

OSSHD & CCCM-ABA: A Pioneering Model in Tigray

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Strategic Brief: Expanding CCCM to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Host Communities

Introduction: Rethinking Humanitarian Response for IDPs

Since late 2020, the Organization for Social Services, Health, and Development (OSSHD) in Tigray has been at the forefront of implementing Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) — a framework traditionally designed to manage services and protection in formal displacement camps. However, OSSHD quickly recognized a critical gap: the majority of IDPs — nearly 70% — were not living in camps, but rather in host communities, informal shelters, or scattered rural and urban areas. These populations were largely excluded from humanitarian services that were structured around camp-based delivery.

The Problem with a Camp-Centric Approach

A humanitarian response focused solely on camps creates several challenges:

- **Exclusion from Services:** IDPs outside camps often lack access to food aid, healthcare, education, and protection services.
- **Forced Relocation:** Many displaced families feel pressured to move into camps just to receive basic support.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Humanitarian agencies cannot feasibly build enough camps to accommodate all displaced people.
- **Data Gaps:** Information on non-camp IDPs is often incomplete or fragmented, making coordination difficult.

OSSHD's Innovation: Community Engagement Centers (CECs)

To bridge this gap, OSSHD introduced Community Engagement Centers (CECs) — a transformative model using an Area-Based Approach (ABA) to CCCM. This strategy shifts the focus from physical camps to geographic areas where IDPs live among host communities, enabling more inclusive and localized support.

Core Functions of CECs:

- **Community Mobilization:** Organize displaced populations to participate in decision-making.
- **Leadership Development:** Establish IDP-led governance structures to represent community needs.
- **Service Facilitation:** Act as hubs for delivering humanitarian aid and services.

- **Coordination Platforms:** Serve as meeting points for humanitarian actors, local authorities, and IDPs.

Case Study: The Mekelle CEC

The first pilot CEC in **Mekelle** demonstrated the model’s potential. It was **welcomed by IDPs, local government, and humanitarian partners**. The center enabled displaced people to:

- Participate in leadership forums
- Express their needs and priorities
- Access services without relocating to camps

This success positioned the Mekelle CEC as a **blueprint for inclusive CCCM** across the Tigray region.

Global Context: Aligning with International CCCM Trends

OSSHHD’s approach is not only innovative locally — it also reflects global shifts in CCCM thinking:

- **Global CCCM Cluster Strategy (2025–2029):** Prioritizes alternatives to camps, community engagement, and local leadership.
- **Area-Based Approach Working Group:** Formed to address displacement in urban slums and informal settlements, promoting tools that reach beyond camps.
- **Localisation Studies (2024):** Research from countries like Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Syria underscores the importance of **community-led coordination** and **inclusive governance**.

Comparative Analysis: OSSHD vs. Global ABA Models

Feature	OSSHHD CEC Model (Tigray)	Global Area-Based CCCM Examples
Target Population	IDPs in host communities	Urban IDPs, slum dwellers
Governance	IDP-led structures	Mixed community councils
Service Delivery	Through centralized CEC hubs	Often decentralized
Coordination	Humanitarian + local gov’t	Primarily humanitarian-led
Replicability	Scaled across Tigray	Pilots in select regions

Key Achievements

OSSHHD’s Area-Based CCCM model has already delivered tangible results:

- **Established governance** among IDPs living in host communities
- **CEC hubs adopted** by humanitarian partners for service delivery
- **Model replicated** by other CCCM actors across Tigray
- **Improved inclusion and coordination** for non-camp IDPs

Strategic Recommendations

To build on this momentum and ensure equitable support for all IDPs, OSSHD recommends:

1. **Scale the CEC model** to more urban and rural host communities.
2. **Advocate for CCCM frameworks** that include IDPs outside camps.
3. **Improve data systems** to track and coordinate support for non-camp IDPs.
4. **Invest in local capacity** to ensure sustainable, community-led CCCM.

Conclusion: Inclusion beyond the Camp

The humanitarian system must evolve to reflect the reality that **most displaced people do not live in camps**. OSSHD's Area-Based CCCM model offers a **scalable, inclusive, and community-driven solution**. Continued collaboration among humanitarian actors, local authorities, and IDPs is essential to ensure **no one is left behind**.