

High-level Meeting of Ministers in charge of Refugees in the Great Lakes Region

High-level panel discussion with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees and UNDP Administrator on local integration as a durable solution for protracted refugees

7 March 2019, Kampala

UNDP Administrator Represented By Director, UNDP Regional Service Center for Africa

Objectives

Participate in panel discussion on behalf of the UNDP Administrator with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, and Ann Encontre Regional Refugee Response Coordinator for the DRC situation on behalf of UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees

Talking points/Speech

Your Excellency Mr. President,
Right Honourable Prime Minister,
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies Special Envoys,
Excellencies Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Dear Colleagues of the UN Family,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
All Protocols Observed.

It is my great honour and pleasure to be part of this high level panel and consultations today, representing the UNDP Administrator, Mr. Achim Steiner, who would have really wanted to be here personally, but was constrained from doing so by circumstances beyond his control. He sends his warmest greetings to you all and best wishes for the success of this important meeting.

Like the previous speakers, I wish to **express** deepest gratitude to His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda for not only hosting this event but also gracing it with his personal presence. I would also like to **thank** the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region, Said Djinnit and the Secretariat of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region led by Ambassador Muita for organizing this critical meeting, addressing the African Union's priority area of focus for 2019: Egypt's President His Excellency Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, Chairperson of the African Union, has called for a further focusing of efforts "to solve the problems of refugees, IDPs and migrants in a comprehensive manner along with post reconstruction and development plans and programmes."

It is an honour for UNDP to be actively engaged in such critical initiatives across the Great Lakes Region to discuss durable solutions to protracted refugees situations in the region. I am pleased to inform that the UNDP Administrator has identified addressing displacement as one of his three top priorities for 2019.

Country Ownership of Durable Solutions

Your Excellences, Distinguished Participants,

We are fully aware of the immense challenges faced by the countries in the region in connection with massive and protracted displacement and we **commend** the great efforts of these countries and their communities. Our hosting country today, Uganda, hosts the largest number of refugees of any country on this continent, has some of the most progressive refugee laws and policies globally. As it is broadly appreciated, the Government of Uganda has taken a very progressive approach to addressing the protracted situations of displacement on several fronts.

The increasing scale, complexity and protracted nature of forced displacement in the Great Lakes Region has created significant challenges for host communities, and tensions over access to

livelihoods and basic services as well as risks of environmental degradation.

The exceptional hospitality and solidarity of the country where we are today, is an example of the long-standing commitment to collaborate for sustainable development which exists in the Great Lakes region.

UNDP's Role as UN Development System Integrator in the Region for Durable Solutions

I would like to recall that, to address the peace and development challenges of this region, the Security Council endorsed back in 2016 the United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. In large Measure, This framework represents the development approach to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region and it recognises the need to tackle country level situations from a regional perspective. Since then, UNDP is proudly acting as co-champion of this framework. We worked on the implementation mechanisms for this framework in this very place at the end of 2016.

Among other priorities for intervention under the Great Lakes Regional Strategic framework, the centrality of its *Mobility Pillar* highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to find durable solutions for refugees, returnees and IDP's in the region. The importance to focus and invest on the resilience and development of communities hosting refugees is a critical aspect toward the success of the approach to durable solutions for all displaced populations. To this end, the *Mobility pillar* of the framework recognizes the need for strong leadership by national authorities and cooperation between humanitarian, development agencies.

Our Commitment to Leaving No One Behind and Delivering on the Nexus in this Region

UNDP remains committed to enhancing development approaches to reduce the need for forced displacement by, amongst others, addressing the root causes of displacement in the Great Lakes Region.

We need to do more by delivering integrated solutions, realising the Humanitarian-Development-*Peace* Nexus working closely with governments to create durable solutions for host communities, refugees, returnees and internally displaced on the basis of the principle of Leaving No-one Behind.

