



# TOWARDS A COMMON RESEARCH AGENDA

A SYNTHESIS PAPER TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
GLOBAL REFUGEE COMPACT - 2019



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**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

**ReDSS**  
Unlocking Protracted Displacement





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Ethiopia's refugee population is not only one of the largest in Africa, but also one of the most complex, divided between very different groups of refugees living in very different parts of the country.**

The challenge of reforming the refugee programme that the Government of Ethiopia has set itself since 2016 is therefore uniquely challenging. This synthesis report, organised against the four objectives of the Government's draft National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS), assesses the state of evidence and knowledge across more than 60 studies and policy documents. It makes recommendations focussed on the development of a common research agenda and a common narrative for future implementation.

**The varying contexts of the refugee operation across Ethiopia informs a key point that cuts across all four of the NCRRS objectives: the need for granular analysis and understanding that takes local factors into consideration. Although tempting from a policy perspective, Ethiopia's refugee programme will not allow for one size fits all answers.**

Although tempting from a policy perspective, Ethiopia's refugee programme will not allow for one size fits all answers. Overall, there is an identified need for a more bottom-up policy development process and, in particular, one that seeks to foreground more prominently the perspectives, wishes and interests of refugees and Ethiopian citizens in refugee hosting regions. There has been an unfortunate lack of consultation and engagement with those actors who will be most impacted by the proposed changes, who are therefore unable to shape how the new instruments being shaped by the CRRF are formulated at national level.

**There has been a focus on the "what" of the reform process, with a particular focus on areas such as livelihoods programming and education that are attracting the greatest levels of new investment, and less on the "how".**

A number of transitions are implied by the proposed changes, but these transitions have not been clearly elaborated. This risks creating an environment where large numbers of new actors initiate new programming approaches without clarity over accountability and coordination, creating confusion and uncertainty at local levels.

**Seeking to explore options for these transitions should therefore be an area of future focus, with the first objective of the NCRSS (focused on capacities across the system) providing a useful anchor**

Work in this area should look at both existing and required capacities for management, oversight and coordination of different kinds of programmes. It should assess how the traditional activities of the refugee programme in particular regions fit into the wider context of service delivery and livelihoods to understand what appropriate governance arrangements could look like. It will also need to focus on options for managing an increasingly complex portfolio of humanitarian and development financing, and how these funds can best be brought together.

**Another key issue highlight for future research is engaging more with informal realities in different parts of the country, rather than theoretical models**

There is a high degree of variation in how refugees live in different locations, and the informal options available to them to support their daily lives. These variations can be obscured if research does not explicitly seek to move beyond the traditional assumptions of refugee programming, and find ways to encourage refugees to openly discuss how they navigate existing restrictions.

**Geographically, the paper has found high levels of variation across the country. The greatest concentration of research in recent years has been on the camps in Somali Region (both to the north and south) and Shire, with far less on those in Afar and Benishangul-Gumuz.**

While the refugee populations in those regions are lower than elsewhere, there may be important lessons and experiences from these locations that are being missed. There is also a significant risk of research fatigue and frustration from those camps who have been the subject of the most research, such as Kebebeyah in Somali Regional State.

**At the heart of any process to take forwards a common research agenda should be an effort to contextualise key concepts that underpin the reform.**

Understanding what terms like self-reliance and local integration mean in the Ethiopian context, in a way that responds to local realities and is informed by local perspectives, would help address some of the identified challenges. Such a process would need to take place under the leadership of ARRA, with a clear structure in place to coordinate and maximise the available resources. A minimum standard, or set of standard protocols, for refugee-related research might be of value, as would be building on existing efforts to develop centralised research resources.



