The Uganda Model

A critical discussion of refugees' self-reliance in Kyaka and Kyangwali refugee settlements

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Abstract

By September 2016, all 193 UN-member states adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Half a year after, In March 2017, Uganda implemented this new global strategy on refugee protection in form of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). This thesis explores the refugee hosting model in Uganda after two years with the CRRF as the leading framework.

During spring 2019, I went on a three-month fieldtrip to inquire into the refugee situation in Uganda, which has been narrated to be one of the best and most progressive refugee host countries in the world. Whereas I was based in the capital of Kampala, this thesis has a particular focus on the two refugee settlements Kyaka II and Kyangwali. Both are located in Western Uganda, and through two weeks of intense qualitative fieldwork, I acquired an understanding of life as a refugee there. I carried out the fieldwork together with resident of Kyangwali, Albert Djuma, who functioned both as gatekeeper and interpreter. Focusing particularly on the aspect of self-reliance, we investigated the situation on ground.

With the qualitative data from the fieldwork as the foundation, this thesis analyses the implications of the current refugee response framework in Uganda. Taking point of departure in the traditions of critical theory, established structures are challenged rather than taken as read. Throughout this thesis, an eclectic approach to theoretical resources are employed. Specifically in terms of analysing policies, the central ideas in Carol Bacchi's WPR-approach are adopted. By scrutinizing selected policy documents of relevance regarding self-reliance, the key principles of the refugee response are identified. This thesis establish how current policies are rehashing previous strategies implemented in Uganda. Moreover, it is demonstrated how the neoliberal values of free trade, free market and private property rights permeate the policies guiding the refugee response in Uganda.

By having an analytical focus primarily on self-reliance, this thesis delves into the experienced realities on ground. It is shown how discrepancies between those realities and the way the refugee situation is articulated are identifiable. To get a more profound understanding of these discrepancies, a few selected empirical cases is unfolded and analysed more thoroughly. This facilitates the opportunity for more detailed discussions of the implications of life in a refugee settlement. As will be clear, refugees in Western Uganda face de facto barriers to enjoy basic rights such as the freedom of movement. This thesis argues that contextual and structural issues are the cause of the obstacles faced by the refugees. By doing so it opposes itself to the current framework, which have a primary focus on the responsibility of the individual.

In the exploration of refugee's self-reliance, this thesis further delves into Community-based organizations (CBO) started within the settlements. These organizations offer something more than simply a livelihood opportunity for members and participants. It is argued how these CBOs face primarily financial barriers to flourish and develop. Rather than providing a favourable environment for the CBOs, the current policy framework seeks to include the CBOs at a higher coordination level. This thesis discusses the implications of this inclusion and how CBOs represents both the very local, but at the same time are expected to take part in wider structures.

Ultimately, this thesis contributes to the already existing critical literature on self-reliance. By focusing on the context of Kyaka and Kyangwali, a new empirical setting is explored. Ideally, the findings in this thesis can be instrumental in a more nuanced understanding of self-reliance. The contemporary promotion of self-reliance within the refugee regime leads to certain consequences and effects that are not addressed in the current refugee response framework in Uganda. By highlighting the effects of having a primary focus on neoliberal values, it is hoped that a more balanced view at self-reliance will be adopted in the future.

Key words: *Uganda, refugee, CRRF, self-reliance, neoliberalism, de facto barriers, governance, resilience, Kyaka, Kyangwali, community-based organizations (CBO)*

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N.B.
A 10% exceed has been granted by Study Secretary Morten Melander and supervisor Michael Ulfstjerne.

1. Introduction

Motivation

While Europe seems to close itself more and more with externalization of borders (Lemberg-Pedersen, 2019) and an increasing popular support to right-wing political discourses (BBC, 2019), other countries around the world practice more solidary refugee policies. Despite being relatively small countries Jordan and Lebanon host a vast number of Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2020), and Colombia allows millions of refugees and migrants from Venezuela to enter (UNHCR, 2019b). Another example is Uganda, one of the poorest countries in the world measured on average GDP per capita[1]. However, Uganda is one of the largest hosts worldwide and is currently hosting more than 1,3 million refugees (UNHCR, 2019c). The refugees enjoy the right to work as well as they are allowed to move freely (IRRI, 2018: 7). Moreover, the Uganda model is characterized by, and is often applauded for, the provision of land to refugees, but this policy has often been misreported as one granting *all* settlement-based refugees with plots of land (Zakaryan, 2018: 4). Around the world, Uganda has been lauded for very generous and progressive refugee policies: Representing The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi proclaims it to be the most progressive in Africa, if not the world (Clayton, 2018); Positive story in New York Times (Goldstein, 2018); Danish Broadcasting Company (DR) stressing its uniqueness and how Uganda has "cracked the code" (Bendixen, 2017). More nuanced stances are also to be found: The Guardian highlighting opportunities as well as limitations (Patton, 2016) and Al-Jazerra pointing out the reality behind "euphoric coverage" (Schiltz & Titeca, 2017). Stories during the aftermath of a corruption scandal about exaggerated numbers painted a rather negative picture of the whole system (Okiror, 2018). More recently, an NBC story reporting on allegations of fraud and corruption within UNHCR Uganda further adds to a more tarnished view of Uganda and its refugee system (Hayden, 2019). For the purpose of clarity, it should be noted that UNHCR has denied all allegations (UNHCR, 2019e).

In March 2017, Uganda adopted the, at that time brand new, UN-strategy on refugees: *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework* (CRRF). The CRRF was first presented as an annex to the *2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (NY Declaration), which was adopted by all UN-member states by September 19 2016. UNHCR hailed this as "a milestone for global solidarity and refugee protection" (UNHCR, 2019a). The core of CRRF is presented as four main objectives: "Ease pressure on the host countries involved, to enhance refugee self-reliance, to expand access to third-country solutions and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity" (UN, 2016: 20). By the end of 2018, the UN General Assembly affirmed the *Global Compact on Refugees* (GCR). Building upon the NY Declaration, and with CRRF as a core element, GCR is a framework for the global refugee response providing for more predictable and equitable responsibility sharing calling for enhanced international cooperation and solidarity. Yet it is not legally binding (UN, 2018: 1).

[1] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?most_recent_value_desc=false
Accessed 8/8/19

Considering that Uganda ten years prior to the NY Declaration started to implement policies promoting many aspects akin to the ones described in the CRRF and the GCR, it seemed logical that Uganda should be one of the pilot-countries to implement this new global strategy on refugees. The narrative about Uganda as an inspiration for drawing up the CRRF is often expressed in publications from The Government of Uganda (GoU) (E.g. OPM, 2019b: 2). Given that the CRRF has now been the main strategy guiding the refugee response in Uganda for more than two years alongside the UN affirmation of the GCR in 2018, I find it pertinent to look into what this has brought along in Uganda hitherto. Into the bargain, as argued by the NGO *International Refugee Rights Initiative* (IRRI), the tendency to idealise Uganda's refugee response should be seen in a global context with few success stories in terms of displacement. The NGO calls for: "a robust critique of it [The Uganda model] that enables it to become much better" including debates and discussions about what is and what is not working (IRRI, 2018: 3).

The progressive policies concerning refugees in Uganda, the current global development with the refugee regime, as well as broad media coverage with varying focus makes the case of Uganda highly interesting for research purposes. Therefore, I decided to explore Uganda's refugee hosting system with the intention of creating solid analyses that unfolds its complexities. In March 2019, I went to Uganda for three months to investigate the characteristics of refugees' living circumstances in Uganda and simultaneously inquire into the policies facilitating the context in which this reality takes place. Combined with theoretical resources and secondary data, this fieldtrip to Uganda forms the basis and empirical foundation for answering the following research question.

Research question

What central principles are identifiable in Uganda's most recent refugee response framework, and with what implications are the consequences for refugees' self-reliance showing on ground in Western Uganda?

Terminology

Throughout this thesis, the reader will encounter numerous abbreviations and acronyms as well as lexical choices I had to make. The full form of a given term, word, or name will always be introduced with the corresponding abbreviation or acronym, and a full list is provided in Appendix 1. Here, I shall present the lexical choices I had to make.

Host community is the commonly used word for a surrounding village to a refugee settlement. Often used in plural about all villages proximate to a settlement. I adapted this use.

National is commonly used to denote Ugandans in the legal sense of being recognized citizens of the country. I adapted this use.

Newcomer denotes a refugee that arrived in Uganda after the large influx started in 2016.

Official is in this context denoting a representative from GoU or The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

Oldcomer denotes a refugee that arrived in Uganda before the large influx started in 2016.

Settlement is used instead of camp to deliberate signify the difference of the Ugandan refugee settlements as opposed to more traditional camps as seen in e.g. neighbouring Kenya. Further, I found that 'settlement' is broadly used among people involved in the refugee response.

2. Context

Historical background: Uganda as a refugee hosting state

It is widely recognized, and stated in reports and academic papers, that Uganda has a long history of hosting refugees (See among others: IRRI, 2018: 4; Nabuguzi, 1993: 1; Beraki, 2009: 6), and people migrating, both forced and voluntarily, have characterized Uganda's borderlands for long time (IRRI, 2018: 4). Given the scope of this study, the focus will be on Uganda as a refugee hosting state rather than a refugee producing country. The first "wave of refugees" came in 1955 from South Sudan (Nabuguzi, 1993: 1) and following this, the first law to deal with refugees was enacted: *The 1955 Control of Refugees from the Sudan Ordinance*. However, already from 1930, Uganda started to host refugees as a result of World War 2 and political turbulence. 7000 refugees, European and Arab, were hosted in Uganda until durable solutions were established after the end of WW2 (Mujuzi, 2008: 400). In 1960 The British initiated the *Control on Alien Refugees Act* (CARA) repealing the Ordinance from 1955. This new act was based on control rather than protection and provided the government with discretionary powers (Mwalimu, 2004: 464). Moreover, it did not include a definition of a 'refugee' (Ibid.: 462). Yet, it provided refugees with a conditioned right to work but restricted their freedom of movement by requiring refugees to stay in camps (Mujuzi, 2008: 402).

Independence and increased displacement

Uganda gained independence from being a British protectorate in 1962, and soon after CARA was ratified by the 'new' Ugandan Government. At this time, Rwandese refugees were fleeing to the country and upon arrival they were confined to camps as a matter of limiting their political intentions. More so, this policy focused on and prioritized "economic development and self-sufficiency rather than political citizenship and refugee rights" (Long, 2012: 221).

By September 1976, Uganda ratified to the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (Mujuzi, 2008: 402) including the *1967 Protocol* (Sharpe & Namusobya, 2012: 564). In 1987, a year after current President Yoweri Museveni came to power, Uganda ratified the *1969 OAU Convention on Refugees* (IRRI, 2018: 4). These International obligations were divergent from some of the provisions in CARA, including the restrictions on the right of free movement (Ibid.). Recognizing this, CARA was mostly used in "situations of mass influx", and practices related to individual refugees were at least partly informed by the international and regional frameworks to which Uganda had ratified (Sharpe & Namusobya, 2012: 565). At this time Uganda was tormented by internal conflict while the conflict in neighbour-country Sudan produced more refugees, and as a result multiple waves of displacement in and out of Uganda occurred. The horrifying Rwanda Genocide in 1994 also contributed with mass displacement of people adding to the refugee population in Uganda (IRRI, 2018: 5).

The Self-reliance Strategy and Development Assistance for Refugees

In 1999, UNHCR and OPM jointly developed *The Self-Reliance Strategy for Refugee Hosting Districts of Adjumani, Moyo, and Arua* (SRS). By 2001, GoU adopted the strategy as the primary framework

for refugee assistance and ordered the local districts to proceed with the implementation. The main objectives of the SRS was:

> to empower refugees and nationals in the area to the extent that they will be able to support themselves; and to establish mechanisms that will ensure integration of services for the refugees with those of the nationals" (GoU & UNHCR, 2004: 2-3).

