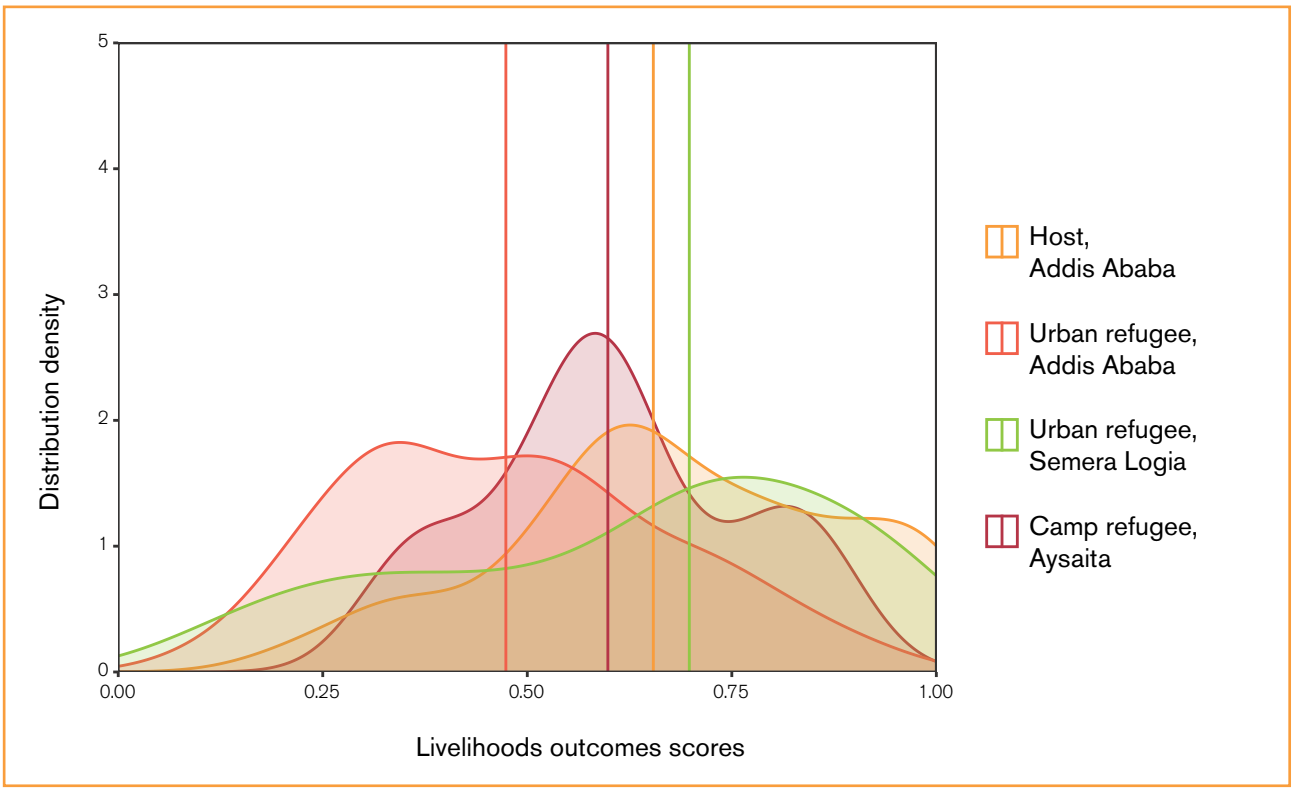


Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa, are mostly employed as mechanics, carpenters, hairdressers/barbers, and in the hospitality businesses (cafés, bars, hotels). Hosts in the same location are mostly professionals working for the administration or private enterprises in clerical work, education, and finance (40%), services (32% – mainly transport, hospitality and hairdressing), and crafts and trade as self-employed workers running their own enterprise (27% – owning supermarkets, clothes shops, garages, computer repairs workshops, or groceries). The figures show that refugees and hosts in Gofa Mebrat Haile work in different sectors, indicating they are not necessarily competing for the same jobs, but also that it is difficult for refugees to be hired for positions requiring more qualifications. When performing the same activities, refugees are more likely to report they are employees while hosts are more often self-employed or business owners. All of these could indicate that refugee labour complements rather than competes directly with host employment.

In addition to refugees' ability to work, it is important to understand the quality of the jobs they can access. The Livelihood Outcomes Index reflects the extent to which working respondents are involved in decent work. Decent work is defined by the ILO as work that is productive and delivers a fair income in decent working time, security in the workplace, and social protection. It further enables personal development, social dialogue, and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men in the workplace (ILO 2023a; 2023b). Following this definition, the Livelihood Outcomes Index is composed of objective and subjective variables, combining reported factual data (such as working hours, the existence of a contract, or a tax registration number) with respondents' perception of the quality of their job (work satisfaction, safety of working conditions, and so on).[22] Consequently, results not only reflect decent work in purely objective terms but show respondents' appraisal of their working situation.

The index results are based on working respondents in all population categories in Ethiopia. A total of 241 refugee respondents were working at the time the survey was conducted (77 refugees and 85 hosts in Addis Ababa, 30 refugees in Aysaita camp, and 49 refugees in Semera Logia). Since the number of working respondents was low in comparison to the overall sample, caution is recommended in the interpretation of the scores.

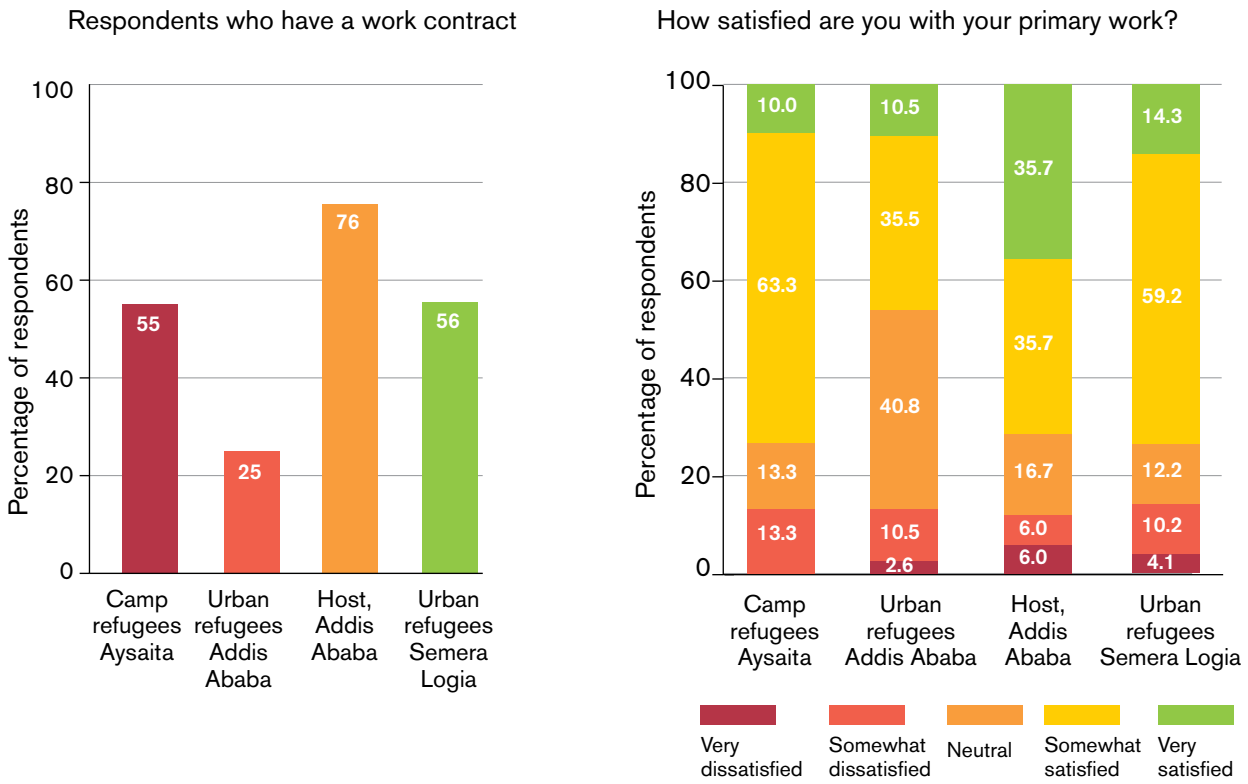
Figure 14. Distribution of Livelihood Outcomes Index scores by population group and location



