



COUNTRY CHAPTER  
**ETHIOPIA**



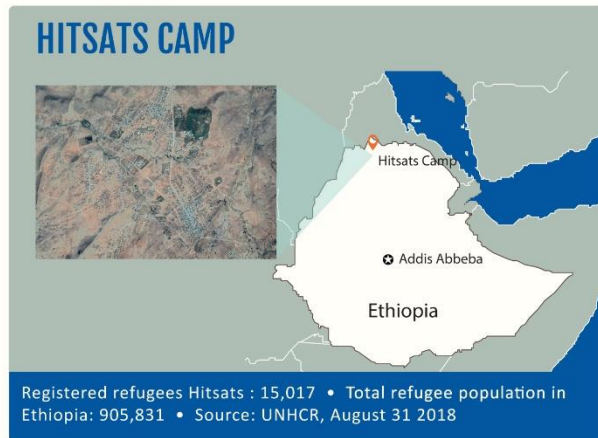
# Baseline Study Ethiopia

The Learning and Evaluation Team (LET) of the **Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP)** is conducting an impact evaluation (2017-2020) of the integrated approach to refugee and host communities.

Results from the baseline are used to inform practice in 2019 and to measure progress at the 2020 endline.

## BASELINE

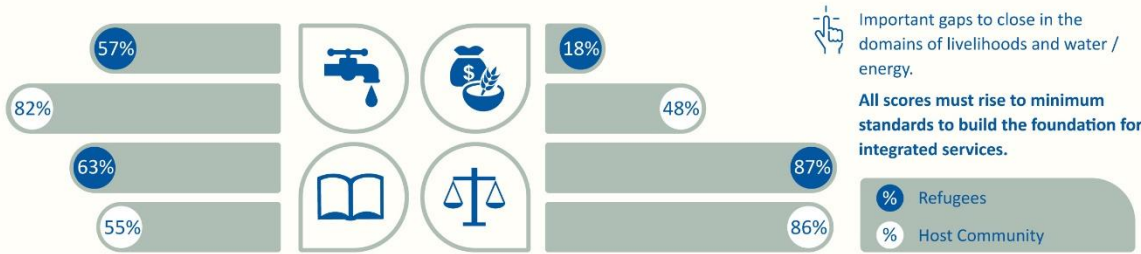
April -May 2018 • **810 households surveyed** in/around Hitsats: 399 refugees and 411 hosts • **In-depth interviews** with 50 hosts and refugees • **Key informant interviews** with main stakeholders.



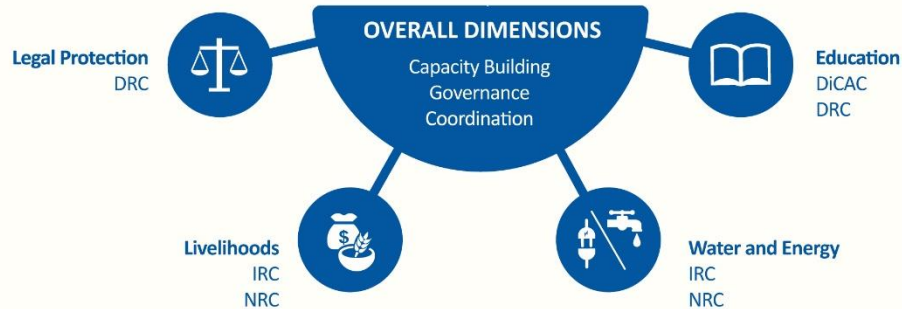
## KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE: HITSATS

<p><b>Population</b> Youth dominate the sample; average age of 21. Refugees are primarily Eritreans in transit.</p>	<p><b>Social Cohesion</b> Shared language and culture as a foundation to promote integrated services.</p>	<p><b>Policy</b> Key changes in 2019, policy context in constant flux. Need for adaptation in RDPP plans.</p>
<p><b>WASH</b> 12 litres pp/day, below minimum standard. 78% of refugees have access to private pit latrines vs 10% of hosts.</p>	<p><b>Energy</b> 89% of hosts access the grid. Camp not yet connected and solar energy not seen as a viable alternative.</p>	<p><b>Legal services</b> 12% of hosts and 2% of refugees reported a problem in the past year.</p>
<p><b>School</b> Over 50% of children attend school. Refugees more likely to attend integrated schools (84%) than hosts (27%).</p>	<p><b>Trade</b> Takes place in the town. Refugees are seen as good customers. Locals do not go to the camp for services/items.</p>	<p><b>Livelihoods</b> 11% of refugees and 66% of hosts in paid work; 95% refugees and 60% hosts have one income earner only.</p>

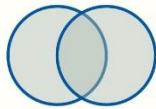
## AVERAGE SCORES IN DOMAINS OF WATER / ENERGY, LIVELIHOODS, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL/LEGAL ACCORDING TO RDPP METRIC



## RDPP PROGRAMME AREAS & IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



## KEY FINDINGS



### RELEVANCE

RDPP activities in line with CRRF objectives and well-aligned with sub-national policies. Focus areas correspond to community priorities of better access to water, energy, education and livelihoods.



### ADAPTIVENESS

Crucial in a context of rapidly changing context (peace treaty, Refugee Proclamation). Adaptive practices have led to delays for instance in the domains of WASH and TVET. Flexible funding and timelines are needed.



### COORDINATION

Positive effect in creating coordination platforms and fostering buy-in. Limited discussions with other actors under CRRF, need for stronger capacity building at the local level.



### SUSTAINABILITY

Good practices have emerged, but sustainability is threatened by structural factors (restricted markets, legal hurdles, lack of water and access to energy). Staff turnover requires continuous engagement.

## MAIN TAKEAWAYS

### OVERALL

Humanitarian standards must be met prior to development planning. This requires humanitarian funding and partnerships.

The context is increasingly favourable to long-term gains and represents an opportunity.

### STRUCTURAL

Agree on common Theory of Change and joint M&E.

Implement beneficiary feedback mechanisms.

Adapt coordination for greater inclusion.

Reduce siloed programming: map activities.

### ACTIVITY SPECIFIC

Connect livelihoods to existing value chains, employers and market systems.

Align with changing policies.

Learn from shortcomings of the TVET approach: individualised & gender-sensitive support.

### DONORS

Provide strategic guidance, communicate realistic expectations.

Flexible funding for adaptive programming.

Coordinate a mapping of all activities under CRRF.

## RDPP in Ethiopia: The case of Hitsats Camp

### Presentation of the case study: scope and methodology

This chapter offers a targeted study of Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in Ethiopia with a focus on the case study of the Lot 1 activities. It is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected<sup>1</sup> in Hitsats Camp in Tigray between mid-April to early May 2018, as well as on a comprehensive review of relevant project documentation. The survey reached 399 randomly sampled refugee households and 411 households of the nearby host community, with qualitative information gathered from both groups. This baseline report offers a snapshot of the situation at that particular time and place. Data will be used to trace impact in 2020 as part of the Learning and Evaluation Team's impact evaluation of RDPP in the Horn of Africa.

The RDPP in Ethiopia focuses on the provision of sustainable development and protection solutions for refugees and host communities. It aims to provide alternatives to irregular and secondary migration movements and build social cohesion through integrated service delivery. The programme's targeted beneficiaries are in five geographic 'ots' across the country: Afar, Tigray and Somali Regions of Ethiopia, as well as the cities of Shire and Addis Ababa, where most of the country's Eritrean and Somali refugees are hosted.

The EUR 30 million budget primarily aims to serve 100,000 to 120,000 beneficiaries, made up of refugees and host community members, in the **water and energy, education, livelihood opportunities, and protection/ access to justice sectors**. Capacity building for local authorities and the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms play an integral part in ensuring sustainability and the adoption of locally led approaches.

This report is divided into four areas:

1. **Key messages** summarises the fundamental trends, action points, and findings that have emerged from the baseline, providing an overview and summary of the overall report.
2. **Opportunities in the desert** outlines the narrative of the context within which RDPP is operating in Ethiopia's Hitsats camp, profiling the lives of refugees and hosts with a view to using the detail to inform operational activities.
3. The two central sections, **Evaluating needs on the ground** and **How are the needs on the ground being met: Evaluation of RDPP in Hitsats**, present key quantitative and qualitative data and indicators that will allow the measurement of RDPP's impact in Hitsats Camp
4. In **Conclusion and Recommendations**, we seek to address gaps highlighted in the central sections. This includes, as a **way forward to the endline, the presentation of an RDPP outcome metric for Hitsats camp to allow for a monitoring of the impact of programming** on the key variables identified for this location.

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<sup>1</sup> In total 810 and over 3,300 individuals (refugees and host community) have been surveyed in Hitsats. As part of a mixed-method research approach, the team conducted a further 20 Key Informant Interviews as well as 68 in-depth semi-structured interviews of refugees and host communities to draw out nuances and personal stories.

## I. Key messages

RDPP is a multi-annual development programme aiming to meet longer-term structural needs. Nonetheless, **meeting humanitarian standards, as a precursor to development responses, will require humanitarian funding and partnerships.** While programming in Hitsats under RDPP includes activities related to water access and energy infrastructure – both needs that have been identified – the baseline research highlights other priority areas such as food security and health. These basic needs are not the remit of RDPP, but also not currently adequately covered by humanitarian programming. They need to be met prior to effective development planning and call for strong linkages between RDPP and its broader operating environment.