As explained to me during an interview with Victor Vuzzi Azza, Senior Advisor at The Royal Danish Embassy (RDE) in Kampala, GoU already realized in the late 1990's that the needs of refugees and nationals, from a socioeconomic view, resembled each other. With this strategy Uganda formalized the system of land allocation, which is still an essential part of the Uganda model today (Int. 22). By 2005, the SRS was transformed into *Development Assistance for Refugees* (DAR), which among other goals aimed at improving burden-sharing with communities and countries hosting large refugee populations alongside facilitating self-reliance for refugees (UNHCR, 2005: 10-11). DAR was seen as an upgraded version of SRS with resembling objectives but an added vision to avoid the anticipated pitfalls of SRS. These included improving engagement and capacity of local stakeholders, better integration into national development plans and district level planning, and budgeting (UNHCR, 2005: 25).

The 2006 Refugees Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations

In May 2006, GoU launched the *2006 Refugees Act*, repealing the CARA, to introduce the Office of refugees and to be more in line with Uganda's international obligations. CARA was not only in contradiction with international conventions, it was also unconstitutional with the 1995 Constitution of Uganda (Beraki, 2009: 8). The 2006 Refugee Act initiated new structures to deal with refugees, clear Refugee Status Determination procedures alongside a refugee definition in line with the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol (Refugee Law Project, 2006; Sharpe & Namusobya, 2012). Further to mention is the introduction of the right to free movement and the right to gainful employment. About the right to free movement, Zakaryan (2018: 4) notes that "its interpretation and implementation remains disputed" given that some refugees are required to request for permits to leave the settlements where they live. Four years after, the complementing *2010 Refugee Regulations* were implemented, and together with the 2006 Refugees Act it forms the legal refugee framework currently effective in Uganda.

The current state in Uganda: The CRRF

CRRF was officially created as the natural consequence of realizing that the nature of refugee displacement needs a more predictable and comprehensive response. According to the CRRF that implies more international cooperation and burden- and responsibility-sharing alongside a multi-stakeholder approach where all pertinent actors are involved (UN, 2016: 16). As of 2019, 15 countries have adopted CRRF of which eight are African states (UNHCR, 2019a). Despite it being a new strategy, it is nevertheless based upon the current refugee regime reaffirming the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol (UN, 2016: §65, p. 12).

It is explicitly stated in the CRRF that each country needs to adopt the framework in a unique fashion fitted to the given context (UN, 2016: 16). In Uganda, the implementation of CRRF is overall led by GoU through the *CRRF Steering Group* co-chaired by OPM and the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) (OPM, 2019b: 28). OPM and UNHCR have in collaboration developed the Ugandan version of CRRF: *The CRRF Road Map,* which was adopted in January 2018. Revisions of the document in March 2019 lead to a change of the name to *The National Action Plan* (NAP). While the Ugandan model appears to have inspired both the CRRF and subsequently the GCR, the need for enhanced regional and international support was recognized by GoU (OPM, 2019b: 10). When GoU in September 2016 agreed to launch the CRRF it was with the expectations of strengthening and building upon already existing efforts (OPM, 2019b: 11). Additionally, *The Kampala Declaration* adopted at the Solidarity Summit on Refugees June 2017, was a response to the recognition that Uganda can't handle the present refugee situation alone thus calling for more equitable responsibility and burden sharing with the international community (Ibid). The figure below displays the four objectives of CRRF in Uganda:

CRRF's objectives in Uganda
- ✓ Support Government policy and protect asylum space
- ✓ Support resilience and self-reliance of refugees and host communities
- ✓ Expand solutions, including third country options
- ✓ Support Uganda's role in the region and invest in human capital and transferrable skills

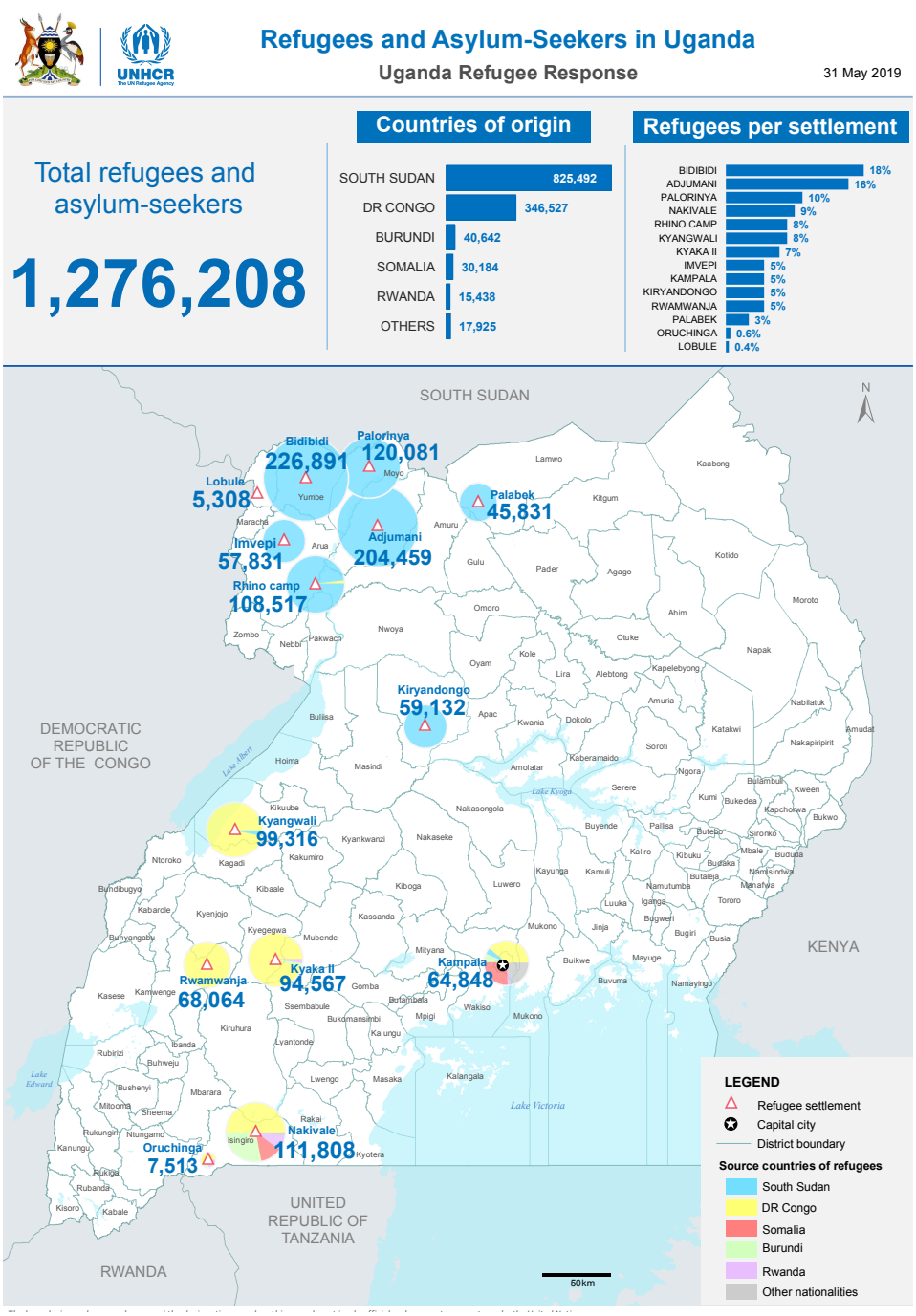
(OPM, 2019b: 13)

The refugee situation in Uganda 2019

Uganda is currently, as of May 2019, hosting 1.276.208 refugees (2% asylum seekers) with the majority coming from South Sudan (64%) and DR Congo (28%) (OPM, 2019a). Around 92% live in one of the 32 settlements adjacent to host communities located in 12 different districts in rural parts of the country (OPM, 2019b: 8). As part of the Uganda model, refugees get a plot of land in a settlement when granted asylum (Int. 18). The last eight per cent are self-settled urban refugees, primarily in Kampala. More than 60% of the refugee population is below 18 years old (OPM, 2019b: 8). Beginning in 2016, Uganda experienced a large influx of refugees from primarily South Sudan. Additionally a considerable number of refugees from DR Congo, and some from Burundi, have fled into Uganda the last two to three years (OPM, 2019b: 7). However, according to Country Director in *Danish Church Aid* (DCA), the situation seems to stabilize itself now (Int. 20). That being said, the situation is not

more stable than escalated violence and conflict in neighbouring DRC and South Sudan may easily compromise this. Moreover, the parliamentary election in Uganda 2020 could potentially change the picture, it was explained to me during an interview with Team Leader from RDE (Int. 19).

The overall situation in Uganda is naturally affected by the large influx of refugees. As pointed out by Emergency and Field Coordinator (EFC) in OPM, Uganda has been in an emergency for long time now: "No day has passed without receiving refugees" (Int. 18). Related hereto is the effect it has on resources. Both concerning the land provided to refugees as well as natural resources. The EFC as well pointed this out as well as he highlighted the chronic underfunding as characterizing the refugee response in Uganda (Int. 18). As of May 2019, UNHCR's funding requirements for Uganda is met 16% (UNHCR, 2019d). By December 2018, the funding requirement were met by 47% for that year's estimated budget (UNHCR, 2018b). Naturally these challenges complicate the planning further. In 2018, as a consequence of allegations of fraud, UNHCR biometric systems were introduced in Uganda, and are now used in all refugee settlements as was explained to me during an interview with Team Leader from *World Food Programme* (WFP) (Int. 27).



Overview of refugee settlements in Uganda, May 2019 (OPM, 2019a)

3. Methodology

The following section presents the central methodological considerations relevant for understanding the research as presented in this thesis. Firstly, I will present my point of departure in critical theory (Juul, 2012; Nielsen, 2015; Thagaard, 2010). Following that, I will discuss the fieldwork in Uganda including the research methods used and their contributions to the research. Hereinafter, I will discuss relevant considerations in terms of reflexivity and ethical aspects. Lastly, I will account for the further work with the gathered empirical data as well as discussing reliability, validity, and generalizability.

Based in critical theory

My point of departure in terms of theory of science is found in the research traditions of critical theory. As explained by the sociologist Tove Thagaard (2010: 42), critical theory aims to critique ideology and the established structures in society. In that sense it is a development of Marxists thoughts and ideas (Juul, 2012; Nielsen, 2015). Critical theory adopts the fundamental view that social science should be emancipatory and expose societal development hindering human development (Juul, 2012). Related hereto, I want to mention my use of the heterodox economic theories of economist and socialist Thorstein Veblen (1914, 1923) to challenge and discuss the current economic system in Uganda.

Philosopher Henrik K. Nielsen elaborates that critical theory should be understood as a "theoretical space for reflection"[2] that is in dialogue with the empirical data. Further, critical theory places the analysis within a broader societal perspective (Nielsen, 2015: 373-374). This thesis seeks to do this by analysing the empirical data in a broader context than Western Uganda where I conducted most of the fieldwork. Specifically, by analysing the empirical data in relation to neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005; Thorsen, 2010). Critical theory takes a starting point in a phenomenon, but its relation to the whole should continuously be reflected upon (Nielsen, 2015: 374). Following this line of thought, this thesis will analyse and display concrete and specific findings inherently unique for the context of Western Uganda, but at the same time the relation to broader structures will be taken into consideration. Nielsen further argues that critical theory challenges, and to a great extend opposes itself to, positivism in terms of ontology and epistemology. Understood as the premise that social and cultural phenomena cannot be regarded in isolation to the historical context in which they are simultaneously being constituted by and constitute the whole (Nielsen, 2015: 374). These ontological and epistemological assumptions are adopted, and rather than aiming for an absolute truth, this thesis seeks to give rise to critical reflection and widen the horizon for alternatives and processes of change.

