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# Responses to Urban IDPs in Adama, Ethiopia: A Case Study

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## Authorship & Project Information

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## Disclaimer

The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Cities Alliance Secretariat, its members or UNOPS.

# Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	5
Background	6
Methodology	7
Research findings	8
Discussion and recommendations	22
Conclusion	27
Annex 1: Research methodology	28

# Executive summary

In this report we highlight successful humanitarian and development responses to internally displaced people (IDPs), as well as long-term development challenges, based on research in Adama, Ethiopia, a growing city in the Oromia region close to Addis Ababa. We present findings from a little-known case of IDP relocation and resettlement to Adama, which received and settled IDPs from camps in 2018.

## Overview

In 2018, about 1,340 registered households as well as many unregistered IDPs fled ethnic conflict in the Somali region of Ethiopia to seek safety in Adama, a city approximately 100km southeast of Addis Ababa. The IDPs, who were mainly ethnic Oromo, arrived in Adama over the course of several months. The sudden and huge influx of IDPs put immense pressure on the city's capacity to provide the necessary support.

While most of the focus on internal displacement in Ethiopia remains on the Somali region (which hosts the majority of the country's approximately three million IDPs), significant lessons can be learned from Adama's response. In the absence of large-scale international assistance, a little-known campaign to address the needs of IDPs led to a multi-level response from federal, regional and – in particular – local urban actors. Ultimately, under the auspices of the city administration, all 28 sectoral government bureaus, hundreds of private sector actors, 18 *kebeles* (neighbourhood districts), 243 *Iddirs* (community-based associations), and many local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals participated in supporting and settling the IDPs.

This response may be a unique instance of an entirely Ethiopian, collective and largely local effort to operate successfully at this scale and within such a short period of time. At the same time it illustrates longstanding development challenges facing both IDPs and the cities that host them, including to employment and social integration. This case study is particularly significant because increasing numbers of forced migrants move not to capital cities, but instead to secondary cities such as Adama, which often lack the resources to accommodate and integrate them.

## Key findings

### Unique national lottery system to settle IDPs

Immediately after displacement, IDPs moved to camps in the Oromia region where they officially registered and received international humanitarian assistance. Subsequently, an anonymous, random regional lottery system was created to settle many IDP households long-term, with 11 cities in the Oromia region selected, based on their capacity to host IDPs. The lottery aimed to avoid competition and conflicts of interest, and IDPs reported that they considered the system to be fair and transparent. This resettlement system provided a way for IDPs to more quickly resume a normal life and for the responsibility of assisting IDPs to be regionally shared.

### Encouraging a collective whole-of-society approach

The regional and local response to IDPs in Adama provides a positive case study of a coordinated emergency response, with a particular emphasis on the involvement of the private sector and local individuals.

After the IDPs arrived in Adama, a public call for action by the city administration and regional government was issued through social media and TV outlets, emphasising the need to build housing and advertising an emergency fund that had been established. Different strategies for spreading the call for support, such as through providing a daily report about the IDPs and publicising private investors' support, were used.

Successful communication about the appeal for support came from 'cascading' a single message through federal, regional and local government. Social media was an important tool in spreading the message to different actors and communicating with potential donors, including in the Ethiopian diaspora. As well as television coverage, posts on Facebook, YouTube and Telegram groups popularized the call for support. This

widespread targeting gave many of our informants a feeling of positive obligation; once a critical mass was reached, offering support became a kind of actionable norm, even for those not directly called upon. The focus on both in-kind and cash donations meant that actors could contribute in various ways, involving contributors with and without funds, both groups and individuals, and those motivated by both altruism and self-interest.

Private sector actors were incentivized to donate through free media coverage; however, some were limited in the amount they gave as donations were not tax-deductible. Local individuals were one of the primary responders to the crisis as many witnessed the emergency first-hand in their local *kebeles* where IDPs were residing, and took action by donating cash and clothing to the IDPs they encountered. Once settled, IDPs also created indigenous voluntary associations known as *Equb* and *Iddir* to support each other financially and emotionally, thus offering important assistance to each other.

### The invisibility of undocumented IDPs

Despite the coordinated lottery settlement scheme, many more than the allocated number of IDPs arrived in Adama. As they were undocumented, their number is unknown, and they did not have access to housing or food rations, thereby increasing their vulnerability. This affected not only IDPs themselves but those mandated to care for them, such as clinics and hospitals that at times had more patients than they could treat. Based on our research, no effort to document and register these IDPs took place, meaning that the city could not adequately support them, nor understand the true extent of the demand they placed on local infrastructure.

### Addressing the long-standing relief-development gap in assistance

While Adama led concerted, collective, and largely successful efforts to support IDPs in the ‘humanitarian emergency phase’ after their arrival, limited success thereafter in areas like employment offers important lessons for other cities. For example, with more support IDPs could be making a greater contribution to Adama’s economy than they currently are. Their existing skills and connections, including domestic and international trades and links to the diaspora, could increase Adama’s economy and transnational business and social networks. However, more practical support is necessary to actualize this potential, such as increased access to marketplaces to sell in.

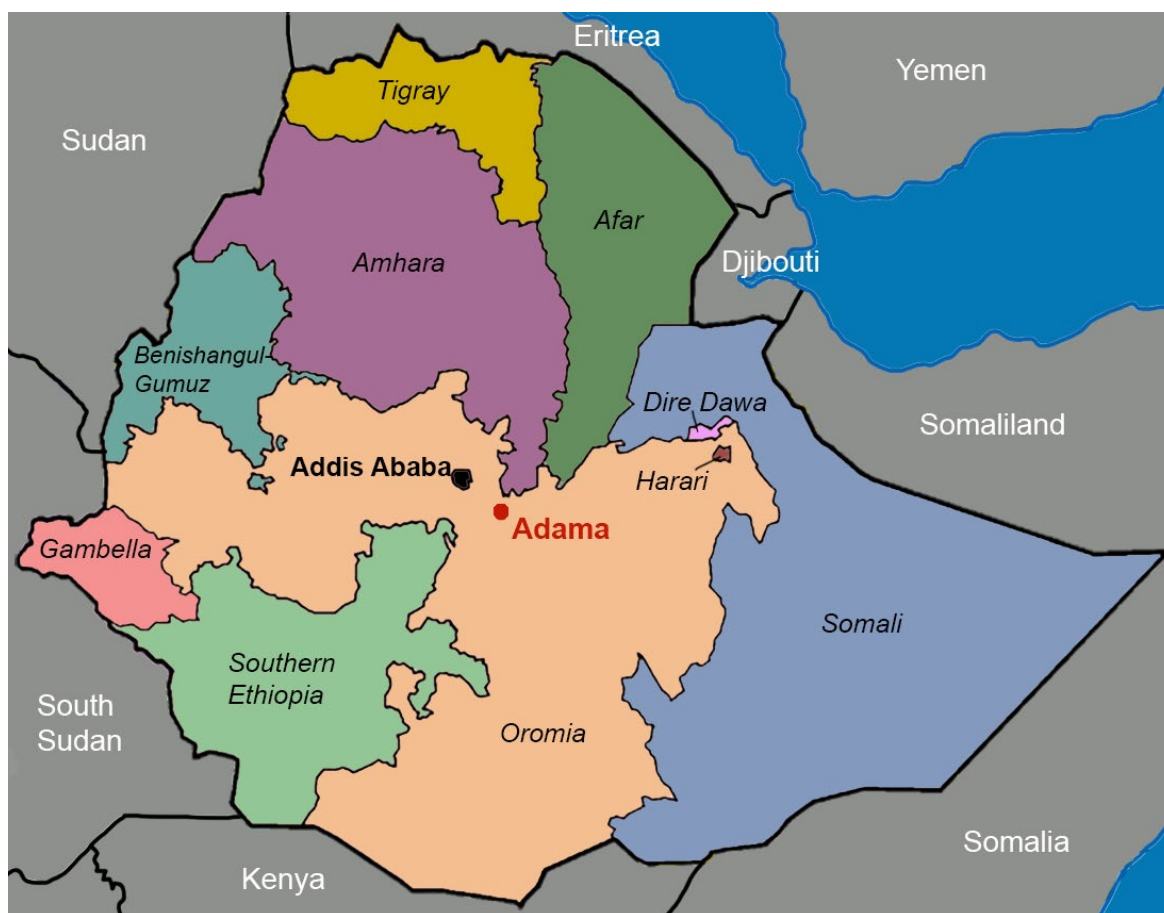
### Documenting and registering IDPs in urban areas

Identifying forced and other migrants once they enter Adama is important for the city infrastructure as a whole, as well as a first step to providing further assistance to those in need. Creating avenues for documentation, registration, and information dissemination is crucial in situations such as this, and could take place under the municipal government or in collaboration with an established, trusted NGO.

## Key points

- While quick mobilization can be successful for addressing some long-term needs such as housing, as well as emergency needs like the immediate availability of food, long-term support is needed to facilitate other needs such as employment, which require ongoing relationships and the availability of certain skills.
- An initial communication approach like that used in the Adama response could be used to spread the word in other situations of displacement about immediate needs as well as particular skill sets in a displaced population to a local or regional audience.
- Formalizing individual and business donations, particularly those above a certain amount, by making them tax-deductible may increase some actors’ willingness to donate to assistance efforts.
- Building on existing indigenous associations like *Iddir* and *Equb*, and encouraging host community members to invite IDPs to join existing social groups, could offer an important means to build social support and better integrate.
- Registering all IDPs upon arrival in cities – regardless of whether they came through formal channels like a lottery or not – can facilitate the assistance that is offered to them by providing better knowledge of how many IDPs have returned and the demographics and needs of those who remain.





Map of Ethiopia by region

# Introduction

In 2018, about 1,340 registered households as well as many unregistered internally displaced persons (IDPs) fled ethnic conflict in the Somali region of Ethiopia to seek safety in Adama, the capital of the Oromia region, approximately 100 kilometres south-east of Addis Ababa. The IDPs, who were mainly ethnic Oromo, arrived in Adama over the course of several months. The sudden and huge influx of IDPs put immense pressure on the city's capacity to provide the necessary support.

While most of the focus on internal displacement in Ethiopia remains on the Somali region (which hosts the majority of the country's IDPs), significant lessons can be learned from Adama's response. In the absence of large-scale international assistance, a little-known campaign to address the needs of IDPs led to a multi-level response from federal, regional and – in particular – local urban actors. Ultimately, under the auspices of the city administration, all 28 sectoral government bureaus, hundreds of private sector actors, 18 *kebeles* (neighbourhood districts), 243 Iddirs (community-based associations) and many local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals participated in supporting and settling the IDPs. This may be a unique instance of an entirely Ethiopian, collective and largely local effort to operate successfully at this scale and within such a short period of time.

is known as a popular city for weekend breaks from Addis and is a common choice for conferences and work events, it has also found itself at the nexus of multiple migrations including internal migration from conflict, trafficking, and smuggling.<sup>3</sup> It is the first main stop along the country's newly restored colonial railroad line, and therefore represents an important site of both industrialization and urbanization. As part of this, the municipal and federal government are focusing on city planning in a way that has largely not been possible in older cities such as Addis Ababa. It has been selected as one of four pilot cities in the Ethiopia Urban Expansion Initiative.<sup>4</sup> Due to this combination of urbanization and forced migration, it presents an important site for understanding how to support local government and other actors in receiving forced migrants settling both formally and informally in the city as well as those aiming to move onwards.

