Building Resilience & Sustainable Livelihoods in Displaced Communities

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Rethinking Self-Reliance as a Solution to Displacement

Lessons from Uganda

Eria Serwajja | Hilde Refstie | Emmanuel Viga
Uganda as a ‘Refugee Paradise’

“The policy framework under which Uganda offers protection to refugees and asylum seekers is lauded as one of the most generous in the world [World Bank, 2016].

A testing ground for displacement policies focused on promoting self-reliance amongst refugees.
Refugees and Asylum-Seekers in Uganda
Uganda Refugee Response
30 September 2022

Total refugees and asylum-seekers
1,518,570*

Countries of origin
- SOUTH SUDAN: 60%
- DR CONGO: 31%
- SOMALIA: 4%
- BURUNDI: 2%
- OTHERS: 3%
- RWANDA: 1%

Refugees per settlement

LEGEND

Refugee settlement
Capital city
District boundary
Source countries of refugees
- South Sudan
- DR Congo
- Somalia
- Burundi
- Rwanda
- Other nationalities

* The total population figure is provisional and is subject to change following completion of the ongoing verification exercise. Verification aims to provide a more accurate assessment of the refugee population.
Refugee Policies

• Refugees Act 2006
• 2010 Refugee Regulations
• The UN Global Compact and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (2018)
• Refugee Self-reliance Model(s)
Refugee Self-reliance

• “Developing and strengthening livelihoods of people of concern by addressing or preventing their long-term dependence on humanitarian assistance” (UNHCR, 2006, p. xi)

• Not a new concept or strategy
Uganda’s Self-Reliance Model

- Provision of tools, material and land [from 50X50 to 30X30]
- Supplementary food rations
- Access to education, healthcare and infrastructure services
- Right to work
- Refugee Welfare Councils
- Relative Freedom of Movement
- Social networks
- Extended family members
But

• Land size, quality and skills
• Pressure on educational, health and infrastructural services
• Conflicts between refugees and between refugees and hosts
• COVID-19 Pandemic challenges
• Dwindling funding and food rations.
• Social networks variedly distributed.
• How self-reliant are refugees?

• “You will probably not understand the real meaning of being called a refugee, and what a refugee goes through in real life, but there are many people in the settlement where tasting tea with sugar in the morning is a problem because there is nothing in the household. Honestly, tasting meat is a problem for many in the settlement” (FGD in BidiBidi 2021).

• “In June when my food ration got used up and there was nothing left for my family to survive on I contacted my friend who was online. I informed him that I am not very OK, by the way. He said what is the matter? I replied: hunger! He sent me 60,000 Uganda shillings [USD 17]. That was very good. It helped my family a lot till we received the next food ration” (Interview with a refugee in BidiBidi, 2021)
Result: Self-reliance as a Durable Solutions ‘lite’

• Self-reliance increasingly becoming an end instead of means to an end in Uganda

• Has de facto replaced the durable solution of local integration
  • Solutions ‘lite’ (Brun & Fábios 2017)
Effects of non-citizenship

• Not participating in national elections
• Can not own property
• Living in limbo (some afraid to let others know they are SS, afraid of backlashes)
• Often subject to stricter control measures (e.g. during the pandemic)
Temporal injustice (Fontanari 2017, Brun & Thorshaug 2019)
For whom is refugee self-reliance promoted?

With gradual but progressive increase in protracted conflicts, permanent losses of livelihoods, and an increasingly hostile refugee politics in Europe and beyond, ‘never-ending displacement’ in precarious conditions has become the norm (Brun & Fábos, 2017). This stalemate in finding solutions to protracted displacement has led to increased emphasis being put on promoting refugee self-reliance through area-based development.
UK still backs Rwandan asylum-seeker deportations despite legal challenge

BIRMINGHAM, England (AP) — Britain’s immigration minister said Tuesday that people who arrive by unauthorized means should not be allowed to claim asylum in the U.K. and she vowed to press on with a contentious plan to send some asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman acknowledged that a legal challenge to the policy means it’s unlikely anyone will be deported to the east African country this year.

Under a deal signed in April, Britain plans to send some migrants who arrive in the U.K. as stowaways or in small boats to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed. Those granted asylum would stay in the African country rather than returning to the U.K.
Conclusion

In the refugee community, life is not okay. If you visit a family that is getting 7.5 kilograms of posho and 5 kilograms of beans per person for a month, and they have to depend on this for survival, you will then believe that things are not okay in the refugee settlement. You have seen how rocky this land is. Then you have to buy salt for yourself. You have to buy clothes. If you visit the person living this lifestyle and you ask him or her how life is in the camp; he will tell you that it is better to go back to South Sudan. (FGD 2021).