Fieldtrip to Uganda

From March 1st to May 29th, I was on a fieldtrip in Uganda to gather research material on the refugee system in the country to form the basis for this thesis. Throughout my stay in Uganda I was based in the capital of Kampala, but in May I travelled to Western Uganda to visit and conduct ethnographic fieldwork in the two refugee settlements Kyaka II (from now on Kyaka) and Kyangwali. Being in

[2] My own translation of "teoretisk reflektionsrum"

Kampala allowed me to carry out interviews with various stakeholders given that most NGOs as well as OPM and UNHCR have their headquarters in Kampala. Whereas most of the interviews used in this thesis was carried out during two intense weeks in Western Uganda, the whole fieldtrip lasted for three months. As argued by the anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup (2013: 146), the field "comes in many shapes and sizes". Thus, I regard the entirety of my stay in Uganda as being in the field, and upon returning to Denmark as leaving the field. The duration of three months was chosen both in terms of practicalities as well as getting an in depth understanding of Uganda and its refugee system. As argued by social scientist Robert K. Yin (2018: 15), to understand a case, the researcher must investigate the phenomenon in depth within the whole context surrounding it. Therefore, in order for me to fully understand the situation in the two refugee settlements in Western Uganda, I had to explore and inquire into the wider context i.e. the refugee system in Uganda.

Narrowing down the scope

When I arrived in Uganda, the scope of my research was still broad. With a critical approach I wanted to explore the current refugee situation in Uganda. By undertaking a qualitative inductive approach, I wanted the focus to be narrowed down continuously throughout the fieldtrip and even upon returning to Denmark by coding and analysing the data. Through extensive reading and preliminary broad expert interviews with representatives from the RDE (Int. 19, 22 & 23), WFP (Int. 24), and the NGOs IRRI (Int. 21), DCA (Int. 20), and former NGO-worker Marilyn (Int. 25), the scope of the research started to take form. I also interviewed refugees residing in Kampala (Int. 1 & 2) as well as I engaged in more informal conversations with refugees to get an understanding of their perspectives. From this initial exploration of the Ugandan refugee system, it was evident to me that the CRRF was omnipresent. However, the initial interviews and conversations with urban refugees indicated a discrepancy between their lived realities and the vision of CRRF. Thus, I decided that I wanted to explore how CRRF has informed the refugee response in Uganda. As a matter of focusing and due to the inherent limitations of this thesis, I decided to primarily focus on one out of the four objectives in the CRRF, namely "enhance refugee self-reliance". This deliberate choice of narrowing down the scope is partly based on the fact that UNCHR and GoU in 1999 commenced implementing a Self-reliance strategy (GoU & UNHCR, 2004). Moreover, self-reliance is consolidated both as a primary objective of the Ugandan CRRF as well as it constitutes one out of its five pillars. In the Ugandan context it is coupled together with resilience. Given that objective three and four in the CRRF implies multilateralism and the broad formulation of objective one, I decided to explore the realm of refugees' self-reliance and resilience.

Ethnographic fieldwork in Western Uganda

Naturally I could not go to all of the refugee settlements, so I conducted desk research in order to correctly evaluate settlements appropriate for investigation. It could be argued that it was an advantage to visit two settlements in order to have a reference point for the observations. I chose Kyaka and Kyangwali, both located in Western Uganda and primarily inhabited by Congolese refugees. Both oldcomers and newcomers reside here, which I reckoned as an interesting social dynamic. Moreover,

my exploration into the refugee situation in Uganda so far indicated that most attention were given to the refugees from South Sudan, mainly hosted in Northern Uganda. Thus, I found it both relevant and interesting to look more into the situation in Western Uganda and the Congolese refugees living there.

Getting the permit to conduct fieldwork and connecting with Albert Djuma

In order to visit and even more important in terms of conducting interviews and research observations, I needed a permit from OPM to access the settlements. After a process of formalities, I eventually got the permit granting me access to conduct fieldwork in Kyaka and Kyangwali. This permit proved to be invaluable for the research since it proved my legitimacy as a researcher. Whereas it might have been hypothetically possible to carry out part of the research without the permit, the fact that I had it enabled me to carry out interviews with NGOs, UNHCR, and officials from OPM and the District Local Government (DLG). I experienced that when showing the permit, people would not only take my research seriously, they would also allocate time for interviews. The fact that I needed a permit to conduct fieldwork showed me that that the refugee settlements are regulated differently than other villages and cities in Uganda.

Simultaneously to acquiring the permit from OPM, I was planning other practicalities related to the fieldwork in Western Uganda. Most relevant was my decision to find an interpreter given that my proficiency in the languages spoken by most Congolese, Kiswahili and French, are restricted to a few phrases and a limited vocabulary. Through searching on locally rooted initiatives in the two refugee settlements, I got in contact with a young Congolese refugee living in Kyangwali: Albert Djuma. Albert and I talked on phone several times, and eventually I decided to hire him as an interpreter for the full two weeks in Western Uganda. Political scientist Janet Bujra (2011: 177) suggests to use interpreters with first-hand knowledge about the area to be researched. Being a refugee and a citizen in Kyangwali, Albert is indeed in this category. Using an interpreter when conducting fieldwork naturally carries implications and limitations. Anthropologist Charlotte Davies (2008: 124) argues that some levels of meaning are inevitable going to be lost. Further, Bujra (2011: 172) states that translation is a "social relationship involving power, status and the imperfect mediation of cultures". Being aware of this imperfect nature of translation, I prompted the interlocutors for explanation or elaboration when I estimated that meaning potentially were about to be lost. Fortunately, Albert's language skills proved to be great and I did not experience that the use of an interpreter harmed the interview situations in a significant manner.

Albert and I taking a break on top of a hill in Kyaka

Two weeks in Western Uganda

Whereas the fieldwork in Uganda lasted for three months, I spend two weeks in Western Uganda: from Wednesday May 1st until May 15th 2019. The first week in Kyaka, and the second in Kyangwali. Anthropologist Kathleen Musante (2015) states that often the researcher needs to be in the field for a longer period of time in order to have a natural presence. Whereas two weeks may not be considered as long time, the fact that I spend most of it together with Albert made it more natural. Most days I would meet Albert for breakfast at around 8am. Then we would tour around observing and interviewing relevant interlocutors the whole day up until sunset at around 7pm. I spent the evenings writing notes and restoring my energy for the next day. In addition to his role as interpreter, Albert functioned as a guide and a gatekeeper to the refugee communities in the settlements. Hastrup et. al. (2011: 67-68) explains that the researcher needs to identify a central gatekeeper to gain access to a place and a group of people. Whereas the permit from OPM was indispensable to get access to the officials and NGOs, Albert was my access to interviewing the refugees. As Albert was working with me, his presence approved my research and legitimized my reasons for interviewing refugees. This enabled me to carry out many interviews every day since trust seemed to be already established to a certain extend just with Albert being present. As a gatekeeper Albert added credibility to the research and seemingly the interlocutors felt safe enough to confide to me (For similar discussion see Heyl, 2001).

In this way the combination of an official permit from OPM and the company of Albert allowed me to explore the two refugee settlements on my own terms. Relevant to mention here though is that the Camp Commandant (CC) in Kyangwali prohibited me from staying at Albert's house. This authoritarian way of exercising control added to my experience of the refugee settlements as different to other Ugandan villages. Simply, the refugee settlements are more regulated than the host communities.

Research methods

In the following paragraphs, the applied qualitative research methods used for this study will be presented and discussed. Davies (2008: 81-82) argues that ethnographic fieldwork ideally consist of several methods enabling the researcher to acquire adequate empirical data. Consequently, I used these research methods: interviews, participant observations, and field notes. Additionally, I have also used and analysed secondary data. In that way data triangulation is used to capture a more nuanced picture of the situation as well as cross-validating data (Johnston et al., 2010).

Interviews

A large part of the empirical data I collected in Uganda was in the form of semi-structured interviews as well as more informal talks (Tanggaard & Brinkmann, 2015: 36-38). During the three months in Uganda I conducted 59 interviews, which may be divided into five groups: refugees, nationals, representatives from NGOs, officials and experts. In general, the interviews with Congolese refugees were carried out in French and/or Kiswahili with Albert as the interpreter. Interviews with Ugandans, and internationals, were carried out in English. All interviews and informal conversations naturally contribute to my overall knowledge about the refugee situation in Uganda, but due to the scope of this

research I will only refer to and quote directly from part of them. A full list is provided in Appendix 2.

In order to retain uniformity in the interviews, but at the same time allow for flexibility, I decided to carry out semi-structured interviews. Naturally the theme of self-reliance was discussed in the interviews, and in most cases, it came naturally and without the need for me to force it. This style resembles what the late professor Steinar Kvale (2007: 38) calls an "explorative interview", where the researcher wants to explore a given topic from the perspective of the interlocutors. With the aim of bringing forward what was important for the interlocutors, I asked open questions such as "what are the opportunities/challenges?" and "how is a normal day for you?". By taking this approach the interlocutors could stress significant topics as experienced by them. However, it should be mentioned that the interviews with officials, experts and representatives from the NGOs in general were more structured, and sometimes I asked closed questions in order to get specific information.

Following from here, I want to highlight that most interviews were not recorded, but instead comprehensive notes were taken during and after the interviews. I decided to undertake this approach since I experienced that the interlocutors would talk more freely when interviews were not recorded. It may be argued that taking notes while engaging with other people is distancing the researcher from the interlocutors (for a similar discussion see Emerson et al. 2001), but this method nonetheless appeared to be the most suitable. To illustrate, I recorded the first interview I conducted in Kyaka, and immediately after the interview, one of the interlocutors said that she wanted to add something "off the record" (Int. 3).

I used a non-probability technique called exponential discriminative chain referral sampling to find interlocutors. This method implies that a recruited interlocutor (In this case Albert) recruits other interlocutors and is suitable for studies researching on marginalised populations that may be difficult to reach for the researcher (Etikan et al., 2015). Additionally, some interlocutors were chosen more randomly i.e. Albert and I approached them and asked if we could do an interview. Being aware of not getting a sample that was too skewed in a particular direction, I as a researcher was always attempting to ensure variation in the interlocutors including male and female, young and old, alone and family, as well as newcomers and oldcomers. The presence of Albert during the interviews contributed to what Pierre Bourdieu labels "non-violent communication"; a desired condition during interviews created by social proximity and familiarity (Bourdieu in Heyl, 2001: 378).

In terms of interviews with NGOs, I decided to interview those with a specific focus on livelihood given that those seemed most relevant regarding self-reliance. The interviews with officials were deliberately chosen i.e. I estimated that interviewing the Camp Commandants, representing the highest authority under OPM in the settlements, to be relevant.

Observations and field notes

I made observations both in Kampala and in Western Uganda. By always keeping a notebook with me, I could easily write down experiences and observations while still fresh in my memory. Taking field notes is "reducing just-observed events, persons and places to written accounts" (Emerson et al., 2001: 353). In that sense, field notes turn the reality into something tangible that can be reconsulted later. This is naturally a selective process and bias is inevitable. Professor in psychology and communication, Thomas Szulevicz (2015), argues that the timing for taking field notes is always context-depending. I experienced this as well, and I strived to find the right time to take field notes without restricting the observations or making the situation uncomfortable for the involved people. A technique I found particularly useful was to just quickly scribble down a word, a name or a phrase that I will then elaborate on later when the situation was suited for it.

The development of houses would often indicate whether newcomers (1) or old-comers (2) lived there. Both pictures from Kyaka.

