

HPG Working Paper

# The refugee response in northern Uganda

Resources beyond international humanitarian assistance

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**HPG**  
Humanitarian  
Policy Group



## About the authors

Lydia Poole is a partner with Humanitarian Outcomes.

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# Acronyms

<b>AIMS</b>	Aid Information Management System
<b>AMP</b>	Aid Management Platform
<b>CRRF</b>	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>ECW</b>	Education Cannot Wait
<b>ERP</b>	Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities
<b>FTS</b>	Financial Tracking Service (of UN OCHA)
<b>HPG</b>	Humanitarian Policy Group
<b>IATI</b>	International Aid Transparency Initiative
<b>MoES</b>	Ministry of Education and Sports
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>NDP II</b>	National Development Plan II (2016–2020)
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OPM</b>	Office of the Prime Minister
<b>PFM</b>	Public Financial Management
<b>ReHoPE</b>	Refugee and Host Population Empowerment framework
<b>RRP</b>	Refugee Response Plan
<b>SEZ</b>	Special Economic Zone
<b>SPLM</b>	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement
<b>STA</b>	Settlement Transformative Agenda
<b>UBOS</b>	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNHS</b>	Uganda National Household Survey



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# Executive summary

This case study contributes to the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG)'s research exploring the hypothesis that the resources for crisis response that we know about and track are only a sliver of a much larger and potentially more significant pool of resources. This hypothesis is here considered in the context of the response to support refugees from South Sudan who arrived in Northern Uganda after the start of the civil war there in 2013. The refugee response in Uganda also provides insights into the demand for and utility of financing data to support effective response.

HPG's research confirms that, for the refugee response in Uganda, international humanitarian aid is the only form of assistance regularly counted and visible in publicly available sources. It is currently not possible to track direct resource transfers to the refugee response from other public and private, international and national actors, including development aid and remittances, as well as the efforts of refugees themselves to make ends meet. As such, the size and make-up of these other sources of assistance remain largely unknown. Moreover, many of the most important national contributions to the response – including provision of legal refugee status, and the right to move freely, to work, and to access services – do not lend themselves readily to costing and tracking in financial terms. A range of 'in-kind' resources provided by host communities, including access to land for settlement and cultivation, access to natural resources, including firewood, water and construction materials, are borne indirectly and, in most cases, no transfer of cash has taken place.

International and national actors supporting the refugee response in Uganda face a range of coordination, planning and accountability challenges as they shift gears from humanitarian response to a

more comprehensive and forward-looking refugee response integrated with national developmental priorities. Currently there is a demand for financing data to help identify and monitor investments in the response. However, the extent to which financing data can play a role in overcoming these challenges is far from clear, and there are risks associated with the rush to collect financing data without sufficient attention to the purpose and sustainability of the exercise. Based on experiences in Uganda and elsewhere, there is limited evidence to indicate that funding data will be forthcoming, that it will be sufficiently useful for planners and decision-makers, that funding data is in fact what determines decisions, or that there is public demand for financing data to hold response actors to account.

Tracking resource inputs alone is insufficient to provide meaningful information for planning, prioritisation, targeting and accountability. Inputs need to be considered in relation to what they are intended to achieve: typically, an agreed and costed set of outputs. Arriving at an analytical framework in which to make sense of input tracking requires basic planning information, the most fundamental usually being population statistics. It also requires agreement on what the intended outputs are, and how much money is needed to deliver them. There are promising new approaches to identifying and costing outputs, for instance in the education sector, but such approaches will be difficult to apply without clearly defined policies and priorities and clear identification and measurement of outputs. Evidence on the broader direct and indirect costs of refugee hosting can also inform policy design and advocacy. However, although new approaches and methods to studying these dimensions are emerging, their findings have not yet received significant uptake or influence on programme design and policy development.



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# 1 Introduction

This paper contributes to HPG’s research exploring the hypothesis that the resources for crisis response that we know about and track are the ‘tip of the iceberg’, only a sliver of what is a much larger and potentially more significant mass of resources. The overarching research question considers how better knowledge about the assistance that reaches communities in crisis might change or affect the international humanitarian response (see Annex 1 for research framework). Supporting research questions include: (1) exploring how people affected by crises make ends meet at the household level; (2) mapping what resources contribute to crisis response at the system level; and (3) understanding how resource data could improve crisis response. This case study considers these research questions in the context of the response to support refugees from South Sudan who arrived in Northern Uganda after civil war broke out in 2013. The research was carried out in partnership with the Ugandan non-governmental organisation (NGO) AFARD, which both facilitated the research and helped in interpreting and contextualising findings.

The refugee response in Uganda provides insights into the demand for financing data in a context where national and international actors are working towards shared goals and grappling with the challenges of working simultaneously across the ‘humanitarian-development nexus’. Notably, Uganda is an early and enthusiastic adopter of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), a country-level approach to supporting commitments made under the New York Declaration for Migrants and Refugees adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 2016, which provides the policy framework for a ‘comprehensive’ and integrated national and international response in support of a set of shared goals. National and international actors in Uganda are working to forge new agreements on roles, responsibilities, coordination structures, decision-making protocols and cycles, accountability

mechanisms, and funding mobilisation tools to support this new approach. As part of this, the role of resource tracking in the refugee response is an active topic of discussion at country level.

The study approached the research questions from two levels: understanding the relative importance of resources from the household level; and mapping the distribution of resources and understanding the demand for and uses of information on resources at the system level (government, national civil society and international actors directly involved in financing and implementing the refugee response).

Mapping resources at the household level included semi-structured interviews with affected and host communities as well as an illustrative (i.e. non-statistically representative) household survey in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe district, and the Omugo and Imvepi extension of the Rhino settlement in Arua district. Bidibidi is the largest refugee settlement in Uganda. By October 2018, its verified population was 223,088 refugees, with another 95,529 refugees in Rhino Camp and 55,820 in Imvepi (UNHCR, 2018). See Box 1 for a summary of the survey approach, and Annex 2 for a detailed description.

Research on the system level included quantitative data gathering and analysis and exploration of the uses of evidence on financing flows in coordination and decision-making through semi-structured interviews with key national and international stakeholders involved in the response.

The report includes a description of the current refugee response; a summary of findings on resources contributing to the response, from the household and system levels; and an examination of the ways in which resource data and evidence could support improved response.

## Box 1: Summary description of HPG-AFARD household survey

HPG worked with local partner AFARD to develop and carry out a household survey in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe district, and the Omugo and Imvepi extension of the Rhino Camp settlement in Arua district. The survey was not designed to be representative, in part because registration figures for the target population were disputed following a high-profile corruption scandal in the registration process uncovered in late 2017.

The survey was designed to provide illustrative insights into the economic lives of refugees, including their ability to generate cash income. Basic demographic information was also collected, and food security and asset indices were calculated to enable segmentation of the

sample according to coping capacity and wealth. The survey segmented the target population into two groups according to the duration of their stay in Uganda (refugees who had been in Uganda for more than one year – those in Bidibidi – and more recent arrivals – those in the Omugo and Imvepi extensions of Rhino Camp).

The AFARD team conducted the survey over ten working days in May 2018. The total sample size was 500 completed surveys. HPG carried out focus-group discussions in December 2017 to inform the content and design of the survey, and semi-structured interviews across both survey sites in May 2018 to probe qualitative questions and gather life-history information, perceptions and opinions.

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# 2 The refugee response in Uganda

Civil war broke out in South Sudan in late 2013 and, following a serious deterioration in security in 2016, large numbers of refugees began arriving in Uganda. A large-scale national and international response was mobilised, and nine new refugee settlements were opened (Maaji III, Pagarinya, Agojo, Bidibidi, Palorinya, Imvepi, two separate sites within Rhino Camp settlement, and Palabek), as well as a network of border collection, transit and reception centres and a large-scale registration and assistance operation (UNHCR, 2018). Refugees settled in large numbers in some of Uganda's poorest and most politically and economically marginalised regions. The host populations in these areas were already struggling, infrastructure is under-developed, and government service provision is underfunded and under strain. In 2018 growing numbers of Congolese refugees added to the steadily increasing refugee population in Uganda.<sup>1</sup>

Uganda is no stranger to large-scale displacement, with a large internally displaced population in the north of the country, where people were displaced by violence associated with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and government-led counter-insurgency operations, including a forced encampment policy (see Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> Uganda has also hosted large refugee populations from neighbouring countries including South Sudan. Many of these refugees returned in the period leading up to and during the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM/A) in the south. Many current South Sudanese refugees and their families,

therefore, are likely to have a history of displacement into Uganda.

The government of Uganda has developed an unusually liberal legal and policy framework providing legal protection and access to assistance for refugees, and granting them freedom of movement, the right to work, and the right to access public services. Uganda does not follow a policy of encampment, so refugees are free to move and settle where they choose. The refugee response in Uganda is therefore unique, even more so since the government volunteered to be the first adopter of the CRRE, a new approach to pursuing comprehensive and long-term solutions to refugee situations developed by UNHCR following the November 2016 New York Declaration (see Box 2).

The government also provides refugees with land that they may use for settlement and cultivation.<sup>3</sup> Most refugees have chosen to settle on these government-allocated lands in what have become very large settlement areas in the north-west and west of the country.

The government's response to hosting refugees in recent years should also be considered against the wider political, economic and developmental context. Uganda is struggling to address its own poverty and under-development. It has one of the highest population growth rates in Africa (3.3% in 2017), with the population projected to triple from an estimated 43 million in 2018 to 132 million by 2050, based on current growth and mortality rates.<sup>4</sup> In addition, many poor households are dependent on rain-fed agriculture,

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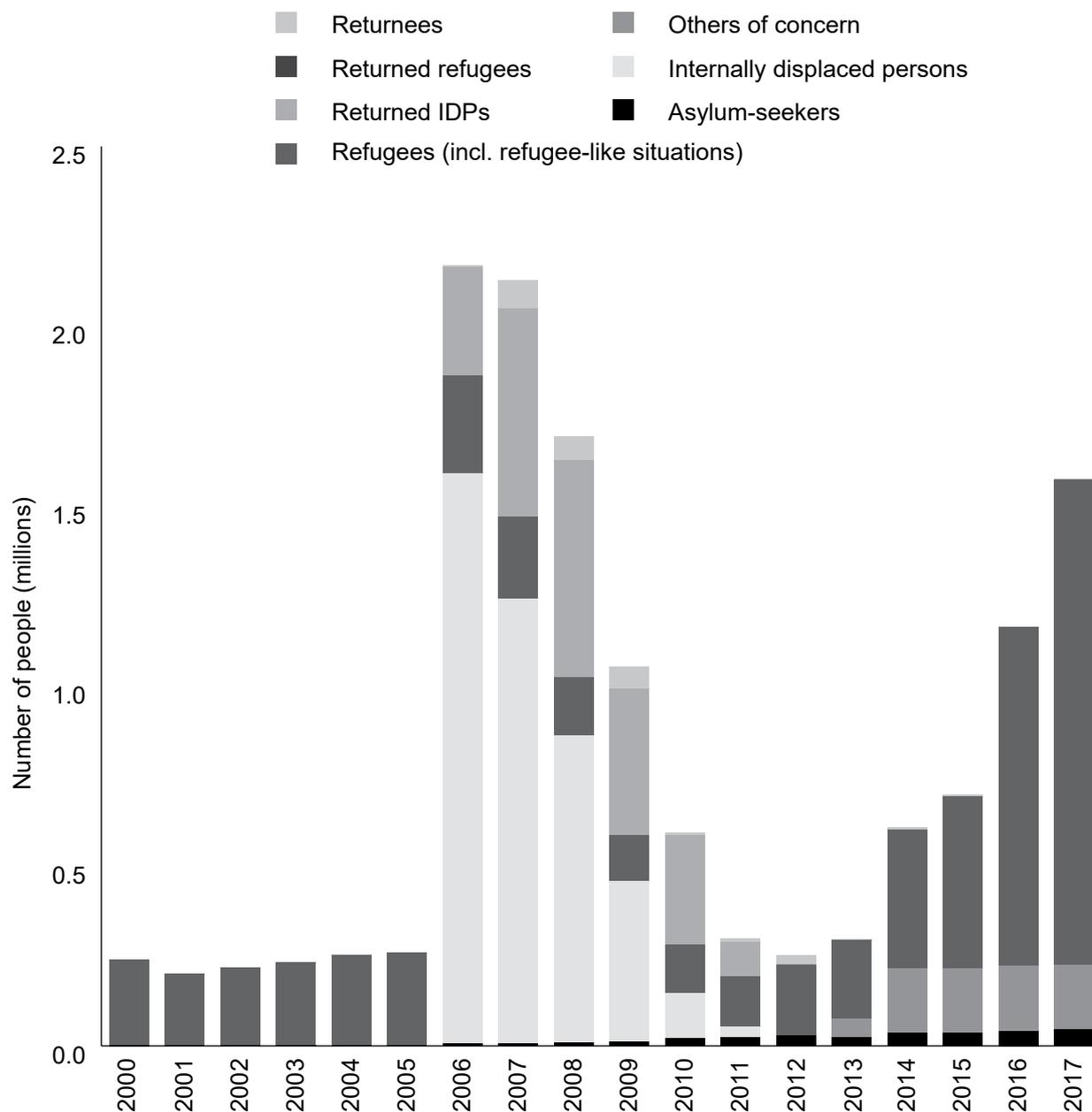
1 By 31 October 2018 UNHCR had verified 284,265 Congolese refugees in Uganda, the equivalent of 24.6% of the verified refugee population.

