

2019 Consolidated Participatory Assessment Report ETHIOPIA

Summary of Findings



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Introduction

In 2019, UNHCR Ethiopia in collaboration with partners undertook participatory assessments (PA) in the different refugee locations of Jijiga, Assosa, Melkadida, Gambella, Shire, Afar and Addis Ababa as part of the continuous and dedicated efforts of UNHCR and partners to develop partnerships with refugees of all ages and backgrounds and to promote their meaningful participation through structured dialogue. The PAs involved separate discussions with women, girls, boys, and men, including adolescents and people with specific needs in order to gather accurate information on the specific protection risks they face and the underlying root causes, to better understand their capacities, and to hear their proposed solutions.

The participatory assessments consisted of a process of information gathering and interactive analysis through conducting Focus Group Discussions together with desk reviews. This exercise continues to demonstrate that given the presence of different population groups in the Ethiopia operation, UNHCR needs to increase internal collaboration among the different functional units and Field and Sub-Offices through the community-based protection focal points that often lead the participatory assessments to ensure that the sectors' questionnaires and approaches are harmonized at the national level.

While collecting and analyzing the data during the participatory assessments, the field locations focused on the thematic areas of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Child Protection (CP), Education, Registration and Documentation, Cash-Based Interventions (CBI), Security and Access to Justice, Community Participation and Representation, Shelter, Energy and Environment, Livelihood, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Health, Food and Nutrition, Durable Solutions, and Onward Movement. As for the urban population, the refugee community in Addis Ababa prioritized six areas: Education, Peaceful Co-Existence and Social Cohesion, Refugee Documentation, Onward Movements, Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Access to Justice and Legal Aid.

This report represents views of refugees and constitutes a key tool to guide country programmes, interventions, planning, priority setting, course corrections, and evaluations. The entire programme cycle is more effective if informed by and adapted to the capacities and needs articulated by refugees themselves. UNHCR will work closely with relevant government counterparts and partner organizations, and use a multi-sectoral approach to address the protection concerns highlighted by refugees in this report. UNHCR and partners will, in particular, support operational coordination that ensures protection mainstreaming, emphasizes community involvement and supports self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in the national systems. UNHCR calls on all relevant actors to act on the recommendations stemming from this report.



Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

Main protection risks identified by refugees in relation to SGBV concern teenage pregnancy, underreporting of SGBV, domestic violence, limited referral pathways, lack of awareness about SGBV among new arrivals, sexual harassment, assault and physical violence. In Afar, refugees also identified among the protection risks the prevalence of Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP), such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and other SGBV cases brought before traditional justice systems.

Refugees who took part in the participatory assessments proposed solutions such as involving elders in eradicating harmful traditional practices, engaging women in decision-making processes, conducting awareness raising campaigns on harmful traditional practices and women empowerment, improving the capacity of school clubs to contribute to the prevention of SGBV, and giving special attention to street lights inside camps to minimize risks of sexual and physical assault.

Recommendations UNHCR, Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and partners should strengthen efforts towards **gender and women's empowerment** through **capacitating frontline staff** to mainstream gender in their programming. **Coordination and advocacy** with the national authorities **in line with the Global Compact on Refugees** to include refugee women and girls in the services provided by the national systems remains critical. The implementation of the National Action Plan to **mainstream SGBV prevention, risk mitigation and response** across sectors is encouraged, as it will uphold a shared commitment to strengthen accountability towards the protection of persons of concern from SGBV. **The involvement of men and boys** to support their integration within prevention and response programmes is also crucial. Advocacy on the **inclusion of refugee survivors of violence in the national systems**, namely the One-Stop Centres, should be considered a key strategic intervention towards sustainability of SGBV services. Targeted actions to **increase access to formal education** for **refugee girls** require continuous efforts. Programmes on the **prevention of Harmful Traditional**

Practices, enhancing community-based protection approaches, and facilitating **access to justice** should be given adequate attention to be able to continue addressing some of the challenges refugees raised in this assessment.

