



Terms of Reference EmProtect+ Ethiopia

1. General Information

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is a child rights organisation and an international NGO. Our vision is that children can flourish in a world free from all forms of child exploitation. Our mission is to protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation, and by empowering children to make their voices count. In executing our mission we seek to address the root causes of exploitation by creating scalable, evidence-based solutions and influencing systemic change rather than providing one-off remedies. Our work towards systemic change is driven by five core principles: Children at the centre, Safety and well-being, Intersectionality, Power Awareness and Sustainability. The organisation works together with children and their families, communities, governments, institutional mechanisms, civil society organisations, and the private sector.

2. Background

One of TdH NL's thematic programmes is the Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC) Programme, which envisions a world where children, in all their diversity, are safe from all forms of sexual exploitation, enjoy their rights, and have influence.

Empower and protect children on the transport corridor (EmProtect+) is the first regionally anchored, systems-change model for child protection along high-risk transport corridors in East Africa. It goes beyond localised interventions by linking national child protection systems with regional trade and transport governance frameworks, positioning the model for replication across multiple countries. This iteration moves beyond service delivery to catalyse institutional reform and long-term systems change through advocacy, evidence, and partnership-driven innovation. As a regional systems-change model, EmProtect+ offers a regional learning and influencing hub for corridor-based SEC prevention.

The project is designed to work with children, families and communities at the intersection of children's empowerment, sexual and reproductive health rights, transformation of harmful social and cultural norms, and sustained economic resilience. At the systems level, EmProtect+ is designed to strengthen the health, justice and protection ecosystems through institutional capacity strengthening to provide child-friendly services that are inclusive, trauma-informed and gender-responsive. Laws, policies and budgets related to SEC and child trafficking will be strengthened through county, national, regional and global advocacy, and children will be empowered to participate directly in influencing events (national, regional, and global). Joint advocacy and knowledge-exchange across priority countries will

strengthen the impact of EmProtect+.

While EmProtect+ is initially rolling out in Kenya, Ethiopia has been identified as a priority country for a potential scale-up. Ethiopia and Kenya share a formalized transport corridor connecting Addis Ababa to Nairobi. Research shows that children from southern and central Ethiopia frequently migrate along this route and are exposed to multiple forms of violence, trafficking and sexual exploitation.

2.1 Initial Desk Review Findings

Before commissioning this field-based scoping study, TdH NL conducted an initial desk review examining the shifting dynamics of child protection, human trafficking, and the transport corridor connecting Kenya and Ethiopia.

- The Addis-Ababa -Moyale- Nairobi Transport Corridor¹: the corridor connecting Addis Ababa to Nairobi has historically been an informal transit route characterized by unsafe migration. However, the recent introduction of direct public transport between the two capitals marks a formalization of the route, accelerating the volume of cross-border movement for goods and people, and simultaneously creating new hubs of vulnerability for children.
- Child Migration Dynamics: Ethiopia hosts an immense displaced population, including 41,000 unaccompanied migrant children (UMC). Internal migration is heavily driven by poverty and exacerbated by severe climate change events and conflicts like the Tigray War. Rural-to-urban migration is common, with many children fleeing limited educational opportunities, violence, and early marriages.²
- Prevalence of SEC: the prevalence of SEC is high in urban centres like Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Adama, and Dire Dawa, where rural children flee seeking work. Many girls are forced into the service and hospitality industries, facing severe risks of sexual exploitation in bars and brothels. Online SEC is also highly prevalent; a 2021 survey indicated that 10% of internet-using children in Ethiopia aged 12-17 were victims of online exploitation.³
- Risks in transit: children migrating along routes are highly vulnerable to traffickers and brokers who promise better lives but force them into exploitative conditions. Law enforcement corruption and physical and sexual abuse at borders push children further into the hands of smugglers.
- Existing services and gaps. Ethiopia's current institutional response to trafficking is anchored around *the National Partnership Coalition, which is housed under the Federal Ministry of Justice*. Regional transport monitoring is decentralized to bodies like the Oromia Region Transport Authority, which interfaces directly with cross-border trade governance. The government and NGOs have established some countermeasures, such as One Stop Centres and the Adama Child Helpline. However, these services suffer from critical gaps: a lack of high-quality trauma-informed care, a lack of trained staff to provide psychosocial support, and overcrowding.

¹

<https://www.afdb.org/fr/documents/document/ethiopia-kenya-mombasa-nairobi-addis-ababa-road-corridor-esia-summary-15042>

² https://docs.google.com/document/d/1szsEZT3t3NZgPKsg1vS5gMBrPJlGUZ7VzN6qMX9_nOs/edit?usp=sharing

³ Ibid.

3. Objective of the scoping study

The overall objective of this scoping study is to explore the prevalence and nature of Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC) and cross-border child trafficking along the Addis Ababa-Nairobi transport corridor, and to map out the institutional, policy, and civil society landscape in Ethiopia. The scoping study should evaluate the feasibility of expanding the EmProtect+ model into Ethiopia.

