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Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda

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Introduction

Political conflicts in various parts of the world are, more and more often, of an extended duration. This means that return to home countries for refugees is increasingly delayed. At the same time, global terrorism and concerns about security have slowed processes of resettlement in traditional resettlement countries and, in some cases, the number of refugees who can be resettled has fallen and their countries of origin have been restricted. The increasing size of refugee population influxes to countries of first asylum has meant that host governments have been reluctant to facilitate local integration; indeed, local integration carries with it a connotation of permanence as well as security problems and resources burdens.¹ Failure to find acceptable durable solutions among these three options have combined to result in increasing numbers of refugee situations worldwide that can be described as ‘protracted.’

“Refugees can be regarded as being in a protracted situation when they have lived in exile for more than five years, and when they still have no immediate prospect of finding a durable solution to their plight by means of voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement,”² writes Jeff Crisp. Due to the proliferation of situations that can be described as such, the many stakeholders — including host governments, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), local communities, and refugees — need to come together to further explore the three possibilities for durable solutions and their applicability in given situations.

By the end of 2001, it was estimated that some three million refugees in Africa were in a protracted situation,³ the vast majority of them in Central and East Africa. The long-term prospect for these refugees is becoming increasingly bleak. In Africa and other parts of the global South, in particular, governments have relied on material assistance from the outside in responding to refugee situations.⁴ As a result, the focus of refugee assistance has been about aid, which is by nature a short-sighted endeavour.⁵ Over recent years, donors and other international actors have focused their attention increasingly on either high profile crises in which there are large flows of people, or on large-scale repatriation cases. As a result, “[p]rotracted situations, which drag on for years and where there is no immediate prospect of a durable solution for the refugees concerned, have consequently been neglected.”⁶

¹ Jacobsen, Karen. July 2001. “The forgotten solution: local integration for refugees in developing countries.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.45, Geneva: UNHCR.

² Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. “No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR, p.1.

³ Ibid, p.2; among the three million, Crisp identifies 450,000 Sudanese in Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.

⁴ Merks, Jozef. 2000. “Refugee identities and relief in an African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and southern Sudan.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 19, Geneva: UNHCR.

⁵ Kibreab, G. 1985. “African Refugees.” *Reflections on the Africa Refugees Problem*. Trenton, NJ: African World Press.

⁶ Crisp, Jeff. 2002. “No solutions in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa.” Paper prepared for a symposium on the multidimensionality of displacement in Africa. Kyoto, Japan, November 2002.

The impact of this neglect has been felt directly by those refugees who fall into this category. Tania Kaiser describes the situation in Guinea, where reductions in food rations are taking place not because there has been a corresponding reduction in need, but because there is simply not enough assistance to go around.⁷ Durable solutions for refugees — particularly those in protracted situations — that do not depend on continued emergency assistance are urgently needed. Crisp writes:

...the presence of so many protracted refugee situations in Africa can be linked to the fact that countries of asylum, donor states, UNHCR, and other actors have given so little attention to the solution of local integration during the past 15 years. Indeed, from the mid-1980s onwards, a consensus was forged around the notion that repatriation — normally but not necessarily on a voluntary basis — was the only viable solution to refugee problems in Africa and other low-income regions.⁸

Given the resulting continuation of protracted refugee situations and the dwindling assistance, therefore, it is imperative that local integration of refugees be explored as a durable solution in Africa. Indeed, while repatriation remains the final goal, local integration gives refugees some certainty about what to do with their lives in the meantime.

This research explores local integration as a durable approach to the protracted refugee situation in Uganda. In Section 2, a framework for the analysis of local integration is presented. Section 3 situates the study within the existing local settlement structure for refugees in Uganda, the Self Reliance Strategy (SRS), and the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) — critiquing these policies in the context of local integration. The perceived resource burden that accompanies refugees is one of the central factors that inhibits the adoption of policies that promote local integration; section 4 therefore addresses the benefits to local communities of hosting refugees, through the specific lens of primary education. Section 5 synthesises information presented in the previous sections and explores ways in which stakeholders can work together to promote shared and simultaneous development in refugee and national communities. In Section 6, recommendations are made for the adoption of policies that promote national development through the local integration of refugees.

Local integration as a durable solution

Rhetorically, integration has always been a guiding principle of refugee programmes in countries of the global South. According to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, restoring refugees to dignity and ensuring the provision of human rights includes an approach that would lead to their integration in the host society.⁹ Indeed the Convention uses the word, ‘assimilation,’ which implies the disappearance of

⁷ Kaiser, Tania 2001. “A beneficiary-based evaluation of the UNHCR programme in Guinea.” Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, Geneva: UNHCR, p. 21.

⁸ Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. “No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR, p.3.

⁹ Article 34 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Adopted on 28 July 1951 by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons convened under General Assembly resolution 429 (V) of 14 December 1950; entry into force 22 April 1954, in accordance with article 43.

differences between refugees and their hosts as well as permanence within the host society.¹⁰ Recent thinking, however, emphasises both the importance of maintaining individual identity^{11,12}, and the possibility of “promoting self-reliance pending voluntary return,”¹³ whereby local integration could be temporary.

The possibility of integration of refugees and their hosts is a question of concern for the international community and host governments, especially in the context of protracted refugee situations. While the impact of refugees on host populations has been explored at a theoretical level,¹⁴ there has been little academic research on the costs and benefits of refugee presence to host populations in a country specific context.¹⁵ In addition, methods to quantify levels of integration among refugee and host communities are lacking in the literature. Indeed, disagreement over the mere definition of the word ‘integration’ makes analysis of this topic difficult and has prevented adequate research.¹⁶

Barbara Harrell-Bond outlines a simple definition of integration that is useful to employ as a guide for the purposes of this discussion: “a situation in which host and refugee communities are able to co-exist, sharing the same resources — both economic and social — with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community.”¹⁷ Tom Kuhlman makes this definition more explicit in outlining indices that can be used to gauge refugee integration to a host community. Among others, he identifies the following characteristics of successful integration:

- the socio-cultural change they undergo permits them to maintain an identity of their own and to adjust psychologically to their new situation
- friction between host populations and refugees is not worse than within the host population itself
- refugees do not encounter more discrimination than exists between groups previously settled within the host society¹⁸

¹⁰ Harrell-Bond, B. 2000. “Are Refugee Camps Good For Children?” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 29, Geneva: UNHCR.

¹¹ Kuhlman, Tom. 1991. “The Economic Integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model.” *Economic Integration of Refugees*. London: Oxford University Press.

¹² Merckx, Jozef. 2000. “Refugee identities and relief in an African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and southern Sudan.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 19, Geneva: UNHCR.

¹³ Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. “No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR, p.26.

¹⁴ Kuhlman, Tom. 1991. “The Economic Integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model.” *Economic Integration of Refugees*. London: Oxford University Press; Sorenson, John. 1994. “An Overview: Refugees and Development.” In Adelman and Sorenson (Eds). *African Refugees: Development Aid and Repatriation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

¹⁵ Notable exceptions are Whitaker, Beth Elise. June 1999. “Changing opportunities: refugees and host communities in western Tanzania.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.11, Geneva: UNHCR; Kuhlman, Tom. 1990. *Burden or Boon? A Study of Eritrean Refugees in the Sudan*. Amsterdam: Free University Press.

¹⁶ Harrell-Bond, B.E. 1986. *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 7.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 7.

¹⁸ Kuhlman, Tom. 1991. “The Economic Integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model.” *Economic Integration of Refugees*. London: Oxford University Press.

The economic and social factors of integration embodied in these definitions of integration are crucial to the examination of policies that foster or prevent local integration. Indeed, as will be demonstrated in the case of Uganda, often the mere structural integration of services is seen as a substitute for the more complex process of local integration.