2 Mukwana and Ridderbos (2008) described the policy as follows: 'The government argued that it had to separate civilians from insurgents in order to reduce the LRA's ability to recruit civilian collaborators. In 2002 the displacement crisis worsened when the Ugandan army, in the course of an offensive against the LRA (Operation Iron Fist), ordered all civilians remaining in "abandoned villages" to move to "protected villages", i.e. government camps.'

3 Land is provided for refugee settlements in line with the Refugee Act of 2006 and the Refugee Regulations of 2010 and comprises a combination of officially gazetted land and land that the Government's OPM Refugee Department has negotiated access and use rights to with local communities on behalf of refugees.

4 Based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017).

**Figure 1: Displaced and ‘populations of concern’ in Uganda 2000–2017**



Source: UNHCR, data downloaded 22 November 2018

which is increasingly vulnerable to a drying and unpredictable climate. These factors, alongside other structural constraints and governance challenges,<sup>5</sup> have contributed to a reversal in earlier gains in poverty reduction in recent years. In 1993 over 50% of the population lived below the national poverty line. Over the next 20 years this fell rapidly, to

19.7% in 2013. However, the latest Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) showed that, despite impressive economic growth, 27% of Ugandans were below the national poverty line in 2016/17 (UBOS, 2017).<sup>6</sup> Reverses in poverty reduction are particularly acute in the north – where most refugees are located – and east of the country.<sup>7</sup>

5 See for example World Bank Group (2015): ‘Uganda faces a number of constraints that slow down its progress toward middle income status; key among those are its governance challenges, infrastructure deficit, high population growth, low levels of human capital, weak public service delivery, limited access to and high cost of credit, and an undeveloped land market.’

6 The UNHS 2016/17 confirms that: ‘the incidence of poverty increased by 7 percentage points between 2012/13 and 2016/17’ (UBOS, 2017).

7 ‘In 2006, approximately 60 percent of the poor lived in the northern and eastern parts of the country. Seven years later, this proportion increased to 84 percent. The northern and eastern regions further suffer from significant land degradation and vulnerability to climate change which exacerbates poverty’ (World Bank Group, 2015).

#### 4 The refugee response in northern Uganda

## Box 2: Uganda's legal, policy and practical support to refugees

The rights and entitlements for refugees in Uganda are set out in the 2006 Refugee Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations. They include access to land and the principle of non-refoulement; provision of individual registration and documentation; access to social services including education and health; the right to work; and the right to establish businesses. The government has also committed to pilot the CRRF, and formally launched its CRRF in March 2017. In practice this incorporates many of the existing planning and coordination frameworks already developed to support the refugee response.

The CRRF comprises five major pillars:

- 1. Admission and rights.** In Uganda, this includes access to land, provision of individual documentation, freedom of movement and the right to work.
- 2. Emergency response and ongoing needs.** This includes provision of protection, registration, and humanitarian assistance to meet immediate needs.
- 3. Resilience and self-reliance.** This is intended to bridge humanitarian and longer-term development programming, and includes

livelihoods initiatives, enhanced service delivery and activities to 'promote peaceful coexistence'. The Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) framework supports this pillar.

- 4. Expanded solutions.** This includes solutions in third countries, primarily resettlement, but potentially work placements and scholarships.
- 5. Voluntary repatriation.** This includes a focus on skills development under pillar three in preparation for return to the refugee's country of origin if conditions are conducive.

The CRRF is supported by a Secretariat led by the government, and including representation from national and international stakeholders involved in the response. The Secretariat is the key locus for coordination and policy and strategy development for the response.

Registration and coordination of the refugee response within government is led by the Refugee Department of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), with support from UNHCR.

*Source: UNHCR (2017).*

Uganda is a major aid recipient, but changes in the political context have affected relations between aid donors and the government. Since 2005, when the Constitution was amended to permit the president to run for a third term, and international recognition of human rights abuses increased, relations have cooled, with a number of key donors scaling back their direct budget support and switching instead to project-based aid, over which they have greater control and visibility (Nunnenkamp et al., 2015).<sup>8</sup> This trend has been accelerated by a series of high-profile aid corruption scandals.<sup>9</sup> Budget support has fallen from 15% of total ODA excluding debt relief in 2002 to less than 3% annually in the five years to 2016 (see Figure 2). Some commentators have argued that the government's relatively generous approach

to refugees is in part designed to improve Uganda's international credibility, and potentially to reset relations with aid donors.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to this more challenging aid environment, the government faces growing constraints. The national budget is under pressure to invest to meet developmental priorities, while at the same time coping with increased demand for public services from a rapidly growing population. This growth in demand has not been matched with equivalent growth in tax revenues. To bridge the fiscal gap, the government has relied on borrowing both domestically and, increasingly, internationally on non-concessional terms, adding further pressure on the public purse as debt repayments mount.<sup>11</sup>

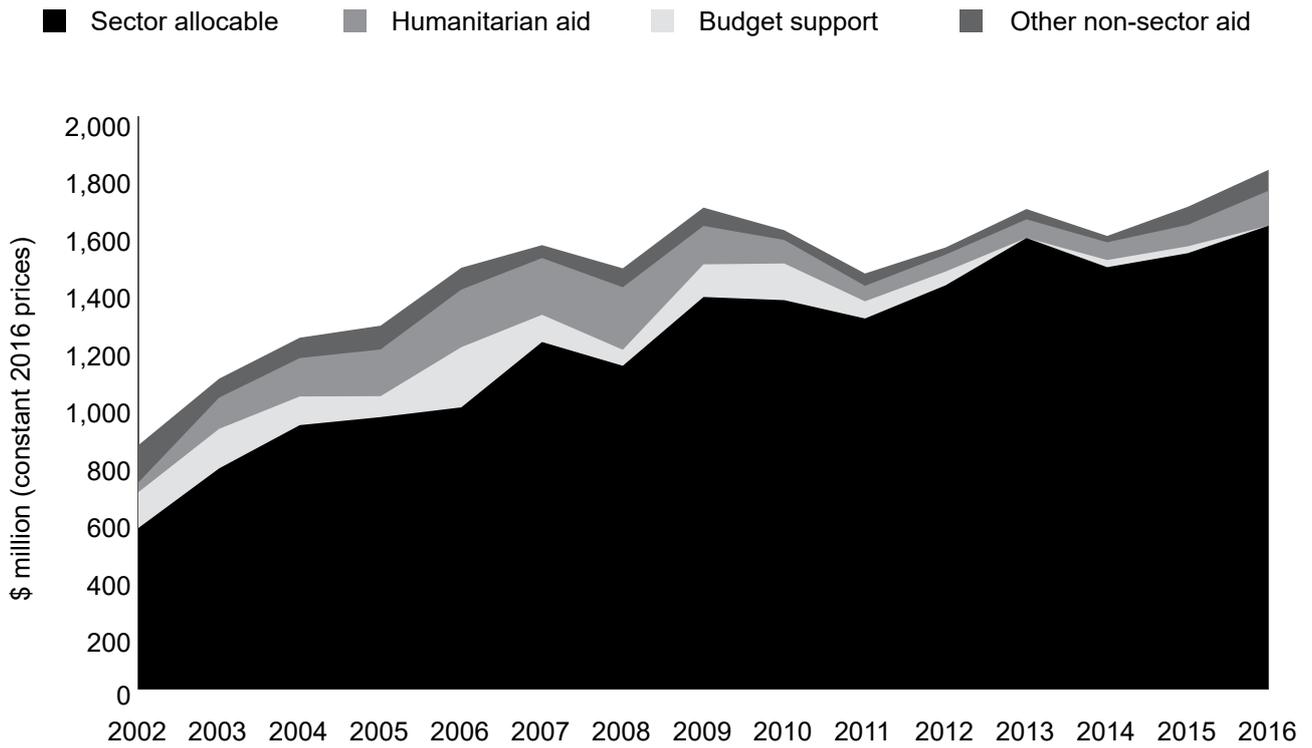
8 'President Museveni were re-elected in February, 2016, for another five year term. The election was the most contested in Uganda's history with high voter turnout (67.6 percent, up from 59.3 percent in 2011). As in 2011, election observers reported irregularities, and incidents of intimidation and harassment, as well as restrictions to freedom of speech, and unequal access to resources and the media' (World Bank Group, 2015).

9 For example, in 2012 donor governments the UK, Denmark, Ireland and Norway suspended aid to the OPM following claims that staff funneled \$12.7 million from an aid programme into private accounts. See: [www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/11/20121117155051480786.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/11/20121117155051480786.html)

10 As noted in research interviews. See also: <https://ugandanenglish.wordpress.com/2017/04/16/ugandas-generous-refugee-policy-musevenis-other-con-job-on-the-west/>

11 Owori (2017) notes that: 'Due to increases in domestic and international non-concessional borrowing, interest payments increased from 8.5% of total spending in 2012/13 to an estimated 13.7% in 2016/17 and 12% in 2017/18.'

Figure 2: Total ODA excluding debt relief to Uganda 2002–2016



Source: OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System.