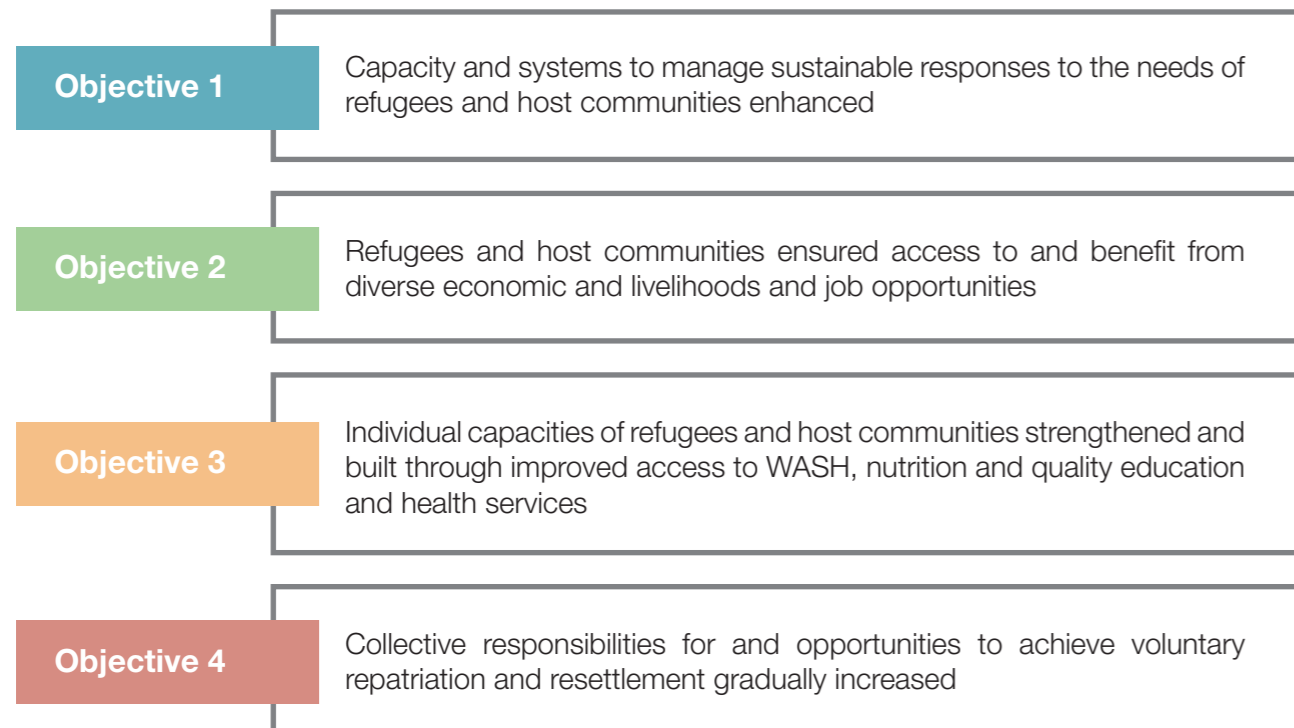
South Sudanese refugees walk through Jewi refugee camp in Ethiopia  
Credit: UNHCR



# INTRODUCTION

This synthesis paper is designed to inform future policymaking and programming in relation to Ethiopian government and international support to refugees. Specifically, it aspires to enable the development of a common narrative among the key refugee stakeholders in Ethiopia about how best to support displacement and durable solutions processes in the country, informed by evidence drawn from existing literature. The synthesis paper is set out in line with the Government of Ethiopia draft ten-year National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS), at a time of transition for the Ethiopian refugee operation. The new legal framework passed by the Ethiopian parliament in February 2019 creates significant opportunities for developing a more sustainable and effective response that meets the needs of refugees and the local populations living in proximity to them.

It is hoped that this synthesis paper provides those developing these new approaches with easier access to the relevant research that has already been undertaken and helps identify key gaps in need of further exploration. For ease of navigation, the synthesis paper is structured around the four objectives laid out in the NCRRS.



This synthesis paper is also intended to act as an entry point to the significant body of work upon which it draws, analyses, and references. Key documents are noted throughout the text, particularly those that are relevant to the NCRRS. Links for online access to these documents are also provided. The focus of this paper is on current publicly available work, although upcoming studies of particular value are also referenced. All these studies, and more, are included in the Ethiopian government Knowledge Management Database (available [here](#)), which has been developed with ReDSS support.

## AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this synthesis paper is to support the development of a common research agenda for the CRRF and Global Refugee Compact (GRC) process as well as inform the implementation of NCRSS in Ethiopia, with an emphasis on better linking evidence from the ground with policymaking processes.<sup>1</sup>

The synthesis paper is organised as follows. The next section provides a short overview of the current refugee situation in Ethiopia. Following that, section three highlights key themes, identifies critical research gaps, and makes recommendations for the development of a common research agenda. The remainder of the synthesis paper is the main body of this study, analysing relevant literature across the four objectives of the NCRRS. Finally, a methodology section explaining the process followed to produce this paper is annexed.



South Sudanese refugee children prepare a meal at Jewi refugee camp in Ethiopia  
Credit: UNHCR

<sup>1</sup> This is in line with the research, analysis, and knowledge management pillar that defines ReDSS work: to increase the availability, accessibility, and utilisation of relevant and timely analysis and information on durable solutions. The core objective is also formulated based on feedback from key stakeholders to the Ethiopian refugee response, and is fully aligned with their needs and interests.



# REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

As of November 2019, there were 705,820 refugees in Ethiopia, distributed around the country as illustrated in the map.<sup>2</sup>

This makes Ethiopia one of the largest refugee hosting countries in Africa, as it has been for many years as a result of conflicts and droughts in the region. Indeed Ethiopia prides itself on its hospitality to outsiders, citing a history that spans centuries of hosting those in need of shelter and support.<sup>3</sup> Most refugees in Ethiopia live in the peripheral areas of the country where they share ethnicity, language, and kinship ties with those across the border from their countries of origin. Since the 1960s and 1970s, in recognition of the burden that large numbers of refugees would place on already poor populations, the Ethiopian government has pursued an encampment policy, mandating the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) to work with UNHCR to provide humanitarian support to meet the basic needs of the refugees in these camps.<sup>4</sup> There have also been restrictions on the right of refugees to move across the country or find employment, although in practice the experience of refugees has been varied. In 2010, an exception was made to this when the government introduced an out-of-camp policy. To date, this has almost exclusively been made available to Eritrean refugees, providing that particular cohort with greater freedom of movement, although not the right to work.

In 2016, the government made a series of pledges to reform these policies, in recognition of the potential advantages to all of finding alternative mechanisms to promote refugee self-reliance and support host community populations. These pledges drew both on in-country experiences, for example the IKEA Foundation funded activity in the Somali Regional State, and on the global policy discussions that led to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR). Since then, the government has issued a roadmap document (2017) formalising the pledges agreed in 2016, drafted the NCRRS (2018), and passed new refugee legislation (2019). During 2018 and 2019, ARRA also underwent major restructuring, both internally and in terms of its place in government as it came under the oversight of the newly created Ministry of Peace. In December 2019, the Government of Ethiopia was one of five co-hosts of the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, and made a further series of pledges.

Key policy documents are highlighted in the text box. Implementing these will involve significant changes in the working of the Ethiopian refugee operation and, as ARRA leadership has said, this will require a significant emphasis on research and knowledge development to ensure that an evidence-based approach can be taken. To this end, as part of ARRA restructuring, a new team focused on research was created to strengthen this component of their work.

## Key policy documents related to the CRRF, nationally and globally

- Refugees Proclamation No. 1110/2019, GoE, 2019 <https://www.refworld.org/docid/44e04ed14.html>
- Roadmap for the implementation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Government Pledges and the practical application of the CRRF in Ethiopia, GoE/ARRA, 2017 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/62655>
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (Draft document), GoE, 2019
- Ethiopia Country Refugee Response Plan: The integrated response plan for refugees from Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia, January 2019–December 2020, UNHCR, 2019a <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/73571.pdf>
- Global Compact on Refugees (A/73/12, Part II), UN General Assembly, 2018 <https://www.unhcr.org/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html>
- New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1), UN General Assembly, 2016 <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration>
- Government of Ethiopia regional action plans, under development

# COMMON THEMES, RESEARCH GAPS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## COMMON THEMES

A number of common themes have emerged from this synthesis, across all four objectives of the NCRRS.

