



# THE REFUGEE ENGAGEMENT FORUM



A project funded by



Welcome to the Presenter's Guide: A document to help Refugee Engagement Forum (REF) members to plan and organize awareness raising and community outreach engagement sessions on the REF.

## Part I: Content Section of the Presenter's Guide

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Part I contains the information presenters will communicate to the audience during the session. It outlines the structure of the presentation, and steps the presenter can take before and during the presentation to make everything run smoothly. Part II (P.6) outlines the best way for presenters to prepare for, organize and manage the audience during the session.

### 1. A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

The REF was established in October 2018 by the Office of the Prime Minister of Refugees (OPM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to ensure refugee participation at the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Steering Group.

The REF aims to create regular communication between refugees from settlements and Kampala, and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Steering Group.

The CRRF was established after the New York Declaration. It was launched in Uganda on 24 March 2017. Uganda was one of the first countries worldwide that has taken concrete steps to engage refugees in high level decision-making.

#### REF Members

37

Leaders from settlements and Kampala meet 4x per year to share community concerns and then revert back with feedback.

#### CRRF SG

2

REF leaders meet with government, aid & development partners, NGOs, and the private sector at the CRRF SG.

#### RWCs

3

Levels of Refugee Welfare Committees elected under OPM supervision to link refugees & response providers.



## 2. THE FEEDBACK CYCLE

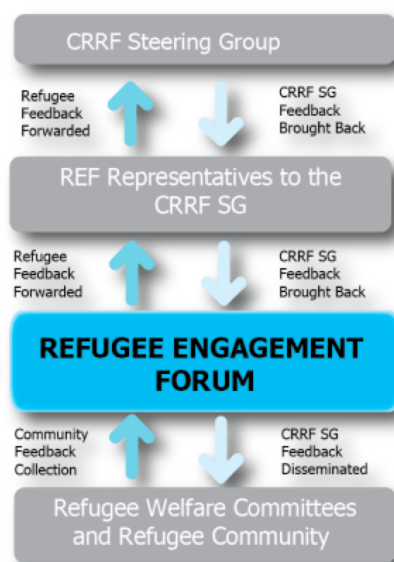
The 37 REF members are elected through the Refugee Welfare Committees, which link refugees with service providers and help to monitor ongoing projects, proactively solve community conflicts, and promote human rights-respecting and cooperative values in communities.

The REF members collect feedback from communities, review it in their quarterly meetings to identify key concerns, and then feed the information to the CRRF SG at sessions, which similarly run four times per year.

“

*I need to talk when I can; it will affect the wellbeing of my [family] and the entire community...I feel it is a gift, I must utilize it. - REF Member*

### Two-Way Feedback Mechanism



The quarterly REF meetings are organized by the REF Task force (REF TF), which is co-chaired by the OPM and UNHCR and also oversees the election of the two REF leaders to the CRRF SG.

## 3. WHY SHOULD REFUGEES BE INVOLVED

When refugees lend their voices to discussions about the programs and decisions that affect their lives, the response is more likely to improve peoples' wellbeing and access to resources, protect vulnerable groups, and create successful and sustainable interventions.

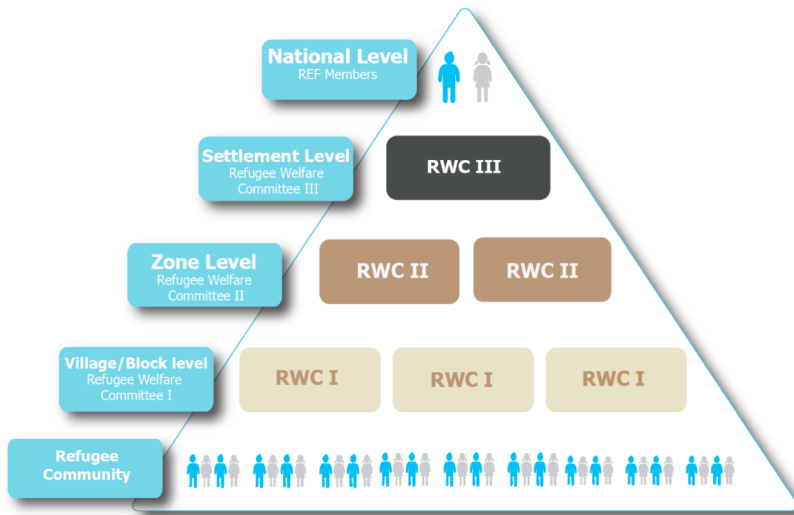
The REF was developed to ensure that refugees' perspectives are heard at the highest levels of decision-making, and incorporated into decisions with tangible and lasting impacts.