Participant observations

Another method I used was participant observation. Inherently in the method is that the researcher is participating in the practices being observed (Szulevicz, 2015: 82-83). In qualitative work, the researcher acquires knowledge both in a socially anchored and a more distanced manner (Hastrup et al.,

2011: 33). This paragraph is concerned about the former, and again Albert was the gatekeeper allowing it to happen**.** Whereas official visitors to Kyaka would commonly sleep at a certain hotel outside the settlement in the town of Kyegegwa, I stayed in a humble guesthouse in Bukere inside Kyaka. In Kyangwali I also stayed within the refugee settlement. In that sense, my stay in the two refugee settlements resembled a refugee visiting rather than an NGO-worker. Throughout I strived to experience the field from within the field, and by touring around with Albert this was doable. We used *boda boda*[3] to get around, we ate at the local restaurants for refugees, and we participated in events such as Sunday service in the church, talent night at the guesthouse and a baptism ceremony in the home of relatives to Albert. Further to mention is that I participated in a meeting with the Community-based organization (CBO) *Youth Organization Building African Communities* (YOBAC). Albert, who is founder of the organization, invited me to participate and this opportunity gave me unique insight into how a CBO work. This way of being in the field naturally enhanced my understanding of it in spite of the relatively short time spend in Western Uganda.

Secondary data

In addition to the empirical data acquired through the methods presented in the previous paragraphs, this thesis is also concerned with secondary data in the form of official publications from primarily OPM. Most important to mention are the *National Action Plan* (NAP) as well as the *Jobs and Livelihoods Integrated Response Plan* (JLIRP), which will be analysed in this thesis. Both are relevant for understanding the current development of the refugee response in Uganda, and the specifics about theses policy documents will be elaborated subsequently. Additionally, I have used other publications, reports, policies, and previous studies in order to get a deeper understanding of the context. In that sense, data triangulation is used both as the means to improve validity of the findings presented in this thesis as well as to discover new angles and perspectives on the case (Johnston et al., 2010; Lund, 2014).

Reflexivity and power relations

Given that I as an outsider represents a privileged class and ethnicity, being reflective about myself as a researcher was of paramount importance throughout the fieldtrip in Uganda. The researcher is always either part of or connected to the object of study, and thus the influence of the researcher must constantly be evaluated through considerations of reflexivity (Davies, 2008: 3). Therefore, in order to be reflexive, I consistently had to consider and reconsider the choices I made. This accounts specifically for the fieldwork, but also upon returning to Denmark in the process of analysing. Professor Emerita Donna Haraway talks about the collection of data as "situated knowledges" i.e. knowledge coming from somewhere. By accepting and persistently reflecting upon one's own position within the field, she argue that a useable though naturally not completely object position can be taken (Haraway, 1988).

[3] Commonly used word for local motorbike taxis

When I was touring the two refugee settlements, I did not encounter other internationals outside of the offices. That seemingly contributed to my presence being even more noticeable by the inhabitants in the settlements. Once again, I must stress that Albert's presence aided me in explaining my role as a researcher. Before talking with people, we were always making sure that they understood my purpose in the settlement and why I wanted to talk with them. On the first day in Kyaka, Albert and I approached a person sitting on a bench in the small village of Intambabiniga to ask for an interview. Within a few minutes, more than 30 people were standing around us. Apparently they expected me to deliver an official message because they, based on my appearance, assumed I represented an NGO. Thus, I was already from the beginning of the fieldtrip to Western Uganda reminded that my presence might cause confusion potentially influencing the data I collected.

Another important aspect are the relations in the field. Davies (2008: 93-94) argues that rather than the specific nature of each relationship to the interlocutors, "good ethnography" is based on "examined relationships". With that in mind, I was not striving after a certain relationship to the interlocutors, but rather to be conscious about them as they naturally developed. Obviously, my relation to Albert is significant for this research, and it has influenced the data collection. Both in terms of him translating during the interviews and the way he enabled me to get access to the field as well as to interlocutors. Also relevant here is the relations between different positions in the field. Kvale (2007: 14-15) states that in the interview situation, as well as when observing and during participant observation, an asymmetrical power relation is always present between researcher and interlocutor. Given that the Congolese refugees in Western Uganda may be regarded as marginalized, it has throughout the fieldwork been crucial for me to reflect upon my interaction with the interlocutors and my presence in the field in general. Albert's presence contributed to minimize the asymmetry, but I still made efforts to decrease it further. I strived to make the interlocutors feel as comfortable as possible during the interviews by e.g. letting them choose the setting for the interviews thus creating a space where they should ideally feel familiar resulting in a reduction of the power imbalances. Recognizing these power imbalances, I did my very best to be polite, respectful, and friendly in the interactions with people. I frequently discussed these aspects of reflexivity and relations in the field with Albert, and combined with my experience from previous fieldwork the potential problems related hereto have likely been decreased.

Ethical considerations

Anthropologist Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (2015: 134) claims that ethical considerations should be made from the beginning till the very end of a study, and she suggests the basic guidelines to be "openness and disclosure". As already touched upon, I strived to always being honest and open about my research. Furthermore, these three principles are key ethics of this thesis: Non-maleficence, beneficence, and autonomy (Inspired by Beauchamp's list in Murphy & Dingwall, 2001: 339). The first two principles combined signify that the research is ethical if the benefits outweigh the potential for harm (Ibid.: 340). In terms of doing harm to the interlocutors, and the people in the settlements in general, the most challenging aspect was the potential of indirect harm. Whereas it was a matter of course not to directly

harm anyone, the potential indirect harm of my research is more difficult to estimate. Therefore, I have considered the ethical aspects until the final draft of this thesis. From the very beginning the purpose of this study has been to critically investigate the refugee system in Uganda. As a result, the analysis presents some critical points about the refugee system in Uganda. To avoid any potential indirect harm to the interlocutors, I have decided to anonymize everyone except Albert (upon his request) and experts that didn't ask for anonymization. Officials may still be identified on behalf of their positions, but since they let me both record the interviews and did not show any sign of objection against the study, I have decided to keep their positions. However, they will as well have a false name in this thesis to display that it is not about them as persons, but rather about the refugee system in which they take a position.

Processing the data

My analytical approach may best be described as abductive. Professor in sociology, Katrine Fangen (2010: 38), explains that this approach implies that the starting point is in the empirical data, but the use of theories to gain a deeper understanding is accepted. Further, I have undertaken an eclectic approach to the use of theories. Rather than an overall theoretical framework guiding the process, relevant theories and concept are used to conceptualise the concrete problem in question as well as contributing to the identification of pertinent analytical themes. Thus my analysis is based in the empirical data and the eclectic use of theories and concepts provides a deeper understanding of the data. Scholars Anna Dubois and Lars-Erik Gadde (2002: 555) suggest that researchers undertaking an abductive approach should constantly go back and forth between empirical observations and theory to gain a deeper understanding of both. Inspired by their notions, I have engaged in this process of reciprocity shaping the outcome of this thesis. According to Nielsen (2015: 373), the aforementioned "theoretical space for reflection" is at play from the beginning when the researcher defines the problem area, but also when gathering reading material. Consequently, the research has changed throughout according to discoveries during the fieldwork as well as by the use of theories through analysis and interpretation.

Carol Bacchi's WPR Approach

As an analytical approach I will adopt the notions of the political scientist Carol Bacchi (2009). She argues that governments are active, rather than solely reactive, in the creation of policy problems. The constitution of a problem is significant since it implies how a given issue is thought about and how the involved people will be treated (Bacchi, 2009: 1). Bacchi advocates that researchers should examine policies critically to reach an understanding of what they actually represent. In a more practical sense, Bacchi suggests using her WPR-approach[4] to analyse policies. Rather than adopting the full approach step-by-step, I draw upon its key propositions: that we are all governed through *problematisations* that we need to study "through scrutinizing the premises and effects of the problem representations they contain" (Ibid.: 25). This implies a recognition of "ruling including but beyond the state", and a critical

[4] What's the Problem Represented to be?

intend to rethink the way in which we are governed (Ibid.: 47). Thus, the WPR is interested in how we are governed. Bacchi's approach draws on the work of Michel Foucault, namely the concept of "governmentality", understood here as "the different kinds of thinking associated with particular approaches to governing" (Ibid.: 276). In this context it will be the neoliberal approach to governing that I seek to identify and analyse through problematisation. Problematisation are here understood as the implicit problem representations i.e. "the thinking behind particular forms of rule" (Ibid.: 30). This understanding will form the basis for analysing policy papers of relevance in this thesis. By using the WPR-approach, I will discover problematisations in the policies and through analysing "the premises and effects" of those, the central principles may be identified.

Leaving the field: a new perspective arises

In the same manner that it was challenging to narrow down the scope in Uganda, narrowing down the analytical focus also proved to be a demanding task. The initial determination of self-reliance as a main focal point was necessary for me in order to carry out the fieldwork. However, upon returning to Denmark, and thus leaving the field, the large set of data demanded a strict analytical focus.

I coded the data to make it more accessible for being analysed. Inspired by the notions found in Hastrup et al. (2011: 53-57), my approach may concisely de presented as follows. Initially I read through all the data, comprised of extensive fieldnotes and transcriptions of the recorded interviews, to get an overview. Following that I reread the data set and coded it into thematic clusters. Professor Christian Lund (2014: 224) states that a case is a "chunk of empirical reality" and that it is "aimed at organizing knowledge about reality". Following these lines, I had to decide what to highlight and what to omit in order to present the case. By scrutinizing the data and reading more about self-reliance, I started to observe ideas and thinking based on neoliberalism appearing. I decided that neoliberalism should carry an important role in the research. In spite of it being academically appealing, I had to make the onerous decision of largely omitting the perspectives of NGOs, DLG, and host communities in the analysis. My intentions when going to Uganda was to understand and explore the refugee system from different angles and perspectives with a focus on refugees and their interests. As a consequence hereof, I decided that I wanted to explore the aspect of self-reliance from a policy level, settlement level, and a local level. This approach allows me to investigate and look into the refugee situation in a holistic way focusing both on the general (policies) and the specific (local life in the settlements). In order to move from the general to the specific, the regional level is taken into consideration.

Lund (2014: 230) argues that a case is not the empirical phenomenon, but rather it is made out of generalizing, abstracting, and theorizing. With these notions in mind, this thesis is not meant to simply present the refugee situation in Western Uganda. Rather, with point of departure in the empirical data, the aim is to reach a new understanding through generalizing, abstracting, and theorizing. Gadde and Dubois argue that with the aim of discovering new things, an abductive approach is desirable (2002: 559).

Lastly to mention here is the discovery of my own bias that I was not thoroughly aware of whilst conducting the fieldwork. When I did interviews and talked with people, conversations about self-reliance were primarily about livelihoods. Later, through reading of other studies and academic

papers, I realized that it is a narrow and limiting way to regard self-reliance. Interestingly to mention is that I did not encounter these more nuanced notions about self-reliance during the three months in Uganda. By revisiting the "theoretical space for reflection", my own understanding of both the concept of self-reliance as well as the empirical data itself has become more profound. Eventually, this 'new' discovery played a role sparking my interest in exploring self-reliance from a critical angle focusing on the connection to neoliberalism.

Reliability, validity and generalizability

Within qualitative research, reliability should be discussed in terms of transparency (Thagaard in Tanggaard & Brinkmann, 2015: 522). Consequently, this methodological section provides a detailed examination of how I have conducted the study. Rather than aiming at the possibility for replication, which I deem to be practically impossible, my goal is that the reader understands *how* and *why* I have carried out this research.

In terms of validity, Davies (2008: 96) states that it is in general argued that the usage of more methods improve the validity of a study. By applying various qualitative methods in addition to triangulation, by both considering and analysing secondary data, I have attempted to accommodate this. Further, and in line with the aspect of reliability, I strive to clarify how the research has been carried out and how I have arrived at my analytical findings. Transparency is paramount. Given limitations in terms of time and resources, there are naturally ways in which this research could have been more valid. I want to stress that if I had been in the field longer or had the option to do more initial research, the validity would likely have been improved. However, given my eclectic and abductive approach, the research question has been dynamic throughout the whole process, and finally it reflects what I believe is possible to validly conclude.