- 1** There are often **significant gaps between the formal policies and systems of the refugee operation and the actual realities** of how these policies have been implemented in different parts of the country. This is partly a result of officials adapting to the practical and political realities of delivering support to refugees in often challenging environments. It is also partly the inevitable consequence of large numbers of people finding the best ways to support themselves and their families in difficult circumstances, whether these fall within the current rules of the system. This presents a significant challenge to the implementation of policy reform, as it risks being based on theoretical assumptions rather than practical realities: an obvious example is the common assumption that refugees are wholly reliant on aid because they have not been allowed to work, when in fact many refugees do find ways to earn income for themselves. It can also be challenging to unearth these realities if refugees and hosts fear that exposing them may risk the benefits they currently receive. Research therefore needs to be carefully designed to flesh out such complex realities and bring the differences within and across different groups to the fore. A mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches allows for these nuances to emerge.
- 2** This informality is also highly contextual, with an **enormous degree of variety between different parts of the country, between different refugee groups**, and even within camps of the same refugee group. While commonalities do exist, the challenge for policymakers is to avoid making any assumptions about how regulatory changes or individual interventions might impact on a specific group of refugees. The factors involved are multiple and include: location, ethnicity and clan; length of stay; cultural influences; livelihood background; and politics. This also applies to host communities, with even the term “host communities” unlikely to be helpful in understanding local complexities. Where the burden (and opportunity) of refugee hosting falls alters from location to location—again for a wide range of reasons—and all actors should keep an open mind in terms of understanding these dynamics. Certainly, definitions of refugee hosting based on geographical proximity should be challenged. This should also never be the only factor considered. The key distinctions to understand are the ways that being a refugee or an Ethiopian citizen in refugee hosting areas shape the opportunities and constraints available to individuals and their communities. Given the concerns that have rightly been raised about the risks of raising tensions and provoking conflict in remote parts of the country, getting this right is particularly important.
- 3** The **views of refugees and the Ethiopian communities that host them are inadequately represented in the available research, with many policies and approaches being rolled out from Addis Ababa** and outside the country by national and international policymakers that, at best, have spent limited amounts of time in the key locations. While these groups are very mixed, with a range of interests and perspectives, the sense of frustration with a process that they hear about but cannot understand or see any tangible outcomes from is growing. Bringing those people who are at the heart of the CRRF more fully into the centre of decision-making and design would likely ensure that local complexities are better understood and catered for. This also applies to the design and implementation of research programmes, which is rarely carried out with the participation of those on the ground.
- 4** Research tends to fall into one of two categories: those studies that seek to provide an overview of the CRRF as a whole but at a fairly high level; or those that are tied to very specific programmes or policy areas. This risks failing to address **critical linkages between different policy areas at an adequately granular level**. For example, research focused on self-reliance tends to emphasise livelihood and economic issues but without considering socio-political dynamics at different levels, the relationship with access to different kind of services, or other forms of rights and protections. There is a need for all involved in research in this sector to reflect on where these linkages matter most and to ensure that work is being done to understand key interdependencies. The greater emphasis on area-based planning envisaged by the NCRRS suggests that work that considers these linkages more fully will be increasingly important.

**5** There is **much more emphasis to date on the what of transforming the refugee operation, and less on the how**. The government ambition, stated in the 2017 roadmap, of ending camp-based assistance within a decade implies a large number of legal, financial, and practical transitions for refugees, for host populations, and for policymakers at all levels. Yet there is a lack of clarity over the nature of these transitions: of how roles and responsibilities will change; of where accountability will lie; and of precisely how the entitlements and obligations of refugees may shift. There is a particular gap in understanding the financial implications, with the nexus narrative sometimes being taken to mean that there should be a transition away from humanitarian to development funds. None of these transitions are straightforward, however. In the case of funding, for example, the key question is not of a shift from one to another but of how they can be blended to best meet needs in the new landscape created by the policy reform. Serious work is therefore required on the part of all actors to help define what these transitions could and should look like and agreeing on their roles. Such an effort should also assist with clarifying how key contested terms such as “self-reliance” and “local integration” are to be understood in the Ethiopian context.