In countries of the global South, areas that host refugees are themselves plagued with poverty, characterised by a lack of resources and infrastructure for social services, and corresponding difficulties in accessing economic markets. In this context, analysis of the costs and benefits of local integration to host communities are critical in policy formation.

As Kibreab asks, given the severity of the economic crises and the environmental degradation facing many of the major African refugee hosting countries, the basic issue that emerges is, can these countries be able or be expected to establish policies, legal frameworks and institutions which could allow the absorption of hundreds of thousands of refugees living within their territories into their societies permanently?¹⁹

Kibreab then argues that in fact host governments in Africa could not be expected to carry this burden, and he proposed local settlement structures, spatially segregated sites which could be supported by international donors, as the optimal solution. Many countries, of which Uganda is one, adopted this strategy.

More recent literature, however, suggests that the benefits to host communities of hosting refugees can outweigh the costs, if structures are set up in such a way as to promote joint development.²⁰ This paper aims to contribute to this body of literature through an examination of the benefits of local integration to refugee-hosting communities, using education as a case study.

Local integration as a durable solution in Uganda

While Uganda has historically dealt with numerous prolonged refugee situations, the previous decade has seen a greater influx of refugees than at any time in the past. As of December 2002, the UNHCR reported a national total of 197,082 refugees living in Uganda, primarily from Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Rwanda.²¹ It is important to note, however, that this number represents the refugees who are registered with UNHCR and who, almost exclusively, live in settlement areas. In addition to this number, conservative estimates place the number of self-settled refugees in the country at approximately 50,000. In reality, the number is

¹⁹ Kibreab, Gaim. 1989. "Local Settlements in Africa: A Misconceived Option?," *Journal of Refugee Studies*. Vol. 2 (4), p. 473

²⁰ See, among others, Jacobsen, Karen. July 2001. "The forgotten solution: local integration for refugees in developing countries." *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.45; Tania Kaiser. 2001. "A beneficiary-based evaluation of the UNHCR programme in Guinea." Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, Geneva: UNHCR; Crisp, Jeff. January 2003. "No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa." *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No.75, Geneva: UNHCR; Harrell-Bond, Barbara. November 2002. "Toward the Economic and Social 'Integration' of Refugee Populations in Host Countries in Africa." Paper presented at a conference organised by the Stanley Foundation, "Refugee Protection in Africa: How to Ensure Security and Development for Refugees and Hosts," Entebbe, Uganda.

²¹ UNHCR BO-Kampala. December 2002. "Refugee Statistics as of End of December 2002."

probably far higher. Furthermore, there are 10,000 refugees registered with the Office of the Prime Minister as self-sufficient urban refugees²² and it is estimated that 5,000 to 10,000 others live in Kampala without assistance or protection.^{23,24,25}

Uganda provides a unique context for the investigation of local integration as a durable solution.²⁶ It has a long history as both a generator of refugees and a host country for refugees,²⁷ and the integration of refugees into Ugandan society has been a common occurrence. As Abraham Kiapi writes, “[u]nless in the case of influx, refugees are, in practice, integrated into Ugandan society. They have been offered employment, including joining the police force and even the army.”²⁸ While social, economic, and cultural integration of refugees to Uganda has successfully occurred in the past, the difficulty of political integration has been a common factor in all cases.²⁹ Indeed, the legal structures of Uganda have shaped, and continue to shape, the possibilities for local integration in this country.

The impact of legal structures on local integration

The current legislation relating to refugees in Uganda is the outdated Control of Alien Refugees Act (CARA). Enacted in 1960, 18 years before Uganda ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, the CARA is inconsistent with international standards relating to the treatment of refugees. As its title implies, the act focuses on the control of refugees. Although the Act has never been strictly applied in Uganda,³⁰ this emphasis has had an impact on how refugees are treated. It regulates, for instance, the way in which assistance is delivered to refugees: aid is contingent upon a refugee living in a designated settlement, all of which are in rural and isolated areas of Uganda. The

²² Refugee Law Project. July 2002. “Urban Refugees.” Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 6.

²³ Personal communication with Douglas Asiimwe, Office of the Prime Minister, Directorate for Refugees. 5th November 2002.

²⁴ Personal communication with Ebende S. Lomongo, Chairman, Congolese Refugees Development Association (COREDA). 19th November 2002.

²⁵ Parker, Alison. 21 November 2002. “Hidden in Plain View: Refugees Living Without Protection in Nairobi and Kampala.” New York: Human Rights Watch.

²⁶ Louise Pirouet. 1988. “Refugees in and from Uganda in the Post Colonial Period.” *Uganda Now*. Nairobi: Heinemann.

²⁷ Gingyera-Pincywa, A.G.G. 1998. “Uganda’s Entanglement with the Problem of Refugees in its Global and African Contexts.” *Uganda and the Problem of Refugees*. Kampala: Makerere University Press.

²⁸ Kiapi, Abraham. “The Legal Status of Refugees in Uganda: A Critical Study of Legislative Instruments.” In Gingyera-Pincywa, A.G.G. 1998. *Uganda and the Problem of Refugees*. Kampala: Makerere University Press, (49).

²⁹ Barongo, Yolamu Rufunda. “Problems of Integrating Banyarwanda Refugees among Local Communities in Uganda: A Study of Refugee Settlements in Hoima and Kabarole Districts.” In Gingyera-Pincywa, A.G.G. 1998. *Uganda and the Problem of Refugees*. Kampala: Makerere University Press, pp.117-140; Kamukama, Dixon. 1997. *Rwanda Conflict: Its Roots and Regional Implications*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, Ltd., pp.33-43; Bond, V. 1988. “Identity Crisis: Banyarwanda Refugees in Uganda.” M.A. Dissertation, University of Edinburgh and Makerere University (unpublished).

³⁰ As Abraham Kiapi states in his article “The Legal Status of Refugees in Uganda: A Critical Study of Legislative Instruments”: “The study shows that officials do not follow the Act to the letter. It is mainly applied to spontaneous refugees who enter the country in large numbers. Otherwise refugees enjoy the rights enumerated in the international instruments.” In Gingyera Pincywa, A.G.G. 1998. *Uganda and the Problem of Refugees*. Kampala: Makerere University Press, p.42 .

only exception to this regulation is the 180 refugees³¹ who are recognised on UNHCR's urban caseload.³²

In addition to those refugees who have been officially recognised by the Government of Uganda (GoU) and the UNHCR and are living in settlements, there are tens of thousands³³ more who do not live in settlements. They have opted-out of the assistance structures and, instead, have self-settled among the Ugandan population. While 'official' refugees fall under the control of the national government structures (through the Directorate of Refugees, Office of the Prime Minister), self-settled refugees tend to operate within the local government structures, both rural and urban. They are integrated into their host community, pay graduated tax, contribute to the local economy, and even run in local council elections.³⁴ However, their legal status remains insecure and ambiguous: they fall within the category of prima facie refugees, but are in danger of being seen as illegal immigrants.

Local settlement structure for refugees in Uganda

As stated above, Uganda historically has hosted refugees in local settlements. In northern Uganda, the local settlement programme for Sudanese refugees started in 1992, when land was made available for agricultural production.³⁵ Settlements are large, isolated areas of land located in rural areas of Uganda, the greatest concentration being in the north-western region. These settlements are, in theory, supposed to offer a more permanent departure from the temporary 'transit camp'.³⁶ Policy makers state that the original objective of the local settlement policy was to promote a degree of self-sufficiency for refugees.³⁷ In real terms, this has meant little more than making small plots of land available for the refugees to use, within the

³¹ 180 refugees were registered on the urban caseload of UNHCR as of December 2002. Refugees become part of this caseload due to medical emergencies that require treatment in Kampala or severe security issues that make life in a settlement impossible. Although this number fluctuates, it is estimated by Inter-Aid, the implementing partner of UNHCR for the urban caseload, to be consistently around 200 refugees. Personal communication with Scholastica Nasinyama, Inter-Aid. 18th November 2002.