**Education and livelihoods activities form the two core sectors for RDPP activities under Lot 1. Constraints surrounding livelihoods programming, in particular TVET programming, are reflective of broader obstacles to reaching effective integrated solutions:** there is a significant imbalance in the ratio of refugee to host community members who are able to access these services, as well as a need for wider policy and legal changes before TVET and livelihoods trainings may begin to have an impact for refugees in particular. Livelihoods activities should strive to connect community entrepreneurs – refugee or host – with existing value chains and markets. Efforts to achieve these linkages are hampered by a number of structural obstacles, including the dearth of developed markets, droughts threatening fragile agricultural gains, the legal restrictions placed on refugees’ participation in the labour market and the high likelihood of onward movement by the target population.

The opening of a secondary school inside the camp, attended by host and refugee students, is a promising step towards integrated educational services. It is also worth noting that refugees did not previously have access to secondary education. Limitations remain to be addressed however and integrated provision of schooling will depend on the management of the facility by the Ministry of Education.

**Developing coordination structures that ensure effective and efficient communication between actors has proven challenging.** Many stakeholders need to be represented for coordination to succeed: the government, ARRA, other CRRF stakeholders, RDPP consortium members, host and refugee communities (beneficiaries), and donors. Despite these challenges, and a complicated legal and policy environment, RDPP has established structures that can serve the CRRF in Ethiopia. Social cohesion in Hitsats remains strong – this represents a foundation on which stakeholders can develop more effective and integrated programming.

RDPP implementing partners are learning to reconcile traditional humanitarian practices with a longer-term development logic and identification of non-traditional actors. The context is favourable to this. However, a stronger focus on assessing and developing capacity on governance is flagged at the baseline stage. While generally supportive of the language of ‘integrated approaches’, woreda offices have displayed a reluctance to include refugees in their own planning, seeing this rather as the domain of NGOs, with ‘integrated services’ seen as an expansion of NGO support to local populations.

The report presents **a set of recommendations to be shared and discussed with implementing partners**, in the context of a workshop. We hope in this way to obtain feedback and pave a way forward for the second half of RDPP activities in Ethiopia.

## II. Opportunities in the desert

Ethiopia hosts close to a million registered refugees, the second largest refugee population in Africa, as well as an estimated three million IDPs. The majority of the refugee population is South Sudanese, Somali, or Eritrean. RDPP targets the Eritrean and Somali populations in five locations or ‘lots’.

**In Tigray**, the refugee population is Eritrean, hosted in camps since 2004. Mainly young and mobile, the Eritrean refugee population is known to move onwards in higher numbers than Ethiopia’s other refugee populations – this is in part due strong connections to a diaspora that can support this movement. Eritrean refugees have benefited from relatively preferential treatment on the part of the Ethiopian government: Eritrean refugees have been able to, in certain instances, benefit from an Out of Camp (OCP) policy that allows them to live outside the camps, although this policy comes with strict requirements and constraints.<sup>2</sup> Significant changes in Ethiopian politics in the past year have had an impact on refugee flows in Tigray: following the signing of a peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia and the subsequent demilitarisation of the border, Eritrean refugee arrivals in Tigray have increased.



**Photo 1** - The main road in Hitsats Town, meters away from the camp

**Hitsats Camp**, located around 40 km from the city of Shire, was established in 2013 following increased numbers of Eritrean refugees into Ethiopia: it is the newest and youngest of the so called ‘Shire Camps’. The camp covers an area of 2,104,000 m<sup>2</sup> in a particularly arid and hot setting. It is located at the edge of Hitsats town, and the lack of a physical barrier between town and camp ensures a de facto integration between the two areas. Hitsats town is small but has experienced growth since the establishment of the camp in 2013.

Although Tigray as a region is traditionally an agriculture-based economy, this is less true in Hitsats. In recent years, industrial mines have been set up, and as the town has grown, trade and other economic activities have emerged. These economic activities include crop production (some engage in irrigation farming), animal/livestock rearing, trading, opening businesses and traditional gold mining. Most people living in and around Hitsats are young and not engaged in formal or consistent income generating activities. One common challenge is access to credit and financial capacity to start businesses.

Host community members highlight that Hitsats had become a ‘real town’ thanks to the presence of the camp (and the multiple UN agencies and NGOs that came with it) and are generally positive in their assessment of its benefits. Nonetheless, some tensions and difficulties still persist. As a Hitsats host community member put it:

“ The establishment of this camp in my view is both useful and harmful. The thing that makes this camp useful to our town is that there are more job opportunities: bars, shops, and business activities. (...) On the other hand, trees have been cut for firewood and construction of shelter. Some of these trees were hundreds of years old, some we used as a source of food. Those are gone, and this makes us very sad. (...) Also, prices have increased a lot and continue to rise from year to year. ”

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Hall (2014). *Living out of Camp: Alternatives to Camp-based Assistance for Eritrean Refugees in Ethiopia*

In and around Hitsats<sup>3</sup>, the RDPP-funded ‘Enhanced Integration of Displaced and Displacement affected communities in Ethiopia’ (EIDDACE) is implemented by a consortium of four NGOs: IRC (lead), NRC, DRC, and DiCAC, as well as a local NGO. The objectives of this programme are **to enhance governance and support capacity to implement and sustain integrated programming that responds to the needs of both host communities and refugees**. This includes developing coordination mechanisms with local government and development stakeholders, as well as building programming with these stakeholders that addresses these needs. Specific RDPP activities under Lot 1 focus on **livelihoods, water and energy, education, and legal protection** as summarised in Table 1.

These activities are taking place within a **context that is in a constant state of flux**: in past years, Ethiopia has moved towards a more open policy for its refugees, starting with the launch of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in 2017. Significant political and policy changes have occurred in Ethiopia: beyond the peace deal between Eritrea and Ethiopia, a revised Refugee Proclamation and law was passed in January 2019. It represents a significant shift in refugee policy, promoting greater inclusion and integration of refugees within the country, including through the possibility of obtaining work permits and the right to live outside of camp. These shifts had not yet occurred at the time the baseline was conducted, and impact on RDPP remains to be seen. Implementation will take time. But it is clear that these evolutions will require adaptiveness in implementation of activities.

**Table 1 - Snapshot: RDPP Activities under the Shire Lot in April 2018**

Sector	Activity	IP
Livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Establishment of VSLAs with host community</li> <li>· Skills training</li> <li>· Provision of start-up kits</li> </ul>	IRC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Development of poultry business (refugees and host community</li> <li>· TVET at YEP center (including hairdressing, metal work, furniture making*), including follow-up on business skills and start-up kits</li> </ul>	NRC
Water and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <i>Water</i>: In Hitsats camp, merging of host and refugee water systems into one integrated infrastructure, in cooperation with local government, increasing water supply by drilling boreholes</li> <li>· <i>Energy</i>: Training with host community on creating local energy-saving producers (stoves, injera ovens)*</li> </ul>	IRC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <i>Energy</i>: Connecting Hitsats camp to the national grid</li> </ul>	NRC
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Running of secondary school open to both host and refugee students.</li> </ul>	DiCAC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Support of tertiary education through provision of university preparation and extracurricular tutoring programs, educational materials, follow-up with students in university, and life skills trainings</li> <li>· Support for youth centre</li> </ul>	DRC
Legal Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Coordination with Axum and Mekele university legal departments to provide free legal services to refugees and host community members</li> <li>· Trainings and awareness-raising sessions on peaceful cohabitation</li> <li>· Establishment of peace committees for host and refugee populations</li> </ul>	DRC

*\*\*not all locations*

<sup>3</sup> As well as Mai Aini and Adi Harush

### III. Evaluating needs on the ground

Hitsats is a young community: refugee respondents were on average 22 years old, hosts were slightly younger (20). Motivations for leaving Eritrea are varied, and include persecution, conflict, forced military service, family reunification as well as a general lack of livelihood opportunities. Most refugee respondents have arrived in Hitsats in the past two years and are formally registered with UNHCR.

The following sections present baseline data across a range of relevant indicators. Covering both humanitarian ('Basic needs') as well as development-oriented dimensions, some categories are directly addressed by RDPP-funded activities in Ethiopia (this is the case for water and energy), while others are introduced to provide information about context and with a view to facilitating comparison to other country chapters in this regional research project.

#### a. Basic needs

**Table 2 - Key indicators for monitoring – Basic needs**

		Hosts	Refugees
Food security	Not had food to eat in the house in past month	58%	14%
	Did not worry about not having enough food in past month	52%	10%
Housing	Owens or rents shelter	98%	1%
	Owens or rents land	25%	1%
Water and wash	Tap as primary water source	35%	72%
	Borehole as primary water source	64%	21%
	Access to private pit latrines	10%	78%
Waste and infrastructure	Does not find that there is a lot of garbage outside	37%	97%
	Does not throw garbage outside dwelling for disposal	50%	97%
	Has grid access	89%	1%
	Has access to a generator (government, private, community)	9%	26%
	Has solar (private)	8%	43%
Health	Children having received vaccinations (full or partial)	86%	60%
	Covered by health insurance	34%	3%
	Sought out treatment after suffering serious illness or injury	91%	95%
	Judged treatment to be of high quality	72%	42%
Safety and protection	Feel completely or mostly safe	87%	94%
	Sought out protection after a legal problem	82%	83%
	Content with the protection received	50%	40%
	Feel they can turn to the local authorities in case of need	63%	70%

**Food security** remains a critical concern for refugees and locals alike, with monthly food rations from WFP per person amounting to 10kg of cereal, 1 litre of oil, and 60 Ethiopia birr (appx USD 2.1) - well below the average host community salary.



*“We don’t have any other income. My husband is jobless. Our life is dependent on the rations. But the 180 ETB we get from ARRA, 60 for each for the three of us, are not enough. We sometimes spent days without eating”.*

**Eritrean woman, Hitsats**

Food management in the camp is coordinated by ARRA, UNHCR, and WFP. Interviewees highlighted the following problems:

- i. A lack of diversity in their diets
- ii. The cost of food items in relation to their income
- iii. Insufficient food rations.