The UN SG's notion of New Way of Working aims at bringing the UN and wider multilateral system, including the Multilateral Development Banks and Civil Society Organisations together to look beyond individual agencies and entities, drawing on comparative advantages and mandates, to jointly maximize the quality of support to governments and communities. Working closely together towards the achievement of collective outcomes is critical to support the Great Lakes region towards peace and economic prosperity, which is inclusive and reaches to all, especially the most vulnerable people on the continent, including protracted refugees.

In doing so, UNDP advocates for support living up to the high ambitions encapsulated by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the commitment to Leave No One Behind, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities.

We are aware that our common success as UN Member States and Development System in Leaving No One Behind will be measured to a large extent in Africa and in this region in particular, due to the great developmental and peace challenges faced.

Local Integration as a Durable Solution

Our increasing joint work with UNHCR in the region and on these issues is a testimony to this commitment. The joint work has recently been summarized in a booklet on joint programming between UNHCR and UNDP in the Great Lakes Region, published on 16 January this year. This booklet focuses on practical joint programmes as part of Regional Refugee Response Plans for the DRC and the Burundi situations which integrate work on Durable Solutions.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind", as well as the Global Compact on Refugees and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approach, provided an important framework for this collaboration.

In the Great Lakes region, UNDP's works with strengthening community resilience to better cope with and recover from the impact of large movements of refugees and IDPs and protect development gains. Our approach includes conflict prevention, emergency employment, job creation and sustainable livelihoods, basic service delivery, access to justice and rule of law, natural resources management (including land management and land property rights), peace building through community based conflict resolution and mediation, along with activities that build social cohesion by bringing communities together around a common goal, such as infrastructure rehabilitation.

As an example, the situation of many refugees living in Uganda is protracted (as the Prime Minister has highlighted). During the integration phase, refugees can access various services, including education, healthcare, water, security and protection and agriculture extension services. In Uganda, UNDP works with local and national authorities to support them managing the large impact on services of an increased population while at the same time supporting refugees and host communities on socio-economic recovery, social cohesion building and sustainable development.

Concretely, UNDP Uganda has lead the contributions in the area of resilience-based development including, for instance, livelihoods and skills development, strengthening of social cohesion and integration, supporting natural resource management, climate/disaster risk management and youth empowerment. In collaboration with UNHCR, UNDP has provided business and entrepreneurship skills training to both refugees and host communities while supporting the local government and communities in setting up the required enabling environment for empowering women and Person with Special Needs (including SGBV victims). UNDP also supported the development of investment profiles for all refugee hosting districts to serve as a guide to promote private sector investments that open, among other things, employment opportunities for refugees.

Furthermore, to enhance evidence-based decisions, UNDP provided technical support to the Office of the Prime Minister to map and profile hosting districts in order to conduct risk analysis for improved settlement management and planning to deal with climate and disaster risks, including displacement influx. . In doing so, a special attention was given to the strengthening of District and Village Disaster Management Committee capacities to respond to any all type of crisis situation within the West Nile region. In that region, in partnership with JICA and to prepare for the upcoming planning cycle, UNDP is currently strengthening Local Government (LG) capacities on bottom-up and evidence-based planning while raising awareness of political leaders on their roles in ensuring transparent and accountable LG planning and budgeting. Finally, UNDP is also actively supporting the development of the environment and livelihood sector response plans.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

UNDP remains committed to support future plans by the States of this region to further develop tools and approaches in support of durable solutions that offer hope and dignity to those seeking safety and decent lives. In this connection, UNDP calls for greater international solidarity in supporting and stabilizing countries hosting

displaced populations to mitigate the impacts of large-scale and protracted displacement and create economic opportunities for local populations and displaced people alike.

I look forward to our deliberations and wish us a fruitful and successful consultation leading to clear political guidance in the Ministerial outcome document.

Thank you.

