



## Key Figures

### Number of Police deployed

339

### Number of female Police deployed

30

### Number of Police Posts in the Refugee Settlements

28

### Number of Refugees that received legal Assistance

2,792

### Number of Refugees reached during community Sensitization

24,570

### Number of Packages provided by UNHCR (Fuel, accommodation, WASH facilities, protection house, vehicle, motorbikes and transport)

67

## UNHCR Monthly Protection Update Legal and Physical Protection October 2019



Figure: Legal Officers facilitating legal information session in Bidibidi settlement.

### Physical Safety and Security

- During the reporting period, physical assault, domestic violence, theft, rape and defilement were the most commonly reported crimes across the settlements in the operation in Adjumani in the settlements of Maaji, Baratuku and Nyumanzi.
- There were no reported cases of refoulement or conditional access to asylum territory along the Uganda-South Sudan border.
- In the Arua operation, there are 42 police officers (06F and 36M) at the 11 police posts in the three Settlements, in addition to the 29 (9F, 20M) crime preventers tasked with maintaining law and order. The operation registered a cumulative of 1,575 (853 refugees, 722 nationals) crime incidents reported as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 with 131 (65 refugees, 66 nationals) crime incidents registered in October 2019. In comparison with September 2019 which recorded 119 incidents, October has witnessed an increase in crime rate in the Arua operation by 10%. Rhino Camp recorded the highest number of incidents: 97 (48 refugees, 49 nationals) followed by Imvepi with 30 (15 refugees, 15 nationals) and Lobule with 4 (2 refugee and 2 nationals) incidents.
- As of October 2019, the operation in Arua had registered 410 ex-combatants (02F, 408M); Five (all male) cases were recorded in the month of October indicating a slight increase of 3 cases as compared to the 02 cases received in September.

### Access to Legal Assistance and Legal Remedies.

- In Adjumani, LWF and DRC conducted case follow up of 19 criminal matters, facilitated court attendance of 06 prosecution witnesses and out of court settlements of 06 petty offences through mediation.

- In Yumbe, Bidibidi settlement; 1,098 (F730; M368) refugees and members of host community received legal assistance. Of these, 95 (F63; M32) were reached through legal counselling on issues related to defilement, child to child sex, divorce, criminal trespass and malicious damage. 84 (F54; M30) individuals received Legal case management support both in the settlement and in detention facilities. 47 (F11; M36) refugees were provided legal representation through ULS.
- In Bidibidi settlement; 43 (F33; M10) refugees with civil cases were supported by Community Based Paralegals (CBPs) through alternative dispute resolution at grass roots level. 15 cases were registered by paralegals and 10 resolved and 5 referred to police and other partners for further intervention and management. The Cases included, assault, land conflict, domestic violence, neighbourhood conflict, grievous harm, and defilement.
- In Arua, UNHCR continued to provide legal assistance to POCs by bringing the court closer to the community through its protection partners including the Ugandan Law Society through a twining approach. Cumulatively, 17,934 refugees have been reached with legal assistance in areas such as legislative awareness and legal counselling in the Settlements of Imvepi, Rhino Camp, Lobule while detention monitoring has been conducted in Arua and Koboko towns. 15 refugees appeared in the courts of law and received legal representation.
- In Kisoro, 03 cases of illegal entry were managed, o1 Congolese male assessed by Court and found to have intentions to seek asylum was released and taken to Nyakabande transit centre for further processing, a separate case assessed by the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) was deferred pending a formal court decision on the individual's case while another case of suspected child trafficking was released from police and registered as an asylum seeker at Nyakabande TC.

### Detention Monitoring

- During the reporting period, partners, OPM and UNHCR conducted joint detention monitoring visits to 08 detention facilities closest to refugee hosting areas in Adjumani, Arua and Gulu which resulted into provision of individual and group legal counselling for 90 PoC remanded and inmates, distribution of assortment NFIs including sanitary materials to refugee female inmates.
- UNHCR, OPM and implementing partners have conducted 11 joint detention monitoring visits to Arua Main Prison including women wing, Remand Home and Koboko Prison. During the reporting period, UNHCR and partners conducted a joint prison visit at Arua and Koboko

prisons with the aim to monitor detention environment of refugee inmates and to offer legal aid and counselling and to provide material support. At the visit there were 84(F7, M77) and 22(F2, 20M) refugee in-mates in Arua and Koboko prisons respectively.

