Refugee Access to Livelihoods and Housing, Land, and Property

CONTEXT

Uganda is currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the region with over 1.2 million refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Burundi.[1] Recently arrived refugees have joined Rwandese, Somali, and other refugees that have lived in Uganda for decades. Due to the large number of refugees, the range of countries of origin, and the varying lengths of displacement, there are key information gaps on how access to or lack of housing, land, and property (HLP) for refugees impact their potential for sustainable livelihoods. In partnership with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), REACH conducted an assessment from 3 December 2018 to 15 March 2019 to collect baseline data on refugees' access to livelihoods and HLP. The assessment aims to provide a better understanding of the conditions of refugee access to livelihoods and HLP, the linkages, and other factors influencing sustainable livelihoods and potential movement within Uganda.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods approach was used, driven by a household-level structured survey, semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). The quantitative household-level survey produced results representative for the refugee population in 30 refugee settlements (considered as 25 due to five combined settlements in Adjumani) across 11 districts, as well as select divisions of Kampala (Makindye, Kampala Central, and Kawempe) with a 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error at the settlement level for all questions asked to the entire sample size. A total of 3,165 households were interviewed for this assessment. All questions referring to a subset are footnoted.

KIIs and FGDs were used to triangulate the data and provide context to quantitative findings. KIIs targeted settlement leadership, including Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) commandants and UNHCR staff, refugee welfare committee leaders, district local government officials, and key partners working in relevant sectors. Semi-structured FGDs were stratified by gender and conducted with refugee and host community groups in each location.

Findings in this factsheet are representative of refugee households living in Mirieyi refugee settlement. A total of 104 refugee households were interviewed in Mirieyi.

POPULATION PROFILE OF REFUGEES IN UGANDA

Demographics[1]

Female	Age	Male
2%	60+	1%
20%	18-59	16%
8%	12-17	9%
13%	5-11	13%
9%	0-4	9%

**Female-headed households (HHs):** 67%

Average household size: 7

Displacement demographic

Top countries of origin:[1]

1. South Sudan (65%)
2. DRC (27%)
3. Burundi (3%)
4. Somalia (2%)

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MIRIEYI IN ADJUMANI DISTRICT

Mirieyi was established in January 1994 in the sub county of Ofua in Adjumani district. It has a surface area of 44 hectares and it hosts over 5,000 refugees. The settlement hosts refugees from South Sudan who fled prior to their country gaining independence in 2011 and those fleeing the war since 2013.

% of HHs reporting HLP issues aggregated by district
- 13% - 17%
- 18% - 25%
- 26% - 34%
- 35% - 69%
- ● Focus settlement (Mirieyi)
- ▢ Focus district
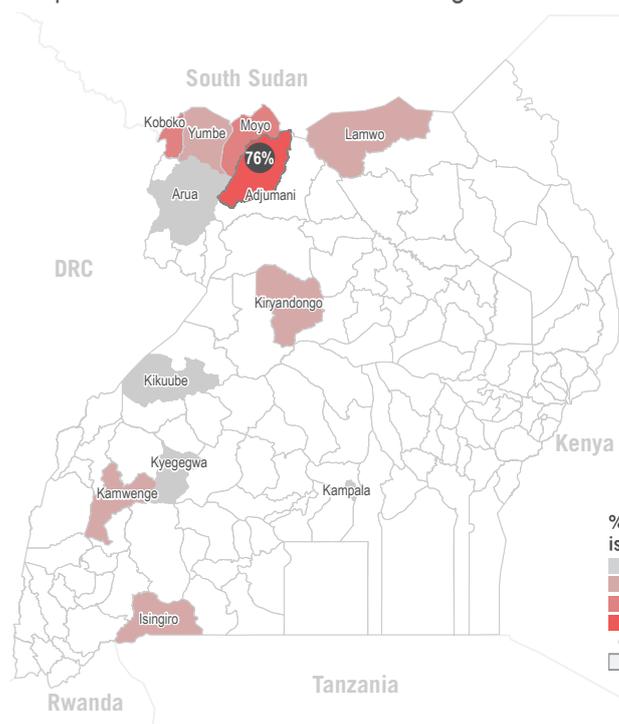
HHs WITH VULNERABLE MEMBERS

Unaccompanied/separated child, orphan	59%
Disabled members	69%
Pregnant / lactating women	43%
Female-headed HHs	95%

HHs reporting member with persons with specific needs (PSN) card: **49%**

HHs reporting that some members are not registered as refugees: 17%
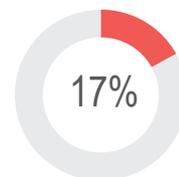
TOP 3 HLP CHALLENGES[2]

Property[3]	42%
Land accessed for cultivation	25%
Housing	24%

[1] Figures based on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)population figures updated as of April 2019.
[2] This question was only asked to the 76% of respondents facing HLP challenges. The level of confidence may thus be lower than 95%.
[3] Respondents could answer more than one option for this question.

