UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Ethiopia

Gender Based Violence Refugee Response

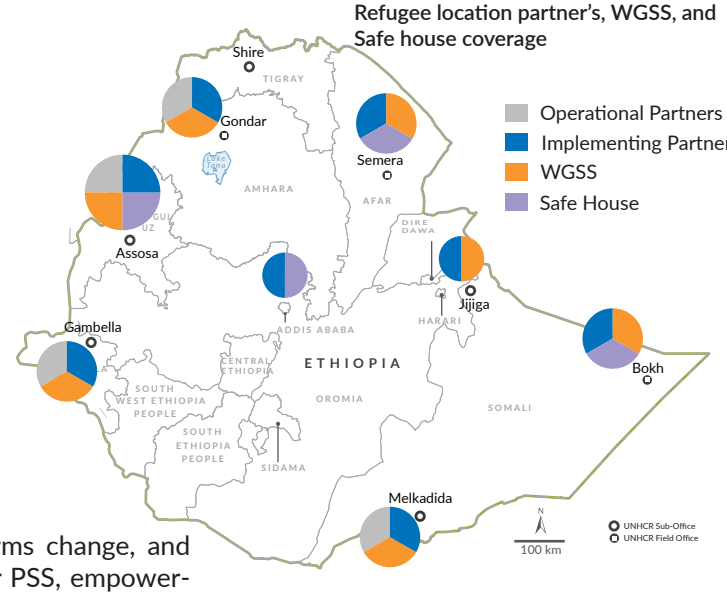
Factsheet | January - December 2025

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

UNHCR's GBV Strategy (2022–2026) guides prevention, risk mitigation and response across all operations in Ethiopia. The strategy prioritizes five core objectives:

- Strengthening women's and girls' and adolescents' participation and empowerment and transforming systems
- Strengthening access to quality multi-sectored GBV response services
- Inclusion of refugees in the national system
- Mainstreaming GBV risk mitigation within UNHCR in coordination with other humanitarian actors
- Strengthening the prevention of GBV

Refugee location partner's, WGSS, and Safe house coverage



PROGRESS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

1. **GBV Prevention (Awareness Raising & Social Norms Change)**
   - Prevention centered on community awareness, social norms change, and collective protection. WGSS served as key entry points for PSS, empowerment, SRH information, and referrals.
   - Dialogue based approaches such as Girl Shine and SASA! supported reflection on power dynamics and harmful norms. Male engagement groups promoted positive masculinity, and GBV volunteer networks conducted outreach, safety monitoring, and referrals at community level.
2. **GBV Risk Mitigation**
   - Safety audits were conducted in Afar, Amhara, Gambella, Melkadida, and IDP sites to assess lighting, privacy, safe access to WASH, markets, energy, and essential services, with strong community and stakeholder participation.
   - Mitigation actions included service mapping, information sharing, follow up on audit recommendations, safer distribution arrangements, and community consultations to inform cross sector adjustments.
   - Frontline workers from government, NGOs, and partners received GBV capacity building to strengthen survivor centered approaches.
3. **GBV Response (Multi-Sectoral Services)**
   - GBV response was delivered through case management at WGSS and GBV response centers, supported by trained providers and an integrated referral pathway including OSCs and safe houses.
   - Survivors accessed case management & safety planning, psychosocial support/counseling, dignity kits, referrals to medical, legal, and security service.

SOUTH SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In 2025, the increased influx of refugees from South Sudan significantly heightened protection and assistance needs in Gambella. In response, UNHCR, government, UN agencies, and implementing partners in Gambella region expanded GBV services to the new sites of Luakdong, Moun and Mattar.