Because programs have to balance a range of needs and preferences from diverse groups in society, the most effective way to be heard is to participate in the RWC discussions and community consultations, held before and after REF meetings, and learn about refugee response systems in Uganda.



**Q:** How does the REF ensure the inclusion of diverse voices?

**A:** REF workers regularly consult community members of all ages, genders and backgrounds. Key issues and queries are then raised at the quarterly REF meetings to ensure all voices are heard.



## 4. HOW THE RWC & REF WORK TOGETHER

As part of the elected RWC structure, the REF works with their counterparts to discuss how policies are being implemented. Because RWCs exist from the village level up to the settlement level – where REF members are appointed – concerns and ideas in communities are channeled upwards to unite to find solutions.

## 5. THE REF CYCLE

### 1 Identify peoples' concerns & conduct consultations

REF members collect information from diverse groups in their settlements and debrief with the rest of the REF members.

### 2 Discuss the issues at quarterly REF Meeting

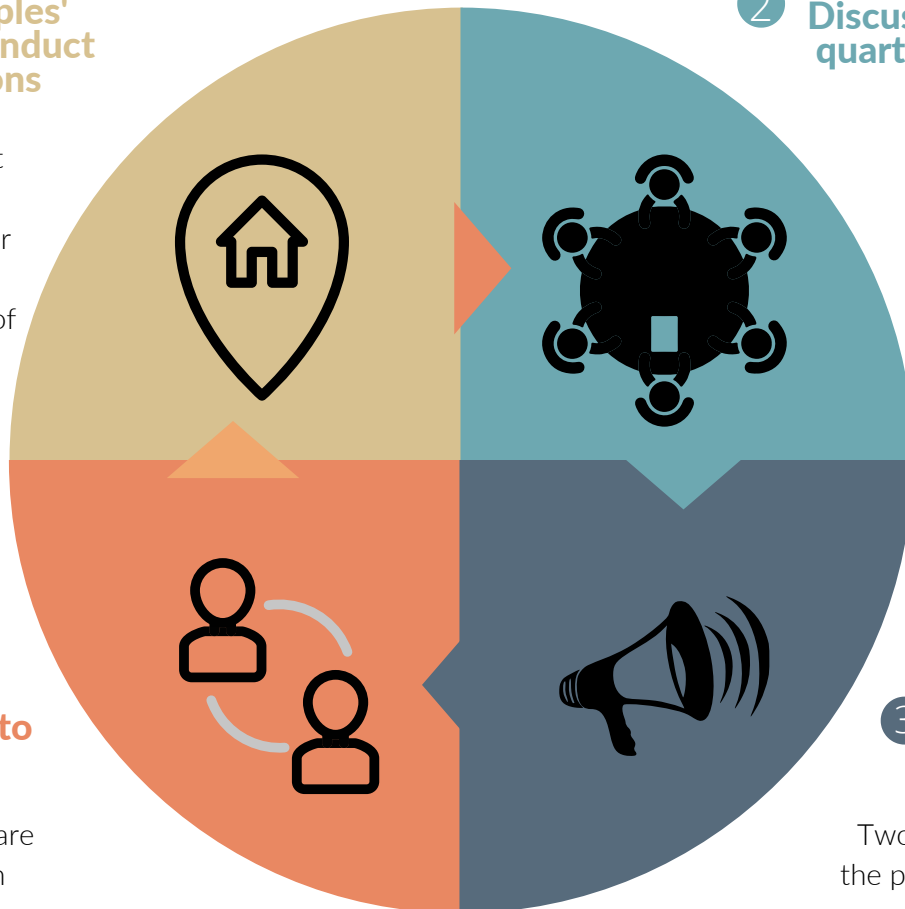
The 37 REF members discuss the concerns raised & formulate key messages to be presented at the CRRF SG meeting.

### 4 Report back to communities

REF members share outcomes with communities.

