



Partnership for Economic Inclusion

IE Collaborative

Technical Workshop

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Including refugees and their hosts in Ethiopia's urban safety net

Country: Ethiopia

Name of Project: Refugee and Host Integration through the Safety Net (RHISN), part of Urban Productive Safety Net and Jobs Project (UPSNIJ)

Research Team (in no particular order): Suleiman Namara, Ayuba Sani, Alemayehu, Woldu, Alfredo Manfredini Böhm, Sandra Rozo, Dennis Egger, Christina Wieser, Girum Abebe.

Government agencies involved:

- Ministry of Urban Development and Infrastructure (MoUDI)
- Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS)

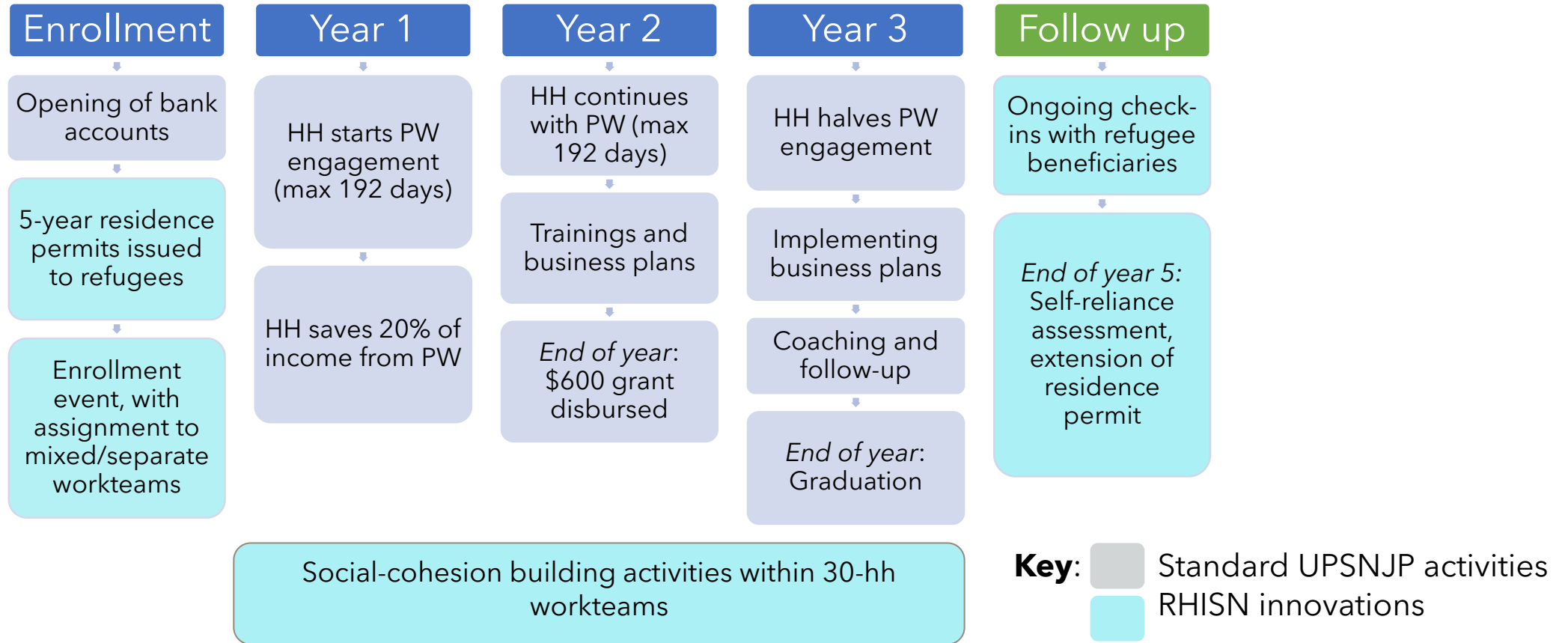
Operational Team:

- MoUDI: Mekonnen Yaie, Berhanu Teshome, Yohannes Kassa, Tesfaye Wudye et al.
- RRS: Tesfahun Gobeze, Mulualem Desta, Ashenafi Demeke, Anteneh Mekasha et al.
- Bank: Suleiman Namara, Ayuba Sani, Alfredo Manfredini Böhm, Alemayehu Girma, Kiros Kinfe, Taies Nezam, Mohammed A. Sigale.