³² UNHCR Public Information Office. Refugee Statistics as of end of December 2002.

³³ It is impossible to estimate accurately how many self-settled refugees there are in Uganda. As Barbara Harrell-Bond writes, "Everyone who can get out of them [camps and settlements] as quickly as possible. This is why there are almost always more refugees living among their hosts outside of camps." Harrell-Bond, B. 2000. "Are Refugee Camps Good For Children?" *New Issues in Refugee Research*, no. 29, Geneva: UNHCR.

³⁴ For a more detailed account of self-settled refugees, see Hovil, Lucy. 2002. "Free to Go, Free to Stay? Movement, Seclusion and Integration of Refugees in Moyo District." Refugee Law Project Working Paper no. 4.

³⁵ Merkx, Jozef. 2000. "Refugee identities and relief in an African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and southern Sudan." *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 19, Geneva: UNHCR.

³⁶ The authors would claim that the difference between camps and settlements in this context is nothing but an 'operational myth'. See Malkki, Liisa H. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. London: University of Chicago Press; Schmidt, Anna. 1998. "How Camps Became 'Mainstream' Policy for Assisting Refugees." Paper reporting on research undertaken as part of the EU-funded INCO-DC project on refugee health and welfare in Sub-Saharan Africa. London School of Economics.

³⁷ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. "Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005," p. 12.

geographical confines of the settlement.³⁸ However, the location of the settlements, the lack of sufficient arable land, and the general insecurity that has characterised northern Uganda for decades, has compromised attempts at self-sufficiency in most cases.³⁹

Self-sufficiency has been further hindered by lack of freedom of movement, imposing restrictions that conspire against refugees becoming economically and socially independent. In order to leave the settlement in which they reside, refugees must obtain a permit issued by the Settlement Commandant, which is a time-consuming and unpredictable process. A recent study in Kyangwali settlement, western Uganda, showed the extent to which self-sufficiency is compromised by restrictions on movement — as well as corresponding limitations on employment — which exclude refugees from basic interaction with external goods and labour markets.⁴⁰ Likewise in Moyo settlement, refugees are isolated not only as a result of the bureaucratic restrictions placed on them, but by the fact that they often do not have the resources to travel the large distances between the settlements and surrounding markets.⁴¹

As well as creating economic isolation, the settlement structure also generates social seclusion. The physical separation between refugees and nationals creates an environment conducive to tensions between the two groups. For instance Ugandan nationals often perceive refugees as being better off than they are, as they witness World Food Programme (WFP) trucks moving into the settlements. They are also seen as a source of potential competition over scarce resources such as firewood and boreholes.⁴² This is due, in part, to the fact that districts within which settlements are located, are themselves underserved and marginalised. In addition, although services that have been created for refugees are, in theory, shared with the surrounding national population, there has been a lack of coordination between refugee assistance structures and the wider district development structures, creating inefficiency and exacerbating tensions.

The self-reliance strategy

By the late 1990s, policy makers were increasingly looking for a more sustainable solution to the protracted refugee situation in Uganda. At the same time, the need to operate in coordination with the wider service-delivery structure of Uganda, “to optimize [sic] the use of resources for the good of both refugees and the host

³⁸ Hovil, Lucy. 2002. “Free to Go, Free to Stay? Movement, Seclusion and Integration of Refugees in Moyo District.” Refugee Law Project Working Paper no. 4. For further discussion of the lack of land in Nakivale settlement, see Bagenda, Emmanuel, Angela Naggaga, and Elliott Smith. May 2003. “Land Problems in Nakivale Settlement and the Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda.” RLP working paper No. 8.

³⁹ See Kaiser, Tania. 2002. “UNHCR’s withdrawal from Kiryandongo: anatomy of a handover.” *Refugee Survey Quarterly*. 21(1). pp.201-227.

⁴⁰ E. Werker. 2002. “Refugees in Kyangwali Settlement: Constraints on Economic Freedoms.” Refugee Law Project Working Paper no. 7.

⁴¹ L. Hovil. 2002. “Free to Stay, Free to Go? Movement, Seclusion and Integration of Refugees in Moyo District.” Refugee Law Project Working Paper no. 4.

⁴² Ibid.

community”⁴³ was being recognised. The result was the creation of the Self-Reliance Strategy (SRS).

The SRS was jointly designed by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR Uganda in May 1999, the culmination of a process that officially began in 1998. It was conceptualised specifically for Sudanese refugees living in the West Nile districts of Arua, Adjumani and Moyo, recognising the long-term nature of their situation.⁴⁴ Its overarching goal, as stated, is “to integrate the services provided to the refugees into regular government structures and policies”⁴⁵ and, in so doing, to move “from relief to development.”⁴⁶ As Dorothy Jobolingo, Education Advisor to UNHCR Uganda states, “[w]e cannot treat it as a relief situation where we give them something to eat every day. That is not a durable solution....The SRS is not theory. It is a practical solution.”⁴⁷

In order to bring about a change from relief to development, the SRS emphasises the dual objectives of empowerment and integration, in order “to improve the standard of living of the people in Moyo, Arua and Adjumani districts, including the refugees.”⁴⁸ It seeks to give refugees the ability “to stand on their own and build their self-esteem” through gaining skills and knowledge to both take back to their home countries when they return, and to leave behind sustainable structures.⁴⁹ At the time it was written, it was envisaged that, by 2003, refugees would be able to grow or buy their own food, access and pay for basic services, and maintain self-sustaining community structures. The SRS was designed to be implemented at a district level, with OPM and UNHCR playing coordinating roles, and “[ensuring] harmonisation of policy.”^{50,51}

In order to “empower refugees and nationals...to the extent that they will be able to support themselves,”⁵² the SRS outlines the integration of service delivery in the sectors of agricultural production, income generation, community services, health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, the environment, and infrastructure development. In this way, it addresses one flaw of the local settlement policy, that of parallel service delivery. It does not, however, address many of the other shortcomings. Indeed, it embraces one of the fundamental problems with traditional development: it attempts to substitute the provision of services for sustainable development based on economic growth.⁵³

⁴³ Harrell-Bond, B.E. 1986. *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.370.

⁴⁴ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self-Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2006,” p.10.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.2.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.2.

⁴⁷ Dorothy Jobolingo, UNHCR Education Advisor, at UNHCR Community Services/Education Coordination Meeting, Entebbe, 1st April 2003.

⁴⁸ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p. 8.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.2.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.9.

⁵¹ In addition, the SRS emphasises that UNHCR will maintain its primary international mandate to protect refugees, and will keep a presence in districts where there is a “sufficiently large presence of refugees.”

⁵² Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p.8.

⁵³ This issue is discussed further in Section 5.

Self-reliance in the context of the local settlement structure

While the SRS provides a framework for addressing the protracted refugee situation in Uganda, it contains fundamental flaws. The policy itself acknowledges that the success of the SRS is contingent upon two factors. First, that the SRS should be implemented under a new Refugee Bill that addresses such issues as freedom of movement, taxation, trade and employment opportunities, and temporary access to land. Second, that it should operate in an environment that is secure from armed conflict.⁵⁴ To date, neither of these factors has been resolved: Uganda has failed to pass new refugee legislation, and refugees and surrounding populations continue to be attacked by rebel groups, most notably the Lords Resistance Army (LRA).⁵⁵ In addition to these two factors, the SRS also acknowledges the marginalisation of the West Nile region as being a further limiting factor.