## The rise of secondary cities

This report presents a case study of the impact of IDPs on Adama and the city's response to assist them. In so doing it focuses on the rising trend of urbanization amongst forced migrants. It also contributes evidence to an under-researched phenomenon: the movement of forced migrants not to capital cities, where most research has been conducted, but instead to secondary cities and towns. Secondary cities are defined as having a population of between 10 and 50% of the country's largest city, which generally equals between 100,000 and 5 million residents.<sup>1</sup> Across Africa and Asia, population growth is projected to occur faster in secondary cities than in capital cities, making them an important site for development and socio-economic growth – and thus destinations of increasing interest to forced migrants unwilling or unable to move to settlements or camps.

## Adama, Ethiopia

Adama, the former capital of Ethiopia's Oromia region, is an upcoming secondary city that is expected to triple its 2010 population by 2040, growing from 253,000 to over 954,000 inhabitants, and growing in area more than fivefold.<sup>2</sup> While it

## Research project overview

This ongoing project aims to provide data and evidence to improve how secondary cities respond to and manage crisis migration, including IDPs and refugees. It is led by the University of Oxford's Refugee Studies Centre, funded through Cities Alliance by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Our research focuses on local authorities responsible for managing cities and those who live within them, but also includes civil society actors such as IDP and refugee organizations. Our case studies are Adama, Ethiopia, and Arua, Uganda. We focus not just on improving the direct assistance provided to refugees and forcibly displaced people, but research ways to enhance positive *effects* of these influxes on secondary cities, such as on urban planning; infrastructure; and coexistence between migrants, citizens and other members of society. Our aim, therefore, is twofold: 1) to provide evidence to strengthen the capacity and preparedness of local actors, namely authorities and civil society members, to improve the management structures as well as service delivery to involuntary migrants in secondary cities; 2) to provide evidence to support sustainable strategies for local city stakeholders to manage crisis migration through collaboration between humanitarian and development actors.

<sup>1</sup> Roberts, B., and Hohmann, R. (2014). The systems of secondary cities: the neglected drivers of urbanising economies. *CIVIS Sharing Knowledge and Learning from Cities*, 7: 1–12.

<sup>2</sup> Lamson-Hall, P., Angel, S., Degroot, D., Martin, R., and Tafesse, T. (2018) A New Plan for African Cities: The Ethiopia Urban Expansion Initiative. *Urban Studies*, 0042098018757601.

<sup>3</sup> Mulugeta, M., and Makonnen, T. (2017). Illicit Cross-border Migration in Ethiopia: Causes, Patterns and Policy Responses. *Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, 13(2): 53–80.

<sup>4</sup> Lamson-Hall et al. (2018), *op. cit.*

# Background

In 2018, more people were displaced as a result of conflict, violence and disaster than ever before. The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) across the world escalated from 28 million at the start of the year to an estimated 41.3 million IDPs.<sup>5</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa was the region most affected globally, with over 10 million people displaced.<sup>6</sup> Ethiopia experienced a huge increase in its IDP population in 2018 – almost double that experienced by Syria, and more than any other country across the world. A total of over 3 million people were internally displaced following violence and conflicts between ethnic Somalis and Oromos.

Ethiopia is administratively divided into nine regional states and two charter cities – the capital Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa in the east – and is governed through a decentralized system of ethnic federalism whereby regional states are accorded powers by the federal government. The two largest regions – Oromia and Somali – have experienced ongoing territorial disputes along a shared border that stretches over 1,400 km: “Historically, their relationship has been characterized by territorial competition which often leads to disputes and conflicts over resources, including wells and grazing land.”<sup>7</sup> Mass displacement occurred after the regional government of Somalia expanded its regional periphery, leading to the forcible expulsion of many Oromos living in the Somali region and on the border of the two regions.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), “Conflict over resources and ethnic violence triggered 2.9 million new displacements in Ethiopia in 2018, more than in any other country worldwide and four times the figure for 2017.”<sup>8</sup>

Climate change also plays a role in internal displacement in Ethiopia, although at times it is difficult to fully attribute causation. However, also in 2018 there were almost 300,000 IDPs due to climate-related causes, associated mostly with flood and drought in the Somali region.<sup>9</sup> According to a 2018 report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), “The flooding was worst in Somali region, where the Genale and Wabi Shebelle rivers burst their banks and about 151,000 people were displaced.”<sup>10</sup>

## Ethiopia’s national policy on refugees and IDPs

### IDP policies

Ethiopia lacks a comprehensive dedicated framework regarding responses to internal displacement. Although it is a signatory to the African Union Convention for Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), it has not ratified the treaty, which is a major policy limitation.<sup>11</sup>

However, Ethiopia has taken positive actions to address humanitarian as well as development-oriented assistance for IDPs. Most recently, the government launched a national Durable Solutions Initiative (DSI) in December 2019 with the aim to “[provide] a platform to connect life-saving humanitarian action to the longer-term development efforts of the country”, which “is development oriented and fully respects the humanitarian principles”.<sup>12</sup> However, at the time of our research, no clear outcomes from the DSI had occurred.

Previously, in 2017, the government introduced an IDP Advisory Group to support more than one million IDPs resulting from the Somali–Oromo border conflict. This committee comprises the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, the UN Humanitarian Affairs, IOM, UNHCR, Red Cross and Danish Refugee Council, and is led by the Deputy Prime Minister.<sup>13</sup> A regional durable solutions strategy by the Somali Regional State was also endorsed in October 2017. This strategy was a first for the region as well as the country,<sup>14</sup> and it is aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>5</sup> GRID 2019, Global Report on Internal Displacement.

<sup>6</sup> Of these, 7.4 million displacements were caused by conflicts and violence and 2.6 million by disasters, mostly weather related. IDMC Press Release. Available at: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/media-centres/10-million-people-internally-displaced-across-sub-saharan-africa-in-2018>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-41278618>

<sup>8</sup> IDMC Press Release. Available at: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/media-centres/10-million-people-internally-displaced-across-sub-saharan-africa-in-2018>.

<sup>9</sup> IDMC Country Report. Available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ethiopia>

<sup>10</sup> IDMC Internal Displacement in 2018 Report. Available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/201809-mid-year-figures.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Habte, Behigu and Kweon, Yun Jin (2018) Addressing internal displacement in Ethiopia. *Forced Migration Review*, 59 (October). Available at: <https://www.fmreview.org/GuidingPrinciples20/habte-kweon>

<sup>12</sup> UN Ethiopia (2019) Durable Solutions Initiative launched in Ethiopia. 06 December. Available at: <https://ethiopia.un.org/en/27655-durable-solutions-initiative-launched-ethiopia>

<sup>13</sup> Habte et al. (2018), *op cit*.

<sup>14</sup> Habte et al. (2018), *op cit*.



## Refugee policies

After Uganda, the country has the second largest refugee population in Africa, and has been similarly generous with accepting refugees from some 24 countries. The country's parliament adopted a national refugee law and regulation on 17 January 2019. The law will grant privileges to the refugees such as the right to work, habitation outside of camps, access to social and financial services, and registration of births and marriages.<sup>16</sup> However, in practice these rights remain limited.

Although the majority of refugees in Ethiopia live in camps, the country has an out-of-camp policy for Eritrean refugees that represents a strong basis for pursuing further alternatives to encampment. This policy was initiated in 2010 to increase refugee self-reliance, and relies on refugees having immediate Ethiopian relatives in urban areas, who act as a sort of sponsor for refugees. For some Eritrean refugees this policy has helped them decide against taking the perilous sea crossing to Europe, and instead has helped them strive to achieve self-reliance in Addis Ababa or in secondary cities.<sup>17</sup>

## Methodology

This report is based on research conducted over seven months (August 2019–February 2020) in Adama, Ethiopia, with additional interviews conducted in Addis Ababa.

We took a qualitative case study approach to understand the municipal response to IDPs in Adama. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with the main actors who played significant roles in assisting IDPs in Adama. These include the Adama city government (Mayor's Office, relevant government bureaus, and *kebele* leaders), private sector actors, international and local NGOs, local communities, Equb and Iddir associations, and IDPs. Several interviews were also conducted with academics and experts in the field. Our research followed a snowball sampling methodology, with 70 interviews conducted. Table 1 presents

an overview of the interviews conducted by actor. Annex 1 contains a full overview of our methodology.

The methodology adopted means that the research is not representative of all different stakeholders or selected populations. Our snowball sampling drew from existing social networks of contacts and informants, and is thus not a random sample. As we are not able to determine sampling errors, it is difficult to make an inference about the overall population of several sectors, such as the private sector, based on our method.

**Table 1. Key actors in the Adama city IDP response**

Key stakeholders	Population sizes	Sample sizes/conducted interviews
Adama City Administration	28 sector bureaus	19 sector bureau (multiple informants within each bureau)
Private sector	100+ companies	7 major private sector companies
Civil society	18 <i>kebele</i>	One <i>kebele</i> and one sub-city which are more involved during the IDPs' resettlement
Iddir	243 Iddir (community-based associations)	Conducted interviews with the Adama City Iddir Association and a local community Iddir association
Host community	Unknown	4 local communities
Media and journalists	Unknown	One regional media station and one journalist
Refugees/IDPs leader or representative	12,500 (approximate)	11 IDPs and IDP representative
Local NGOs and international NGOs	Unknown	9 local and international NGOs

<sup>15</sup> National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities (2017) Ethiopia: Somali Region Durable Solutions Strategy (Durable Solutions Strategy 2017/2020. The Durable Solutions Strategy of the Somali Regional Government of Ethiopia), October 2017, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b34d30a4.html> [accessed 28 October 2020].

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR (2019) Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan: The integrated response plan for refugees from Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia (2019–2020). Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67744>

<sup>17</sup> Sudan Tribune (2016) Feature: Eritrean favors 'out of camp policy' over peril sea route, 12 February. Available at: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article58008>

# Research findings

Prior to the end of 2017, the Somali region was home to many ethnic Oromo people, and Somalis and Oromos had cohabited somewhat peacefully for years. Overall, the Oromos considered the Somali region as their own. However, in late 2017, ethnic conflicts between the Oromos and the Somalis led to an estimated 1,074,000 people forcibly displaced in both regions.<sup>18</sup> The crisis affected many lives and left countless IDPs traumatised. Some lost family members and some were physically injured, while others witnessed atrocities.