*“Life is very difficult, the ration is not enough. I think most of the people staying here are those who have no external support and they can have only one meal a day”.*

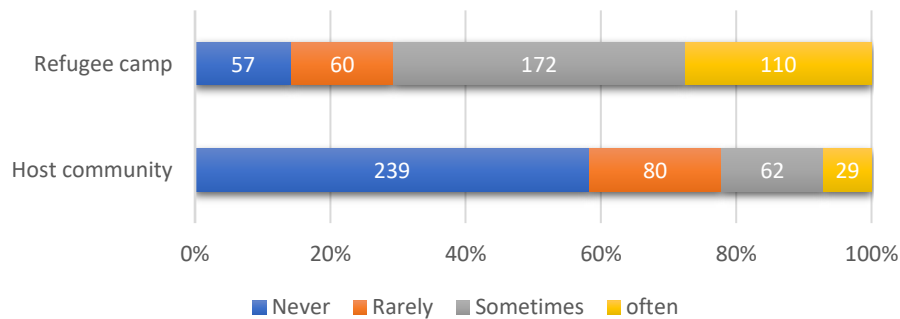
**Eritrean refugee man, Hitsats**



**Photo 2 - Shop in Hitsats.**

The most pressing concern for both locals and refugees is the insufficient quantity of food. This is either due to prohibitive costs and minimal local production, or to the fact that the rations they receive do not sufficiently address their nutritional needs. Refugees are disproportionately disadvantaged: 71% of refugee respondents reported that their household sometimes or often did not have enough food to eat, compared to only 22% of host respondents. More than three quarters of refugee respondents are likely to report sometimes or often being worried that their household will not have enough food, against a quarter of host respondents.

**Figure 1 - In the past four weeks, was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your household because of a lack of resources?**





**Photo 3** - Shelter in Hitsats camp

Refugee households are more likely to reside in temporary housing such as makeshift **shelters** or tents (18% vs 4%). The predominant construction material for refugee homes' roofs is iron (91%), whereas host community roofs are made of iron (62%) and concrete (37%). The rate of home ownership differs considerably between the two groups with around a third of hosts owning their current home, whereas almost all refugees reside for free with authorization.<sup>4</sup> Land ownership is close to zero for refugee households due to legal restrictions.

“

*“They say people of Ethiopia are now living a better life. But really that’s only true for those who have their own land. It is not true for those who live in rented house.”*

”

Eritrean Refugee

The **water** provision is at around 12 litres per person per day, well below the IRC standard of 20 litres.<sup>5</sup> UNHCR places these figures even lower, at 7 litres per person per day. Access to clean drinking water is a serious need in Hitsats camp.

### JOINT WATER MANAGEMENT: LEARNING FROM CURRENT LIMITATIONS

RDPP aims to apply a ‘utility-based model’ to **integrated water management** for hosts and refugees in Hitsats, led by the IRC. Currently, there are two different water management systems for refugees and host community: the latter is managed by the local government and the camp system is managed by UNHCR. RDPP aims to merge these two systems in partnership with local actors, with the goal of having one water system unit managed jointly by members of the host and refugee communities, and the Government’s Water Bureau. Both hosts and refugees would pay for this system, while a joint water management committee would collect the money and invest it back into the system. This system, it is hoped, can provide a sustainable way of water management in Hitsats, following the example of other similar systems that have been put in place in Gambella. However, informants during baseline fieldwork revealed that existing water management committees in Hitsats face capacity constraints and are not fully trusted by community members. Integrated water management for both refugees and hosts needs to be accompanied by learning and capacity building on effective water management more broadly.

<sup>4</sup> This is confirmed by the results of a recent World Bank survey showing that “housing needs for refugees in Ethiopia are almost entirely provided by the UN or NGOs through temporary shelters”. This also often means living in temporary and overcrowded shelters (World Bank, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Pro-just Research and Training Center PLC/IRC et al. (2017). ‘Baseline Assessment Report: Enhanced Integration of Displaced and Displacement Affected Communities in Ethiopia (EIDDACE)/ Regional Protection and Development Program – Shire Area’

All refugees and the vast majority of host community respondents (94%) report having access to improved water sources (including borehole, shared or private tap, protected spring). 21% of refugee households, and 64% of host community told us that a borehole is their primary source of drinking water. The other main source of drinking water for both groups is a shared tap.

Qualitative research reveals that refugees as well as host community members access water from hand-dug unprotected wells as a response to unreliable water systems that struggle to meet demands. These wells are informally owned by the person (refugee or host community) who has dug it, and payment is sometimes required in order to access the well.



Photo 4 - Drawing water from a borehole in Hitsats camp

The fact that refugees do not generally have to pay for water while hosts do has given rise to scepticism regarding a joint water management system.

“The water that we drink is dug from underground and it has all kinds of germs. We drink it because we don’t have any other option. And it’s not even for free!”

Host community man

WASH infrastructure development has not kept up with the pace of continuous refugee arrivals since the establishment of the camp. The refugee camps appear better equipped with toilet facilities: 78% of surveyed refugees report using private covered pit latrines compared to only 10% of hosts. Four host respondents in ten have no toilet facilities available to them. Finally, garbage disposal is sorely lacking in the areas inhabited by the interviewed host community members.

Unlike Hitsats town, the camp is not yet connected to an **electrical grid**; a quarter of interviewed refugee households report no electricity use whatsoever. Those that are connected typically depend on private solar power (43%), a private generator (15%) or a community generator (10%). NGOs operating in the camp have introduced solar power as an alternative form of energy. For most refugees this does not constitute a viable energy alternative, especially not for opening small shops.



Photo 5 - Energy in Hitsats camp

## BUILDING AN ACCESSIBLE ELECTRIC GRID?

RDPP and other EUTF-funded programmes are **working with the Ethiopian Electric Utility to connect the camp**. Construction of this connection had yet to begin at the time of baseline fieldwork. The involvement of the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) in the expansion of the national grid to camp means that the Government of Ethiopia would gain a larger customer base. The activity would also support equitable electricity access. However, refugees have voiced concerns in interviews that even if a grid connection were put in place, many of them would be unable to afford the electricity bills. It is imperative that these limitations to access are taken into account in discussions with national partners.

Health is not part of RDPP programming but constitutes a condition without which durable gains cannot be achieved. There are few differences between host and refugee respondents in terms of access to **healthcare**, with the majority having experienced a case of serious injury or illness over the past month also seeking out treatment. Refugees seek treatment in government health facilities (87%) while hosts also appear to frequent NGO-run health facilities (46%), private ones (14%) and local pharmacies (11%). Hosts are much more likely to judge health services positively. Qualitative interviews depict a situation of inefficiency in the provision of health services inside the camp. Respondents are dissatisfied due to alleged mismanagement and misconduct of the health centre's administration and medical staff. Costs of treatment and medicine are deemed too high.

*"It is difficult to get the medicine because we have to pay!"*

Refugee respondent

Conversely, the local community in Hitsats town seems to be satisfied with the health services provided, particularly the opportunity to also seek assistance from the clinic in the camp.

*"Life is good. People are cooperative and if you get sick the clinics treat you."*

Host respondent

Finally, both refugee and host respondents report feeling mostly or completely **safe** in their communities (94% and 87%, respectively). Although crime and theft were mentioned by a few interviewees, most refugees reported improvements to security and an overall perception of safety during the qualitative interviews.

Of the relatively few refugees who did not feel safe, the most common source of that insecurity stemmed from isolated incidents (for instance, harassment, violence, or theft) with others outside their community. For host community members incidents primarily came from within their own communities. Women are deemed particularly vulnerable.

**Contrary to common assumptions, refugees in Hitsats are more likely than host community members to believe they can turn to a local authority if they have a dispute or experience conflict.** On the whole, refugees view the responsiveness of the national and local government, and NGOs more positively than host respondents.

Three out of four refugees trust national authorities in such situations compared to only one host in ten. This lower trust in authorities on the part of host communities may be a potential barrier to integration to be addressed, including through the participation of local authorities in existing peace building or justice resolution programming where appropriate.

Overall, **legal issues** are not a common occurrence for refugee households as only two percent report having had a legal problem in the 12 months prior to the survey, in contrast to the 12% of host respondents. Of those reporting legal problems, 82% sought out legal protection with no significant difference across the two groups. Local government authorities, and informal/community justice systems for host communities, were the go-to institutions. In the few cases where refugee respondents were faced with serious legal issues and sought legal protection, they felt this protection was inadequate: this was the case for refugees accused of grave crimes with no possibility of legal recourse or appeal.

“I have a son who is in prison in Mekele. There was a fight between two Ethiopian people and two refugee people, and my son was in the crowd. [...] One of the Ethiopians died. The judge said my son has to denounce the killer since he was a block leader, but my son doesn't know who it was. [...] ARRA or UNHCR did not help— at first ARRA was trying to select an elder to make an agreement[...] with the parents of the dead man, but it didn't work, and they did not support me after that. My son will probably be in prison for life.”