22 See annex 3 for a detailed explanation of the index variables.

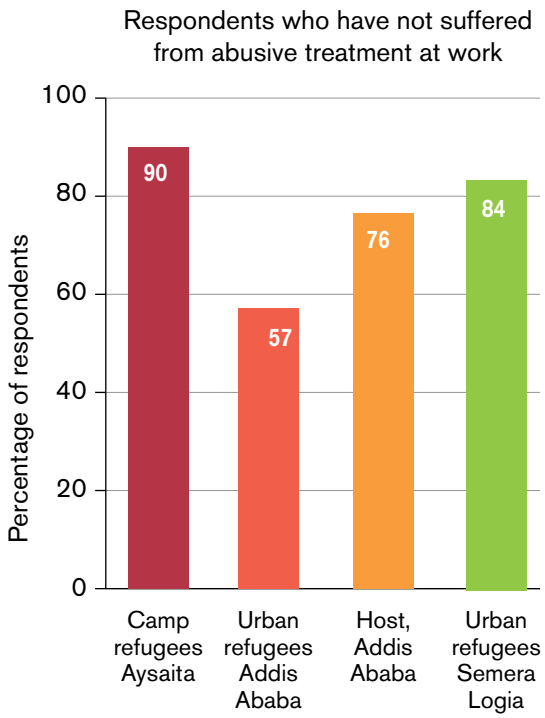
The index scores for Eritrean refugees show that livelihood outcomes of refugees in Addis Ababa are significantly worse than for the other three groups (Figure 14). Taking a closer look at the index variables we find that although the proportion of refugees working in Afar is relatively low, particularly in Aysaita, refugees were more likely to have a written work contract in the region (Figure 15). Generally, refugees working with contracts in Semera Logia are hired by local government offices or as security guards, while in the camp, the few contracts available are provided through NGO incentive work or the local government for maintenance, cleaning, and security. Refugees in Afar were also more satisfied with their work (Figure 16), and have a more secure working environment than refugees in Addis (Figure 17).

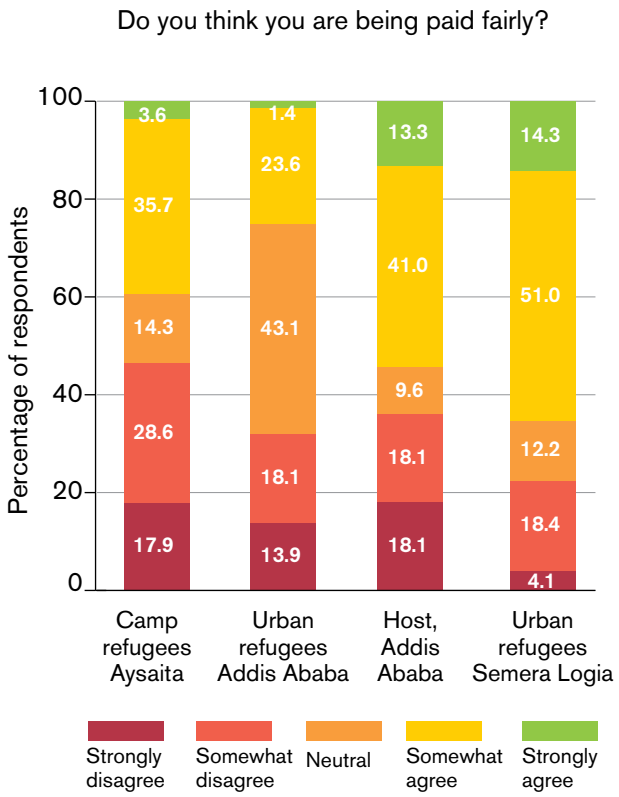
Figure 15. Respondents with work contract and Figure 16. Work Satisfaction



By contrast, in Addis Ababa 43% of working refugees reported abuses while working (Figure 17), particularly discrimination (21%) and theft of goods and tools (14%). Only 25% of refugees working in Addis Ababa consider they were fairly paid, in comparison to 54% of Addis Ababa hosts (Figure 18). More hosts were working formally (76%), with 71% having a tax registration number and 37% enjoying some sort of social protection, in comparison to only 3% and 0% respectively of Addis Ababa refugees.

Figure 17. Not suffered from abusive treatment at work and Figure 18. Consider they are paid fairly





Refugees in Semera Logia got better livelihood outcomes index scores than refugees in Aysaita camp and, perhaps surprisingly, slightly better results than hosts in Addis Ababa. Taking into consideration the differences between the two contexts and the reduced number of working refugee respondents in Semera Logia, hosts in Addis Ababa reported better working conditions in the objective index variables (such as contracts, tax registration, social protection) but, slightly less in the subjective index indicators (like perceptions on fair pay or work satisfaction).

In summary, the indices show that many Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa are prepared and willing to enter the labour market but the quality of employment they can access is generally poor, leading to a great loss of refugees' economic potential in working environments in which they are often left unprotected. In Afar a shared ethnic background appears to facilitate refugee employment and enterprise, with the local government appearing as an employer for refugees both in the camp and in town. However, refugee incorporation to the labour market is hindered by the low economic development of the region, limited market opportunities, and the high levels of illiteracy in Aysaita camp.

