



SUMMARY REPORT



19 October 2017, Imperial Royale Hotel, Kampala



Overview

The National Planning Authority (NPA), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, convened Chief Administrative Officers and District Planners from 11 refugee hosting districts, together with representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), line ministries and Uganda's development partners, to advance efforts for integrated district planning for refugees and their host communities.

I. Background

Over the last 18 months (since early 2016), the number of refugees hosted in Uganda has dramatically increased. Today, nearly 1.4 million refugees reside in 28 settlements across 11 districts, and in Kampala, living alongside their Ugandan hosts. Uganda's approach to refugee protection and management provides exemplary prospects for dignity, normality and self-reliance, and creates a conducive environment for pursuing development-oriented approaches.

However, the hosting of refugees places inordinate pressure on the country, and in particular the districts and communities that host them. A comprehensive refugee response in Uganda must meet both immediate life-saving requirements for refugees as well as mid-term to long-term resilience needs of both refugees and host communities.

The Government included refugee management and protection in its second National Development Plan (NDP 2015/16-2019/20) through the Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA). Building on this, in 2017 the Government launched the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Uganda, which fosters stronger cooperation among a broad array of stakeholders.

The Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) strategic framework was developed in support of the Government's STA through a consultative process involving the Government, UN Country Team, World Bank and other humanitarian and development actors. ReHoPE aims to more effectively promote the resilience and self-reliance of those residing in refugee hosting areas – both refugees and Ugandan nationals. The initiative is the key component in the application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Uganda.

The Government – through initiatives like STA and ReHoPE – aims to strengthen local government-led planning, budgeting and monitoring processes, ensuring that the implementation of District Development Plans enables Ugandans and refugees to build their self-reliance and resilience. Local governments in refugee hosting districts therefore play a central role in the realisation of a comprehensive response.

At the national level, NPA has a particularly important role, as a key element of a comprehensive refugee response to support and strengthen planning processes, especially at local level. In line with NPA's mandate to support local development planning, the objectives of the workshop were:

1. Local Governments hosting refugees understand what they need to do by when to develop a short list of priority areas of intervention to build the resilience and self-reliance of both refugees and Ugandans in their districts 2018-2020, and receive guidance on prioritization;



2. To discuss the possible process at national level by which support will be provided to help design and implement the priority interventions; and
3. Suggest ways of strengthening coordination and joint planning processes within districts and between districts and national level.

II. Key Messages

Opening the workshop, Mr. Patrick Birungi, Director of Planning, **NPA**, standing for the executive Director, welcomed participants and underscored the opportunity the workshop presented to achieve greater coordination and to address challenges districts face in planning in the context of refugee hosting. Mr. Birungi said that development actors and others have not always moved together in support of district planning. He affirmed NPA's role in addressing this, noting that, now is the time to inform forthcoming planning processes. NPA has commenced a process to revise the national planning guidelines, as such it is an appropriate time to integrate refugee issues within district plans.

Representing **UNDP**, Mr. Innocent Fred Ejolu, underscored the need to look at how – concretely – refugee hosting districts can be further strengthened to lead their local development, to leverage the opportunities, and address the specific challenges faced. He highlighted that with the national budget process underway, it is time for districts to re-visit their priorities for next year's budget in light of the refugee influx. He further noted the likelihood of additional funding, following the pledges made during the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees and new financing made available by the World Bank.

Mr. Ejolu highlighted development partners committed to aligning their support with local and national government priorities. In this regard, he called on refugee hosting districts to come up with realistic priorities and plans quickly. Otherwise, there is a risk that short term support will not address the most urgent and prominent needs – and facilitate the transition to medium – to long-term development support. He also underscored the need for a long-term approach to improve coordination, build local government capacities, and improve social services and economic opportunities both for refugees and Ugandans.

The acting **Chairperson of NPA**, Dr. Godfrey Okot, said that while the Ugandan refugee hosting model provides refugees with dignity and creates an inclusive environment for development outcomes, the large influx of refugees has placed immense pressure on host communities. He noted that while refugees contribute to the economy, they also compete for resources, both natural resources and jobs. Dr. Okot underscored the need for better planning to manage refugees, to mitigate potential conflict, and to sustain the model. Recognising the role of NPA in the roll-out of the CRRF, vis-à-vis support to integrated planning, he also called on local government to understand what to do and develop priority areas on what they need to do in 2018 to 2020 and seek guidance and development partners to increase their support to both refugees and host communities.

Mr. Godfrey Kaima, **OPM**, noted that refugee management, an OPM mandate, had been integrated into the NDP-II through the STA thereby shifting the focus from a solely humanitarian approach to one that recognises the nexus between humanitarian and development. Mr. Kaima highlighted the recently established CRRF National Steering Committee that had been tasked with, among others, resource mobilization for both refugees



and host communities. He called for greater coordination and the engagement of all stakeholders if the needs of both communities are to be addressed in an integrated manner.

