

Refugee Community Radio

Baseline Study, Sudan and Ethiopia

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Acronyms

EEPA	Europe External Policy Advisors
ICT	information and communication technology
ARRA	Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs

Introduction

This baseline study was commissioned by Tilburg University and Europe External Policy Advisors (EEPA) as part of the European Commission project 'Youth in the Horn of Africa – Pilot Project'. The project aims to create resilience among young Eritrean refugees in the Horn of Africa in the context of human trafficking. The objective is to promote peace and democracy in the target countries by building the capacity of youth to become active members of society with strong knowledge and skills in democratic processes. This baseline seeks to determine the radio usage habits of young refugees and their peers in host communities with a view to developing a radio communication project to inform young Eritrean refugees and young people from host communities of the risks of trafficking and possible alternatives. Data collection from social media feedback is part of the information loop the project hopes to establish with the refugee youth, so that the information they hear and receive is consistent with the information available through other channels.

Over 100,000 Eritreans are currently estimated to be living in refugee camps in northern Ethiopia and in towns and cities throughout the country (Prandi 2016). On the other side of the border, Eastern Sudan hosts 112,283 Eritrean refugees, of whom 83,499 live in camps and 28,784 in urban areas (ICMC Europe 2013). This is a highly mobile community, with refugees often leaving camps and settlements to join their other migrants on a secondary migration across the Sahara Desert to Libya and then across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. Many do not reach their final destination and those who make it face an extremely traumatic journey and a harsh reception, severely impacting on their ability to cope with their experiences and the demands of settling in to their new home.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly smart phones, play a pivotal role in the lives of migrants and refugees in the region. However, despite the fact that ICTs are playing such a key role in enabling the flow of information between geographically-dispersed people, including a key role in facilitating human trafficking (Van Reisen et al. 2016), little has been done to use technology to build and promote community resilience and improve coping strategies among youth in Eritrean refugee communities. Nonetheless, it is clear that ICTs have great potential for developing community resilience, both due to their ability to transcend barriers of accessibility and their versatility in responding to current concerns in real-time.

The concept of community resilience is based on the inherent competence and connectedness of all human beings and is often defined as: "A community's capacity, hope and faith to withstand major trauma and loss, overcome adversity and to prevail, usually with increased resources, competence and connectedness" (Landau and Saul 2004). Based on studies of communities exposed to mass violence, Norris and colleagues developed a framework with four variables that constitute community resilience (Norris and Stevens 2007; Norris et al. 2002, 2008). This framework allows for the identification of opportunities for using ICTs as a resource for building (or

rebuilding) resilience in traumatised communities, such as Eritrean refugee communities. Table 1 sets out the four variables and describes how ICTs can be used to support community resilience for each variable.

Table 1. Four variables of community resilience and how ICTs can be used to support them

Variable	How ICTs can be used
Economic development (or economic situation): relates to the ability to meet the basic needs of members of the community. Populations at a lower socioeconomic level have less instrumental, psychological and social ability to resist disasters than populations with a higher socioeconomic standing (Norris et al. 2002). Therefore, wealthier communities with better economic resources have increased resilience and heal more successfully from traumatic experiences than poor communities. This is sometimes related to their ability to draw more attention to their problems and, hence, receive more acknowledgement and support.	ICTs can be used to draw attention to difficult (traumatic) experiences faced by communities, facilitating faster awareness and more effective responses, and ultimately mitigating the resulting trauma.
Social capital: refers to the networks of community organisations and links between them. It refers to the sense of belonging and, hence, commitment to the community (Perkins and Long 2001).	ICTs can be used to help communities scattered across the globe to remain connected and build community resilience by affirming each other, promoting belonging, and mobilizing information and resources.
Reliable information and open communication: refers to accurate and trusted information, which enables members of the community to cope with the outcome of traumatic events and enhances trust in community leaders (Shamai 2015). Good communication also contributes to the development of meaning (or community narrative).	The provision of reliable information through ICTs creates a sense of security among members of the community affected (directly or indirectly) by the traumatic event and also among those who are trying to provide help.
Community competence: refers to the ability of community organisations and their leaders to create collective problem-solving and decision-making skills that empower the community to cope with the challenges posed by traumatic events. Where community competence is diminished, or was lacking in the first place, the result is	Using ICTs, communities can develop ways of communicating up-to-date information on protection and problem solving, enabling people to feel safe and a sense of belonging to a wider network of people who are concerned with issues that are of mutual importance.

community helplessness.	conflict	and	
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Using ICTs, people can reconnect with each other, to their history (and past resilience), and to the wisdom of their faith and traditions, enabling them to make coherent choices about their future. This increased connection can go beyond enabling communities to simply cope with traumatic experiences and result in positive psychological changes or post-traumatic growth, resulting from successfully struggling against adversity (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2003). In addition, ICTs have the potential to enhance community resilience by giving people access to the wider world and enabling victims to raise awareness and obtain material and moral support.

Objectives of the study

The baseline study seeks to understand:

- How youth from refugee communities and their counterparts in host communities engage with each other (if at all)
- What they know/understand about each other
- How they obtain information about each other
- If there are any examples of engagement between refugee communities and their counterparts in host communities on building protection and resilience together
- What means of communication/sources of information they have from which to learn about each other

The measures of success of the radio communication project will be:

- An increase in the number of youth in the host community engaging with youth from the refugee communities
- An increase in the number of youth in the refugee community engaging with youth in the host community
- Enhanced understanding of the need for protection and of the existing dangers of human trafficking
- An increase in collaboration between youth in both communities and willingness to take part in supportive engagement
- A widening of the understanding of mutual interests, leading to the building of joint resilience and coping strategies

Methodology

The baseline study was conducted from April to July 2016 and consisted mainly of a survey of Eritrean, Ethiopian and Sudanese youth in various locations in Ethiopia and Sudan. A separate questionnaire was used for Eritrean refugee youth (Appendix I) and Ethiopian and Sudanese youth from the host community (Appendix II). Table 2 lists the locations and groups surveyed.