# 3 What we know about how refugees in Uganda make ends meet

## 3.1 National and international contributions to the refugee response

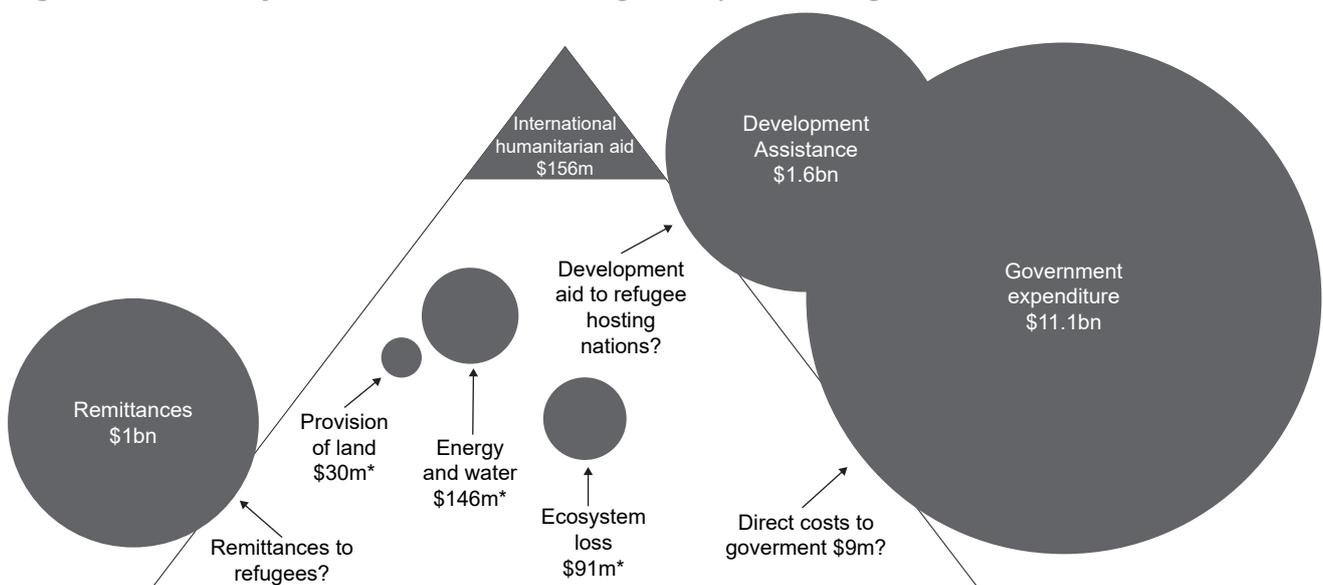
In attempting to find out how refugees in Uganda make ends meet, the study gathered publicly available data on international and national resource flows and triangulated this against refugee perceptions from the household survey, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with a sample of South Sudanese refugees in settlements in northern Uganda. This exercise demonstrates that only international humanitarian aid is regularly counted and visible. In 2016, international humanitarian aid totalling \$156 million was captured in UN OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data; this is the only publicly available figure on resources directly targeting refugees. It is not currently possible to determine resource transfers

specifically to the refugee response from other public and private, international and national actors, and their size and make-up remain largely unknown.

In 2016, Uganda also received \$1.6 billion in development aid (total ODA, minus humanitarian aid) from official donors reporting to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, it cannot be determined how much of that development assistance benefitted refugees and the host population, either directly or indirectly.

Total government expenditure in 2016 was \$11.1 billion, but again we cannot determine how much of this benefitted refugees or host populations. A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) study in 2017 estimated the costs to the national budget of providing key services – security, education and health – at \$9 million. While at the time of the study, in mid-2018 the national budget process had not yet begun to

Figure 3: Summary of known ‘costs’ of refugee response in Uganda in 2016



\*Note that these values are estimates and do not represent actual resource transfers.

Source: Based on data from UN OCHA FTS, OECD DAC, World Bank remittance data, IMF World Economic Outlook and UNDP.

include the refugee population in planning figures and budget allocations, any additional funding allocated from the national budget is likely, in practice, to be low.

National contributions to supporting the refugee population also exist ‘off-budget’. UNDP’s 2017 study also attempted to assign a value to some of these important areas of support (see Box 3). This approach builds on a growing area of research into the fiscal and economic costs or burden of refugees for host countries (Omata and Weaver, 2015). It is striking that by far the largest elements of UNDP’s costing relate to costs that do not require direct financial outlay for the government. The sum of the ‘costs’ of fuel and firewood,

ecosystem loss, forgone tax revenues and land provision account for 96.5% of total costs (UNDP, 2017).

Remittances can play an important role in supporting crisis-affected populations. National-level remittance statistics capture only formal remittances recorded in Central Bank and government statistics and, since refugees in settlements are unlikely to have access to formal banking services in Uganda, these statistics are likely to exclude any remittances they might receive. Refugees participating in HPG’s household survey confirmed that they did not have access to financial services, and few received remittances. We do not know how much of the \$1 billion in remittance flows into

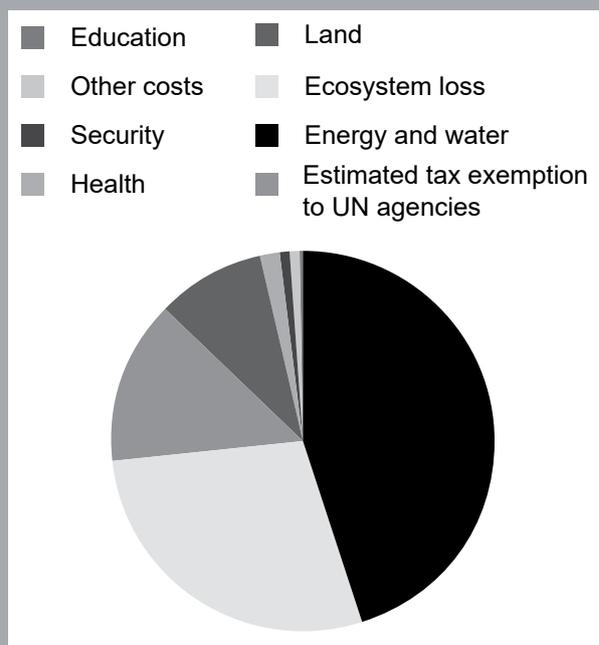
### Box 3: Assessing the ‘cost’ of Ugandan support to refugees

Many of the most important elements of the support provided to refugees in Uganda are not readily costed. Provision of legal refugee status, the right to move freely, to work, and to access services probably significantly outweighs all material support provided to refugees in terms of providing safety, dignity, and the ability to plan and strive towards a better future. There are also very significant material contributions that are not typically costed. Provision of access to land for settlement and cultivation, and the ability to access and exploit natural resources (including water, firewood, grass, soil for brick-making and stone) play a major role in how refugee households meet their basic consumption needs.

UNDP’s study sought to attach a value to the provision of land and access to natural resources, including the opportunity costs of the negative environmental impacts of over-exploitation of natural resources. The study calculates both direct and indirect public costs related to refugee hosting from time of arrival to the point where refugees are ‘integrated’ into settlements on gazetted land, and assigns a value to both in-kind and financial contributions for one fiscal year. The study does not consider wider economic impacts, such as the effects of immigration on market prices, wages and employment. The study does include an assessment of a range of indirect costs related to land allocation, environmental degradation and forgone tax revenues associated with tax exemptions for relief goods, as well as assigning values to the theoretical cost of refugee consumption of water and firewood. The indirect costs resulting from increased demand on public services and infrastructure however have not been assessed in the UNDP study.

The study assigns a value to aspects of government service provision including both recurrent costs (notably staff salaries and consumables such as drugs and medical supplies), some capital expenditure (notably road construction), and central government administrative costs (calculated at 15% of operational costs during the integration phase).

In total, UNDP calculates that, in the financial year 2016/17, the cost to Uganda of hosting refugees was at least \$323 million, which equates to \$277 per refugee (excluding forgone tax revenues estimated at \$45 million). The greatest cost incurred relates to refugees’ use of firewood and water, calculated at \$146 million, followed by ecosystem loss, calculated at \$91 million, and provision of land, estimated at \$30 million.



Source: UNDP (2017).

Uganda in 2016 went to refugees, but it is reasonable to assume that it would have been a very small proportion.

Establishing a comprehensive picture of the financial value of contributions from international and national actors, as well as refugees themselves, to meeting the household consumption and service provision needs of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda remains extremely challenging and relies on a variety of methodologies and tracking systems, which are not readily comparable. For example, within the picture collated here, there are a range of different types of ‘costs’ and ‘values’ including actual resource transfers between actors, resources generated through productive activities, and values attributed to indirect and opportunity costs. In addition, the ‘value’ of many of these resources may not make sense to consider or compare in dollar terms. Notably, the value of legal protection and freedom of movement costs relatively little in terms of cash, but is of huge value from the perspective of refugees themselves.

### 3.2 How do refugees cope at the household level?

It is clear that refugees rely heavily on international assistance – almost 100% of respondents reported that they were in receipt of food aid and 60% indicated that aid organisations were their most important source of support when faced with regular shortfalls in household income (see Table 1).

Refugees are also active economic agents, engaging with markets, generating income and, in some cases, benefitting from transnational financial and economic networks. HPG’s household survey findings provide insights into the varied income sources and strategies that refugee households engage in to make ends meet, and how much cash they receive from them. The average household cash income reported from

all income-generating sources was UGX 371,037 (\$101) for the preceding three months – the equivalent of \$33.52 per month. Although the majority of households surveyed indicated that they had received food aid during the previous three months, most also had a range of additional livelihoods strategies. Almost three-quarters (72%) of survey respondents had three or more livelihood activities or sources of income, with an average across the sample set of 3.5. Other common sources of income included: 41% of households indicated that they sold home-made products; 38% engaged in non-agricultural casual labour; 30% in the sale of bush products; 29% in petty trade; and 26% in agricultural casual labour (see Table 2). The sale of food aid or other relief items is widespread, with 75% of survey respondents indicating that they had done so to raise cash during the preceding three months. However, the amount of cash they received from this was low, with an average of just \$3.07 reported per household per month (see Table 3). The most lucrative sources of income were jobs with the UN and NGOs or in the private sector, but only 7% of households had a family member who had a job with the UN or NGOs, and 10% had a family member with a job in private business.

Refugees do not currently appear to be able to match their skills to available work opportunities. Many of the refugees surveyed indicated that the livelihoods they engaged in were not the same as before they became refugees: 91% of those involved in the sale of bush products and 57% of those involved in the sale of home-made products had not undertaken these activities before. Similarly, 79% of agricultural and non-agricultural casual labourers had not been casual labourers prior to their displacement. Anecdotally, refugees described a lack of education, skills development and employment opportunities in settlement areas, informal discrimination against refugee job-seekers, and challenges matching qualifications to Ugandan standards and requirements.

