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Uganda: A role model for refugee integration?

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SUMMARY

Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa and is, after Turkey and Pakistan, the third-largest refugee recipient country worldwide. Political and humanitarian actors have widely praised Ugandan refugee policies because of their progressive nature: In Uganda, in contrast to many other refugee-receiving countries, these are *de jure* allowed to work, to establish businesses, to access public services such as education, to move freely and have access to a plot of land. Moreover, Uganda is a pilot country of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). In this *Working Paper* the authors ascertain whether Uganda indeed can be taken as a role model for refugee integration, as largely portrayed in the media and the political discourse. They identify the challenges to livelihoods and integration to assess Uganda's self-reliance and settlement approach and its aspiration towards providing refugees and Ugandan communities receiving refugees with opportunities for becoming self-reliant. Drawing on three months of field research in northern and southern Uganda from July to September of 2017 with a particular focus on South Sudanese refugees, the authors concentrate on three aspects: Access to land, employment and education, intra- and inter-group relations. The findings show that refugees in Uganda are far from self-reliant and socially integrated. Although in Uganda refugees are provided with land, the quality and size of the allocated plots is so poor that they cannot earn a living from agricultural production, which thus, rather impedes self-reliance. Inadequate infrastructure also hinders access to markets and employment opportunities. Even though most local communities have been welcoming to refugees, the sentiment has shifted recently in some areas, particularly where local communities that are often not better off than refugees feel that they have not benefitted from the presence of refugees.

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Main findings

Land for agriculture is not sufficient for sustaining a living, and not all refugees are farmers

Uganda's settlement approach foresees that each arriving refugee receives a plot of land to become self-reliant. However, the poor quality and size of the allocated plots means that they cannot earn a living from agricultural production. Especially in Rhino Camp, Bidi Bidi and Nakivale refugee settlements, the soil is reportedly infertile, and refugee and Ugandan communities struggle with water shortage and hunger. Furthermore, many refugees are not accustomed to farming and have difficulty in adapting to the different lifestyle.

Forced immobility and unequal access to resources create social tensions

Sizes of plots and distributed food rations differ according to region and time of the refugees' arrival. This creates resentment among refugee groups because some feel at a disadvantage compared with others. In cases where family members arrive later and receive a plot in a different refugee settlement, families often decide to stay together and share a plot and food rations. Forced immobility resulting from the fact that aid provision is limited to the settlements and the costs for transportation are high constrain the livelihood options of refugees.

Local communities are not necessarily better off than refugees

Uganda's West Nile region has been historically marginalised. In particular, infrastructure has remained poor. Thus especially in the northern regions, large parts of the local Ugandan population are not better off than refugees are. International food distributions enable some refugees to hire locals to work for them, e.g. constructing their houses, digging out latrines. Yet, their situation remains poor and is far from reaching self-sufficiency. Diversified and long-term jobs, training and secondary education

opportunities remain scarce for all refugee groups as well as parts of the rural population in northern Uganda. The case of self-settled refugees in Arua town provides a different picture. Here, preexisting business and family networks, remittances sent from South Sudan or countries of the Global North considerably enable prospects for de facto local integration.

Shared displacement experiences, ethnic kinship between refugees and the local Ugandan population and direct benefits for the local Ugandan population facilitate social integration

The shared experience of displacement of Ugandans and refugees, as well as ethnic and cultural ties between parts of the refugees and locals, contribute to empathy and solidarity between the two groups. Locals are especially welcoming towards refugees in areas in which they see the actual benefit of the aid distributed, such as new water holes or schools. On the other hand, historical grievances and conflict negatively affect the opportunities for social integration, a fact that has in some cases been ignored while setting up the refugee settlements. Moreover, resentment has grown as of late due to the increasing number of refugees.

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Introduction

Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa and is, after Turkey and Pakistan, the third-largest recipient country of refugees worldwide with almost 1.1 million refugees, mostly South Sudanese (UNHCR, 2018m). South Sudanese also represent the largest group of newly displaced refugees in the world.

Political and humanitarian actors have widely praised Ugandan refugee policies because of their progressive nature: In Uganda, in contrast to many other countries that host refugees, these are *de jure* allowed to work, to establish businesses, to access public services such as education, to move freely and have access to a plot of land (Refugee Act, 2006; Krause, 2016). The majority of refugees live in one of the designated refugee settlements (in the official political discourse, these are understood as long-term structures as opposed to refugee camps) which are intended to provide refugees with a degree of self-sufficiency. As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi stated at the beginning of 2018: "Uganda has the most progressive refugee policies in Africa, if not the world".

In 1999, the Self-Reliance Strategy was introduced in Uganda which sought to integrate services provided to refugees into existing public service structures and make refugee settlements self-reliant by allocating land to refugees and allowing them free access to government health and education services (Hovil, 2018, p. 5). Since 2016, Uganda has implemented the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) strategy which aims at harmonising the refugee response in Uganda by integrating refugee programming into the national development plan.¹ ReHoPE is a key component of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Uganda, a multi-stakeholder approach with the objective of easing pressure on host countries and enhancing

¹ \ ReHoPE is based on the Self-Reliance Strategy (SRS) which was jointly designed by the Office of the Prime Minister and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Uganda in 1999. It was conceptualised specifically for then Sudanese refugees living in West Nile recognizing the long-term nature of their situation. Its overarching goal was to "integrate the services provided to the refugees into regular government structures and policies" and in doing so "moving from relief to development".

self-reliance of refugees.² The CRRF was one of the outcomes of the New York Declaration on Refugees that was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 19 September 2016. Uganda is a pilot country of the CRRF (UNHCR, 2017) and considered to be a role model for other countries (by political actors).

However, can Uganda indeed be taken as a role model for refugee integration, as largely portrayed in the media and the political discourse when looking at the envisaged launch of the Global Compact on Refugees, one of the outcomes of the CRRF? The authors will address this question by investigating the challenges to local integration and self-reliance of refugees in Uganda. How do refugees in Uganda cope with the challenges of displacement and how do they regard their situation? The focus lies on the perspectives of the refugees and their receiving populations, also considering the point of view of local and international aid agencies to understand how self-reliance strategies have so far been employed and what challenges remain.³

The centre of attention of this *Paper* is not *de jure* integration, understood as the successive granting of rights and opportunities by the government culminating in the granting of citizenship rights in the receiving country. Instead, we focus on *de facto* integration defined by Jacobsen as a condition where "refugees are not in physical danger, are able to sustain livelihoods through access to land or employment, and can support themselves and their families, have access to education and vocational training" (2001, p. 9). *De facto* local integration of displaced persons is a gradual process and manifests itself in livelihood strategies resulting in better chances for participation in society while self-reliance, as defined by UNHCR

² \ Building on the existing Ugandan policy approaches, the CRRF in Uganda officially addresses five mutually-reinforcing areas: Admission and rights; emergency response and ongoing needs; resilience and self-reliance of refugees; expansion of third country solutions and complementary pathways (such as scholarships and student visas), and finally voluntary repatriation, which in the current situation focuses on investment in human capital and transferrable skills as well as support to the countries of origin.

³ \ In February 2017, the glorious picture of refugee integration in Uganda was briefly damaged when Ugandan aid officials were accused of fraud; inflating refugee numbers and misusing aid money. As a consequence, a biometric verification system was introduced (Guardian, 2018; Angenendt & Biehler, 2018).

(2006), is "the social and economic ability of an individual [...] to meet essential needs, such as [...] food, water, personal safety [...] and education, in a sustainable manner" (p. 1). As the definition of self-reliance contains the goals of achieving sustainable livelihoods and accessing education and safety, we assume here that self-reliance is an integral part of the process of local integration. However, *de facto* integration goes beyond self-reliance and includes as well that refugees are socially networked into the host community" (Jacobsen, 2001, p. 9). At the same time, the authors argue that self-reliance without the socio-economic integration of the individual is hardly achievable.

Thus, in this *Paper*, we will analyse not only structural factors shaping the opportunities for self-reliance and *de facto* local integration but also power relations between refugee communities and local Ugandan communities. This approach corresponds to claims in livelihood studies that power needs to be included as "an important explanatory variable" in our understanding of livelihoods⁴ (De Haan & Zoomers, 2005 in Geiser, 2016, p.44). Three criteria must be taken into account: structural factors such as access to rights and resources; individual factors such as skills; and intergroup relations as all three considerably shape livelihoods of displaced persons and members of the receiving communities and consequently also their prospects of achieving self-reliance.

The *Paper* thus focuses on access to land, employment and education, as well as on intra- and intergroup relations to identify the challenges to livelihoods and integration to assess Uganda's self-reliance and settlement approach against its aspiration to provide opportunities for self-reliance of refugees and refugee-receiving Ugandan communities.⁵

⁴ \ Livelihoods are defined as "the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term" (Chambers & Conway, 1991).

⁵ \ Cernea (2000) in his Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction (IRR) Model has also identified these factors among others as the main components to reduce the risk of impoverishment.

Our empirical insights presented below complement earlier research on refugee livelihoods in Uganda (e.g. Hovil, 2007; Betts et al, 2016; Monteith & Lwasa, 2017; Kaiser, 2006, 2010) with our strong focus on the receiving communities and intergroup relations.

The *Paper* is based on field research which was conducted from July to September 2017 in Uganda within the framework of the project "Protected rather than protracted: Strengthening refugees and peace" which was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Though the focus of this *Paper* lies on South Sudanese refugees in the northern part of Uganda, we also include some data we gathered on Burundian and Congolese refugees in the south of the country to complement the picture and identify similarities and differences of refugee livelihoods in the respective areas.

While most refugees in Uganda are from South Sudan, Uganda has recently also witnessed a new vast influx of people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and hosts a large number of mostly Burundians who find themselves in protracted displacement in the south of the country. The *Paper* deals with these three largest refugee groups in Uganda but pays particular attention to the first. Differences of their situations, as well as common challenges that they face, will be analysed and compared. In addition, and especially with regard to intergroup relations and their impact on the prospects of self-reliance and local integration, the authors also scrutinise socio-economic differences between settlement-based and urban refugees in the north of Uganda. While most refugees in Uganda live in designated refugee settlements, as of March 2018, seven per cent of the total number of refugees in Uganda have been categorised as urban refugees (UNHCR, 2018e).