Eritrean Refugee Woman

## NEED FOR CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES

Under RDPP, DRC has established partnerships with the legal departments of Axum and Mekelle universities in order to provide **free legal services for refugees and host community members**. This is meant to benefit community members in Hitsats and Mai Aini camps. DRC also seeks to establish a harmonised legal referral mechanism, in order to support the legal aid officers who focus on the most vulnerable and pressing cases. KIIs highlighted that the process of obtaining MoUs between these universities, local government, and DRC had been a time consuming and bureaucratic process. Activities had not yet begun at the time of baseline fieldwork. Discussions about recruitment and training of legal students had been sporadic and high level only. It is crucial that those offering legal counselling receive adequate and up-to-date training on the current legal context for refugees in Ethiopia, as well as on potential sources of tension. Given that only a minority of respondents expressed the need for such services, but that those who do need them are in dire situations, efforts must be made to identify and reach out to those potential clients. More broadly, a focus of the programme should lie on helping refugees exercise their rights under the new refugee law – this should involve communicating these rights to those who might not be aware of how the changes in the legislative environment might impact their lives.

### b. Education and livelihoods

**Education and livelihoods activities form the two core sectors for RDPP activities under Lot 1.** Constraints surrounding livelihoods programming, in particular TVET programming (see box 5), are reflective of broader obstacles to reaching effective integrated service provision: there is a significant imbalance in the ratio of refugee to host community members who are able to access these services, as well as a need for wider policy and legal changes to be implemented before trainings may begin to have an impact for refugee community members in particular.

Freedom of movement and the right to work need to be addressed; the potential impact of the new 2019 Refugee Proclamation regarding these elements will form a crucial part of the endline.

Education programming is one of the activities the consortium was most proud of at the time of the baseline: the opening of a secondary school, located near the edge of the camp and attended by host and refugee students alike, is a promising step towards integrated educational services. It has considerable added value given that prior to the establishment of the school, refugees in Hitsats had no access to secondary education.

**Table 3 - Key indicators for monitoring – Education and Livelihoods**

		Hosts	Refugees
Education	Regular school attendance		
	Age 0-5	5%	21%
	Age 6-10	82%	80%
	Age 11-18	78%	62%
	Integrated school attendance		
	Age 0-5	8%	38%
	Age 6-10	21%	83%
	Age 11-18	35%	98%
	Fewer than 50 children per teacher	1%	18%
	Quality of education judged high or very high	31%	20%
	Assistance to attend school (uniform, shoes, books...)	25%	27%
	School-feeding programme	2%	38%
Livelihoods	In paid work or self-employed	66%	11%
	Earned redundancy (more than one income earner)	40%	5%
	Among working population, hosts working inside and refugees working outside camp	7%	1%
	Among working population, formal contract	27%	69%
	Among working population, holds skill certification	27%	69%
	Among working population, working five or more days per week	17%	21%
	Average monthly expenditures	\$113	\$37

## EDUCATION



**Photo 6 - Classroom at Hitsats**

Hitsats camp counts an elementary **school** for refugee children, managed by the camp; Hitsats town has its own elementary school managed by the Bureau of Education. Facilities for younger children in the camp are scarce, particularly those focusing on early childhood education – a gap raised in key informant interviews.

A secondary school was newly built in Hitsats in 2017 and managed through RDPP funds. **It is attended by both host and refugee children.** At the beginning of the 2017/2018 school year DiCAC had registered 227 host community students and 123 refugee students, all in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>6</sup> The school was accredited by the Regional Education Bureau, which recommended the school be fenced and equipped with a laboratory (both under construction). It is aligned with the national systems but runs in parallel to national schools. Locals and refugees attend the school together.

As it is the only option for secondary education, the opening of the school has been welcomed by refugees, hosts and local politicians with whom we discussed the event. This is an area where the RDPP has brought a real change and opportunities that were not present before. The endline will be an opportunity to investigate if the initial positive feedback continues and assess the outcomes for the first batch graduates and the community.

Informants highlighted that dropouts, in particular for host community members, remain a significant challenge. Host community students may leave school for financial reasons, or to attend other schools in larger towns; host community students may also register but not attend school at all for similar reasons. In this regard, the good relationship that the IPs have with ARRA and UNHCR can help resolve small challenges that reduce the outcomes and impact of the school.

DiCAC could, for example, convince ARRA and UNHCR to change the food distribution timing so as not to clash with classes – this reportedly contributed to absenteeism and dropout rates. Around one in four children of both hosts and refugees receives assistance to go to school, though school-feeding programs are rare for the hosts.

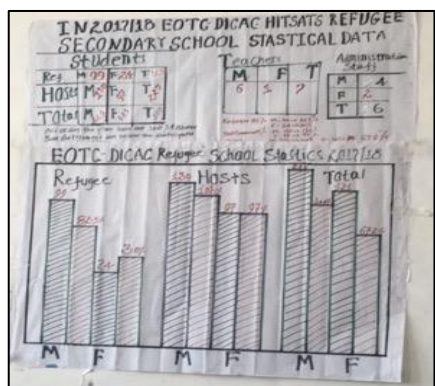


Photo 7 - School attendance figures

The high school follows the national Ethiopian curriculum and is staffed with accredited Ethiopian teachers. The day-to-day management of the school falls to the local consortium member, DiCAC, with the agreement and support of the local Woreda education office. The school maintains new science laboratories, a library, and an IT room complete with computers which will be connected once the electric grid has been established in Hitsats.<sup>7</sup> The school will prepare students to take the national entrance exams for preparatory school and university.

Challenges remain to be addressed in implementation of effective integrated education provision, including:

- (i) **Imbalanced ratio between refugee and host community students in school:** On the one hand, DiCAC reported higher registration numbers of host community than refugee students for the first year of the secondary school operations. On the other hand, refugee respondents from the survey were much more likely to report that their children were generally attending school with host community classmates in comparison to host respondents (84% vs 27%).

<sup>6</sup> A new grade will be added progressively each year.

<sup>7</sup> At the time of fieldwork, they could be turned on by being connected to the school generator.

This paradox is explained by the fact that registration rates do not reflect attendance, and host community students may avail themselves of other school options outside of Hitsats. Schools situated within the camp are more geographically accessible to refugees, while host community members send older students to attend schools in Shire or other nearby towns where 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades are immediately accessible. As new grades are opened at the high school each year, it remains to be seen if progress on this front is made.

- (ii) **Staff turnover and lack of materials:** Teachers are recruited from Shire, Axum, Mekele, and other surrounding cities; the heat and remoteness of Hitsats makes it an unappealing place to work. In addition, DiCAC offers a salary about 2000 birr (USD 70) per month less than other (UNHCR-managed) schools, which has contributed to teacher turnover and dissatisfaction. Resignations have, in some cases, led to teachers needing to cover multiple classes or subjects. At the time of fieldwork, discussions were held to increase salaries.
- (i) **Budget constraints** have meant that books, uniforms and equipment for the recreational centre were lacking. The school has limited access to water (through a pipe installed by IRC) and electricity. The RDPP electrification plan is designed to include the high school.
- (ii) **The student-teacher ratio** is high for both groups, although in line with regional trends and only slightly above the national average:<sup>8</sup> one class that was visited during fieldwork had around 50 students for one teacher. The quality of the education their children receive is judged poorly by the majority of both host and refugee parents.

### A CHALLENGING JOURNEY TOWARDS TERTIARY EDUCATION

In addition to the high school run by DiCAC, DRC is engaged under RDPP in supporting access to tertiary education through provision of tutoring services for struggling students and those seeking to pass the national entrance exams to university. While the majority of students do not pass the exam, for those students who do succeed in gaining admittance to university, DRC supports study groups, life skills training, and follow up over the course of university studies.

## LIVELIHOODS

Host community members are significantly more likely to be **working** than refugees. This status quo may change with the new Refugee Proclamation, which guarantees the right for refugees to ask for a work permit. Due to work restrictions, the relatively few employed refugees work exclusively within Hitsats camp as incentive workers. Opportunities for paid work for refugees outside of NGOs within the camp are extremely limited: some refugees may be informally employed in service jobs in town, but these arrangements are not common.

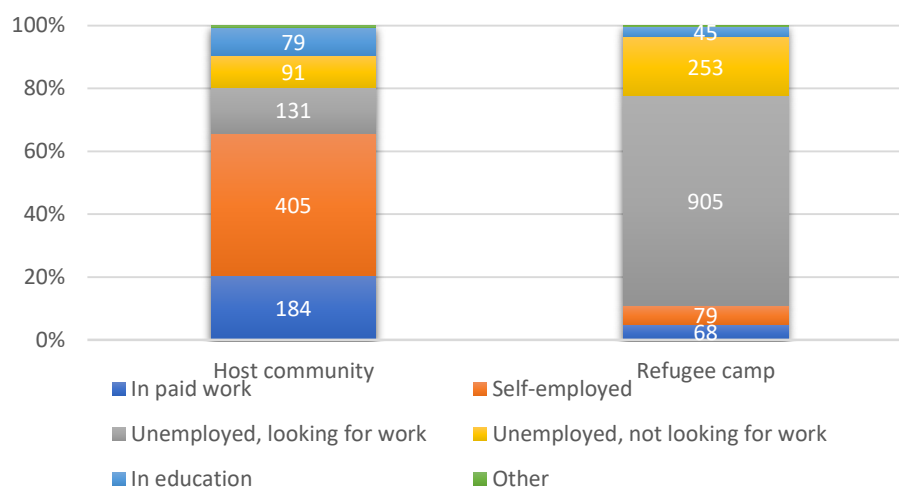
<sup>8</sup> In 2012 the average pupil teacher ratio in Ethiopia was 40:1 (World Bank, 2012)



The majority of employed host community members work in either the private or government sphere – interviews note that the presence of the camp has expanded the private sector within the town, contributing to the opening of new shops and restaurants, although in multiple cases the owners of these shops were not Hitsats natives, having come from bigger cities to seize the opportunity presented by the expanded consumer base in Hitsats.