Table 2. Location and groups surveyed	
Location	Group
Shimelba refugee camp	Eritrean refugee youth
Adi Harush refugee camp	Eritrean refugee youth
Hitsats refugee camp	Eritrean refugee youth
Addis Ababa	Eritrean refugee youth
Shire, Tigray region	Ethiopian youth
Addis Ababa	Ethiopian youth (civil service college)
Kassala (refugee camps in the area)	Eritrea refugee youth
Khartoum	Eritrean refugee youth
Khartoum	Sudanese youth

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to establish the potential of a radio communication project and to understand how it would fit with existing policies and programmes. Interviewees included:

- Minister for Communication and Information, Ethiopia
- Refugee protection officer at Shire ARRA (Ethiopian refugee agency)
- Ethiopian professionals from the Tigray region
- Ethiopian and Eritrean media professionals and artists

Results

Participants

In total, 151 people took part in the survey: in Ethiopia 40 Eritreans and 44 Ethiopians, took part, while in Sudan 50 Eritreans and 20 Sudanese participated. Most participants were aged between 17 and 35 (apart from a couple of older Ethiopian post-graduate students from the civil service college). Table 3 presents the characteristics of the survey respondents (age, location and nationality) and Figure 1 gives the age range.

Table 3. Characteristics of survey respondents					
Location and nationality	Number of respondents	Number of women	Age 17–19	Age 20–26	Age 27–30+
Hitsats (Eritrean)	14	0	3	10	1
Adi Harush (Eritrean)	4	1	3	1	0
Shimelba (Eritrean)	10	3	1	2	7
Addis Ababa (Eritrean)	12	4	3	4	5
Shire, Tigray (Ethiopian)	20	5	3	5	12

Addis Ababa (Ethiopian)	21	10	5	5	11
Kassala (Eritrean)	30		4	6	20
Khartoum (Eritrean)	20		0	6	14
Khartoum (Sudanese)	20		1	4	14
Total	151		23	43	84

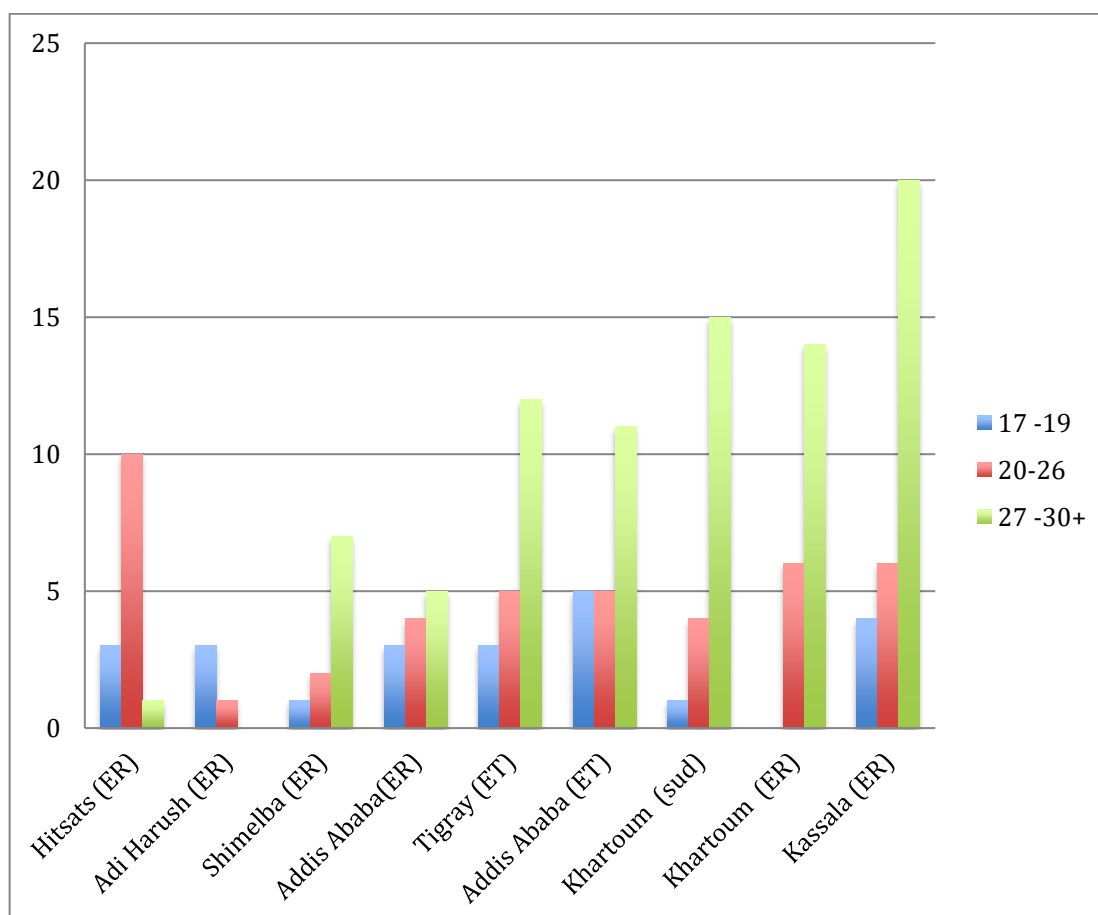


Figure 1. Age range of participants

Radio listening habits

In Ethiopia, with the exception of four participants at Adi Harush refugee camp, all groups reported using FM radios. Very few participants reported listening to international radio stations. However, there was great variation in the proportion of people who accessed radio programmes in the different locations. Generally, fewer refugees reported listening to FM radio in the camps, compared to their refugee counterparts in Addis Ababa and youth from the host community. This could be due to difficulties with reception in the camps. Similarly, in Sudan (and particularly among Eritrean refugees in Kassala and Sudanese youth in Khartoum), local FM radio programmes are very popular and many also listen to international radio. Figure 2 shows the radio listening habits of participants in each location.