**Table 1: Which of the following actors is the most important in helping you to meet regular shortfalls in your household income?**

	Whole sample		Male-headed		Female-headed		Bidibidi		Rhino	
	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH
Aid organisations	60%	301	56%	122	63%	179	55%	164	68%	137
Relatives and friends	21%	103	23%	50	19%	53	25%	74	14%	29
Community organisations and churches	12%	60	13%	27	12%	33	14%	42	9%	18
Government of Uganda	5%	27	6%	14	5%	13	4%	13	7%	14
Other	2%	9	1%	3	2%	6	2%	6	1%	3

**Table 2: Livelihood activities and sources during the last three months**

	Full sample		Male-headed		Female-headed		Bidibidi		Rhino	
	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH
Distribution of food aid from UN or NGOs	84%	418	81%	151	85%	220	85%	253	82%	165
Distribution of cash from UN or NGOs	10%	52	6%	11	13%	34	13%	38	7%	14
Consumption of own cultivated food	23%	116	23%	43	23%	59	36%	109	3%	7
Sale of cultivated food	19%	93	16%	29	22%	56	30%	89	2%	4
Own livestock activity (any animals, e.g. chickens, goats, cows)	12%	58	14%	26	11%	28	9%	28	15%	30
Own fishing activity	0%	2	0%	0	1%	2	0%	0	1%	2
Casual labour – agriculture (e.g. labouring on other people’s farms/gardens)	26%	129	36%	68	22%	56	31%	93	18%	36
Casual labour – non-agriculture (e.g. brick-making, quarrying, sand collecting, boda-boda, grass cutting)	38%	188	42%	79	33%	85	30%	90	49%	98
Sale of bush products (e.g. thatch, poles, firewood, charcoal, bricks)	30%	147	33%	61	26%	68	17%	50	48%	97
Petty trade (e.g. sale of mobile phone credit, household items)	29%	145	25%	47	29%	76	26%	78	33%	67
Sale of home-made products (e.g. alcohol brewing, mandazi, handicrafts, hair plaiting)	41%	202	28%	52	47%	121	30%	89	56%	113
Job with private business	10%	49	8%	15	12%	31	15%	44	2%	5
Job with UN or NGOs	7%	33	7%	14	6%	15	7%	22	5%	11
Paid housework or childcare	1%	5	1%	1	2%	4	2%	5	0%	0
Sale of personal property	10%	50	13%	25	8%	22	2%	6	22%	44
Ongoing business interests in home country	0%	1	1%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1
Remittances	7%	34	4%	8	6%	16	10%	30	2%	4
Other	6%	30	12%	22	5%	13	4%	11	9%	19

**Table 3: Sources and volumes of cash income during preceding three months**

	Frequency	% of sample	Average amount (UGX) (3 months)	Average amount (\$) (3 months)	Average amount (\$) (1 month)
Job with UN or NGOs	36	7.2%	580,556	157.33	52.44
Job with private business	46	9.2%	574,609	155.72	51.91
Paid housework or childcare	5	1.0%	371,000	100.54	33.51
Ongoing business interests in home country	1	0.2%	250,000	67.75	22.58
Sale of home-made products	162	32.4%	236,228	64.02	21.34
Other	13	2.6%	234,231	63.48	21.16
Petty trade	91	18.2%	218,714	59.27	19.76
Remittances	29	5.8%	216,586	58.69	19.56
Casual labour (non-agriculture)	129	25.8%	178,023	48.24	16.08
Distribution of cash from UN or NGOs	43	8.6%	134,605	36.48	12.16
Casual labour (agriculture)	93	18.6%	132,054	35.79	11.93
Sale of livestock	23	4.6%	96,348	26.11	8.70
Sale of cultivated food	53	10.6%	85,566	23.19	7.73
Sale of fishing products	5	1.0%	77,000	20.87	6.96
Borrowing/credit	11	2.2%	75,636	20.50	6.83
Sale of bush products	86	17.2%	66,116	17.92	5.97
Sale of personal property	27	5.4%	42,519	11.52	3.84
Sale of food aid or other relief items from UN or NGOs	375	75.0%	33,993	9.21	3.07

Within the population surveyed, there are notable variations in the ability of refugee households to generate income. A significant factor was the length of time a household had been established in the settlement. Average household income among survey respondents in Bidibidi was UGX 499,884 (\$135) compared with an average of UGX 179,368 (\$49) for survey respondents in the Omugo extension of Rhino Camp and Imvepi – most likely because residents had not yet established and harvested crops. Notably, fewer respondents reported consumption (36% of respondents in Bidibidi compared with 3% in Rhino Camp) and sale of cultivated food (30% of respondents in Bidibidi compared with 2% in Rhino Camp), and they were less likely to engage in agricultural labour (31% of respondents in Bidibidi compared with 18% in Rhino Camp). Conversely, residents in the Omugo extension of Rhino Camp and Imvepi, where there was demand for construction of new houses as new arrivals established their compounds, were more likely to

report engagement in non-agricultural casual labour (49% of respondents in Rhino Camp compared with 30% in Bidibidi) and the sale of bush products (48% in Rhino Camp compared with 17% in Bidibidi).

Economic opportunities also vary according to gender. Our survey found that female-headed households are more likely to earn income from selling homemade products, jobs with private business, paid housework and selling cultivated food compared to male-headed households (they are less likely, however, to earn money from casual labour and selling bush products). These findings were reflected in focus group discussions, where women described the gendered patterning of casual labour opportunities: men do brick-making, while women fetch the water for the brick-making; men collect grass and firewood for sale, and women collect firewood for household use; women do small-scale trade and service provision like hair plaiting, alcohol brewing or selling food close to home, whereas men

are more likely to move more widely, providing motorbike taxi services, wheelbarrowing of heavy goods, and buying and selling items.

Women in HPG's survey sample were also significantly educationally disadvantaged compared to men. Male household heads were more likely to have attained a higher level of education, with 34% of male household heads having achieved some secondary schooling, and 12% having completed secondary school. Female household heads were more likely to have had no formal schooling (34%) or to have achieved only some primary school education (47%). Educational levels correlate with household welfare: households with more educated heads had higher levels of expenditure per capita and had more assets. Notably, female-headed households had fewer assets than male-headed households.

Refugees had limited reliance on previously accumulated savings, assets and income-generating opportunities. Those from South Sudan often suffered a significant change in status as a result of the conflict and their displacement. In semi-structured interviews, refugees often described the total destruction of their property and businesses, or did not know the status of their homes and assets but assumed that they had been destroyed. One elderly refugee described a long and distinguished career in the public and private sector, followed by the total loss of substantial urban property, close family members and his long-anticipated pension due to the war. One former driver described having his vehicle and driving licence taken from him at the border. Refugees also described selling household assets and using savings brought with them from home to supplement their income.<sup>12</sup> Evidence from the survey indicates that refugees relied on savings and the sale of assets in the earlier stages of their displacement: refugees who arrived in Uganda earlier had significantly lower household expenditure per capita than more recent arrivals, which may indicate

reduced access to these accumulated resources to meet consumption needs over time. One formerly wealthy household head described how his family had initially relied on savings to rent accommodation in a nearby town, but after failing to find employment and exhausting their reserves had moved into the refugee settlements.

Refugees receive remittances, often through informal channels, but of those surveyed only 7% indicated that they had received remittances in the previous three months (see Table 2). Of those who provided information on the amounts received (6% of respondents), the average monthly amount reported in the preceding three months was \$19.56 (see Table 3).

Access to credit is constrained, with refugees relying in the first instance on family and friends (46% of respondents) or simply stating that there was no one they could go to (34%). In some cases, refugees have established village savings groups, but none of the respondents felt that they could go to formal credit providers, including micro-finance institutions or banks.<sup>13</sup>

In summary, among the refugees surveyed, international assistance and food aid played a major role in meeting basic needs, alongside a range of other strategies. The economic capabilities of refugees are limited by their experience of conflict and displacement, and by structural constraints to their ability to access employment, markets, services and credit. The ability of refugees to rely on previously accumulated savings, assets and income-generating opportunities appears to be limited, and few have access to remittances. Just 2% of those surveyed felt that they were able to meet their household needs and invest for the future, 46% felt that they were doing 'just OK', and able to meet their needs but with nothing to spare, while 34% were 'just about coping', and 17% 'struggling to get by' (see Table 4).

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12 In focus group discussions, several respondents mentioned selling household items they had brought with them from South Sudan as a significant source of income. The practice of purchasing items as a kind of saving that can later be liquidated was described by many respondents and confirmed as a common practice by research assistants.

13 Actors in the livelihoods sector frequently point to the lack of credit as a major constraint for refugee livelihoods. For example, the Danish Refugee Council's (2015) market assessment in Rhino Camp and Adjumani settlement notes that 'Traders in both settlements mentioned they are not able to serve an increase in demand because of inadequate access to finances. ... Access to credit is very poor in both camps as a few percentages have access to some form of credit' (Danish Refugee Council, 2015).

**Table 4: Which of the following statements best describes your household’s situation over the past 12 months, or since you arrived in Uganda if you have been here less than 12 months?**

	Whole sample		Male-headed		Female-headed		Bidibidi		Rhino	
	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH	%	#HH
‘Doing well: we are able to meet household needs and are investing for the future.’	2%	11	3%	7	1%	4	4%	11	0%	0
‘Doing just OK: we meet our household needs but with nothing to spare.’	46%	231	48%	103	45%	128	46%	138	47%	93
‘Just about coping, but sometimes sell assets or rely on help from others.’	34%	171	31%	67	37%	104	36%	108	32%	63
‘Struggling to get by: we rely heavily on support from others.’	17%	85	17%	37	17%	48	14%	42	22%	43



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# 4 What difference would it make if we knew more?

## 4.1 Demand for evidence

There are multiple claims that improved resource tracking will enable a range of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and resource mobilisation benefits (see Box 4).

In Uganda, there is widespread recognition that there are major gaps in evidence around how the financial costs of supporting the refugee response are being met. There are calls from multiple sources, including government, domestic civil society and international aid actors, to improve the tracking of resource inputs to the response to address a range of coordination, planning, prioritisation and resource mobilisation challenges.

Tracking funding for the refugee response within the national budget is extremely challenging, but there is some evidence of a growing demand for budget planning and expenditure tracking information. The national budgeting process has in principle committed to consider the additional costs associated with hosting refugees. This process requires a range of planning information including data on population figures and geographical distribution, costings for additional demand on existing services and infrastructure, new costs associated with refugee hosting (such as registration and reception), and economic development investment needs for refugee-hosting regions. The budgeting process also requires information on both on- and off-budget international contributions to the refugee response.

### Box 4: Summary of recent policy arguments for better tracking of financial flows

Better tracking of resource data is a recurrent theme across several policy discourses and frameworks. These include:

- The policy argument emerging from various post-2015 policy frameworks, commitments and paradigms may be summarised as follows: better-quality and more comprehensive evidence on the full range of financing flows would facilitate more efficient targeting of aid resources in the context of a more diverse mix of financial flows from public and private sources, and more rational division of labour based on comparative advantage.
- Arguments emerging from the 2015 High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and the 2016 Grand Bargain are that greater transparency in tracking resource flows can drive efficiency – including cost-efficiency – gains.
- The following arguments emerge from the wider discourse on improving funding terms for local and national humanitarian actors:
  - Greater transparency around resource flows through the humanitarian system will drive changes in financing behaviour, leading to greater efficiency and fairer terms for local and national actors.
  - Tracking funding to local and national actors will help to incentivise international actors to meet their commitments to provide more direct funding to local and national actors.
- Embedded in long-standing humanitarian policy and practice emerging from UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, which led to the creation of the UN's humanitarian coordination mandates, structures and supporting management tools: tracking funding contributions is a fundamental tool in enabling a coordinated needs-based financing response.
- Further arguments put forward by the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing related to resource mobilisations include:
  - Tracking and providing public recognition for financing contributions provides an incentive for increased giving.
  - Transparency builds confidence in the aid system, potentially encouraging donors to provide more funding.

Source: Willitts-King, Poole and Bryant (2018).

The refugee population has not yet been included in national planning statistics so the budget has not taken into account the increased population at district level, and fiscal transfers to districts, calculated based on population figures, have not been adjusted. An update to the 2016/17 UNHS, which did not include refugees, was undertaken in 2018 with the support of the World Bank, but these updated planning statistics will take time to filter into the budgeting process. Local government officials in West Nile State confirmed that their budget allocations had not increased. This lack of provision for refugee populations in public service delivery is corroborated by analysis from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with respect to primary education – new primary schools opened to support refugees do not currently receive government capitation or school facilitation grants, and calculations for capitation grants for existing primary schools do not take refugee pupils into account. Similarly, at secondary level, the government provides a grant to schools for each eligible pupil, but these grants are not currently being provided for refugee children (MoES, 2018).

Although in principle the government runs an open and transparent budgeting process and information is publicly available,<sup>14</sup> interpreting this information, and following the execution of the budget through ministries and departments and across national and district-level budgets, is challenging in practice, including for the government. The government recognises the limitations in its ability to budget for the cost of the refugee response, including keeping track of off-budget funding and monitoring expenditure.<sup>15</sup> The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning has recently commissioned a mapping of financing flows to Ministry of Health-supported health facilities in refugee hosting districts.

There is some limited evidence of demand for information on the refugee response from civil society. A study conducted by the Civil Society Advocacy Group (2018) and funded by the US government recommends introducing a ‘one-stop data centre for refugee expenditure’ on the basis that ‘fragmented’ and ‘insufficient’ data on financing is a barrier to identifying duplication or whether funds are being used effectively, whereas better data would

enable ‘prioritization, programming, reporting and accountability’. An issues paper submitted to the July 2018 government-convened National Dialogue on Financing by a group of international NGOs recommends that improved tracking of resources for the crisis response would contribute to better targeting of humanitarian funding, and disaggregating data further to differentiate local and national CSO recipients could support improved financing for local and national actors (Joint INGO paper, 2018).

## 4.2 Recent efforts to track financial inputs and what has been learned

Past experience of tracking resource flows in Uganda provides pause for thought. Often, these efforts have not delivered the insights anticipated, confirmed assumptions around the demand for information, or delivered expected behaviour change. Sustainability has also proved challenging.

The demand for and usefulness of aid data appears to have been over-estimated. Development financing policy actors have long argued for the benefits of improved data on resource flows. Notably, the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), launched in 2008, was intended to enable donors to meet their commitments to transparency (made in the Accra Agenda for Action, which acknowledges the need for better data at the national level to support country-owned development plans, as well as promoting greater accountability to the public (Poole, 2018). High-level commitments to strengthen transparency and agree a common standard for the electronic publication of aid data in the 2012 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation led many major donors and development organisations to adopt and publish their data to the new IATI standard. Alongside the IATI and wider open-data aid movements, there is a small industry in creating country-level databases – Aid Information Management Systems (AIMS) – to track international aid contributions against government development priorities and budgets. Uganda has adopted the Aid Management Platform (AMP) provided by Development Gateway.<sup>16</sup>

14 Uganda has a strong legal and policy framework for public expenditure transparency and accountability, and introduced a new Public Financial Management (PFM) Act in 2015. See: <http://budget.go.ug/>

15 UNDP (2017) notes for example that ‘As the number of refugees crosses 1 million, the Government of Uganda’s spending on refugee hosting remains unclear. ... information and statistics regarding actual government spending remain scattered and not well documented.’

16 For further discussion on the purpose and functions of AIMS, see: <https://sites.google.com/site/useofiatidataincountrysystems/the-guide/aims>

Consistent with the experience of many other countries with country-level AIMS,<sup>17</sup> reporting compliance to the Uganda AMP is very low. Donors have little incentive to report, and government officials spend a great deal of time chasing data from reluctant donor officials who may not in fact hold the required data at country level.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, because the data produced is historic rather than forward-looking and does not map readily onto government sectoral, ministerial, and geographical planning and budgeting categories, it is not very useful to government planners. Anecdotally, interview subjects reported that, rather than relying on the AMP, in practice the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning maintains a spreadsheet listing major forward-looking donor contributions.<sup>19</sup> Civil society actors interviewed for this study also indicated that public demand for information around aid investments for accountability purposes is very limited.

Assumptions that better data alongside high-level policy commitments would enable improved coordination and accountability do not appear to have been borne out in practice. Reducing proliferation (where aid donors spread their funding across many sectors, partners and projects) and fragmentation (where from the recipient country perspective, many small aid activities are initiated by many different donors) in aid spending and aligning aid with country systems are core components of the aid effectiveness agenda. However, recent evidence suggests that, despite high-level policy commitments, donors have not reduced proliferation and fragmentation of their aid spending. In Uganda, following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, aid fragmentation appears to have increased. Comparison of donor funding between 2006–2009 and 2010–2013 shows a significant increase in fragmentation for six of the nine major donors to Uganda (Nunnenkamp et al., 2015). Duplication also appears to have increased. Use of and alignment with national systems reduced after 2005, when the president announced his intention to

run for a third presidential term and as recognition of human rights abuses in the country increased, whereafter there was a sharp contraction in general budget support (ibid.). Interviews with actors with long experience of donor engagement in Uganda also described a deterioration in operational coordination among donors. Domestic and international political factors appear to have had a greater effect on how aid allocations are determined compared to policy commitments and availability of evidence.

Data on international financial contributions to the response is spread across an array of tracking systems supporting multiple overlapping planning frameworks, but there is a new commitment to coherent planning and monitoring. Tracking international contributions against collectively agreed planning frameworks is typically carried out to enable targeting of resources against agreed priorities, resource mobilisation, and often as a proxy for monitoring progress in implementation. Uganda currently has multiple planning and prioritisation frameworks in operation (see Box 5). Funding contributions against the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) are regularly tracked and monitored through OCHA FTS as well as by UNHCR. However, contributions to the longer-term priorities in the ReHoPE planning framework are not tracked (see below for further details).

Recent attempts to track aid contributions to the refugee response highlight the challenges in matching data collection tools with demand. In 2017, the World Bank funded a ‘stocktake’ of progress against the ReHoPE policy framework. Among the stated objectives were: mapping funding flows, programmes and projects; identifying gaps; and assessing coordination, planning and alignment of efforts with government priorities and plans and the ReHoPE guiding principles (Nowahabwe et al., 2017). To do this, the World Bank commissioned a team of consultants to design a one-off mapping and reporting exercise. The consultants developed

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17 A review of 75 AIMS in 2017 found that only 12 of these had been updated in the preceding six months; 27 were accessible but had not been updated in the last six months; and 32 were classified under the category of ‘implemented once but shut down’. The study also notes that ‘on the demand side, there is a lack of evidence of usage by the originally targeted users, particularly citizens in recipient countries’ (Park, 2017).

18 Based on a country pilot to automate the import of IATI data into the Rwanda AIMS, it was found that less than 10% of activities reported were successfully imported and more than half needed to be manually corrected. The Government of Rwanda ‘is not yet convinced of the value of the available data and is currently reluctant to invest further financially and staff-wise into more sophisticated processing or import modalities’ ([https://iatistandard.org/documents/491/Spotlight\\_on\\_IATI\\_Data\\_Use\\_-\\_Rwanda.pdf](https://iatistandard.org/documents/491/Spotlight_on_IATI_Data_Use_-_Rwanda.pdf)).

19 Interestingly, this has also been reported to be the case in Rwanda where ‘Forward-looking information is usually missing, and some difficulties are faced when AIMS data is late, or when its accuracy and reliability must be checked. However, an Excel-based template was developed to record forward-spending plans of DPs to assist with the preparation of the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework’ ([https://iatistandard.org/documents/491/Spotlight\\_on\\_IATI\\_Data\\_Use\\_-\\_Rwanda.pdf](https://iatistandard.org/documents/491/Spotlight_on_IATI_Data_Use_-_Rwanda.pdf)).

## Box 5: Uganda's overlapping planning and prioritisation frameworks and processes

UNHCR coordinates the humanitarian component of the refugee response through the RRP for refugees from South Sudan, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The RRP is a planning, prioritisation, coordination and resource mobilisation tool. The RRP includes the total budgeted cost of implementation of projects within the plan, and UNHCR publishes periodic progress updates in PDF reports against funding targets, but (unlike FTS) near real-time transaction-level data is not publicly available.

Several transitional and developmental frameworks are also in operation. Uganda has committed to integrate the longer-term refugee response within its wider socio-economic plans and priorities. The socio-economic priorities for refugee-hosting areas are set out in the Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA) policy framework launched in 2015. The STA has been incorporated into the latest revision of the

government's five-year National Development Plan II (NDP II 2016–2020), bringing recognition to the specific needs of refugee-hosting regions into the national development plan. The NDP II is budgeted for annually, but the refugee-specific elements are not currently readily distinguishable.

The UN and the World Bank support the STA priorities through their own planning framework, ReHoPE, which in turn has been incorporated into the UN's wider planning framework, the UN Development Assistance Framework for Uganda (UNDAF 2016–2020). The STA and ReHoPE are not costed. Moreover, some elements of ReHoPE are addressed under the humanitarian RRP.\* The UNDAF is costed but not tracked publicly in real time.

*\* The 2018 humanitarian RRP notes for example that: 'The implementation of ReHoPE will be supported through this response plan, which includes some of its components.'*

an online reporting system for international actors to upload their project and funding data. However, compliance with the reporting exercise was lower than expected, with responding organisations finding the platform too inflexible to accommodate their information. Therefore, only a partial retrospective mapping was achieved. The ReHoPE stocktake report acknowledges this limitation, noting that 'Gaps in the quantity and quality of data mean that the analysis provides a general overview of indicative priorities' (Nowahabwe et al., 2017). One of the key recommendations of the stocktake exercise was to gather data on an ongoing basis 'integrated into existing government coordination and planning processes at district and national levels' (ibid.).

The CRRF, launched in March 2017, will in principle encompass all existing planning frameworks and establish a coordination structure that draws together the various policy, prioritisation, and monitoring elements. However, reconciling these multiple priorities and actors is complex and time-consuming; it is not simply a technical exercise and requires exhaustive consultation and negotiation across national and international stakeholders, each of which have their own interests and incentives. The CRRF Secretariat, now the primary site of coordination for the response, has committed to develop a funding tracking platform in 2018 and is currently exploring

the scope and options to deliver this commitment. However, there is currently no agreed approach to tracking resource contributions against priorities identified in the CRRF.

### 4.3 What resource tracking does not tell us

Tracking inputs alone is not enough to meet the expectations attached to resource tracking. It is almost meaningless to planners, decision-makers, or indeed the public, without additional information to make sense of whether those inputs are adequate, appropriate, live up to what was promised, or are going to the right places. Moreover, tracking inputs is predominantly a technical exercise, while the allocation and use of resources is highly political. Although evidence is necessary, it is not sufficient to enable 'good' decision-making or to override political and economic incentives in the decision-making process.

Resource inputs only make sense with reference to a range of other information, data and evidence. Planning, prioritisation and budgeting require basic data on the scale and nature of the problem being addressed. However, in many crisis-affected settings, obtaining basic planning information is challenging. Uganda's official statistics agency, the Uganda Bureau

of Statistics (UBOS), produces regular statistical data and analysis, which is generally considered to be of good quality.<sup>20</sup> However, there are major gaps in statistics relating to the newly arrived refugee population. International actors have made substantial investments to help the government fill in these critical statistical blanks. In 2018, the World Bank supported the government in re-running the 2016/17 UNHS to include refugees. In addition, whereas the refugee registration data produced by the Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR could be used in lieu of official national household survey data, however, international actors no longer have confidence in this data and OPM and UNHCR undertook a comprehensive and costly re-registration of the refugee population, using biometric technology to reduce opportunities for fraud in 2018.<sup>21</sup>

Inputs need to be considered in relation to what they intend to achieve, typically an agreed and costed set of outputs or outcomes. This is necessary to provide meaningful analysis of coverage and gaps, timeliness relative to needs and efficiency and, crucially, to know whether funds are actually reaching and being spent on intended recipients. Humanitarian actors typically have the latitude to develop their own planning processes, targets and priorities. But this is far harder when working alongside government and development actors, which are likely to have a far wider scope of competing priorities, commitments and demands for resources and which may be constrained by existing planning and prioritisation processes. In the case of Uganda, district-level planning and budgeting processes are beginning to incorporate refugee-related priorities, but this comes several years after the arrival of the first significant numbers of South Sudanese refugees. At the national level, ministries and development partners are grappling with how to incorporate this new population into established development priorities and plans.