### 3 Present to the CRRF SG

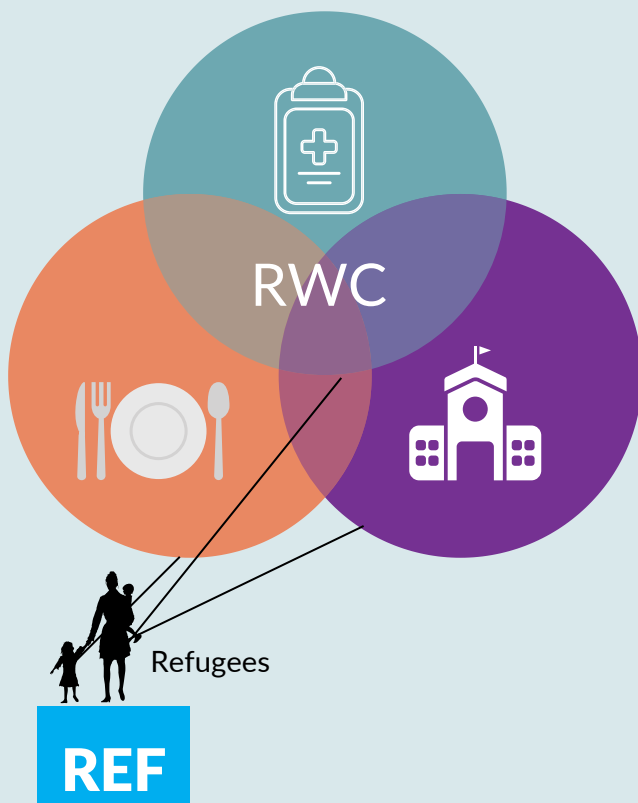
Two REF members present the priorities and gaps in their community to the CRRF SG for consideration and receive feedback/responses for their communities.



## 6. HOW THE REF ADVOCATES FOR REFUGEES

The REF is supported by the OPM Department of Refugees and UNHCR to identify challenges and discuss solutions that are presented to the CRRF steering group.

The REF links up refugees with service providers when there is a need, or helps to facilitate talks to resolve issues with implementation for food rations, education, and healthcare.



The REF meets with aid and development organizations to advocate for the improvement of service provision and implement identified priorities.



The REF talks to people in the community to understand what they think, need, and feel about the decisions and refugee responses that shape their daily lives.



Two REF leaders form part of the high-level decision-making body, the CRRF Steering Group.



Refugees talk to REF when they see gaps in the response.

The REF advocates for the fulfillment of already-existing rights of refugees with the central government of Uganda.



## 7. HOW TO GET INVOLVED



**The REF is an extension of the Refugee Welfare Committees.**

- Keep up-to-date with your RWC and how they instigate and support change.
- Learn about the refugee response systems in Uganda.
- Attend & participate in RWC talks and discussions.

**Share your insights with the RWC members, who can then raise concerns with the REF.**



RWC I → RWC II → RWC III → REF → CRRF SG

## PART II: CONDUCTING A SESSION

Welcome to the Presenter's Guide Part II:  
A tool to help you plan, prepare for, and  
manage your 60-minute presentation  
about the REF for refugees and host  
communities.



### 3. Session Breakdown

#### 1. Prepare yourself & the audience

- Read through the session content ahead of time to rehearse content & flow
- Practice with a friend beforehand
- Bring pens, notebooks, the poster and photo permissions forms to the event.

#### A. Introduction

- Welcome the audience with greetings and seating
- Everyone introduces themselves
- Invite the audience to take notes & ask questions

#### B. Session Overview

- Present the topics that will be covered
- What does the audience already know about REF?
- What would the audience like to learn in the session?

#### C. REF Awareness

- Explain: What is the REF?
- How does it work (structure and cycle)?
- Which issues are covered by the REF?

#### 2. Interact with the audience

- While talking, maintain eye contact with the audience & speak slowly
- Make time for questions
- Break large groups into smaller, diverse groups
- Circulate the room
- Encourage discussion; stronger, empowered voices will lead to success!

#### D. Participation

- Discuss: Why should the community be involved?
- How can the community be more involved?
- How do you contact the REF?

#### E. Session Close

- Summarize the topics covered
- Answer any questions
- Thank you and farewell



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