Child Protection

Child labour, Harmful Traditional Practices, such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, self-harm by children, early and forced marriage among teenage girls in some communities, trafficking and smuggling of children from the camps, adverse coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse (khat, cigarettes and alcohol) by children and youth, children with disabilities unable to meaningfully participate in different activities, including education, leisure and social activities were among child protection risks identified by refugees. In Shire, although the effect of smuggling children via Sudan and onward to Libya has recently reduced due to the closure of the route, young men in Adi-Harush, May-Aini and Hitsats camps noted that smugglers changed their route and started using air transport.

Refugees proposed to strengthen family-based care for unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs). This should include the meaningful participation of the Refugee Central Committees (RCCs) and other community structures in the identification of foster care, placement of children and monitoring of care arrangements. Additionally, refugees proposed construction of recreational facilities and the provision of adequate material supplies in the existing child friendly and youth friendly spaces. Further, refugees highlighted that UNHCR, ARRA and partners need to ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities in all activities. Finally, refugee communities proposed the strengthening of awareness rising activities on adverse effects of human trafficking and smuggling to address the risks associated with these phenomena.

Recommendations Together with ARRA, partners and the refugee communities, UNHCR needs to **strengthen the case management** component of the child protection programme. This includes timely identification of children at heightened risk, Best Interests Assessment (BIA)/Best Interests Determination (BID), implementation of the case plan, follow-up, review and case closure. To this end, UNHCR should roll-out the revised **Best Interests Procedures (BIP) Guidelines** in all refugee operations and **develop the capacity of partners and other stakeholders**. Together with ARRA, partners and refugee communities, UNHCR needs to strengthen the **linkage between child protection, education and SGBV**. To this end, operations should prepare concrete action plans to strengthen the linkage between the three sectors. ARRA, UNHCR and partners need to continue **strengthening community-based protection interventions, enhance family-based care arrangements** for UASCs and establish operation-specific action plans to **address harmful traditional practices and child labour**. There is also a need to advocate for meaningful **inclusion**, representation and participation of **children with disabilities**, and strengthen **awareness** about **risks of onward movement** and **smuggling**.

Education

According to the participatory assessments across the operation, optimal access to education is hampered by lack of adequate infrastructures (classrooms, WASH) and scholastic materials.

Some existing facilities are temporary or dilapidated. There is only a small number of camp-based and host community secondary schools. Refugees saw over-crowding and a poor learning environment as a contributing factor to low quality education. Students graduating from grades 10 and 12 have limited post-secondary opportunities to further their studies. Major barriers limiting access to national schools mainly in the urban context include Amharic as a school language, lack of clear certification policy on certificates, uniforms, hidden levies and long distances to schools. Refugees under the Out-of-Camp Policy (OCP) stated that they are not able to send their children to schools, because they do not receive adequate support from UNHCR and other partners. The exercise also revealed that existing schools are not inclusive to cater for children with specific needs. The quality of teaching is affected by absence of qualified teachers and limited learning time due to rotation schemes and teacher absenteeism. Refugees attributed low enrolment, particularly among girls, to early marriage, engagement in domestic chores, including income-generating activities to supplement household income. Lastly, limited awareness of the importance of education was cited as a contributor to a high number of out-of-school children and youth.

Refugees proposed the expansion of infrastructure and schools with appropriate inclusive facilities that target children with specific needs, provision of adequate support for refugees to access camp-based and host community schools through timely provision of uniforms and scholastic materials. Refugees also highlighted the need to tackle household level barriers to access education and the need to introduce education programs to improve awareness and literacy among them. In addition, refugees recommended addressing certification and language barriers preventing them from enrolling in the national education system. During the Focus Group Discussions, refugees noted that there is a need to increase post-secondary pathways and scholarship opportunities. Refugees also recommended continuous capacity development of teachers and non-interruption of learning in schools to improve instructional hours and tackle harmful cultural practices that affect the enrolment of female students.

Recommendations ARRA, the Ministry of Education, UNHCR and partners should continue **strengthening access to quality education** by constructing and **equipping key school facilities**, developing the **capacity of teachers**, **encouraging girls** and **children with disabilities** to attend school, and **empowering the community** to follow up on student attendance and **contribute** to **improvements in the school** and learning environment.



Registration and Documentation

Refugees mentioned miscommunication related to registration and documentation coupled with a lack of clear information about the Immigration, Nationality and Vital Events Agency (INVEA) as a challenge. In addition, refugees indicated that there is a delay of data transfer due to the limited number of staff assigned to do this work. Bureaucratic procedures to get replacements for ration cards for UASCs and crowded and time-consuming registration were among other challenges refugees indicated. Refugees also highlighted that the number of pass permits available at each camp remains low. The short duration of these permits does not meet their travel requirements.