Background

High-level Meeting of Ministers in charge of Refugees in the Great Lakes Region

Recent and ongoing relevant work of UNDP in Great Lakes Region and in Uganda specifically

Integrating Durable Solutions in to Great Lakes RRRP's

Since 2018, following the joint communique signed by Filippo Grandi and Achim Steiner highlighting 5 areas the agencies need to strengthen collaboration on, UNDP Sub-Regional Office for ESA worked with UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator for the DRC to operationalize the collaboration in the framework of the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) for the DRC situation. Followingly, UNDP Sub-Regional office, has along with UNDP CO's supported the same for the 2019 RRRP for the Burundi situation. Working closely with UNDP Burundi, the UNDP Sub-Regional Platform for ESA supported the RC substantially in ensuring a coherent Joint UN Refugee Returnee Response Plan. The RRRP and JRRRP were co-launched in February 21 2019. All RRRPs include a language that is consistent with the UNDP work in development and they constantly refer to the need to strengthen resilience as a way to ensure integrated durable solutions. This process is setting the basis for the development of a UNDP Sub Saharan Africa Regional Engagement Strategy in Refugee Crisis. As an example, there is now USD 22M of UNDP programming included in the 2019-20 RRRP validated in Zambia in all seven countries as opposed to less than USD 2M in 2 countries in 2018.

DDR Inside Mediator Project for EU

In December 2018, the EU funded project was jointly launched with ICGLR and GIZ in Bujumbura. The project aims at strengthening ICGLR Peace and Security Program and supporting the implementation of the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children in the region. The UN participating agencies will implement activities in support to ICGLR capacities in mediation and DDR, including options for insider mediation at local level, in support to four ICGLR fora (women, youth, private sector and civil society), to promote awareness of Gender-Based Violence as well as the transcription of the above-mentioned protocol into national laws.

PBF Cross-Border Project Tanzania - Burundi

Under the GLRSF, endorsed by the ICGLR, SESG-GL and RC's, and funded by the PBF, on the Burundi – Tanzania border, UNDP, UNHCR and IOM have delivered a successful cross-border project based on joint programming and delivery 15 December 2017 – 31 March 2019. UNDP R Nairobi led the coordination of synergetic delivery of activities ensuring concerted delivery on the humanitarian – development – peace nexus in practice, in the complex cross-border displacement context. In practice the project delivered concrete peacebuilding initiatives by linking conflict mediation and access to justice with livelihood opportunities for Burundian returnees and internally displaced and protection of refugees. On the Tanzania side of the border, the project ensured that refugees have access to humanitarian services and human rights protection along with tailored skills trainings, matched with needs in their areas of pre-displacement in Burundi. On the actual border the project did humanitarian border monitoring along with capacity development of border officials from the two countries with the to strengthen the protection of migrants and refugees crossing the border. In areas of pre-displacement in Burundi, the project delivered access to legal and documentary assistance to returnees along with inclusive livelihoods activities, targeted both host communities, returnees and Internally Displaced Persons. The activities generated income for the most vulnerable population groups using a reintegration approach allowing different community groups to work together around physical community infrastructure rehabilitation and establishment of producer associations to build social cohesion and stability. The project ensured that 2,700 beneficiaries (59 % women) were provided with legal assistance in relation to displacement and access to land, a main driver of conflict in border areas in Burundi. In Tanzania, community leaders of host communities and refugees engaged in conflict mediation trainings over issues related to struggles over resources around refugee camps. In Burundi 600 returnees, IDPs and host community members joined reintegration activities such as employment, skills and job training. 300 conflict cases were peacefully resolved due to peace-making and conflict resolution systems established. And 47 producer organizations were created in areas of return in Burundi, with participation of all groups affected by the crisis in the border region. UNDP Nairobi coordinated the design of a phase two which has been presented to the EU Conflict and Stability Instrument for potential funding.

Background on Uganda refugee reception and CRRF from UNDP Uganda 6/3/19

Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa with over 1.2 million refugees as of December 2018. Those fleeing to Uganda reached unprecedented levels in 2016 and 2017, while not at the same scale, refugees have continued to come at a steady pace, with over 163,000 new refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Uganda in 2018. South Sudanese make up the largest refugee population in Uganda (789,099 people), followed by refugees from the DRC (312,699) and Burundi (34,981). Another 54,143 refugees are from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan.