In the *Paper*, the authors first provide a brief background and overview of the regional displacement dynamics before presenting the methodology of how they analysed the situation of refugees in Uganda regarding self-reliance and local integration. In a next step, they present their field research findings focusing on three main aspects: Access to land, employment and intergroup relations. They conclude their analysis with a description of the challenges and limitations of the current refugee policies in Uganda.

Regional displacement dynamics

Uganda is characterised by a long history of displacement with people from neighbouring countries, such as South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burundi moving back and forth and has also experienced large-scale internal and cross-border displacement.⁶ By November 2018, more than 1.1 million refugees lived in Uganda (UNHCR, 2018m). Around 71 per cent of all refugees in Uganda were from South Sudan.⁷

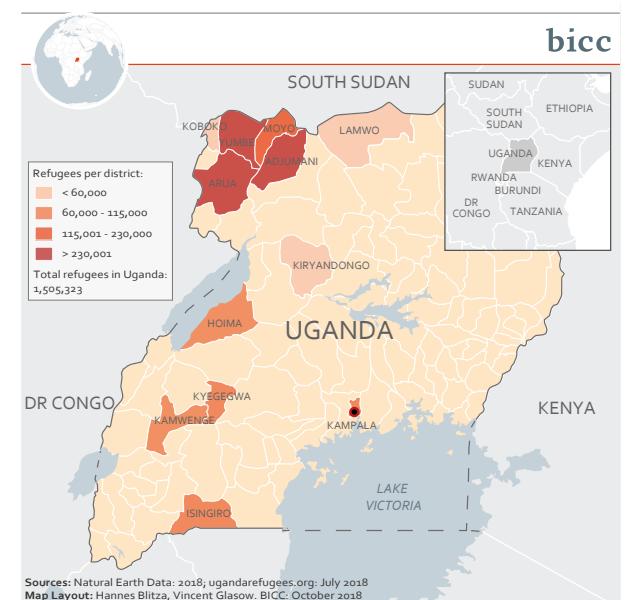
Refugees from South Sudan

Most of the refugees from South Sudan are settled in the borderlands to South Sudan in Yumbe (286,859), Arua (270,390), Adjumani (257,104) and Moyo (151,304) in north-western Uganda (UNHCR, 2018a). After 22 years of civil war between the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) and the successive governments of Sudan, South Sudan gained independence in 2011. In 2013, a new war broke out in South Sudan. Since then, several attempts to reach a peace agreement between the rivalling South Sudanese opponents, President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar, have failed. After the peace agreement (Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan—ARCISS) of August 2015, fighting between the forces of Machar and the army erupted again in July 2016. Machar fled to the DRC and was later detained in South Africa (e.g. Dessu, 2018; Maasho, 2018). Further peace talks only led to unstable and short phases of a cease-fire, while

⁶ \ By the beginning of the 1980s, after the Tanzanian army had invaded Uganda and overthrew the regime of Idi Amin, large parts of the population of West Nile fled across the borders to avoid persecution by Ugandan forces. In the 1990s, rebel groups sponsored by Sudan such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the West Nile Bank Front caused instability and further displacements (Leopold, 2009, p.472). It is estimated that at that time, some 90 per cent of the population of northern Uganda were uprooted as a result of conflict between the LRA and the government. Considerable additional displacement has been caused by armed cattle raiders from the north-eastern Karamoja region (Miller, 2007).

⁷ \ Refugees from different countries of origin and different ethno-linguistic groups show certain settlement patterns and preferences to settle in certain destination countries or areas within those countries. The regional approach of our research project "Protected rather than protracted" allowed us to identify factors that affect these settlement patterns. These are, among others, the geographic distance, preexisting (family) networks, ethno-linguistic factors, socio-economic factors, a deteriorated security situation and perceived livelihood perspectives.

Map 1
Refugees per district



armed fractions splintered and the number of opposition groups increased. In five years of war, it has become difficult to distinguish clear conflict trends (Beaumont, 2018). On 27 June 2018, a new peace agreement was signed in Khartoum by Kiir and Machar and included more representatives of different opposition groups than before. However, the agreed impunity of the atrocities committed by all actors involved in the conflict and the diverse geopolitical interests of the neighbouring countries question its viability. Uganda is considered a supporter of Kiir, whereas Sudan supports Machar (New York Times, 2018, Tanza, 2018), reflecting old-established alliances from the civil war between Sudan and then Southern Sudan (1983–2005). Indeed, the ceasefire foreseen in the peace agreement was violated hours after its declaration (Reuters, 2018c). A professor at Columbia University and director of the Institute of Social Research at Makerere University in Kampala (Uganda) states: "The future of South Sudan is likely to be marred by continuing chaos until a single dominant group emerges out of it [...] and regional powers will likely be further drawn into the conflict" (New York Times,

2018). Displacement of South Sudanese to Uganda will most likely not end soon, but be there for years to come. Consequently, finding long-lasting integration measures for refugees in Uganda is vital.

Old and new arrivals

The South Sudanese refugee situation in Uganda is neither static nor linear. Because of oscillating conflict intensity and (short) periods of ceasefires, South Sudanese refugee movements are characterised by “back and forth movements” that started during the civil war in the 1980s and are ongoing. Most South Sudanese refugees and those internally displaced within the country have been displaced more than once.

Some of them have not returned to South Sudan, even after the comparatively longer period of less fighting after South Sudan’s declaration of independence in 2011. For some young South Sudanese, the chance of receiving a better education in Uganda played a role in their decision to stay there while their parents often returned to South Sudan. Besides education, scepticism concerning the peace processes were other reasons to stay. Some interviewed refugees have already lived in Uganda for several years or decades. The Ugandan government as well as international and local aid providers define South Sudanese refugees by their time of arrival in Uganda and therefore speak of ‘old and new caseloads’. Usually, ‘old caseloads’ refer to those who came before 2016 and ‘new caseloads’ to those who came in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

While the term ‘caseload’ in itself can be seen critically because it implies ‘a burden’, the differentiation between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ ones is important to note, as the time of arrival is one of the decisive factors for the location of the designated settlement of refugees, the size of land allocated to the refugee and the food ration provided.⁸

As fighting in South Sudan shifted to different regions, and more and more new groups were involved in the conflict, the ethnic composition of refugees from South Sudan in Uganda changed over time.

⁸ \ For the effects on social relations and opportunities for self-reliance, see section on land access.

In the beginning, mainly Dinka and Nuer, the two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan, were displaced from their homes in Upper Nile, Unity and Jonglei States. But as the conflict spilled over to the south and Eastern and Central Equatoria from July 2016 onwards, more and more people fled from these regions, mainly Kuku, Kakwa, Pojulu, Acholi and Madi, but also many others.⁹

Thus, the ethnic composition of refugees in Uganda is as diverse as the population of South Sudan. In Boroli settlement in Adjumani district in the north of Uganda, for example, 30 different ethnic groups from South Sudan are registered. However, not all refugee settlements are that ethnically diverse and not all are mixed. In Moyo, for example, mainly Nuer and Equatorians have settled. In Odubu I, it is mainly Dinka, and in Bidi Bidi most refugees come from the Equatoria region (interviews with Office of the Prime Minister - OPM and UNHCR, July 2017).

Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The second-largest group of refugees in Uganda are those from the DRC with a total of 316,968 by the end of July 2018. Refugees from the DRC came to Uganda in 1999 due to the Second Congolese War. In 2010, Uganda signed a Tripartite Agreement with the DRC and the UNHCR that intended to assist return movements, but due to the protracted instability in the east of their home country, refugees were hesitant to return (UNHCR & ATCR, 2014). As violence in Ituri and North Kivu provinces of the DRC escalated in December 2017, new Congolese refugees came to western Uganda mainly. By 13 February 2018, it was estimated that about 34,000 people had crossed the border from the DRC to Uganda in 2018 (Start Network & acaps, 2018). Most Congolese refugees (78,084) live in Rwamwanja (UNHCR, 2018f).

⁹ \ Western Equatorians are a minority group among the Equatorians in refuge in Uganda, with geography playing a significant role for their trajectory of displacement. Western Equatoria is closer to the DRC and Central African Republic (CAR). Thus, despite the glorification of Uganda’s refugee policy, many Western Equatorians found it difficult to access Uganda (information provided by South Sudanese male, Kakwa, Arua, November 2018).

Refugees from Burundi

The third-largest group of refugees in Uganda is from Burundi; they have been in the country for the longest. Recently, however, new movements to Uganda have been observed. There are currently 40,765 Burundian refugees, located mainly in the south of Uganda. Most of them are in the administrative district of Isingiro with 32,632 and 7,814 in Kampala and 2,121 in Kyegegwa. Many of the Burundian refugees first came in the early 1990s when the fighting between the Burundian government and Hutu rebel groups started (NRC, 2005; UNHCR, 2018a). Although the civil war officially ended in 2005, the ceasefire between the government and the only remaining active rebel group (National Liberation Forces (FNL)) failed in 2007 (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2008; UNHCR, 2018a). This failure induced a new refugee movement to Uganda in 2007. As the peace agreement was not implemented, the movement continued so that by 2014, 11,903 Burundians had fled to Uganda. As the Burundian President Pierre Nkurunzizab announced his highly debated move to seek a third term in office, political conflicts arose in Burundi from April 2015 on. Until November 2015, about 200 people were killed. Political repression and human rights abuses such as arbitrary arrests or extrajudicial killings increased the fear of a renewed civil war (Al Jazeera, 2015). The Imbonerakure, a youth organisation affiliated with Nkurunzizab, the National Intelligence Services and security forces are considered to be responsible for those atrocities. These three forces closely cooperate with each other as well as with the government. Furthermore, the Imbonerakure even took de facto state control in some areas (Canada: Federal Court of Appeal, 2018). These developments induced renewed refugee movements to Uganda so that in 2017, 38,245 Burundian refugees were recorded (Bentley, Oyuke, Penar & Sebudandi, 2016; UNHCR, 2018a).