Tracking funding within humanitarian response plans is often used as an informal proxy indicator for the extent to which agreed objectives and outcomes are being met. Yet this information does not prove whether outcomes have been *effectively* met. Similarly, tracking government budgetary allocations and international commitments and disbursements against agreed development priorities is not synonymous with the delivery of results – there may be significant gaps between financial allocations and the execution of projects and disbursement of funds in practice.<sup>22, 23</sup>

The Ministry of Education and Sports, with the support of UNICEF, has developed a flexible approach to defining, costing and monitoring desired outputs and outcomes, which can be scaled up and down according to fluctuations in the target population and changes in other planning assumptions (see Box 6). This new approach provides a potentially transferable model for other sectors where defining output metrics is relatively straightforward. Arriving at a crisis-wide, comprehensive set of agreed outcomes or outputs, with a supporting, costed, planning and prioritisation framework against which resources can be tracked, is a difficult undertaking; yet without it, identifying and tracking relevant financing inputs is a fruitless exercise.

Data and evidence are not the only information considered in decision-making. Data collection may be largely a technical exercise, but resource prioritisation, coordination and allocation are deeply political and rely on negotiation, relationships and trust. These ‘human’ elements are typically far more important determinants of decisions than their technical counterparts. The Ministry of Finance for example, prefers maintaining a spreadsheet and regular human interaction with key partners to using a cumbersome database tracking historic financing flows. Donors and government actors each have political, economic, and policy priorities that influence their investments at least as much as objective evidence. In Uganda after 2005,

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20 Owori (2017), for example, notes that: ‘Uganda also produces plenty of good data through its official statistics agency, UBOS – the principal data collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating agency responsible for coordinating and supervising the National Statistical System. UBOS is regarded as one of the best national statistics offices in Africa; it publishes a range of nationally aggregated statistics relatively regularly’.

21 Notably, focus group discussions in November 2017 with refugees indicated that obtaining multiple registrations, known among the refugees as ‘kubwariga’, was considered a common livelihood strategy prior to the introduction of biometric registration. The false registration of Ugandans as refugees is also thought to be a widespread practice, which it is hoped will be addressed by re-registration.

22 The World Bank Group (2015) notes for example that: ‘Strategies, guidelines and programs are generally sound, but weaknesses in applying sanctions and public service effectiveness constrain implementation and service delivery. Public transparency is improving, e.g. through the budget transparency initiative, but this has not yet translated into accountability and improved service delivery. Public sector projects are plagued by implementation delays, and the capital budget is generally under-executed.’

23 Owori (2017) also notes that: ‘in 2016/17 the government faced significant changes in disbursing externally financed development expenditure, impacting on project implementation, with overall spending only marginally increasing in nominal terms from 2015/16.’

## Box 6: Linking financing requirements to results in the education sector in Uganda

The provision of quality education in refugee-hosting districts is extremely challenging. The education system, which already faced significant resourcing, quality, over-crowding and retention challenges, now faces huge additional levels of demand. On average, across refugee settlements at primary level, the pupil to teacher ratio is 85:1, rising in some settlements to as high as 133:1. Based on current population and refugee registration figures, there is an estimated shortfall of 3,000 classrooms and 1,750 teachers at primary level just to achieve the government standard of 53 pupils per teacher. Education has attracted low levels of funding from international donors supporting the refugee response.

National and international actors within the education sector recognise the need for a longer-term and comprehensive strategy, and plan to address education needs in refugee-hosting areas. In 2017, Uganda was selected as a priority country for the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) global fund for education in emergencies, and discussions around the shape that this support would take provided the impetus that actors in Uganda needed to develop a plan.

ECW offered funding to support the planning process, but levels of commitment and practical support were sufficient to draw primarily on in-house agency and ministry resources. A new Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (ERP) was developed by MoES, with practical technical support from a range of international actors, particularly UNHCR and UNICEF in late 2017 and early 2018. Donors and implementing partners (including members of the Education Development Partner Working Group and Education in Emergencies Working Group), as well as ministry staff at the national and district level, were heavily involved in development, prioritisation and review of the plan.

The plan includes a set of overarching objectives that equate roughly to improving access, quality and strengthening systems:

1. More equitable access to inclusive, relevant learning opportunities.
2. Improved delivery of quality education services and training.
3. Strengthened systems for effective delivery.

Under each objective, based on extensive consultations, are a list of activities and, linked to these, a theory of change.

The plan is explicit in its metrics: it targets an estimated 625,000 learners per year, for three and a half years (from January 2018 to June 2021) across 34 sub-counties of the 12 refugee-hosting districts. Within existing education policies, targets and benchmarks guide the development of the key inputs required to provide education to this target population. Within these planning targets, a detailed prioritisation (where activities are assigned priority (a), (b), or (c)) has been developed, which takes into account capacity and resourcing constraints. The plan also establishes a framework for leadership (MoES) and coordination (a steering group and Secretariat).

The plan also provides a costing of prioritised activities based on a detailed costing methodology, which recognises the different operating models and costs of a range of national and international actors. To deliver the agreed activities, the costing exercise calculates that the ERP requires \$395 million over the three and a half year implementation period.

The transparent and consultative approach to developing objectives, activities, priorities, metrics and costings, has resulted in broad support for the plan. The MoES and partners hope that the strategy will build support for sustained financing, including increased alignment of donor support with priorities identified in the plan and a multi-donor fund that can direct funds to agreed priorities.

The plan will function on a three-year rolling basis, with achievements, lessons and challenges fed back into annual reviews and planning adjustments. The planning metrics and costing model, for example, will be able to quickly accommodate revised population figures resulting from the ongoing re-registration.

In summary, the ERP links each step, from output, to activity, to cost input in a logical and transparent way, and includes provision for regular monitoring and reporting on results. It is not yet clear how funding support to the plan will be identified and tracked, or how exactly the costing approach will be used for resource mobilisation purposes. However, these have been identified as early tasks of the Secretariat. In contrast to some other more abstract tracking exercises, within the context of the ERP and its governance, coordination and monitoring framework, tracking funding alongside monitoring of activities and results should provide key feedback for subsequent prioritisation and resource mobilisation efforts.

*Source: MoES (2018); research interviews.*

development donors chose to increase fragmentation and duplication of their aid spending, and not to use government systems as a tactical response to concerns around government corruption and politics.

In summary, tracking resource inputs alone is insufficient to provide meaningful information for planning, prioritisation, targeting and accountability purposes. Arriving at an analytical framework against which to make sense of input tracking requires basic planning information, the most fundamental usually being population statistics. It also requires agreement on what outputs are intended and how much money is needed to achieve them. This is far more challenging ‘across the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus’ than within the humanitarian community, where planners and decisions-makers can be more discretionary when setting targets and using their own systems to monitor against them. There are promising new approaches to identifying and costing outputs, such as the output-based costing developed by the education sector in Uganda. But it may be more challenging to apply this approach to sectors where policies and priorities are less clearly defined, and outputs less clearly identified and measured. Funding data is typically a necessary but not sufficient condition for coordination and decision-making. Often, evidence needs to be ‘good enough’ to support decision-making; it must respond to the information needs of decision-makers and support accountability in resource allocation processes, but it does not necessarily need to quantify and track everything.

#### **4.4 What other uses could there be for measuring financial costs and impacts?**

In addition to tracking resource inputs for planning, budgeting, coordination, resource mobilisation and accountability purposes, there are other potential uses for evidence on resources beyond visible international contributions. The following discussion draws on findings from the HPG household survey and recent research in Uganda that attempted to generate evidence on the economic lives and

economic impacts of hosting refugees for a range of programme, policy design and advocacy purposes. In most cases, the practical application of this evidence has not been fully demonstrated and therefore remains somewhat theoretical.

Better evidence on how refugees make ends meet can help inform programme targeting and design, and serve as a reality check on assumptions. Evidence on household economic conditions and dynamics can be used to improve targeting, coordination and resource allocation, particularly when extrapolated above the level of particular projects. The livelihoods sector in the Uganda refugee response, for example, had previously built up a picture of ‘needs’ based on multiple agency-commissioned needs assessments, which are typically methodologically incompatible and designed to elicit responses that confirm a particular pre-conceived set of programming responses.<sup>24</sup> The ad hoc and piecemeal information generated by these many assessments cannot easily be used to build a coherent picture that would enable objective needs-based targeting and prioritisation. Recognising these limitations, and in support of the 2015 Grand Bargain commitment to ‘Improve joint and impartial needs assessments’, in 2018 UNHCR and the EU commissioned an independent comprehensive needs assessment across multiple sectors and all refugee-hosting areas through a large-scale random, representative household survey. The expectation was that obtaining objective, comparable evidence would inform better coordination and targeting of limited resources (REACH, 2018). The findings of the Joint Monitoring Survey and Needs Assessment in 2018 fed into the 2019–20 RRP. Drawing on evidence prioritising needs according to specific population groups, geographical areas and sectors, it is expected to inform ‘other programmatic, strategic, and operational decision-making for the humanitarian response coordinators and partner organisations’ (ibid.).

Frequently, humanitarian analytical tools and approaches are of limited scope in understanding the complexities of the financial and economic lives of refugees and the wider political and economic context, since they are often designed with specific

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24 During HPG’s initial scoping visit in December 2017, for example, actors in the livelihoods sector reported conducting assessments to inform cash-based responses that used divergent approaches to identify geographical areas to target and very different methodologies to assess need and determine cash amounts. One NGO described conducting a nutrition assessment and calculating the cost of meeting the household calorie deficit to determine cash amounts. There was at that time no agreement on approach or cash amounts and, while agencies shared information on their programmes and in some cases their assessment reports in coordination forums, it was not possible to build a comparable, objective and comprehensive picture of household economic conditions and needs.

programming responses in mind.<sup>25</sup> They are therefore likely to miss higher-level challenges and opportunities. Analysis of evidence on how refugees make ends meet also reveals significant flaws in policy-makers' expectations and programmatic responses to achieve economic self-reliance.

The allocation of land for settlement and cultivation and the distribution of cultivation tools and seeds are central to the government's self-reliance policy – yet expectations that refugees can achieve agricultural subsistence do not match reality. Respondents to HPG's household survey listed cultivation activities infrequently – only 23% of respondents mentioned the consumption and 19% the sale of cultivated food produce as livelihood activities they had engaged in during the preceding three months. Despite many refugees surveyed indicating that they had experience in agriculture and animal husbandry prior to displacement (85% of respondents indicated that consumption of their own cultivated food was among their three most important productive activities before moving to Uganda, 54% the sale of cultivated food, and 22% livestock activities), cultivation is clearly not a major livelihood strategy for most refugees in the settlements. This is also apparent from observations, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The plots of land allocated are far too small to allow significant cultivation, and in some cases refugees' houses occupied their entire 30m by 30m plot. In the Omugo and Imvepi extension of Rhino Camp, where newly arrived refugees were clearing their plots of scrub vegetation, plots were too small to support subsistence cultivation and were extremely rocky and dry. At best, refugees had planted very small areas around the margins of their plots. Policy-makers acknowledge that the plots are inadequate for self-sufficiency – the 2017

ReHoPE policy framework, for example, notes that ideally each refugee family would require 1 hectare of land<sup>26</sup> plus 'agricultural finance, agricultural extension services, post-harvest management, value-chain processing, and market linkages by refugees and host communities alike' (Government of Uganda et al., 2017). While plot sizes vary according to time of arrival and location,<sup>27</sup> on average refugees have only 0.23 hectares of land (UNDP, 2018). Heavy reliance on cultivation as a source of sustainable livelihoods for refugees is therefore not a realistic long-term strategy without alternative approaches to negotiating access to land or investing in alternative modes of production. Yet livelihoods investments have focused heavily on subsistence agriculture rather than alternative sources of income (UNHCR, 2017).<sup>28</sup>

