Expanding Economic Opportunities for Refugees in Ethiopia

WORLD BANK GROUP

Baseline Qualitative Results - Highlights

July - August 2025

The World Bank – Oxford University – London School of Economics

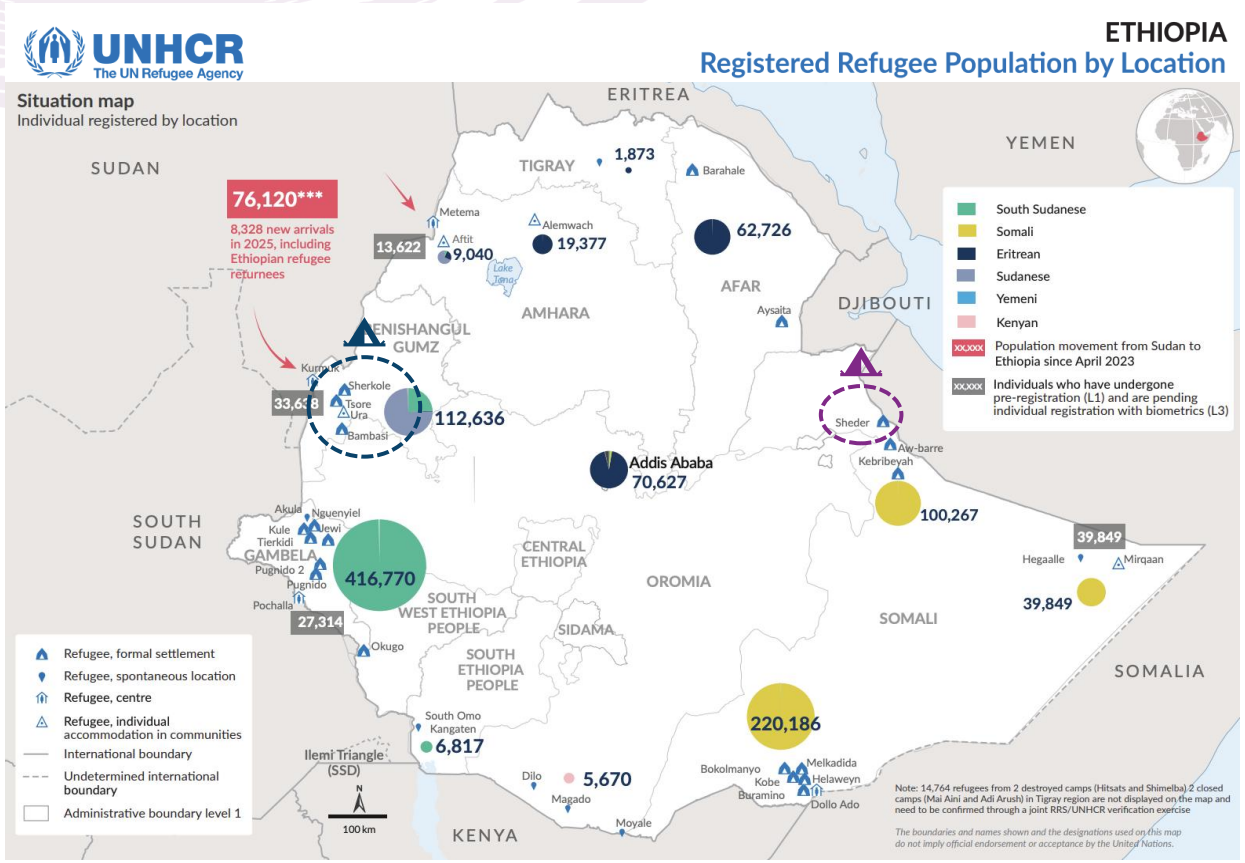
Objective & Methodology

Explore perceptions, challenges, and opportunities

36 KIIs, 20 FGDs complementing the quantitative survey

Refugees, host community, local officials, RCC leaders, RRS staff

Camp Profiles



Sheder

14,500 Somali refugees

Solar electricity and schools

Water shortages and poor road access

Tsore

39,000 refugees

Poor health services and no electricity

Unstable access to water

Sherkole

16,000 refugees

Unstable electricity and reliance on generators

Limited health and internet facilities

Bambasi

21,000 refugees

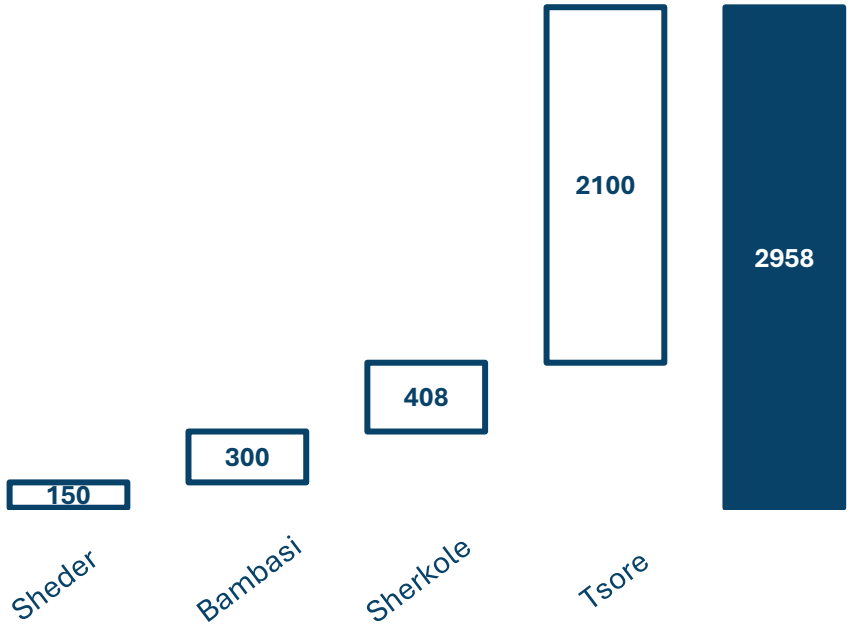
Unreliable electricity and medical supplies gaps

Strong farming ties with locals

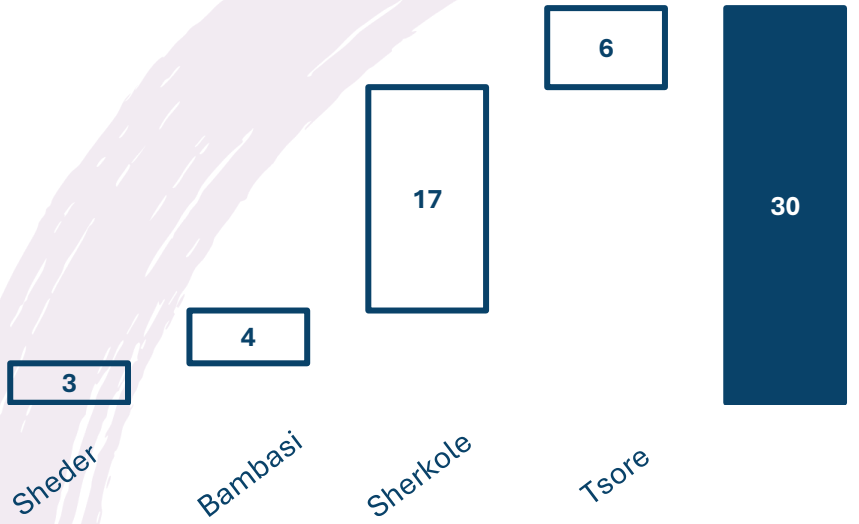
Official Use Only

Work Permits & Business Licenses (June 2025)

Issued Work Permits



Issued Business Licenses



Official Use Only

Economic Activities and Skills

Diverse Economic Engagement

Refugees participate in small trade, tailoring, livestock rearing, daily labor, and informal gold mining

Camp-Specific Businesses

Refugees in Sheder run shops and cement supply; in Tsore engage in agriculture and retail; in Sherkole in sharecropping and poultry; in Bambasi in agriculture

Skill Development Support

Programs like RHISN promote skills in poultry, goat farming, and shopkeeping, fostering refugee empowerment

Socioeconomic Integration & Empowerment

Despite limited formal jobs, refugees collaborate with host communities for farming and trade, showing income generation potential