5.2 Refugee enterprises

Complementing these quantitative metrics, the interviews with refugee entrepreneurs shed light on the greatest challenges and opportunities for enterprise in each location. This section focuses on refugees' entrepreneurial activity, the strategic use of their assets to start and sustain their businesses, the effects of shocks and stresses in camp and urban environments, the gendered nature of enterprises in displacement, and the outcomes of the enterprise in terms of livelihoods, durable solutions to displacement, and contributions to the host societies.[23]

Assets and strategies of displacement enterprises

Refugee enterprise assets are explored through five different domains: legal status, market access, trade networks, finance, and space. This section explains how refugee enterprises capitalise on their assets, taking decisions to navigate barriers and realise their economic potential.

23 For a list of enterprise activities in every location, see annex 4.

Legal status

In every country, the refugee legal framework sets boundaries for the economic performance of refugee enterprises. In this section, we focus on the legal status of refugee enterprises which can be viewed as a continuum between formal or informal practices around registration and business operation.

A critical problem for the refugee-run enterprises in Ethiopia is business registration. In practice, refugee enterprise registration is very complex and few refugees are able to meet all the requirements to register their business in their own name. In response, many opt for running businesses in partnership with Ethiopian nationals. The business is registered in the name of the Ethiopian partner and the partnership arrangements differ depending on the relationship between the two. The most common agreement is for the refugee to pay for the licence, tax and a percentage of the profit, whether the host partner works in the enterprise or not. Arrangements are easier and less onerous when the Ethiopian partner is a friend or a relative, although it is also common practice for Ethiopian landlords to form partnerships with refugee businesses renting their commercial properties.

However, these partnerships can become exploitative – the Ethiopian partner may ask for more money and the refugees risk losing all their investment. Refugees highlight this concern as they cannot claim legal redress if their partner decides to leave the partnership and manage the business alone.

"It is not only that it is not in our name but it is also without our will. So yes, the disadvantage is huge; what would you do if they say 'all of this is ours'? What evidence do you have and what law to disprove them? People might testify for you but the law would only see the evidence. So, we do have fear about this."

Female refugee entrepreneur (aged 29), Addis Ababa

Partnerships are more common in Addis Ababa where the authorities have more capacity to monitor enterprises than in other locations. Refugees understand that working without a licence is risky and that their enterprise can be closed if it is found to be operating informally. Refugees running home-based enterprises or small informal businesses talk about the difficulties and the risks of getting a local partner, but find registration essential if they wish to expand and promote their enterprise.

In Semera Logia, partnerships are present but less frequent, and formalisation is enabled by a more understanding approach of the authorities to the situation of refugees and clan support. In Aysaita town and Semera Logia a few refugees had registered their enterprises in their own name with the authorities, while enterprises inside camp premises are generally not registered but have RRS permission to operate. Relations with authorities are more strained in Addis Ababa than in Semera where the shared ethnic background allows for more positive interaction, and ad hoc arrangements allow enterprises to operate formally.

"There was no difficulty as I am Afar, they even helped me in registration. My friend who is now living abroad, helped me in registering it. He has contact with many people who are working in offices here."

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 35), Semera Logia

"I have no local ID but they gave me a temporary permission to work formally. If the bajaj is not registered, I cannot work and I cannot get fuel subsidies from the government. Now I have a temporary certificate to work."[24]

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 34), Semera Logia

Market access

We explore the reasons and incentives to start an enterprise, and the strategies used by refugees to enter the market, secure contracts, and get customers and clients.

In Addis Ababa, low salaries and poor working conditions for employees spur refugees into starting their own enterprise. A combination of connections and opportunity make it possible for refugee businesses to use their skills and previous enterprise experience, find a location, and establish partnerships in the capital. After completing secondary education in Eritrea, some refugees were able to attend training courses offered to refugees in Ethiopia, but most of them were skilled workers before displacement, either working for others or running their own enterprises. Support for urban refugee enterprises from NGOs and agencies is patchy, and the selection criteria for receiving assistance is perceived as unfair or random (a question of luck) by Eritrean refugees interviewed in Addis Ababa.

In the Afar region there is a great divergence in refugee entrepreneurs' backgrounds in the camp and in the city. In Aysaita camp interviewees were mostly breeding livestock before coming to Ethiopia, had limited schooling and no previous business experience. Refugees in Semera Logia are better educated, and had both enterprise and work

24 Bajaj is the name given to motor rickshaws in Ethiopia, based on the name of one popular Indian automotive company manufacturing those vehicles.

experience in their country of origin. Refugees running enterprises in Semera Logia are often registered in Aysaita camp and receive monthly rations that contribute to household sustenance during critical periods like the COVID-19 pandemic, which also help to keep their businesses afloat.

There is evidence that only those refugees with enough resources can establish their business in Semara Logia or Aysaita town and move out of the camp to improve their living conditions. A shared ethnic background paves the way for refugees to leave the camp and settle in the city in search of employment and business opportunities. In Aysaita camp, the poor conditions in the camp, the scarce food rations, and the realisation that it is impossible for families to depend exclusively on aid leads refugees to start a business inside or outside the camp in an effort to become self-reliant. Businesses in Aysaita camp were often started with the support of NGO programmes – such as Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) and DanChurchAid (DCA). However, the scope of these entrepreneurship programmes and share-cropping agricultural schemes, and the number of people benefiting from them, is limited.

In Addis Ababa, the internet and social media are used to attract new customers, source new products, or learn new techniques, but most refugees promote their activities by word of mouth. In the Afar region, access to new customers and clients is determined by location, with camp-based enterprises only able to sell their products to other refugees in the camp. Mobile phones are used routinely to communicate with suppliers and customers, talk with business partners, or check prices of goods, but the use of the internet and social media is limited. Refugees running enterprises outside the camp or in Semera Logia find their customers mostly among town residents, either hosts or other refugees. Trade relations with Aysaita camp are not mentioned by Semera refugee entrepreneurs, illustrating a weak economic nexus, the limited purchase capacity of both businesses and residents of the camp, and poor transport services connecting the camp with main cities in the region.

Trade networks

Connections and collaboration with other enterprises, nearby or abroad, establish a network which can provide market opportunities and support expansion. In Addis Ababa, refugee enterprises often expand their operations beyond the Gofa Mebrat Haile condominium. Some attract customers from other parts of the city or provide their services in other *kebeles* (wards or local authority areas), with at least three businesses selling their products or services abroad, mainly to Eritrea or the Eritrean diaspora. Businesses with a permanent location, like bars and restaurants, mostly serve local residents, both Eritrean and Ethiopian.

Products and supplies in Gofa Mebrat Haile are mainly sourced from Addis Ababa markets and shops, and the main providers are Ethiopian wholesalers and retailers. Collaboration between refugee and national enterprises is frequent, with established relations of trust that allow refugees to buy on credit and repay their debts later. There is one case of a refugee enterprise sourcing products from more distant markets, in this case cosmetics from Dubai.