Thank You
Graduating to Resilience

Derrick Nsibirwa | Innocent Cwinyai | Vanessa Hoffman
**Goal:** Graduate extremely poor refugee and Ugandan households in Kamwenge District from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self-reliance and resilience

**Period:** 7 years (Oct 1, 2017 - Sept 30, 2024) in two cohorts

**Participants:** 13,829 women and youth as primary participants
- Cohort 1: 6,629 primary participants (Active 5,199)
- Cohort 2: 7,051 primary participants

**Budget:** $36.7 million

**Implementer:** AVSI Foundation in a consortium with Trickle Up and American Institutes for Research (AIR)

**External evaluator:** Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) conducting an RCT to measure impact and cost-effectiveness of the graduation model
Graduation Approach

A sequenced and time-bound intervention that aims to help people living in extreme poverty build resilience and engage in sustainable livelihoods.

For more information on the Graduation Approach:

• [https://refugees.trickleup.org/resources/graduation-approach-for-refugees-video/](https://refugees.trickleup.org/resources/graduation-approach-for-refugees-video/)
• Check out our Two-Minute Explainer Video about Graduating to Resilience in Uganda
• Watch: [Graduating to Resilience Animation Video - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example_video_id) and: [Graduating to Resilience Cohort One Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example_video_id)
Graduation Approach – Sequencing

1. COACHING
2. LINKAGE AND REFERRALS
3. SAVINGS AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION
4. CONSUMPTION SUPPORT
5. LIVELIHOOD SKILLS TRAINING AND SUPPORT
6. ASSET TRANSFER

Cohort 2
Feb 2022

Jan 2023
Jan 2024
## Graduation Components and Structure – Cohort 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COMPONENT</th>
<th>ARM 1 STANDARD GRADUATION</th>
<th>ARM 2 GROUP COACHING</th>
<th>ARM 3 EMPOWERMENT MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumption Support</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood Skills Training and Support</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings and Financial Inclusion</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asset Transfer</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>INDIVIDUAL</td>
<td>GROUP</td>
<td>INDIVIDUAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkage and Referrals</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cohort 1
Graduation Results
(June 2021)
### Graduation Progress Over Time (Cohort 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Never Met</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3: October - December 2019</td>
<td>2,732</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>2,397</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: January - March 2020</td>
<td>1,497</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>1,089</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: July - September 2020</td>
<td>3,036</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>1,959</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1,089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: October - December 2020</td>
<td>2,568</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>2,863</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: January - March 2021</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>2,170</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: April - June 2021</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2,504</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1,082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- **Green:** Graduation
- **Purple:** Progression
- **Red:** Never Met
- **Gray:** Missing
- **Black:** Dropouts
## Summary of Cohort 1 Graduation Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Stage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Arm 1</th>
<th>Arm 2</th>
<th>Arm 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td># HHs</td>
<td>% HHs</td>
<td># HHs</td>
<td>% HHs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>Met the criteria at least three times consecutively</td>
<td>1244</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression</td>
<td>Household is working towards graduation but has yet to meet all criteria three times consecutively.</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Met</td>
<td>Never met grad criteria</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1631</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1576</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall significantly positive results for all treatment groups compared to the control groups.
External Evaluation Results – IPA

The Impact of a Graduation Program on Livelihoods in Refugee and Host Communities in Uganda | Innovations for Poverty Action (poverty-action.org)

• Large positive impact of the program on several key outcomes - Increases in value of productive assets, income, consumption, food security, and subjective well-being, both in refugee and host communities

• Effects on economic activity larger in absolute terms for hosts (but refugees start from a lower base)

• All program versions have positive impact - Group coaching same impact as individual coaching

• Participants with the asset transfers performed better than without

• Additional positive effects on savings, nutrition, schooling, psychometrics

• No impacts on anthropometric measures of young children (height, weight)

• Some evidence of positive spillovers (consumption, food security, business activity); larger for hosts, at most moderate for refugees

• The group coaching arm (T2) has similar impacts to T1 in each of these metrics but 13% lower costs and therefore performs best in the cost-benefit analysis.
Post-Graduation Status
Graduated Households (73%)
Post-Graduation Status
Pre-Graduated Households (23%)
Post-Graduation Status
Never Graduated Households (5%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Met the Criteria</th>
<th>Never met the criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host</td>
<td>39% 41</td>
<td>61% 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>37% 29</td>
<td>63% 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>38% 70</td>
<td>62% 114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons and Cohort 2 Design

- **Group coaching** is effective – promotes social cohesion/peer support BUT an additional household level touch point is helpful for observation and tailored support

- Most Significant Activities identified by participants – coaching, savings, asset transfer in a graduation approach type program

- **Family/household approach** – an inclusive way of working with an entire family while addressing women and youth needs

- **Refugees** might take longer to graduate compared to Host (18-24 months might be enough for host but refugees might need 24-30 months)

- **Drop out** will happen! Plan for this (about 22%) @Cohort 2 only 4% drop out at month 13/24

- **Adaptive Learning** and the use of evidence for decision making is critical
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Q&A Panel
AIR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Building Resilience & Sustainable Livelihoods in Displacement Communities

Webinar Series: Forced Displacement and Migration