As we have seen, evidence from HPG's survey and interviews confirms the unintended inefficiencies of providing in-kind aid. Three-quarters (75%) of households (375 households) listed the sale of food aid or other relief items as among their three most important sources of cash income (though it is notable that the value of this income source is low compared with other sources). Anecdotally, refugees, aid agency staff and local government officials interviewed described not just small-scale, local trading of food for cash within refugee settlements and adjacent areas, but a substantial business operation whereby relief commodities are purchased at below-market rates, consolidated and transported to markets elsewhere in Uganda. This represents not only an inefficient use of resources, but it has also inadvertently created a shadow-aid economy, which could adversely affect local markets,<sup>29</sup> and has the potential to cause significant reputational damage to the aid response, and consequently impact negatively on future resource mobilisation for the response.<sup>30</sup>

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- 25 Betts et al. (2017) argue, for instance, that livelihoods interventions developed by UNHCR and other actors 'frequently identified and supported activities that have been abstracted from a deeper understanding of underlying demand and supply conditions. For example, around the world, UNHCR has too often ended up supporting arbitrarily selected income-generating activities, from beekeeping to tailoring, that may not be based on a data-driven understanding of the economies into which they are super-imposed'.
- 26 This assessment is based on a 2011 World Bank report which concluded that that 'a farm size of at least 1.0 ha is needed for a smallholder to move from subsistence to resilient and growth-oriented production' (Government of Uganda et al., 2017).
- 27 OPM allocates land irrespective of household size. The size of plots has reduced as pressure on land has increased. Before 2016, refugee households were allocated plots for settlement of between 20 x 30 m and 30 x 30 m plus plots for cultivation of between 30 x 50 m and 50 x 50 m. More recently many households have been allocated a single plot of land of 30 x 30m (based on UNDP, 2018).
- 28 In a UNHCR presentation on livelihoods in Bidibidi from October 2017, UNHCR recommended: 'To have sustainable livelihoods within the settlement more attention should be given to IGA activities and vocational skills training in order to enhance resilience' (UNHCR, 2017).
- 29 A 2015 Danish Refugee Council market assessment found that local markets around Rhino Camp and Adjumani Settlement 'became distorted due to high availability of food aid which lowered prices and reduced demand'.
- 30 See for example Birrell (2018).

Understanding the wider economic and fiscal implications of hosting refugees can help to improve longer-term development, investment and public policy. A field of study considering the economic impact of refugees on host countries has emerged during the last decade, and has often sought to challenge the view that hosting refugees results only in net social and economic costs to the host country. More recently, the ‘refugee economies’<sup>31</sup> approach is beginning to move from academia into public and development policy, and has the potential to inform the design and targeting of livelihoods programming, longer-term economic development investments and national-level policies (see Box 7).

Uganda has been the focus of refugee economies and economic impact studies from both the Oxford Refugee Studies Centre and operational actors. For example, research by Taylor et al. (2016) found that current assistance policy for refugees creates significant economic benefits for host communities within a 15km radius of refugee settlements in the form of increased land productivity and consumption of goods and services within local economies. The study also found that positive economic spill-over effects in the local economy were significantly greater where refugees received cash as opposed to food aid. For instance, net of WFP food aid costs, the study calculated that an additional refugee household receiving cash aid would generate \$671 in the local economy in and around Rwamwanja settlement, and \$563 in and around Adjumani, compared with a refugee household in receipt of food aid, which would generate \$431 at Rwamwanja and \$318 at Adjumani

(ibid.). This evidence not only builds the case for an emphasis on cash rather than in-kind programming; considering the broader economic impact (i.e. considering benefits as well as costs) of refugee hosting helps to build a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between refugees and the wider economy, providing insights for longer-term economic policy and investment.

Evidence on the broader direct and indirect costs of refugee hosting can inform policy design and advocacy. There are a range of costs associated with hosting refugees that may not be immediately apparent when assessing for and designing immediate response, but which nevertheless require financial and policy responses. For example, HPG’s survey highlights a reliance on the sale of bush products and forms of casual labour that are environmentally damaging – including brick-making, charcoal-making, sand collection and quarrying, and sale of firewood – to generate cash income. Continued reliance on environmentally damaging sources of income is unsustainable and likely to lead to escalating tensions and conflict with the host community. Indeed, in focus group discussions and interviews refugees described instances of harassment from the host community when travelling out of the settlement areas to collect natural resources. UNDP’s 2018 costing study assigned a cost to the environmental impact of refugee hosting, with ecosystem loss calculated at \$91 million. While this figure does not provide information which could inform programme or investment responses directly, it is useful for advocacy purposes, in drawing attention to the issue of environmental ‘costs’.

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31 Betts et al. (2017) define the refugee economies approach as ‘the resource allocation systems relating to the lives of refugees’, including the factors that influence production, consumption, finance and exchange activities of refugees, and scrutiny of the what determines different outcomes for refugees.

## Box 7: Insights into the economic and financial lives of refugees from the ‘refugee economies’ field

While the impacts of labour migration have been well investigated, the impacts of forced migration are a relatively new field of study, particularly with respect to low- and middle-income countries, which host by far the largest number of the world’s refugees.

Policy-makers in the international development and humanitarian fields have commissioned and invested in a series of studies in recent years that explore the economic and fiscal impacts of hosting refugees, particularly for Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, which host the largest numbers of Syrian refugees. Some of these studies have proved influential in shaping global policy responses, particularly with respect to international burden-sharing of the direct fiscal costs to host country governments, while others have influenced specific policy and investment strategies, notably with respect to labour markets. One example is the Jordan Compact between the Jordanian government and the European Union (EU), which was designed to provide economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and poor Jordanians through investment in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and targeted liberalisation of EU trade policy. To achieve its aspirations to develop manufacturing capabilities, Jordan needs investment from major companies and a ready supply of skilled labour. The arrival of Syrian refugees – many of whom are skilled and educated – and the willingness of international donors to encourage private sector investment has been mooted as a potential means of furthering Jordan’s development goals, while simultaneously providing sustainable employment for Syrian refugees and local Jordanians in SEZs, where companies enjoy tax relief and other financial incentives (Betts and Collier, 2015).

Overall, the existing literature on the economic impact of refugees indicates that the story is

rarely straightforward. There are often both economic winners and losers at the micro-economic level, impacts change over time, and the extent to which refugees contribute positively or negatively to the economy of host countries depends on a range of factors, including the socio-economic characteristics of the refugees themselves, the structural and macro-economic conditions of the host country, and the policy environment – notably whether refugees are free to move and work (OECD, 2017). Attributing the economic impacts of refugees is also methodologically challenging: attribution of causes is difficult, there is often no counterfactual to enable comparison, and the lack of comparative or longitudinal data means that it is currently difficult to draw general conclusions (Omata and Weaver, 2015; Betts et al., 2017).

A new field of study is emerging, which seeks to build a holistic understanding of the economic lives of refugees (Omata and Weaver, 2015). This level of enquiry may be particularly useful for informing programming and policy at the ‘humanitarian–development nexus’. Betts et al. (2017) argue, for example, that focussing on the market-based economic activities of refugees could play an important role in the troubled transition between humanitarian and development programming, helping to ‘create more sustainable opportunities for refugee self-reliance’. The refugee economies field emphasises the role of markets, as well as states, in developing self-reliance – analysis has the potential to inform programme interventions more closely calibrated to the needs and capacities of refugees and opportunities of the political and economic context.

*Sources: OECD (2017); Betts and Collier (2015); Omata and Weaver (2015).*

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# 5 Conclusion

The research reported on here explores the extent and ways in which developing a more fine-grained understanding of how people in crisis cope financially, and having a more comprehensive resource picture, could enable better planning, resource allocation, and intervention design.

International and national actors supporting the refugee response in Uganda face a range of coordination, planning and accountability challenges as they shift gears from humanitarian response to a more comprehensive and forward-looking refugee response integrated with national developmental priorities. There is demand for collecting financing data to help identify and monitor investments across a diverse constituency of actors. However, the extent to which that data can help in navigating these challenges is far from clear, and there are risks associated with the rush to collect such data without sufficient attention to the purpose and sustainability of the exercise. Based on experiences in Uganda and elsewhere, there is limited evidence to indicate that funding data will be forthcoming, that it will be sufficiently useful for planners and decision-makers, that funding data is in fact what determines decisions, or that there is public demand for financing data to hold response actors to account.

Funding data is a necessary but not sufficient condition for coordination and decision-making purposes. It is also often not a good proxy for results, on its own

means little, and many ‘contributions’ make little sense when expressed in monetary terms. What is ultimately important is not counting inputs, but monitoring whether the intended outputs or outcomes have been achieved. As such, inputs need to be considered in relation to what they intend to achieve – typically, an agreed and costed set of outputs or outcomes. Data collection and tracking cannot substitute for foundational evidence, prioritisation, and agreements on responsibility and divisions of labour, which are both technically and politically far more challenging to achieve. In many cases, solutions to coordination challenges are more likely to be human-centred than technical, and based on communication, trust, commitment to openness and coordination, and common sense, sustainable tools and approaches.

As programming and policy shift towards a longer-term outlook in the context of extensive pre-existing socio-economic challenges in Uganda, there may also be significant benefits in developing analytical approaches that place the economic agency and challenges of crisis-affected people at the centre. This contrasts with the programme-centric approaches often favoured by humanitarian actors. While new approaches and methods to studying these dimensions are emerging, they have yet to fully transition from academic and theoretical studies into programming practice, and their findings have not received significant uptake or influence in programme design and policy development.



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# Annex 1. Research framework

Hypothesis	Themes to explore	Sources of evidence	Policy implications
<i>Overarching policy question:</i> How might better knowledge about the assistance that reaches communities in crisis change/affect the international humanitarian response?			
We do not have full visibility of the different resources on which communities call in a crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What different resource inputs exist?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field case studies</li> <li>• Thematic studies</li> <li>• Global interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More holistic understanding of how resources are used by communities and by system-level actors</li> <li>• Better understanding of the role of data and evidence in resource allocation decisions and how this could be strengthened</li> </ul>
<i>Research question 1:</i> How do people affected by crises make ends meet at the household level?			
Affected communities use a range of resources – international and other – to meet different needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What resources (including assets and inputs) do people have access to and through what networks?</li> <li>• What influences access to resources?</li> <li>• How do the different resources compare in terms of quality, timeliness and appropriateness?</li> <li>• What do different resources enable households to achieve (e.g. meet basic consumption needs; repay loans; assist others; invest in household economic viability/sustainability/resilience)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published data</li> <li>• Interviews with affected and host communities</li> <li>• Household surveys</li> <li>• Interviews with local agencies, private sector, money transfer operators, government, aid actors at field level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better understanding of the relative contribution and importance of different resources and insights into the factors which enable or constrain affected communities to access and benefit from resources</li> </ul>
<i>Research question 2:</i> What resources contribute to crisis response at the system level?			
A range of resource inputs contribute to crisis response at the system level, which currently fall largely outside of humanitarian tracking and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What resources contribute to the wider crisis response?</li> <li>• How much are they and what is their relative importance?</li> <li>• How are these contributions measured and monitored?</li> <li>• What influences, enables and constrains these resource contributions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of publicly available data on resource flows including national budgets, aid and remittance flows and data on private giving</li> <li>• Interviews with local agencies, private sector, money transfer operators, government</li> <li>• Aid agency interviews at field and national level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better understanding of what resources enable system-level response and the factors which enable or constrain contributions</li> </ul>

Hypothesis	Themes to explore	Sources of evidence	Policy implications
<i>Research question 3: How do decision-makers incorporate resource data in making allocation decisions and why?</i>			
Aid actors do not factor in the full range of resources available in decision-making; and data and evidence play a limited role overall in resource allocation decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do decision-makers currently incorporate resource data into allocation decisions?</li> <li>• Is the right kind of evidence available and at the right times?</li> <li>• How might additional knowledge affect decision-making?</li> <li>• What systems would need to be in place for better visibility of all resources?</li> <li>• What other factors influence decision-making and why?</li> <li>• What would need to change about how responders and funders make decisions to incorporate a wider picture of resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of agency and publicly available data and evidence informing decision-making, including needs and vulnerability analysis, funding evidence and gap analysis; interviews on decision-making processes and influences at field, national and global levels</li> <li>• Literature review on influences on decision- and policy-making</li> <li>• Interviews with data experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better systems/ approaches for tracking non-traditional resources</li> <li>• Implications for more direct/local aid</li> <li>• Different approaches to understanding household economy/ or better use of this evidence</li> <li>• Different approaches to coordination, information sharing and decision-making</li> </ul>

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# Annex 2. Household survey methodology and approach

HPG worked with local partner AFARD to develop and carry out a household survey in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe district, and the Omugo and Imvepi extension of the Rhino Camp settlement in Arua district. The survey was not designed as a representative survey. This decision was taken in part because population figures for the target population were at the time of survey development contested and the government and UNHCR began conducting a biometric re-registration of refugees in April 2018 in response to a high-profile scandal concerning corruption in the registration process. The re-registration exercise was not completed until November 2018. Bidibidi is the largest refugee settlement in Uganda and by October 2018 its population was verified as 223,088 refugees, while Rhino Camp hosted 95,529 refugees and Imvepi 55,820 refugees (UNHCR, 2018).