While some Burundian refugees had first fled to Tanzania, they moved to Uganda later on because the Tanzanian government had started to take on more restrictive measures against refugees, such as restricting their movements (Chiasson, 2015) and

forcing them to repatriate to Burundi and closing camps. Burundian refugees interviewed in Uganda who have tried to return to Burundi stated that they were no longer considered to be "Burundians" after their year-long stays in Tanzania (interviews with Burundians, Oruchinga, August 2017).

To sum up, the region is facing various and intermingling displacement dynamics that combine decade-long situations of protracted displacements with newer flows of displaced persons. The effects of Uganda's refugee policy on the conditions under which refugees try to secure their livelihoods and to socially integrate into the Ugandan society, however, differ considerably as will be outlined in the Chapter on intergroup relations (p. xxx ff.).

Methodology

To analyse the situation of these three refugee groups, particularly the first one, we conducted three months of field research from July to September 2017 in Uganda. Our South Sudanese research assistant John Kenyi collected and contributed additional longitudinal data covering the period from summer 2017 until early summer 2018. The following map shows the research locations covered in this study.

Map 2
Field research locations in Uganda



We used a qualitative approach to capture the perspectives of refugees and Ugandan receiving communities on their livelihood situation. In total, we undertook 100 semi-structured in-depth interviews and 15 group interviews or focus group discussions with both refugees and Ugandans. We conducted an additional 40 interviews with experts and key informants of the Office of the Prime Minister, district and sub-county representatives, international organisations, such as the UNHCR and World Food Programme, as well as international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as American Refugee Committee, Center for Democracy Initiative

South Sudan and Community Technology Empowerment Network (South Sudanese NGOs), Danish Refugee Council, GIZ, International Rescue Committee, Jesuit Refugee Services, KfW, Lutheran World Federation, Malteser International, Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council, Nsamizi (Ugandan), Oxfam, Red Cross, Samaritan Purse, UNRSPo, War Child Netherlands and Canada, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and Windele Trust. We also spoke with scholars from Makerere University. The 100 interviews with refugees and members of the local Ugandan communities were carried out with the help of several assistants and translators to be able to speak to members of different ethno-linguistic groups, including Acholi, Aringa, Dinka, Kakwa, Kuku, Lugbara, Nuer, Madi, Murle and Mundu. We were not able to select the interviewees at random because in many cases either village leaders in the refugee settings (Refugee Welfare Councils) or aid organisations did a pre-selection of potential interview-partners. Nevertheless, we tried to diversify the interviewees as much as possible with regard to age, religion, ethnic belonging, gender and socio-economic situation, rural and urban settlement, and, at the same time, we took into account what kind of groups are most presented within each village. We also interviewed representatives from youth and women's groups.

With the overall focus of the *Paper* on the micro/individual and group levels, we mainly focussed on refugee settlements and local Ugandan communities in rural areas but also included the cities of Arua and Kampala to be able to compare the situation of urban and rural refugees. In Arua, we conducted 26 interviews, in Kampala 20. However, in Kampala, for feasibility reasons, we were only able to interview young students—which, however, is also one of the main refugee groups within the city.¹⁰ The interviews have been complemented with on-the-spot observations and information that has been triangulated by our research assistants (one South Sudanese and one Ugandan), expert interviews as well as academic and grey literature.

¹⁰ \ The results of Kampala have not been considered in this *Paper* because the situation for students in Kampala are quite different to the other refugee groups in the country.

To be able to identify the challenges of integration and self-reliance, we used both a deductive and inductive approach. First, we drew on the Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model of Michael Cernea (2000) to analyse the situation of refugees and Ugandan communities. Cernea's model delineates the risks that come with displacement (causes of impoverishment) and offers indicators for measuring impoverishment and challenges of integration. This study mainly focuses on three of Cernea's indicators which we consider—based on our data—especially relevant as preconditions for self-reliance and *de facto* local integration in the Ugandan case. These factors are also prominent in the definitions of self-reliance and local integration we used (see Introduction):

- 1\ Landlessness and food insecurity vs. access to land, food and water;
- 2\ Joblessness vs. access to employment, training and business opportunities;
- 3\ Marginalisation and social disarticulation vs. social integration.

We also included the indicators protection risks, the ability to move freely and central-peripheral relations, as these factors also proved relevant for the access to livelihood options. We developed the latter indicators based on our field research findings, thus, taking both a deductive and inductive approach to analysing facilitators for and obstacles to integration and self-reliance.

Field research findings:

Parameters of de facto local integration

In this chapter, we will analyse the factors that influence the prospects for social integration and self-reliance of refugees, especially from South Sudan. It also includes a short overview of the situation of refugees from Burundi and the DRC, outlining the limitations and challenges of Uganda's settlement approach for all three-refugee groups. It analyses the situation of refugees regarding their access to land, food and water, as well as to employment, training and business opportunities.

Access to Land: Uganda's settlement approach

Since 1959, Uganda has been hosting refugees in village-style settlements. In northern Uganda, the local settlement programme for (then) Sudanese refugees started in 1992.

Uganda's settlement approach foresees that refugees are given a plot of land under the premise that this enables self-reliance in the medium- and long run. It is primarily this approach that has brought Uganda its reputation of a liberal and generous refugee policy. Refugee settlements are understood as long-term structures that offer the possibility for a degree of self-sufficiency as opposed to camps (Zakaryan, 2018). Our results demonstrate that while the settlement policy can be a major facilitator for social integration and sufficient land may foster self-reliance, at the same time, land access may cause tensions between refugees and Ugandans (see Chapter on inter-group relations).

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) negotiates the provision of land for the allocation of refugee settlements with the district governments. Negotiations ideally lead to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (see p.27). This process is often lengthy and complex and also depends on different types of land tenure systems in Uganda (cf. Zarayan, 2018, p. 6). Usually, negotiations with the communities are based on the commitment of OPM and UNHCR to install infrastructure such as health centres and schools in the affected districts which would benefit

Ugandan receiving communities. So far, there is an agreement that 30 per cent of international refugee assistance should directly target receiving communities. However, this agreement is contested, and districts are increasingly pushing for a 50/50 ratio.

The willingness of the local population to provide land for a refugee settlement differs depending on the general availability of land. For instance, the area where Rhino Camp refugee settlement is located is comparatively sparsely populated. Reportedly, the locals have so much land that they are not able to cultivate it all by themselves (interview with WHH worker, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, Eden, July 2017). "The agreement between UNHCR and hosts worked out: The hosts accepted that the refugees settle here, in exchange for schools and health centres" (interview with a South Sudanese founder and representative of an NGO, Arua, July 2017). In other areas, the negotiations with the landowners seem to be more difficult. Some community landowners in Olua I/II in Adjumani District, have reportedly reclaimed land that was previously rented to groups of refugee farmers and there are reports of local youth blocking aid delivery to refugee settlements (UNHCR, 2018h). Thus, the Ugandan settlement approach faces considerable challenges in several regions, especially with regard to the communities' consent to the allocation of land for refugee settlements.

The norm has been to provide 30x30 m² residential land and 50x50 m² for agriculture purposes to a household. However, some refugees, especially the new arrivals, have only been given a residential plot. Others were given an agriculture plot that was too far away from their residential plot. Some refugees received 25x25 m² and some only 13x20 m², which also created a sense of inequality between different refugee groups. When new family members arrive, they often want to settle with other family members who arrived earlier, yet there is no space for them on the same spot of land. Thus, interviewees in Rhino Camp refugee settlement, for example, mentioned that they would settle next to the family and try to rent their other plot to someone else.

Practices of getting land

Besides using the officially designated and distributed plots, refugees themselves negotiate with the local population to lease land for cultivation. In some cases, the owners ask for a seasonal rent; in other cases and areas, local landowners leave land to the refugees for free or receive a share of the harvest. Many refugees who cultivate food on someone else's land reported that they would sometimes share some fruits or vegetables with the landowner (group interview with WHH farmer field group, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, Eden, July 2017). Some refugees 'bought' land from Ugandan landowners, though local landowners are legally not allowed to sell land titles, but would give land to the refugees "for the sake of development." The land allocated to the refugees often is bushland which needs to be cleared before cultivation can begin. Accordingly, the landowner also might expect to profit in the future, once the refugees return to their country of origin (interview with Mundu Leader, Arua, July 2017).

Another strategy of obtaining more land is cultivating empty plots or land that has been abandoned by other refugees, because they returned to their countries of origin, relocated to unite with their families in other settlements (often without receiving a new plot there) or settled in town but still stay registered as refugees to receive rations.

Constraints to cultivation: Small plots, poor soil and seeds, insecurity and lack of skills

Our research reveals that the aspiration of the settlement policy to enable self-sufficiency of refugees has not been met as neither the size nor the quality of the allocated plots allow for meaningful agricultural production. In Rhino Camp and Nakivale refugee settlements, the soil is reportedly infertile, and the local population struggles with water shortage. Refugees complain that the quality of the seeds provided by aid agencies to grow okra, maize, cassava or tomatoes was poor.

Drought has been a problem in the southern region of the country. Besides poor soil quality and drought in some areas, insects also affected the harvest. Roam-

ing cattle were another cause of crop failure:

"The cattle don't stay in the agreed zones, but destroy everything" (focus group discussion with Dinka community, Odobo I, Rhino camp refugee settlement, July 2017).

Refugees not only complain about the inadequately small size and poor soil quality of the plots but also about their location as access to services such as education and health services is difficult.¹¹ The distance to health facilities and schools, however, is also a problem for local Ugandans.

The plots' sizes differ in each settlement, and plots are often reduced to accommodate newly arriving refugees. Urban refugees, such as in Kampala and Arua, are not considered at all by the settlement approach.

The fact of having been granted a plot of land to settle on does not necessarily guarantee access to land for food production. As of March 2017, only 55.1 per cent of all refugees had land that was suitable for household food production (OPM/UNHCR Inter-Agency Presentation, Food Security and Nutrition Assessment, Kampala, Uganda, 10 March 2017, in Zarkayan 2018, p.4). A Congolese, 22-year-old female refugee in Nakivali also reports that "there is no land to cultivate" (interview, Nakivali, August 2017).