The analytical findings I arrive at based on the fieldwork is solely applicable for the context in which the data have been collected. Professor in forced migration Alexander Betts and collaborators have previously been criticized for generalizing findings from a few refugee settlements in Uganda to be applicable for the whole country (Kigozi, 2017). That being said, my analysis is divided into three levels: national, settlement, and local level. The national level concerns policies guiding the refugee response in Uganda, but I explore self-reliance through the empirical setting of two settlements in Western Uganda. Thus, the specific unfolding of empirical examples is unique for this research, but the conclusions may, at a more abstract level, point at tendencies relevant to consider for the general refugee response.

4. Theoretical context

The following section lays the theoretical foundation for this study, and seeks to present and review relevant literature concerning the concept of primarily self-reliance and secondly resilience. About the relationship between the two concepts, Junior professor in forced migration and refugee studies Ulrike Krause and sociologist Hannah Schmidt (2019: 2) state: "whereas self-reliance mainly suggests that refugees can support themselves, resilience indicates their broader ability to absorb and deal with difficult situations and crises". Given the volume of literature revolving around self-reliance[5], it is naturally beyond my resources to assess all of it. As a consequence, the literature presented here is chosen on the basis that it is relevant for exploring self-reliance in the context of refugees in Uganda. Further, in accordance with eclecticism, other literature will be used throughout the thesis when relevant. Here, particular attention will be given to a historical trace of self-reliance, the link to neoliberalism, and how it is related to dependency. Ultimately, this thesis will be placed within the body of critical literature on self-reliance.

Self-reliance – not a new theme on the agenda

UNHCR has been interested in the concept of self-reliance since the 1960's and 1970's, where refugees were commonly placed in large agricultural settlements that was expected to become self-reliant quickly whereupon the responsibility would be handed over to local authorities (Crisp, 2003). In the 1980's an increased recognition of protracted refugee situations led to various attempts to bridge the humanitarian development gab to promote self-reliance (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1460). Following the ICARA Process[6] in the early 1980's, a strategy called *Refugee Aid and Development* was developed to increase refugees' contributions to the host countries (Easton-Calabria, 2014: 414). The strategy spawned limited success and UNHCR's focus on livelihoods and self-reliance decreased (Crisp, 2003). Scholars Tony Binns and Etinenne Nel (1999) claim that self-reliance gained prominence within development theory in the 1980's and 1990's due to Western development strategies failing to deliver meaningful poverty reduction in the Global South. Around the millennium a new interest for self-reliance was as well sparked within UNHCR (Crisp, 2003).

Since then, self-reliance appears to have caught even more attention, and it is now an "eminent interest" of the international refugee regime (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1458). Moreover, it is argued how self-reliance actually dates back to the 1920's, before the creation of UNHCR, with the Greek refugees from Asia Minor (Ibid.: 1459). As such it was seemingly on the agenda already from the very beginning of the institutionalized response to forced migration. In another article, Easton-Calabria conclude that refugee livelihood assistance practices to foster self-reliance in the interwar period was characterized by a bottom-up approach, whereas a more top-down authoritarian approach were taken after WW2 and up until 1979[7] (Easton-Calabria, 2014: 428). In spite of the long trajectory

[5] ProQuest reveals that 12.374 entries contain 'self-reliance' in the abstract. The number decreases to 511 when 'refugee' is added to be appearing in the main body of text.
[6] International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa.
[7] The International Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa took place in Arusha in 1979. Easton-Calabria chose this as a diving point since it initiated the ICARA Process.

of the concept, few programmes have led to major accomplishments resulting in self-reliance of larger populations of refugees (Meyer, 2006; Hunter, 2009; Ilcan et al., 2015; Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1459) further claim that this lack of successful outcomes is due to a multitude of reasons such as limited opportunities for legal pathways to work, restricted rights, limited land for agriculture, lack of administrative planning and poor host economies. Following that, they draw attention to the claim that the terminology of self-reliance has changed throughout time. The result is "the repeated repackaging of similar self-reliance practices under new rhetoric" (Ibid.:1460). Common for these self-reliance practices are the preoccupation with "refugees' ability to support themselves with little to no external assistance from humanitarian and development agencies" (Ibid.). Krause & Schmidt (2019) note that the policies in the context of Uganda also have a focus on the reduction of aid. In a *Refugee Studies Centre* (RSC) Research brief from 2017, refugee experts, Amy Slaughter and Kellie Leeson, point out that despite the extended promotion of self-reliance, studies on the matter use different ways of measuring it leading to exclusion of comparability (Easton-Calabria et al., 2017: 5). It is argued that there is no "coherent theory or universal definition of self-reliance" (Ibrahim & Zulu, 2014: 483). Further, Omata (2017: 5) claims that given the absence of "systematic and rigorous criteria for measuring refugee self-reliance", UNHCR often see refugees as 'self-reliant' when they are living without external assistance.

The link to neoliberalism

Several scholars link self-reliance and neoliberalism. In their collaborative paper, which is indeed to be considered a primary text for this thesis, Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1461) argues that both the shaping and legitimising of the contemporary understanding of self-reliance is rooted in neoliberalism and its political and economic hegemony. They further argue that the primacy of markets as well as the focus on individual responsibility and independence are basis for contemporary self-reliance (Ibid.: 1461-62). Neoliberalism has to a large degree influenced development policies as well as practices (Swyngedouw & Wilson in Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1462). Priya Lal (2012: 230) further connects it to neoliberalism and highlights how self-reliance has become a 'catchword' within development discourses. Binns and Nel (1999) argue that self-reliance grew in popularity from the 1990's due to the interpretation that it supported the neoliberal ideology dominating the international political system.

Interesting to note here is how the discourses about refugees have changed. Welsh talks about subjects as "prudent autonomous and entrepreneurial" (Welsh in Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1462), which as argued by Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1462) is how relief organizations currently are framing refugees in the promotion of self-reliance. Given that refugees are seen as responsible economic actors, it represents a shift from "vulnerable victims" (Black in Ibid.).

Several scholars link resilience to neoliberalism: Walker & Cooper (2011: 144) note how it has developed from its roots in systems ecology to "a pervasive idiom of governance". Emeritus Professor Mark Duffield (2011) talks about resilience as an ideology accommodating the uncertainties of a neoliberal economy. Professor of Politics and International Relations Jonathan Joseph (2013) claims that resilience, as concerned with sustaining day-to-day life for individuals or communities, is a form of

neoliberal governmentality emphasizing the responsibility of the individual. The connection of resilience and neoliberalism are further explored in the literature (See among others Evans & Reid, 2013; Reid, 2012; Welsh, 2014).

With the link between neoliberal thinking to self-reliance and resilience established, it seems imperative to briefly dwell on the concept of neoliberalism. As argued by Professor Dag Einar Thorsen (2010: 188), neoliberalism has, despite its widely use in academic and political debates, "become an imprecise buzzword in much of the literature", and he further claims that the most common use of neoliberalism is "pejoratively" (Ibid.). I will here foreground a "disinterested" definition as proposed by Thorsen:

> [Neoliberalism is] a loosely demarcated set of political beliefs which most prominently and prototypically include the conviction that the only legitimate purpose of the state is to safeguard individual liberty, understood as a sort of mercantile liberty for individuals and corporations. This conviction usually issues, in turn, in a belief that the state ought to be minimal or at least drastically reduced in strength and size, and that any transgression by the state beyond its sole legitimate *raison d'être* is unacceptable (Thorsen, 2010: 16).

Professor David Harvey puts it this way in his definition: "human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey, 2005: 2). "Free" is here understood within the sphere of orthodox economics i.e. little if any regulation of the markets and trade. Whereas the definition by Thorsen provides the elementary comprehension of neoliberalism as beliefs and ideas rather than an established political ideology, Harvey's definition contributes to the analytical focus in this thesis. Thus, when I identify principles linked to neoliberalism, those are favouring the aspects of individual entrepreneurship, private property rights, and the primacy of a free market with free trade.

Self-reliance and dependency

Omata (2017: 5) argues that refugee policy-makers commonly positions self-reliance as the opposition to dependency. Although dependency is ill defined, it is often considered as "the act of constantly relying on others to make a living, to make decisions and to take action to address challenges" (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1463). It is further argued that the refugee regime in general presents aid dependency as something negative, and frequently as "failed self-reliance" (Ibid.). On that note, Assistant Professor Sarah Meyer (2006: 14) suggests that regarding self-reliance and aid dependency as polar opposite, creates a simplistic understanding of the relationship whereby self-reliance will be defined as "a process of reduction of external inputs and support for refugees". This framing of self-reliance and dependency as "an inverse relationship" may justify reduced assistance to refugees (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1466). In the context of Uganda, Meyer (2006: 1) further notes that after the implementation of the SRS, the refugees experienced a reduction in food rations and decreased provision of health and community services. Within the global refugee regime, the focus on

self-reliance have for decades been aiming at reducing expenses on humanitarian intervention and avoiding dependency (Easton-Calabria et al., 2017; Omata, 2017).

Placing this thesis within the body of literature

Lastly to mention are some important empirical studies relevant for this thesis: Betts et al. (2014) explores refugee's economic lives in Kyangwali and Nakivale. Whereas some interesting findings arise, the mere focus on economic aspects simplifies the picture of refugees' life. A later study by Betts et. al. (2019) has a specific focus on self-reliance, and even though generalization is problematic, the conclusions are still of relevance. Looking backwards, Meyer (2006) and Kaiser (2005; 2006) investigated the implementation of the SRS. To get some perspectives on Kyaka, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) (2018) deals with the increased refugee population in the settlement.

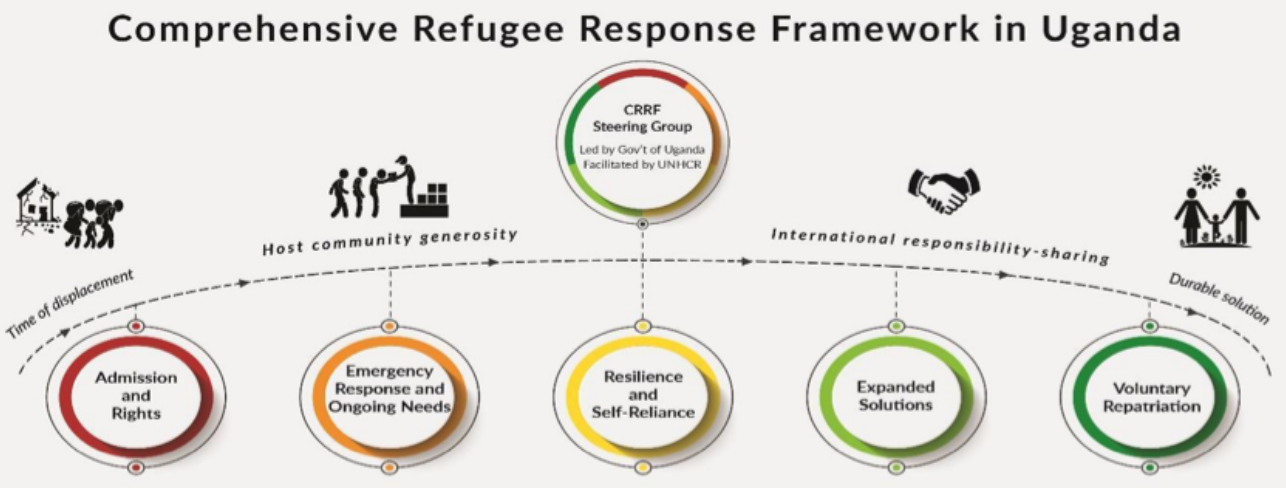
Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1462) states that "the existing literature primarily focuses on the neoliberal trend in the refugee regime at a broad policy level", and they attempt to fill this gab by exploring the consequences for refugees' protection and welfare on the ground. Noting this dearth in the literature, Schiltz et al. (2019) take an empirical approach and investigate how young South Sudanese refugees in Adjumani Refugee Settlement (Northern Uganda) imagine their futures. This thesis places itself along the same lines of critical studies on the promotion of self-reliance and resilience in a humanitarian setting. Scholars such as Frank (2017); Crawford et. al. (2015) and Hunter (2009) critically investigate self-reliance focusing mainly on livelihoods. These scholars challenge the standardization of policies and argue that premises on ground are often not compatible with the goals in the policies. While these authors' findings are both relevant and commendable, this thesis attempts to look beyond the focus of livelihood exclusively. Rather I am joining scholars like Ilcan et al. (2015), Ilcan et al. (2017), Omata, (2017) Easton-Calabria & Omata (2018), Oliver & Boyle (2019), and Schiltz et al. (2019) in critically investigating the promotion of self-reliance and resilience within development. By looking into the situation of Congolese refugees in Western Uganda, a new contextual setting will be explored.