7,900 (Individuals)
GBV prevention and awareness

95
Responders trained

2
Temporary WGSS

32 (100% men and boys)
Male engagement sessions

[1]**Girl Shine:** A specialized program model (developed by the IRC) designed to support adolescent girls in humanitarian settings. it focuses on providing them with life skills, social networks, and protection information to reduce their vulnerability during times of crisis. See also https://prevention-collaborative.org/programme-examples/sasa/

[2]**SASA!:** A community-led mobilization methodology (developed by Raising Voices) used to prevent violence against women and HIV. The name is a Swahili word meaning "Now," and it focuses on shifting the social norms and power imbalances that allow GBV to exist. See also https://gbvaor.net/

[3]**Male Engagement:** A strategic approach that involves men and boys as active allies and stakeholders in GBV prevention. It focuses on challenging harmful notions of masculinity and promoting equitable relationships to create a safer environment for women and girls. See also https://gbvresponders.org/adolescent-girls/

CONTACT: Sidra Anwar, Protection Officer UNHCR Ethiopia, ANWARS@unhcr.org | Hanna Getnet Maru, Assistant Protection Officer, getnet@unhcr.org

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KEY FIGURES

1,051,645 (262,911 HH)
Refugees and Asylum Seekers registered in the camps and settlements (94% of total)

12,000 (Individuals)
SASA!

15,547 (Individuals)
Dignity kit distributed

29
WGSS

33%
Safety and security (GBV response)

37%
Medicals (GBV response)

129,455 (Individuals)
GBV prevention and awareness efforts reached

3,500 (54 % male 46% female)
Responders trained
Capacity strengthened among caseworkers

8,490 (Individuals)
Education & Livelihood (Empowerment)

1,200 (100% men and boys)
Male engagement sessions

100%
PSS (GBV response)

23%
Legal cases (GBV response)

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- Limited Availability of Safe Houses: In 2025, several operations including Gambella, Amhara, Melkadida, and Jijiga had no functioning safe houses, leaving survivors without access to temporary protection or emergency accommodation. In Jijiga, the only safe house closed at the end of 2024 due to funding constraints. In Afar, although a safe house existed, it remained partially functional, significantly limiting its ability to support survivors.
- Access to WGSS remained uneven across locations. Addis Ababa had no functioning WGSS. In Melkadida, two of the five WGSS ceased operations due to funding shortfalls. In Gambella, six of the thirteen WGSS in protracted camps were closed because of limited resources, while only two mobile or semi permanent WGSS were operational in Luakdong. These gaps significantly constrained consistent access to psychosocial support and structured services for women and girls.
- Funding and partnership gaps: Partner and funding gaps continued to disrupt GBV service delivery in 2025, with several operations lacking consistent implementing partners or complementary donor support. Amhara faced service interruptions due to partner transitions, while Somali–Jijiga experienced frequent partner changes without additional external funding, undermining continuity. Tigray remained without partner support for the entire year. In Afar and Addis Ababa, reliance on a single IP limited service scale, and in Gambella, dependence on short-term donor grants led to recurrent gaps. Uneven partner presence in Somali–Melkadida created inconsistent camp coverage, and Somali–Bokh operated with only one partner and no supplementary donor funding, constraining programme scope and sustainability.
- Capacity gaps among service providers: Gaps in coordination across sectors, including WASH, Shelter, and Protection continued to undermine risk mitigation efforts and limit the overall effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

PARTNERSHIPS

GOVERNMENT
- RRS & BOWCA Somali region (Bokh)

UNITED NATIONS
- UNICEF
- UNFPA

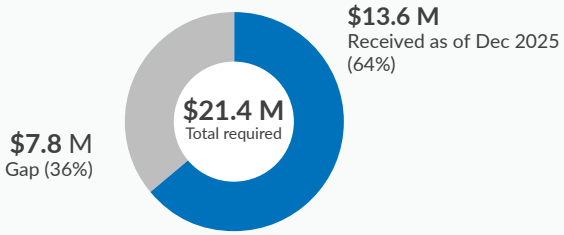
UN DONORS
- Switzerland
- CERF
- ECHO
- Netherlands
- KOICA
- BPRM

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
- EOTC-DICAC
- PIE
- IRC
- IHS
- IMC
- OWS-DF
- RaDO

OPERATIONAL PARTNERS
- CVI
- AAH
- MTI
- IRC
- EECMY
- PIE
- DCA
- AAH
- GOAL
- IMC
- RaDO
- MSF
- NCA

DONORS for OPs
- Irish Aid
- SIDA
- ECHO
- NORAD
- BPRM

FUNDING DEC 2025



UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the contributions to the Ethiopia Operation

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