The research aims to:

1. Gain insight into the risks of sexual exploitation (both offline and online) that children, living or migrating along the transport corridor, experience both domestically in Ethiopia and cross-border with Kenya, specific to the transport corridor context
2. Determine the underlying drivers of these risks, paying particular attention to poverty, climate-induced migration, and gender inequality. This can be carried out through primary data collection with children, caregivers and community members in specific locations. Any data collection will be planned and implemented in close collaboration with TdH NL, following the organisation's standards in terms of child participation, accountability and safeguarding standards.
3. Map out relevant stakeholders in Ethiopia and along the Addis-Moyale-Nairobi Transport corridor, including all relevant international and regional cooperation, local civil society organisations, local authorities, government, law enforcement, and private sector transport actors
4. Assess the existing child protection systems, cross-border coordination mechanisms, and barriers children face in accessing trauma-informed and youth-friendly SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights), psychosocial services, education and vocational training / economic resilience opportunities
5. Assess the operationalisation of TdH NL's strategic operational model in practice, evaluating potential entry points, and make recommendations on specific geographic hotspots for a potential EmProtect+ pilot intervention in Ethiopia

4. Expected deliverables

The main expected outcome is reliable data on the context of SEC along Ethiopia's transport corridor, which will inform the design of a potential EmProtect+ scale-up. The consultant is expected to deliver a final report including:

- A context analysis detailing the social, legal, and institutional landscape around SEC and child migration in Ethiopia, specifically along the transport corridor
- A comprehensive stakeholder map and partnership recommendations, outlining potential partner organisations, cross-border bodies, and private sector actors
- A thematic analysis report of the collected primary data, if relevant
- Technical advice and recommendations to guide TdH NL's programming options, including identified programmatic gaps and operational hotspots where an EmProtect+ expansion would be most impactful
- A comprehensive methodological note and data package, detailing the qualitative methods used (e.g., focus group discussions, stakeholder

interviews), accompanied by all raw data and translated verbatim transcripts

- Evaluate how TdH NL can best apply its new model as a *strategic convenor, connector, and knowledge broker* within the Ethiopian context, ensuring local partners assume progressive leadership over time

5. Timeline and Phases

We aim for this assignment to be carried out by the end of 2026. Proposed timeline:

- Phase 1 (Sept / October 2026): Preparatory Phase & Desk Research
 - Review TdH NL's initial data and carry out a desk review of trafficking trends, formalization of the corridor, and drafting of interview/data-collection guides
 - Scoping Study Concept Note and preliminary stakeholder mapping
- Phase 2 (November 2026): Stakeholder Engagement & Fieldwork
 - Conducting qualitative interviews with stakeholders across community, local government, law enforcement, and transport sector actors
- Phase 3 (December 2026): Data Analysis & Reporting
 - Synthesis of data, stakeholder validation, and final report formulation

6. Budget

The available budget for this scoping study is up to 20,000 EUR for a maximum of 20 days of work, including data collection costs and any applicable taxes.

7. Profile and application process

Desired consultants will have:

- Extensive experience in conducting participatory and qualitative research methodologies in the field of child rights
- A strong understanding of child protection, sexual exploitation of children (SEC), and child migration/trafficking dynamics
- A strong, demonstrated understanding of the Horn of Africa context, human trafficking mechanisms and a deep contextual knowledge of Ethiopia's institutional, political and civil society environment
- Fluency in English and relevant local languages
- Proven experience in conducting ethical, safe, and age-appropriate qualitative research

Consultants / firms already based in Ethiopia are strongly preferred.

Important Integrity Measures

The consultant must adhere to the TdH NL Integrity Framework. As a condition of entering into a consultancy agreement, the individual/firm must:

- Read and Sign the TdH NL Code of Conduct
- Read and Sign the Annex 2 Conflict of Interest Policy Declaration
- Read and Sign the TdH NL Ethical Content Policy

8. How to Apply

Please apply by emailing your application to Ms Zoe de Melo, Programme Manager SEC, z.demelo@tdh.nl

The following should be included in applications:

- CV (individuals) or Credentials (Agency)
- Motivation letter
- Proposed Approach and Work Plan: a brief paper (5 pages maximum) outlining your proposed methodology and a simple work plan aligned with the timeline
- Financial Proposal: a budget breakdown that clearly conveys how the funds will be distributed across the assignment (e.g., consultant daily rates, travel, and data collection costs, applicable taxes)

Our Commitment to Diversity, Integrity and Child Safeguarding

We are not looking for just one type of person - we want to recruit people who can add fresh perspectives, innovative ideas and challenge our thinking. We are especially interested in people whose lived experiences help us to see things we might otherwise miss, and enable us to do better work with and for children. Whether or not you meet 100% of the criteria, we want to hear from you, because we know that different voices, ideas, perspectives and knowledge, working together will enable us to better the lives of children around the world.

TdH NL is committed to ensuring diversity and gender equality within our organisation. We continue to learn about intersectional considerations and power distribution within our organisation and our work. We are dedicated to preventing and eradicating any type of misconduct including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, any other type of misuse of power, lack of integrity or financial misconduct.

Note: We place a high priority on ensuring that only those who share and demonstrate our values are recruited to work for us, this includes a commitment to diversity and inclusion at all levels of our work. All offers of employment will therefore be subject to satisfactory references and appropriate screening checks, which include a valid criminal record check, terrorism finance checks, and/or integrity screenings/references relating to misconduct and disciplinary actions in prior employment.

TdH NL is particularly committed to keeping children and vulnerable individuals safe, and has zero tolerance on (child) abuse. Every TdH NL employee is bound by the TdH NL Code of Conduct that describes the expected behaviour by staff, in particular with regards to Safeguarding children and (young) adults in our programmes. Child safeguarding measures are part of our selection and recruitment process. By submitting your application you accept that TdH NL will conduct such pre-employment screening for successful candidates. TdH NL participates in the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme.