Refugee Access to Livelihoods and Housing, Land, and Property

May 2019
UGANDA

CONTEXT
Uganda is currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the region with over 1.2 million refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Burundi. Recently arrived refugees have joined Rwandese, Somali, and other refugees that have lived in Uganda for decades. Due to the large number of refugees, the range of countries of origin, and the varying lengths of displacement, there are key information gaps on how access to or lack of housing, land, and property (HLP) for refugees impact their potential for sustainable livelihoods.

In partnership with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), REACH conducted an assessment from 3 December 2018 to 15 March 2019 to collect baseline data on refugees’ access to livelihoods and HLP. The assessment aims to provide a better understanding of the conditions of refugee access to livelihoods and HLP, the linkages, and other factors influencing sustainable livelihoods and potential movement within Uganda.

METHODOLOGY
A mixed methods approach was used, driven by a household-level structured survey, semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). The quantitative household-level survey produced results representative for the refugee population in 30 refugee settlements (considered as 25 due to five combined settlements in Adjumani) across 11 districts, as well as select divisions of Kampala (Makindye, Kampala Central, and Kawempe) with a 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error at the settlement level for all questions asked to the entire sample size. A total of 3,165 households were interviewed for this assessment. All questions referring to a subset are footnoted.

KIIs and FGDs were used to triangulate the data and provide context to quantitative findings. KIIs targeted settlement leadership, including Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) commandants and UNHCR staff, refugee welfare committee leaders, district local government officials, and key partners working in relevant sectors. Semi-structured FGDs were stratified by gender and conducted with refugee and host community groups in each location.

Findings in this factsheet are representative of refugee households living in Rwamwanja refugee settlements. A total of 117 refugee households were interviewed in Rwamwanja settlement.

POPULATION PROFILE OF REFUGEES IN UGANDA

Demographics

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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>8%</td>
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Average household size: 7

Displacement demographic

Top countries of origin:
1. South Sudan (65%)
2. DRC (27%)
3. Burundi (3%)
4. Somalia (2%)

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RWAMWANJA IN KAMWENGE DISTRICT

Rwamwanja settlement was established in 1964 to host refugees from Rwanda and closed in 1995 when many repatriated. It reopened in 2012 to host refugees fleeing insecurity in DRC due to violence in North and South Kivu. The settlement, currently hosting over 68,000 refugees, is at full capacity and no longer receiving new arrivals.

HHs WITH VULNERABLE MEMBERS

- Unaccompanied/separated child, orphan: 9%
- Disabled members: 39%
- Pregnant / lactating women: 44%
- Female-headed HHs: 35%

HHs reporting member with persons with specific needs (PSN) card: 21%

HHs reporting that some members are not registered as refugees:

TOP 3 HLP CHALLENGES

- Land accessed for cultivation: 59%
- Land accessed for housing: 24%
- Housing: 21%

1 Figures based on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) population figures updated as of April 2019.
2 This question was only asked to the 25% of respondents facing HLP challenges. The level of confidence may thus be lower than 95%.
3 Respondents could answer more than one option for this question.
HHs perceiving themselves at risk of eviction: 75%

**TENURE ARRANGEMENTS**

% of HHs by shelter tenure:
- 81% Owned by the head of the household
- 13% Owned jointly between household members
- 5% Rented
- 1% Owned by neighbors (rent free)

8% of HHs have documentation proving ownership or legal occupancy of shelter.

% of HHs by methods of shelter acquisition:
- Construct 84%
- Acquire 16%

Of the 84% of HHs that reported constructing their shelter, most commonly reported ways of acquiring materials:
- Purchased 58%
- Assistance 39%
- Friend 14%

**SHELTER CHALLENGES**

57% of HHs reported shelter damage. Of those, the most commonly reported parts of the shelter damaged are:
- Damage to roof: 82%
- Damage to wall material: 37%
- Damage to structural element: 12%

43% of HHs reported not being able to conduct repairs. Of those, the most commonly reported reasons include:
- No money for repair: 86%
- Material not available: 21%
- Waiting for landlord to repair shelter: 14%

% of HHs reporting members do not feel safe in their current shelter:
- Female: 21%
- Male: 14%

**ACCESS TO LAND**

% of HH reporting:
- Accessing land where shelter is located: 92%
- Accessing land in a separate plot: 13%

Method of accessing land around shelter plot:
- 97% OPM/UNHCR allocation
- 3% Renting to access someone else's land

13% of HHs reported accessing land outside their shelter. Of those, the most commonly reported methods of accessing that land are:
- OPM/UNHCR allocation: 47%
- Renting to access someone else's land: 27%
- Accessing someone else's land for free: 20%
- Use of land where access has not been granted: 7%