Despite Uganda's progressive approach to refugee management, refugees living in settlements and their host communities remain vulnerable and at risk of recurring shocks. The alarming rate of dependency of refugees highlights the risk for refugees to become dependent on humanitarian assistance if interventions do not adequately focus on livelihoods assistance from the moment of being settled.

In response to this, Uganda adopted its first Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Road Map in January 2018, and set the vision to implement a comprehensive approach that both ease the pressure on host districts and meet the needs of refugees and host communities. Uganda's CRRF Road Map identifies the key engagement and priority interventions required to stabilize and recover from the emergency while simultaneously laying the operational foundation for inclusion, sustainability and longer-term development engagement.

UNDP support to CRRF Road Map implementation

To support the CRRF road map implementation, UNDP is implementing an Emergency Response and Resilience Strategy for Refugees and host communities strategy that aim at strengthening the resilience of refugees, their host communities, local authorities and relevant national institutions to cope with the large influx of refugees. To do so, UNDP contribute to the emergency response effort but also invest in existing national and local capacity to ensure they can adequately serve both refugee and host communities in the long run.

During 2017 and 2018, UNDP supported the creation of 22,000 emergency employment opportunities for refugees and host communities in West Nile through cash for work activities, and supported over 400 beneficiaries with micro-business development of non-agricultural nature. UNDP also supported the development of investment profiles for all refugee hosting districts to serve as a guide to promote private sector investments that open, among other things, employment opportunities for refugees. Throughout these activities, UNDP has placed a strong emphasis on supporting the local government and communities in setting up the required enabling environment for empowering women and Person with Special Needs (including SGBV victims).

To enhance evidence-based decisions, UNDP also provided technical support to the Office of the Prime Minister to map and profile hosting districts in order to conduct risk analysis for improved settlement management and planning to deal with climate and disaster risks, including displacement influx. UNDP is also strengthening District and Village Disaster Management Committee capacities to respond to any crisis situation within the West Nile region, including displacement influx. Within the West Nile region again, in partnership with JICA and to prepare for the upcoming planning cycle, UNDP is currently strengthening Local Government (LG) capacities on bottom-up and evidence-based planning while raising awareness of political leaders on their roles in ensuring transparent and accountable LG planning and budgeting. Finally, UNDP is currently supporting the development of the environment and livelihood sector response plans.

Uganda Emergency Response and Resilience Strategy for Refugees and Host Communities

The objective of the Emergency Response and Resilience Strategy is to strengthen the resilience of refugees, host communities district local governments and relevant national institutions to cope with and recover from the impact of large influxes of refugees. The aim is to provide emergency support, while investing in existing national and local capacity to ensure they can adequately serve both refugee and host communities

The Strategy has three components with a number of sub-components:

1: Emergency livelihoods and economic recovery

- Disaster risk and climate change sensitive employment and livelihoods opportunities for refugees and host communities, focusing on women and youth
 - o Emergency employment through cash for work
 - o Small grants for business creation
 - o Vocational and business skills training
 - o Value chain development

2: Multi-sectoral support to prevent and respond to SGBV

- Access to justice and tailored psychosocial support for survivors of SGBV
- Contribution to legal aid provision and enhanced legal awareness of victims
- Contribution to strengthen national capacities (police, judiciary) and physical infrastructure required (e.g. detention centres, shelters)
- SGBV Survivor' socio-economic rehabilitation
- Gender responsive local area development and social cohesion
-

3: Strengthen core government functions

- Strengthening of relevant national and local level government capacity to
- Cope with and respond to influxes of refugees
- Ensure a resilience based development approach is mainstreamed across the overall response from the start

Annexes:

- Draft Final Agenda
- Concept Note
- Logistics Note
- GLRSF Progress Report 2018
- PBF Progress Report November 2018;
- UNDP-UNHCR Booklet on Joint Programming in GLR
- PPT on PBF project.
- Uganda Strategy for Emergency Response and Resilience Strategy

Communication and additional information:

UN GLRSF

Website: www.glrfsf.org

Twitter: @UN_GLRSF

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UNGLRSF/>