In Aysaita camp only a few refugees have a site or shop in Aysaita town or Semera Logia, even when selling outside the camp can provide a better and more reliable income. Most of the shops in the camp depend on the limited purchasing capacity of refugees who often buy on credit, increasing business debt and compromising its viability. Products for camp enterprises are sourced from whatever is available and cheap in Aysaita town and there are few links between suppliers and refugee businesses in the camp. The research found one case of cross-border cattle trade with Djibouti made possible through the collaboration of a camp refugee with Ethiopians in the livestock sector, indicating an existing potential for international trade in the Afar region.

Businesses run by refugees in Semera Logia operate mainly in the city, except for transport services. Supplies are sourced from the city market or local wholesalers/ retailers, mostly Ethiopians. Semera Logia is a transit point on the route to Djibouti, and sometimes supplies, such as vegetables, are bought directly from trucks. Goods also come from other regional cities such as Kombolcha, in the Amhara region.

Finance

Accessing start-up capital, financial resources, and debt management are central to understanding refugee enterprise finance. For refugee entrepreneurs in Ethiopia, initial finance to start the business was mostly secured through a combination of own resources and contributions from family and friends either living in Eritrea or sending remittances from abroad. Remittances as a source of start-up capital is more prominent in cities, and more common in Addis Ababa than in Semera Logia. In general, loans are repaid when the business is up and running and there are no additional obligations involved. Sometimes the money is a gift or one-off payment with no request for return, often when relatives abroad want to ensure that the refugee becomes self-reliant and stop depending on remittances, or from friends resettled in Western countries.

Buying from suppliers on credit is possible when trust and an established relationship exist and is a support for starting a business, but also for more established enterprises in times of need. These relations of trust, mainly with Ethiopian suppliers, evidence the economic inclusion of refugees and the collaboration with local businesses. Allowing customers to buy on credit is

common practice and problematic in Aysaita camp. Refugees pay their debts monthly when they receive food rations and cash assistance, but delays in aid distribution and other priorities may hinder repayment, affecting the sustainability of in-camp businesses. Aid received in the camp is also used strategically by some refugees to save and start businesses in Semera Logia, and became a lifeline during COVID-19, allowing refugee entrepreneurs to resume activities following lockdown.

In Ethiopia refugees can open a bank account and most of the enterprises interviewed in the three locations have at least one savings account. However, they often complain they cannot access credit services in the same way as Ethiopians, which hinders their capacity for business expansion. Informal saving schemes are common in the Afar region, both in the camp and the city, but not popular among refugee businesses in Addis Ababa. Key informant interviews in the capital noted that an iqub (savings group) is mainly used to collect money for other purposes, such as supporting families in need or for household expenses, rather than business creation.

Registered refugee enterprises pay licence fees and taxes to operate in cities, but there is no formal payment for camp businesses. In refugee/host enterprise partnerships, the refugee partner covers these expenses by default. Meanwhile, unregistered refugee enterprises face demands for informal payments or bribes to keep the business open. The police and local authorities (*kebele* and *ketene*, village committees) visit businesses and request payments. Being a refugee and not a citizen increases the fears of arbitrary detention, losing their only source of income, or being imprisoned in a foreign country.

All the refugee enterprises interviewed managed to cover their household expenses, in combination with aid in Afar, but it is difficult for all except the most successful to make regular savings. However, many of the refugee-run enterprises interviewed in Addis Ababa have regular workers with monthly salaries, both Ethiopians and Eritrean refugees. Employment creation is often seen as an opportunity to help others in need and is often prioritised over profit and capital reinvestment.

Space

Enterprise location and access to trading space is an important asset for refugee enterprises. In Gofa Mebrat Haile, affordability, accessibility, and being close to other members of the Eritrean community and the area where they live, are the main determinants of the business location. In Addis Ababa, a space previously occupied by a business, or registered and licensed by the landlord, is an asset, easing the formalisation process. Rent prices vary depending on their proximity to central areas of the condominium where there is more economic activity and potential customers.

"It is because this is our neighbourhood… You can succeed if you work where the people that you know are and we do not have the capacity to go to the more central areas."

Female refugee entrepreneur (aged 29), Addis Ababa

Working from home, or informally in an underused spot of a residential building, is also common in Gofa Mebrat Haile, although these spaces are deemed inadequate by refugee-run entrepreneurs. It is customary to ask the community or landlords for permission to run a business informally inside a residential building or in the streets.

In Aysaita camp, as most of the businesses pay no rent or taxes, the reduced cost of running an enterprise and less competition than in town are the main reasons for site selection. The areas around the aid warehouse and the health centre are considered the most profitable since people gather there to receive assistance. While some may not be interested in moving to the town, others think their business would be more profitable in Aysaita town or Semera Logia, but cannot afford to rent a space in the city.

In Semera Logia the description of the city as peaceful, densely populated, and strategically positioned en route to Djibouti is underlined by many interviewees. The shared ethnic background and language helps people work without discrimination, and Afar clan representatives are willing to support refugee enterprise, either formally or informally. Refugees with some resources opt for locations in the market area with better access to supplies and customers, but some refugees can only afford to operate in areas closer to their residence with less business activity.

Refugee enterprise vulnerabilities

There are critical events in the life of refugees that put them under considerable strain affecting their entrepreneurial performance. This section discusses the different ways in which shocks and stresses affect the refugee enterprise and shape their use of assets. In doing so, it explores how the experience of living in exile, the wider political and economic environment, and socio-cultural norms create or limit refugee enterprise capacity to respond to these circumstances.

In Ethiopia, the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Tigray led to a total halt in refugee registration, ID renewals and registration of vital events that significantly affected the lives of refugees in camps and cities. Eritrean refugee businesses in Addis Ababa were concerned about the increasing cost of products as a result of the conflict in the north, and several interviewees expressed a growing sense of insecurity being part of the Tigrinya-speaking community and fear for their business being ethnically

targeted. Since many businesses are formally registered in partnership with Ethiopians, some refugees also suffered from the closure of their enterprise when Tigrinya businesses were closed by the government and their owners accused of supporting the TPLF.

"Before this, I was working in a woodwork shop in Gofa industrial zone. My Ethiopian friend who had a working place helped me to work with him. He got me a business licence in his name and I was working independently for three years. I had three workers. But the police closed our workshop suspecting that my friend is supporting TPLF forces. You know many Tigrayans in Addis Ababa were arrested and their businesses were closed."

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 41), Addis Ababa

Theft and insecurity are also common in Gofa Mebrat Haile, affecting refugee businesses. Refugees complain that their reports to the police are not investigated and that harassment, extortion and threats from the security forces are also frequent whether they have their business registered or not.

"Whenever a refugee is reported or caught under the claim of any wrongdoing, the policemen always ask for money. Any policeman can put a refugee into custody to get a bribe without any tangible wrongdoing."