*Regardless of them being Somali, I thank our neighbours. We survived because of them... The regional police started going around to announce that Oromos should leave the region or they will be killed... They used to go around killing, beating and raping. This continued for days. We didn't sleep or eat the whole time... My friend has many brothers, so she [then] brought them to us... The police came to check... asked if there were any Oromos in the house and they said no. They kept us safe till we left.*

– IDP resettled in Adama

*We didn't leave our house for six days... there were [some] who got beaten, who died, women who got raped... This whole crisis...was just because of ethnicity, and it is awful.*

– IDP resettled in Adama

The Government of Ethiopia's IDP response plan focused on (1) voluntary return to areas of origin, (2) voluntary integration with host communities, and (3) voluntary resettlement to selected areas. An IDP intention survey led by Haromaya University identified areas for refugee settlement, gathered data on IDPs' place of origin, and noted whether IDPs sought return, reintegration or relocation.<sup>19</sup> A study on IDPs in four IDP sites in the East Hararghe Zone, one of the zones of the Oromia region, found that most preferred to stay in Oromia rather than be repatriated.

Many IDPs temporarily settled in different camps in Oromia where they officially registered and received international humanitarian assistance. According to our interviews, NGOs such as the Red Cross and Oxfam contributed greatly to support the thousands of IDPs in camps. Many of our informants stayed in camps for approximately eight months before being relocated to Adama.

The voluntary resettlement took place through a lottery system wherein an IDP household drew a ticket using a registration code they had been assigned to see where they would be relocated. This anonymous, random lottery was

created to avoid competition and conflicts of interest. This system led to the distribution of approximately 86,000 IDPs across 11 cities in the Oromia region, of which Adama was one. A regional government committee was set up to implement the lottery and settlement while the municipal authorities created their own committees to address the needs of IDPs (expanded on below).

According to the IDPs we interviewed and other key respondents, most IDPs were positive about being relocated to Adama. In contrast to some of the other cities designated for relocation, Adama is a major city in Ethiopia, and close to Addis Ababa. Adama city was also preferable to many IDP households as they received free housing, which was not offered in each relocation site. IDPs mentioned the lottery system being fair and transparent.

The following sections present main findings from key actors involved in the response and thematic sectors, including education and healthcare.

## Regional government

In response to the displacement, the regional government of Oromia called for action to help resettle the IDPs. Recognizing that encampment was only a short-term solution, the Oromia regional government took the initiative to distribute and permanently resettle the IDPs in different parts of the region. The regional government considered the capacity of 11 cities<sup>20</sup> within the region to allocate acceptable numbers of IDPs to each according to their capacity. As a result, Adama was allocated 2,000 households and 506 unaccompanied IDP minors. According to our interviews, the regional government worked collaboratively with the Adama City Administration to agree on this number based on what the city could offer IDPs.

<sup>18</sup> Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (2018). Ethiopia 2018. Geneva: IOM.

<sup>19</sup> Government of Ethiopia (2018) Ethiopia Humanitarian and Disaster Resilience Plan. Addis: Government of Ethiopia and Humanitarian Country Team. Available at: [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ethio-pia\\_2018\\_humanitarian\\_and\\_disaster\\_resilience\\_plan\\_2.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ethio-pia_2018_humanitarian_and_disaster_resilience_plan_2.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Adama, Shashemene, Bishoftu, Legtafo, Modjo, Dukem, Gelan, Zeway, Sebeta, Burayu, Sululeta.

## Adama city's response

*It was very painful to witness a person being forcefully displaced from where he/she used to live just because he/she is Oromo. Adama city residents also felt the pain. We, therefore, sent out a call for action ...with a motto "people for people/Wegen le Wegen" Everyone, from big to small, had placed their fingerprint in response to the call.*

– Coordinator at the Mayor's Office

*Firstly, as a human being, you feel something whenever someone is going through a rough time... You have to share what you have. If you can just make a small contribution but help these people in the long term, that is very satisfying. You enjoy the point of living when you do such things. Some of the IDPs actually lost a lot, but our small contribution made them feel that they do have people.*

– HR employee, Private food industry

According to many of our key informants, Adama city accommodated more IDPs than any other city in Oromia. The city hosted both temporary IDPs (who subsequently relocated to another resettlement area) and people who took up permanent residence in Adama. Most of these IDPs were temporarily staying in *kebeles* (the smallest administrative unit of Ethiopia, similar to a ward or neighbourhood group), and a private school compound.

This was a huge responsibility for the city as it had to facilitate and provide for 2,000 households without federal government support. The city administration therefore requested significant help from different sectors and stakeholders. Quickly, the city administration and regional government called society to action through social media

and TV outlets, emphasizing the need to build housing and advertising an emergency fund that had been established. Additionally, the city organized a committee to deal directly with the crisis.

## The media

The media played an essential role in amplifying the Oromia regional government's message calling citizens to mobilize to support the IDPs. Both traditional media and social media proved effective channels for disseminating information. The call for support was spread through different strategies, notably a daily televised report about the IDP situation and publicizing the names of private investors who provided support. Media footage was also shared, ranging from showing how people were living in *kebeles* to showing IDPs and local community members celebrating Muslim holidays together.

## Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN)

One media outlet that played a large role in calling for support to IDPs was the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN), the leading regional public service broadcaster in Oromia region. It played broadcasts on TV and radio from its Adama headquarters, sent journalists to settlement areas to disseminate information to local communities and different stakeholders, and highlighted ways IDPs and locals were working together. This free coverage has continued for over three years, and now occurs twice weekly. More than 600 OBN staff even contributed one month of their salaries to the IDPs. During the religious holidays, OBN gifted IDPs with live sheep and food for their celebrations.





Although the station is government-owned, it made efforts to maintain balanced reporting of the Somali–Oromo tensions it encountered, including visiting IDP settlements and interviewing the residents first-hand. The OBN newsroom manager described its role as “the voice of these people”.

## Welcoming IDPs in Adama

Adama city is now home to 1,340 registered IDP households and 506 registered unaccompanied IDP minors who arrived through the lottery system. Only those who came via the formal lottery system were registered at all, as Adama has no official migrant registration process. This registration took place in the camp. In response to the city’s call for action, and with the generous contribution of the local community and the private sector, four resettlement areas were constructed, and the lottery system was replicated to distribute the newly constructed houses fairly and equally to all registered IDPs. Each resettlement house is a single room constructed from iron sheets, has a total of 105m<sup>2</sup> plot of land, including a shared bathroom (one for two houses) and water access, but no access to power and individual electric counters.

IDPs have now stayed in Adama city on average for two years. Based on interviews, it appears that for many returning to their original home is not an option due to an ongoing fear of violence. Practically, many do not have assets to return to or even money to make the trip back, further reinforcing their preference to stay in Adama. As two informants explained:

*We went through so much so we just want to settle here. We want to work here and change our lives. We just want to live like others.*

– IDP

*We were asked this question when we were in camps. If we wanted to return, we would’ve done so then.*

– IDP

Since the IDPs’ arrival, the local city administration has offered those who are registered free healthcare and education, although it appears that, while officially available, it is not always accessible to IDPs. In addition, through the collaboration of the federal and regional government, registered IDPs still receive monthly food rations from the National Disaster Risk Management Commission distributed based on family size. IDPs receive 15kgs of rice or flour and about half a litre of cooking oil per person/month, but no other groceries, so IDPs often sell some of their donated rations to buy spices and vegetables. However, IDPs commonly complain that the food rations are not large enough for their families, particularly since children born since their arrival are not included in the data transferred from the camps, which was used to calculate consumption. They have also stated that delays in the arrival of food rations for 1-3 months is a major ongoing problem.

*I don’t have a job, I’m not working. As a [IDP] representative, I don’t even get money for transport to come here for different reasons. I sell a few kilos*

*from what I get to cover my other expenses such as transport costs. But we don’t even get the rations on time. We have to wait 2-3 months sometimes. We also don’t get other necessities such as soap and groceries.*

– IDP

## The importance of registration and IDs

A dual system of assistance has emerged in Adama based on whether IDPs are registered (e.g. if they came through the formal lottery process) and have an IDP ID card specific to Adama, or whether they are lacking one due to being unregistered, which meant they travelled to Adama independently of the lottery system. Those registered IDPs holding ID cards are privileged: the cards not only serve as documentation, but they also allow them to receive monthly food rations and free healthcare. The IDP card has the house code they live in, as well as where they are from. Having one makes it easier for them to be employed, as employers then have more information about them.

Yet in addition to the registered IDPs who were assigned by the regional government to live in Adama city, there is a significant number of undocumented IDPs in Adama who were assigned to live in other Oromia cities but relocated independently, or were not assigned to a city at all. As Adama has no municipal registration process, there is no formal way for these IDPs to be registered as IDPs or inhabitants of the city.

Undocumented IDPs face many problems as they are not included in any official data, making them ineligible to receive monthly food rations, free housing, access to interest-free loans, and other benefits that are available for registered IDPs. For instance, Mr. Mohamed, an undocumented IDP, does not receive any benefits from the government or city administration because he does not have an IDP ID card and did not arrive in Adama through the government’s IDP resettlement programme. Currently, he works as a casual daily labourer (wage employment) and his wife also has wage employment. From these jobs they are able to support themselves through earning about 3000 birr (\$100) monthly, but survival remains precarious.

*Undocumented IDPs who came to Adama by themselves should be given legal documents.*

– Mohamed/IDP

To address this, an ID programme led by the government will likely be launched in the coming years, and the Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU), in partnership with Adama City Level, Labour and Social Office, is in the process of implementing a pilot migrant registration desk in Adama specifically to address this issue, funded by Cities Alliance. However, as currently stands, there is a lack of data about the number of IDPs in Adama, as well as the number of those lacking ID cards and thus currently undocumented.

This presents huge bureaucratic hurdles to offering them assistance, and has a stark impact on the quality of life for many undocumented IDPs.

## Local individuals: contributions and experiences

Local individuals were primary responders to the crisis. Before the call for action, local individuals witnessed the emergency first-hand in their local *kebeles* where IDPs were sheltering, and took action by donating cash and clothing to those they encountered. The work of these local individuals demonstrates the importance of civil society in its various forms in offering assistance. By utilizing this assistance in ways demonstrated below, cities also have the opportunity to help foster positive interactions between locals and forced migrants, which in turn can promote acceptance and even social integration.

Soon after the IDPs' arrival the city administration organized a committee to help resettle IDPs in Adama. The committee was further divided under the sub-city and *kebele* level. The *kebele* committees were tasked with facilitating the support and donations from local individuals by collecting cash and in-kind donations on behalf of IDPs, which were then distributed in bulk. One interviewee summarized the structure as one of "individuals connected with *kebeles*, *kebeles* connected with sub-cities, and sub-cities connected with the city committee." This structure helped to avoid biased donations whereby only specific groups of IDPs benefited.

*Both Muslim and Christian communities received the IDPs like their family. Foods were served for three days in a row, such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner.*

– IDP

IDPs were not in a position to cook food for themselves when they first arrived in the city as they lacked money, groceries, materials, and a place to cook. Local individuals initially helped IDPs literally survive by providing food and taking turns to prepare hot meals to feed the IDPs in *kebele* compounds. According to one of our respondents, "one neighbourhood would bring breakfast, another would bring lunch and the other would bring dinner. Hot meals were the first response, then the rice donations continued...". No *kebele* meeting was called; instead, information regarding the cooking of hot meals was distributed through word of mouth. Individuals invited their neighbours to support and contribute to the welfare of IDPs, and these neighbours in turn passed the invitation on to their networks.

## IDP-led support: Iddir (Funeral Association)

In addition to locals helping IDPs, IDPs also offered and continue to offer support to each other through cultural mechanisms of financial sharing and saving. One main way is through Iddir, an indigenous voluntary association established primarily to provide mutual aid in relation to burial matters but also for addressing other community issues. It is one of the oldest informal self-help associations that exist in the country, emerging in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>21</sup> Typically an Iddir has 70-100 members though this varies considerably based on rural or urban settings. Households become members of the associations and pay regular, fixed contributions (e.g. weekly or monthly). Whenever death occurs among members, the association raises an amount of money (depending on the specific bylaws) and handles the burial and related ceremonies.<sup>22</sup> Rather than a means to financially save, Iddir offer immediate, emergency support in the face of death or illness.

Similar to the above-mentioned studies, our research found that IDPs in Adama offer each other support through Iddir. The emergency funds can be even more necessary in situations of displacement, and the associations also offer important psychological support and community building. In one instance, the father of one IDP in Adama died in Somaliland, but she did not have the means to travel to her family. Although Iddir members did not have money or food rations to offer her individually, they took the money from the association's collections and savings and gave it to her so she could attend her father's funeral service. They then collected money again to restore the association's savings. They also raised 30 birr per household to help pay for the wedding of one of the Iddir member's daughters, and among their 50 members divided tasks over three days to provide meals and hold a prayer for the new family.

In addition, the IDP's Iddir founder informed us that Iddir help to resolve conflicts between people in the IDP compounds, with the help of elders. They reported that social support is much more beneficial than money in solving their problems. When conflicts arose over the children of IDPs, for example, members mediated between both parties to try to solve the issue and then pray together.

In two Adama local communities, Iddir participated in a range of community development initiatives by giving IDP children school materials such as exercise books and uniforms, and collecting clothing from their communities and schools to donate to IDPs. In addition Iddir leaders organized a coffee ceremony every three months for women IDPs in a compound known as *Entebaber Iddir* ('Let us cooperate in Iddir'). This is a support system in which IDP women can talk about the problems and issues they encounter.

<sup>21</sup> Pankhurst, Alula (2008) The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of Iddir Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia. *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 41(1/2).

<sup>22</sup> Kibrom A. Abay, Kahsay, Goytom A., and Berhane, Guush (2014) *Social Networks and Factor Markets: Panel Data Evidence from Ethiopia*. ESSP working papers 68, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), pp. 174–90. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/p/ifpri/esswp/68.html>



One particularly striking example of the generosity of the local community is evident in the donations of 35,000 birr and 20,000 birr by two Iddir associations for the construction of resettlement houses. They gave the money to their specific *kebeles* and the government constructed the IDP houses. All 18 *kebeles* participated in this donation.

## IDP-led support: Equb (Rotating saving and credit association)

IDPs in Adama have also created rotating savings and credit associations known as Equb to offer each other financial support. Equb takes the form of regularly held meetings wherein members contribute a small amount of money for saving that is kept track of by the group, but ultimately gets lent out as part of a larger loan for a group member. Every member receives the loan at some point, although the timing is generally decided randomly through drawing numbers. Beyond offering a savings mechanism, which may be particularly valuable for unbanked populations, Equb also offers members an amount of money many would otherwise be unable to accrue on their own at once, which can help expand businesses, build or rent homes, and more. Individuals may also join Equb mainly for the purpose of saving, such as to deal with emergencies or purchase household items. Compared to Iddir, Equb usually tends to have fewer members and run for a limited and specified period.

In Adama's IDP settlements, women offered each other critical support through forming their own Equb programme in their compound and contributing 12 birr every Sunday. Of

the 12 birr contributed, 2 birr goes for tea/coffee and 10 birr goes to the person who hosted the IDP women in her home. Then, they decide the next IDP woman whose turn it is to take the next round of funding. During their coffee and tea ceremony, they discuss their issues, such as family problems, economic challenges, domestic violence, and opportunities for self-reliance. According to informants, Equb has had a great positive impact on IDPs' social relationship and economic empowerment.

While IDPs in Adama self-organized both Iddir and Equb, such mechanisms for both financial and social support could be explicitly promoted in situations of displacement by NGOs or even city bureaus. Moreover, research shows that similar types of rotating credit and savings associations, often known as ROSCAs, exist around the world, including in other displaced populations such as refugees.<sup>23</sup> However, it is only recently that they have begun to be utilized as a tool for displaced people.

## From emergency to permanence: Adama's post-crisis response

As a host secondary city, it was a huge responsibility for the Adama City Administration to settle IDPs in the city. As a result, the city administration requested help from different stakeholders, which involved assisting in resettling the IDPs by building 2000 houses. The main actors who



<sup>23</sup> Easton-Calabria, E., and Hakiza, R. (2020) In the Interest of Saving: Refugee-led micro-finance in Kampala, Uganda. *Development Policy Review*, doi:10.1111/dpr.12500

participated in building houses were private investors, local communities, churches, local communities, Adama University, and contractors. The following section presents the activities of local private sector actors in Adama, who were very involved in constructing houses for IDPs as well as offering other forms of support.

## Local private sector response

Ethiopian owners of private sector companies are very willing to be involved when humanitarian crises occur, including in response to climate disasters such as drought and flooding and forced displacement. For instance, when a large-scale displacement occurred in Amhara region, the regional government called for different stakeholders to assist more than 90,000 IDPs. The Amhara Development Association raised more than 610 million birr (approximately \$2,033,333) for Ethiopians of ethnic Amhara origin displaced from different parts of the country at one single event, held at Sheraton Hotel in March 2019.<sup>24</sup>

The majority of the financial support collected by the Adama Government Communications Affairs came from the private sector, attributed in large part to the media coverage received. The bureau officer stated, *“Most of the private sectors were competing against each other to get media coverage because whenever someone donates, we provide media coverage on roundabout screens for free... therefore, the private sectors and investors donated a large amount of money.”*

Private sector actors supported IDPs through:

- Providing in-kind support including basic necessities such as food, clothes, mattress, and blankets when they arrived at Adama. As both registered and undocumented IDPs often had very few assets or cash at hand at the time of their arrival, such provisions were crucial lifesavers for them. All in-kind support that the local private sectors gave went to the *kebele* administration and then the administration passed it to the IDPs.
- Building houses and other buildings for the IDPs. A private car assembly firm built 64 houses worth about 3.5 million birr (about US \$116,000). Another food complex company built 112 houses, which is three times more than what was requested by the city administration. The company spent about 7 million birr to construct the houses. The company also provided materials to the IDPs which helped to furnish Mushema (a specific type of plastic carpet that is very common in the Harari Region where the IDPs came from) in each house. In addition, the private sector actors constructed churches and mosques for the IDPs in their compounds.
- Offering wage subsidies and employment opportunities for IDPs. Several private companies employed IDPs after an official request of the sub-city administration. Registered IDPs were preferred as they had documents

that others lacked. Even so, employment often did not last long. In one case, a manufacturing company hired 125 IDPs; however, their employment lasted only one month of their training period because the IDPs mounted illegal strikes in the manufacturing compound twice in one week, leading to considerable financial losses for the company.

- Visiting the IDP compound during the holiday season and celebrating with them by bringing cows and foods.
- Buying lotto lottery tickets issued by the regional government as a form of fundraising.

Despite making sizeable contributions, some company owners complained that their donation was not tax deductible and that the government lacked transparency with regard to the money collected for the support of IDPs. Consequently, the owners were not incentivized to contribute more to the IDPs. However, many did benefit from media coverage, and thus used their donations as a marketing strategy. Ultimately, competition for free media coverage in exchange for donations played a huge role in successfully mobilizing funds.

## Housing and utilities

After funding for housing construction had been raised, the Adama City Administration assigned one of the governmental sectorial bureaus, the Adama Housing construction bureau, to take on the task. Four IDP resettlement housing areas were constructed after the IDPs arrived in the city, including Chekeno 1, 2, and 3. Sekelelo (the fourth resettlement area) had already been constructed before the IDPs arrived in Adama. As soon as Chekeno 1 was completed, the sub-city and *kebele* determined which IDPs would live there. They also conducted an investigation into invalid applications for housing by locals who claimed to be IDPs in order to secure free housing, ensuring that only registered IDPs were offered these. Unregistered IDPs had no recourse to housing support, meaning that they were at higher risk of homelessness and their situation was often much more dire than for those who came by the national lottery.

Based on a lottery system, the housing and construction bureau distributed the houses for 1,340 registered IDPs. Since the main private house buildings were constructed using temporary materials such as wood, cement, and corrugated iron sheet, the bureau plans to undertake future construction using permanent materials.

The Adama Housing Construction Bureau had multiple tasks, including:

- **Landscape preparation:** The land where the city administration decided to build IDP houses was heavily forested, so the bureau was tasked with preparing this forest land for IDP house construction.

<sup>24</sup> Borkena Newspaper (2019) Amhara Development Association raises 610 million birr to support IDP. Available at: <https://borkena.com/2019/03/16/amhara-development-association-raises-610-million-birr-to-support-idp/>





Sena Seba primary school for IDPs within the IDP settlement

- **Road construction:** Initially no suitable road passed through the IDP resettlement area, so the bureau constructed one, which helps IDPs connect with the city.
- **Water drainage:** The bureau constructed a drainage system in the IDPs' resettlement area to ensure access to running water.
- **Housing allocation:** The bureau allocated houses using the random lottery method based on IDP ID numbers.

The work undertaken to build houses, and the collaboration to raise funds to build them in the first place, is laudable. At the same time, the location of the settlements has posed challenges for the IDPs living in them. Many lack the funds to take a bus or motorcycle into town, which means they must walk over 45 minutes in order to access markets to buy or sell goods, or attend secondary schools. This has an obvious impact on their ability to earn an income and become educated, and also affects their chances to interact with locals and integrate into Adama.

## Electricity

After the IDPs were settled, two other government bureaus – Adama Electricity Cooperation and Adama Water Sewage Bureau – began supplying electricity and water for the IDPs. Adama Electricity Cooperation incurred a cost of 2.4 million birr (approximately \$10,500) to provide electricity, including new lines, transformers, conductors, and extension cables. Initially, 724 households received individual counters to track their electricity use. Due to a shortage of cables, there has been a delay in reaching all of the registered IDPs. However, the bureau did provide street lights to improve the

safety of the settlement. Notably, over 1,340 IDPs have had free electricity for the last three years.