RHISN supports the shift away from camps toward productive inclusion

- Globally & in Ethiopia, support and funding for camp-based “care & maintenance” is declining :
 - Need to **shift to targeted assistance**
- Ethiopia's **Urban safety net has effectively supported income and consumption of poor urban households** through a public works and livelihood intervention (PW & LI).
 - Refugee and Host Integration through the Safety Net (**RHISN**) **will roll out this PW & LI model to refugees and their hosting communities**, which tend to be economically disadvantaged.

RHISN adapts the urban SN's graduation model



Many innovations, worth studying

- The intervention includes **several innovations** and intervenes **on multiple fronts**:
 - **CfW and work permits** for refugees and hosts (not new, but rigorous evidence is scant)
 - **Joint refugee-host public works + livelihoods** training and grants (new: effects of collaborative contact on poverty, social cohesion, labor market and poverty outcomes)
 - **Social cohesion building activities** e.g. inter-communal teas, dinners, festivals (new: effects of simple, cheap activities on social cohesion, labor market and poverty outcomes)
- **Beneficiaries: 22,600 refugee and host households** across the country:
 - ~ 81,400 people (~34,200 refugees), for 3 years, and up to 5 regions.
- **Challenges:** First phase (2,230 hhs) has seen **slow implementation** (esp. social cohesion activities), **low capacity** (esp. in hosting communities new to the UPSNJP).
- **The scale question:** Only 5% refugees will be reached. **What about the other 95%?**

RQ: How does the bundle work, at scale, in diverse refugee-hosting areas?

- **Can we grow a narrow literature?**
 - Effectiveness of Cash Plus in improving lives of refugees and mitigating impact on welfare of host communities and social cohesion has a thin evidence base
 - Few exceptions: Cash transfers (Hidrobo et al. 2014, Özler et al., 2021; Altındağ and O'Connell 2021), Social cohesion (Valli et al. 2019), Health (van Daalen, 2022).
- **How does the RHISN bundle work?**
 - RHISN tackles multiple constraints. What will work? Why? Where? What is cost-effective?
- **Can the RHISN safety net bundle made to work at large scale?**
 - The Urban safety net has been tried and tested in Ethiopia, but never with refugees.
 - After a small first phase appears to be progressing, will implementation at scale work?

Many questions: ergo - ideally - multiple arms

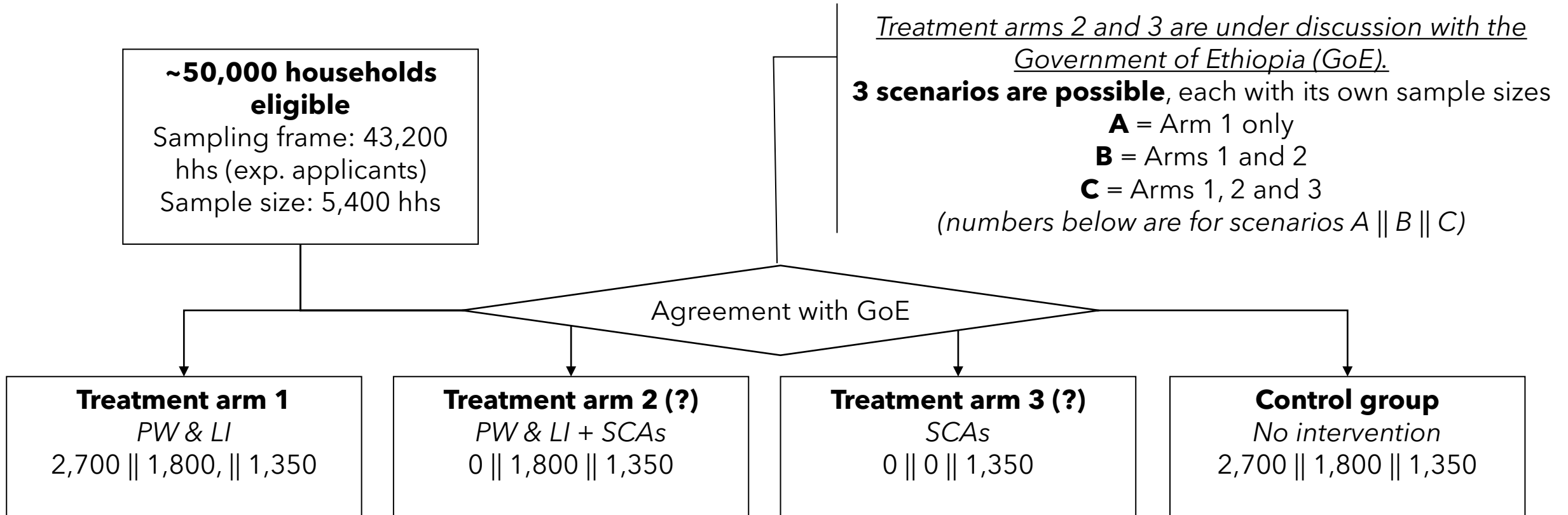
Conditional on agreement with the Government, the plan is **to randomize among the least poor households** as follows:

- Arm 1: Public works and livelihood intervention (PW & LI) only
- Arm 2: PW & LI + social cohesion building activities (SCAs e.g. teas, dinners...)
- Arm 3: Social cohesion building activities (SCAs) only
- Arm 4: Pure control group

We could then answer: **“What are the impacts and cost-effectiveness of...”**

- Public works and livelihood intervention **(PW & LI) alone?** (1 vs 4)
- Social cohesion building activities **(SCAs) alone?** (3 vs 4)
- **SCAs layered on PW&LI?** (2 vs 1)
- **PW & LI layered on SCAs?** (2 vs 3)

3 design scenarios, increasing in ambition



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Focus will be on socio-economic and psychological impacts

Outcome Domain	Level	Source
Poverty and labor market outcomes	Household and individual	Household survey (consumption module, labor market module)
Social cohesion	Individual level	Household survey (social cohesion index on social capital, networks, attitudes towards refugees and hosts), FGDs, monitoring data
Mental health	Individual Level	Household survey (e.g. CES-D Scale), FGDs

Inclusion of control groups and implementation of SCAs still uncertain

- **Inclusion of control group** still to be agreed
 - Worst-case scenario = revert to RD design
- **External validity is a concern:**
 - Social-cohesion impacts may be heavily dependent on locality
 - We cannot control types of public works.
 - What about impacts for the poorest?
- **You tell us:** Arguments to convince Government of need for control groups, implementation support?

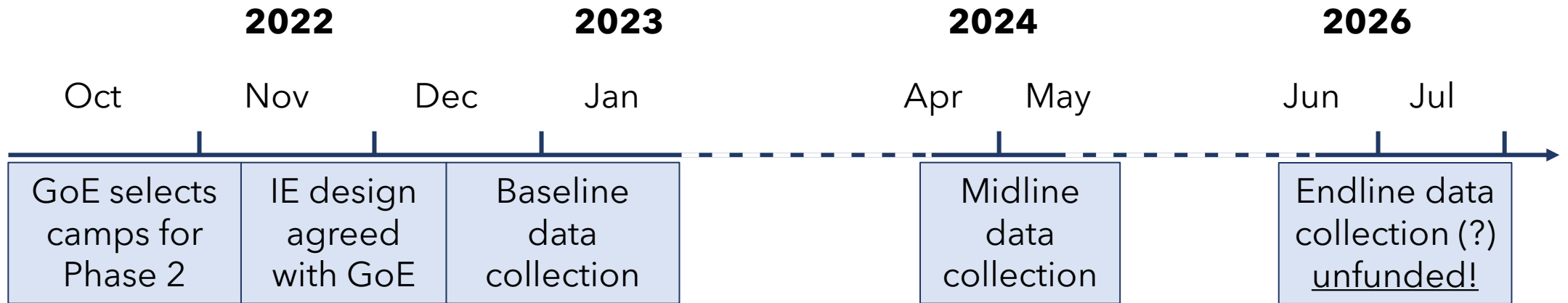


Top four risks: capacity, delays, insecurity, power

- **Institutional capacity** (esp. to implement social cohesion activities): GoE wants to include all beneficiaries, not use an NGO to support SCAs → feasible?
- **Insecurity:** Refugee-hosting areas are subject to insecurity, conflict
- **Delays:** RHISN rollout has unpredictable timelines (see phase 1)
- **Reduced power due to non-compliance and attrition:** acceptability of RCT to government, communities → grievances → replacements → attrition + non-compliance

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The study runs - for now - until midline in 2024





Thank you!

Presenter

Alfredo Manfredini Böhm

amanfredinibohm@worldbank.org

Rest of the team, in no particular order:

**Girum Abebe, Sandra Rozo, Christina Wieser,
Suleiman Namara, Alemayehu Woldu, Dennis
Egger* & Ayuba Sani.**

** University of Oxford, all others World Bank*

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