Another factor that impedes cultivation is perceived insecurity. In various interviews, Dinka refugees, in particular, mentioned that they would hardly leave their residential area as they feared harassment and violence by fellow (non-Dinka) refugees. Other groups of refugees behave the same as they fear members of the Ugandan local communities. In Bidi Bidi, for instance, women reported:

We received our plots of land to dig on it, but we haven't started digging yet. We fear the nationals. They don't want refugees on their land. We would dare to go there in a group for digging, but never by ourselves (focus group discussion at women's centre, Bidi Bidi, Zone 3, village 1).

¹¹ \ Reportedly, refugees tried to actively obtain plots of land from local land owners in the refugee settlements they desperately wanted to be in—with an established population and better services, such as health and education facilities, rather than being taken to peripheral remote bushes. Some new arrivals for example opted to remain around Ocea reception centre, as there was a school, a health center and a small market (information provided by a South Sudanese refugee, Arua, November 2018).

Finally, the settlement approach is challenged by the fact that it is based on the assumption that all refugees wish and know how to cultivate the land. Many of the settlement-based refugees, however, do not bring agricultural expertise but had been working in other sectors of the South Sudanese economy. Also in the south, many refugees from Burundi and the DRC state that they are not used to cultivating land. A 58-year-old refugee man in Juru, Nakivali, also expresses that "children do not want to dig" (August, 2017). Those that do cultivate in the south grow mainly beans, cassava or maize. Previous expertise often gets lost as the rural and remote environment of the settlements hardly offers alternative employment opportunities, and those with non-agricultural skills hardly have any livelihood option there. The following quote illustrates such disrupted livelihood trajectories:

I reached the reception centre on 1 July 2016. When the war began, soldiers attacked our village, and my sister was killed. I fled to the bush with my own four children plus the four orphans of my sister. We walked for 12 days—only me with eight children. While we fled, I got separated from my husband. I formerly worked for Mine Action and had a small trading business. Agriculture is completely new for me. We are starting a new life here. I am stranded. There is nothing we can do here (young woman from Lainya, Yei River State during a group discussion with a Farmer Field Group from Yei River State, recently arrived in July and August 2016, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, Ocea Zone, Katiku, 3 July 2017).

Shortage of water

The sustainability of the settlement approach is also challenged by the shortage of water—the lack of rain in the summer of 2017 and dropping groundwater level have a profound effect on the communities in the West Nile and the southern region. In the south, near Nakivali settlement, a small lake is the only source of water that, for one, is drying out and, for the other, not very clean. As a Congolese refugee describes: "The problem is water: A challenge in the long dry season" (21-year-old DRC refugee, Nakivali, August 2017). A 46-year-old woman from the local community in

Kityaza village, near Nakivali, also explains that drought is a problem which prevents them from growing enough food.

In the north, aid agencies are drilling boreholes ever deeper into the ground (e.g. up to 100m in Rhino Camp refugee settlement), but still, parts of the population cannot access them as they are too far away. UNHCR reports of poor quality groundwater and the ensuing need for the construction of piped water networks in Rhino Camp and other settlements, such as in the south. Until the construction is finished, the settlement is dependent on water trucking. Reportedly, the quality of trucked water is also poor (UNHCR, 2018k). In Rhino Camp, 53 per cent of water needs are met through water trucking compared to 21 per cent in Bidi Bidi (UNHCR, 2018l). Although in the Adjumani region, there are fewer water shortages, the amount of water per person per day needed still exceeds the 8.9 litres that are provided by 11.1 litres) (UNHCR, 2018h). In some areas, refugees are better supplied with water than Ugandan communities.¹²

Hence, improved access to water as a consequence of the newly drilled boreholes and the agreement between aid agencies and OPM that for every two boreholes drilled for the refugee population, one is drilled for a Ugandan community, is a very tangible benefit of the refugees' presence for many Ugandans in the West Nile region. Anselia, a 28-year-old Ugandan woman in Tika, Rhino Camp (refugee) settlement, recounts:

Here, most refugees arrived 15 years ago. Before the new refugees [in 2016] arrived, we had to walk four kilometres to fetch water. Now, it is very close. But still, our main problems are the poor road conditions, and that we do not have enough manpower to dig the land (interview with female Ugandan, Tika, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, July 2017).

But still, long queues at the water points lead to heightened tensions among the refugees and

¹² \ A survey by REACH among refugee and local Ugandan households in Moyo finds that 54 per cent of refugee households and 57 per cent of receiving community households reported not having enough water to cover their basic needs. In Moyo, 27 per cent of the interviewed Ugandans reported distance as the main challenge to collecting water. Among the interviewed refugees, only 13 per cent of refugees mentioned this (UNHCR, Multi-sector Needs Assessment: Moyo District, Uganda, August, 2018).

between refugees and Ugandans, sometimes escalating violently (see pp. 25).

To conclude this chapter, our results demonstrate the limitations of the settlement approach in Uganda with regard to access to land and water. In practice, livelihood conditions in the Ugandan refugee settlements do not differ considerably from traditional camps elsewhere, and conditions for self-sufficiency in most cases remain dire.

Access to employment, training and business opportunities

This section analyses the factors that enable and restrict refugees' access to employment, training and business opportunities.

Few and unsustainable job opportunities

Besides the quality and size of arable land as well as access to water, access to employment can be an important facilitator for integration. In Uganda, all refugee groups have the right to work as is enshrined in the Ugandan Refugee Act from 2006, Article 29(1) (UNDP, 2017). Yet, many refugees in the refugee settlements have little employment opportunities, let alone sustainable ones. In Nakivale refugee settlement in the south, Somali refugees hire Congolese or Rwandan refugees, for example, to do the laundry or fetch water for them. In the north, refugees reported hiring Ugandans for cultivating land, building houses or digging out latrines. Less frequently, refugees are hired by Ugandans (see pp. 20).

Often, aid agencies are the only employers in the region where refugee settlements are located, especially in the north of the country. Yet, work with aid agencies is often restricted to a short period and not sustainable.¹³ Besides, only those with English

¹³ For example, in Boroli refugee settlement, some refugees expressed that they got an income as "food unloaders" with aid agencies when the day of food distribution comes. Yet, this happens only on a few days and is not enough to guarantee an income. Thus, some refugees also sell part of their food ration to other refugees or Ugandans, even when the food ration is not enough for themselves. The aim behind is that they can also buy something different, for example, diversify their food or buy soap or other necessary household items or even pay school fees. Food rations are often also shortened due to funding delays. While in the beginning, some received 12kg of food (grains, such as maize or

language skills can find longer-term jobs with international aid agencies, such as hygiene promoter or translator. Also, many skill training activities offered by agencies were in English and not in Arabic or other local languages spoken by most of the refugees (focus group discussion, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, July 2017). Consequently, not many refugees can take part in the training activities or have the possibility to apply for the few jobs available.

The primary income-generating activities for refugees and Ugandans in areas receiving the most refugees are brick-making, retail trading and selling fruit and vegetables, such as tomatoes and bananas, or making soap. In the south, refugees, for example, try to access bigger markets, such as Bakere near Kyaka II, where they get fruit cheaper and then sell the same fruit at a higher price within their village. In the north, not many opportunities besides agriculture exist. But considering all constraints as pointed out above, there is seldom any surplus that can be sold.

Some refugees and receiving communities organise themselves with or without the help of aid agencies in farmer field groups, where they cultivate a field together. Others create saving groups that give loans to some members of the group. Many complain that the loan is often not sufficient to start a business, even if the required skills are present.

The few who have businesses in the marginalised north explain that there are few markets and "no buyers". As all have little, both refugees and local Ugandans, there is a lack of purchasing power. In the south, small businesses are more widespread, particularly in the base camp of Nakivale because it is like "a capital" (24-year-old male, Burundian refugee, Nakivali, August 2017). Tailoring has, for example, increased the income of some refugee families after women were trained by aid agencies and received knitting machines in Juru, Nakivali. Yet, this has also enhanced competition and jealousy between those

sorghum per month) many receive only half or even less now. As a result of this, many refugees as well as parts of the receiving communities suffer from hunger (especially in Yumbe and particularly those without alternative income sources but who solely rely on food distributions and/or their small plots of land).

who were successful and those who were not. Ideally, some women would have entered different markets and accessed buyers outside their village. Nevertheless, moving to another village or outside the refugee settlement is not that easy because in practice, freedom of movement is restricted, as will be outlined below. Thus, many refugees interviewed never went outside their settlement. This is true both in the north and south of Uganda.

While in the south, more small businesses are widespread, many refugees still do not have a job or state that it is "very tough to get an income" (24-year-old Burundian refugee, Bujumbura near Nakivali, August 2017). The income from a small shop where they sell charcoal, fruit, rice, maize and oil, for example, is not enough to sustain a living. Only through support, such as rent that one woman received from Burundi, can she provide for herself (interview with 45-year-old Burundian refugee, Oruchinga, September 2017). There are also tensions between those businesses or associations, such as youth groups, that receive support from others, such as aid organisations, and those that do not, explains another refugee (interview with Burundian refugee, Nakivali, August 2017). The unequal distribution of aid to refugees is also a cause of tension among refugees.

As many refugees or local Ugandans do not find jobs, have nothing to do or do not earn enough to make a living, they turn to other activities. Several aid agencies pointed out the problem of gambling and sport-betting within refugee settlements, both in the north and the south. Yet, these negative coping strategies are neither sustainable nor do they foster self-reliance, but rather create social tensions. Wives of the mostly male gamblers complain that they spend all the money, and this leads to quarrels within families.

In the capital Kampala, too, employment opportunities for refugees are scarce. Many of the mostly Congolese and Somali refugees in Kampala work in the informal sector, but due to the growing competition, they cannot earn enough money to meet the basic needs (Montheith et al., 2017). They often live in slums or other informal settlements (Addaney, 2017).