**6** Across the board, **inadequate coordination**, particularly at the policy and implementation levels, is a key theme. Given the entrance of a number of new actors in the refugee policy space, this is perhaps unsurprising. Nonetheless, inadequate coordination needs to be addressed quickly to ensure the best use of limited resources. The transitioning of the current refugee coordination model to a functional CRRF coordination mechanism remains a challenge. The delays in approving the NCRSS and agreeing a clear accountability structure for implementation that brings all the key actors together has slowed progress on discussion of critical detail in each of the relevant sectors.

**7** The number of **similar or potentially complementary pieces of research and analysis that are being undertaken without adequate reference to one another** is striking. This is partly a function of the differing starting points this body of research takes, with some being tied to specific projects, others to particular policy issues, and yet others of a more purely academic nature. A related challenge is that much research is not made fully accessible in the public domain by those who commission it. Data is also inconsistently gathered; for example, in terms of disaggregation across key categories. While full coordination of this effort may be unachievable given the range of stakeholders involved, it would be of benefit to all actors to find ways to better link up this work.

## KEY RESEARCH GAPS AND RECOMMENDED FOCUS AREAS

A number of thematic and geographical gaps emerge as a result of the literature review upon which this synthesis paper is based. These gaps point to areas where future research efforts might be best prioritised across the four objectives of the NCRRS. There is also a clear hierarchy among the four objectives in terms of the breadth of research already undertaken. There is also a clear hierarchy among the four objectives in terms of the breadth of research already undertaken. Moving from the most researched area to the least, this section highlights **key thematic gaps and recommended priorities** in relation to each objective.

### Objective 2

The activities that relate to **Objective 2** (access to livelihoods and job opportunities) have been the focus of most studies, particularly in the last two to three years. This is unsurprising, given that this area has been the focus of the majority of new programming related to the CRRF. The work to date has been little coordinated, leading to anomalies such as multiple labour market assessments being conducted in Jigjiga over a very short period of time. As the livelihood and self-reliance sector develops, it will be important to have a stronger framework for organising work in this area. Government leadership will be critical to making this happen. As it becomes clearer how the new Refugee Proclamation will be implemented, this should also become more coherent as roles and responsibilities are clarified at different levels. Such vision should then assist in the determination of priority research areas and employment sectors across the country. It will undoubtedly be critical to focus more on **potential ways to engage the private sector**, exploring how lessons from elsewhere in East Africa where there has been more progress can be applied to the very particular Ethiopian context. For example, there may be lessons to learn from the increasing involvement of Equity Bank Kenya Limited in providing financial services to refugees in Kenya and Uganda. It also will be important to ensure **a good balance between research focused on the formal and informal sector**, given the importance of the latter to refugees across the country.

### Objective 3

**Objective 3** (strengthening individual capacities through improved public services) has also been subject to a considerable amount of research and analysis, given that it is an area of significant external involvement through projects and programmes. Much of this research is, however, tied to specific interventions. It is noted that there has been a particular focus on education, with less research conducted on other service delivery sub-sectors such as health, child protection, nutrition, and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene)—despite the considerable investments being made in these areas. In relation to existing practice, the key requirement is for **more research related to appropriate governance models for more integrated service delivery systems**, both from within Ethiopia and from other countries. Research is also needed on **the impact of such integrated models on access and quality**. As new approaches are tested in future, it will be important to build robust research components into them to ensure that their impacts are fully understood. There is also a critical need to **undertake more research into effective pathways to transitions out of humanitarian assistance programming in both Ethiopia and the region**, to inform design of the new approaches envisaged around more targeted humanitarian assistance and public workfare programmes. The challenge of providing sustainable and effective safety nets that meet the needs of both refugees and Ethiopian host communities will be considerable, and the best possible evidence must be made available.