While the SRS acknowledges these factors, there are other flaws within it that have not been taken into consideration. In particular, the SRS advocates self-reliance without local integration. Integration, as defined by the SRS, is based primarily on the coordination of services: it does not present social and economic integration as a necessity in such a process. By divorcing the two areas — integration of services and social integration — rather than acknowledging that they are mutually dependent, the SRS ensures that it cannot bring about self-reliance. Furthermore, while the word ‘communities’ in the SRS document is used to refer to refugees and hosts collectively — reflecting an emphasis on a ‘community-based’ approach — the term, in reality, refers to two geographically isolated groups. The notion of ‘community’ in this context is anathema.

While the SRS expresses similarities between refugees and hosts in terms of cultural background and refers to their common experience of refugeehood, it keeps them physically segregated through the local settlement structure. The concept of full integration — in other words the abolishment of the settlement structure — is left hanging: “Finally, the freedom of movement for refugees within Uganda should be as broad as possible, although a reasonable system of control should not be rejected out of hand.”⁵⁶ Thus, as with the local settlement structure, the sticking point continues to be the issue of freedom of movement:⁵⁷ the SRS attempts to propagate a free-market

⁵⁴ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” pp. 11 – 12.

⁵⁵ A most extreme case is the Achol-Pii Refugee Settlement in Pader District, Uganda. In July 1996, the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) attacked the settlement killing over 100 unarmed refugees and wounding several others. After a passionate appeal to government to relocate them to the southern parts of the country, refugees received a response from the Government of Uganda (GoU), stating that they had no right to decide where to be housed and that if they were tired of government’s hospitality, they should go back to their country of origin. Unable to return to Sudan, the majority remained in Achol-Pii. Despite numerous reports warning of an imminent attack on the settlement in 2002, the government did not act. On 5th August 2002, the LRA again attacked Achol Pii Refugee Settlement killing more than 20 refugees, injuring several others, and displacing 23,000. See L. Hovil and A. Moorehead. 2002. “War as Normal: The Impact of Violence on the Lives of Displaced Communities Living in Pader District, Northern Uganda.” Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5.

⁵⁶ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p. 15.

⁵⁷ See also description of the SRS in Merx, Jozef. 2000. “Refugee identities and relief in an African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and southern Sudan.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 19, Geneva: UNHCR.

economy, whereby self-reliance could be achieved, but within a command economy framework.

In addition, the SRS refers only to refugees who are in the official assistance structures, and makes no more than a passing statistical reference to the many self-settled refugees living in Uganda. This is a serious omission for two reasons. First, it fails to reflect the refugee population in its entirety. Second, and most importantly, it misses the opportunity to learn from refugees who have, themselves, gone some way towards reaching the dual goals of empowerment and integration laid out in the SRS.

Implementation of the self-reliance strategy

The time frame for implementing the SRS, as outlined in the original Strategy Paper published in May 1999, was ambitious. It envisioned a four year implementation process, with “[t]he last two years of the strategy...used to consolidate the structures and systems established in the first two years.”⁵⁸ The one specific benchmark stated was that “[f]ree food distribution will be ended by July 2001,”⁵⁹ as the first real step in self-sufficiency. Despite these plans, the implementation of the SRS has been slow and disorganised.

Problems associated with the implementation of the SRS have a number of origins. First, the Refugee Bill that was expected to be passed into law by 2001 at the latest⁶⁰ still remains in Parliament. Second, the reluctance of donors to include refugees in district development plans has constrained plans for implementing the SRS effectively.⁶¹ Third, and most importantly, administrative failure and lack of communication have consistently led to delays and misunderstandings in the implementation process. There is disagreement, in fact, over when the implementation of the SRS actually began. An UNHCR representative cites a 2001 start date, when money started to change over to district levels.⁶² An official from the Office of the Prime Minister is explicit that it was not until January 2002 that the SRS took effect.⁶³ District Education Officers and Camp Commandants outside of the West Nile region do not know if the SRS has yet taken effect in their areas and if they are responsible for implementing it.⁶⁴ What is clear, however, is that implementation of the SRS has not gone according to plan.

In the sphere of education, it was not until February of 2001 that a workshop was convened to “start looking at the possibilities for integration from a technical point of

⁵⁸ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p. 38.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 38.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 39.

⁶¹ This reluctance by donors is highlighted as one of the constraints within the educational sector in the UNHCR Uganda Country Plan; obtained from Linnie Kessely, Senior Community Service/Education Coordinator.

⁶² Linnie Kessely Senior Community Services/Education Coordinator, UNHCR Uganda. Personal communication, 6th November 2002.

⁶³ Ronald Mayanga, Refugee Desk Officer, Mbarara. UNHCR Community Services/Education Coordination Meeting, Entebbe, 1st April 2003

⁶⁴ George Bomera, Assistant Commandant, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, personal communication, 25th March 2003. Mugisa Charles, Assistant Education Officer, Kyenjojo District, personal communication, 8th April 2003. Tindikira Michael, Inspector of Schools, Bukanga Country, 5th May 2003.

view and to aim at the hand over of education service delivery from Implementing Partners (IP's) to local governments in the most efficient way.”⁶⁵ Education was not the first sector to be integrated. Indeed, a similar delay was experienced in other sectors and, more importantly, processes of “sensitis[ing] communities (Nationals/Refugees) in districts on integration,”⁶⁶ a process that the designers of the SRS indicated would be crucial to the SRS implementation from the outset,⁶⁷ had not yet begun by February 2001.⁶⁸ This sensitising and coordination of stakeholders is a problem that persists to the present. The only person at the Ministry of Education and Sports with even partial responsibility for refugee education says, “[t]here is very little written communication. We go to these [refugee-hosting] schools, we see libraries and classrooms, organisations have given physical cash. But there is no written communication about what they are doing to their schools. So that limits knowledge.”⁶⁹ It also limits the possibilities for a true integration of services, let alone of communities.

Review and evaluation of the self-reliance strategy

The UNHCR and the Government of Uganda had planned a review and evaluation of the SRS during the year 2002. Due to on-going violence in the West Nile region, however, the lives of refugees have been severely disrupted. Linnie Kesselly of UNHCR Uganda explains that while refugees in Adjumani, for example, had become self-sufficient in terms of food production, the upheavals of recent attacks and violence have caused refugees to flee their fields and become once again dependent on direct assistance. An evaluation in this context would not be productive, she said.⁷⁰

An exhaustive critique of the Self-Reliance Strategy is outside the scope of this paper. As outlined above, however, critical aspects of the process of integration have been overlooked both in the formation of the SRS policy and in its implementation. As a result, the possibilities for local integration as a durable solution are not being fully explored at a policy level, within the Ugandan context. Indeed, the Self Reliance Strategy has been conceived and operationalised in isolation from direct experiences with the process of integration of refugee and national communities.

In the following sections, this paper seeks to illuminate some of the factors that are essential to successful local integration of refugees in Uganda through two case

⁶⁵ Technical Committee for Education Integration (OPM, Directorate of Refugees; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Ministry of Education and Sports; and UNHCR). “Consultative Workshop for Integration of Education Service Delivery, 13th – 14th February 2001: Draft Report, April 2001,” p. 3.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.27.

⁶⁷ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p. 39.

⁶⁸ Technical Committee for Education Integration (OPM, Directorate of Refugees; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Ministry of Education and Sports; and UNHCR). “Consultative Workshop for Integration of Education Service Delivery, 13th – 14th February 2001: Draft Report, April 2001,” p. 27.

⁶⁹ Agula Francis. Responsible for Francophone education, Uganda Ministry of Education and Sport. Personal communication, 16th April 2003.