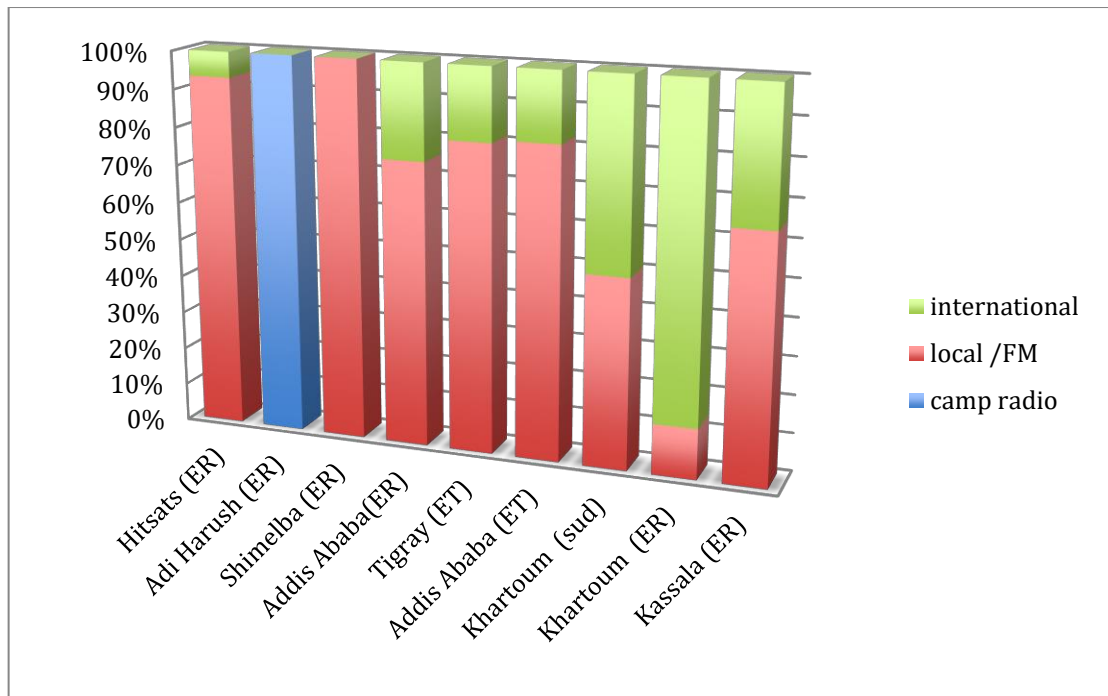


Figure 2. Radio listening habits

Frequency of radio listening

Camp residents reported listening to the radio rarely, with only a few respondents in Shimelba reporting listening daily. The picture is different for refugees in Addis Ababa, as well as youth from the host community in Ethiopia, among which there is wider spread access, with people listening to the radio daily and weekly.

In Sudan, the situation is more diverse with refugees in Kassala almost evenly split among those who listen to the radio daily, weekly and rarely. A greater proportion of refugees in Khartoum reportedly listen to the radio rarely, than in Kassala. The host community in Khartoum reported listening to the radio more than other groups in Sudan. Figure 3 shows the differences in radio listening habits.

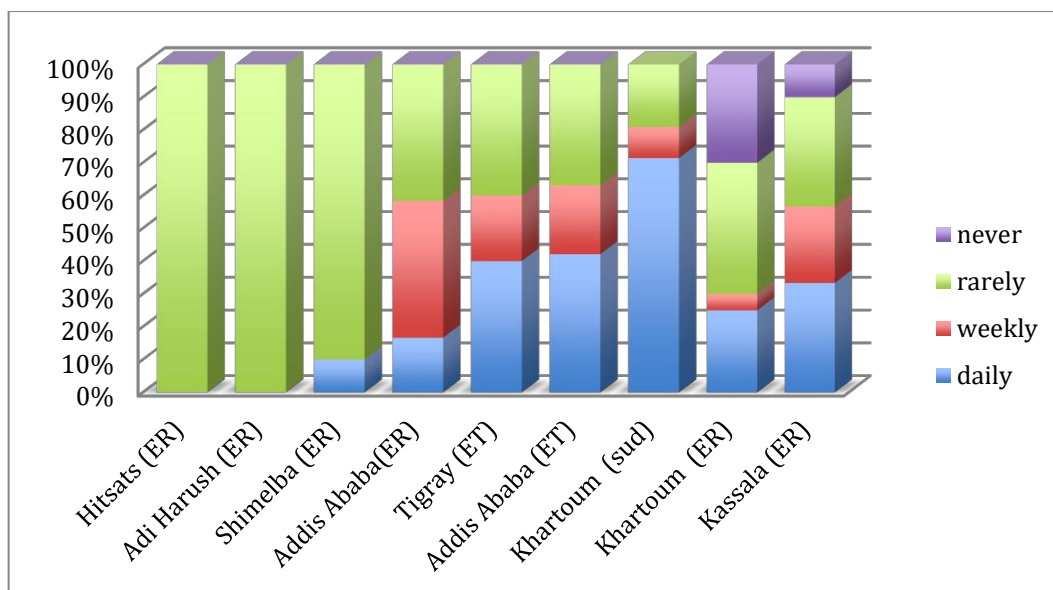


Figure 3. Frequency of radio listening

Broadcast language

The survey found that Amharic and Tigrigna are the most popular broadcast languages listened to among those surveyed in Ethiopia. In Sudan, Arabic is more popular, but broadcasts in other international languages are also accessed.

