

HDPN Progress Snapshot

This document is produced as a background document for the Peer-to-Peer workshop on strengthening collaboration across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors. This document serves to provide a baseline snapshot of in-country progress towards strengthening the humanitarian development nexus, the so-called new way of working. All data is based on self-reporting from members of the UN Country Team.

Operational Context:

Uganda has experienced sustained stability and socio-economic progress for the past 30 years, with a vision to transform Uganda into a prosperous middle-income country by 2020 through strengthening the country's competitiveness for sustainable wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth, in line with the National Development Plan and Vision 2040. However, Uganda is also grappling with three key vulnerability drivers; an unprecedented refugee crisis, food insecurity and adverse effects of climate change as well as chronic under development and poverty in parts of the country, which makes it more vulnerable to shocks.

Uganda has a long history of hosting refugees and asylum seekers since 1945. Since 1962, the country has been hosting refugees and asylum seekers at an average of about 161,000 per year. Uganda is currently receiving a massive and steady influx of refugees that far exceeds national capabilities to cope with. In less than two years, the number of refugees in Uganda has tripled. This makes Uganda one of the largest refugee asylum countries world-wide, and the largest in Africa, and gives a tragic reminder of fragility and conflict in the region. In particular, Uganda received some 800,000 newly arrived refugees from August 2016-August 2017, with arrival rates as high as 10,000 per day. These refugees, 86 % of whom are women and children, arrived by foot at various border crossings, with no belongings, no savings and no livelihoods. Many of these refugees were traumatized, fleeing hunger, gender-based violence and a civil war that is increasingly ethnic in nature. As of 1 August 2017, the total registered refugee population in Uganda stood at 1,326,750, of which more than 75% of them are from South Sudan. The refugee population in Uganda tripled in less than 12 months.

In addition to the refugee crises, Uganda has experienced long periods of crop failure. Increasing levels of food insecurity, adding to underlying vulnerabilities of poverty, youth unemployment, poor access to social services, high levels of gender based violence and high levels of new HIV/AIDS infection. In addition to this, the impacts of climate change risks to negatively impact on agricultural production, food and nutrition security, forests, water supply, infrastructure, health, livelihoods (including for refugees) and overall development. Uganda is ranked as the 27th most vulnerable and 25th least ready country to address climate change. Consequently, there is a need for significant investments and innovations to improve readiness, reduce risks and enhance resilience. Findings from the Food Security and Nutrition Assessment (FSNA) conducted in December 2016 indicate that 80% or more of the population in the old refugee settlements have an acceptable food consumption score. However, this is not the case in the new refugee settlements (recent South Sudanese refugee influx) where the concentration of new arrivals is high. Moreover, the nutrition situation in refugee settlements in Uganda reflects two different levels of malnutrition between South West and West Nile settlements, where the newly arrived refugees from South Sudan are located. While the global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates in South West settlements have stabilized at acceptable levels (<5%), the West Nile settlements have GAM prevalence classified either as serious (10%-15%) or critical (>15%).

All factors combined to a daunting challenge for the Government to meet its humanitarian and national development needs. The underlying poverty and vulnerability of refugees and their host communities and their limited resilience to shocks contributes to higher levels of poverty in refugee-hosting areas. The refugee and host communities are exposed to increased competition for labor market opportunities, land, education and health facilities, and other infrastructure. The growing population pressure also poses an environmental risk, due to poor access to clean energy in refugee settlements and hosting communities.

In support of the Settlement Transformative Agenda, which is a Government policy outlining a progressive and generous hosting refugee regime, the United Nations in partnership with the World Bank has developed the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) Strategy, a multi-stakeholder framework around common outcomes, aiming to build resilience and self-reliance of refugees and host communities. It contributes to the fulfilment of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), which Uganda has decided to implement. The CRRF is being rolled out in Uganda and the experiences of the CRRF implementation will to inform Global compact on Refugees.