⁷⁰ Linnie Kesselly Senior Community Services/Education Coordinator, UNHCR Uganda. Personal communication, 6th November 2002.

studies within the service-delivery sphere of education. The schools that form these case studies fall outside the official area of implementation of the SRS, although both the schools and district systems of which they are a part believe themselves to be responsible for the local integration of educational services. The two case studies have been chosen to demonstrate the limitations of local integration within the current Ugandan context and to explore and outline the possibilities for success. They examine situations in which the social integration of refugees and hosts takes place at different levels to provide important models both of the processes of social integration under differing conditions and the benefits to refugees and their hosts of such integration. It is work that the authors believe should have been undertaken in the process of development of the SRS and that we believe to be a necessary framework for an urgently needed review and evaluation of the SRS.

Benefits to host communities in the education sector

Education is a sector directly affected by implementation of the SRS policy. Of particular relevance to this study, the SRS advocates “integrating refugee primary and secondary schools into the district education system.”⁷¹ In so doing, the SRS aims to develop “mechanisms for the inclusion of the refugees into the Universal Primary Education (UPE) being implemented in Uganda”⁷² and to ensure that “the conditional grants provided to the districts for UPE...be increased to include refugees.”⁷³ Under this system, schools would receive an allocation of UPE funds from the Ugandan government for all pupils, regardless of whether they are refugees or nationals, in addition to funds provided by the UNHCR designed to specifically target refugee education. Not all refugee-hosting schools in Uganda are included in these initiatives

⁷¹ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p. 32.

⁷² A brief background of Universal Primary Education in Uganda: Major educational reforms began in Uganda in the late 1970s when an Education Review Committee under Idi Amin Dada proposed the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) over a period of 15 years. Another commission on education was created by Milton Obote in 1980. In 1988 the government instituted another education review commission led by then Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Kampala, Professor Kajubi. But it was not until 1996, during the heat of the presidential election campaigns, that a programme of Universal Primary Education was given serious thought by the Government. In January 1997 UPE was finally introduced, this time under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government. This programme exempts four children per family from paying primary school fees. The number of children enrolled in primary school increased that year from 2.6 million to 5.5 million. By 1999, 6.5 million children were enrolled in primary school in Uganda, equivalent to a net enrolment rate of 85%. The existence of UPE does not mean that primary school education in Uganda is completely free. Parents or guardians must often support the cost of school buildings, books, writing materials, school meals, and uniforms. The result has been the development of schools that—while licensed by the government and receiving government aid for teachers’ salaries—do charge school fees, which are prohibitive for many families, especially in urban areas. At these schools, the school fees pay for construction of new school buildings, the hiring of teachers to decrease the pupil-teacher ratio, and the expansion of recreational and technology programmes. In addition, the quality of education at UPE primary schools that do not charge school fees—and are therefore accessible to most families—is low. There are insufficient schools, classrooms, and trained teachers for the influx of pupils who have joined primary school since the introduction of UPE in 1997. Indeed, for every permanent classroom in Uganda, there are on average 228 pupils. As concluded in a study of the ActionAid-Uganda/Centre for Basic Research, “UPE has improved children’s access to classroom buildings but not to quality primary education.”

⁷³ Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR Uganda. 1999. “Strategy Paper: Self Reliance for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua, and Adjumani Districts, 1999-2005,” p.32.

of the SRS. As will be apparent in the case studies, however, decisions regarding support for refugee education are not uniform and are increasingly being taken at district levels.

The first case study presents a situation in which there is some integration of the service of education but little social integration. It provides insight into situations within the local settlement structure in which there is lack of access to land and hindered freedom of movement; the consequences of this situation for social integration are examined through the lens of primary schooling.

The second example considers the case of a refugee-hosting area in Uganda in which both the integration of services and social integration are taking place. The site is not one of those included in the SRS, as explained above; the integration occurs simply through coordination between district officials and UNHCR and its implementing partners. While this site is located within the local settlement structure, it is a settlement that is secure, where there is greater freedom of movement than in other places, and where there is open economic interaction between refugees and nationals. This case seems to have been overlooked in the development of the SRS and yet it holds important lessons in the search for models of local integration for refugees in Uganda.

Kashojwa primary school in Nakivale refugee settlement

Nakivale Refugee Settlement is located in Mbarara District in Western Uganda on 86 square kilometres of land, approximately 60 kilometers south of the town of Mbarara. At the end of April 2003, 14,729 refugees were living in Nakivale, including 12,311 Rwandese, 1,154 Congolese, 838 Somalis, 236 Barundi, 82 Kenyans, 52 Ethiopians, and 56 Sudanese. Fifty-three percent of the refugees are male, 47 percent are female.⁷⁴ Nakivale refugee settlement was created in 1960 in response to an influx of Rwandese Batutsi refugees fleeing the Bahutu regime that had taken power in Rwanda.⁷⁵ At that time, the colonial government acquired land in the Nakivale area — close to the border with Rwanda and with a low population of nationals, due to infestation with tsetse fly — that was owned by the Ankole king, in exchange for land in the Nyabushozi area of Mbarara. This land, which would become Nakivale refugee settlement, has hosted varying numbers of refugees since this time. While most of these refugees have come from Rwanda, it is one of two settlements in Uganda that hosts a wide diversity of nationalities. At times, this diversity has created complex situations and sometimes conflict.⁷⁶ Moreover, tension between refugees and nationals over access to land in the Nakivale area is one of the largest issues currently facing the settlement;⁷⁷ as the Camp Commandant states, “all problems originate from land.”^{78,79} These issues of conflict over access to land and ethnic tensions are common

⁷⁴ Statistics compiled by the Camp Commandant in Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁷⁵ Interview, David Mugenyi, Camp Commandant, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁷⁶ Interview, Linnie Kesselly, Senior Community Services/Education Coordinator, Kampala, 28th April 2003.

⁷⁷ For a thorough discussion of the issue of land in Nakivale settlement, see Bagenda, Emmanuel, Angela Naggaga, and Elliott Smith. May 2003. “Land Problems in Nakivale Settlement and the Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda.” RLP Working Paper No. 8.

⁷⁸ Interview, David Mugenyi, Camp Commandant, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

within the local settlement structure in Uganda and are essential in understanding the possibilities for social integration.

Kashojwa Primary School holds an important place within Nakivale settlement. It is located close to the base camp and to the main trading centres. It has also been the only school in the area for long periods of time and, thus, many educated people in the region attended this school. Indeed, many of the teachers at all three schools in Nakivale settlement attended Kashojwa Primary School themselves as pupils.⁸⁰ The school has been opened and closed over the years in response to the number of refugees in the area. Most recently, it was closed in 1994 when many Rwandese repatriated with the change of government in Rwanda. It remained closed for one year before a Kenyan refugee living in Nakivale petitioned the UNHCR to reopen the school to cater for the refugees remaining in the settlement.⁸¹ Kashojwa was thus reopened in 1995. As of April 2003, it is the largest school in Bukanga Country, with a total population of 1,822 pupils with 26 teachers. The motto of the school, proudly written and illustrated on the front of the school, is “[t]o produce self-reliant citizens of the nations.”⁸² Indeed, the school population is composed of children from many nations: 1,212 pupils from Rwanda, 348 from Congo, 35 from Somalia, 12 from Kenya, five from Burundi, four from Sudan, and 206 from Uganda.⁸³

The instability generated from fluctuating numbers of pupils is common in schools in settlements that serve refugee pupils primarily. Without a critical mass of national pupils, schools such as Kashojwa are vulnerable to sudden closing if repatriation for a group of refugees becomes a possibility as it did for Rwandese in 1994. At Bujubuli (the second case study), on the other hand, the presence of national pupils has stabilised the school even in the situation of repatriation of Congolese refugees. This integration of refugees and nationals thus creates more long-term development of educational infrastructure in the area to benefit nationals.