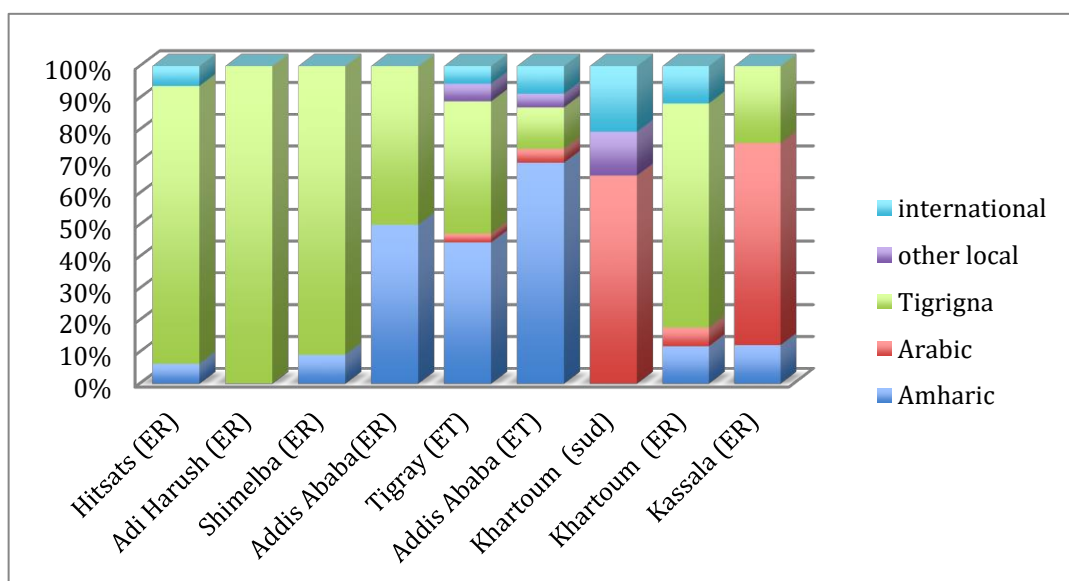


Figure 4. Broadcast language

Device used

Nearly everyone surveyed listened to the radio on their mobile phone. In Addis Ababa, both refugee and host community members also reported listening to the radio on the Internet. Similarly, in Sudan, mobile phones and the Internet were popular, but satellite TV is also widely used for accessing radio programmes. This was particularly so among refugees in Kassala.

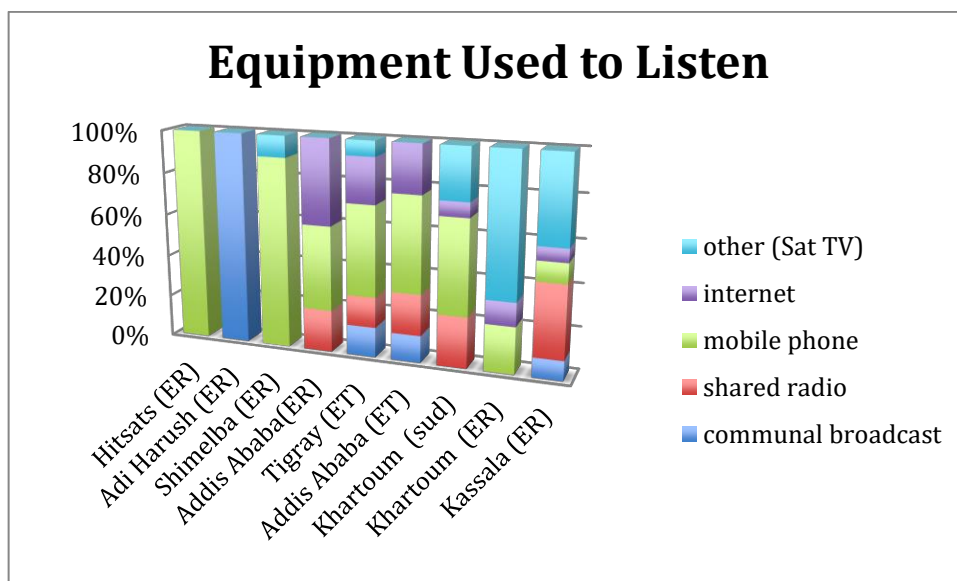


Figure 5. Device used to listen to the radio

Social media usage

By far the most popular social media platform was Facebook, followed by Viber. This was the case even for the least connected camp in Ethiopia. In Sudan WhatsApp and MSN Messenger are also in wide use.

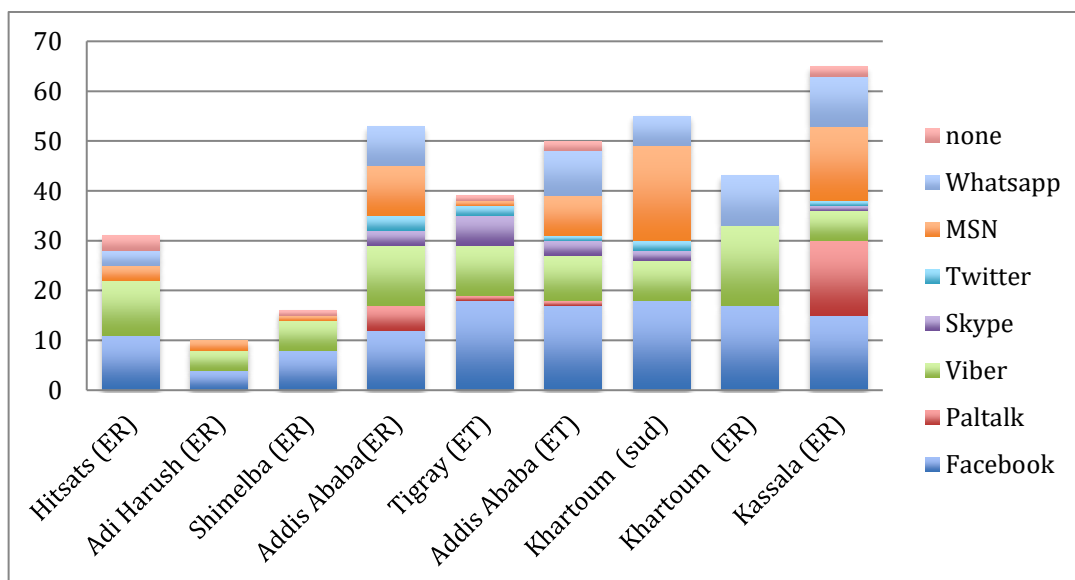


Figure 6. Access to social media (by location of respondent)

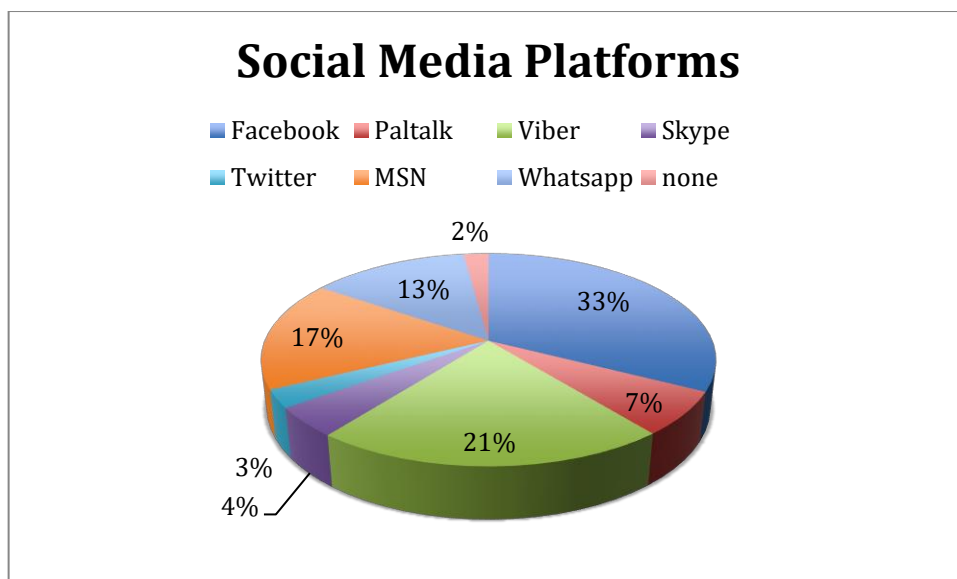


Figure 7. Usage of social media (overall)