5. Analysis

The analysis is divided into three interrelated parts exploring the aspect of self-reliance in Uganda from different perspectives jointly answering the research question. Structurally, each part will be commenced with a contextual paragraph and terminated with a concise sub conclusion highlighting crucial analytical findings to be considered throughout the analysis. Part I of the analysis is concerned with the national level and seeks to identify the central principles in the current policy framework guiding the refugee response in Uganda. Part II examines the situation on a regional level, and in combination with Part I, it answers the first part of the RQ. Part III takes the analysis to the local level to investigate the consequences, and with what implications they are showing on ground. Thus this part provides the answer for the last part of the RQ.

ANALYSIS PART I – The national policy level

This first part of the analysis deals with the national policy level. As indicated previously, Carol Bacchi's WPR-approach forms the foundation for the analysis of policy documents. Already explained in the Context, The National Action plan (NAP), The Ugandan version of CRRF, is currently the policy framework guiding the national refugee response in Uganda. Five pillars compose the core of CRRF in Uganda:



The five pillars of CRRF in Uganda (OPM, 2019b: 12)

In terms of narrowing down the scope, and as articulated previously, this study has a specific focus on the aspect of self-reliance, thus the third pillar will be the main focus throughout. During the interview with a representative from the CRRF Secretariat[8], it was brought to my understanding that priorities should advance each of the five individual pillars, rather than intersected (Int. 29). This point underlines the fact that despite self-reliance being the focal point, it is not straightforward to separate pillar three from the others. It will, however, be evident from the analysis that one of the related sector plans deals specifically with this pillar and consequently that document will be analysed.

[8] The CRRF Secretariat, led by OPM, is the technical body supporting the implementation of CRRF and the decisions made by the CRRF Steering group (OPM, 2019b: 28).

The National Action Plan

Following the notions of Bacchi (2009), I will identify the central principles in the NAP "through scrutinizing the premises and effects" of the problematisations. As will be demonstrated, the central principles are related to ideas grounded in neoliberalism. Further, the underlying assumption that solutions to the anticipated problems concerning refugees are to be found within the Uganda model is identified. Moreover, it is argued how NAP transfers responsibility to the refugees. In terms of self-reliance, this analysis will show how the perception as presented in the NAP is narrow. I was able to gather the most recent version of NAP from April 11 2019, which is analysed here, but to my knowledge it is not available online at the time of writing[9].

From the very beginning, NAP stresses how practices in Uganda have formed and inspired the general CRRF and GCR. In that sense, NAP is further contributing to the story about Uganda as a role model refugee host country. To clarify the belief in the system, it is written: "Uganda's refugee response model of welcoming our brothers and sisters in the hour of need remains intact" (OPM, 2019b: 34). In accordance with the general CRRF, there is emphasis on the aspects of burden-sharing with the international community, inclusion of more stakeholders, streamlined coordination among the stakeholders, and the assessment and identification of needs. As Bacchi (2009: 4) advocates, it is important to identify "implied problem representations". The NAP regards the four abovementioned aspects as the solution to the refugee situation in Uganda. Thus the solution is to be found within the current system.

In terms of the inclusion of more stakeholders, the NAP follows the lines of previous UNHCR-strategy, DAR, and is in that sense not revolutionary. Even though refugees have been recognized as an important stakeholder previously, it could be argued that there is an enhanced focus on refugees as "agents of change" (OPM, 2019b: 35). Related hereto, NAP describes a:

> paradigm shift from a mainly humanitarian focus to developing integrated services for the long term for the benefit of both refugee and host communities and advancing socioeconomic growth and development in hosting areas (Ibid.: 14).

This clearly marks the change in seeing refugees as "vulnerable victims" (Black in Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1462) and resonate more with what Ilcan and Rygiel (2015: 337) label "self-governing and entrepreneurial refugee subjects who will be responsible for their futures". In that sense, more responsibility is transferred to the refugees themselves. This aspect is also touched upon in the RSC brief claiming that "By defining refugees as actors in self-reliance projects, humanitarian organizations also transfer prime responsibility to refugees" (Easton-Calabria et al., 2017: 2). Whereas in this context it is happening on national level, the implications are obviously the same, and it echoes the notion of refugees as entrepreneurs highlighted several times throughout the NAP. Into the bargain, Krause & Schmidt (2019: 17) note that transferring the responsibility of becoming self-reliant and resilient to refugees "correlates with the neo-liberal paradigm that directs the focus away from governmental

[9] The second most recent version, CRRF Road Map, may be accessed here: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/64290

measures for changing structural problems towards the individual's responsibility to finding solutions". Following these thoughts, it could be argued that the paradigm shift implies a depoliticization of structural issues. Understood in the sense that instead of being solved institutionally, the responsibility for finding solutions are placed on the refugees.

What is further relevant to mention is the addition of a new 'durable' solution. Initially introduced in the refugee regime in the GCR §100 as "other local solutions" (UN, 2018: 26). NAP seeks to advance that, aiming "toward integration to foster inclusive economic growth for host communities and refugees and promote economic opportunities, decent work, job creation and entrepreneurship programmes for host community members and refugees" (OPM, 2019b: 38). In this statement, the notion of refugees as entrepreneurs reoccurs, and the value of economic growth is championed. This resembles neoliberal thinking having a primary focus on economic factors, and goes along the lines of Harvey's (2005: 2) observation regarding neoliberalism: "human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills". Moreover, it entails that the mere economic inclusion in society has started to be regarded as a durable solution. That Uganda is going for this "other solution" was confirmed during the interview with the CRRF Secretariat (Int. 29). Specifically in terms of self-reliance, it is stated that:

> Enhanced support to Uganda's refugee-hosting districts is needed to ease the pressure and enable both refugees and the host community to enjoy access to quality social services and build their resilience and self-reliance (OPM, 2019b: 33).

This clearly separates self-reliance and the access to social services. Noticeable, that goes against UNHCR's own definition of self-reliance: "the ability of individuals, households or communities to meet their essential needs and enjoy their human rights in a sustainable manner and to live with dignity" (UNHCR, 2017: 2), where essential needs are part of self-reliance. The way the NAP envisions to build self-reliance and resilience is as follows:

> Without prejudice to eventual durable solutions that may become available, local solutions toward integration will be attained through implementation of the comprehensive plan for jobs and livelihoods which targets both refugees and hosting communities to improve resilience and self-reliance (OPM, 2019b: 49).

Evidently, self-reliance and resilience are strongly linked to jobs and livelihoods. However, Easton-Calabria et al. (2017) call for a broader understanding and the Self-reliance Initiative[10] even define 12 different domains comprising self-reliance. Investigating deeply into these domains is considered out of scope, but their multiplicity marks a contemporary understanding of self-reliance, within the context of refugees, reaching much further than the one provided in the NAP.

Given that NAP is inherently general in its nature and does not focus specifically on self-reliance and resilience, it appears to be both meaningful and relevant to further explore the policy

[10] A global association of NGOs, government agencies, academics and other partners. https://www.refugeeselfreliance.org/

framework and evaluate an additional aspect of it. The sector plan for jobs and livelihoods is mentioned in the NAP to be crucial in terms of self-reliance and resilience specifically. Moreover, it was stressed during several expert interviews how the sector plans in general are important parts of the refugee response in Uganda. In terms of self-reliance and resilience, both The CRRF Secretariat (Int. 29) and the Country Director of DRC (Int. 46) stressed that the *Jobs and Livelihood Integrated Response Plan* (JLIRP) are to play an important role in enhancing pillar three. Likewise, the Senior Advisor from RDE, even articulated that it is the most relevant plan to consider in terms of self-reliance and resilience (Int. 22). In addition to that, both 'self-reliance' and 'resilience' are articulated more in the JLIRP compared to the other sector plans[11], and the two words even form part of the goal and vision of that specific response plan. Thus, the importance of the JLIRP in terms of pillar three, enhancing self-reliance and resilience, becomes apparent.

The Jobs and Livelihoods Integrated Response Plan

Even though the JLIRP may not be considered as a mere policy document, nevertheless it represents GoU's solution to an anticipated problem. Bacchi's critical WPR-approach is applied to disentangle and understand the JLIRP. In this paragraph, it will be argued how this sector plan is built upon neoliberal thinking. It will also be demonstrated how the JLIRP regards jobs and livelihood as the key factors in achieving self-reliance. Further, and in spite of the presentation as such, the notions and ideas represented in the JLIRP are not new in the context of refugee protection.

The JLIRP was expected to be launched in 2019 (OPM, 2019b: 16), but to my knowledge it has not happened yet as of January 2020. The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social development (MGLSD) leads the creation of the JLIRP in close cooperation with other ministries (Int. 29). I was able to get access to the newest draft from February 2019. As this is the newest, and most updated, version of the plan, it will be my point of departure to delve into the understanding of self-reliance and resilience. It should be pointed out that this is a draft for a plan to direct interventions on a national level. Nonetheless, it appears relevant to look into since the work within the Jobs and Livelihood sector on settlement level will be based on this plan.

In the JLIRP the vision is written as: "a resilient and Self-reliant refugee and host citizen via jobs livelihoods." (MGLSD, 2019: 8). In spite of the wording appearing very much like a draft, the message is the desire to have self-reliant and resilient refugees and nationals. And the way to achieve that is through jobs and livelihoods. Not only does this represent a pronounced focus on the economic aspect of self-reliance, it also highlights the importance of the JLIRP in terms of self-reliance and resilience.

Moving on from here, the perception of self-reliance as articulated in the JLIRP will be explored. In the introductory section, the following piece of text is found denoting the purpose of the plan:

[11] In the Education sector plan, 'self-reliance' is not mentioned and 'resilience' is mentioned twice. In the Health sector plan, 'self-reliance' is mentioned three times and 'resilience' four times. In the JLIRP, 'self-reliance' is mentioned 13 times and 'resilience' is mentioned 11 times.

> The Jobs & Livelihoods Integrated Response Plan (JLIRP) addresses the existing shortfalls in implementation of livelihood interventions. It widens the scope of the sector beyond natural resource-based agriculture to include trade, labour markets, entrepreneurship, cottage industry, commercial agriculture and individual talent development (MGLSD, 2019: 1).

From this statement it can be interpreted that the shortfalls in the livelihood interventions are deemed to be the major problem to be solved. This corresponds well with the fact that the sector plans are meant to be used as a fundraising tool stressing where intervention is needed (Int. 20). Further, the quote shows that the JLIRP seeks to expand the interventions to cover a broader spectrum of activities. The concrete examples all resonate well with a neoliberal focus on the "mercantile liberty for individuals and corporations" (Thorsen, 2010: 6). It should be noted though, that whereas the SRS mainly focused on agricultural livelihood for refugees, its successor DAR recognized the need to expand that focus. Both in terms of legal frameworks as well as widening the scope of livelihoods (UNHCR, 2005: THREE 26-27). In that sense this focus is not a novelty in Uganda. Following here, it is written that:

> The plan further seeks to ensure that the social and economic ability of individuals, households and communities of refugee hosting districts meet essential needs through enhancing employability and livelihoods (MGLSD, 2019: 1).