Social integration of refugees and nationals at Kashojwa Primary School has proved difficult, and the issue of nationality never seems to be far below the surface in discussions. As the Headmaster explains, “harmonising people from different countries, it is just a miracle, as I see it, a miracle to harmonise them to fight for one thing because there are so many differences between the nationalities, the parents, between children themselves, and at times between even teachers.”⁸⁴

⁷⁹ For a thorough discussion of the issue of land in Nakivale settlement, see Bagenda, Emmanuel, Angela Naggaga, and Elliott Smith. May 2003. “Land Problems in Nakivale Settlement and the Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda.” RLP Working Paper No. 8.

⁸⁰ The continued presence of Rwandese Tutsis as teachers in refugee settlement schools was mentioned to the researcher numerous times as a problem area. Most of the Rwandese refugees who currently live in Nakivale settlement are Hutu and some described feeling threatened by “old Rwandese nationals” who are Tutsi and who are now in positions of power within the settlement. See RLP Working Paper No. 8, “Land Problems in Nakivale Settlement and the Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda,” for further discussion of the “old Rwandese national” population.

⁸¹ Interview, Renson Nangendo-Ngassi, teacher at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 2nd May 2003.

⁸² Personal observation at Kashojwa Primary School, 29th April to 7th May 2003.

⁸³ Statistics from first term 2003, obtained from Headmaster of Kashojwa Primary School, 29th April 2003.

⁸⁴ Interview, Twinomugisha Victor, Headmaster of Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 29th April 2003.

Nakivale settlement itself is set up in 'zones' that are named after the ethnicity of the group that lives there. Thus, children will say "I live in the Munyamulenge zone" or "I live in the BaKongo zone" or "I live in the Somali zone."^{85,86} When children are asked to draw their friends, most draw friends of the same national origin. When asked about friends of other nationalities, children often respond: "We don't live together."⁸⁷ Children are also grouped together by their teachers into national groups. At one end-of-day parade, a teacher demanded an explanation for the number of children who were not present. "Where are the Somalis?" he yelled. "They always run away before the end of the day...do I need to chase them all the way to Mogadishu?"⁸⁸

The stereotypes that result from this kind of grouping of children are obvious in pupils' responses to questions about how children at Kashojwa get along. One pupil explains how pupils classify themselves: "Some say 'We are Congolese,' others say 'Rwandese,' some are from Burundi and others are from Sudan. Everyone separates themselves."⁸⁹ Another explains why he does not have friends of other nationalities: "I see that [pupils of other nationalities] are not happy with me....Even when I ask them a question, they do not respond to me."⁹⁰ "Somalis are hostile,"⁹¹ says another. "I do not know their culture,"⁹² one girl says of other refugees, explaining why she does not have friends who are not Congolese. Interviews suggest that Ugandan nationals feel even more isolated than refugees; "Eiii, these Banyarwanda. You see, if you talk to them, and say touch on their book, she may even beat you. So if you don't want to quarrel or fight with her, don't touch their books. But Ugandans, you can touch it and they don't abuse you."⁹³ The presence of these stereotypes and tensions leads to feelings of insecurity for both refugees and nationals, a certain disincentive for communities to hosting refugees.

Four flags fly outside Kashojwa Primary School, representing the different stakeholders in the school: the Ugandan national flag, the UNHCR flag, the Uganda Red Cross flag, and the school's own flag.⁹⁴ Indeed, although the vast majority of pupils at Kashojwa are refugees, it is now a government school. As Kiwanuka Monica, Community Services and Education Coordinator of the URCS explains, "all

⁸⁵ Interviews with refugee pupils at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003 and 2nd May 2003.

⁸⁶ For further discussion of the ordering of space within refugee settlements, see Foucault, Michael. 1979. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage; and Malkki, Liisa H. 1995. *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.137.

⁸⁷ Interviews with refugee pupils at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003 and 2nd May 2003.

⁸⁸ Deputy Headmaster, personal observation at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 29th April 2003.

⁸⁹ Interview, refugee pupil 1 at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁹⁰ Interview, refugee pupil 2 at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁹¹ Interview, refugee pupil 3 at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁹² Interview, refugee pupil 4 at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 30th April 2003.

⁹³ Interview, national pupil 1 at Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 2nd May 2003.

⁹⁴ Personal observation, Kashojwa Primary School, Nakivale refugee settlement, 29th April to 5th May 2003.

of these schools are government schools. So the government has the responsibility of posting their teachers. So it's not our responsibility....We only put in refugee teachers for the sake of the refugee children. Because ... somehow they might be mistreated by the nationals....That's why we are having refugee teachers in those schools.”⁹⁵

Responsibility for Kashojwa Primary School is shared between URCS, as implementing partner for UNHCR, and the Mbarara District, through the District Education Office (DEO). One of the central issues in this relationship is the coordination of funding. URCS employs eight teachers out of the 26 at Kashojwa and pays school fees for all of the refugee pupils.⁹⁶ The district employs 18 teachers and pays UPE funds for all of the pupils in the school, regardless of whether they are national or refugee.⁹⁷ In this way, the Uganda government is heavily subsidising the education of refugees in Mbarara District, as refugee pupils are “double-counted” for the purposes of funding.⁹⁸

This provision of education is in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, Article 22, Clause 1, which states: “[t]he Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.” In a situation where host communities are not benefiting substantially, however, this support of refugee programmes can be seen as a drain on resources. Local integration of refugees can only be politically viable if it sustains benefit to hosting communities over the long-term. In order to achieve this solution to protracted refugee situations, increased communication and coordination of programmes between UNHCR, its implementing partners, and district officials — in education and in other sectors — are essential.

Bujubuli primary school in Kyaka II refugee settlement

Kyaka II Refugee Settlement is located in Kyenjojo District in Western Uganda on 81 square kilometres of land,^{99,100} approximately 70 kilometres by road from the town of Mubende. At the end of December 2002, 3,159 refugees were living in Kyaka II, including 1,905 Rwandese, 1,242 Congolese, and 12 Kenyans. Fifty percent of the refugees are male, 50 are female.¹⁰¹ The Kyaka area first hosted refugees in the 1950s following the political turmoil in Rwanda that led to the flight of thousands of Batutsi into Uganda.¹⁰² Kyaka II was created as a settlement to host these refugees in 1959,

⁹⁵ Interview, Kiwanuka Monica, Coordinator for Community Services and Education, Uganda Red Cross Society, Mbarara, 5th May 2003.

⁹⁶ Interview, Kiwanuka Monica, Coordinator for Community Services and Education, Uganda Red Cross Society, Mbarara, 5th May 2003.

⁹⁷ Interview, Tindikira Michael, Inspector of Schools Bukanga County, Mbarara, 5th May 2003.

⁹⁸ This provision of education is in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, Article 22, Clause 1: “The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.”

⁹⁹ Interview, George Bomera, assistant camp commandant, Kyaka II refugee settlement, 25th March 2003.

¹⁰⁰ Kyaka II refugee settlement was regazetted in 1994 after the repatriation of Rwandese refugees. At this time the area of the settlement decreased from 220 square kilometres to 81 square kilometres.

¹⁰¹ UNHCR-BO Kampala. December 2002. “Refugee Statistics as of End of December 2002.”

¹⁰² Barongo, Yolamu Rufunda. “Problems of Integrating Banyarwanda Refugees Among Local Communities in Uganda.” In A.G.G. Gingyera Pinyewa (Ed). 1998. *Uganda and the Problem of Refugees*. Kampala: Makerere University Press, pp.118-122.

and many of them stayed until 1994 when it became safe to return to Rwanda.¹⁰³ Since 1994, Kyaka II has hosted primarily Congolese refugees and Rwandese of Bahutu origin.