Engagement with counterparts in host community

In Ethiopia, members of the host community reported having minimal contact with their counterparts from refugee communities, and this contact was least among host community members in Addis Ababa. In contrast, in Sudan, there seems to be a lot more engagement between host and refugee communities.

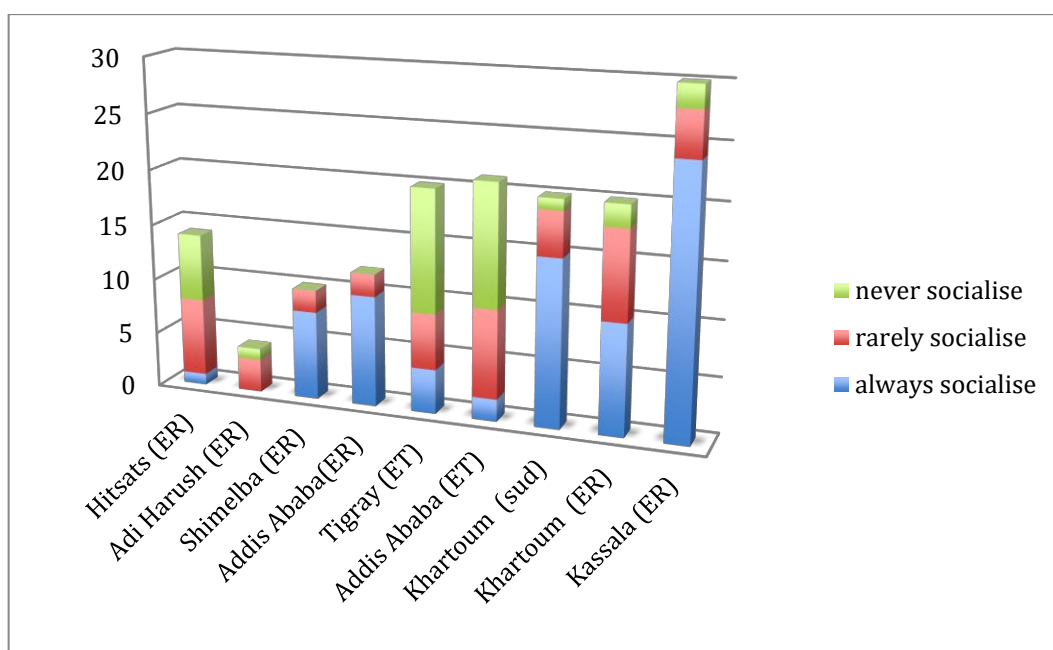


Figure 8. Frequency of socialising with counterparts in host community

Areas of interaction

Where people do interact, much of their interactions are limited to superficial topics, such as music and sports, with personal matters and security issues being the least popular topics. A substantial number of respondents from the host community in Addis Ababa reported discussing nothing.

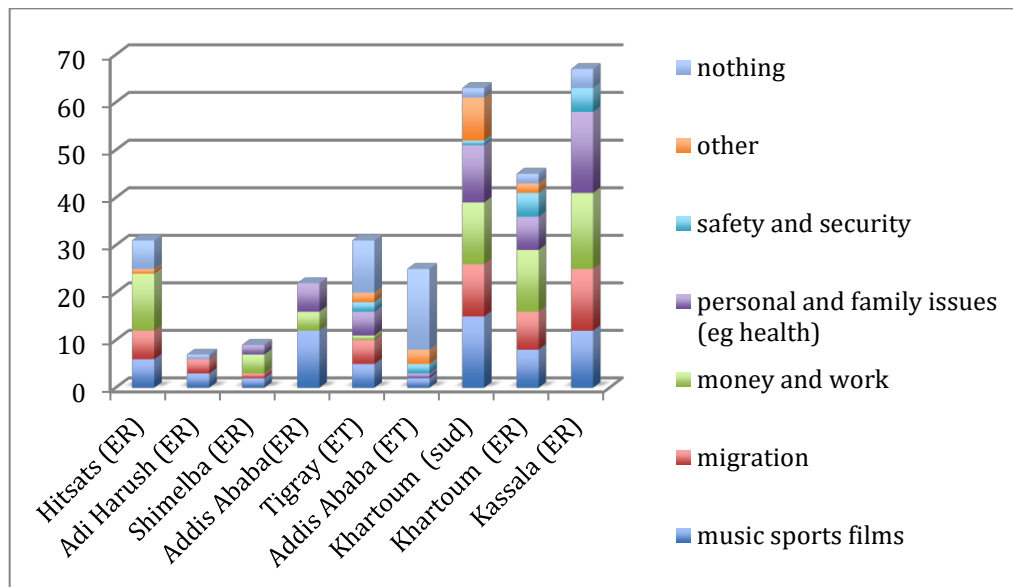


Figure 9. Topics of social interaction

Source of information about counterparts

Most respondents considered their fellow countrymen and women as the best source of information regarding their counterparts in the host/refugee community, and more important than official media and social media.