The north has long been neglected by the central government

In Uganda, refugees are mainly administered centrally through the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR. This centralistic approach has advantages from a management perspective in that it facilitates coherent management of refugees, yet it also causes several problems. For one, it delays activities and projects of aid organisations as everything needs to be coordinated with OPM in Kampala, first. While there are representatives of OPM at each settlement location (the settlement commandants and/or their subordinates), they often need prior approval from headquarters through the refugee desk offices in the regions—such as in Arua and Adjumani towns. There is a lack of coordination and information exchange between districts and regions which have different interests and aims. For the other, local government and district officials often feel insufficiently informed about the activities planned or conducted by OPM and aid organisations in their districts, which leads to mistrust. Frustration and resentment among local governments towards the central government is widespread, as the northern parts of Uganda have experienced a long history of marginalisation and negligence by the central government—the supporters of President Yoweri Museveni are rather from the central and western regions. The poverty line is the highest in the northern region, which is also the least represented politically (Hitchen, 2017). Consequently, job opportunities not only for refugees but also for the local population are rare. The centralised administration of ReHoPE by the OPM bears the risk of constructing a parallel system to the existing local institutions at the district and sub-county level. Currently, they are underfunded and do not have the capacity to manage the refugee influx. Aid organisations step in to fill the gap of support in the north, contributing to a perpetuation of the Ugandan central government's politics of neglect towards the north.

In some settlements, the situation of the local Ugandan population is worse than that of refugees, who receive food aid whereas the Ugandans do not.

A refugee representative in the Boroli refugee settlement comments: "The nationals here are also suffering" (interview with refugee representative, July 2017). "Refugees and hosts have the same problem: The shortage of food" (interview with a Dinka woman who arrived in 1987, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, July 2017).

Freedom of movement in practice restricted

In principle, refugees have the right to move freely in Uganda. However, there is a variety of mostly structural factors that impede mobility. The poor road or transport infrastructure for instance constrains the mobility of settlement-based refugees and that of members of the receiving communities. Most of the refugee settlements are located in remote areas. In Nakivale, the only possibility to move at night is to use transport trolleys. The next bigger town is 60 km away. In northern Uganda, women reported not going out because they were afraid of assaults.

This year some Kakwa attacked a Dinka lady in a car. Since that incident, we only enter a car to Arua when the driver is a national [Ugandan]. It is even more difficult for the Dinka to travel in-between the clusters because Equatorians are settled there. There have been three security incidents where Dinka women and children in cars were attacked since 2015/16 (focus group discussion with Dinka, Odobo I, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, 10 July 2018).

Refugees did not only mention being afraid of fellow refugees but also the local receiving community. "The refugees are afraid that they may be harmed by the natives if they move freely because sometimes there are bad feelings from the natives as they believe that the refugees have come to grab their land" (interview with a 26-year-old South Sudanese woman based in Rhino Camp refugee settlement who fled in July 2016 from Yei and returned to Yei in February 2018, Nyangbara tribe, Arua town, October 2017).

Besides security-related constraints to free movement, financial constraints also play a role. Transportation is expensive, and many people in remote areas cannot afford it. Only the better-off manage to move from the settlements to the town where they rent

houses. They often remain registered in the settlements, but either give their distribution cards to other people (to receive rations for them on distribution dates) or come to the settlements only to receive their rations on a specific date and take them to town.

Despite the tense security situation in the borderlands and frequent attacks by the warring factions¹⁴ on the transit roads, movement to South Sudan takes place:

While the majority of the South Sudanese who find safety in the refugee camps [settlements] have not moved anywhere apart from the movements within the camps [...], a small portion of refugees keeps moving between Uganda and South Sudan. Most of the reasons for these movements are either to search for jobs back home or to visit their relatives. Some also return to South Sudan to process their money trapped in the banks so as to establish some businesses in the camps—like a grinding mill as a source of livelihood (interview with 42-year-old South Sudanese, Director of South Sudan Integrated Mine Action Service, whose family fled to Kampala—Uganda. Juba, April 2018).

Others reportedly return temporarily to bring in the harvest or take care of their cattle which they are not allowed to bring to Uganda.

Even though refugees have the right of free movement, some do not know about it, and some are still stopped by police or government officials on occasions and report that they are required to get a permit to be allowed to travel beyond West Nile from the refugee settlements. There are several checkpoints on the road, particularly to Kampala. If one does not have a travel document, one can get arrested (report of a South Sudanese refugee from Arua town, July 2017). Cars with a South Sudanese license plate seem to be stopped more frequently than Ugandan cars (interview with 38-year-old South Sudanese male from Yei River State, Pojulu, Arua, March 2018). Also in

¹⁴ | The SPLA-IO is a main South Sudanese political party and rebel group that split from the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) party and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) – then South Sudanese national army in December 2013, due to political tensions which turned violent between President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar over leadership of the SPLM (now SPLA is renamed as 'South Sudan People's Defense Force - SSPDF').

Kyaka II, in south-west Uganda, an NGO officer reported that refugees often need a permit from OPM when they want to travel outside the refugee settlement (Kyaka II, September 2017). Because of these hindrances, many refugees are afraid to or cannot move freely and thus, can also not access other markets or find jobs elsewhere.

Sense of hopelessness and limited opportunities for secondary education

Among many refugees who have been in Uganda for a very long time, such as those in the southern settlements, a sense of hopelessness prevails. For them, the only hope, as they say, is resettlement, although the quotas have been reduced dramatically. Because of the poor prospects of finding a job, some parents and refugee youth in the southern settlements consider education unnecessary. For many other young people, however, education is a high priority. 60 per cent of the refugees in Uganda are children (UNHCR, 2018e).

Because of insufficient numbers of school buildings, school is often cancelled because of rain once the rainy season has started, as teaching takes place outside (UNHCR, 2018l). Although there are no school fees for public primary schools as such, parents of refugee and Ugandan children alike have to pay for school uniforms, lunch and materials, repairs or a so-called development fee. Secondary schools are costly. Students who are better off prefer private schools despite their high costs because compared to public schools, there are fewer students and the quality of teaching is much better.

Yet, there are also many positive examples of training and small business enterprises that have been developed with the help of aid organisations who have provided refugees with micro-credits. Refugees themselves have organised themselves in different refugee associations, for instance in support of orphans and for film-making. They have also established an information-sharing portal. In Nakivale, refugee teachers have come together to run own schools, even though they suffer from the same lack of infrastructure as the regular schools. Still, the numbers of successful businesses and associations

remain small, and vocational training opportunities are limited, with the funding attention of aid organisations having shifted away from the south of Uganda and now focussing on the new South Sudanese arrivals in northern Uganda (and to some extent new Congolese arrivals in Kyangwale refugee settlement, western Uganda).

In this Chapter, the authors have shown that despite the right of refugees to work in Uganda, employment opportunities are minimal due to the remote location of many settlements within economically weak regions of the country, considerable constraints to the freedom of movement and insufficient education and training opportunities. Even self-settled refugees who, in the case of Arua, seem to be a lot more mobile and connected to translocal networks that often provide them with opportunities for businesses are struggling.

Intergroup relations

A description of the intergroup relations between refugee and receiving communities needs to take into account that neither refugees nor the Ugandan receiving communities are a homogeneous or a static group, but represent a variety of groups with different cultural and historical backgrounds, forms of livelihoods, etc. Relations and power hierarchies thus differ considerably in Ugandan regions and settlement areas, between settlement-based and urban refugees and between old and new arrivals. Moreover, relationships and power hierarchies are constantly changing due to ever-changing conflict dynamics and the political and humanitarian settings in which they are embedded, high population movements among displaced persons (circular movements, multiple displacements, onwards mobility) and evolving translocal support networks.

Socio-economic status commonalities and differences among refugees and Ugandans

Intra- and intercommunal relations are very much shaped by socio-economic status differences between refugees and local Ugandans as well as in-between different refugee groups. Regarding

relations and power structures between receiving communities and refugees, the concept of “established” and “outsiders” by Elias and Scotson (1965) has been applied to displacement contexts (Grawert & Mielke, 2018). According to Elias and Scotson, power hierarchies are shaped by the higher degree of social cohesion within the community of the “established” compared to the “outsiders” and by stigmatisation of the “outsiders”. In the Ugandan case, much more relevant for the power hierarchy of receiving communities and refugees than questions of social cohesion seem to be differences in the socio-economic status between different groups. Important factors explaining socio-economic status differences are access to resources, i.e. the receipt of humanitarian aid (in-kind and cash assistance), financial assets, translocal support structures and the resulting opportunities for spacial and social mobility.

Especially in the remote parts of the West Nile region, the livelihood conditions of local Ugandans are often very bad, and refugees and Ugandans face similar challenges in agricultural production. Due to the rations distributed by international aid organisations to newly arrived refugees, the socio-economic status of these in some cases exceeds not only the status of refugees who had arrived earlier in the settlements and thus no longer receive rations, but also of some local Ugandans. This affects social interaction and employment patterns in particular: In the northern refugee settlements, aid frequently enables refugees to hire either old arrivals (see pp. 17) or local Ugandans for constructing their houses or digging out the latrines in exchange for food, while it is a lot less frequent that Ugandans hire South Sudanese, reportedly because the local population has nothing to pay them with. Often, old arrivals of South Sudanese refugees depend entirely on this income source (interview female South Sudanese refugee, Dinka, who fled to Uganda in 1987, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, July 2017).

In the town of Arua, remittances decisively influence the socio-economic status of South Sudanese refugees and enable the South Sudanese educational elite to self-settle in the district capitals rather than being allocated to one of the refugee settlements, to stay at a boarding school in Uganda or to set up

businesses.¹⁵ It is very common for the better-off South Sudanese (e.g. those occupying government posts in South Sudan or working in the international humanitarian sector in South Sudan, Somalia or elsewhere or those living in the United States, Asia and Australia) to support South Sudanese relatives in Uganda. Many self-settled South Sudanese in Arua have also been to Uganda before as educational migrants, and we find numerous South Sudanese businessmen who maintain transnational business and political networks in the region or even worldwide. Others have succeeded to establish new businesses in Uganda. Accordingly, it has been repeatedly stated by Ugandans and South Sudanese alike that South Sudanese in Arua do not take up 3D (dirty, dangerous, demeaning) jobs but rather local Ugandans. This indicates that livelihood conditions, especially in economic terms, are a lot better for the educational and economic elites among South Sudanese refugees than for settlement-based refugees and many local Ugandans.¹⁶

Yet, being dependent on the translocal support networks often counteracts efforts aiming at achieving self-reliance. The high dependency of self-settled individual South Sudanese refugees or even entire communities in Arua on these networks becomes visible for instance when the flow of remittances dries up as is reflected in the following quote:

The community went through difficult times, which included the killing of a community member who had worked with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Sudan and his brother—both at the former's home in Juba. Their family, which was in Arua had to be relocated to the refugee settlement, as they were no longer able to afford life in Arua town without the support of the breadwinner from South Sudan (focus group discussion with Moru men, Arua, October 2017).