Refugee and host community members are involved in small-scale activities like trading and service provision (e.g. restaurants, beauty and barber shops). Agricultural activity appears to be less important in this context for both groups, although hosts are slightly more likely to be involved in farming, animal rearing, and beekeeping, to name a few.<sup>9</sup> In addition, traditional gold mining is a source of self-employment for host members, typically as informal daily labour.

**Figure 2 - What was this person's primary daily activity during the past 12 months?**



Note: Working-age individuals 15+ years old and 'active' on the labour market, meaning currently working or looking for work if unemployed (i.e. does not include students, retirees, disabled, etc.). N for refugee camp: 1,052 and host community: 720.

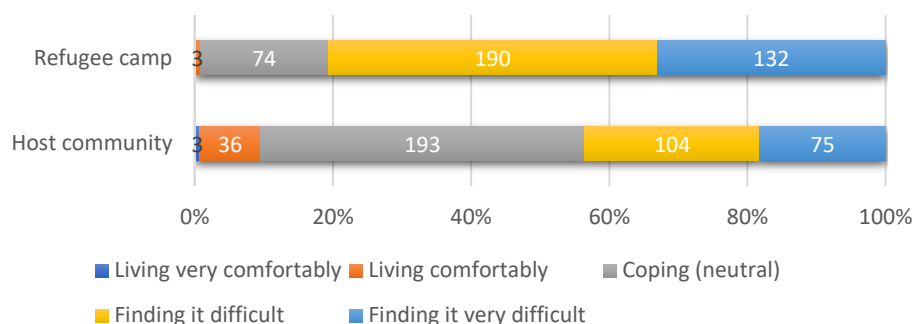
**Trade between refugees and locals is informal in Hitsats town** and takes place mainly at the markets. Refugees are seen as good customers for businesses in Hitsats town, especially those who receive remittances. Locals do not usually go to the camp to access services or buy items. Even when a refugee household member is able to find work, purchasing power for refugees is lower than for hosts: host communities **spend** approximately \$75 more per month in comparison to refugee households. These discrepancies are also reflected in asset ownership. Refugees are thus more affected by the fact that the cost of living in Hitsats has risen significantly since 2013 as the town has taken on more urban characteristics and is less comparable with rural areas and costs.

A regression analysis confirms that residing in Hitsats refugee camp will, while controlling for individual characteristics such as age, gender, marital status and education of the head of household, result in lower income / expenditure and employment prospects. The education of the head of household has a significant positive effect.

This large discrepancy between hosts and refugees is reflected in the subjective assessment of respondents' economic situation: a significantly higher share of host community households view their current economic situation positively.

<sup>9</sup> Hosts are also considerably more likely to own livestock such as cows (23% vs 3%), donkeys (18% vs 2%) and poultry (16% vs 6%).

Figure 3 - How do you see this household's current economic situation?



### TVET: A STOPGAP MEASURE IN A STAGNANT CONTEXT

Developing livelihood activities and opportunities, primarily in the form of certified vocational skills training (TVET) courses and follow up, is a significant part of RDPP’s operations. Two main stakeholders lead complementary TVET activities in Shire under RDPP.

- ➔ NRC implements vocational skills training for youth as part of the Youth Education Pack (YEP) and teaches life skills, literacy/numeracy and occupational skills. The life skills trainings have been provided through a six-month programme, while the business skills trainings follow completion of a vocational skills training through the support of Shire Polytechnic College. The vocational courses focus on five value chains: structural construction work, hotel kitchen operations, basic garment making, basic metalwork, and furniture making. Once the courses have been completed, trainees benefit from business skills training and group start-up kits designed to support the expansion of their skills into the development of a small business.
- ➔ IRC provides trainings of trainers (ToT) to teach the “learn-to-earn business and life skills training curriculum”. IRC conducted a quick capacity assessment of public TVET College instructors in the Shire area, and ‘soft skills’ were identified as a gap among these instructors. As a result, IRC collaborated with the Aksum University Research and Community Service Directorate to provide ToT to four government TVET colleges: Shire Polytechnic TVET college, Shire Agricultural TVET college, Endaba-guna TVET College, and Mai-Tsebri-TVET College. The “learn to earn business and life skills training curriculum” was adapted to fit into the existing TVET curricula. A further identified gap was ICT- as a result, IRC procured 10 desktop computers for use at Mai-Tsebri TVET College.

Although most respondents were happy to have had the chance to take part in RDPP-funded trainings, examples of viable businesses resulting from these trainings are rare. Where they do exist, they are the result of a business owner having access to supplemental funding through remittances. Inadequate start up support and funds, the complicated nature of group start-up kits (which require 5 to 7 people to work together on one business), as well as limited access to markets and restrictions on movement for refugees have resulted in very little livelihood impact for training participants.

While some refugees highlighted psychological benefits to these trainings, giving participants a sense of purpose and accomplishment in a camp where life is mostly stagnant and involves interminable waiting, these benefits are unsustainable in the long run, serving as a stopgap measure which does not address more fundamental barriers to livelihoods access. Sustainable approaches to livelihoods need to be reconceptualized outside of a uniquely TVET approach and need to include key policy changes in terms of access to movement, markets, and relevant networks.

### c. Social cohesion

This research focuses on RDPP activities in Hitsats, Tigray - Eritrean refugees and Ethiopians here share a common language, religion, and culture. This means that social cohesion indicators cannot necessarily be compared to a context such as Gambella, where more conflictual relations are the norm. But in the case of Hitsats, the majority of refugee and host respondents hold positive views of the other. It is not uncommon for families to have members on either side of the border.

**Table 4 - Key indicators for monitoring – Social cohesion**

	Hosts	Refugees
Deem living conditions of refugees to be better than those of hosts	16%	2%
Think that authorities treat refugees better than hosts	52%	13%
Have not experienced conflict with the other group in the past month	90%	97%
Believe economic integration is on the rise	57%	59%
Believe social integration is on the rise	71%	66%
Have a positive or very positive opinion of the other	68%	86%

“We have good relations with the host community. They do respect us, and they are good people.”  
**Refugee woman in Hitsats**

The vast majority of both refugees and hosts say they have never experienced conflict with the other (97% and 90%, respectively), and serious disputes are rare. What little conflict there is often revolves around the use of local natural resources, in particular firewood which refugees are no longer allowed to harvest.

“There is a huge problem of shortage of wood. Because of this, we fear that relations with the host community might turn sour.”  
**Refugee woman in Hitsats**

While tensions persist and may be exacerbated by new arrivals, the fact remains that social cohesion between refugees and host communities in Tigray is strong; this represent an opportunity to promote access and attendance towards more effective integrated programming.

### d. Migration intentions

Hitsats is a significant transit place for Eritrean refugees who intend to move onwards.<sup>10</sup> Family and diaspora networks remain strong: nearly half of the interviewed refugee households indicate that they have a family member in Europe. Upwards of 85% of refugees surveyed would like to move away from their current location over the next 12 months (either to another country or within Ethiopia), although only one third had concrete plans to do so.

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR (2016). *Study on the Onward Movement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Ethiopia*.

**Table 5 - Key indicators for monitoring – Migration intentions**

	Hosts	Refugees
Would like to migrate, but no concrete plans	21%	85%
Plan to migrate	17%	31%
Of those, plan to use formal channels	84%	91%
Have been provided information about the risks of irregular migration	74%	91%

“I believe that in order to change your situation and life, you have to move and find a job. (...) Staying here is a waste.”  
**Eritrean Refugee in Hitsats**

The overarching perception appears to be that Hitsats is stagnant, and that those who strive for a better life, for the ability to save and benefit from opportunities, have little choice but to seek fortune elsewhere. This view is partly due to the fact that international migration has led to visible signs of wealth within Hitsats, partly as a result of remittances received.<sup>11</sup>

*Regression analysis shows that, controlling for individual characteristics including income, age, gender and marital status, individuals residing in Hitsats refugee camp are more likely to plan to migrate than their host peers. Education also appears as a statistically significant factor in the decision to migrate: the more educated, the higher the likelihood of migration aspirations.*

Migration is openly discussed. Refugees are more likely to want to go to Europe, whereas host community members see movement to the Middle East for work as a potentially more affordable option. Overall main destinations for respondents include Europe (45%), the USA (24%) and Canada (11%). The majority of respondents are aware of risks inherent to irregular movement and want to migrate legally. Several interviews revealed that refugees were waiting for resettlement with their families to a third country.

Nearly all respondents indicated that they had been provided with information about the risks involved with migrating. NGOs, UN agencies and the government are the main sources of this information. Several UNHCR ‘Telling the Real Story’ billboards can be found in Hitsats, featuring cautions on the dangers of migration. Refugee beneficiaries and refugee leaders both mentioned that the majority of people do not put much stock into these billboards. They highlighted the harsh journey that Eritreans had already faced to reach Ethiopia, noting that harsh and dangerous journeys were not a deterrent to onwards movement. The majority of those stuck in Hitsats who want to move express a feeling that they have nothing to lose. As one Eritrean put it: “Most people would rather die trying to leave than stay”.



**Photo 8 - Telling the Real Story? Billboard in Hitsats Camps**

<sup>11</sup> Exceptions do exist. As one local highlights, “it is better to live in your own country - you proudly live in your country. It is better to live in the environment that you are familiar with. If you work hard you can also change your situation at home”.

## IV. How are the needs on the ground being met: Evaluation of RDPP in Hitsats

This section turns the spotlight onto RDPP activities in Hitsats following the evaluation criteria of relevance, coordination, sustainability, adaptiveness and capacity. It provides context to numbers collected, as of March 2018, in the Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) on Lot 1 activities which report:

- 2,087 people receiving basic social services as part of the project.
- 374 people assisted to develop economic income-generating assistance.
- 325 staff members from local authorities and basic service providers benefiting from capacity building for strengthening services delivery.
- 59 people benefiting from professional trainings (TVET) and / or skills development.