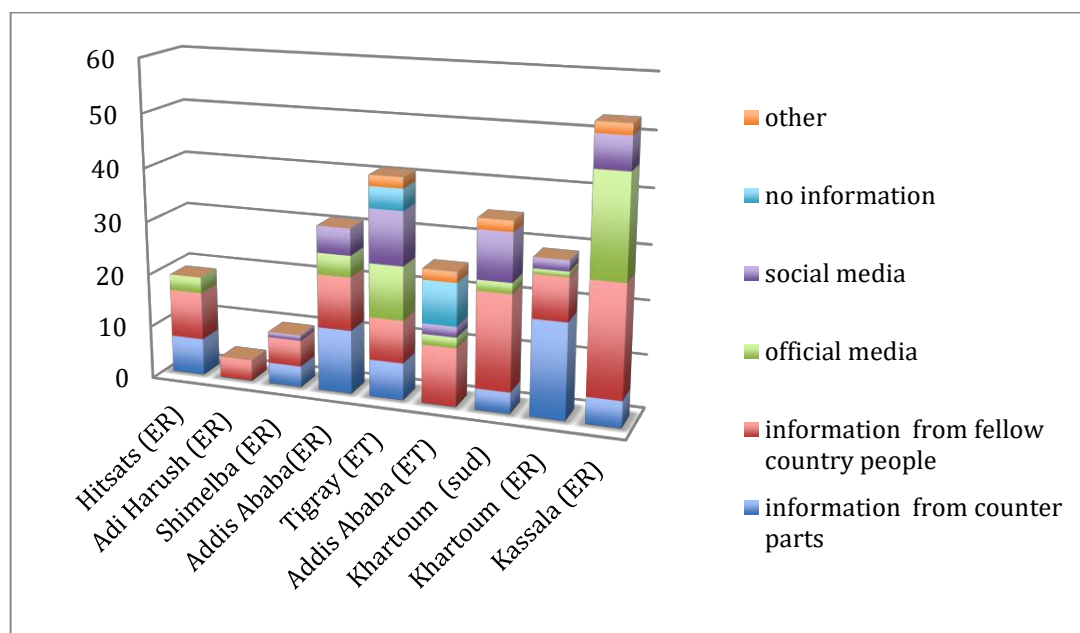


Figure 10. Source of information on counterparts (by location of respondent)

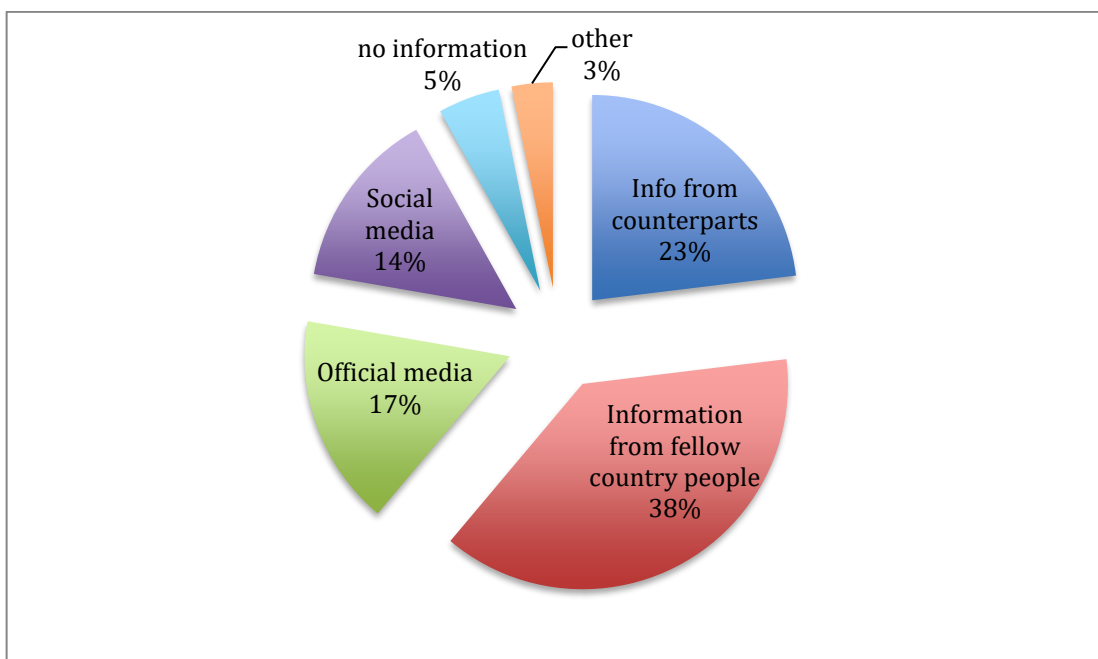


Figure 11. Source of information on counterparts (overall)

Perceptions of counterparts

When asked if their counterparts would help them if needed (i.e., if Ethiopian/Sudanese youth in the host community would help Eritrean refugee youth and vice versa), the majority of respondents said that their counterparts were occasionally helpful. However, a substantial number of respondents were unable to confidently say that this is the case. In almost all groups, some respondents said that their counterparts would never help them out.