The survey is designed to provide illustrative insights into the economic lives of refugees, including their ability to generate cash incomes. In addition, basic demographic information was collected and food security and asset indices were calculated to enable segmentation of the sample according to relative coping capacity and wealth.

The survey was developed jointly by AFARD and HPG, informed by a series of focus group discussions with refugees, as well as targeted semi-structured interviews with government and international agency representatives in December 2017. The survey questions on household expenditure were aligned with groupings and terminology used in the Uganda National Household Survey. Survey questions were revised following field testing in May 2018. In addition to focus group discussions carried out in December 2017, semi-structured interviews took place across both survey sites to probe qualitative questions and to gather qualitative life-history information, perceptions and opinions.

The survey segmented the target population into two groups according to the duration of their stay in Uganda. Refugees are allocated plots according to their time of arrival, and therefore the site selection was targeted to include refugees who had been in Uganda for more than one year – those in Bidibidi – and those who were more recent arrivals – those in the Omugo and Imvepi extensions of Rhino Camp.

Five zones in the Bidibidi settlement and three ‘tanks’ in Omugo and Imvepi were randomly chosen from the full list of zones and tanks provided by Refugee Welfare Committees. Using a lottery system – selecting zone and tank numbers randomly – the zones and households were randomly sampled. In Bidibidi settlement, Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 were sampled while in Omugo and Imvepi Tanks 1, 2 and 3 were sampled. Within each zone, enumerators were asked to begin at the centre of the zone. The enumerators were instructed to interview the fifth household according to the direction provided by spinning a pen at the centre of each chosen zone.

AFARD selected and trained five local refugee enumerators and one research assistant who facilitated the 13 qualitative interviews carried out by HPG. The AFARD survey team completed the survey within 10 working days in May 2018. After reviewing and discarding 10 incomplete surveys the total sample size was 500 completed surveys.



# Annex 3. Demographic profile of the population surveyed

100% of the sample indicated that they had moved to Uganda as a result of conflict. 30% indicated that other reasons included access to services like health and education, while 15% indicated that access to economic opportunities was also a motivation.

Across the full sample set, people had arrived across varied time periods, with 27% having been present more than two years; 32%, more than 12 months but less than two years; 21% more than six months but less than 12 months; and 20% less than six months.

How long ago did you first arrive in Uganda?	Frequency	%
Less than six months	102	20.4
More than or equal to six months but less than 12 months	105	21
More than or equal to 12 months but less than two years ago	158	31.6
More than or equal to two years ago	135	27
Total	500	100

For most of the respondents surveyed (72%), this was their first experience of being a refugee. However, for 26% this was the second time they had been a refugee. The majority of respondents had been displaced in South Sudan (73%) before becoming a refugee.

	Frequency	%
This is the first time	362	72
This is the second time	130	26
This is the third time	7	1

The majority of the population surveyed (77%) were Bari speakers, with small numbers of other language groups reported.

Language groups	Frequency	%	Language groups	Frequency	%
Bari	383	77	Lotuko	2	0
Kakwa	38	8	Abukaya	2	0
Kuliko	27	5	Baka	2	0
Juba Arabic	14	3	Dinka	1	0
Avukaya	7	1	Nuer	1	0
Kuku	6	1	Zande	1	0
Shilluk	3	1	Aviokaya	1	0
Acholi	3	1	Avocaya	1	0
Madi	3	1	Madi	1	0
Mundu	3	1	Muru	1	0

The average household size was 6.5 people across the full sample, with a somewhat higher average household size reported in Bidibidi (7.3 people) than in Rhino Camp (5.2).

	No. of observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum value	Maximum value
Full sample	500	6.47	3.92	1	24
Bidibidi	299	7.31	4.09	1	24
Rhino	201	5.22	3.26	1	20

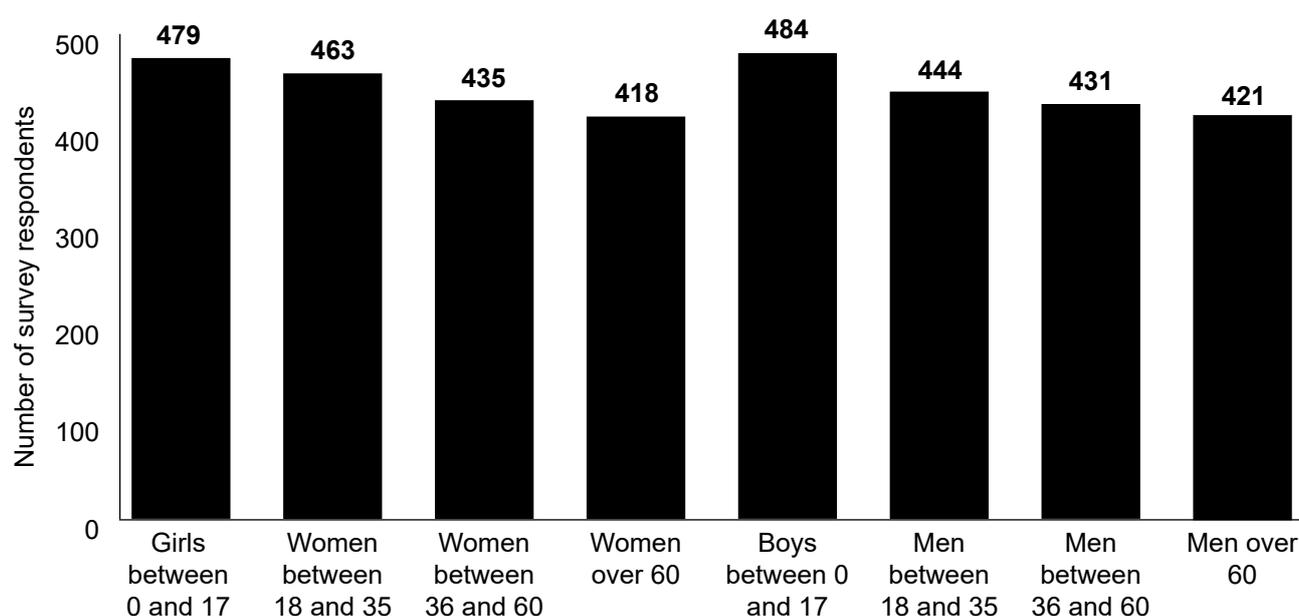
58% of households across the full sample reported being headed by a woman. Female-headed households were more prevalent in Bidibidi (64%) than in Rhino Camp (49%).

Gender	Male-headed	Female-headed	Female %
Full sample	187	260	58%
Bidibidi	95	171	64%
Rhino	92	89	49%

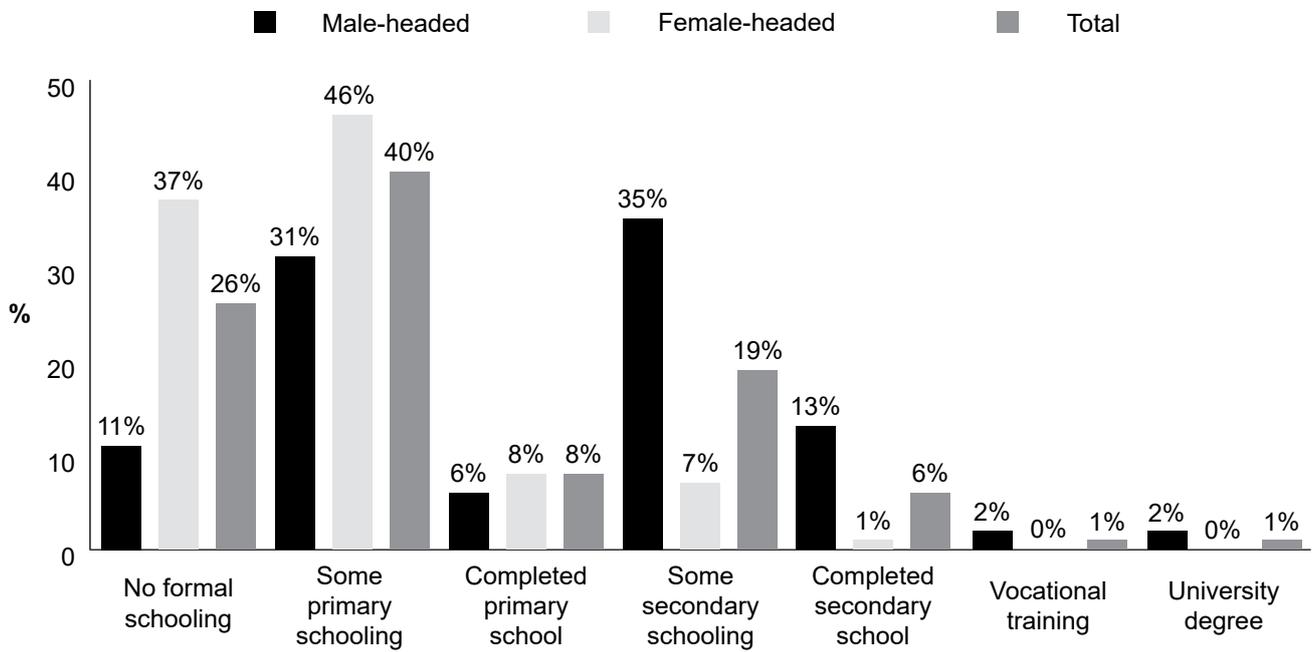
The average age of household heads was 35.2 years.

	No. of observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum value	Maximum value
Full sample	446	35.2	13.4	10	95
Bidibidi	265	34.8	12.0	10	80
Rhino	181	35.9	15.3	17	95
Male-headed	186	35.6	13.8	10	75
Female-headed	260	34.9	13.1	17	95

The largest demographic group among the household members of the survey respondents was girls and boys under 18 years of age.



Male household heads were more likely to have attained a higher level of education, with 35% of male household heads having achieved some secondary schooling and 13% having completed secondary school. Female household heads were more likely to have had no formal schooling (37%) or to have achieved only some primary school education (46%).



# HPG

## Humanitarian Policy Group

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Cover photo: Uganda. Bidibidi  
settlement for refugees from South  
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