I. Shared Vision :

Overall, agencies, organizations, and the government share the same common vision and understanding of the general context. In Uganda, given its long history of providing asylum, a comprehensive response is already being pursued under the leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Uganda's vision of a self-reliant and fully integrated refugees and migrants are enshrined in various policy documents, making it easier for the international community to support. The open door policy for refugees is well established and supported by all parts of the government and parliament, and provides the guiding principles underpinning service delivery, livelihoods, social services etc. What remains, is a further articulation of how this vision impacts each sector.

II. Joint analysis:

Despite the common and shared vision of the problem, mechanisms for joint analysis of the situation are less evident. Most actors rely on the analysis and situation updates by UNHCR. In some instances joint-assessments are conducted around key cross-sectoral issues such as food security and nutrition and infectious disease management. However there are no mechanisms or process at the onset of the acute refugee influx to bring together various sectors and various assessment products to undertake a comprehensive analysis of key issues facing both refugees and host communities.

III. Joint planning/ Joined Up Programming:

In the refugee hosting districts, both humanitarian and development actors organize around one strategic framework, called the [Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Framework](#) (UN-WB), which is aligned with the [UNDAF \(2016-2020\)](#) has been developed to support the Government of Uganda in the implementation of its [National Development Plan II \(2015/16-2020/21\)](#).

The planning logic of the ReHoPE is over 20 years. This allows humanitarian and development actors alike to plan for the short, medium, and long term. At the same time, there is enough

flexibility in the design of the ReHoPE for its medium and long-term goals to remain valid, despite a new humanitarian emergency in 2016. The 2016-2017 new refugee emergency, which took place after ReHoPE was envisioned and one year into the UNDAF timeline, did require an immediate humanitarian response to save lives.

The humanitarian response was coordinated by the Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, **with three collective objectives agreed amongst more than 73 NGOs, 12 UN entities and several Government departments**. Out of the three objectives, only one is strictly humanitarian (emergency response) whereas the other were developmental in nature (stabilisation and integrated system delivery, environmental protection and risk mitigation). The articulation of these collective outcomes is a merger between the different planning processes (UNDAF, the National Development Plan, and a government led/refugee specific [Settlement Transformation Agenda](#)). These objectives were agreed across all actors, including the Government and detailed as objectives in the Refugee Response Plans, along with timeframes and indicators. In the UNDAF itself, ReHoPE is a stated outcome. As such, the NDP II has uniquely integrated refugee needs into the overall national development process. On the other hand, ReHope also consists of its own strategic objectives.

CRRF: <i>“to support governments to protect and assist refugees and support host communities involved, through a response based on the principle of international cooperation and on burden and responsibility sharing”</i>	(UNDAF) REHOPE: <i>“To have in place strong and resilient institutions that can deliver appropriate, accessible, cost-effective, and affordable services to all people in the refugee-hosting districts in ways that build resilience and self-reliance among both refugee and host communities and that maintain and promote the asylum space.</i>	STA: <i>“achieve self-reliance and local settlement for refugees, and to promote social development in the refugees hosting areas as a durable solution to the refugees’ problems, while protecting national and local interests”</i>
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IV. Leadership and Coordination:

Challenges in coordination remain. While there is strong government leadership through the OPM which ensure that programmes, activities, and standards are in line with national goals and targets, some confusion remain as perceptions of twin coordination arrangements – that of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and that the one envisaged to operationalize the ReHoPE strategic framework persist. The most recent development in this regard is the creation of the CRRF Steering Group, which met for the first time in October 2017. The steering group builds on existing coordination platforms in that it is composed by the RC and UNHCR and members nominated by the Government line Ministries and District Authorities, the local development partners’ group, the humanitarian donor group, the UNCT, the IFIs, the INGO Directors Group and the National NGO forum and the Private Sector Foundation. Refugee representatives are also part of the Steering Group. In addition to the CRRF coordination structures, a specific multi-partner trust fund (MPTF) in support of the UNDAF is being envisioned. The MPTF for Uganda will be able to offer grants both to UN agencies, NGOs and Government working both on humanitarian and development activities.