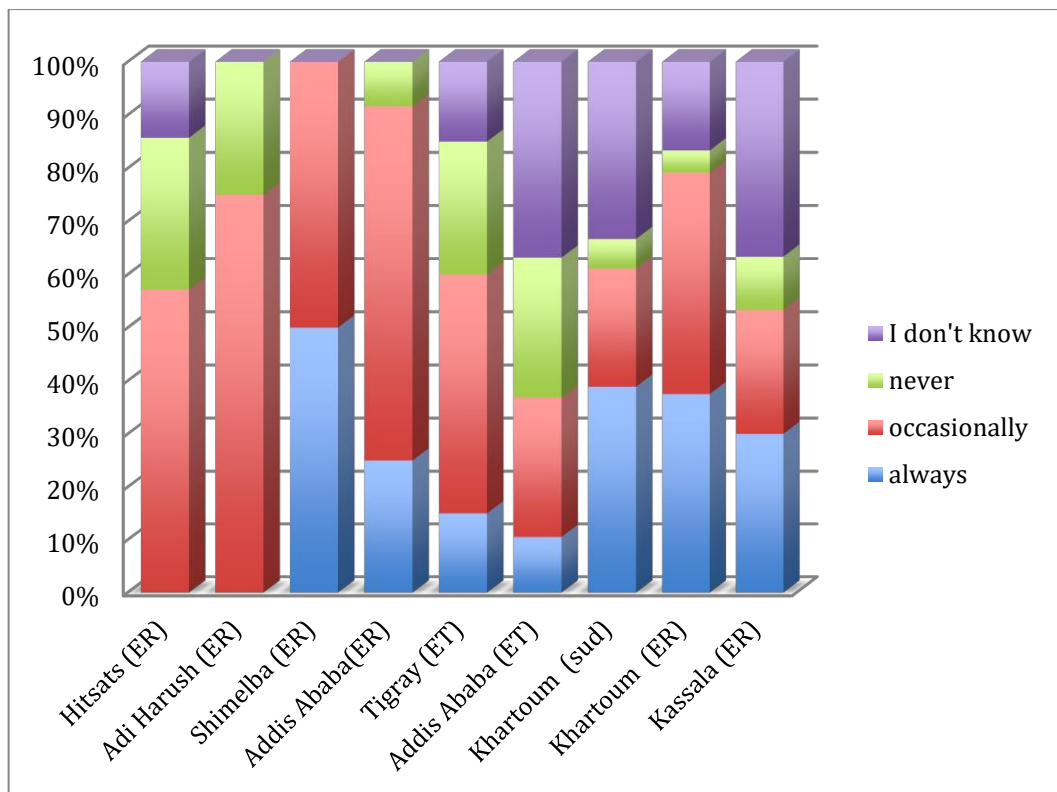


Figure 12. Perception of helpfulness of counterparts (by location of respondent)

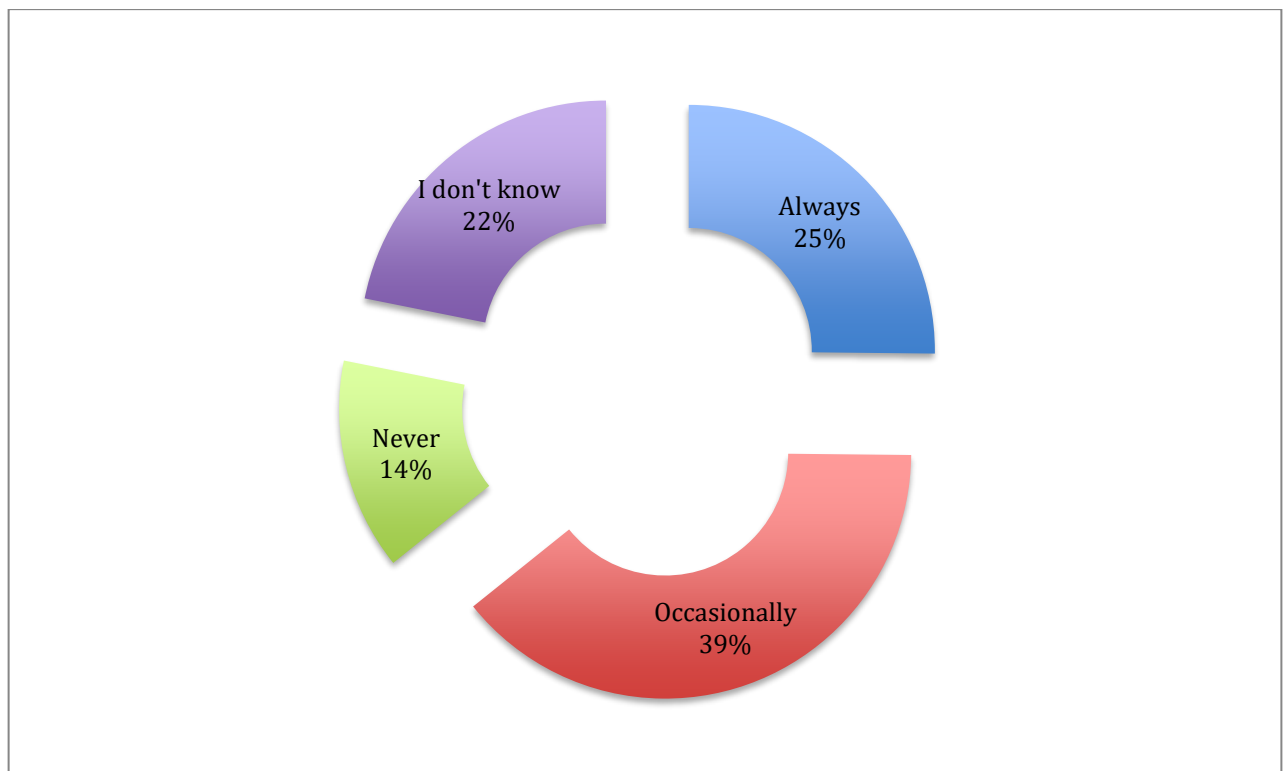


Figure 13. Perception of helpfulness of counterparts (overall)

Compatibility with other initiatives

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to determine the compatibility of the proposed initiative with other policies and programme, and to identify any potential competition. The results of these interviews are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of results of semi-structured interviews			
Compatibility with existing policies and societal trends (acceptability)	Feasibility: resources and technology	Feasibility: media professionals	Potential competition
Improving people-to-people relations is an existing policy in Ethiopia although implementation has not been as successful as initially envisaged.	Social media is used by youth from both sides, although proper utilisation for a specific purpose is not common. Most radio stations have Facebook pages and try to encourage participation.	Both Ethiopian and Eritrean artists and media professionals are supportive of the radio communication project and willing to provide input.	There are currently no other radio stations that air a similar programme in the format that is being suggested by this project.
Eritrean refugees no longer see Ethiopians as the enemy and appreciate the refuge and support they have been accorded.	Reception and connectivity are patchy in the refugee camps, and in Hitsats connectivity is currently impossible.	Media professionals see the initiative as a unique opportunity for people to work in their shared profession, regardless of which community they come from.	
Ethiopians want to understand what is going on in Eritrea and want information that is not based on propaganda (from both sides of the border).	Everyone believes that a radio communication project will attract a lot of support with time and as people begin to enjoy the output.	Media professionals believe that such an initiative could inspire others.	

Discussion and recommendations

The proposed project aims to build and promote community resilience by engaging youth in refugee and host communities through radio and social media in local languages. It will creatively raise issues of common concern and inform youth of the risks of trafficking, as well as possible alternatives. The project is expected to help young refugees to develop and maintain closer engagement with their counterparts in the host communities. It will also

enable young refugees to access information and provide them with opportunities to express their views and collective narrative.