### Objective 4

**Objective 4** (voluntary repatriation and resettlement) has had less dedicated research, particularly with a focus on resettlement and voluntary repatriation, although a wider durable solutions lens indicates that there has been a larger amount of work focused on local integration. Much of the research that has been done in reference to refugee intentions also risks being skewed by the dominance of particular policy agendas, notably the strong emphasis of European donors on reducing informal migration flows out of the Horn of Africa. There is therefore scope for a new research agenda to be developed in this area **that works with refugees to understand in more depth the complex choices and trade-offs they make when considering whether, how, and when to move, and their aspirations for the future, and how appropriate policy responses can be determined to best engage with these choices**. This will be particularly important in those parts of the country where the focus of many refugees remains international resettlement. Such work should hopefully allow for more informed policies to be developed around socio-economic integration. The Ethiopian government may also wish to identify different channels to promote advocacy with developed countries over increasing resettlement numbers.

### Objective 1

**Objective 1** (capacity and systems to manage sustainable responses) has undoubtedly had the least focus in terms of research, which reinforces the point made above about the need for more of a focus on the **how** of NCRRS implementation. A particular requirement under this objective, as policy evolves, will be **capacity assessments for the various stakeholders to ensure they can take on new roles and responsibilities under the agreed model for implementation of the NCRRS**. Research could also be undertaken to determine **appropriate accountability and governance models**, including those that provide a strong voice to refugees themselves. Finally, critical to this objective is **a fuller understanding on the financial implications of likely future financing trends**, for both humanitarian and development funds, to allow for the design of an appropriate and sustainable displacement financing architecture that makes best use of the different funding streams.

From a **geographical perspective**, there are also clear research imbalances. For example, **Afar** is particularly under-researched, which seems like a missed opportunity given the potentially promising practices reported there by the limited research that has been done. **Benishangul-Gumuz** and **Gambella** have also had less focus than other regions. The **Somali Region** has been most saturated with research, followed by work with the Eritrean refugees in the **Tigray** region, particularly with reference to livelihoods and economic issues. The considerable policy focus on irregular migration among Eritrean refugees also has a somewhat skewing effect on the nature of research relating to Shire and Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING A COMMON RESEARCH AGENDA

This synthesis paper confirms the need for a common research agenda to underpin implementation of the new government refugee strategy, with such an initiative having the potential to lead to more coordinated and coherent implementation in line with a shared narrative. Of the existing research, much was conducted before the introduction of the CRRF framework, or addresses very specific agendas or issues in line with the priorities of the commissioning entity. Lack of coherence is a contributing factor in the confusion and uncertainty that has been expressed by many actors about what is intended in the coming years. A more common research agenda in Ethiopia should not only lead to more evidence-based decision making but also provide a better platform for Ethiopia to share its lessons with the rest of the world.

A good starting point for this work would be a **collective effort, led by government, to develop a more contextually driven understanding of key concepts** at the heart of the reform process. Standard definitions are likely to be of limited use in driving good decision-making, and it is for this reason that this report does not have a glossary of such terms. At the same time, this synthesis paper reveals key terms in particular need of more work, and research should be undertaken to improve both collective understanding and future implementation. These include:

**Self-reliance** While the broad outlines of this concept can be framed by standard definitions, the detail of how it should be understood in the context of refugees living in parts of Ethiopia where formal employment is extremely hard to find is difficult to pin down. Underlying the push for self-reliance is an assumption that refugees cannot be self-reliant in the current environment. Evidence shows, however, that many are indeed finding ways to look after themselves and their families, and this existing self-reliance needs to be understood before new initiatives are developed. There is also inadequate consideration given as to how self-reliance should be understood for Ethiopian citizens in these regions, particularly in the eastern regions of the country where the caseload figures for humanitarian assistance and safety net programmes are very high. While additional right to work provisions are clearly a critical component of self-reliance, these must be placed in the specific context of what kind of work and livelihoods are feasible across Ethiopian regions. Also, there needs to be a greater recognition of the complementary components of self-reliance, such as freedom of movement, access to basic services, and the ability to interact positively with local host populations. There is a clear need to hear from refugees themselves about how these different factors influence their thinking.