¹⁵ In some cases, remittances enable individuals to set up businesses as it was the case of John, who lives with his family in his brother's house in Pajulu Sub-County, Arua district. His brother is a businessman in Juba and sends remittances to the family. The rations he is still receiving in Imvepi refugee settlement are used additionally to be sold in the small shop he set up with the help of these remittances (interview with South Sudanese Pojulu, Pajulu Sub-County, Arua District, March 2018).

¹⁶ In contrast, in Kampala, the majority of urban refugees are from DRC and Somalia and often live in the slums or other informal settlements and work in the informal sector (Montheith et al., 2017; Addaney, 2017).

The extent to which the socio-economic status shapes intergroup relations is illustrated by reports of several interviewees about discriminatory practices that are based on the assumption that South Sudanese are generally better-off than the local population:

Sometimes, they [South Sudanese] get mistreatment from people in Uganda; like in the hospitals, where they do not treat them fairly. At times, they give drugs to the Ugandans freely, but ask for money from the South Sudanese. [...] There is a community water well which charges each family that fetches water from it about two thousand Ugandan Shillings (UGX) [€0.48] for three times in a year, but they over-charge the South Sudanese to pay 3000 UGX [€ 0.72] or 4000 UGX [0.96€] per family, that is 12000 UGX [2.16€] per family per year, respectively. But [...] one can buy a jerry can of water at 200 UGX [0.04€], without any discrimination (interview with Lugbara Ugandan woman, Pajulu sub county, Arua district, September 2017).

Therefore refugee livelihoods in Uganda cannot be generalized, since the conditions of old vs. new arrivals and settlement-based and self-settled refugees differ considerably. Especially in the southern part of Uganda where mostly Burundians and Congolese are settled, their situation is a lot worse than that of the local population. Besides, even if in some cases, settlement-based and self-settled refugees are equally well- or better-off than the local Ugandan population, it by far does not mean that the refugees are self-reliant: Most remain highly dependent either on aid or remittances, and their livelihood situation often remains difficult.

Cultural commonalities & differences between South Sudanese and Ugandan ethnolinguistic groups

The relationship between Ugandans and South Sudanese is also determined in part by cultural ties and ethnolinguistic commonalities. Belonging to a specific group often does not depend on nation-state-related categories, but rather on ethnolinguistic

relations that predate colonial border making.¹⁷ Several ethnolinguistic groups span across the borders between South Sudan, Uganda and the DRC, most prominently the Kakwa, Acholi and the Lugbara, while the Mundu, Keliko and Avokaya are in South Sudan and the DRC.¹⁸

Ever since there have been close contacts and continuous cross-border flows of people and commodities, enhancing what Leopold calls “peoples’ ideas of cultural and political community” (2009, p. 475). Ethno-cultural commonalities have a direct impact on the acceptance of refugee settlements:

For example, in Koboko, where the natives are Kakwa, many Kakwa from South Sudan seem well received ‘back home’. Many had established here earlier and had their families in Koboko town. There were efforts from South Sudanese and Ugandan Kakwas alike to have some settlements established around Koboko so that their people could be near. That resulted in the creation of Lobule refugee settlement in Koboko [...] (interview with 38-year-old Kakwa from Yei, Arua town, April 2018).

Besides ethnocultural ties, a common language also plays a role in the effort to locally integrate:

Our relationship with the Ugandans is not all that bad. Because of the [similar] language [Lugbara and Lulu'bo], we can communicate with the Ugandans. There is no communication barrier. They consider us as some of them [...]” (interview with 21-year-old male Lulu'bo from former Juba county (former Central Equatoria State), Pajulu sub-county, Arua district, October 2017).

¹⁷ For an in-depth discussion on the ethnolinguistic landscape of Eastern Africa and questions of belonging see for example Leopold, 2009.

¹⁸ The ethnolinguistic groups on both sides of the South-Sudanese and Ugandan border share a history of marginalisation and being different from the dominant ethnolinguistic groups of both countries. The main groups of Uganda’s West Nile region are the Lugbara, Madi, Kakwa and Alur. With the exception of the Alur, these are speakers of Sudanic rather than Nilotc languages and are agriculturalists, not pastoralists, unlike those in other parts of northern Uganda, such as the Acholi and Langi peoples or the Karamojong (Leopold, 2009). Also the Equatorian people on the South Sudan side of the border, such as the Kuku and the Bari, are linguistically and culturally different from the majority of and dominant South Sudanese groups such as the Nuer and Dinka.

Accordingly, the interviewed refugees often mentioned that speaking different languages impedes local integration. To overcome the language barrier, especially those refugees who had spent years or decades already in Uganda reported that they proactively learned the local language, e.g. Lugbara. Moreover, Arabic (north) and Swahili (south) are often used as lingua franca.

Interethnic marriages between Ugandans and South Sudanese are quite rare as high dowries—especially for Nuer and Dinka women—impede intermarriages, as many interviewees confirm. Where interethnic marriages happen, these might, on the one hand, illustrate close contact and trustful relationships between some communities and, on the other, be a result of the families' economic needs.

Besides sociocultural commonalities, the interviewed aid organisations highlighted the shared experience of displacement of the Ugandan West Nile population and South Sudanese refugees as a factor contributing to the empathy and solidarity of the Ugandan local community. It is estimated that at that time, some 90 per cent of the population of northern Uganda were uprooted as a result of conflict between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the government (Leopold, 2009, p. 472).

Impact of the settlement structure on social relations

The Ugandan settlement policy in its official discourse strives for mixed settlements, i.e. villages where there is a mix of Ugandan and refugee households. We find mixed settlements especially among the Ugandan population and refugees who have not returned during one of the main return movements after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 and independence in 2011.¹⁹ However, in the majority of these “mixed” settlements, we find signs of segregation. The Ugandan communities live in one part of the settlement, and the refugee communities live away from them, e.g. on the other side of the road or around the newly established refugee settlements. “The nationals settle at the outskirts of the village.”

¹⁹ These South Sudanese refugees are usually referred to as the old ‘caseloads’.

Houses of refugees and nationals are not mixed” (meeting with OPM official, Bidi Bidi, Zone 1, village 1, July 2017). Another interviewee even stated: “Refugees are limited to the areas provided to them by UNHCR. [...] Refugees are not allowed to settle with citizens, except through intermarriages” (interview with male South Sudanese, Kuku, Arua, April 2018).

Refugees and local Ugandans alike reported that contact takes place at the market, at school, at the water points and health, worship and recreational centres. The degree of separation of receiving communities and refugee households not only depends on the location of plots assigned to refugees by OPM but also on the deliberate settlement preferences of refugees and Ugandans alike: Some refugees reported that they preferred to settle close to their compatriots instead of being settled apart or in-between the local population. Some even accepted to share plots and have less space for building their house and for cultivating, just to be able to be close to relatives or other members of their community. Security concerns, as in the case of the Dinka, also played a role for the wish to settle together with other Dinka (see below).

Yet, we also observed that, once refugees had been settled in one area, Ugandans settled around them, reportedly to gain better access to services provided by aid agencies (e.g. boreholes, schools, health centres, etc.) to these new settlements. Various interviewees also reported that both groups came together to celebrate ceremonies such as marriages and funerals. Especially in very remote areas and areas with scarce resources, Ugandans reported that they were happy about the South Sudanese settlers and actively pursued relationships with the refugees and supported one another.

I learn Arabic to better communicate with the refugees, and some of the refugees also already picked up some Lugbara. Before the refugees arrived, I felt lonely, since I stayed only with my grandfather, who passed away recently (focus group discussion with WHH farmer field group comprising both refugees and Ugandans, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, Eden, July 2017).

While in the north of the country, many refugee settlements and Ugandan villages are located side by side as described above, refugees in the south, such as in Nakivale, live mostly separated from locals. This also holds true for the base camp, the main settlement within Nakivale. Rubonga, a village within Nakivali, is an exception: Here, locals live among refugees. So generally, the interaction between locals and refugees is limited because opportunities to meet are little. While Burundian, Congolese and Rwandan refugees often stay next to each other and mix, in the majority of villages, one group is still dominant, and Somalis who are also present in Nakivale live on their own. "It is their wish", NGO workers explain. The same holds for Kenyans and Ethiopians. In conclusion, one could posit that, overall, the 'mixed' settlements are not really mixed. Refugee groups still stay within their ethnic kin and language group. An NGO employee states that "tribal connections are stronger than national ones". Social integration in the local Ugandan communities of the south thus only rarely takes place.

Perceived benefits from the refugees' presence

Relations between refugees and local Ugandan communities are particularly good where receiving communities directly benefit from the refugees' presence, even if interaction remains limited. The willingness of the local population to provide land for a refugee settlement thus differs considerably depending on the general availability of land and the expected benefit from interventions funded by international agencies.

According to several interviews, the local Ugandan community of Rhino camp which was established as early as in 1980, overwhelmingly welcomed the new refugees (those arriving since 2016) and was willing to provide land for residential and farming areas of the settlement.²⁰ The region has been politically and economically marginalised. Soil quality is poor, and livelihoods are often secured by fishing. The Ugandan population thus perceives to benefit from increased national and international attention and the newly built infrastructure.

²⁰ \ The recent addition of Omugo zone to the settlement illustrates the cooperation of local communities (UNHCR, 2018).

For a 26-year-old South Sudanese woman from Lujulo county in Yei River State, the comparable socio-economic condition of refugees and some local Ugandans as well as the direct benefit from international aid positively affects intercommunal relations: "In the refugee camps, the poor refugees relate well with the poor host community, because they know they benefit. Part of the food, though little, is exchanged for firewood brought by the host community" (interview with a South Sudanese female from Lujulo county, Yei River State, Pajulu Sub-county, Arua district, March 2018).

Also in Adjumani, the conditions for establishing refugee settlements seem to be favourable.