Refugees proposed enhancing delivery of registration and documentation services through adding more staff dedicated to this task.

Recommendations It is recommended that the Government, and in particular the Immigration, Nationality and Vital Events Agency (INVEA), ARRA and other relevant stakeholders make all efforts to **strengthen protection sensitive vital events registration** for refugees. ARRA should consider developing a strategy to **clear the backlog of birth registration**. UNHCR, UNICEF and other stakeholders need to continue advocating for the **facilitation of registration of children** with only one parent.

Cash-Based Interventions (CBI)

Refugees indicated insufficient CBI support due to high and consistent inflation. They further added that items they need are not available in or around camps and that it results in additional transportation costs to markets, which are inadequate to supply both the host and refugee communities. The Jijiga Sub-Office indicated that discrimination against refugees by suppliers of goods is a challenge.

Refugees proposed to conduct market assessments and adjust cash interventions to reflect the inflation of the market prices. They also suggested to ensure availability of local products and to regulate prices.

Recommendations Market assessments should inform programming in terms of identifying items that can be provided through cash and in-kind assistance. There is a **need to combine** both **in-kind and CBI responses** in order to alleviate suffering and at the same time reduce the amount of time spent by women looking for jobs or items to sell to generate income. A **market analysis** is an important tool to support it and ensure the design of appropriate CBI assistance. **Child labour and early marriages** are adverse coping mechanisms that can also be **mitigated/addressed by introducing CBI** that target households where these children live. CBI can also be used as an incentive for **refugees** to take **active part in the construction** of latrines and schools. **Cash for work** carried out by refugees and host communities would support refugees to meet other **household needs** and acquire common assets. **Income-generating activities** can be started off using **cash combined with training** and in the long term will support household livelihoods.

Security and Access to Justice

Refugees identified major risks for women and girls while collecting firewood or walking in camps at night especially due to lack of proper night patrolling by community watch groups. Refugees in Gambella and Assosa considered as challenges the tribal tensions, competition over resources and sporadic fights caused by alcohol and substance abuse among refugees in the camps. Furthermore, refugees were concerned over the existence of discrimination against members of minority clans together with unequal representation in community structures, especially the Refugee Central Committees (RCCs).

In order to solve or mitigate these challenges, refugees suggested to strengthen law enforcement, install solar streetlights, expedite criminal investigations, and strengthen the role of community leaders to maintain peace, security and safety in the camps.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should **strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officials** and bodies and **community security police** and **sensitize** the refugee **community on their rights and responsibilities**, provide available **alternative energy** to mitigate competition over resources, involve religious and community leaders and other community structures in strengthening the relation between the refugee and host communities.

Community Participation and Representation

Refugees indicated that low representation of women and minority groups in leadership structures constitutes a major challenge. In addition, participatory assessments conducted under the Assosa Sub-Office revealed that refugees are not very familiar with activities undertaken by community structures and lack awareness about their functioning.

In order to address these challenges, refugees suggested to work more closely on women's empowerment and make community structures more inclusive by involving women, older persons and persons with disabilities. In addition, refugees highlighted the need to establish a well-structured election system and to create awareness about community structures among refugees, using services provided by these structures.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should increase the level of **community awareness** about **available services**, review the current representation structures and **ensure equal representation of women**, as well as inclusion of **ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities** and persons with other **diversity factors** in representation bodies in line with UNHCR's AGD Policy. In the context of inclusion, it is recommended that refugees are represented in the host community structures. It is also recommended to strategically **include leadership/representation training in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes**.



Shelter

Refugees were concerned about poor condition of shelters. Insufficient size of the shelters has compromised their dignity and privacy as family members of different ages and sex have to live together. Refugees also indicated that shelters are at risk of break-ins and theft. Refugees in the Gambella region pointed out that some shelters were destroyed by floods, and roofs leak during heavy rain, as there are no plastic sheets, and that a significant number of refugees are still living in emergency shelters.