Refugee female entrepreneur (aged 29), Addis Ababa

In the Afar region, the Tigray conflict delayed aid distribution and cut off electricity and supplies for several months. The price of commodities also increased, affecting the sustainability of refugee businesses in the camp and Semera Logia. In the camp, business sales depend on customers receiving periodic aid. In Semera, the conflict affected communications and distribution chains from cities such as Kombolcha, and increased the sense of insecurity among refugees.

"Even if the war did not affect our area directly, the main services and food supplies to Semara Logia were disrupted since we get them from towns that were in war zones. The enterprise was not closed but there was tension in the community, and the security warned us to take precautions."

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 49), Semera Logia

Gendered refugee entrepreneurship

Societal gender norms and gender roles influence entrepreneurial activity, affecting the likelihood of opening an enterprise, or conditioning the type of business – the financial and social support this receives – among other issues. At the same time, displacement has an effect on gender roles, changing or reinforcing social and cultural norms that dictate what is expected from men and women and their options to engage in income-earning activities. But it can also open avenues for socio-economic and cultural transformation, redefining power relations between men and women (Holloway, Stavropoulou and Daigle 2019, 9). To understand better how refuge, gender and enterprise intersect, we asked refugees about the differences between men and women in running their businesses.

Refugee entrepreneurs showed mixed views about gender differences and the impact of norms and culture in running a business. In the Afar region, some interviewees argue that traditional gender roles in the Afar culture put additional pressure on women with house chores, so they have less time for their business. Several female entrepreneurs in Aysaita camp and Semera explained how they changed their activity or planned their business location or working hours to keep up with domestic work.

In Addis Ababa, although some interviewees argued that both men and women are now equal and can do the same type of jobs without discrimination, others noted that women in Tigrinya culture are expected to stay at home and that husbands may not be supportive of their wife working outside. Some activities are not considered appropriate for women, particularly working in bars where waitresses are presumed to be sex workers. A refugee woman running a bar's kitchen in Gofa Mebrat Haile explains how she dealt with customer harassment:

"At the beginning there were challenges as one would try to pull you and another would call you but then, you would make them understand that you only aim to work and that you are responsible and that you see people only from the perspective of work."

Female refugee entrepreneur (aged 25), Addis Ababa

Female refugees in Addis Ababa also believe that being a woman increases the chances of being robbed or not paid for their goods and services. The lack of physical strength to respond to aggressors and robberies, and their experience of police inaction, contribute to their perception of insecurity.

Aspirations

The aspirations of refugees who run enterprises combine their hopes and uncertainties about business expansion with aspirations for long-term solutions to displacement. In Ethiopia, their expectations for improving or expanding their activities are frustrated by legal restrictions and lack of documentation – including IDs, work permits and business licences – leading to feelings of stagnation and absence of progress in their lives in both Addis Ababa and Semera Logia.

Facing the lack of institutional support and restrictive refugee legal framework in Ethiopia, many urban refugee entrepreneurs see their business as a stop-gap while waiting for an opportunity for resettlement. Although they are willing to invest in their venture, take on new products, open new branches, or create more employment, the current legal and practical limitations make them pessimistic about their ability to improve their businesses. However, waiting for resettlement as their only chance to realise their potential, generates a feeling of despair and of putting their lives on hold.

"The main problem is they make the refugees lose hope … there are many friends of mine who lost hope and stopped everything and now they are just doing nothing. There are many refugees who want to work but if you cannot have the business and properties in your name, what guarantee do you have?"

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 29), Addis Ababa

In the camp, most refugees would like to see their business grow and hopes for durable solutions are divided between those who believe staying in the camp is their only option, and those hoping for resettlement opportunities to improve their lives.

Business outcomes: the contributions of displacement enterprises

Refugees' contribution to host society is often gauged by their social and economic inputs, but refugee enterprises are also a means for integration, support for other members of the refugee community, and leave an imprint on refugees' own perceptions of themselves.

In Ethiopia, enterprise facilitates inclusion and self-reliance for urban refugees, and external linkages for refugees in camps. In Aysaita camp, business earnings and aid can only complement each other but are usually insufficient to achieve self-reliance. Interaction with the local community is limited to nearby suppliers, and customers are almost always other refugees. As a result, the camp economy is highly dependent on aid provided by humanitarian agencies.

"The business income is used to cover my household expenses, however now it is not covering the expense because the community lacks money. The people do not have money because we, the camp community and myself, are dependent on aid that has been given by RRS."

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 52), Aysaita Camp

Working and having a business is a sign of respectability among Eritreans, who find their entrepreneurship has helped change the negative views about them. Earning the respect of Ethiopians is rewarding to many refugee-enterprise operators in Addis Ababa, and learning Amharic is considered key to establishing relations outside the Tigrinya-speaking community. The refugees running an enterprise develop feelings of belonging, improving and expanding their relations with residents in Gofa Mebrat Haile and beyond.

Being in a position to help others in the refugee community is an important social contribution of refugee enterprise in cities. Refugee entrepreneurs are proud of supporting others either financially or through advice. Money is often collected in Gofa Mebrat Haile to support other needy members of the refugee community, according to interviews and key informants. This helps build support networks that save people from destitution or losing their livelihoods to accident or illness. In a way, refugees in cities are responding to the gaps in support from humanitarian or government institutions, helping each other in running their enterprises.

Urban refugee enterprises are employers, offering work to Eritrean refugees and Ethiopians in Addis Ababa and Semera Logia, or outsourcing work to other enterprises, contributing further to city economies. Most of the suppliers and landlords of refugee enterprises are Ethiopian, and registered businesses pay licence fees and taxes, adding to city revenue. Competition in Gofa Mebrat Haile is mostly between refugee-run businesses working in unskilled sectors, and between new and long-established enterprises. However, one interview suggests that competition with host enterprises could intensify if refugees work in sectors requiring high qualifications and technical skills.

"My work and expertise are rare but there are many Ethiopian youth who give that service. After I started working, I was charging customers lower fees than the Ethiopians. They were infuriated and told me not to charge lower fees. Now I charge the same price, but still they are not happy when they see me working. Sometimes, I have to cancel orders from customers especially in areas the Ethiopian workers dominate. I know I am a refugee and I cannot enjoy the same rights as them."

Male refugee entrepreneur (aged 26), Addis Ababa

In camps, business cooperatives are common, either supported by NGOs or as refugee-led initiatives. These create economic opportunities for members, but their expansion or replicability seems limited. Cooperatives' level of success also varies depending on the sector and the ability to sell products out of the camp, with male-dominated livestock activities (such as goat fattening, and cattle trade) generating good revenues in comparison to female-led cooperative shops (KI, local NGO).

Refugees also highlight how offering new and more affordable products is increasing customers' options in cities. Moreover, providing services and goods that were previously unavailable in their area, refugee businesses reduce transport costs and save people time in Gofa Mebrat Haile and Aysaita camp.