HOUSING

HHs perceiving themselves at risk of eviction: 40%

TENURE ARRANGEMENTS

% of HHs by shelter tenure:

- **88%** Owned by the head of the household
- **5%** Rented
- **3%** Owned jointly between household members
- **2%** Owned by spouse
- **2%** Owned by other family members (rent free)
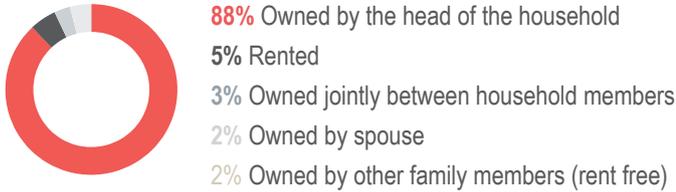
0% of HHs have documentation proving ownership or legal occupancy of shelter.

% of HHs by methods of shelter acquisition:

Construct	97%
Acquire	3%

Of the 97% of HHs that reported constructing their shelter, most commonly reported ways of acquiring materials:[3]

Purchased	87%
Nature	66%
Friend	10%

SHELTER CHALLENGES

89% of HHs reported shelter damage. Of those, the most commonly reported parts of the shelter damaged are:[3]

Damage to roof	93%
Damage to windows and/or doors	12%
Damage to wall material	7%

**55%** of HHs reported not being able to conduct repairs. Of those, the most commonly reported reasons include:[3]

No money for repair	78%
Material not available	49%
Waiting for landlord to repair shelter	6%

% of HHs reporting members do not feel safe in their current shelter:

35% Female
26% Male
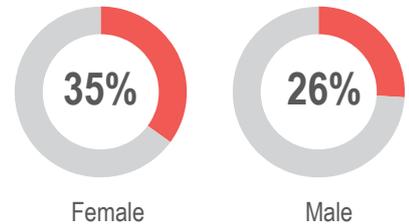
LAND

ACCESS TO LAND

% of HH reporting:[3]

Accessing land where shelter is located	96%
Accessing land in a separate plot	11%
No access to any land	3%

Method of accessing land around shelter plot:

- **99%** OPM/UNHCR allocation[4]
- **1%** Renting to access someone else's land
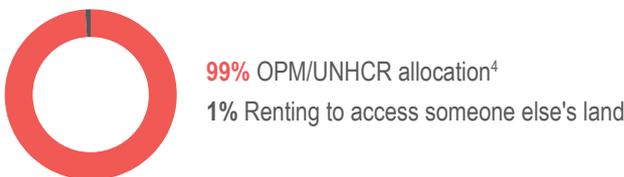
11% of HHs reported accessing land outside their shelter. Of those, the most commonly reported methods of accessing that land are:[3]

Renting to access someone else's land	64%
OPM/UNHCR allocation	36%
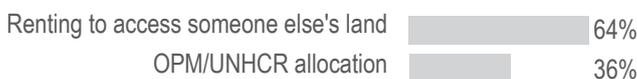
USE OF LAND FOR CULTIVATION

92% of HHs reported using their shelter plot for cultivation. Of those, the following reported on sufficiency of the land to provide food for the HH in the most recent harvest.

- **97%** Insufficient
- **3%** Sufficient
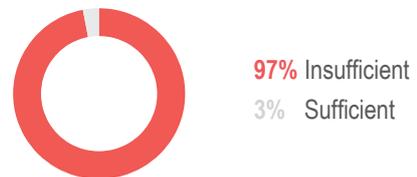
FORMAL AGREEMENTS

Of the **1%** that access land around shelter plot through renting, free access, or ownership, **0%** of HHs that have a formal agreement to access the land

Of the **64%** of land accessed outside of shelter plot through renting, free access, or ownership, **0%** are accessed through formal agreement

[4] The Government of Uganda allocates land for residential and agricultural purposes, to refugees, irrespective of ethnicity and origin. This is done via OPM with the support of UNHCR.

HLP Challenges

76% of HHs reported facing HLP challenges. Of those:

Most commonly reported areas of HLP issues (% of HLP issues):[3]

Property	42%
Land accessed for cultivation	25%
Housing	24%
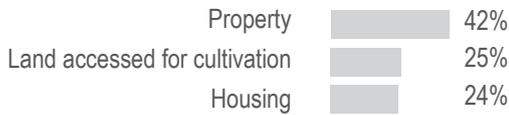
Most commonly reported types of HLP issues (% of HLP issues):[3]

Theft	34%
Plot given was unusable	33%
Destruction	23%
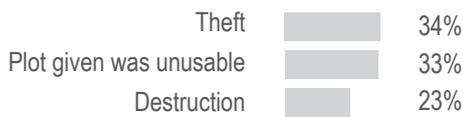
HLP ISSUE RESOLUTION