Enhancing levels of engagement

The project aims to increase the level of engagement of youth in the refugee and host communities. The survey found that the current level of engagement varies from over 40% of refugees in Adi Harush reporting never socialising with youth from the host community, to 80% of refugees in Kassala reporting always socialising with their counterparts in the host community. From the perspective of the host community, levels of socialisation ranged from over 50% of Ethiopians in Tigray reporting never socialising with Eritrean refugees, to 75% of Sudanese youth reporting always socialising with Eritrean refugees. Hence, there is much scope for supporting interaction and engagement, as well as opportunities to learn from places where such engagement already exists.

Enhancing understanding, collaboration and joint resilience

Another objective of the project is to enhance understanding and joint resilience among youth from the two communities. To this end, the survey sought to understand current perceptions of these communities of each other by asking participants if they thought that their counterparts would be supportive of them if they were in need of assistance. Although few respondents (about 30% in Hitsats being the highest) thought that their counterparts would never assist them, there was no resounding confidence that they would always assist them either (under 50% of respondents in Shimeleba being the highest level and less than 10% of Ethiopian youth in Addis Ababa). Many responded that they simply do not know whether or not their counterparts would assist them in times of need or said that they thought they might be 'occasionally supportive'.

One way of understanding the scope for enhanced collaboration and joint resilience building is to identify areas of current interaction. When asked about their topics of interactions, most said that they are limited to superficial topics, such as music and sports. The great majority of respondents reported never discussing safety and security with their counterparts (the highest reported was just over 15% of Eritrean refugees in Kassala, followed by just under 10% of Sudanese youth in Khartoum).

Finally, the survey also sought to determine where young people obtain their information on their counterparts. With the exception of refugee youth in Adi Harush, who reported obtaining all of their information from fellow Eritreans, the majority reported obtaining information from a variety of sources, including official sources.

Radio listening habits

The survey found that, with the exception of Eritrean refugee youth in Adi Harush refugee camp, who predominantly access camp radio, and Eritrean

refugees in Khartoum, who access international radio (over 90%), a substantive majority reported using local (FM) radio stations. However significant daily access was only reported among Sudanese youth in Khartoum (over 60%). Nearly all refugees in Hitsats, Adi Harush and Shimelba camps reported only rarely accessing radio. Further enquiry revealed this to be due to a lack of Internet connectivity in the camps.

Broadcasts in Amharic, Tigrigna and Arabic are widely accessed, as well as broadcasts in a smattering of other international languages. In the refugee camps in Ethiopia and among refugee youth in Khartoum and Addis Ababa, as well as among Ethiopian youth in Tigray, Tigrigna is most widely listened to broadcast language. Refugee youth in Kassala and Sudanese youth in Khartoum prefer Arabic and Amharic is more dominant among Ethiopian youth in Addis Ababa. Around 40% of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa and Ethiopian youth in Tigray also access broadcasts in Amharic.

Technology in current use

The most prevalent device in use for accessing radio is the smart phone, with satellite TV and the Internet as alternatives. Respondents in Adi Harush reported only accessing communal radio. Participants also reported widely accessing social media, particularly Facebook and Viber, with nearly all participants in every location (120 participants) reporting having a Facebook account and a significant proportion (82 participants) reporting accessing Viber. MSN and WhatsApp were also in use, particularly in cities, with 59 and 46 participants reporting using MSN and WhatsApp, respectively. Only 9 respondents reported not using any social media.

In conclusion the baseline study has established that there is plenty of scope for using social media and ICTs to enhance interaction among Eritrean refugee youth and youth in host communities to promote community resilience and to combat safety and security concerns such as human trafficking. Local FM radios are popular across the region and smart phones are widely used to access information, as is satellite TV and the Internet, where available.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- Resolve Internet connectivity issues in camps.
- Conduct an awareness raising campaign to introduce the project and its objectives.
- Use Facebook, Viber and WhatsApp to supplement radio broadcasts to maximise the impact of the project.
- Broadcast radio programmes in Tigrigna and Arabic.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire for Eritrean youth¹

Baseline Study for Radio Programme

(For Eritrean youth)

Name: _____

Camp (city of residence): _____

Email or phone number: _____

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: _____

1. How long have you lived in Ethiopia? _____

2. Radio listening habit

What radio station do you listen to	How often			What language is used by the station				
	Daily	Weekly	Rarely	Amharic	Arabic	Tigrigna	Other local	Other international

1. How do you listen to the radio?

Communal broadcast in the camp	
Shared radio at home	
On my mobile phone	
On the Internet	
Other	

2. What social media outlet do you use?

¹ Questionnaire also available in Arabic and Tigrigna

Facebook	
PalTalk	
Viber	
Skype	
Twitter	
None	
Other	

socialise with Ethiopians in your locality?

3. Do you

Often	Rarely	Never

4. What sort of things do you discuss with your Ethiopian friends?

Music, sport and films	
Migration	
Money and work	
Personal issues, health and family matters	
Safety and security	
Other topics	

5. Where do you get your information about Ethiopia and Ethiopians?

Other Eritreans	
Ethiopians	
Newspapers radio and TV programmes	
Internet and social media	
Other source	

6. Do you think Ethiopians in your locality understand Eritreans and would help them if needed?

Always	Occasionally	Never

Appendix II: Questionnaire for host community youth²

Baseline Study for Radio Programme

(For Sudanese/Ethiopian youth)

Name: _____

City: _____

Email address or phone number: _____

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: _____

1. Radio listening habit

What radio station do you listen to	How often			What language is used by the station			
	Daily	Weekly	Rarely	Arabic	Tigrigna	Other local	Other international

2. How do you listen to the radio?

Communal broadcast	
Shared radio at home	
On my mobile phone	
On the Internet	
Other	

3. What social media outlet do you use?

Facebook	
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² Questionnaire available in Arabic

PalTalk	
Viber	
Skype	
Twitter	
None	
Other	

4. Do you socialise with Eritreans in your locality?

Often	Rarely	Never

5. What sort of things do you discuss with your Eritrean friends?

Music, sport and films	
Migration	
Money and work	
Personal issues, health and family matters	
Safety and security	
Other topic	

6. Where do you get your information about Eritrea and Eritreans?

Other Sudanese/Ethiopian people	
Eritreans	
Newspapers radio and TV programmes	
Internet and social media	
Other	

7. Do you think Eritreans in your locality understand Sudanese/Ethiopian people and would help them if needed?

Always	Occasionally	Never