To address these challenges, refugees proposed solutions such as identifying persons with disabilities and other critical specific needs to give preferential treatment in the allocation of shelter, provide larger shelters for families with a large number of family members, provide plastic sheets, renew existing shelters, and establish a joint monitoring mechanism to ensure minimum standards for shelters. Refugees also mentioned that those with skills can help with construction or renovation of shelters.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should work towards the **implementation of the 2017-2020 National Shelter Strategy**, which informs a collective and coherent response, based on available resources to enable refugees to access shelter solutions that provide **privacy, security and protection** from the elements, **emotional support**, and a **space to live** and store belongings in a **dignified manner**. ARRA, UNHCR and partners should also ensure **timely maintenance and rehabilitation** of shelters, while following the **prioritization criteria** for **persons with specific needs**.

Energy and Environment

Lack of adequate alternative sources for cooking exposes women and girls to protection risks when collecting firewood. Peaceful coexistence is also at risk due to frequent conflict between refugee and host communities competing over scarce natural resources. The protection risks are exacerbated by the frequent downturn of solar-powered public lights and home lighting systems because of lack of proper repair and maintenance and management of electrical equipment.

To address these challenges, refugees suggested to increase the provision of alternative energy sources for cooking, including briquettes, ethanol and kerosene, and the expansion of grid-connected communal kitchens through community-based and market-oriented approaches, including the organization of workshops run by trained refugee technicians. They also suggested an engagement of refugee communities in environmental protection and reforestation activities to reduce resource degradation and to maintain good relations with the host communities through shared management of the environment in and around the settlement areas.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should **reinforce the existing policies and guidelines** and **mainstream Environment and Energy (E&E)** into all sectors. They should also increase E&E advocacy roll-out using the E&E Working Group (consisting of implementing and operational partners, UN Agencies and other humanitarian agencies engaged in E&E activities) and other fora, as appropriate for support. UNHCR should **advise the partners on increased engagement** of refugees in E&E activities, including the **establishment of E&E cooperatives**. UNHCR should also encourage partners to **increase community-based and market-oriented E&E activities**. UNHCR should **prioritize E&E interventions** and to consider **energy as part of a lifesaving component**.

Livelihood

Limited livelihood activities and job opportunities in camps forced refugees to sell a part of their monthly rations, and in some cases resulted in theft, lack of access to credit services or capital to start small businesses, very limited job opportunities for women and persons with disabilities, and lack of skills training opportunities. Refugees further indicated that existing livelihood projects are not developed in line with skills and talents of refugees. In addition, refugees indicated the existence of unfair recruitment for work in refugee camps.

To address these challenges, refugees proposed provision of skills trainings to prevent them from idleness and adverse coping mechanisms. Refugees also suggested to deploy partners/organizations with a focus on livelihood and income-generating activities that will support them to engage in self-reliance programs. Refugees would welcome an increase in job opportunities for women, persons with disabilities and, in general, for skilled refugees in the



camps. They would also suggest creating closer linkages with micro-finance institutions and ensuring that livelihood projects are designed in consultation with them.

Recommendations ARRA, Immigration, Nationality and Vital Event Agency (INVEA) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) have jointly drafted procedural Directives for the issuance of work permits, residence permits and grievance mechanisms. It is anticipated that these Directives will be implemented in 2020 and will provide refugees with an opportunity to **access employment pathways**, where joint programs are developed with external actors. In relation to creating meaningful opportunities, UNHCR has partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to **conduct a comprehensive value chain assessment** exercise for all refugee hosting areas in 2020 in order to identify areas, where investments are needed to create meaningful opportunities. In addition, UNHCR has collaborated with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) and the Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) Agency to develop a Concept Note towards **the inclusion of refugees into public TVET systems**. It aims to provide **refugee youth** with an opportunity to **access public TVET institutions, vocational training** that matches required skills and accreditation that would ensure they are able to compete in the Ethiopian labour market. In terms of financial inclusion, UNHCR will seek to **facilitate financial inclusion** in public-private dialogue with commercial Financial Services Providers (FSPs) to explore how these actors can include refugees, and to identify possibilities for FSPs to receive a guarantee when providing services to refugees.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Refugees were concerned over possible health risks due to insufficient water supply and shortage of sanitation and hygiene facilities, inaccessibility of water points by persons with disabilities and poor personal hygiene. Refugees also identified the increase in health risks due to lack of latrines.