Official Use Only

Key Challenges

Administrative Barriers

Long distances to offices, equipment failures, unstable electricity, and staff shortages delay work permit processes

Registration Delays

Delays in Fayda ID and TIN registrations in refugee camps hinder timely application processing

Social and Economics Barriers

Fear, misinformation, discrimination, lack of startup capital, and lower wages limit refugees' economic independence

Infrastructure Gaps

Poor roads, limited water supply, and unreliable electricity worsen refugees' ability to access economic opportunities

Official Use Only

Quotes

Refugee – Host Relationship

"The Somalia refugee community has a similar way of living, language, religion, norm, culture, and lifestyle with the host community. This contributes a lot to simplify life and secure peace for both communities."

Camp Coordinator

Economic Impact

"Before the refugees arrived, the economic activity here was weak. But after their arrival, the local economy grew. Refugees buy mattresses, clothes, charcoal, and livestock from us, so we have very good interactions."

Host Community Elder

Business License

"Before obtaining my license, I was fined thirty thousand birrs by the woreda government for selling cement without permission. After obtaining my license through RRS's help, I am now running my business legally without problems."

Refugee Entrepreneur

Host Community Concerns

"Local merchants who pay taxes face unfair competition from refugee merchants who do not"

"The host community believes that the job opportunities given to refugees could have been theirs."

Woreda Administrator

Official Use Only

WORLD BANK GROUP

Thank you!