**USE OF LAND FOR CULTIVATION**

78% of HHs reported using their shelter plot for cultivation. Of those, the following reported on sufficiency of the land to provide food for the HH in the most recent harvest:
- 65% Insufficient
- 35% Sufficient

**FORMAL AGREEMENTS**

Of the 3% that access land around shelter plot through renting, free access, or ownership, 67% of HHs that have a formal agreement to access the land

Of the 47% of land accessed outside of shelter plot through renting, free access, or ownership, 29% are accessed through formal agreement

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The Government of Uganda allocates land for residential and agricultural purposes, to refugees, irrespective of ethnicity and origin. This is done via OPM with the support of UNHCR.
25% of HHs reported facing HLP challenges. Of those:

**Most commonly reported areas of HLP issues (% of HLP issues):**
- Land accessed for cultivation: 59%
- Land accessed for housing: 24%
- Housing: 21%

**Most commonly reported types of HLP issues (% of HLP issues):**
- Eviction: 22%
- Plot given was unusable: 19%
- Land grabbing: 19%

15% of the HLP issues reported were resolved.

HLP ISSUE RESOLUTION

- 22% of the 36 HLP issues reported were attempted to be resolved by the household.

Out of the HLP issues that HHs attempted to resolve, the following mechanisms were used:
- Help desk: 61%
- Refugee Welfare Committee: 48%
- LC1 chairperson/local gov official: 23%

**PROPERTY**

30% of HHs reported having no property at all. Out of the 70% who do:

**HHs with income-generating property:** 25%

**Most commonly reported type of property:**
- Livestock: 39%
- Solar panel: 39%
- Bicycle: 12%

78% of property items are owned by one owner.

**Proportion of those by sex of owner:**
- Female: 28%
- Male: 72%

27% of HHs that own property/assets reported having documentation proving ownership or legal access.

% of HHs owning number of income-generating property items:
- 75% Zero income-generating items
- 21% One income-generating item
- 4% Two income-generating items
- 0% Three income-generating items

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Most commonly reported sources and types of information HHs access:
- Family and friends: 65%
- Refugee Welfare Committee: 47%
- Loudspeaker: 39%

**Type of information**
- Food distribution: 77%
- Registration: 44%
- Safety: 21%

97% of HHs reported trusting the information they receive.

Most commonly reported information needs of HHs by area:
- Food distribution: 59%
- Availability of services: 41%
- Employment opportunities: 33%
HHs reporting perceived livelihoods challenges:

98%

**LIVELIHOODS SOURCES**
Out of the 76% of HHs who reported having a source of income, the most commonly reported sources are:

- Farming: 34%
- Casual labour: 16%
- Cash assistance: 12%

**Most commonly reported livelihood groups HH members participate in:**

- Village Savings and Loan Associations: 49%
- Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations: 9%
- Farmers’ group: 8%

**Most commonly reported livelihoods challenges:**

- Lack of work opportunities: 56%
- Health problems: 41%
- Lack of skills/qualifications: 40%

**SKILLS AND ASPIRATIONS**
82% of HHs have men of working age and 91% of HHs have women of working age. Of those:

- Most commonly reported livelihoods skills gained in country of origin:
  - Farming: 71%
  - Livestock: 25%
  - Domestic work in the home: 48%

**Most commonly reported livelihoods aspirations:**

- Farming: 40%
- Livestock: 32%
- Tailoring: 39%

**MOVEMENTS WITHIN UGANDA**

**PAST MOVEMENTS**

- 13% of HHs that had at least one member move in the year prior to data collection:

  Of those:

  - Types of destinations:
    - Urban area: 33%
    - Rural area: 33%
    - Another refugee settlement: 33%
    - Another site in same refugee settlement: 0%

  - Most commonly reported reasons for moving:
    - Presence of education services: 33%
    - Joining other family members: 27%
    - Presence of employment opportunities: 27%

  63% of the HHs with at least one member who moved reported that they receive resources from the member that moved

**MOVEMENT INTENTIONS**

- 3% of HHs that have at least one member planning to move in the 6 months following data collection:

  Of those:

  - Types of destinations:
    - Urban area: 67%
    - Rural area: 33%
    - Another refugee settlement: 0%
    - Another site in same refugee settlement: 0%

  - Most commonly reported reasons for planned movement:
    - Joining other family members: 100%
    - Plant crops/cultivate land: 33%
    - Presence of employment opportunities: 33%

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Footnote: 13% of the respondents chose not to respond to this question.