Although Kyaka II refugee settlement was not included in the conceptualisation of the SRS, the abundance of land and the stability of surrounding national communities have been conducive to the integration of services in this settlement. Indeed, it meets the conditions for successfully establishing self-reliant communities, as outlined in the SRS. While schools in Kyaka II have received and continue to receive assistance from UNHCR, “they are like any other schools because to us those schools are also government schools.”¹⁰⁴ Indeed, refugee pupils are counted in the overall population of a school, and UPE funds are granted on the basis of those numbers;¹⁰⁵ UNHCR supplements the amount the school receives with school fees paid for each refugee child.¹⁰⁶ As the District Education Officer (DEO) for Kyenjojo says, “I grew up and found that these people are studying together.... [T]here is no way you can say that refugees go there [points one direction] and those who are not refugees go there [points in the other direction].... [T]he goal is to have the child educated. So we don’t separate them.”¹⁰⁷

Bujubuli Primary School opened in 1984 and has, since that time, served both the refugees and the nationals who have made their home in the area. In April 2003, there were 160 refugee and 177 national pupils at this school. A sense of cooperation among pupils and teachers pervades the school. The school feels peaceful; it does not feel like a conflict or displacement situation. It is located far from insecure borders and there is enough land for people to grow their own food. It is a stable place for refugee children.¹⁰⁸

The social integration of pupils at Bujubuli Primary School is obvious. On a symbolic level, this integration is demonstrated by the two flags that fly in front of the school: the Ugandan national flag and the flag of the Batooro people.¹⁰⁹ At afternoon parades, the children sing the Ugandan anthem, the Ugandan school anthem, and the anthem of the Toro Kingdom. There is a sense that all of the children of the school are “young women and men of Uganda... uniting for a better Uganda.”¹¹⁰ There is not a sense of children being asked to give up their identities as Rwandese or Congolese; but there is a sense of equal belonging. On an individual level, refugee

¹⁰³ “Refugee Life,” a broadcast of Common Ground. Air date: 11th March 1997.

¹⁰⁴ Interview, Mugisa Charles, Inspector of Schools Kyaka County, Kampala, 4th April 2003.

¹⁰⁵ Mugisa Charles, Inspector of Schools Kyaka County, at UNHCR Community Services/Education Coordination Meeting, Entebbe, 1st April 2003.

¹⁰⁶ Personal communication, Atwooki Imedla, Coordinator of Community Services/Education for OPM, Kyaka II refugee settlement, 25th March 2003.

¹⁰⁷ Interview, Asiimwe Douglas, DEO Kyenjojo District, Kampala, 25th April 2003.

¹⁰⁸ One of the primary purposes of education in a refugee situation is the creation of stability for children coming from situations of conflict and displacement. As stated in the UNHCR “Education Sector Policy and Guidelines,” “[e]ducation helps meet psychosocial needs.... Crisis situations involving conflict and displacement cause disruption of children’s lives, the break up of families and social ties, and uncertainty regarding their futures.” From UNHCR Geneva. 2002. *Education Sector Policy and Guidelines (Draft)*. Geneva: UNHCR.

¹⁰⁹ The Batooro people traditionally live in the Toro Kingdom area of Kabarole and Kasese districts.

¹¹⁰ From the Ugandan school anthem.

and national pupils model social integration as they do not all sit together in groups but mix in class, by their own choice.¹¹¹

The majority of pupils at Bujubuli are nationals. Although the school was originally built by UNHCR with the aim of providing education for refugees, the nationals who make their home in the area have also benefited. First, children state in interviews that if Bujubuli Primary School were not there, they would have to walk many kilometres to go to the nearest school and may, in fact, not attend school.¹¹² In this way, access to primary education for nationals is augmented by the presence of refugees. Second, Bujubuli feels more stable than other schools due to the continued presence, aid, and supervision of both UNHCR — and its implementing partner Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) — and district education officials, which is a benefit to refugees and nationals alike.¹¹³

Third, the infrastructure that has developed with the financial support of both of these stakeholders is more substantial than in neighbouring schools and thus promotes the standard of education for both refugees and nationals. Fourth, the teaching force of the school is almost entirely national, with only one refugee teacher. These nationals are paid both by the Ministry of Education and Sport (Government of Uganda) and the UNHCR, through OPM. The presence of refugees in this area thus increases opportunities for employment of local teachers. Lastly, due to the population of refugee pupils, teachers are hired both by the MOES and OPM, resulting in a greater number of teachers than would otherwise be posted at the school. The lower pupil to teacher ratios allow for greater interaction between pupils and teachers, more frequent marking of books, and increased class participation by individual pupils,¹¹⁴ thus serving to increase the quality of education available in this area of Uganda.

Conclusion: local integration within a model of development

The case studies of Kashojwa Primary School and Bujubuli Primary School demonstrate the need for policies, and their implementation, that strive for joint development among refugees and their hosts. In this context, the simple integration of services cannot be substituted for careful planning, coordination, and monitoring of the social and economic integration of these communities. In order to achieve benefits for both refugees and hosts, conceptualising local integration through a model of development is essential.

A framework for development: The Poverty Elimination Action Plan (PEAP)

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) is the framework that guides development for Ugandan nationals in Uganda. It articulates a national vision to eradicate mass poverty in Uganda by 2017. Specifically, the goal is to reduce the

¹¹¹ Personal observation in P.5 class, Bujubuli Primary School, Kyaka II refugee settlement, 24th March 2003.

¹¹² Interviews with Bujubuli nationals, Bujubuli Primary School, Kyaka II refugee settlement, 27th March 2003.

¹¹³ Personal observation, Bujubuli Primary School, Kyaka II refugee settlement, and Kabweeza Primary School, Kyaka County, 7th March to 10th April 2003.

¹¹⁴ Classroom observations, Bujubuli Primary School, Kyaka II refugee settlement, 24th, 25th, and 26th March 2003.

number of people living below the poverty line to 10% by that time — from 56% in 1992-93, and 35% in 2000.¹¹⁵ Since its inception in 1997, it has guided the formulation of government policy as well as the direction of international aid. Indeed, the PEAP is the over-arching national planning document of the Government of Uganda and clearly places poverty eradication as the fundamental goal of the Government.¹¹⁶

As put forth through this document, development is measured by the eradication of poverty that, it argues, will only be possible with economic growth. From these basic assumptions stem the four major, and interrelated, goals of the PEAP:

Goal 1: Rapid and sustainable economic growth and structural transformation

Goal 2: Good governance and security

Goal 3: Increased ability of the poor to raise their incomes

Goal 4: Increased quality of life of the poor¹¹⁷

Goal 1 expresses the need for large-scale economic growth as a means to eradicate poverty; this growth, while it aims to be rapid, also needs to be sustainable. The PEAP simultaneously advocates for structural transformation within the Ugandan economy, specifically in the context of agriculture. Indeed, the basis of poverty in Uganda is the “poor economy where most people are locked into traditional subsistence agriculture.”¹¹⁸ Importantly, however, the PEAP asserts that the transformation of the economy from agriculture to non-agricultural sectors must happen through the modernisation of agriculture and not by its abandonment. Agriculture is indeed the most important source of livelihood for the poor so it is only through its growth and modernisation that mass poverty can be eradicated.¹¹⁹ Prerequisites for this modernisation are increased access to production technology and access to markets.

Goal 2 underlines the essential conditions that must be present for development to occur: good governance and security. As stated in the PEAP, “[I]nsecurity is the most important of all the factors determining poverty at the regional level.”¹²⁰ When consulted, ordinary citizens “see a definite and direct link between insecurity and poverty levels. For example they say whole regions (North East and Karamoja) have lagged behind in terms of development largely due to prolonged insecurity.”¹²¹ Development simply cannot happen without security of person and property.

¹¹⁵ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Government of Uganda). February 2001. “Poverty Eradication Action Plan (2001-2003) Volume 1. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development: Kampala, p.1.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.10.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, pp.4-5.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p.1.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, pp.3, 4.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p.28.