5.3 Displacement economies findings

Working is a challenging endeavour for refugees in Ethiopia. Recent changes in legislation with the new Refugee Proclamation 1110/2019 and associated directives in practice have not yet given most refugees the right to work, and they continue to be prevented from joining the labour market or starting their own enterprise. The informal sector and diverse informal arrangements with hosts have allowed some of them to work and run a business, but it leaves them vulnerable and facing the daily risk of losing their main source of income and investment.

Our research shows how Ethiopian cities offer more opportunities for refugee livelihoods and a better environment for refugee enterprise than refugee camps. Data also shows how the camp economy depends mainly on humanitarian aid, but also demonstrates how aid can act as a safety net supporting business creation outside camps if refugees are entitled to receive regular assistance, as in Semera Logia. Institutional flexibility, a shared ethnic background, and clear support for economic and social inclusion in the Afar region have made it possible for refugees to improve their lives outside of camps.

Refugees in the three locations are willing to work and develop strategies to build on their livelihoods and enterprise assets to make it possible. However, the barriers to professional accreditation hinder highly qualified refugees from entering the labour market, while the difficulties in obtaining work permits and business registration create insurmountable roadblocks for many refugees, particularly in Addis Ababa. Instead, informality and a shared ethnic background create opportunities with ad hoc arrangements and practices of solidarity that enable refugees to work and run enterprises in the Afar region. Data highlights the limited economic viability and development of Aysaita camp whose residents are mostly dependant on aid, with a few exceptions of refugees running their businesses outside.

Eritrean refugee entrepreneurs interviewed in urban locations were willing to invest their remittances, savings, effort and time in creating and running their own businesses. Diaspora support is important for the creation of businesses in Addis Ababa and Semera Logia, but this money is often combined with entrepreneurs' savings from previous jobs and borrowing from friends and relatives in the country. In Aysaita camp, small businesses are mostly started with limited savings, borrowing goods from suppliers, or with support from friends in the region.

The conflict in Tigray had a negative effect on refugee enterprise activities in all three locations. The impacts were more evident in Addis Ababa where the actions against Tigrinya-speakers, including the closure of businesses, led to feelings of insecurity and fear among those who ran businesses. The higher cost of goods, and delays in the supply chain have negatively affected refugee enterprise operations inside and outside the camp. Furthermore, delays in aid provision put small businesses in Aysaita camp under great strain, underlining the dependence of a camp's economy on aid.

Given the opportunity, the economic activity of refugees in Ethiopia would contribute to local development through the creation of employment for both refugees and hosts, their demand for supplies and services, and tax payments. Refugees in cities aspire to expand their businesses but without access to credit or formal registration of their enterprises in their name, their aspirations are hampered, leading to wasted economic potential.

6

Conclusion

Ethiopia is at a crossroads as one of the main refugee hosting countries in the African continent. The CRRF and GRF commitments have enabled changes in refugee legislation designed to enhance rights to work and mobility. Implementation however has been slow, resulting in few improvements to the everyday lives of refugees. The COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Tigray and growing national and regional instability have hindered the implementation of directives and policies that could help decentralise refugee assistance. Involving regional and local actors in the design and management of refugee assistance could help bridge the humanitarian-development gap, ensuring hosts are also benefiting from aid programmes – as these feed into local development agendas that could ultimately enable integration.

Our study shows significant differences between life as a refugee in a capital city, a secondary town and a camp, and finds that cities generally provide a more conducive environment for refugee wellbeing and economic activities. However, limitations to the working rights of refugees and the limited assistance to out-of-camp refugees make it difficult for most Eritreans to integrate in Addis Ababa, and this is only possible in Semera Logia due to the strong, shared Afar affiliation. These limitations feed the desire of Eritrean refugees to be resettled or reunited with their families abroad. It may force them to seek risky routes for onward migration in the absence of any realistic legal alternatives for resettlement, or effective measures to promote their local integration.

Local integration of refugees is often viewed with suspicion and as a potentially disruptive element in an ethnically-diverse society with a growing but uneven economy and high local unemployment. However, Eritrean refugees demonstrate their ingenuity, creating connections that enable them to work around legal and policy limitations. Either through partnership with Ethiopian nationals to start up an enterprise, through community block committees, participating in share-crop arrangements, or using their ethnic lineage to negotiate their situation, refugees are integrating into everyday city dynamics. In this way, they generate opportunities for themselves and their associates – both refugees and locals – and often contribute to local development with their effort, investment, and entrepreneurship. On the other hand, our data shows that camp structures do little to enable a good life, and Eritrean refugees struggle to make sense of their present to devise a future of self-worth and self-sufficiency.

The new Refugee Proclamation (no. 1110/2019) is a useful tool to further realisation of refugee rights, but the cumbersome procedures introduced by successive directives and the limited capacity of institutions to speed up application and resolution processes are limiting its implementation and scope. Granting refugees the same rights as any other foreign nationals is not enough, since this treatment does not reflect the singularities of a life in asylum. It is further hindering potential investment by the Eritrean diaspora in the economic development of the country. Foreigners are only entitled to invest in a few 'open' sectors which require considerable financial resource, and exclude small- and medium-size investors who have the potential to stimulate the Ethiopian economy.

Policy should not only contribute to the realisation of refugee rights, but also ensure that the outcomes of those rights contribute to overall refugee wellbeing. This requires not only access to services, but good quality and affordable services; not only the right to work, but decent work standards and the possibility to register their own enterprise; not creating parallel structures to provide for refugees, but ensuring all people in Ethiopia – citizens, foreigners, or refugees – can make use of the same structures with guarantees.

Local governments have a key role to play in bridging the humanitarian-development divide. Local governments often provide key services to host populations, which could be extended to refugees, but our study showed that these have not yet been leveraged to replace parallel systems of support. NGO projects in Ethiopia are already supporting both hosts and refugees in the same programme, but bringing international aid funds into local development agendas could expand those benefits.

Guiding and designing policies based on such high standards, and involving local governments, would require the concerted efforts of national and local agencies with donors to realise their Global Compact commitments, ensuring refugee financing contributes to the overall development of Ethiopia as a hosting country. This requires a paradigm shift in refugee management, progressively dismantling the care and maintenance of an encampment system and transferring the budget to support integration and local development beyond camps for both refugees and host communities. The initial CRRF proposal for the elaboration of Regional Action Plans should be resumed, exploring their potential links with local development plans. In the same way, the new RRS urban refugee strategy should define the role of local governments to incorporate refugee response, and give guidance on how to integrate refugee voices, needs and demands into urban planning.

