

International Rescue Committee Ethiopia: Strategy Action Plan



M Hutchison / IRC



Issued June 2016



IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee’s (IRC) mission is to help the world’s most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the IRC’s global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries’ needs.



ETHIOPIA OVERVIEW

While Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies globally, it is also one of the poorest countries in the world. As Ethiopia grapples with its own development and humanitarian needs, it is a major host country for refugees in the region.

Despite improvements in recent years, Ethiopia still faces many life-threatening health issues. 1 in 17 children dies within one year of being born and 1 in 11 dies before their fifth birthday. Many women do not have access to family planning services. Almost half the

population does not have access to an improved water source, and while waterborne disease outbreaks are rare, limited awareness of hygiene-related behaviors increase public health risks.

In recent years, the government has invested substantially in education. However, overall enrollment and retention rates tend to be lower for girls compared to boys. Furthermore, many youth lack marketable skills to become self-sufficient.

Ethiopia’s economy is heavily dependent on farming. Frequent drought and flooding have negative impacts on nutrition and food security. Moreover, limited employment and income generation opportunities for refugees can lead to risky and unsafe approaches to make a living, particularly for youth and women.

The IRC’s new strategy for Ethiopia illustrates its commitment to improving the health, education, and economic wellbeing of crisis-affected people in Ethiopia.

IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

The IRC began programming in Ethiopia in 2000, providing assistance to refugees from neighboring countries and Ethiopians in under-served and/or crisis-affected local communities impacted by drought, flooding and/or conflict. Currently, the IRC provides multi-sector assistance for emergency response and long-term resilience-building.

Through the end of 2020, the IRC's strategy in Ethiopia will prioritize improving outcomes in health, education, and economic wellbeing (see Figure 1), specifically targeting women, youth, children, and other vulnerable groups.

The IRC will contribute to improved health through increased education, capacity building, and support for community and government partners. Specifically, the IRC will engage with households, communities, and partners in refugee and non-refugee settings to increase access to water and sanitation services, raise awareness on family planning and reproductive health, and change attitudes and behaviors to protect against preventable health conditions.

At the same time, the IRC will implement programs aimed at enhancing literacy, numeracy, social and emotional, and market-related skills among youth and adults. Building on existing programs, the IRC will pursue these skills-building interventions in women and girls' safe spaces, youth training centers, and non-formal education programs.

Mentorship, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, and micro-franchise opportunities will prepare youth to enter the workforce. In addition to long-term livelihoods skill-building interventions, the IRC will continue to respond to emergencies with distributions of essential items, including dignity kits, and water, sanitation and hygiene.

The IRC's commitment to gender equality strives for equal outcomes for women and girls, and men and boys. To narrow the gender gap, the IRC will ensure that all programming is designed to address the unique needs of and mitigate against access barriers faced by women and men, boys and girls.

Figure 1: Signature Outcomes and Program Approaches

	Signature Outcomes in Ethiopia	Program Approaches
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Women and adolescent girls prevent unwanted pregnancy > Children are protected from and treated for communicable diseases > People are protected from water, sanitation and hygiene-related diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Support communities to overcome cultural and social norms that lead to unintended pregnancy and vaccine-preventable diseases > Increase awareness and build capacity on key topics like family planning, vaccination, early marriage and critical WASH behaviors > Promote project ownership among community leaders, government partners, and service providers through technical support and capacity development
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 15 – 29 year olds have high levels of market-relevant livelihoods skills, literacy and numeracy skills; and social and emotional skills, according to their developmental potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Adapt curricula for and provide responsive education programs in literacy, numeracy, social, and emotional skills-building > Provide market-relevant skills training programs to equip youth to improve livelihoods
ECONOMIC WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > People meet basic needs and avoid negative coping strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Deliver life-saving interventions including basic relief items distributions and emergency cash transfers > Build financial literacy and facilitate access to safe earning opportunities

COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

In order to maximize impact and achieve priority outcomes, the IRC in Ethiopia is making new investments to improve program effectiveness, use resources more efficiently, deepen and diversify program coverage, react more quickly when crisis strikes, and be more responsive to beneficiaries and partners. The IRC made the following commitments to strengthen programming and improve the lives of the people it serves in Ethiopia.