## Water and sanitation

The water and sewerage bureau spent more than 3 million birr for materials to help distribute free water to the IDPs sites, which is provided for the community as central water stations. The water and sewerage manager stated: “Actually, there was no need for a call to action to support the IDPs with a free water service. The community facilitates the support of IDPs and as an institution we participated by distributing water for IDPs.”

At the same time, this has placed a burden on local hosts. One local community member said: “The cost of water bills has dramatically increased since the IDPs arrived in Adama. I asked the water bureau why it happened, and they said to cover the free water service for the IDPs.” Although this claim could not be verified through our research, it presents further evidence of assumptions related to the impact of IDP arrivals on local hosts, who are often struggling themselves. This suggests a further need for sensitization on IDPs for locals in Adama as well as further study on the real and perceived impacts on hosts.

## Job opportunities, training, and financial support

According to different sources, some IDPs have received employment opportunities on a limited basis, mostly in the

private sector with help from the government. However, these were primarily available to youth IDPs only, and of these several IDPs claim that due to a lack of skills training and cultural differences, they were forced to resign.

In addition to helping IDPs find decent jobs in the private sector, the Adama City Administration has offered an interest-free loan to those IDPs with identification cards and a business licence. By forming business groups, some IDPs have received 20,000 birr (about \$625) per person. These business groups can be among families and/or friends over 18. However, IDPs reported that the market they were allocated to trade in was too remote from passing trade to develop profitable businesses, and delays to food rationing resulted in many spending the loan on food rather than on businesses to become self-reliant. This may put their ability to repay the loan, and their housing that is attached as collateral, in jeopardy.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (Devex) also became involved in supporting the IDPs through job creation and employment opportunities. This governmental bureau worked in collaboration with Oromia credit association, Social and Labor affairs, city job employment, and the job opportunities office. The responsibility of the bureaus was to register the youth who were capable of working and provide skills orientation. The bureau then contacted different private sectors for employment opportunities. At the time, there were some private sectors which had shown interest in employing the IDPs. In addition, some got involved in the informal business of selling goods on the streets, which the government supported by grouping them, providing loans and giving them space to work. However, challenges remained. As one informant shared:

*About 33 million birr was granted to the IDPs as loans from one source/branch (one loan office). The IDPs were given a space to work, trading centre and a place [resettlement area] to live. As these IDPs were the first to come to us and report that they needed help, the City Administration gave them the working space. There was no space available for those who came after them. For example, IDPs who worked on animal husbandry who needed a lot of space were left without. As 151 groups focused more on selling items, they developed small shops, yet those IDPs without work spaces were forced to operate businesses from their homes or rent a place to work.*

After the Micro and Small Enterprise bureau had made arrangements for the IDPs to work, the Oromia Credit bureau offered loans without interest and a training course on credit and savings before they were given the money. The bureau provided about 41 million birr in loans to 2,100 individuals, although not all IDPs received these due to budget constraints. To qualify for the loan, IDPs were asked to demonstrate their business plans and work places, and took their property documents as guarantees before releasing funds. As one bureau employee explained,

*We usually ask them if they have any previous experience with the work. We first give them 50% of the fund, and then we check their progress regularly before we give them the remaining 50% of the fund. We give them a one-year grace period. The overall payment period is three years.*

The bureau director reported that most IDPs saved the loans that were made to them.

## Challenges of integration

While the majority of our informants shared that they were happy to have been resettled in Adama, there are ongoing challenges with integration. Many of these relate to the issues mentioned above, including the location of settlements, housing, and water access.

According to our research, in the two years since IDPs' arrival in Adama, at least two major conflicts have erupted between IDPs and local communities. One issue appears to have been religious, as most IDPs are Muslims while the locals living near the resettlement area are Christians. The proximity led to tension between a church and a mosque near the sites. Locals burnt a mosque and killed at least four IDPs because they claimed the IDPs had intended to destroy the church. However, IDP informants as well as the local government did not have any evidence demonstrating this intent.

There also were assertions that this tension arose due to conflict over water access, as it was reported that IDPs were refusing to allow local communities (who previously used the land where the IDPs settled) to have access to the free water and were in some cases even charging them. However, this could not be confirmed through our research.

The second dispute between the local community and the IDPs arose over a marketplace that was originally built near the settlement for IDPs, as locals felt that they also had the right to sell their goods there.

These conflicts demonstrate the importance of appropriate locations for settlement sites and the need for clear communication between those authorities designating sites, IDPs, and surrounding locals both prior to and after resettlement. The latter conflict may also illustrate the need for economic support for locals as well as IDPs. Social tensions between IDPs and local communities have remained as time has passed and some IDPs fear for their security.<sup>25</sup>

The following sections review research findings by theme, namely the experiences of and support offered to IDP women, education provided to IDP children, and healthcare assistance to IDPs in Adama.

<sup>25</sup> 'For more information on IDPs' integration, see Easton-Calabria, E. (forthcoming) Success Twinned by Challenge: An urban IDP response in Ethiopia. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*.



## Experiences of women IDPs

While displacement is always difficult, research shows that it exacerbates the violence and discrimination habitually faced by women. In Adama, IDP women face regular violence and have high workloads in the home. It is common for IDPs to live in large families of 5–6 children, and the birth rate has increased since resettlement. Since the responsibility for childcare falls primarily to women, it is essential to provide additional support to IDP mothers during and after resettlement. In Adama mothers and babies did receive baby food and sanitary pads at the beginning of the crisis, but this was inadequate and was actually reduced over time, while the birth rate increased, resulting in numerous reports of miscarriages and deaths of infants.

*I got beaten when I went to fetch wood for fuel. I reported the case. The people who beat me were in jail for 2-3 days and they got released. So, I personally don't think there is anything that the government has done for women. One thing I've noticed is when some of them gave birth, they got a few things such as oil, pots, and stuff.*

– IDP

Adama's Women, Children and Youth Affairs Bureau provided basic needs such as food, milk, sanitary pads, mattresses, blankets, and diapers for women who needed special attention, such as pregnant women and infants. However, this support has also reduced over time. In addition, the bureau cooperated with various stakeholders such as government, NGOs, and social entities to tackle this problem. For instance, they acted as interlocutors between various stakeholders and IDPs, by collecting resources and distributing them to IDPs based on their family size.

Since the bureau did not have a budget for supporting the IDP women and children, it tried to approach different stakeholders to collect donations that would help IDPs. Donations are partly collected from various NGOs and partly obtained from women associations, city administration, and local cooperatives such as Equib. The bureau works in close collaboration with the women's association. Both supplied food and other materials to the displaced people at the *kebele* camp for around six months. This was a much longer span of time than many other actors, and served to form a strong bond between many IDPs and the bureau. The bureau also provided a variety of other support, including psychological counselling and safe homes for women suffering domestic abuse, known as *Setoch Marfia*.

As time has gone on, the situation for some women has slowly improved. This is confirmed by the chairman of *Entebaber Iddir*, who explained, “Some [IDP women] have even started working, they are no longer begging. They sell charcoal, spices, small things ... some have settled already.”

The Adama Women's Association also contributed to IDP women's and families' well-being. The Association has 171 members, most of whom are Adama locals rather than IDPs. It offers financial and social support to members,

The Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development (AWSAD/SASA) was established 14 years ago by Ms. Mariamwork, a former Supreme Court judge with experience in working on cases of gender-based violence, which motivated her to establish the association. The Association employs 107 full-time staff who mainly support vulnerable groups such as women and children across its five temporary shelters in Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Dessie, and Adama. During the IDP crisis, the organization provided mattresses, blankets, flour, oil, and sugar to 200 households, and additional support such as housing and medical assistance to pregnant women and women experiencing domestic violence. As the founder explained:

*There was also one case where a young woman saw her parents slaughtered in front of her during the conflict. We took her in and gave her the help she needed, including psychological help. We then helped her look for the rest of her family and found her grandmother, who we helped her return safely to.*

– Association for Women

who contribute on average 50 birr per month, which is then provided to women as loans. This lending system empowers women and makes them economically independent. When the IDPs arrived, the Association's leader called its members for a meeting to discuss how to support the IDPs. At that time, the regional government implemented a lottery system for resettling IDPs, and each member of the Association bought lottery tickets at 20 birr each (18,000 birr in total). The Association began supporting IDPs with in-kind goods such as clothes, mattresses, and material to build houses. It also linked the IDPs to consumer associations so that the IDPs could buy their basic needs, as consumer associations only allow members to buy items from their shops. Moreover, the Association supported IDPs during mourning periods by providing food such as rice and meat.

In 2018 the International Rescue Committee (IRC) also worked to support women and girls in Adama through its ‘Girl Shine’ programme, which aims to support, protect, and empower girls in humanitarian settings. The programme incorporated a life skill curriculum for young IDP girls and positive parenting curriculum for IDP caregivers and adolescent parents. According to our informants, the IDP community is facing serious challenges such as high rates of early marriage, cases of rape, and unprotected sex. Although there are many cases of domestic violence, instances of forced early marriage are rarely perceived as a problem, as getting married at a young age is a largely accepted norm.

As part of the Girl Shine curriculum, IRC provided dignity kits for 1,800 vulnerable women and capacity-building training targeting IDP women and girls. Although the capacity-building training is not a proper school education and the teaching method is different from a lecture, the





Inside Sena Seba School

© Gezahegn Gebremedhin/Delina Abadi

organization provided knowledge on adolescent life skills and instructed about positive parenting. IRC also converted two of the classrooms at the Sena Seba school (the school for IDPs) into a furnished safe space for girls where sessions were held. The programme was able to introduce attitudinal and behavioural change. Besides creating job opportunities for some IDPs as part of the Girl Shine programme, IRC also had a plan to work on water supply in the IDP community.

Unfortunately, despite wide interest shown by the adolescent IDPs themselves, the Girl Shine programme lasted only five months due to major opposition from the IDP community and challenges from government bureaus. During the five months, the organization spent about two months trying to negotiate and resolve the issue. The opposition primarily came from the community and religious leaders (the Sheikhs) who are particularly influential in the IDP community. They believed that the programme's agenda contravened their Islamic religious beliefs.

*For example, a young girl was raped. A health extension worker heard about her and gave the girl a post-pill to prevent unwanted pregnancy. However, the health extension worker was severely beaten by people in the community who claimed that she was trying to destroy the Oromo tribe... Human rights violations are very high; unfortunately, we can't do anything about it.*

— IRC employee in Adama

Besides our informant from IRC, other sources also indicated and confirmed the major opposition from primarily

male community and religious leaders who believe that the programme promotes sexual orientations not accepted in much of Islam. On one occasion when IRC invited the influential community and religious leaders to clarify the aim of the programme, the invitees did not accept the per diem, thinking that it also contradicted Islam, as they assumed interest would be charged on the money offered by the organization as compensation for their time. Our respondent also expressed the challenges she faced in communicating with these leaders – despite speaking both Somali and Afaan Oromo and also being a Muslim.