Annex 1: Protracted Displacement in an Urban World

Out of camp or out of sight? Protracted Displacement in an Urban World (PDUW) is a comparative mixed-methods research project focusing on the wellbeing and livelihoods of displaced people in camps and urban areas in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Jordan. The 3.5-year project is funded by the UK Research and Innovation Global Challenges Research Fund, the IKEA Foundation, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation and the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

The PDUW study aims to build an evidence base for national and local governments, humanitarian agencies and donors on the opportunities and challenges of hosting displaced people in camps versus urban areas. It also aims to assess current responses to urban protracted displacement, raise awareness of unmet needs and examine the economic contributions of refugees and IDPs. Finally, the project aims to support municipal authorities, displaced people, NGOs, organisations of the urban poor, and other local actors to use participatory planning to co-produce innovative and inclusive solutions to forced displacement in cities.

Our research has sought to deepen understandings of refugees' experiences of life in the camp and the city through the exploration of two thematic areas: wellbeing and displacement economies. The project is comparative in nature – we have primarily sought to compare displaced people's wellbeing and livelihoods between the camp and the urban area in each country, although we are also able to make some cross-country comparisons and will publish these findings in an overview paper and a series of thematic journal articles and working papers. To facilitate the comparison, we have focused on one nationality of refugee per country, so as to consider how the place where they find themselves – a camp or a city – has impacted on their wellbeing and ability to make a living.

A key aim of this research project has been to promote interaction between urban refugees/IDPs, residents of low-income informal settlements, municipal authorities and other local actors. To this end, PDUW has supported **participatory forums** on urban displacement in Addis Ababa, Amman, Jalalabad and Nairobi, in which city stakeholders, including urban refugees and IDPs, have been involved in regular conversations about service delivery, protection challenges and the policy environment, informed by presentations from PDUW's quantitative and qualitative datasets. The findings from these participatory processes throughout the project have been presented in a series of **City Notes** and **policy briefs**.

Project methods

The project has taken a mixed-methods approach and generated significant new qualitative and quantitative datasets for each country. Following concept-testing focus groups in the project's inception phase (February-December 2020), a survey was designed and delivered to camp and urban displaced people and urban hosts (50/50 men and women) in: Nairobi and Dadaab camp in Kenya (May-July 2021); Addis Ababa, Aysaita camp and Semera Logia, in Ethiopia[25] (March-April and October 2021); Amman and Zaatari camp in Jordan (February-March 2022); and Jalalabad and Barikab settlement in Afghanistan (February 2021 and August 2022[26]). Following preliminary analysis of the survey results from each country, a total of 450 qualitative interviews were held across all camp and

25 In Ethiopia, our original aim was to compare Tigrinya-speaking Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa with those in a camp in the Tigray region. After the outbreak of war in 2020 – initially in the Tigray region – the research focus shifted to Eritrean refugees in the Afar region. However, we were not able to identify significant numbers of Afari speaking refugees in Addis Ababa, and there are marked cultural differences between Afari (who are traditionally semi-nomadic pastoralists) and Tigrinya people who have moved from camps to the capital. We therefore added an additional urban site – Semera Logia, the regional capital in the Afar region, with significant populations of Afar Eritrean refugees.

26 In Afghanistan, we administered a follow-up survey after the Taliban takeover in 2021 to enable comparison of livelihoods, wellbeing and mobility patterns before and after this significant change. Findings from this will be presented in the Afghanistan Country Working Paper and other project outputs.

urban locations. These were complemented by key informant interviews with government, UN and NGO representatives in each country. Findings in this report draw on the project's full range of data collection methods. For the purpose of this report, the analysis will focus on the displaced population, but graphs from the survey and metric data will also display findings from the hosts, in order to provide a point of comparison.

Quantitative data

The PDUW survey was translated into local languages but was largely identical in each country, with some minor amendments to questions on legal status to ensure accurate reflection of the policy environment. It covered basic demographic information, migration trajectories and future plans. The livelihood component gathered information around income, assets, individual and household livelihoods, decent job standards, and human, social, physical, natural and financial capital. The wellbeing component covered physical health and access to healthcare, WASH and shelter; debt and economic comfort; community representation and access to justice; access to social spaces and ability to socialise; hope and aspirations, and the extent to which respondents feel at home and supported in their communities.

The survey applied a randomised, purposeful sampling to ensure the same number of female and male respondents. The sample included a smaller reference group of hosts from each urban location, as well as displaced people from each camp and city. To ensure randomisation, sampled areas were divided into geographical clusters on a map, based on a satellite image. Some of these clusters were then selected for data collection. A random walk pattern, based on the random starting point, was then established in collaboration with the field coordinator, and a random adult respondent was selected in each household.

PDUW QUANTITATIVE SURVEY SAMPLE

Afghanistan

- Barikab Camp: 362 displaced (204 reached in round two)
- Jalalabad: 371 displaced and 156 hosts (241 displaced and 79 hosts reached in round two)

Ethiopia

- Aysaita Camp: 366 displaced
- Semera Logia: 372 displaced
- Addis Ababa: 365 displaced and 153 hosts

Kenya

- Dadaab Camp: 382 displaced
- Nairobi: 315 displaced and 156 hosts

Jordan

- Zaatari Camp: 398 displaced
- Amman: 368 displaced and 217 hosts

To facilitate the comparison between the camp and urban locations, a selection of indicators from the survey have been used to create three metrics. The indexes also demonstrate how life in displacement differs for men and women in each location.

1. **The Refugee Wellbeing Metric**, covering five wellbeing dimensions (bodily, economic, political, social, and psychosocial wellbeing). This permits a comparison of wellbeing between different cohorts, for example camp vs urban, old vs young, men vs women, educated vs non-educated, those who spent a long time in the country vs those who did not. As far as the research team can ascertain, the wellbeing metric is the first of its kind to be specifically designed for displaced people. It provides a holistic picture of wellbeing, beyond a typically narrow focus on basic needs.
2. **The Livelihoods Assets Index**, is a work-readiness metric designed to ascertain who shows the highest potential for labour market integration. The index builds on the concept of sustainable livelihoods (DFID 1999), based on age, physical and mental health of respondents, education, legal status, housing quality, adequacy of income, financial inclusion, security, and social integration.
3. **The Livelihoods Outcomes Index**, looks at decent work and labour conditions for those who do have a source of income, in order to study who among those with income from work had the best working conditions. The index builds on the concept of 'decent' work, advocated by the ILO as productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity (ILO 2023a). The index includes components on working hours, job security, work satisfaction, fair pay, tax status, working conditions and social protection.

The metrics are a weighted sum of target indicators, where the weights correspond to a rotation into the first principal component of all the observations of the indicators in the training sample. The principal components of a dataset where each record (row) corresponds to an observation (respondent) and each column corresponds to a variable (indicator) within each observation. There are exactly as many principal components as there are variables, and the original dataset can always be reconstructed from its principal components. However, unlike the original variable set, the principal components explain (rapidly) decreasing proportions of the total information content (variance) of the original dataset.

