

Qualification and Employment Prospects for Refugees, Internally Displaced People and Host Communities in Ethiopia (QEP II)

Special Initiative Displaced Persons and Host Countries

The challenge

Ethiopia's history of welcoming people that are displaced from their home country goes back a long time. Today, the country is home to more than one million refugees, making it one of the largest host countries in Africa. Furthermore, internal conflict as well as adverse effects of climate change have resulted in more than 1.9 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). An estimated 2.8 million IDPs have already returned to their place of origin. However, just like the host communities, refugees and IDPs face insufficient employment and income prospects. An important reason for this is the limited access to vocational training that opens up pathways into employment. Existing vocational training opportunities often lack practical relevance or do not prepare people for self-employment.

Our Approach

The programme builds on Ethiopia's commitment to refugee and IDP inclusion. The country is part of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) as well as a signing party to the Kampala Convention for the protection and assistance of IDPs. Ethiopia's Refugee Proclamation from February 2019 is an expression of the country's intention to include refugees into existing structures. QEP II supports Ethiopia's efforts in refugee and IDP inclusion and moves towards a development-oriented long-term approach of including refugees and IDPs, while also supporting their host communities. GIZ has been working in the field of vocational training in Ethiopia for many years. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and in cooperation with the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Skills (MoLS), the pro-

gramme creates inclusive vocational training and employment opportunities for refugees, IDPs and Ethiopians across the country: in Addis Ababa, Somali region, Benishangul-Gumuz region and Tigray region. The programme is co-funded by the European Union and contributes to the Special Initiative *Displaced Persons and Host Countries*.

Project name	Qualification and Employment Prospects for Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in Ethiopia (QEP II)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Co-funded by	European Union (EU)
Project regions	Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Somali region, Benishangul-Gumuz region and Tigray region
Lead executing agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Partner organisation	Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Skills (MoLS)
Duration	11/2023 – 10/2027
Budget	EUR 22.45 Mio. including EUR 10.25 Mio. contribution by the European Union (EU)

QEP II's approach encompasses the following areas of action:

- **Implementation of the refugee proclamation**
As part of the first project phase, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was concluded between MoLS and the Ethiopian Refugees and Returnee Service



L. to r.: Trainee in Tigray training in an automotive company; Joint business group in Jigjiga, Somali, in front of their beauty shop; Trainee in Tigray training in an automotive company;

(RRS). The partners are being supported in establishing a coordination format that supports the implementation of the Refugee Proclamation. Thereby institutionalizing the inclusion of refugees into the national TVET system and labour market.

- **Expansion of access to vocational training**

Established public vocational colleges receive support to provide access for refugees and IDPs. Refugees, IDPs and host community members jointly participate in short-term trainings and job entry measures tailored to local labour market needs. Vocational training measures in areas with high employment potential, including agriculture and other environmental and climate-related sectors, are further developed.

- **Creating pathways into employment**

Entrepreneurship centres are being set up or expanded at inclusive vocational colleges to promote the start-up culture in the vocational training system. Business groups made up of refugees, IDPs and members of host communities benefit from comprehensive start-up training, start-up assistance and mentoring. Regional employment promotion agencies support business groups in developing their products and services to establish themselves on the market. Partnerships between companies and vocational schools are established to facilitate the career entry of vocational school graduates.

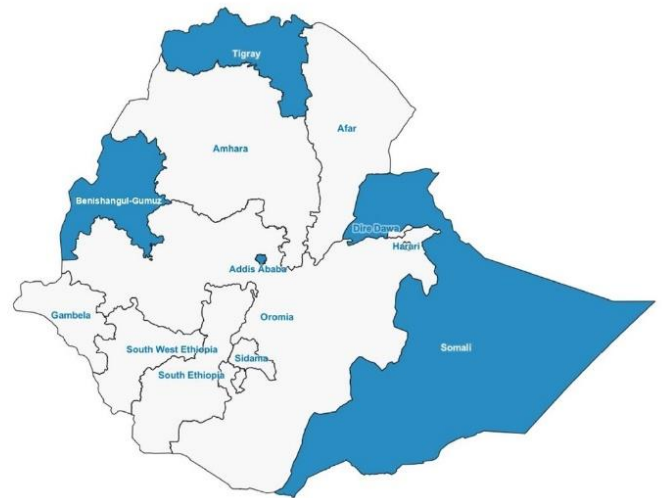
- **Strengthening social cohesion**

The integrated vocational classes and accompanying extra-curricular activities, such as sports and cultural events and psychosocial counselling, contribute to strengthen social cohesion between the different target groups. These measures strengthen personal resilience and reduce social conflicts between the groups. This ultimately leads to fewer drop-outs and facilitates the transition to employment.

- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector**

In Benishangul-Gumuz and Tigray, IDPs and their host communities are trained for jobs in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector. The skills they learn will help meet local demand for the installation, reconstruction and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities. Access to safe drinking water will also help to

improve the learning experience at the inclusive vocational colleges and ensure a higher quality of education.



Regions of programme implementation: Addis Ababa, Somali region, Benishangul-Gumuz region and Tigray region.

Achievements (August 2025)

- Eleven public vocational colleges in Addis Ababa, Tigray, Benishangul-Gumuz and Somali region are expanded to inclusive vocational colleges. These institutions lay the foundation for joint learning for thousands of refugees, IDPs and Ethiopians.
- More than 1800 refugee, IDPs and host community trainees have successfully completed short-term skills trainings in sectors like agriculture, WASH, construction and automotive.
- More than 2700 refugees, IDPs and host community members have improved their employment prospects through wage- and self-employment support measures.
- 15 water facilities have been newly constructed or rehabilitated in Tigray and Benishangul-Gumuz, to the benefit of the people attending the TVET college as well as adjacent IDP sites and their host communities.
- The programme is considered as a flagship project for the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Ethiopia.

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