There is enough land here. The hosts have a lot of land, but lack the workforce to tend it and to sow the seeds. That is why they provide land to the refugees. You can already see an impact, but mostly for those of the host communities who directly benefit from the projects (interview with representative of the Welthungerhilfe, Adjumani/Pakele, July 2017).

In contrast, in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement which was [re]opened in 2016,²¹ the receiving population that is mainly Muslim Aringa seemed to be a lot more hesitant and openly criticised the actual share of international aid for local communities. A REACH survey also describes the perceived strain on local services and resources, especially in Yumbe district (REACH & USAID 2018).

As a district government representative in Yumbe explained:

All development focuses on Arua. [In Bidi Bidi] a vulnerable population is hosted by a vulnerable population. [...] There is too much pressure on the roads because of water trucking; schools are overstrained, there is a water shortage, and we're facing the environmental impact due to the households' dependency on wood for cooking (meeting with a District Government representative, Yumbe district, July 2017).

²¹ \ Bidi Bidi was established in the 1990s during the second Sudanese civil war between the SPLA and successive regimes in Khartoum.

These research findings indicate the strong influence of socio-economic conditions in the receiving areas and the settlement structure and aid delivery on the one hand and remittances on the other on intergroup relations of refugees and local Ugandans. These intergroup relations impact on a) employment, b) settlement and c) mobility patterns and thus on livelihood options of both refugees and local Ugandan communities. This becomes obvious also in the differences of livelihood options of settlement-based and self-settled refugees.

Conflict and protection

In the past, refugee settlements in northern Uganda were attacked by armed groups. The LRA's attack on Kitgum's Acholi-Pii camp in 1997 led to the death of 100 refugees, and attacks on Maaji settlement in Adjumani district in 2002 displaced thousands of refugees (IRIN, 2002). In 1996/97, the West Nile Bank Front targeted Bidi Bidi and surrounding settlements. These incidents resulted in deaths and relocations. Some of the refugees left for then Southern Sudan, while others fled to Ugandan towns like Arua and Koboko, and others were relocated to other refugee settlements (information by South Sudanese male, Kakwa, Arua, November 2018). In Palorinya settlement in Moyo district, intercommunal relations remain strained as a result of a previous border conflict in 2014 that caused the renewed displacement of more than thousand (then) Sudanese Kuku refugees by the local Ugandan Madi population. Reportedly, many newly arrived refugees in Moyo would have preferred to be settled elsewhere (information by South Sudanese male, Kakwa, Arua, July 2017).

Compared to those years, the security situation in the settlements has considerably improved, and most of the refugees we talked to felt relatively safe from attacks in the settlements. Violent confrontations are sporadic and small-scale and mostly related to inter-ethnic conflicts between the Dinka and other groups from South Sudan. These, however, have led to deaths, displacements and evacuations and the relocation of ethnolinguistic groups, mostly Dinka, to separate them from their adversaries (UNHCR, 2018k). OPM

and UNHCR originally aimed for ethnically mixed settlements. But as more violent confrontations occurred, Dinka²² are now often settled apart from the other tribes or deliberately chosen to settle with fellow Dinka to feel safer.

Besides violent interethnic clashes, the protection of refugees is both in the north and the south considerably affected by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), the perpetrators often being husbands or other male community members (focus group discussion with South Sudanese women, Bidi Bidi, July 2017).²³ Several female refugees mentioned SGBV as a big problem, especially because of stigmatisation and "isolation after rape" (ex. in Nakivale). A problem that was also addressed by a 25-year-old female Burundian refugee: "There is no punishment for perpetrators" (interview, Oruchinga, August 2017). Sports betting, gambling and drinking alcohol has also created protection risks in both the southern and the northern regions, as outlined in the previous section.

Despite the fact that only minor conflicts among refugees have been recorded in the south of Uganda, many do not feel safe from fellow refugees. They have reported small-scale violence and incidences and are suspicious of "newcomers". For example, some Burundians explained that they fear that the newcomers are spies from the Burundian government. Some fighting occurred during power struggles before elections of new chairpersons and refugee leaders. Burundian women in Oruchinga, for example, complained of violence because of the campaigning.

Although we do not find any systematic violence between Ugandan and refugee communities, there are various issues that lead to small-scale conflict that sometimes turn violent. So far, these conflicts largely stay on the micro level. However, we also found violent interethnic confrontations within the settlements causing evacuations of humanitarian staff and refugees and relocations of (especially Dinka) refugees to other villages. Tensions between refugees and members of local communities—both in Uganda's northern and southern regions—arise mainly from

²² Many of the Equatorian ethnolinguistic groups make the Dinka responsible for the escalation of violence in 2016/17 in the Equatoria.

²³ For an in-depth discussion of SGBV in refugee settlements see for example Krause, 2015.

competition for natural resources, such as water and firewood, and competition for aid distributed by international agencies. As a 38-year-old female from Burundi stated in Oruchinga: "They are fighting over water with the local communities, as there is only one borehole" (interview, September 2017). A conflict assessment by Danish Refugee Council (2017) comes to similar results: "Conflict related to lack of social cohesion or tribal issues is not the primary cause of conflict. Instead small-scale conflict over natural resources, especially water, and conflict over aid especially food is more prevalent" (DRC, 2017, p. 5).

Various interviewees in Adjumani, Arua and Yumbe Districts reported on conflicts over firewood as well as grass that is collected in the bush to thatch the houses: "The locals chase us away when we try to find firewood. Sometimes, they are armed. That is why we stay near the village now" (focus group discussion at women's centre, Bidi Bidi, Zone 3, village 1). A Kakwa man from Yei in Arua stated: "The claim is that the Ugandans want the South Sudanese to buy such items from them rather than getting them for free, since the food is distributed to refugees only" (interview with male Kakwa, Arua, July 2017). A Dinka man reported that they did not have any problems with the locals when they arrived here, but problems grew after a while:

Within a year we lost 100 cows. If we knew who stole them, we would go to the police, but we stay here in peace. Locals come to the village to offer casual work. For us, it is not possible to go to their area. We fear the forest. The nationals will chase you. They don't want the refugees to cut building materials but want to sell it to them. I once cut grass, was chased away and then the grass was set on fire" (focus group discussion, Odobu I with male and female Dinka, July 2017).

Moreover, access to water is a conflict issue, especially in areas where water is very scarce. However, there is not only conflict over water between refugee and Ugandan communities, but also among refugees. Refugees frequently complained that water points are claimed by certain groups (group interview with

Kakwa women, Rhino Camp refugee settlement, July 2017), fellow refugees drive nails in the water containers making them useless and that there are quarrels at the water points.

Frequently, conflicts arise between *agriculturalists and cattle-keepers*; agriculturalists complain about free-roaming cattle belonging both to Ugandans and refugees that destroy their crops.

Access to *aid* has been perceived as a conflict issue not only by Ugandans but also by refugees. Women in Bidi Bidi reported that they "fear and have been threatened, that nationals will do something bad to them, if the aid agencies don't provide support for them. We're still living in fear and don't feel safe" (focus group discussion at women's centre, Bidi Bidi, Zone 3, village 1). Ugandans whom we interviewed described tensions over the distribution of aid:

When the refugees entered Uganda, UN agencies focused on the needs of refugees. Thus, the refugees were doing well while members of the host community were badly off, causing conflict between the refugees and the hosts. The refugees were given food and other assistance while living on the land of the host community. This caused problems with some camps. The government of Uganda said that host community should be focused on as well, sharing services, such as hospitals and learning with refugees in schools and other training measures. The host community now sees they are also benefiting, and there is a peaceful co-existence here in the integration of the refugees into the host communities" (interview with South Sudanese male, (Kuku), project officer at Youth With A Mission, Arua town, October 2017).

Another conflict issue mentioned both by refugees and Ugandans was *employment*.

[...] the locals claim that they don't get jobs in the refugee settlements, but instead other Ugandans, mainly from south-western Uganda get the jobs. In some instances, youth from the refugee-hosting communities blocked roads leading to the refugee settlements and demanded that the refugees be relocated to where the Ugandan employees in the refugee settlements come from. These incidents leave the

refugees in panic and spoil their relationships with the host communities (interview with 38-year-old Kakwa from Yei, Arua town, April 2018).

Aid agencies are generally aware of this criticism but criticise at the same time that it is difficult to hire qualified personnel from the West Nile region. Moreover, refugees complain about discriminating practices of international aid agencies: "When there is community work (construction work) to be done in the village, the refugees are supposed to do the work voluntarily, while members of the local community receive money. This is considered unfair (individual interview with a young woman, Bidi Bidi, July 2017).

In the settlements and in town, it has been reported that the presence of refugees has been putting much strain on social services like health and education. Moreover, increasing food prices and food shortage was ascribed to the influx of South Sudanese:

I understand some of the agencies in charge of the visitors [refugees] are cutting down the food ration. This [...] will affect the locals [...]. The little food produced by the locals will be sold off, and a famine is likely. Some of the visitors are given cash, an equivalent of what is cut from their ration. Thus, the hosts will be selling their food to the visitors and not the locals that need it just as badly but have less money (interview with male Ugandan from Yumbe district, Arua, October 2017).

Interestingly and despite the fact that the lack of productive land is a significant hindrance to livelihoods, a conflict assessment by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) shows, that both in Rhino Camp and Adjumani, conflict over land is negligible compared to other conflict issues, e.g. water and firewood (2017, p.5). However, other sources reveal that the negotiations over settlements on communities' land themselves entail considerable potential for contestation and future conflict. A recent IRRI report shows that it remains largely unclear how the communities participate in the process and who represents these communities in the negotiations (Zakaryan, 2018). Drawing on the example of Lamwo refugee settlement, Zakaryan

shows that the acquisition of land from Acholi land-owners in Lamwo district took place without the inclusive consent of the community. Moreover, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the landowner and the government of Uganda fails to state how long the land will actually be occupied by the refugees.

Our interviews show some evidence on tensions about land use and lack of participation in Arua:

I heard that the government gave the land to the refugees to settle on. The people [natives in the area] say it is their land, yet the government says it is its land. Thus, the people on whose land the refugees are settled feel that the government is forcibly taking away their land without compensating them. The government cannot take the land like that (interview with male Ugandan, Alur, Catholic Catechist, Pajulu Sub-County, Arua District, October 2017).