Qualitative data

In each location, qualitative interviews were also conducted within each of the projects' two main workstreams: **refugee/IDP wellbeing** and **refugee/IDP enterprise**, using purposive sampling. On wellbeing, 25 semi-structured interviews with displaced people (roughly equal between men and women) were conducted in each location (camp and urban) exploring themes from the survey in more depth. On enterprise, 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted with refugee- and host-run enterprises in each location (camp and urban) exploring business creation, decision-making, networks, achievements, and challenges. Additionally, key informant interviews were conducted in all four countries to follow up on emerging themes from the survey and semi-structured interviews. All data was collected during 2021-2022.

Project outputs

The PDUW project will produce a range of written outputs, all of which will be made available on the project website: www.protracteddisplacement.org These include:

- **Country Working Papers**, to summarise findings on livelihoods and wellbeing from each country.
- **City Notes**, to summarise the process of running participatory forums in each country.
- **Policy Briefings**, to summarise findings from each country, and draw out cross-country learnings from the participatory planning processes in each city.
- **Academic articles**, to provide further thematic analysis of key data, including the Autumn 2024 special issue of IIED's journal *Environment and Urbanization*.
- **Qualitative and quantitative datasets** will be made available to researchers via the UK's Reshare Data Archive.

Annex 2: refugee livelihood assets indicators

How old are you? (working age)
Reduced Coping Strategies Index
Is healthcare in this area readily available to you?
In general, would you say your health is ...
Does your physical health currently limit you in these activities?
Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale
Have you acquired any technical and vocational skills in the past?
Before arriving in this country, did you work elsewhere? / Have you worked in the past in this country, doing something different from what you are doing now?
Can you read?
What is the highest level of education you have completed?
On an average day, how many hours do you spend doing unpaid work around the house / chores?
How well do you speak the language spoken by people (non-displaced hosts) in this area?
Are qualifications from your country of origin recognised in this country?
In this area, is it safe to walk the streets at night?
Can you legally work in this country?
If you wanted to, could you legally open a business in this country?
Do you regularly use the internet?
How would you describe your current housing situation?
Do you feel your current home is sufficient for your household's needs?

What is the primary source of drinking water for this household?
What type of toilet facilities do you have access to in your household?
In your local area, how satisfied are you with the access to public transport?
Does your household hold savings?
What are your household's sources of income today?
Do you have a bank or micro-finance account?
Is the level of debt of your household concerning to you?
If needed, is your household able to borrow money?
In this area, if you felt threatened or in danger, could you turn to...
How would you judge the quality of dispute-solving mechanisms / justice / courts in this area?
Is it secure, affordable, and physically possible for you to access justice in this area?
Do you feel you can make a difference in your community when you work with others?
How well do you feel represented / do you feel your issues are raised with the relevant authorities?
How satisfied are you with your ability to attend social gatherings outside of your home?
How well respected by your neighbours/your community do you feel?
How satisfied are you with your ability to meet up with friends or family who do not live with you?

Annex 3: refugee livelihood outcomes index indicators

How many hours do you work on an average workday in your primary income-earning activity?
How many days do you work in an average week in your primary income-earning activity?
Do you have a written contract?
Do you feel secure you can keep doing this work (primary activity) for as long as you are willing / able to?
How satisfied are you with your current primary work?
Have you suffered from any of the following while working in your current work?
Would you say you are being paid fairly at your current job?
Would you say working conditions are safe at your current job?
Would you say your current work matches your skillset?
Do you have a tax registration number?
Do you have social protection like medical insurance, unemployment insurance, maternity leave?

Annex 4: refugee enterprises interviewed in Ethiopia by location, sector and activity

	ADDIS ABABA	SEMERA	AYSAITA CAMP
Skilled crafts & trade	Tailor Metalwork Cosmetics trade Painter	Tailor	Dibora weaver (traditional mat) Cattle trader
Technical	Electronic reparation and installation Photographer	Translator & interpreter Education Academy	
Hospitality	Bar Billiard Restaurant Juice house & fruit shop Game zone	Restaurant Cafeteria Coffee/tea seller	Restaurant
Services	Hairdressing & beauty salon Barber	Bakery Butcher	DStv provider
Transport	Taxi	Moto-taxi	
Unskilled trade and other	Car wash Mobile phones & accessories Shoe shiner Small shop	Small shop Street hawker Clothes retail Khat seller Vegetable stall Grocery store	Small shop Khat seller Street hawker Mobile phones & accessories

Annex 5: key informant interviews

ORGANISATION	TYPE	LOCATION	DATE
Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS)	Government agency	Addis Ababa	2.11.2022
Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)	National NGO	Semera	4.11.2022
RRS Semera office	Government agency	Semera	4.11.2022
Regional Bureau of Labour and Skills	Regional government	Semera	4.11.2022
UNHCR Afar regional office	International agency	Semera	4.11.2022
Dan Church Aid (DCA)	International NGO	Semera	4.11.2022
Action for the Needy in Ethiopia	National NGO	Semera	4.11.2022
UNHCR Aysaita office	International agency	Aysaita	5.11.2022
Zonal Refugee Committee (ZRC)	Refugee representative	Aysaita	5.11.2022
RRS Aysaita office	Government agency	Aysaita	5.11.2022
Women representative ZRC	Refugee representative	Aysaita	5.11.2022
World Bank	Donor	Addis Ababa	7.11.2022
City Council	Local government	Addis Ababa	7.11.2022
Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)	Donor	Addis Ababa	7.11.2022
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	International NGO	Addis Ababa	8.11.2022
Refugee Central Committee (RCC)	Refugee representative	Addis Ababa	8.11.2022
German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)	International Agency	Addis Ababa	9.11.2022
Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)	Research institute	Addis Ababa	9.11.2022
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	International NGO	Addis Ababa	9.11.2022
Organisation for Women in Self-employment (WISE)	Local NGO	Addis Ababa	9.11.2022
RRS Urban Refugee Unit	Government agency	Addis Ababa	10.11.2022
UNHCR livelihoods unit	International agency	Addis Ababa	10.11.2022
Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC)	National NGO	Addis Ababa	10.11.2022
Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS)	International NGO	Addis Ababa	10.11.2022

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Ethiopia is one of the main refugee-hosting countries in Africa, with more than 900,000 refugees and asylum seekers in 2023. Many live in camps but increasing numbers are moving to cities. Ethiopia's international commitments and new legislation provide scope for policy innovation, to which this working paper contributes. The paper reports findings of the Protracted Displacement in an Urban World project, which examined the wellbeing and livelihoods of people living in protracted displacement in camps and cities, focussing on Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa, Semera Logia and Aysaita Camp. Key findings highlight the potential of urban refugees, and need to bring local governments into policy debates.

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Funded by:

UK Research and Innovation
GCRF Global Challenges Research Fund
IKEA Foundation
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Bernard van Leer FOUNDATION

Protracted displacement in an Urban World was funded by UK Research and Innovation through the Global Challenges Research Fund programme, the IKEA Foundation, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Bernard van Leer Foundation and ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (ESRC-IAA)

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