- In Yumbe, Bidibidi, 5 visits to Prisons and Police detention facilities were jointly conducted by UNHCR and partners during which 27(F0; M27) refugees were identified in detention facilities in Yumbe and Bidibidi Prisons, Yumbe Central Police Station, Police Stations of Kululu, Odravo and Bidibidi Police out Post. The legal team provided legal counselling and conducted legal information sessions with inmates on rights of accused persons and criminal trial procedure in Uganda. 3 male released refugee prisoners were provided logistical support through transportation and minimal cash to purchase food and house hold items in the interim as they reintegrate back in the community. 12(F4; M8) relatives were provided logistical support to visit detainees to maintain family linkages and follow on the status of the cases.
- In the South West, a total number of 103 (102M, 01F) persons of concern from Nakivale refugee settlement in detention were visited. The persons of concern received psychosocial support; legal counselling and medical assessments while in Kisoro 1 prison visit was conducted to 10 POCs remanded at Kisoro prison on charges of malicious damage of property at Nyakabande TC. The needs identified in prison included communication with family members and need for blankets.
- In Kisoro, 02 refugees accused of murder were transferred to Ndorwa prison in Kabale district on committal from a lower court to high court.

### Community Policing and Advocacy

- In Rwamwanja; The legal team of OPM, UNHCR and LWF participated in a community awareness session on human rights, crimes and penalties in Kikurura and Mahega Zones.
- While, in Adjumani, 06 legal awareness sessions were held targeting 421 PoCs in Nyumanzi, Boroli, Ayilo, Maaji and Alere settlements. Key areas of messaging included prevention and response to domestic violence and how to engage the GBV referral pathway.

### Coordination

- In th West Nile operation; Adjumani, UNHCR and OPM convened the monthly Legal Working Group meeting which was attended by legal service providers including implementing partners; LWF, DRC and operational partner Refugee Law Project while in Arua, the Legal Sector Working Group meeting was held at

UNHCR Arua office and was attended by HADS, IRC, DRC, FIDA-Uganda, ULS and OPM.

- UNHCR in coordination with Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) hosted the District Coordination Committee meeting in Arua and Koboko respectively. In attendance were Police, Resident District Commissioner (RDC) for Arua and Koboko, HADS, IRC, DPP, representatives of the Judiciary, the districts' officials among others. Key issues discussed included: increase in crime incidents in both districts, President's directive on detention of persons arrested for being idle and disorderly and coordination issues amongst JLOS stakeholders among others.
- In Yumbe, a DCC meeting was attended by 21 (F5, M16) participants and the key security issue raised was a precaution to partners to avoid night movements due to the high rates of cases of theft, simple robbery and burglary/house breaking by suspected youth in Yumbe Town.

#### Capacity Development

- In Adjumani, DRC and UNHCR provided 02 training sessions on basic principles of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms to 36 (M32, F04) members of traditional bench courts in Baratuku and Ayilo 1 settlements.
- In coordination with the District Magistrate Court, Adjumani, protection partners; LWF and DRC conducted 02 sensitization radio talk shows where information shared included; laws of Uganda, child rights, domestic violence and the role of police and community structures in addressing the incidents of domestic violence.
- In Bidibidi, the Legal Officers held 8 weekly mentorship sessions with 150(F62; M88) Community Based Paralegals in Zones 1-5 aimed at building their capacity in alternative dispute resolution mechanism. Emphasis was put on mediation cases within their jurisdiction, referrals, record keeping, documentation, procedures and key laws of Uganda. In addition, 63(F22; M41) Community Based Paralegals received materials support inform of soap and sugar.

#### Gaps Identified

- There are several obstacles stifling provision of access to justice for persons of concern. The following challenges persist:
- Delayed trials coupled with long period of detention without trial, lack of court interpreters and legal representation all continue to impact negatively on access to justice by POCs.
- Inadequate access to specialized treatment for inmates with chronic illnesses, detention of juveniles in remand homes beyond the lawfully prescribed period, lack of visitation by family members to refugee inmates and for those who are transferred to other detention facilities and challenges in accessing the settlement after serving their time in prison.
- From the South West operation in Kisoro, it was reported that current judicial officials and police officers are not well equipped with refugee protection knowledge because most of them are newly deployed with those trained transferred almost immediately.
- Language barrier at the police and court remains a challenge for witnesses, this is coupled with difficulty in accessing interpreters for court which often results in miscarriage of justice.
- Delay in reporting of SGVB cases often affects investigation especially where material evidence is missing or tampered with leading to miscarriage of justice.
- Poor and prolonged investigation of cases due to limited capacity, lack of investigative skills, poor turn up of witnesses thus frequent adjournments leading to case dismissal for want of prosecution.
- In Adjumani and Lamwo, persistent lack of adequate police vehicles and motorcycles continues to impact negatively the efforts of law enforcement to respond and address reported incidents within reasonable time. The absence of functional community policing structures in the refugee settlements, a case of Adjumani impacted the capacity of communities to engage in crime prevention and overall contribute to improved physical safety across settlements.

#### Partners Implementing Access to Justice Response

**Partners:** IRC, HIJRA; DRC, ULS, ARC, RLP; InterAid Uganda, CAFOMI, WARCHILD

**Operational Partners:** UNDP, LASPNET

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