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact



Effectiveness

- > Deepen internal capacity for gender mainstreaming approaches and disability inclusion
- > Enhance documentation, sharing, and use of evidence in program design



Best Use of Resources

- > Improve and standardize cost and quality assessment for program inputs and outputs to drive cost efficiency and effectiveness



Scale & Reach

- > Further develop and diversify strategic partnerships to increase programmatic reach



Speed and Timeliness

- > Improve lead times on workforce placement and procurement to ensure timely project start-up and a quicker response when crisis strikes



Responsiveness

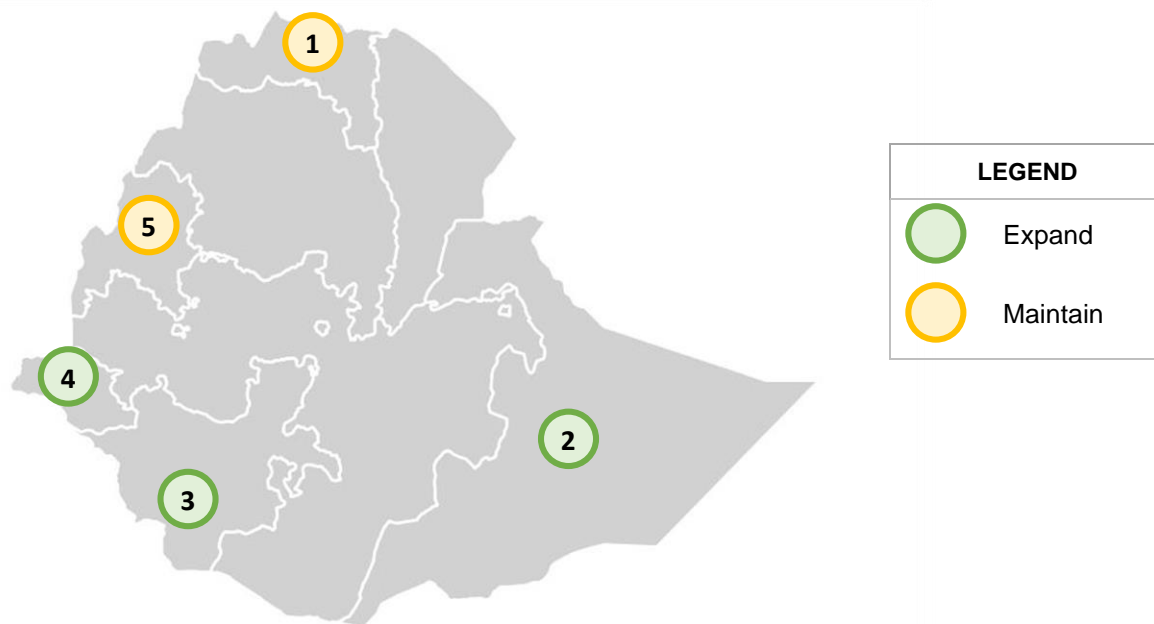
- > Establish formal client feedback mechanisms and use information to inform project management and design



IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

Through the end of 2020, the IRC will maintain and/or expand its presence in sites across Ethiopia based on an analysis of where the greatest need is and where the IRC can create the greatest impact. At the same time, the IRC will continue to respond, directly and in partnership, to emergencies as they arise throughout the country.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in Ethiopia




Location	Geographic Transition
<p>1 Tigray</p>	<p>Continue to support Eritrean refugees and host communities with multi-sector programs, while responding to emergency needs when they arise</p>
<p>2 Somali</p>	<p>Provide more local communities with services in health, education and economic wellbeing, respond to emergency needs, and support Somali refugees</p>
<p>3 Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples</p>	<p>Build on past and current programs to address recovery and resilience needs, including key health, education, and economic wellbeing interventions, while responding to emergency needs as they arise</p>
<p>4 Gambella</p>	<p>Continue and enhance programming that meets the needs of South Sudanese refugees and host communities, while responding to emergency needs in the region</p>
<p>5 Benishangul-Gumuz</p>	<p>Continue to support new and existing refugee populations and host communities with multi-sector programming</p>



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The IRC in Ethiopia

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