This formulation indicates that enhancing employability and livelihood is seen as the solution to the anticipated problem: that people do not have the abilities to meet essential needs. What may be more interesting though, is the underlying assumption that lack of employability is the reason for people, refugees as well as nationals, not being self-reliant. As noted by Thomas Osborne (1997), professor in social and political theory: "policy cannot get to work without first problematizing its territory" (cited in Bacchi, 2009: 31). Here the limited employability of the individual, household, or community is problematized to hinder self-reliance. Bacchi (2009) claims that often policies do not explicate the problem that the policy will address and remedy. In the remaining part of the JLIRP, 'employability' is not dealt with otherwise than calling for it to be qualitatively enhanced. Thus, this problematisation remain implicit. Another aspect of the JLIRP to consider is the goal:

> Ensuring that the social and economic ability of an individual, a household and a community of both refugees and host citizens meet essential needs in a sustainable manner through strengthening of livelihood for persons of concern, and reducing their vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance (MGLSD, 2019: 8).

The wording here resembles UNHCR's definition of self-reliance almost one-to-one (UNHCR, 2017), and the way to become self-reliant is stated to be through "strengthening of livelihood". It could be argued that strengthening refugee's livelihood is generally positive, but the statement here fails to include contextual barriers to livelihoods. What I experienced in the two refugee settlements was that livelihood opportunities were limited. This will be discussed and evaluated explicitly in Analysis part III. Additionally, I asked the CC about opportunities in Kyaka: "The biggest opportunity with Kyaka now is the community is very hard-working" (Int. 16). Whereas I am naturally aware about regional

differences and the fact that the JLIRP is a national-level plan, the framing is nevertheless that the problem is identified at the "persons of concern" rather than institutionally.

Also to note is the explicit statement of "reducing long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance". Whereas humanitarian assistance is the aid provided by humanitarian actors, also called humanitarian relief, external assistance is not clearly defined. It is likely an expression for external funding in the sense of donors, national or international. In any case, part of the goal of the JLIRP is to reduce long-term reliance on assistance. That notion opposes self-reliance and assistance, be it humanitarian or external, thus creating justification to reduce funding (For similar discussion see Omata, 2017). Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1464) argue that "If self-reliance aims to liberate refugees from dependency, the promotion of refugees' self-reliance should in theory lead to a shift from traditional relief aid to developmental assistance". Taking the strong focus on the reduction of aid into consideration, that appears not to be the goal here.

In the 'Problem Statement' section, it is stated how self-reliance and resilience become the refugees' priorities after the initial emergency, and how sustainable livelihood becomes the central part to achieve that (MGLSD, 2019: 6). It is further argued that the promotion of self-reliance and resilience should be initiated already from the beginning (Ibid.). That rationale is later elaborated upon as the means to avert "the dependency mentality":

> Self-reliance promoted from early stages through all stages of operations provide durable solutions by averting the dependency mentality and building on the refugees' existing skills and knowledge base before it is lost (MGLSD, 2019: 10).

That directly connects self-reliance to the assumption that a dependency mentality is there, and that it is something to be combatted. Philosopher Martha Fineman (2006) discusses the complexity of dependency and highlights that it cannot simply be seen as one single relationship. The way it is used here is definitely in a negative sense, and likely it denotes a reliance on external assistance. Noticeably is also how self-reliance and averting of the dependency mentality is regarded as a durable solution. This corroborates with the mentioning of "Other local solutions" in the GCR §100 as well as considering mere economic inclusion as a durable solution as stated in the NAP (OPM, 2019b: 38).

Likewise, this anticipated fear of dependency is catered for when it is stated that there is "a need for a shift away from the traditional way of giving hand outs" (MGLSD, 2019: 6). Moreover, the promotion of self-reliance is seen as the means to ensure that refugees' existing abilities are not lost. That implies that refugees will lose their skills and knowledge after a given time. Following the same lines, the necessity of early promotion of livelihood is also connected to a question of finances:

> Promotion of livelihood is a proactive approach of coping with budget constraints along the donor fatigue curve. Donors' interest is usually stronger at the beginning of a refugee crisis, and decreases gradually to the expectation of self-reliance to emerge. In this case, if livelihood strategies are not properly planned and embedded in the settlement interventions right from on set, paralysis situations usually follow and are commonly very costly to reverse (MGLSD, 2019: 11).

Like early promotion of self-reliance was expressed as a way to avert the dependency mentality, promotion of livelihoods is narrated here as a way to deal with limited funding. Considering that the sector plans function partly as a fundraising tool (Int. 20), it may not be surprising that the JLIRP cater for relevant issues related to donors and funding in general. The GCR, CRRF, and NAP all advocate for a more comprehensive and streamlined refugee response where humanitarian and development actors coordinate their interventions from the very beginning. With the focus on donor fatigue it is hereby accepted that development interventions should be planned with an expectation of declined funding. Contrary to this, Meyer (2006) argues that actually more resources rather than fewer is needed to create self-reliance. The latter part of the above quote sadly captures very well what has happened in Uganda since 2016.

Considering these extracts from the JLIRP, an understanding of how the aspects of self-reliance and resilience are articulated herein is now established. Bacchi (2009: 5) stresses that to analyse policies critically, one must identify and analyse the *conceptual logics*[12] underpinning the problem representation. And further one should also determine what is silenced (Ibid.: 12-13). For the JLIRP to make sense, it is clear that self-reliance and resilience is expected to be created within the realm of jobs and livelihoods. With the SRS from 1999 and DAR from 2005 aiming for self-reliance too, this is not new in the Ugandan context. By focusing on employability and reduced humanitarian assistance, the JLIRP plays into neoliberal sentiments. Into the bargain, the JLIRP emphasizes the notion that self-reliance should be achieved by "liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills" (Harvey, 2005: 2). It could be argued that the conceptual logic of the JLIRP resembles the sentiments of Ilcan et al. (2017) that self-reliance strategies aims at: "changing their [refugees] behaviour such that they engage with the values of enterprise and market-oriented economies". Political theorist, philosopher, and professor of International Relations, Julian Reid (2012: 69) argues that in preaching the necessity of people becoming resilient, one is at the same time preaching for "the entrepreneurial practices of subjectivity". It is clear that the JLIRP regard refugees as active actors in creating their own livelihood with the expectation of that making them both resilient and self-reliant in terms of not receiving external assistance.

Sub conclusion I

Analyses Part I has demonstrated how central principles identified in the current policy framework in Uganda are linked to neoliberal ideas. NAP and the JLIRP connects self-reliance and resilience to the realm of jobs and livelihoods. Both policies seek to find the solution within the current system, but whereas the NAP mainly focused on the Uganda model as the best, the JLIRP emphasised the novelty of the ideas presented in the plan. Both policies envision refugees as entrepreneurs and thus responsibility is transferred to the individual. The focus on primarily the economic aspect of self-reliance illustrates how neoliberal ideas permeate the policies. Moreover, both policies indicate that being self-reliant in the sense of being economically included is to be regarded as a durable solution. This implies that instead of self-reliance being the means to achieve a durable solution, it becomes the durable

[12]Refers to "the meanings that must be in place for a particular problem representation to cohere or to make sense"

solution itself. Combined, these two policies form our understanding of the refugee policy framework in Uganda thus partly providing the answer for the first part of the RQ.

ANALYSIS PART II – The regional settlement level

Whereas Analysis Part I concerns national policies, this part focuses on the implementation level of these polices. In that regard, it is closer to the local level and consequently, the findings here are context-specific for the two refugee settlements. By identifying how self-reliance is articulated among officials at this level, the basis for analysing the implications of the policies becomes more doable as well as it strengthens the argumentation. Furthermore, this implies that I regard the combined findings of Analysis Part I and II as the 'refugee response framework'.

Before venturing into the analysis, a brief contextual elaboration of the two settlements will be laid out. Hereinafter, it will be analysed how self-reliance are articulated by officials representing OPM. Three thematic paragraphs will demonstrate how the perception of the Uganda model as the best is reconsolidated by the officials I interviewed. It is further argued how neoliberal principles are used to justify redistribution of the available land, and it will be demonstrated how the responsibility in terms of resilience are placed on the individual rather than institutionally. Hereinafter, the implementation of CRRF in Western Uganda will be accounted for. As it will be clear, the consequences of CRRF are currently taking place mainly on a national and regional level thus I decided to include this paragraph here. Ultimately, Sub conclusion II will concisely conclude on the analytical findings leading up to the final part of the analysis.

Kyaka and Kyangwali refugee settlements

Kyaka and Kyangwali are both to be considered as 'old' in comparison to the new settlements in Northern Uganda that have been opened to cater for the influx of the more recent arrived refugees from South Sudan. Kyangwali has functioned as a refugee receiving settlement since the 1960s, primarily hosting Rwandan refugees. When many of them voluntarily repatriated in the 1990s, mostly Congolese refugees have been living in the settlement (UNHCR Uganda, 2018b). Kyaka I was established in 1983 to accommodate Rwandan refugees as well, and in 2005 Kyaka II was established to receive the remaining population as well as Congolese refugees (UNHCR Uganda, 2018a).

A drastic increase in the population

In both Kyaka and Kyangwali, the by-far largest group of people are of Congolese descent with smaller numbers of Rwandans and Burundians represented as well. More than half of all refugees from DR Congo in Uganda are hosted in one of these two settlements. Both settlements have, like the refugee population in Uganda as a whole, experienced a drastic increase in its population over the last five years, and especially the last two years. In 2017 the population in Kyaka were around 27.000-30.000 (DRC, 2018) and the numbers for Kyangwali were 37.613 (UNHCR Uganda, 2018b). Renewed violence in DR Congo caused more people to flee, and beginning in December 2017, both settlements

experienced an increase in the population. By May 2019, the population is 94.567 in Kyaka and 99.316 in Kyangwali (OPM, 2019a). This increase in the population have an effect on the conditions in the two settlements, where all sectors are struggling to meet the needs of the refugees (Int. 16, 17, 18, 26, & 28). Further, the situation in Western Uganda is that nearly all refugees are receiving aid as provided by WFP (Int. 27). Despite the high numbers, both settlements still function as receiving settlements, and the population is continuously growing (Int. 16 & 17).

As a consequence of the increased population, the food market (above) and the clothes market (below) in Bukere, Kyaka has grown in size.

The issue of funding

As touched upon previously, the refugee response in Uganda is underfunded. Likewise, representatives from NGOs and officials generally emphasized the challenges related to funding in the two settlements. Some stressed earmarked funding as a problem, whereas others pointed out the problematic aspect of short-termed funding. The CC in Kyaka stated that only 15% of the funding requirements have been collected so far (Int. 16). CC Kyangwali called attention to the aspect of donor fatigue, and explained how funds get exhausted already within a year (Int. 17). The DRC Area Manager in Kyaka declared that: "Everything is about funding" (Int. 30) encapsulating very well the perceived root of the problems in the settlements as advanced by officials and NGO-representatives. It seems indisputably that the refugee response in both Kyaka and Kyangwali is challenged in terms of inadequate funding that is into the bargain also short-termed.

The articulation of self-reliance on settlement-level

Within the global refugee regime, self-reliance is currently a prominent theme on the agenda (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018: 1458). As demonstrated in Analysis Part I, it is a focal point of the refugee response in Uganda, and thus it was also a theme to be discussed during the interviews with officials.

When the conversation revolved around self-reliance, I often experienced that it was closely linked to promoting livelihoods for refugees. Illustrated well by the CC in Kyangwali:

> "Every family household will need to be supported to have a livelihood to depend on. It becomes a very big challenge to see that at least everyone gets to have something to do" (Int. 17).