As a solution, refugees suggested to consider water harvesting methods during rainy seasons and to increase accessibility of water taps with improved water quality.

Recommendations ARRA, the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, UNHCR and partners should **continue providing safe and adequate water supplies** and strengthen community-based protection approach through **activating the water committees** across all camps and **ensure WASH issues are addressed in refugee-host community** peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution **fora**.

Health

Lack of proper health care services especially during evenings and weekends, poor referral mechanisms and lack of ambulance services for emergencies, scarcity and lack of medicine and medical examination tools, lack of specialized treatment, and poor laboratory services are major challenges refugees identified during the participatory assessments.

To mitigate these gaps, refugees suggested allocation of resources to ensure adequate supply of medicine and medical supplies. Further, refugees indicated the need to provide trainings for medical staff to be able to offer ethical and quality services to the refugee communities.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should **strengthen involvement of refugee population in** setting priorities and **designing health intervention** programmes with emphasis on prevention and affordable primary and emergency health care; engage with refugee populations on an ongoing basis explaining the rationale of **investing limited resources in most cost-efficient health interventions**, e.g. expanded programmes on **immunization, maternity care, and disease control** (e.g. malaria, TB, HIV, diarrheal diseases) over expensive individual interventions like cancer treatment or organ transplant; improve the **supply chain of medicines** and other medical supplies as well as **access to diagnostic laboratory services** at camp level through enhanced capacity (e.g. providing automatized diagnostic equipment); and **increase ambulance services** in each location.

Food and Nutrition

Refugees were concerned especially about inadequate food assistance and lack of food variety, delay in distribution of monthly rations, and limited attention to persons with disabilities in food distributions.

To address these challenges, refugees suggested that the income generating activities should be less dependent on the rations provided. Also, refugees underlined the need to give adequate attention to persons with specific needs such as persons with chronic medical conditions like diabetes and persons with disabilities during the provision of food and increase the quality as well as the type of food.

Recommendations UNHCR and partners should advocate with donors for a **full food ration**. UNHCR, ARRA and partners should facilitate **access** of refugees to **livelihood** options through **CRRF economic inclusion** (CRRF approach) to allow for **reduced**



dependence on food rations. UNHCR and partners should advocate with the Government to allow **cash assistance to replace food rations** in all locations and to facilitate that persons with specific needs can purchase food that is suited to their conditions. UNHCR, WFP and ARRA should conduct **joint monitoring of food distributions** to ensure that all **people with specific needs**, including people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions, are **prioritized** during food distributions.

Durable Solutions

Refugees identified among challenges the lack of vocational and language trainings, limited resettlement opportunities, as well as challenges in local integration due to negative attitudes of local communities towards refugees.

In order to address these challenges, refugees suggested to expand resettlement opportunities, and to facilitate a less bureaucratic mechanism by which refugees can use their IDs to go out of the camps and find jobs.

Recommendations UNHCR and partners should continue advocating with the Government to issue **work pass permits** for refugees, **increase job opportunities** and **allow freedom of movement** within the country. UNHCR should continue advocacy efforts with resettlement countries to **increase resettlement quotas**.

Onward Movement

Refugees indicated that smugglers are taking refugees through a different route via Uganda following the closure of previous routes through Sudan or Libya.

Therefore, refugees suggested increasing awareness about the risk of onward movement and expanding resettlement opportunities especially for those who have stayed long in refugee camps.

Recommendations UNHCR should continue **advocacy** efforts with **resettlement countries to increase quotas** and to advocate for **complementary pathways** (work permits, scholarships). UNHCR, ARRA and partners should work towards improving the quality of life by **increasing assistance and psychosocial support**, increasing creative and innovative outreach and **awareness raising about the risk of onward movement** and challenges faced by refugees taking illegal routes with smugglers. In addition, UNHCR, ARRA and partners should **strengthen the provision of counselling services** to refugee youth, strengthen **local integration/peaceful co-existence projects**, and improve access to internet trainings to overcome language barriers.