¹²¹ Nyamugasira, Warren. 2000. “Monitoring of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP).” A Presentation at the Consultative Workshop on the Revision of the PEAP and Public Expenditure Review. Kampala International Conference Centre, May 15-16, 2000.

Goal 3 is the projected outcome of the economic growth described above: an increase in the ability of the poor to raise their incomes. In order for people to raise their incomes, development strategies need to find ways that the poor can participate in economic growth. It is only through this participation that they can benefit. The PEAP makes a distinction between participation in economic growth and simple redistribution. “Poverty eradication will depend on economic growth; although redistribution would reduce poverty, it would not by any means eliminate it. While poverty has many dimensions below low incomes, it cannot be removed without raising incomes.”¹²² Indeed, “[p]oor people suffer directly from being disempowered”¹²³ and this goal underlines the importance not of service provision but of the economic freedoms that can create sustainable solutions. The idea of the PEAP, and the thrust of Goal 3, is not that the rural poor serve as beneficiaries of the country’s economic growth but that they are engaged in that growth.

Goal 4 is the anticipated result of the previous three goals. The aim is that with economic growth and the ability of the poor to raise their incomes, the poor will experience enhanced quality of life. Although increased quality of life is dependent on greater access to services such as education and health care, the PEAP is clear that, alone, provision of services is not development. It presents the role of provision of these public services only as a subsidiary to the economic growth that comes with individual freedoms and development of human agency. Creating the environment in which individuals can ensure their own access to services, it argues, is more important than the direct provision of those services.

At its most fundamental level, the PEAP represents a blueprint for long-term national development within the context of a stable environment. It recognises the need for security, and underscores the extent to which the provision of services is not, in itself, development.¹²⁴ A move from relief to development in the context of refugees, as outlined in the SRS, needs to take place within the framework created by the PEAP for development in Uganda.

Towards the local integration of refugees in Uganda

Assistance to refugees in Uganda needs to be considered in the light of the PEAP. The question that needs to be asked is, how does development — as set out in the PEAP — occur in the context of the local settlement structure? The local settlement structure and the PEAP present two parallel and uncoordinated assistance/development structures — one for refugees and the other for Ugandan nationals. Perhaps the question is then better phrased as can development occur in the context of a local settlement structure? Self-sufficiency and local integration operate in a symbiotic relationship. Economically, politically, and socially, it is not possible to have one without the other. The SRS system proposes harmony through the integration of services, yet it lays the foundation for antagonism by maintaining notions of ‘otherness’ inherent in the settlement structure.

¹²² Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Government of Uganda). February 2001. “Poverty Eradication Action Plan (2001-2003) Volume 1. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development: Kampala, p.1.

¹²³ Ibid, p.21.

¹²⁴ It falls beyond the scope of this paper to analyse the successes and failures of the PEAP.

Merkx, who was a member of a four-people task force comprising two government and two UNHCR officials involved in the development of the SRS, argues that “UNHCR is still maintaining the terminology of ‘local settlement’ as one of the ‘durable solutions’ and prefers not to talk about integration, since this might have connotations of assimilation and permanence.” He goes on to state, “assistance programmes aiming at integration, not necessarily assimilation and not excluding return, should widen their approach and target refugee-hosting areas as a whole.”¹²⁵ Indeed, while the SRS has been described as “a landmark in the development of innovative and development-oriented refugee policy”,¹²⁶ the analysis above suggests that there are still many changes that need to take place before that claim can be made.

¹²⁵Merkx, Jozef. 2000. “Refugee identities and relief in an African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and southern Sudan.” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, no. 19, Geneva: UNHCR, p. 28.

¹²⁶Duda, Gerald, Technical Advisor to the Directorate of Refugees, Uganda, from his presentation at the *Consultative Workshop for Integration of Education Service Delivery*, 13th—14th February 2001, Draft Report, April 2001, Drafted by the technical Committee for Education.

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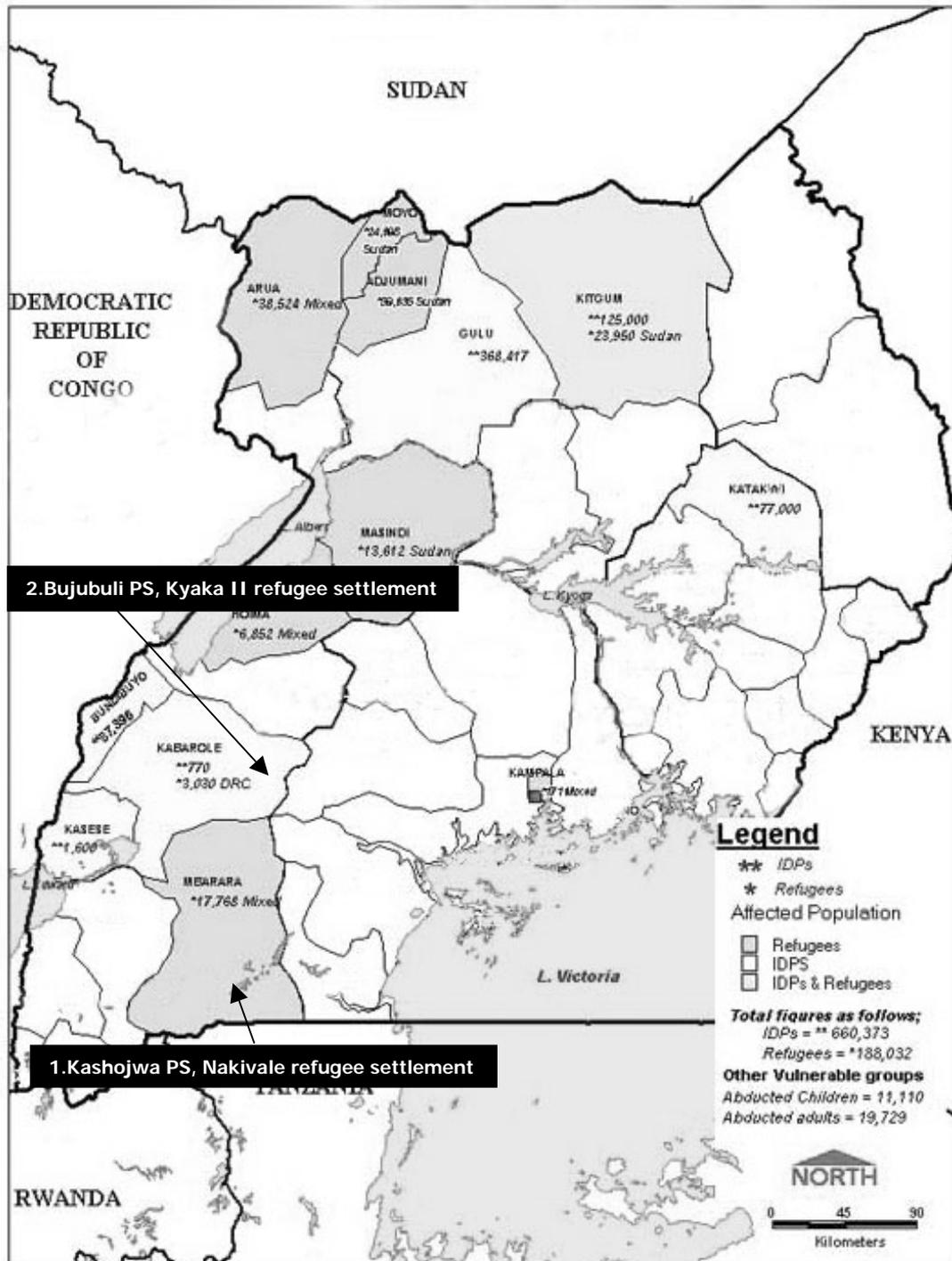
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Appendix I: Map of Uganda with refugee-hosting districts and identification of case study sites



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

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