**Local integration** This has long been a contested concept at the international level, with most definitions now framing it as a process with multiple components, rather than a one-off event that shifts people from one status to another. These broad definitions do not help refugees or host populations gain clarity on what local integration means for them. They also risk creating considerable uncertainty and confusion. The 2019 Refugees Proclamation helpfully provides a definition for the Ethiopian context but also raises further questions about the extent to which the government understands local integration as a long-term durable solution. While work is underway to explore these issues in more depth, at the request of ARRA, it will be important for this dialogue to be as transparent as possible, with both refugees and local populations involved at all stages.

**Sustainability** Much of the impetus for the Global Compact for Refugees has come from a desire to make refugee operations more sustainable, partly stemming from a wish on the part of donors to reduce the overall humanitarian burden. The evidence reviewed for this synthesis paper demonstrates that sustainability is far from being a straightforward objective. As indicated above, development interventions cannot take the place of humanitarian programmes in protecting basic human needs and rights, particularly in the short term. The places where refugees currently live in Ethiopia face considerable wider development challenges, and any new approaches to working with refugees need to be placed in the wider context of seeking to tackle these, recognising that there will be no quick fixes. There also must be consideration of the sustainability implications of the different durable solutions and how they are understood by Ethiopian stakeholders. All actors must therefore challenge themselves on what they really mean by pushing for greater sustainability in programming approaches, and what is realistic over what timeframes.

The previous section provides suggestions as to **what** the focus of a common research agenda should be. Here, recommendations are made as to **how** it should be developed.

**Leadership** for the development of a common research agenda should come from the government, with ARRA at the forefront. Hopefully this report can be a useful starting point for this process, with ARRA bringing on board both its partners across government and international partners to identify priorities, existing resources, and needs. It is important to consider what **capacities** will be required across the system to make this happen. The role of key initiatives, such as the work being supported by ReDSS and the new UNHCR initiative to develop an Ethiopian academic network on refugee studies, should be determined within a **single overarching system**. More work is also required to determine entry points across the wider government research agenda.

Work could usefully be undertaken to develop a **minimum standard for undertaking refugee-related research in Ethiopia**, covering all stages of design, implementation, and development, and issues such as consultation, research ethics, transparency, and dissemination. Such an output would help provide guidance to donors, implementing partners, researchers themselves, government actors, and local populations (host and refugee communities alike) on what their obligations and expectations in relation to research activity should be. It would also help set standards for defining what good data is; for example, around disaggregation. In addition to creating a more consistent and coherent body of data, greater standardisation should also enable better longitudinal studies that can track trends over time.

Within this wider effort, there should be particular emphasis on doing more **to foreground the perspectives and participation of local populations** in research initiatives. More work is required to determine the most effective mechanisms to do this that do not exacerbate research fatigue. A starting point may be to share and discuss the findings of this synthesis paper or other pieces of research in different parts of the country to create more of a feedback loop between research processes and local perspectives and, hopefully, spark an ongoing discussion.

Recognising that written reports are only one limited form of research dissemination, more emphasis should be given to other types of dissemination. One element could be a greater emphasis on **research seminars and workshops**, both in Addis and in different parts of the country, to promote dialogue and discussion. Another could be an **online portal** for refugee-related research, designed to make it easy to access and navigate all the research that exists. Thought would need to be given as to how to embed this appropriately in Ethiopian institutions to increase the chances of this being a sustainable initiative.

Consideration should also be given to developing a **centralised repository** for research data, in line with the global initiative being carried out by the World Bank and UNHCR. If such data could be made more available, this should reduce the need for duplication of effort and allow for greater triangulation of research. While privacy and data sharing considerations would need to be carefully considered to protect all parties, this should not be an obstacle to developing an appropriate solution.

Ideally, all of this work should sit within a **common framework** that both enables joint monitoring of effort and progress, and allows for flexibility. Such a framework should also encourage more joint evaluations and studies to reduce overlapping efforts.

There is a need for all involved in research to reflect on the linkages and interdependencies that exist between the specific research work they are conducting and wider research on similar topics and the policy environment. By so doing, it could be possible to understand the specific issues at hand in a more **holistic manner**. The greater emphasis on area-based planning envisaged by the NCRRS suggests work that considers these linkages more fully will be increasingly important.

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