Urban Refugees

Gaps identified by the urban refugee communities include lack of access to education due to language barriers, discrimination and unequal treatment in schools, lack of educational certificates from countries of origin and lack of schools/access to education for refugee

children with specific needs. Lack of job opportunities, cultural and language differences represent challenges in relation to peaceful coexistence resulting in poor social interaction between refugees and host communities. Language barriers, discrimination, unequal treatment and refugees' lack of information on access to legal services and vital event registration are some of the challenges identified in relation to access to justice and legal aid. Refugees also mentioned that refugee ID cards are not accepted by different service providers, hindering access of some refugees to services.

In relation to the challenges identified above, refugees proposed to strengthen parent-teacher relationships, establish reporting and feedback mechanisms, increase education grants, and expand access to vocational and skills training centres with start-up capital. Refugees also suggested to increase monthly cash assistance and its timely distribution, and arrange language classes, especially Amharic language for refugee children to assist them in schools. In addition, refugees suggested to raise awareness among teachers, police and personnel in the justice system, school and host communities about refugee rights and living conditions to reduce discrimination targeting refugees. Legal aid services at the refugee reception centres would also facilitate access to justice. Strengthening the relationship between various actors working with refugees and line Ministries/Sectors/Bureaus would facilitate the provision of the necessary documents and access to services, such as employment, and basic goods and services in Kebeles. Refugees also suggested to disseminate information in their communities on vital events registration, highlighting that these services are free of charge.

Recommendations UNHCR, ARRA and partners should focus on the implementation of the **Refugee Proclamation** No. 1110/2019 and the **nine pledges** adopted by the Government at the 2019 **Global Refugee Forum**. This will **facilitate broader access to refugee rights**. **Coordination and partnerships** should be strengthened with the **Ministries/Sectors/Bureaus** to address issues related to **documentation**, and to **include refugees in the national systems** specifically to ensure access to special needs education and vocational training. Enhanced **cooperation and partnership with legal institutions** and the Addis Ababa University Centre for Human Rights would also foster **diversified options for free legal aid** and support to refugees. **Community-based approaches** should be adopted to **enhance the use of incentives for refugee workers** to support them at court procedures. UNHCR, ARRA and partners should implement **diversified projects fostering peaceful coexistence** and cooperation between refugees and host communities.

Refugees identified the major causes of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) to be power imbalances between men and women, students and teachers, resource owners and destitute people. Refugees mentioned delays in cash assistance as one of the contributing factors potentially leading to SEA. Refugees also indicated that SEA cases are underreported due to lack of knowledge about SEA and where and how to report SEA cases, fear of retaliation, stigma, and inability to provide evidence on SEA incidents.

In relation to protection from SEA, refugees proposed continuous awareness raising for them, teachers and school community members on how to protect children from SEA. Refugees further suggested that cases should be monitored, and appropriate and timely feedback should

be provided to complainants and that perpetrators should be brought to justice. Survivors and family members should also be encouraged to report cases to the police and UNHCR.

Recommendations ARRA, UNHCR and partners should continue **raising awareness** among humanitarian workers, refugee and host community members, as well as all service providers **on protection from SEA** and on how and where to **report SEA incidents**, and **establish/enhance community complaint and feedback systems**, especially in schools, reception centres and locations of service delivery.

Economic/financial challenges and lack of job opportunities in the country of asylum, political insecurity in the country of origin, peer pressures, exaugurated/false information about expectations of onward movement, limited number of resettlement opportunities, delays and rejections in resettlement processes, and lack of job opportunities are the main challenges identified by refugees, leading them to irregular migration.

To address the challenges of irregular migration, refugees proposed the need to strengthen education opportunities, vocational skills trainings and employment opportunities. Dangerous routes should be closely monitored by the police and other relevant authorities and safe migration options should be promoted in addition to durable solutions. Special attention should be given to UASCs. Asylum applications should be processed more speedily, safe accommodation for older persons and persons with disabilities should be improved and continuous counseling and awareness of refugee communities about risks related to irregular migration should be provided.

Recommendations UNHCR and its partners should continue strengthening their cooperation with the Government to address the issues of **human trafficking** and **smuggling** through appropriate **legal remedies**, improve the **quality of social services** such as **medical, education** (formal and informal), **recreational, legal, livelihood**, and continue **raising awareness** among the refugee communities residing in Addis Ababa on **irregular/onward movement** and its inherent **risks and negative consequences**.