### a. Relevance of programme activities

Three tiers of relevance in particular emerge:

- ✓ **Relevance to national policy promises and objectives:** At the national level, RDPP activities fall under CRRF objectives, echoing the Government's move towards more inclusive and integrated refugee policies. At the local level, stakeholders view RDPP as a pilot approach to the CRRF, with a strong willingness to learn from the RDPP experience as a pilot approach.
- ✓ **Relevance to regional or sub-regional government objectives:** Where national policy had not yet been formally communicated at sub-regional levels, RDPP discussions with local authorities have, in some cases, served to clarify national level policies and the CRRF, and align activities with and sub-regional needs and objectives. The desk review conducted as part of this evaluation highlights how government officials at different levels (e.g. regional, zone, district) express their support of the project's successful implementation and visit project locations on a regular basis.
- ✓ **Relevance to local beneficiary or community needs:** Consultations with direct beneficiaries occur less frequently and less directly. Lot 1's focus on livelihoods, education, energy, and water correspond to community priorities. However, specific activities within these sectors may need to be revised or reconsidered in order to be relevant to particular community dynamics.

Table 6 lays out the types of assistance received by respondents, their assessment of the quality of assistance and need in terms of (further) aid in that domain. This table summarises the findings for both services provided by RDPP and more humanitarian-type assistance provided through other means:

**Table 6 - Are the services offered in Hitsats in line with the needs of the beneficiaries?**

			Hosts	Refugees
<b>Humanitarian-type assistance, not covered by RDPP</b>	<i>food in kind assistance</i>	% received	3%	100%
		% happy with	84%	8%
		% requesting	17%	64%
	<i>non-food in kind assistance</i>	% received	1%	81%
		% happy with	67%	12%
		% requesting	6%	55%
	<i>cash</i>	% received	1%	92%
		% happy with	100%	7%
		% requesting	11%	53%
	<i>supplementary for pregnant women / children</i>	% received	9%	36%
		% happy with	87%	33%
		% requesting	1%	7%
<b>Development-type assistance, partly covered by RDPP</b>	Business grants	% received	4%	16%
		% happy with	83%	54%
		% requesting	48%	26%
	VSLA	% received	2%	3%
		% happy with	33%	72%
		% requesting	12%	4%
	TVET	% received	9%	41%
		% happy with	79%	57%
		% requesting	24%	3%
	Legal assistance	% received	10%	27%
		% happy with	73%	51%
		% requesting	4%	1%
Agricultural inputs	% received	10%	0%	
	% happy with	51%	NA	
	% requesting	3%	0%	

### CHALLENGES TO IDENTIFYING RELEVANCE FOR BENEFICIARIES: THE EXAMPLE OF TVET IN HITSATS

TVET activities are an interesting case in point: while skills training is deemed relevant by beneficiaries interviewed over the course of this research, the value of this is more psychological than economic: these trainings are not seen as a path to economic independence, but rather as ‘something to do.’ The role and relevance of skills training as it stands in Hitsats is complicated by unclear selection criteria: one IP staff noted that in order to minimise the risk of dropout there has been a preference for targeting those who express a wish to stay in Hitsats. Using migration aspirations as a criterion for selection comes at the expense of matching opportunities with interest and skills, and thus reduces the relevance of this programming to the target population. This is in addition to the fact that current limitations on movement and work severely limit participants’ ability to use any of acquired skill.

Half of host respondents express an eagerness to receive business grants, which they have had limited access to. One host respondent in four thinks they would benefit from TVET opportunities, compared to only 3% of refugee households. This suggests that TVET activities might do well to strive for further inclusion of hosts, who are less represented in these activities. However expectations need to be made clear to potential participants of what a training may offer: host communities who had participated in trainings expressed disappointment at delays in receiving start up support, lack of longterm business support, frustrations inherent to having to work with a group to start a business, and lack of financial growth of their business when they were able to launch it. Stronger connections with employers and identification of market needs, not only in Hitsats but in larger cities such as Shire, maybe a way too reframe TVET to fit into a wider and more relevant context.

## b. Adaptiveness of programme structures

Adaptiveness is crucial in the Ethiopian context, which has changed drastically since fieldwork for this report was conducted in April 2018. A new peace treaty with Eritrea and the ensuing demilitarization of the Eritrean-Ethiopian border, as well as the formalisation of the new Refugee Proclamation in January 2019 have brought significant shifts to the context within which RDPP is being implemented. Follow up studies will need to examine closely how programming has been able to adapt to these changes. Maintaining flexibility in programming comes at a cost, as adaptive practices lead to delays as shifts in programming need to be redefined and discussed in new consultations with authorities. This has been a recurrent challenge for RDPP in Ethiopia, where adaptiveness of programming – whether in order to avoid project overlap, or due to inclement environmental conditions or shifting social dynamics – has slowed down implementation.

### EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE ADAPTIVENESS OF PROGRAMMING

An example of flexible and adaptive programming are water activities, changed under Lot 1 to avoid duplication of efforts by UNICEF on the Serenta dam. Instead, IRC sought to work in tandem with UNICEF to establish where water related efforts might be best served. At the time of writing, these shifts were still in the process of being defined.

On the other end of the spectrum, livelihoods programming largely duplicates past livelihood training activities, which have now also been made available to the host community as part of an integrated approach. No fundamental structural changes have been implemented to the activities otherwise, and this lack of adaptation to context has limited the potential impact of livelihoods programming.

## c. Coordination

Working on integrated programming is relatively new for all stakeholders involved. Developing coordination structures for effective and efficient communication between diverse actors has been challenging. Five main categories of stakeholders need to be included for coordination to succeed: government, other CRRF stakeholders (including humanitarian and development actors), RDPP consortium members, host and refugee communities, and donors.

The coordination dynamics are complex:

- ✓ *Government:* ARRA used to be the sole government actor in charge of refugee programming. Developing relationships with other government actors is a new facet to working on integrated programming. Consortia have put effort into developing these new relationships, particularly at the zonal and woreda level: partners and authorities were consulted and had the opportunity to input to RDPP Lots from the initial application stages. This inclusion has had a positive effect, as it brought actors together and ensured buy-in from the outset. Local authorities have expressed a willingness to support and coordinate with the consortium, although their eagerness to be included and to receive information is tempered by reluctance to actively include integrated programming in community planning.  
MoUs have however been signed with relevant regional and local authorities, and coordination platforms with these authorities have been put in place. Held on a regular basis, these platforms also aim for coordination with DRDIP and BRSP, thus linking government and CRRF coordination.

- ✓ *Other CRRF Stakeholders:* CRRF was launched at the local level more or less at the same time as RDPP, though RDPP became operational much earlier. While CRRF has seen a launching workshop, the adoption of the national strategy, regional action plans, etc., remain on hold. RDPP, DRDIP and BRSP are currently the only projects fulfilling the CRRF vision more broadly. In the case of Hitsats, RDPP consortia have this been instrumental in serving as pilots for building effective CRRF coordination mechanisms. This is by no means the case for all Lots.

“Coordination between programs is new. It started with RDPP. Last month there was a multi-stakeholder meeting, with government, all UN agencies in the area – we all met for the first time. This was an open invitation, anyone could come. CRRF was part of it. (...) In areas where there is no coordination mechanism we agreed to form them, and to continue and strengthen where there is. Right now RDPP is coordinating everything. But the idea is that UNHCR and ARRA will take over at some point, and form a type of umbrella coordination platform”.

KII UNHCR CRRF Focal Point (February 2018)

These fledgling coordination mechanisms have included discussion with other projects. RDPP and DRDIP in particular held discussions to ensure complementarity and avoid redundancy by agreeing to focus on different *kebeles* within which to implement programming. This coordination however remained minimal at the time of fieldwork and follow up studies may examine how it has developed.

- ✓ *Consortium members:* Coordination within the consortium is ensured through regular coordination and progress meetings: common project reviews occur every three months and joint workshops are carried out in order to assess performance. Tensions within the consortium regarding overlap, leadership, and communication issues, have on occasion inhibited effective coordination - IPs are not used to being asked to work collaboratively as opposed to competitively, and there is a learning curve inherent to working effectively within a consortium model.
- ✓ Coordination with *beneficiaries* themselves has not been formalised, occurring only occasionally on an ad hoc basis despite being envisioned in the project’s inception report. None of the above stakeholders have defined relationships or coordination with private sector actors: linkages with outer markets and involvement of non-traditional actors (such as banks or community leaders) are weak and informal at best.

#### d. Capacity Building and local ownership

While generally supportive of the language of ‘integrated approaches’, woreda offices have displayed a reluctance to actively include refugees in their own planning, seeing this as the domain of NGOs, with ‘integrated services’ understood as an expansion of NGO support to local populations (rather than local governments extending activities to refugee communities). Part of the reason is funding: local woreda lack the resources to take on a more active role integrated planning. While RDPP does not explicitly address resource issues for local government, capacity building activities are aiming to promote co-ownership of programming. Small steps such aligning woreda planning and RDPP planning calendars can be significant for building a stronger base on which to work in tandem. Information sharing on national initiatives, policy changes, and new legal frameworks is also crucial here.



## BUILDING ON EXISTING SOCIAL COHESION AND INFORMAL INTEGRATION

In Lot 1, informal integration of services exists already to a certain extent between camp populations and host communities. Close to Shimelba, a host community school accepted the enrollment of refugee students, and included them in its budget planning, independent of any formal programming. In addition, host and refugee community members near Hitsats have worked jointly on land irrigation, sharing together the resulting harvest.