## Education

Like many forced migrants around the world, many IDPs in Adama face barriers to accessing education. The school structure of Adama city is similar to other cities in Ethiopia, with both private and public schools. While IDPs can attend private or public schools, most attend public schools due to financial constraints. Adama city has a cluster division structure of schools designed by the Ministry of Education, and the Adama Education Bureau plays an important role in organizing school supplies for public schools. It also helped open a school for IDPs.

The resettlement area is served by one school, Sena Seba, which was constructed by the city administration and the Education Bureau to educate IDPs from kindergarten to 4th grade. The school is free for every IDP, and aims to provide access to education for younger IDPs (between the

ages of 4 and 13) within close distance of their homes. To make it accessible for everyone, the school has a multi-shift (morning and afternoon) programme. All classes are taught in Afaan Oromo.

There are on average about 65–75 students per class and an overall 870 registered students in the school (Figure 1). Initially, there were 1,200 registered students, however, the dropout rate is high due in part to the lack of a school feeding programme and security issues. The absentee rate is also high, as many children help their parents during school hours. Although, there are slightly more registered boys than girls, one teacher at the school reported that girl students tend to miss school more than boys because “they have to work [house chores] or they need to take care of a family member who is sick.” Figure 1 shows the students’ gender breakdown and class size at Sena Seba school.

The large influx of IDP students has affected the capacity of other public schools, as after completing 4th grade, IDP students attend public schools nearby. For example, in Odaa Sadarakaa school, the total number of students in a class rose from an average of 80 to 100–120 students. This school offers education to about 285 IDP students from kindergarten to 8th grade. Students pay only 40–70 birr (\$1.3–2.3) per month, while IDPs do not pay at all. The school also provides school supplies and donation of uniforms for students in need, including IDPs.

Sekekelo is another public school (up to 8th grade) around the resettlement area that enrolled many IDP students, adopting a multi-shift schooling programme. According to our interviews, there was a maximum of 430 students in the school before the crisis and there are now around 712 students including IDPs. It was mentioned that there are only about 24 students in grades 5–8 at age 13 or 14. Most of the IDP students are between the ages of 7 and 11, and are in grades 1–4. This is due to the limited space in the school.

According to the school principal, “[The] standard class size is 50 students per class. [However] because the younger ones cannot travel far to attend school, we decided to take in more younger kids.”

## Challenges in IDP education

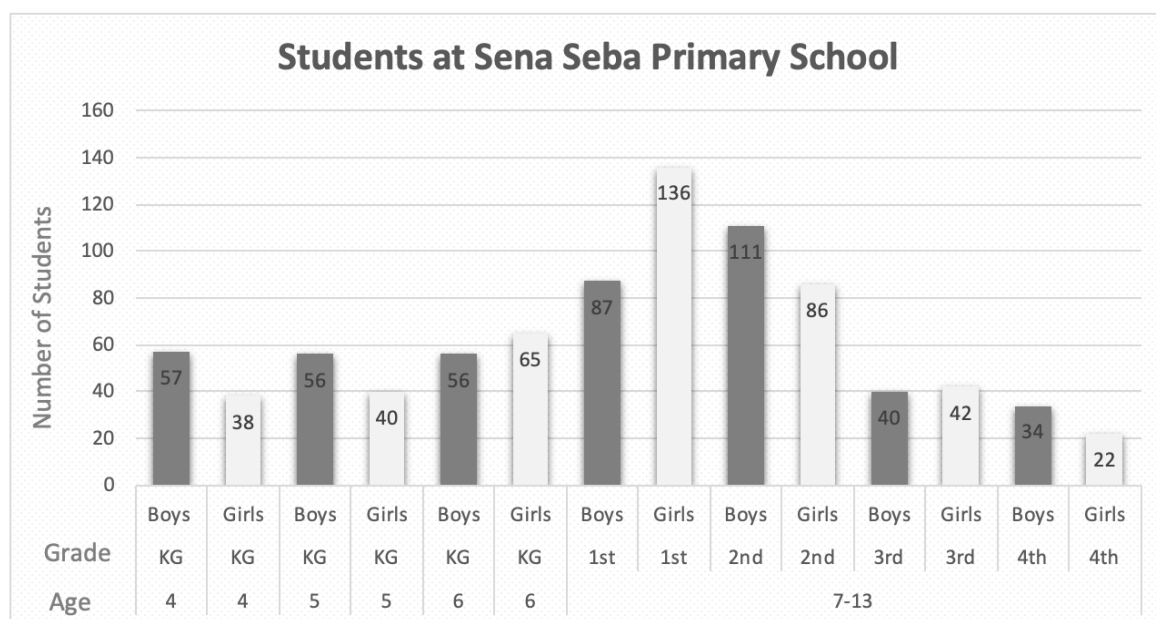
**Loss of documentation:** Students arriving in schools in Adama did not have their school records from previous years’ education. This presented a challenge for schools to register and ascertain students’ grades, despite the *kebele* providing a support letter for the IDP students. In some cases, schools had to ask other people, including families of the students, to determine which grade they should be placed in. As a result, some IDP students were placed in the appropriate grade but were not able to keep up with the course material. In such cases, schools moved IDPs to lower grades. The loss of documentation was also a problem for the staff, as the principal of Sena Seba school reported not having his degree certificate nor his supporting materials with him when he arrived in Adama, and had to rely on people back home who sent his documents to him, which is not possible for every IDP.

**Financial pressure on the government:** The costs of opening a school, hiring teachers, and providing a transport service for the IDPs are significant, and this has not been easy for the city administration, especially since it was not part of their budget. Consequently, Sena Seba school faces a shortage of supplies of stationery, teaching materials, and sanitary supplies.

### Financial pressure on IDP parents:

- **Transportation cost:** Teachers as well as IDPs have reported that transport is an issue. The cost of transport puts pressure on the parents of IDP students. Most public

Figure 1: Overview of students at Sena Seba School



Source: CRC Cluster Supervisor

schools are located in the centre of the city; schools in the outskirts of the city and in new neighbourhoods are often private schools which the IDPs cannot afford. The significant distance from the resettlement area to most public schools is a challenge for pupils, who mostly walk to school and often arrive late as a result. In some cases, parents have their children repeat 4th grade at Sena Seba or allow their children to stay home due to the difficulty of the journey and issues with transport.

- *Lack of uniforms:* The cost of buying a uniform has been a challenge for IDP parents. In public schools with a school uniform policy, some IDPs do not have uniforms, which can lead to stigmatization. On the other hand, the fact that Sena Seba school does not have a uniform has been reported as a major issue by teachers and the principal. A principal stated, “[they] are actually having a hard time managing [the] school because [they] cannot differentiate who is a student and who is not [since] they are not wearing uniforms.”
- *Lack of school supplies:* Despite the annual school supply drive and the collaboration of schools through the clusters to collect school supplies from private schools, shortfalls persist, which represents a major challenge for parents as well as the schools.
- *Lack of a school feeding programme at Sena Seba school:* The lack of a school feeding programme at Sena Seba school has been listed as one of the major factors for the high rate of school dropout. According to an IDP with two children, one of his children “is staying home because the school doesn’t provide food, [students] have to bring their own food ... but the older [child] is in school because [the school] provide[s] food for the student.”

#### Poor infrastructure of Sena Seba school:

- *Not a child-friendly space for learning:* The school lacks a dining hall, a proper sports court, a playground, sports equipment as well as a proper gate which allows students to leave the school compound.
- The school lacks *access to water and power*.
- *The restrooms are poorly constructed and not appropriate for children;* they are in desperate need of renovation.
- *Poor classroom conditions:* Classrooms were designed as temporary classrooms, yet no renovations have been

carried out since they were built, and there are insufficient classrooms for the number of students. The classrooms are constructed with steel, which can get extremely hot in the afternoon and is therefore an unsuitable environment for learning. The classrooms are separated with board partitions, which provide inadequate soundproofing, making it difficult for teachers to teach and students to learn.

#### Cultural gaps:

- *Conflicts:* During our field work, it has been stated several times that local students and IDPs did not get along initially. There were fights and conflicts on many occasions in schools.
- *Language barrier and accent difference:* IDP students tend to speak Somali first and then Afaan Oromo, whereas the local students speak Amharic and/or Afaan Oromo. According to teachers, IDPs’ pronunciation is completely different and often very hard to understand.
- *Difficult parent-teacher relationships:* Initially, IDP parents and teachers did not get along well, as communication gaps and cultural differences led to misunderstandings and conflicts. However, according to our interviews, the cultural gap has been minimized to a great extent, and students, teachers, and parents are now getting along much better.

## Good practices in IDP education

Adama city has undertaken positive work to help IDPs have access to education. The city organized a school bus to transport IDPs, opened a school that is closer to the resettlement area, provided free education, allowed a multi-schooling system, and promoted an annual school fundraising drive. The additional following good practices were also identified:

**Afterschool programmes:** Odaa Sadarakaa school has a tutorial and catch-up classes for 2 hours at the weekend for students who are not performing well in school. Although this is not specifically for IDP students, they face particular challenges, and therefore benefit widely from this programme.

#### IDP student performances according to teachers

*“When it comes to education, the students [IDP] are very good. They are eager to learn.”*

*“Their performance is surprisingly good. We started teaching them from the basics (from ABC) but they were able to grasp the information and move quickly... [a] university actually invited the top 20 students and gave them recognition.”*

*“Their performance is mixed. Some are outstanding, some are in the middle, and there are also low performing students.”*

*“[IDP students] easily understand the subject matter of the courses.”*



**Language preference:** Local and IDP students are given the option to take classes in either Afaan Oromo or Amharic, allowing IDPs to be taught in Afaan Oromo, which is their first or second language after Somali.

**Teaching job opportunities for IDPs:** Although their number is quite small, two IDPs were able to gain employment as teachers and one IDP a principal position at Sena Seba school.

**Educational cluster capacity-building programme:** Kindergarten teachers from Sena Seba school were invited for an experience exchange programme twice.

**Parent-teachers' meeting:** Meetings between teachers and parents to discuss students' performance and the parent-teacher relationship has helped address some of the cultural gaps between the locals and IDPs. At Sena Seba school, these meetings occur weekly, while at Sekekelo public school the meetings are held monthly.

**School clubs to promote integration:** In schools such as Geda Kilole primary school, IDP students are part of the education quality package, whereby every two weeks, student groups in every class (grades 5–8) discuss issues relating to their behaviour, their performance, and problems in the school. Students give advice to each other and report to their team leader and secretary. This platform has helped IDPs integrate well with the local students as well as overcome some language barriers.

**Adama Science and Technology University donation:** Adama University donated 600 chairs, two computers, blackboards, a photocopy machine, a bookshelf, and tables to Sena Seba school.