13% of the **89** HLP issues reported were attempted to be resolved by the household

Out of the HLP issues that HHs attempted to resolve, the following mechanisms were used:[3]

Refugee Welfare Committee	61%
Help desk	37%
NGO	7%

27% of the HLP issues reported were resolved

PROPERTY

15% of HHs reported having no property at all. Out of the **85%** who do:

HHs with income-generating property: 30%

Most commonly reported type of property:

Livestock	73%
Solar panel	42%
Bicycle	5%

99% of property items are owned by one owner

Proportion of those by sex of owner:

- 87% Female
- 13% Male
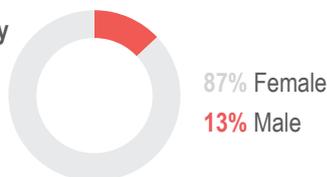
6% of HHs that own property/assets reported having documentation proving ownership or legal access

% of HHs owning number of income-generating property items:

- **70%** Zero income-generating items
- **29%** One income-generating item
- **1%** Two income-generating items
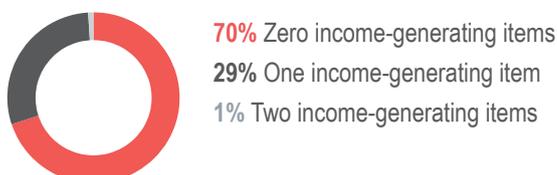
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Most commonly reported sources and types of information HHs access:[3]

Source		
	Refugee Welfare Committee	88%
	Family and friends	58%
	NGO	37%

Type of information		
	Food distribution	91%
	Registration	84%
	Availability of services	69%

93% of HHs reported trusting the information they receive

Most commonly reported information needs of HHs by area:[3]

Availability of services	63%
Food distribution	60%
Registration	39%

LIVELIHOODS

HHs reporting perceived livelihoods challenges: **99%**

LIVELIHOODS SOURCES

Out of the **100%** of HHs who reported having a source of income, the most commonly reported sources are:[3]

Cash assistance	80%
Remittances	30%
Street trade	19%

Most commonly reported livelihood groups HH members participate in:[3]

Village Savings and Loan Associations	49%
Livestock association	29%
Farmers' group	23%

Most commonly reported livelihoods challenges:[3]

Lack of credit to start/continue a business	68%
Lack of work opportunities	55%
Lack of skills/qualifications	39%
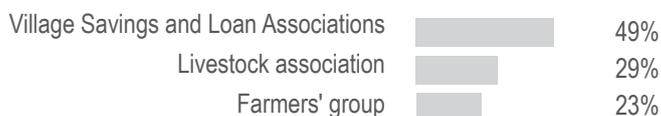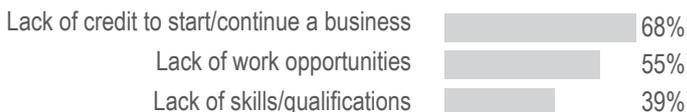
SKILLS AND ASPIRATIONS

78% of HHs have men of working age and **100%** of HHs have women of working age. Of those:

Most commonly reported livelihoods skills gained in country of origin:[3]

Farming	73%	Farming	68%
Livestock	56%	Domestic work in the home	66%
Domestic work in the home	37%	Street trade	31%
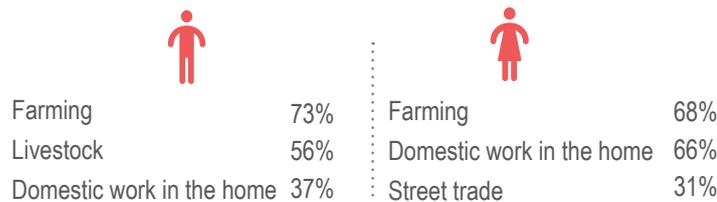
Most commonly reported livelihoods aspirations:[3]

Health worker	26%	Street trade	44%
Farming	20%	Tailoring	37%
Livestock	20%	Hairdressing	21%

MOVEMENTS WITHIN UGANDA

PAST MOVEMENTS

% of HHs that had at least one member move in the year prior to data collection:

9%
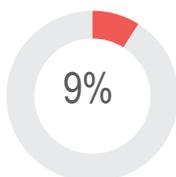
Of those:

Types of destinations:

11% 33% 56%

urban area
another refugee settlement
rural area
another site in same refugee settlement

Most commonly reported reasons for moving:[3]

Joining other family members	22%
Presence of education services	22%
Presence of NFI distribution	22%
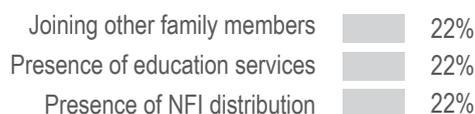
50% of the HHs with at least one member who moved reported that they receive resources from the member that moved

MOVEMENT INTENTIONS

% of HHs that have at least one member planning to move in the 6 months following data collection:

0%