Another interviewee commented as follows:

The coming of these people [refugees] has caused land shortage and hunger. Wherever these people are, there are many misunderstandings between the Ugandans and foreigners. The number of people coming has increased so much. The Aringa [the dominant ethnolinguistic group in Yumbe District] want to claim back their land on which the refugees are settled. They want the government [of Uganda] to give back their land (interview with Ugandan Lugbara male, businessman, Pajulu Sub-county, Arua district, October 2017).

These statements clearly indicate a risk of future land conflict due to the lack of information and participation of local communities in the decision-making processes.

According to press reports, also in the border town of Lamwo, landowners are resisting the relocation of refugees. Politicians reportedly have been stoking tensions by inciting locals to demonstrate in the refugee settlements or hamper the delivery of aid. In April 2017, armed youths reportedly ambushed a convoy in an attempt to stop supplies from reaching the settlements (Summers, 2017).

Interviewees mentioned that conflict dynamics and violent incidents in South Sudan affected interethnic relations. According to a representative of a South Sudanese NGO, ethnic tensions were greater in Bidi Bidi than in Rhino Camp refugee settlement due to the fact that

in Rhino, the Dinka came early from South Sudan [before conflict escalated in 2016] and came willingly. In Bidi Bidi, the Dinka came late and are the 'hard-liners' [extremists]. In Bidi Bidi, there are supposedly also more ex-combatants than in Rhino (interview with a representative of a South Sudanese NGO, Arua, July 2017).

Another interviewee stated: "The recent Kakwa arrivals are in conflict with the Dinka, not the old caseloads. To avoid conflict, it's good to be separated" (focus group with Dinka, Odobu II, mixed settlement, Rhino Camp, July 2017). This shows that ethnic tensions have increased in the course of conflict—even in Uganda. This is related to the fact that in 2016 and 2017 the Equatorians were increasingly targeted by South Sudanese government forces who are perceived to be Dinka. Telecommunication is also held responsible for conflict spill-over: "Mobile phones are a main conflict source in Uganda. All the news from South Sudan immediately spills over. The leaders are preaching that the conflict won't spill over to Uganda, but any minor fighting here has been preceded by a call from Juba" (focus group discussion with hygiene promoters, Bidi Bidi, Zone one, village one, July 2017).

To sum up, the analysis shows that in Uganda, social integration works best where cultural backgrounds of receiving communities and refugees are similar and the local population directly benefits to a large extent from humanitarian and developmental support, thus the refugees' presence. Refugees, especially recent arrivals, are not integrated yet. Despite a policy of mixed settlements, refugees and local Ugandans rather live next to each other, and interactions remain superficial. For those, too, who have been in Uganda for a long time, social relations with local communities remain scarce. Even though many refugees consider social relations with the local

communities desirable, it is not an end in itself, but considered necessary to meet the most urgent needs with regard to food, cooking material or the construction of a house. Likewise, the most frequent types of conflicts relate to everyday livelihood activities. However, interethnic tensions within the South Sudanese refugees become more and more prominent, and resistance by local communities to host refugee settlements can be found where people feel that they had not been able to participate in the decision to host and provide land to refugees and where development benefits of the refugees' presence are not tangible yet.

Conclusion

Even though refugees in Uganda, in theory, have access to land, employment and education and have the right to free movement, the situation on the ground provides a different picture. Our field research findings show considerable flaws in Uganda's refugee policy with regard to its sustainability and its aim to foster self-reliance of refugees and local communities.

The settlement approach of providing each refugee with a plot of land faces considerable challenges as it often does not fulfil the promise of self-reliance (which is the declared aim of this approach in contrast to the encampment policies of neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Tanzania). The insufficient plot size, poor quality of the soil and water shortage impede the self-sufficiency of many refugees. Often, this forces refugees to borrow or beg for food or sell non-food items to supplement the poor harvest and/or monthly food rations. Moreover, we still find a very high dependence on water trucking, and the strain on natural resources such as water and firewood has a considerable environmental impact. Sustainable forest management, water pipelines and energy sufficient stoves have been introduced very slowly.

Many refugees cannot benefit from their right to employment or free movement because the refugee settlements hardly offer sustainable job opportunities, and infrastructure that would connect them with markets is poor. Even if refugees achieve to establish a small business, buyers and markets are insufficient to attain self-reliance. Thus, most refugees remain reliant on food rations which lately have also been reduced.

The sustainability of the settlement approach is further challenged by the fact that increasingly the communities' consent to the allocation of land for refugee settlements cannot be taken for granted. The settlement approach is based on the assumption of the government that local communities consent, and Ugandan communities so far have overwhelmingly agreed to the set-up of refugee settlements. This has largely been ascribed to Ugandan communities' empathy with the refugees due to cultural commonalities and a shared experience of displacement.

However, this consent also heavily relies on the communities' expectations of being able to benefit from infrastructure funded by humanitarian and developmental actors. As soon as the financial back-up by the international community decreases, the sustainability of the settlement approach might, therefore, be in jeopardy. In a nutshell: Uganda's settlement approach remains highly dependent on international support.

Moreover, the settlement approach and its discourse of self-reliance neglects self-settled refugees who, in most cases, did not integrate in assistance structures. Their attempts at social integration as well as their economic livelihood strategies are completely overlooked. Furthermore, it is ignored that although most self-settled refugees in the north do not receive aid, they remain highly dependent on remittances.

The current focus of aid agencies on the situation in the north due to the recent heavy influx of refugees is another critical factor of Uganda's refugee policy. Neglecting the situation of refugees in older settlements, such as in the south, and suppressing aid in these areas might create new obstacles to refugees in attaining self-reliance. Refugees, especially those who have already been there for a long time, such as Burundians in the south, are frustrated and disillusioned. The lack of hope also pushes some refugees into adopting negative coping strategies, be it sports betting or drinking alcohol. While there are a few who believe that education is not necessary because they see no improvement in their situation anyway, the majority still hopes for more education and training opportunities and underlines the necessity of micro-credits to at least get the chance to start "something". School children, too, are highly motivated to stay in Uganda, at least until they have finished school, as the educational opportunities for refugee children are very good.

The analysis of power relations within the refugee communities and between refugees and members of the receiving communities illustrates the enormous impact of socio-economic class and ethnocultural factors on settlement patterns, livelihood options and strategies, and thus, on the prospects of *de facto* local

integration. Although mixed settlements exist and refugees and locals interact, social relations between them often remain minimal and superficial. Generally, the acceptance level is higher where locals benefit directly from the refugee presence and have shared displacement experience or ethnic kinship.

A significant part of the South Sudanese refugees has no perspective of sustainable livelihood options in Uganda and, therefore, does not see a future within the Ugandan settlements. For many refugees, sustainable livelihoods—not to speak of local integration—in Uganda are completely out of sight. Some South Sudanese refugees have already returned, and others are deciding to return to South Sudan due to cut rations and despite the uncertain future of the current peace agreement and ongoing fighting in the country..

However, large numbers of the refugees in Uganda will have no choice but to stay in the country because of poor livelihood prospects in their countries of origin and the cycles of conflict and displacement South Sudanese and Congolese refugees have experienced. Also, the return of many Burundians is unlikely as many of them stated that they are no longer accepted as Burundians in their home country because they have been away for so long. This shows that it becomes even more necessary to facilitate the integration of all refugee groups in Uganda.

The findings of the *Paper* clearly illustrate that Uganda's self-reliance strategy as well as the CRRF were not designed to achieve a full socio-economic integration of refugees or—even less to allow them to become Ugandan citizens—but rather are based on the idea of a temporary local integration of refugees until their eventual return. In the case of Uganda, most refugees have so far not achieved the goal of local integration, i.e. the ability to sustain a living and being socially integrated into the local Ugandan community. The *Paper* thus sharply contradicts the premise of any self-reliance policy that self-reliance would be possible without full socio-economic integration, but shows instead that self-reliance can hardly be achieved without a certain degree of socio-economic integration. The CRRF pilot country Uganda thus lags behind the expectations that were raised with regard to finding durable solutions for the refugees in the countries.

The Ugandan case provides several lessons for policymakers and aid organisations working in other refugee-receiving contexts:

The case study shows that merely establishing the rights to employment, free movement and a plot of land for refugees does not suffice to guarantee the self-reliance or local integration of refugees. Instead, governments and aid organisations must make sure that refugees can also benefit from their rights by providing the necessary infrastructure so that they can move freely and access markets.

If providing land to refugees, the government has to ensure that the land is large enough for growing sufficient quantities of crops, is located near their residence, the soil is adequate for cultivating, and that sufficient water is available. Furthermore, land rights need to be clearly defined to inhibit tensions. Not all refugees are farmers; this must be recognised, and alternative employment opportunities ought to be provided so that previously acquired skills are maintained and alternative incomes are assured, for example, in times of drought. Generally, long-term approaches, such as creating sustainable job opportunities, are necessary that also include old arrivals of refugees, such as those in the south.

Refugees and local communities should be addressed in the same manner by aid agencies and the Ugandan government to prevent competition and conflict. Locals are often no better off than refugees. In that regard, it is also important to bear in mind the political context in which humanitarian and development aid enter and the risk that aid agencies support existing exclusion mechanisms. For example, the Ugandan government has traditionally neglected the north of the country. By stepping in for the government in the north, aid agencies may help refugees and receiving communities in the short-term. But without establishing long-term structures in the north that also stay after aid agencies leave, the economic and political marginalization of the region will persist. Therefore, while Uganda's refugee policy has progressed, providing refugees more opportunities than in other refugee-receiving contexts such as in Kenya or Tanzania, it is a long way before it can be named a role model for refugee integration.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement	CPA
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework	CRRF
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	DRC
FNL	National Liberation Forces	FNL
GOU	Government of Uganda	GOU
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army	LRA
NGO	Non-governmental organisation	NGO
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister	OPM
ReHoPe	Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy	ReHoPe
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence	SGBV
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement	SPLA/M
UGX	Ugandan Shilling	UGX
UN	United Nations	UN
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	UNDP
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
US	United States	US
WHH	Welthungerhilfe	WHH

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