## The healthcare response

The health bureau has supported IDPs and provided help since the crisis. Initially, the bureau provided the necessary help in places such as *kebeles* and privately owned school

compounds where IDPs temporarily settled. After the construction of the resettlement sites, the health bureau utilized resources by converting one of the resettlement houses into a free emergency clinic for the IDPs until it closed in July 2019. While the emergency clinic dealt with minor medical cases, the city allocated a specific budget to help patients with serious cases that were beyond the capacity of the city's government hospital, to enable them to travel to Addis Ababa to receive the help they needed. IDPs now receive free health treatment from public health centres in the city. However, undocumented IDPs are ineligible for these services, and even those who are eligible often feel that there are not sufficient supplies or proper infrastructure to adequately meet their needs.

The health bureau not only played an important role in treating IDP patients, it also actively worked on disease prevention programmes. The programme included providing vaccines, malaria sprayings, and distributing malaria bed nets, through collaboration with UNICEF and other stakeholders in the region, and offering health education programmes. Additionally, the health bureau selected several IDPs for basic health training on communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria so that they could educate other IDPs living in the settlements.

According to the bureau, an inadequate budget for the emergency crisis was a major challenge. Our interviewee stated:

*[initially], health workers did not get paid for overtime or night shifts on time ... there was no money allocated for emergency purposes.*

However, as a member of the health bureau explained, the help they were able to offer was significant:

*If [the health bureau] hadn't daily checked the sanitation issue, treat dehydrated patients, provided ambulance service for pregnant women and provided preventives, the number of deaths would've been extreme.*

### Health officer experience

#### Can you tell us about your experience working here in healthcare and supporting IDPs?

*There was just a lot of trauma. We didn't have a ward [in the clinic], so it was especially hard for women [IDPs]. [IDPs] are most affected by upper respiratory tract infection. If there are five kids in one house, all five of them will get sick. There is also a diet imbalance. We didn't have a laboratory there; everything was done in that one room. We stayed in the resettlement area for more than a year. ... I used to see about 90 patients a day or 50–60 on a slow day.*

#### Some of the major challenges

*[IDPs] are usually affected by communicable diseases which are affected by hygiene. Family planning was very hard. There was one case where a 12- or 13-year-old was married and got pregnant. I was so shocked. I have noticed that most of them don't go to school. Early marriage is an issue. A woman can have a 6-month-old baby and still become pregnant.*

## The responses of a local health NGO

After the IDPs' arrival, a collective meeting was held with the health bureau, *kebeles*, the city administration, a local NGO, and other groups in response to the call for action. The NGO was provided with a kitchen material purchase list to support the IDPs. The NGO proceeded with purchasing and donating kitchen materials such as plates, cups, utensils worth more 20,000 birr, and also provided free healthcare for several months to IDPs.

## Challenges

**1. Loss of documentation:** Newborns and infants have been highly affected with loss of or absence of vaccine documentation. *"There was a problem with immunization. Babies who were born there [in the Somali region] started taking vaccines there, but they weren't able to finish. Some of them haven't taken anything till they were 9 months old. Because they had to travel [leave Somali] ... some were born on the road and some were born in the camps ... Therefore, babies who were born in different places through this whole process were disadvantaged"* (Interview, Health Officer)

**2. Poor infrastructure:** The emergency clinic at the resettlement area was poorly constructed, as it was a conversion from one of the residential buildings, and so not designed to treat patients in a clinical setting. The building comprised only one room, and hence lacked a separate delivery room/space.

**3. Budget shortfalls:** As the crisis was an emergency, the city faced budget constraints in meeting the arrivals' healthcare needs.

**4. Cultural gaps:** According to our interviews, there were huge behavioural and cultural differences between IDPs and locals across all aspects of life. Among the health-related cultural practices, chewing Khat and resisting family planning were the major ones IDPs reflected.

**5. Undocumented IDPs:** IDPs without an official IDP identification card did not receive free health services at any of the health care centres.

## Good practices

**1. Immediate response:** Many IDPs were able to get medical treatment while they were in camps and once they arrived in Adama city.

**2. Free health services and medication:** For the past two years, many IDPs have been receiving free health services and medication using their IDs. However, at times the right to free healthcare versus the actual *access* to it have been in contradiction with each other due to larger structural issues around lack of supplies.

**3. Training:** The health bureau's training programme on communicable disease directly contributed towards minimizing the spread of infection.

**4. Free childbirth care for women:** Women received free ambulance and child delivery services, which should continue to be widely promoted.





# Discussion and recommendations

In the face of significant constraints, Adama city impressively responded to the needs of thousands of IDPs. Successful communication about the appeal for support came from ‘cascading’ a single message through federal, regional and local government. Social media was an important tool in spreading the message to different actors and communicating with potential donors, including in the Ethiopian diaspora. As well as television coverage, posts on Facebook, YouTube and Telegram groups popularised the call for support. This widespread targeting gave many of our informants a feeling of positive obligation; once a critical mass was reached, offering support became a kind of actionable norm, even for those not directly called upon. The focus on both in-kind and cash donations meant that actors could contribute in various ways, involving contributors with and without funds, both groups and individuals, and those motivated by both altruism and self-interest.

Adama’s IDP response also offers some lessons. Firstly, while rapid mobilization can be successful for addressing some long-term needs such as housing, as well as emergency needs like the immediate availability of food, it appears to be more difficult to facilitate other needs such as employment, which require ongoing relationships and the availability of certain skills. The following presents some important points for discussion for both Adama and other cities around the world facing incoming forced migrants. Recommendations are then offered to the Adama City Administration and other relevant actors, which in many cases may be applicable to other cities assisting urban IDPs and refugees.

## Relief-development gap

Scholars such as Habte and Kweon (2018) argue that Ethiopia has been focusing largely on life-saving humanitarian action in response to the displacement crisis, with less emphasis on transitioning to development-oriented assistance.<sup>26</sup> This is reflected in the case of Adama, where IDPs are now only receiving food rations, with minimum attention to self-reliance programmes. Although humanitarian responses are necessary, it is important to examine *why* this approach remains necessary over two years after the so-called ‘crisis’, as well as what form of support may be more appropriate. As discussed in this report, IDPs in Adama have struggled to find

and retain employment, for reasons including the distance of the settlement to the city, the location of the market in which they were allowed to sell, and apparent differences in ‘mindsets’ and ‘culture’ that have made it difficult for employers and IDP employees alike. Larger structural factors such as the overall high level of unemployment in Ethiopia also play a significant role.

The result – as seen in many other situations around the world – is that of a relief-development gap, in which the transition to development support remains lagging or fully lacking even years after the arrival of forced migrants. This is especially notable in the case of Adama due to the concerted, collective, and largely successful efforts of different actors to support IDPs in the ‘humanitarian emergency phase’ after their arrival. The limited success thereafter in areas like employment offers important lessons for other cities. Not the least of these is the recognition of how IDPs *could be* making a greater contribution to Adama’s economy than they already are. Most of our key informants, including IDPs themselves, noted that they are very active and successful in domestic and international trade, with many networks, including to diasporas. These skills and connections could serve to increase Adama’s economy and transnational business and social networks. However, more support is necessary to actualize this potential.

At the same time, the government-led lottery system that allocated IDPs in camps to 11 different cities across Oromia is a promising practice of bridging the relief-development gap in and of itself. Based on our informants, the quality of assistance in these cities varied widely, with Adama ostensibly providing some of the most comprehensive support. This model presents an opportunity to build on in different contexts, such as identifying minimum standards for receiving cities to adhere to in assistance provision and the creation of a national or international financial support mechanism to receiving cities to promote IDP integration.

### Crucial support received in Adama according to IDP informants

1. Access to free education for IDP children
2. Forming Iddir and Equb groups
3. Access to free healthcare
4. Provision of food rations
5. Access to micro-finance and loans
6. Observation of Muslim holidays by private sector actors
7. Provision of resettlement housing

### Documenting and registering forced migrants is crucial for both emergency and long-term planning.

Many of the IDPs who arrived in Adama came by way of a lottery system that designated their household to go to one

<sup>26</sup> Habte, B., & Kweon, Y. J. (2018). Addressing internal displacement in Ethiopia. *Forced Migration Review*, (59), 40-42.

of 11 cities in the Oromia region. The number of IDPs was predetermined, and these were registered upon arrival. As a result of this, the city knew how many houses needed to be built and how many food rations provided. It seems likely that this played a large role in the overall success of the emergency response.

At the same time, it is evident that many more than the allocated number of IDPs arrived in Adama, independently of the lottery system. However, as they were undocumented, their number is unknown, and they did not have access to housing or food rations, thereby increasing their vulnerability. This affected not only IDPs themselves but those mandated to care for them, such as clinics and hospitals that at times had more patients than they could treat. Based on our research, no effort to document and register these IDPs took place, meaning that the city could not adequately support them, nor understand the true extent of the demand they placed on local infrastructure. Creating avenues for documentation, registration, and information dissemination is crucial in situations such as this, and could take place under the municipal government or in collaboration with an established, trusted NGO.

### **The location of settlements for IDPs and refugees matters for development and long-term integration.**

Members of government and policymakers must take a long-term view when settling forced migrants. They

should be housed in areas where they can easily create or find employment, have access to healthcare and schools, and make contact with local hosts. The failure to do so contributes to the creation of an isolated population unable to support themselves and lacking the social ties to integrate and make use of community social and practical resources.

### **IDPs need support integrating, too.**

While the integration of refugees remains a common topic of research and discussion, there is much less of a focus on the challenges that IDPs face in integrating. Sharing a language and ethnicity, or perhaps a religion and common heritage, does not obviate the challenge to belong in a new city. Our research found that despite initial support arising in part due to the IDPs being considered kin, IDPs in Adama are still largely seen as outsiders in the city. The more remote location of their settlements contributes to this. Locals we interviewed perceived the IDPs as being very culturally different, with different social norms that in instances clashed with their employers' expectations. While training on workplace expectations may be useful on a case-by-case basis, importantly, creating more opportunities for interaction and connection between locals and IDPs is needed. Shared cultural mechanisms for social and practical assistance, such as Iddir and Equb, offer one means for locals and IDPs to interact and gain trust.

## **Local recommendations to improve Adama city's response to IDPs**

To address the ongoing challenges discussed above, this research presents recommendations for key stakeholders in Adama city, notably the municipal authorities, to improve the city's response to IDPs.

### **Humanitarian support**

#### **1. Prioritize food rations for IDPs until economic integration is realized.**

Food provision should be prioritized in all budget allocation decision-making to ensure a healthy amount and variety of food is distributed to those most in need. Importantly, the amount should only be reduced when it is clear that IDPs have the means to feed themselves well – not due to an externally imposed timeline.

#### **2. Include IDPs in family planning and gender-based violence awareness-raising programmes.**

Engage with community leaders and influencers in the resettlement community to provide awareness-raising programmes on issues such as gender-based violence and family planning. This may be effective on its own, but could also enable NGOs or members of government bureaus to enter communities and address these issues without resistance and conflicts.

### **Social integration and overcoming cultural barriers**

#### **1. Work with community influencers and media outlets to offer learning and exposure through media to promote social integration.**

Actively promote the social integration of IDPs through cultural programmes in mass and social media, including entertainment shows, dramas, music, and news segments which involve IDPs and share their cultures.