Mr. Jens Hesemann, representing **UNHCR**, outlined the process resulting in the 2018 Refugee Response Plans (RRPs), that aim to bring together all actors to enable a coordinated strategy and planned approach. He noted that, while the United Nations and NGOs were there to support the Government, under international law the responsibility to protect refugees was Uganda's alone. He pointed that, 50% of the district population are refugees that needs coordinated, managed and costed services to the 50% extra population. Mr. Hesemann said the 2018 RRP's include support to affected districts as a priority and the need for resource investment in refugees through fundraising from donors. Ultimately, UNHCR would like to see districts take-over from NGOs in service delivery. For this to happen, the capacity of districts to deliver must be strengthened, recognising that, for some districts, the population has doubled. The end goal is an integrated development approach.

Mr. Chris Leather, from the **ReHoPE Support Team**, presented the findings from the recent stocktaking exercise in 11 refugee hosting districts. The aim of the stocktake was to identify which humanitarian and development actors are doing what and where, assess alignment with ReHoPE objectives and principles, and determine what gaps in service delivery and support for livelihoods remained to be addressed. He reported that while there was now a better understanding of what actors are doing and what the priorities of districts are, there are significant data gaps remaining, hence the stocktake needs to be an ongoing process integrated into government planning and data systems. He noted that, the majority of prioritised interventions focus on construction or rehabilitation of physical infrastructure and assets with further consideration required on how these assets will be sustained, and the availability of human resources. Environment and energy sources, water and sanitation and road infrastructure emerge as areas impacted most by the refugee influx in the short to medium term, albeit with major needs in all sectors over the long term.

Mr. Leather noted the limited participation of partners working in host communities and settlements in local government coordination mechanisms; the limited involvement of local governments in refugee issues; inadequate coordination, planning and implementation capacities, especially in sectors; and the interpretation of national policies and guidance at the district level.

Going forward, Mr. Leather called for district priorities to be further refined, in view of the next National Partnership Forum in November and the NDP-II mid-term review, to support the scale-up of action next year (2018) and strengthen the government capacity and ability to lead the management of the refugee response. He noted NPA is well placed to compile district priorities and, with OPM, develop a comprehensive programme framework to inform investment decisions, integrating humanitarian and development priorities, and ensure monitoring, evaluation and learning systems are put in place.

III. Exchange of Views

During an exchange of views, participants reflected on a range of issues, including on financing and the role of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and development partners vis-à-vis respective contributions to financing a comprehensive response.



On regulatory issues, participants underscored the need to address both the understanding of, and conflicts in, legal frameworks, particularly in relation to the NGO and Refugees Acts; and the need to sensitise development partners and district officials on Uganda's laws and regulations and international legal obligations, respectively, in relation to refugee management. Reflecting on Uganda's 'bottom-up' planning system, participants call on NPA to provide clear guidance on the process of integrating refugee issues.

On issues related to coordination, participants highlighted the need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of OPM and the Ministry of Local Government, and the need to improve UNHCR and OPM's understanding of existing district structures and coordination mechanisms (Council, Budget Conference etc.). It was noted that, issues of equitable access to services (between refugees and host communities) needs to be harmonised to mitigate conflict and this can only be achieved through better coordination, joint planning and effective and efficient resource utilization. On the various frameworks and financing arrangements in place (ReHoPE, STA, CRRF and World Bank and Solidarity Summit funds), participants sought greater information and transparency.

IV. Conclusion

Participants split into regional groups (Northern and Western) to explore workable mechanisms to develop a short list of priority areas of interventions to build the resilience and self-reliance of both refugees and Ugandans in their districts over the coming 12 months. The groups agreed on the following outcomes:

- OPM to convene regular meetings with local government sector heads and humanitarian and development partners to identify needs, identify priorities, implementation partners, monitoring and evaluation;
- The District Technical Planning Committee ensures that interventions for resilience and self-reliance of Ugandans and refugees are, in the short term, are annexed as addendum to District Development Plans, and in the longer term well integrated into District Development Plans, including interventions outside the jurisdiction of local governments;
- Develop planning capacity of local governments, including harmonised guidance to districts, so that they can better analyse and integrate refugee issues into District Development Plans;
- More coordination between sectors within local governments; and
- More interface between sectors (at central level) and local governments.

The Way Forward

Participants agreed on the following actions:

1. Local Governments to consult with district stakeholders and submit a final list of priorities to NPA by 31 October (NPA to provide a template and guidance);
2. NPA to compile district submissions into a programme framework and share with Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the CRRF Steering Group and Secretariat, and the National Partnership Forum Task Force;



3. NPA to propose to the National Partnership Forum to endorse the programme framework and provide high level steer on coordination;
4. Districts to identify implementing partners/agencies, as necessary, and oversee development of detailed implementation plans;
5. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and CRRF Steering Group, supported by the CRRF Secretariat, helps to identify potential funding sources;
6. CRRF Steering Group clarifies and harmonises the relationship between STA, CRRF and ReHoPE;
7. NPA continues to lead this type of dialogue with Local Governments;
8. OPM to support NPA to play its roles in coordinating the planning process and strengthening local government planning capacity;
9. NPA to review the Local Government Planning Guidelines to provide for integration of refugee issues into District Development Plans; and
10. Need advocacy on additional staffing for Refugee Hosting Local Governments through Central Government and Development Partners.

Annexes

1. Programme
2. UNHCR Presentation
3. Group Presentations
4. Attendance Record

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