The foundation for effective building capacity on integrated service provision has therefore already been laid to a certain extent, in part thanks to a strong sense of social cohesion that exists for historical and cultural reasons. Local stakeholders are beginning to speak the same language and can envision what successful integrated programming might look like – RDPP programming should recognise and build on these relationships.

Beyond the woreda level, kebele level officers provide entry points towards shared implementation, as practices at the kebele level may trickle up. Kebele administrations may feel more invested if they are part of planning and if there is a sense of shared implementation – capacity building efforts should be aimed at these levels of local administration as well as at the larger woreda, zonal, and regional levels.

### e. Sustainability and Effectiveness

The inception reports across RDPP Lots indicate that the projects will address sustainability at the environmental, institutional, financial and policy levels in each lot. Good practices have emerged. The most apparent is the close and active involvement of regional and sub-regional government offices. This offers significant potential to create a lasting contribution to future programming. Stakeholders' willingness to be flexible in response to complementary programming and contextual needs is encouraging for long term impact. However significant challenges to sustainability remain. Staff turnover of local authorities, IP staff, and activity staff (including teachers at the new high school) is an issue that requires continuous engagement and creative problem solving in light of limited resources. RDPP stakeholders have to build new relationships as actors change, including within the consortium. Active knowledge management systems and interagency learning is crucial.

Some activity sectors struggle with sustainability and effectiveness. This is true of livelihood activities associated with TVET skills trainings: while the training and the entrepreneurship support implemented by IRC and NRC provide valuable skills for refugees, the ability to use these skills towards sustainable income generation is less clear.

This is due to structural factors, which include:

- A **restricted market** in Hitsats and lack of access to opportunities further afield.
- **Insufficient start-up capital** despite the provision of start-up kits by IPs.
- Material issues such as **lack of water and lack of access to energy**.



Photo 9 - Zone C

Participants in skills trainings, who received business support, do not report a significant and sustainable change in their lives due to a lack of long-term support. On the other hand, positive examples to emulate also exist. Tailoring and small restaurants seem to have more success than other enterprises. One host community member interviewed described the success of his metal and construction business thanks to livelihoods trainings provided by NRC. In these cases, factors related to effective interventions include good cohesion and teamwork within the supported group, timely provision of start-up resources by the IP, and successful efforts to create a customer base. For RDPP livelihood activities to be sustainable and effective, IPs will need to learn from these initial lessons.

## V. Conclusion and recommendations: Ways forward to

The findings provide a snapshot of the situation of RDPP Ethiopia in 2018, with a focus on Lot 1 in Hitsats. Different actors play a role in building capacity and effectively implementing RDPP; the recommendations provide ways to address weaknesses and build upon project strengths.

## Structural recommendations

NEED OR CHALLENGE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Lack of investment on the part of kebele and woreda authorities in active implementation: they want to be informed and included, but do not see implementation of integrated programming as their role.</b>	<b>Involve kebele level authorities in coordination:</b> While efforts to include and consult local woreda authorities have proven effective, kebele administrators can provide viable entry points to community buy-in and feedback. They may feel a stronger sense of shared implementation if they are part of formal and regular coordination.
<b>Consortium activities function in silo, providing punctual updates rather than working together in a consistently coordinated matter.</b>	<b>Strengthen collaboration and synergies between consortium partners:</b> Although coordination efforts are in progress, highlighting explicit synergies between sectors can support the identification of areas where partners can work to identify joint solutions. <i>Examples of working coordination mechanisms include ensuring that a transformer is installed to electrify YEP centres and the DiCAC High School. The Serenta Dam project was originally planned to fall within IRC's responsibility through RDPP but was finally included in UNICEF's portfolio and financed through DFID funding, further illustrating the importance of close coordination for maximum impact. One example of room for improvement is the integration of WASH and livelihoods activities, for instance by linking up with UNHCR WASH projects, pursuing complementary funding, and supporting NRC's business groups with WASH access.</i>
<b>IPs, donors and stakeholders have different understandings of what the overall impact-level objectives of the programme are.</b>	<b>Agree on a joint monitoring framework:</b> Explicit and realistic agreement on programme objectives can be communicated through the production of an agreed-upon common RDPP Ethiopia monitoring framework. This would be based on a consensus among IPs and all other stakeholders. Monitoring should reflect synergies and the interlinked nature of desired outcomes. The common EUTF output indicators are a start but were found by stakeholders in the field to be too broad (aggregated indicators being unable to serve the purpose of detailed analysis for any given portfolio), while disaggregated indicators lead to an absence of comparability. Furthermore, the existing framework lacks benchmark targets which IPs in Ethiopia can aspire to meeting not in isolation but as a common RDPP vision. M&E information is not routinely shared among stakeholders in the field. A common gauge of 'success' beyond outputs can improve coordination and accountability. The outcome metric proposed on this report may serve as a starting point for further reflection in this regard.

## Activity-specific recommendations for implementing partners: TVET and livelihoods activities

NEED OR CHALLENGE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>The group business structure for TVET graduates has been a source of problems due to differing interests, future plans, money management and work styles amongst group members.</b>	<b>Consider group member interests and relationships when creating livelihood and business groups.</b> This can ensure more cohesive, cooperative, and sustainable groups than the current somewhat arbitrary means of forming business groups.
<b>Lack of sustainable support for TVET graduates upon completion of programme, including significant delays in receiving start-up kits.</b>	<b>Reduce the time gap between training and reception of start-up kits</b> and other in-kind support and provide clear business plan development support in addition to technical skills training, so that those benefiting from livelihoods trainings can begin to build up their small businesses as soon as possible once training is completed.
<b>Lack of connections to existing value chains, employers, and wider markets around Hitsats and the larger Shire areas.</b>	<b>Build relationships with private sector actors</b> around Hitsats and in Shire to connect start-up business to larger markets in order to ensure that training responds to practical skills needs. This can increase the relevance of livelihood activities to broader economic objectives of the region as well as connecting beneficiaries with already existing value chains.
	<b>Arrange market fairs in or around Hitsats</b> for livestock and livestock-based products (chickens, eggs, milk, meat) in order to connect to markets that are farther and less easily accessible for refugees and host community members. This can allow community members in Hitsats to engage with wider markets and traders.

### Structural recommendations for RDPP Steering Committee and Donors

NEED OR CHALLENGE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Lack of clarity concerning expectations for IPs.</b>	<b>Provide specific and formal strategic guidance to IPs</b> in order to establish clear expectations regarding ‘integrated ways of working’ and structural change. <b>Expectations of donors</b> regarding what RDPP can achieve in the project timeframe and operational context – including significant political shifts – <b>should remain realistic and funding flexible.</b>
<b>Need for flexible funding to address contextual specificities and support continuous learning opportunities.</b>	<p>Provide strategic <b>guidance to consortium leads for aligning RDPP project cycles with budgetary planning cycles of woreda offices.</b> In the words of one counterpart with whom we discussed the issue, <i>“all NGO projects use different calendars. One of our tasks now is to discuss with Woreda offices to promote refugee issues as a part of their development plans. But it is complicated by the fact that our own plans were drawn up already. The IPs should be more flexible. Local government actors have their cycles dictated by the national level”.</i></p> <p>The RDPP Steering Committee should <b>maintain a certain level of flexibility</b> regarding planning cycles in order to better coordinate and work with local administration. Communication between IPs and the EU Delegation remains high level, focused on general support and feedback on strategic direction rather than the details of implementation of individual activities.</p>
<b>Lack of clarity concerning expectations for IPs.</b>	<b>Provide specific and formal strategic guidance to IPs</b> regarding ‘integrated ways of working’ and structural change. <b>Expectations of donors</b> regarding what RDPP can achieve in the project timeframe and operational context – including significant political shifts – <b>should remain realistic.</b>
<b>Need for publicly available and widely distributed mapping of all activities that fall under CRRF objectives.</b>	<b>Mappings of activities and programming that falls under the umbrella of CRRF should be conducted in cooperation with all local stakeholders.</b> These CRRF activity mappings can help address coordination gaps, avoid duplication, and identify where efforts are needed to streamline existing structures at both national and local levels. While this exercise should not necessarily be <i>led</i> by RDPP counterparts and might be better suited to national government counterparts or UNHCR, the RDPP Steering Committee is in a strong position to initiate the necessary discussion.

### Structural recommendations for local and national government stakeholders

NEED OR CHALLENGE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Lack of knowledge of CRRF law and of national refugee context on the part of local stakeholders.</b>	At the national level, <b>invest in outreach and awareness measures that clearly communicate information regarding the practical implications of the new refugee law and CRRF</b> at the local level, including at the woreda, kebele, and camp level.
<b>Lack of inclusion of refugees in local planning.</b>	At the local level, lobby to <b>include refugee and integrated activities in woreda planning and budget measures.</b>

## CONCLUSION

The RDPP Lots in Ethiopia have made the effort to establish baselines and a certain level of community assessments before establishing programming: this inception work has helped ensure relevance of programming to the general sectoral needs of target populations. This is evidenced by references to such assessments in the literature review of RDPP project documents, as well as in feedback from interviewees in the case of EIDDACE in Hitsats. Compared to other RDPP countries in the Horn of Africa, the Ethiopian RDPP consortia seem to be relatively strong in this regard.

While targeted sectors may represent relevant community sectoral needs, the content of programming may not address the specific contexts – this is true for instance of livelihoods programming, where the focus on specific TVET training offers brief windows of purposes but has not been able to link with the wider market context. Programming in this sector is additionally limited by the current restrictions on refugee movement and work at the national level.

