REBUILD

Boosting Livelihoods

How Donors Can Better Support Urban Refugees in Kampala and Nairobi

2nd May 2024

EiWG Presentation

Refugees in East Africa: Boosting Urban Innovations for Livelihoods Development (Re:BUiLD)

Re:BUiLD is a multi-faceted approach to support urban refugees to build sustainable livelihoods in East Africa and to inspire evidence-based systemic change globally.

Our progress so far

As of February 2024

8,371 clients
Clients Registered

4,935 clients
Female Clients Registered

1,455 clients
Reached with Vocational Training

84 clients
Reached with Green Energy Training

4,116 clients
Reached with Microenterprise Support

352 clients
Reached with Digital Skills Training

Refugees in Kampala and Nairobi

- 136,887 refugees and asylum seekers in **Kampala** (8% of total)
  - Forfeit access to humanitarian assistance
  - Many in reality live both in settlements and Kampala, moving between the two

- 96,348 registered refugees in **Nairobi** (15% of total)
  - Movement passes to leave camps rarely obtained
  - Work permits difficult to access

- Refugees in cities more likely to be of working age, self-employed and higher education levels

Distinct needs of urban refugees

- Difficulties accessing city-based services without the right ID

- Decent housing
  - High costs – sometimes higher rents demanded from refugees
  - Discrimination and xenophobia
  - Documentation challenges

- Access to social and professional networks
  - Refugee networks, especially for women are often limited
  - Refugee-host social ties are important for overcoming barriers to work

=> Governments and city authorities can provide solutions!

For ex. working with local refugee serving organisations improving refugee representation in local governance

Donor support

Humanitarian system is underfunded and mostly focused on camps

Bilateral and multilateral donors often have a strong focus on

- Sustainable urbanisation
- Forced displacement
- But mostly not integrating the two – though some good examples

Lack of support for housing and access to social networks

Policy recommendations for donors

- Encourage refugee-hosting governments to **expand freedom of movement and ensure refugee IDs are legally accepted** to access services
  - *Link donor support to policy progress, such as in World Bank's Window for Host Communities and Refugees*

- Identify and overcome **practical barriers to essential services** for urban refugees, including documentation
  - *Consult refugees and refugee-serving organisations to understand barriers, and work with city authorities*

Policy recommendations for donors

- Provide **direct financial support to city and local authorities**
  - *Support to create/implement inclusive urban development plans (eg. underway in Nairobi)*
  - *Good examples from the EU's SUIDAC program supporting Koboko municipality (Sustainable Urban Integration of Displacement-Affected Communities)*

- **Partner with refugee-led organisations** to design and deliver services.
  - *RLOs and local refugee-serving organisations facilitate integration with community networks and social cohesion*

Policy recommendations for donors

- For **MDBs** – these partnerships require a **shift from government-first to 'people-first' approaches**
    - Formalizing partnerships with non sovereign actors – ranging from advisory services to financing for direct implementation

Policy recommendations for donors

- **Integrate refugees into national surveys**
  - *Funding and technical support to national statistics offices*
  - *Work with humanitarian and city actors to fill data gaps*
  - *Correct data can inform financing for services*

- **Mainstream refugee inclusion into the urban development sector**
  - *Urban development donor policies should take urban refugees into account*
  - *Better integrate forced displacement and urban development units*