#### **2. Share IDPs' interests and needs in formal and informal media outlets.**

Continue to reflect the voice of IDPs and cover current issues faced by IDPs, such as infrastructural and cultural challenges.

### **3. Ensure IDPs are integrated in social and cultural gatherings and initiatives such as Iddirs, Equbs, and coffee gatherings.**

To minimize cultural gaps and promote social integration while simultaneously helping IDPs better manage their finances, local community Iddirs and Equbs should invite IDPs to join. IDPs and locals could further participate in regular coffee meetings, where knowledge can be exchanged and ideas and practices shared.

### **4. Guarantee full transparency on sensitive decisions regarding land administration.**

In order to overcome conflicts over land property with the local community, the city administration should be transparent regarding the property of the resettlement area to minimize the tension and conflict among IDPs and the local community. Although land is owned by the government in Ethiopia, both IDPs and the local community have the right to know who can utilize the land, based on the government's lease. This will help address major security issues caused by the misunderstanding of the land proprietorship.

### **5. The city administration should offer support with voluntary repatriation for those IDPs who would like to return to their original homes.**

### **6. The city administration should create an environment where the IDPs and the local communities can meet frequently to reduce the cultural differences.**

### **7. It would be valuable to pursue more inclusive approaches to services that reach both IDPs and other urban inhabitants, i.e. a one-stop shop desk or social support scheme serving different vulnerable groups, including the urban poor and the IDPs. This could reduce animosity towards IDPs while also increasing assistance to others who need it.**

## **Education**

### **Role of the city administration:**

#### **Allocate a budget for school renovation and adjustment of existing programmes.**

1. Allocate a budget to renovate Sena Seba school and make it sustainable for learning and suitable for children, as it is clear the school will be needed long term.
2. Construct additional classrooms and accommodate students at least up to the 8th grade at Sena Seba school.
3. Introduce a school feeding programme.

4. Promote biennial or triennial school fundraising drives to increase the availability of school supplies for students and teachers (books and stationery materials) and uniforms.
5. Hire more teachers to reduce the current workload on teachers at Sena Seba school, which suffers from a current shortage.
6. Offer adult education opportunities for interested IDPs, and particularly influencers such as community leaders (community elders), IDP representatives, and Sheikhs, who are crucial community advocates.

### **Role of the Sena Seba school:**

#### **Schools should actively promote social integration.**

1. Teachers should continue to promote social integration through extra-curricular activities, sport, games, and school clubs. Promote group projects and exercises in classrooms so students can work collaboratively.
2. The school head should promote regular parent-teacher conferences to further minimize cultural gaps.

## **Health**

### **1. City administration, regional government, and the private sector should actively collaborate to raise funds specifically for health provision.**

Health should be prioritized during and after crisis, and sufficient budget allocated to provide clinics that can adequately serve thousands of IDPs, including creating separate delivery rooms for women and an examination room for children.

### **2. Create a system to offer and record the formal documentation of birth, death and immunization certificates.**

The systematic assessment and recording of immunization documentation for children of IDPs should be carried out by doctors and/or health officers. Doctors and health officers can issue vaccines and immunization documentation where necessary to ensure blanket coverage and protect the health of babies in both IDP and wider local communities. The births and deaths of IDPs should be properly documented and necessary records should be issued to IDPs. These records should also be kept track of by the city administration to have a better overview of the number of IDPs in the municipality.

### **3. Provide catch-up vaccinations for children of IDPs.**

In cases where a child has not received any vaccinations, catch-up vaccinations should be immediately introduced according to the World Health Organization (WHO) or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) schedule.

#### 4. Provide free access to healthcare for undocumented IDPs.

Adequate health provision should include access to free healthcare for undocumented IDPs.

## Infrastructure, housing and public services

### 1. Renovate temporary housing and drainage systems.

- Permanent building materials such as bucket cement should be used for housing, and temporary houses built from materials such as corrugated iron sheet, wood, and mud should be upgraded as soon as possible.
- The city administration should ensure that water drainage systems are resilient to the location, so supply problems are averted. In the case of budget constraints, the city administration should consider collaborating with INGOs, the regional government, federal government or the private sector to introduce sustainable water well projects in the resettlement area.

### 2. Public service for undocumented IDPs.

- The regional government should continue to cooperate with cities to resettle undocumented IDPs or return them to their original settlement if that is their preference.
- The city administration should introduce a registration office to help formally undocumented IDPs to officially settle in Adama. This should then allow them access to food rations and public services. However, the city administration should implement a strict security policy to ensure that non-IDPs do not receive benefits to which they are not eligible.

## Self-reliance

### 1. Provide work space and start-up capital – crucial resources for income generation – for IDPs to start their own businesses.

- Women and youth associations can play a role in alleviating the lack of working space faced by IDPs by lobbying the city administration.
- Relevant bureaus should facilitate loans from micro-finance institutions.

### 2. Ensure a robust system for micro-finance to identify and process loans for IDPs.

The Oromia Small- and Micro-Finance Association should implement a robust IDP identification system to ensure that only genuine IDPs can access loans provided by micro-finance institutions.

### 3. Eliminate housing precarity by delinking it from loan collateral.

- The Oromia Small- and Micro-Finance Association should consider extensions to the grace period of the loan repayment for IDPs struggling with debt.
- The Oromia Small- and Micro-Finance Association or relevant government bureaus should provide regular training for IDPs on finance management to help them to plan and maximize their resources.

View of Adama





## Areas for further research

Our research has highlighted several gaps and areas for further research both in Adama and on IDPs in Ethiopia.

### Undocumented IDPs

First and foremost, a lack of information by the local authorities and many stakeholders on undocumented IDPs demonstrates a crucial gap in our understanding of 1) IDPs' impacts on Adama, and 2) the needs, challenges, and quality of life of these undocumented IDPs. As many undocumented IDPs and other migrants live in fear of repercussions if their legal status is discovered, careful research must be conducted to establish the trust of undocumented IDPs and to also ensure they do not face adverse effects for participating in research. Due to the nature of this research, IDPs trained as peer researchers may be best suited for identifying and interviewing informants.

### IDPs during the COVID-19 pandemic

This report was finalized during the first few months of the COVID-19 global pandemic, meaning that our research was conducted prior to lockdowns and a state of emergency in Ethiopia. However, given that many of our IDP informants live hand to mouth and rely on petty trading to sustain livelihoods, we are deeply worried about the effect that lockdowns will likely have on their health and economic and mental well-being. Specific research is needed to understand the types of formal and informal support they are provided with during the duration of the pandemic, as well as the myriad effects of COVID-19 on their communities. Specific questions include:

- **What role has a history of displacement played in IDPs' mental/psychological well-being during COVID-19?**
- **Are IDPs in Adama provided healthcare and other assistance equal to that provided to locals during the pandemic?**
- **What effect does COVID-19 have on the provision of government food rations to IDPs and other support offered by city bureaus and NGOs?**

### Role of diaspora networks

The role of diaspora networks was not explored in our research, but may yield interesting and important information regarding the assistance IDPs receive, and

where their networks of support lie. The strength of the Ethiopian diaspora is well-known for contributing to national development as well as individual household well-being, and a deeper examination of the role of diasporas for IDPs could contribute to understandings of displacement and diasporas.

### Job opportunities and training for IDPs

The Adama city administration worked in two ways to ensure self-reliance of the IDPs. Firstly, the administration tried to convince the local private sectors to hire IDPs. Secondly, the Adama city administration has provided interest-free loans to those IDPs with proper documentation and a business licence. However, most IDPs remain unemployed and very poor. Deeper research into the local mechanisms that could help IDPs become economically independent in Adama is needed (e.g. access to markets, increased micro-finance loans). Specific questions include:

- **Given that most IDPs were independent traders before they moved to Adama, would it be more beneficial to offer support for self-employment or pathways to waged employment?**
- **In light of Adama's local economy, which sectors and type of work (e.g. self-employment or waged work) might offer more economic success?**

### Local integration

Despite having lived in Adama for almost two years, most of our informants cited a lack of integration as an ongoing challenge for IDPs. While the location of the settlements as well as different religions and customs between IDPs and locals were mentioned as issues, more research is needed to understand how to increase belonging and integration in Adama. Specific questions include:

- **Which mechanisms could narrow social and cultural gaps between IDPs and local residents in Adama (e.g. local gatherings, information dissemination, etc)?**
- **Which activities or changes could be undertaken by the municipality, IDPs, and local communities to facilitate stronger social integration?**



# Conclusion

As rates of both forced migration and urbanization rise, more and more IDPs and refugees will enter secondary cities like Adama. Following some of the good practices undertaken by the city offers possibilities to increase the coordination and level of responses in other urban areas. For example, a communication approach like that used in the Adama response could be used to spread the word about particular skill sets in a displaced population to a local or regional audience. Formalizing individual and business donations, particularly those above a certain amount, by making them tax-deductible may increase some actors' willingness to donate. Finally, registering all forced migrants upon arrival in cities can facilitate the assistance that is offered to them by providing better knowledge of how many have returned and the demographics and needs of those who remain.



# Annex 1: Research methodology

Before launching the research project ‘Responses to Crisis Migration in Ethiopia: Researching the Role of Local Actors in Secondary Cities’, the research team members travelled to Adama to pilot research questions on 20 August 2019. We discussed the following broad research questions with three major stakeholders: Adama University, the Department for Labour and Social Affairs, and the Adama Chamber of Commerce:

- What type of migrant does Adama have?
- Who are the major actors in assisting IDPs?
- How have local actors assisted IDPs?

Based on the pilot findings, we categorized the main actors who played significant roles in assisting the IDPs. These are: private sector, various government bureau, international and local NGOs, local communities, IDPs, and Equb and Iddir associations. Before officially launching the project and approaching those actors, two local researchers met with the mayor to request approval to undertake the research activity in the city. After launching the fieldwork, twice a week

two local researchers travelled to Adama and conducted interviews with local actors. During the course of the project the local researchers made 30 trips to Adama and conducted 67 interviews with respondents. We used snowballing sampling techniques to gain access to the informants through existing contacts in our fieldwork sites, and prepared well-structured qualitative research questions for each actor.

The researchers successfully interviewed 21 of the 28 government bureaus. Because of time and resource constraints, it was not feasible to reach all 100 private actors who were involved in supporting IDPs. Therefore, the research team interviewed the seven major private actors who made the greatest contributions toward the IDPs in terms of cash and in-kind donations. Other major actors which played a significant role in supporting IDPs were local and national NGOs, nine of which were approached by the research team to learn their best practices for supporting IDPs. Interviews were also conducted with six local community groups, in which they shared their experiences of participating in efforts to assist IDPs.

## Key resources

Abadi, D. (2020) IDP-led Women’s Assistance: New roles for traditional groups. Rethinking Refugee Platform, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford. Available at: <https://www.rethinkingrefuge.org/articles/idp-led-womens-assistance-new-roles-for-traditional-groups>

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