Overall, expectations of all stakeholders should be managed. For many RDPP Lots in Ethiopia, and for EIDDACE in particular, ‘Integrated service delivery’ is pursued from the refugee camp settings outward. Structures that have provided services for refugees during the past are being asked to include host communities, take on a longer-term development logic and work with local authorities towards integrated planning. Few traditional development actors that have focused on local community development of host communities, and working through other line ministries than ARRA, are included in the consortia. Growing from a strictly humanitarian focus into an integrated humanitarian-development nexus will take time.

Even though RDPP consortia in Hitsats cover several activities, seeking complementarity with other actors is important and could be pursued more systematically. EIDDACE alone can and should not be the sole leader in effecting full transformation of service delivery and moving towards integrated services.

Opportunities for building capacity and local ownership of programming do exist and should be strengthened. But RDPP is in many ways a pilot. In addition, the policy context at the national level, which has been changing rapidly in Ethiopia (and continues to remain unpredictable at the time of writing), has an enormous impact on the capabilities of and restrictions that refugees face – equitable programming will require changes at the national level in practice as well as in law: this is yet to be implemented. Given all of this, expectations of RDPP should be modest, recognising that this is a first step in a new way of working, and that what RDPP offers at the structural level is the possibility of identifying tangible lessons to be learned. If this is effectively taken on board, it can prove foundational for future striving towards integrated and equitable programming.

## ANNEX 1: USING AN RDPP OUTCOME METRIC TO GAUGE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMMING

### ✓ Why an outcome metric?

In order to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of RDPP programming, stakeholders in the field, donors and evaluators should agree on the effects they expect to see. Focusing only on variables to influence, scores can be attributed to individual respondents both along to point to gaps and identify the most vulnerable respondents, both across each dimension and overall. At the time of the endline, to the extent that the same respondents are identified and re-interviewed, the evolution in the relevant dimensions can be assessed and linked to programming efforts.

### ✓ Which dimensions / indicators are relevant in the case of Hitsats camp and surroundings?

The indicators should focus on the domains of direct relevance to RDPP activities, with the understanding that these are sector-based rather than reflective of the broader RDPP priorities as reflected in its theory of change. In Hitsats camp, activities focus mainly water / energy, education, livelihoods, social cohesion and access to justice.<sup>12</sup> Based on these broad categories, the following indicators were selected for a Hitsats-specific RDPP outcome metric:

Table 7 - Hitsats-specific RDPP outcome indicators

<b>Water and energy</b>	<b>Access to an improved water source</b>
	Enough water for agricultural production
	Access to electricity (grid, solar or generator)
<b>Education</b>	Regular school attendance
	Integrated school
	Teacher-student ration of 50 or less
	Quality of teaching judged high or very high
<b>Livelihoods</b>	Working-age individuals in paid work or self-employed
	Individuals working in an integrated setting
	Working individuals with a formal contract
	Individuals who have access to TVET to foster their skills
	Households which have access to credit
	Households which have income redundancy (more than 1 earner)
	Respondents who find their economic situation (very) comfortable
<b>Justice and social cohesion</b>	Households who judge that economic integration is on the rise
	Households who judge that social integration is on the rise
	Trusting one's own community
	Trusting neighboring community
	Has not experienced conflict in the past month
	Has a neutral, positive or very positive perception of the group
	Can turn to local authorities in case of conflict
	Was able to seek legal help in the event of a legal problem

### ✓ How is the metric calculated?

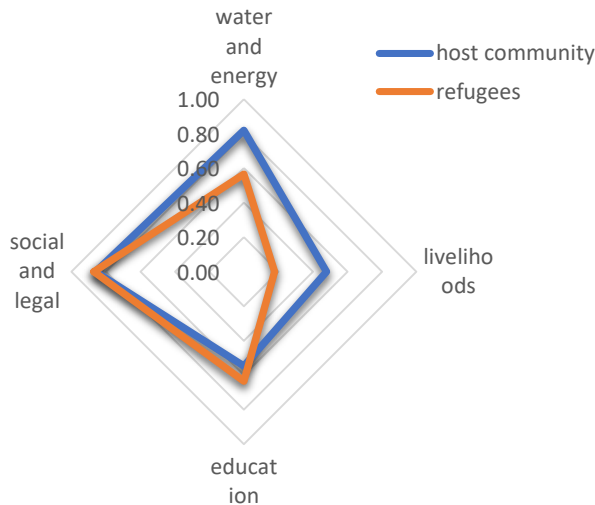
A multiple correspondence analysis<sup>13</sup> was used to determine a set of weights that would maximize the variance of the weighted sum among these variables within the sample. Empirical indices are often used in the absence of an a priori set of weights based on intimate knowledge of the underlying populations with respect to themes at hand. These weights were used to create a thematic index to compute a score for each respondent household in each dimension.

<sup>12</sup> Governance and capacity building is another important component, but its effects on the population cannot be ascertained using a household-level survey tool.

<sup>13</sup> Although for binary variables, multiple correspondence analysis is functionally equivalent to principal components analysis, the former is a more appropriate term due to the lack of scalarity in the variables.

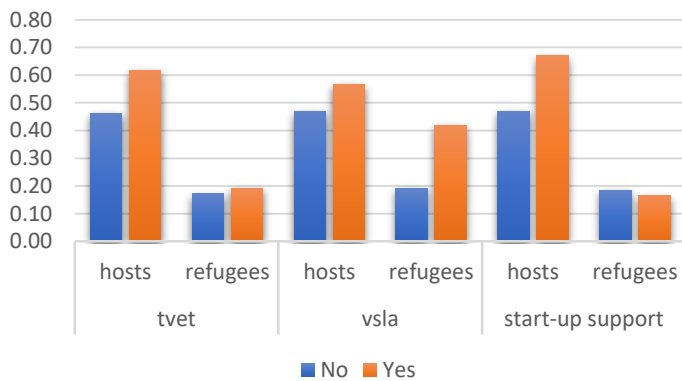
✓ **What are the preliminary insights?**

**Figure 3 - Average scores of host and refugee respondents**

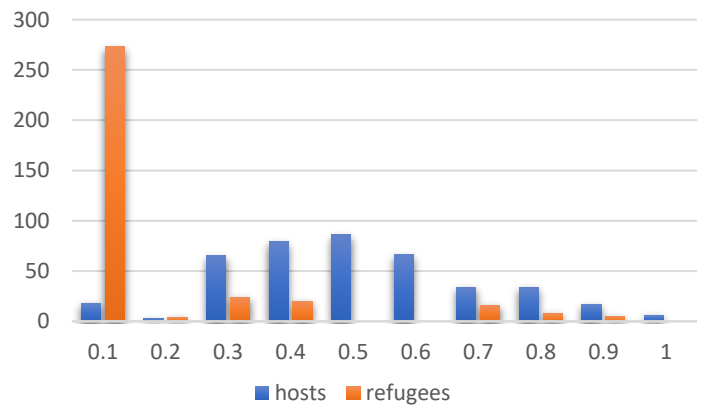


The overall assessment of average scores between host and refugee respondents points to an important gap in the domains of livelihoods and water / energy. Closing these gaps will be one of the goals of RDPP programming in the years to come. Refugees' scores are so low as to be negligible. For integrated programming to lead to sustainable integration, these scores should rise significantly.

**Figure 5 - Livelihoods scores and livelihoods support received**



**Figure 4 - Histogram of livelihoods scores**



Comparing mean livelihoods score to different types of livelihoods programming benefited from, it emerges that particularly for host respondents, higher scores tend to go hand in hand with a higher likelihood to have benefited from TVET, VSLA activities and start-up support. It is not possible to ascertain whether this is due to success of programming (aid raises livelihoods scores) or inefficient targeting (those most in need are not necessarily those selected as beneficiaries) - further light will be shed at the link between economic well-being and programming at the endline stage.

✓ **What changes would we expect to see at the time of the endline?**

If targeting is effective, one would expect the lowest quartile of respondents to have improved their scores considerably. The domains where respondents score the lowest should be prioritised. In the case of Hitsats, these are the livelihoods and energy domains, with a focus on refugee populations. In line with the goals of the integrated approach, gaps between hosts and refugees should be minimized.

Overall, the population should be 'lifted' towards the goal of a 'perfect score' – this is by no means an ideal score but simply represents minimum standards being met in the context of this study of Hitsats and in the domains relevant to programming efforts.

## **ANNEX 2: Limitations to the research**

The above chapter focuses on the baseline situation of RDPP-related activities in Hitsats camp and surroundings. Located in Tigray, this camp was selected in consultation with RDPP stakeholders active in Ethiopia as the best option for qualitative and quantitative fieldwork because of the programming's focus, as well as accessibility and permits / authorisations. Lessons learned here are likely to apply also to programming taking place in the regions of Afar and Somali. They should not, however, be generalised without taking into consideration the local areas' context.

Limitations to fieldwork included the fact that timing coincided with the post – Fasika (Orthodox Easter) festivities, as well as the long-awaited reopening of mobile telephone / data services throughout the country.

Fieldwork was impacted by the fact that the temperatures in April exceeded 35 degrees Celsius, putting a limitation on the number of interviews which could be conducted in one day, particularly in the camp zones with smaller and hotter shelters (Zone C).

Permissions to conduct research had to be obtained from the local Administration for Refugee and Returnees and was granted after a detailed presentation of the kinds of activities that would be undertaken.

The team found that it was easier to interview refugees than hosts. The team assigned to the camp also struggled with the respondents' survey fatigue, but camp management was helped the team navigate the environment, identify respondents and make introductions.