Focusing primarily on jobs as the end goal is, as argued in the RSC brief, problematic since it fails to recognise the highly gendered refugee interdependencies as well as it neglects non-economic aspects (Easton-Calabria et al., 2017: 2). This focus on livelihoods corresponds well with the already established connection hereto in NAP and the JLIRP. This part of the analysis seeks to explore the perceptions about self-reliance held by officials representing OPM. In the *Methodology* chapter, I have already elaborated upon the interview style and accounted for the fact that I as a researcher was subject to conversations which provided me with a concrete idea of the discourses revolving around self-reliance. I am drawing attention to this fact again in order to remain truthful to the data and to display transparency in terms of my own bias as an interviewer.

A strong belief in the Uganda model

The first theme to be dealt with is this seemingly strong belief in the way things are done, and the accompanying acceptance of the state of affairs. As demonstrated previously, the policy framework praises the Uganda model, and suggests the solution to the refugee situation is to be found within the current system. Important to remember is the generally positive mentioning of the Uganda model in international media. As will be demonstrated here, I also predicated this strong belief in, and praising of, the Uganda model during the interviews with officials. It may not come as a surprise that officials representing OPM equally highlight the Ugandan model as the best. Likely it is both a result of that being a general opinion as well as a reluctance to criticise one's employer being aware of potential consequences. As laid out in the contextual paragraph, both settlements are under pressure in terms of meeting the needs of the refugees. However, when I asked CC Kyaka about the refugee response, he uttered:

> "So the response is fine. I've seen people who have changed their lives from bad to better and so forth. People have access to education, health care and so forth. There are a number of challenges as well with the response […] Main one is limited funding" (Int. 16).

Numerous times during the interview, he further stressed how all problems come down to funding. Even though challenges within the different sectors were highlighted, the impression one will get only from this interview would be that things are actually fine. When we conversated about the fact that resettlement as a durable solution is a lengthy process and only for a very limited number of people, he stated that:

> "Nobody is stopping them from living a positive life here […] You can enjoy all the rights as a refugee until your chance come and you move. So, there is no cause for alarm at all" (Int. 16).

From my observations and interviews with refugees, many seemed not to live "a positive life". In that way, a discrepancy may be identified in the way things are in the settlements and the way the refugee response is articulated.

Along the same lines, Emergency and Field Coordinator (EFC) for the Department of Refugees under OPM, whom I discussed the specific situation in the two settlements with, stated about the refugee response: "Challenges are many, but we are managing" (Int. 18). In akin manner he demonstrated acceptance of the state of affairs. Later in the interview, when we talked about the implementation of CRRF, the EFC uttered that:

> That's why Uganda is being taken as a model. Most of the things we were doing them as a country. Compared to other countries which are implementing CRRF, they are learning most of the things from us (Int. 18).

This contributes to the story about Uganda as a role model for refugee hosting and it indicates a strong belief in the way things are done. I noticed some of the same sentiments while in Kyangwali. When asked to give a comment about the general refugee operation in Kyangwali refugee settlement, the CC responded:

> For me I think Uganda continues to have progressive practices and very good practices, and the best policies towards the response to the way we handle refugees in several ways (Int. 17).

Following this, she highlighted various anticipated positive aspects about the refugee response such as more stakeholders got involved with health services during the peak of the influx. Following the lines of the WPR-approach (Bacchi, 2009), the problematisation of inadequate health services was apparently deemed to be the low number of implementing partners. In that way, when the CC stressed that more stakeholders were on-board, it was stated as a naturally positive development of the situation. One of the main objectives in the refugee policy framework is to bring on more stakeholders to take part in the refugee response. Thus, it may be argued that there is a clear link between the notions as articulated by the CC and the policy framework.

The shortage of land

When interviewing the CC in Kyaka, I presented him for the commonly shared opinion among the refugees in the settlement that the shortage of land is a major problem, and that the oldcomers felt that land has been taken away from them. His immediate reaction was: "I do not know how they interpreted it. But nobody is taking the land away from refugees. We are only reducing from what they have been using" (Int. 16). Hereafter it was explained how refugee numbers have previously been low and

therefore the refugees were able to use the land that was not allocated to them. After the influx, refugees were then told to go back to their own plots. To affirm the point, he uttered:

> "Yes we are taking over pieces of land, which some of them have been using, but each of them has their original plot that was allocated to them on arrival. Yeah, so there's no cause for alarm in that. Each refugee will remain with his original plot" (Int. 16).

As rightful as this may be, there was at no time any talk about the likely problems that could arise from this. Given the limitation of space, I just want to briefly state that this privation of land potentially could cause both "mental suffering" and "social suffering" (Anderson, 2014). Rather than the wellbeing of refugees, the focus was on the fact that the refugees remained with their "original plot". I also brought this issue up when talking with CC Kyangwali and the EFC, and they both expressed resembling views. I argue that there is a clear promotion of private property rights in favour of the de facto use of the land. The fact that in both Kyaka and Kyangwali, the land used for the settlement is government gazetted land was used to defend the decision disregarding the fact that the refugees were utilizing it. As was pointed out to me by the Senior Advisor at RDE, there is vast non-utilized land in other districts. Freeing up the land here would be a feasible solution, but the problem is naturally the financial leverage (Int. 22). Given that this was seemingly not possible due to economic restrains, GoU kept the borders open and let the Congolese refugees settle in the already existing settlements. In her examination of the SRS, Kaiser (2005) argues that the wellbeing of refugees was subordinated to wider political objectives. According to IRRI, Uganda's refugee policies should in general be seen in the light of both national and international politics. They claim that GoU, through the shaping of refugee policies, have pursued an agenda of improving its international standing as well as "gaining access to foreign support and aid" (IRRI, 2018: 8). By continuing to receive refugees, GoU is hereby reinforcing its status as a reliable partner for the international community. Somehow the solidarity with refugees, as stated in NAP, GCR and CRRF as key, appears to have gone away as the guiding principle for the refugee response. It should be mentioned though, that if a fully financed plan for a new settlement were available, GoU would probably have cooperated.

"Let's not look at land as the only way"

In the same manner that both CCs and the EFC uniformly claimed that land shortage is not as such regarded as a problem, they offered similar solutions to the recognized problem that oldcomers have lost their livelihood: Using the land in a better and more productive way, and looking at other opportunities. The CCs uttered:

> "I think the opportunities are there. Let's not look at land as the only way. There are people who are doing a lot of business and they are making some good money" (Int. 17).

> We don't want people's livelihood to depend only on land. We want to look at other sources of livelihood. Issues of skill training is one of them. Issues of business support is one of them" (Int. 16).

It may be argued that this statement frames refugees as "prudent autonomous and entrepreneurial" (Welsh in Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). The focus from the CCs appears to be solely on the economic aspect of self-reliance thus neglecting the fact that the oldcomers were also using the land for subsistence farming. The EFC also expressed the need to look at alternative livelihood opportunities:

> "The options are there. We have to continue to encourage our partners to bring other forms of livelihood. (…) So once people are trained, they are skilled, then we know that they can earn a living" (Int. 18).

What all these statements have in common is that they transfer the responsibility of finding a solution, at least partly, to the refugees. When the population increased, the numbers outgrew the resources, and the settlements were not resilient i.e. they could not withstand the 'shock' of the new arrivals. Related to the quotes above, it appears that the expectations of the officials are that the refugees, rather than the system itself, are supposed to be resilient. In an article discussing the plurality of resilience, Welsh (2014: 15) argues that resilience as a governmental discourse "responsibilise risk away from the state and on to individuals and institutions". In this context the responsibility is put on the refugees themselves and the partners that are supposed to bring new forms of livelihood. Duffield (2011: 13) talks about resilience as the "ability to survive through adaptability". This statement captures the initial departure point of reasoning rather well. The refugees are simply expected to adapt to the new situation and act accordingly. In terms of these new livelihood opportunities that are to be explored for the refugees, nothing new was really put on the table during the interviews. The officials mentioning vocational training, VSLAs[13], and 'business' may be seen as new when compared to the agricultural livelihood that many refugees have pursued before the influx. However, these practices were according to Easton-Calabria (2014: 413) labeled as 'innovative' already in the beginning of the 2000s, but historically they may be traced back to the first institutionalized response to refugees in the 1920s.

CRRF in Western Uganda

Lastly to consider before concluding Analysis Part II is the way CRRF is informing the refugee response in Western Uganda. Based on several interviews with various stakeholders and my own observations in the field, the situation in Western Uganda concerning CRRF may be presented as follows (See Appendix 3 for a thorough review of the findings)

From the interviews with officials representing both settlements and both districts, the picture appears to be that CRRF has strengthened coordination between, and even brought on more, stakeholders including the refugees themselves. These changes are on a regional or national coordination level. Two years after the official launch, CRRF is still perceived to be at a formation stage, and the

[13] Village savings and loans association

need for top-down communication was expressed. The representatives from UNHCR as well stressed the improved coordination as the main result of CRRF so far. When it comes to the NGOs operating in the settlements, CRRF is generally seen as a key document guiding for all stakeholders involved. Moreover, the integration of the refugee response in the local development plans were stated to be an improvement, but so far changes on the ground appears to be limited. Except for the representative of the Refugee Welfare Council 3[14] (RWC) Kyangwali, none of the refugees I talked to, neither the nationals, knew about CRRF. After the implementation of CRRF, the change that is generally noticed and recognized by the refugees is the increased number of inhabitants in the settlement resulting in less land per household.

Sub conclusion II

Second part of the analysis has demonstrated how the underlying assumptions based in neoliberal thinking are identifiable among the officials. Manifested in the articulation of self-reliance as primarily being about jobs and livelihoods alongside private property rights ruling over the de facto use of land. Moreover, the focus on refugees as entrepreneurs transfer responsibility to the individual implying that refugees are expected to be resilient. In that regards, the focus on the individual rather than potential systemic or institutional flaws (Joseph, 2013) was further strengthened during the interviews with officials. Combined with Analysis Part I, these findings answer the first part of the RQ and forms the understanding of the current refugee response framework in Western Uganda.

ANALYSIS PART III – The local ground level

This last part of the analysis explores the implications for what is happening on the ground. Thus, this part of the analysis answers the second part of the RQ. The empirical foundation will mainly be in the form of interviews with refugees alongside my own observations. However, other interviews may be considered as well to bring in nuances and clarifying certain aspects. From the previous parts of the analysis, the necessary understanding of both the national policies and how self-reliance is articulated on implementation level has been established. This comprehension of the refugee response framework will be used as a backdrop when analysing the implications for the effects happening on ground.

Analysis Part III commence with an empirically driven contextualization revolving around the dynamics in the settlements as experienced and highlighted by refugees. This section contributes in strengthening the point about discrepancies between how the refugee response is evaluated and articulated officially and how the refugees actually experience the situation. The section following after explores how refugees struggle to make ends meet despite putting in efforts resembling what is expected from them. The last thematic section revolves around Community-based organizations (CBOs). These organizations offer an alternative way of achieving self-reliance, but at the same time they are bounded in the wider system in which they operate.

[14] The refugee settlements in Uganda are divided into local leadership structures called Refugee Welfare Council. The *3* denotes the highest level representing the whole settlement.

"This time we don't have land"

When I talked with oldcomers about life as a refugee in the settlement, commonly the first challenge to be mentioned was how the shortage of land has become an issue. As explained by Andrea, a Congolese refugee who has been in Kyaka for 15 years, her family used to have access to bigger land. Before they used the land for cultivation, and from selling the outputs they gained an income that was used to pay for school fees as well as to purchase crops and vegetables they did not grow themselves. For her family, life was better before compared to now (Int. 4). This example illustrates well the experienced reality for many oldcomers in both settlements. In the same manner, newcomers also articulated a reality in which land is scarce to a degree that cultivation is limited to family support. Gloria, who came alone to Kyaka in January 2018, told me about how she has a small plot of land where she grows cassava for herself – not for selling (Int. 3). Whereas the oldcomers used to have more land, the newcomers have solely experienced the situation as it is now. Common for both is that they now utilize the small land for growing a few things for themselves and the family and not as an income generating activity (IGA). A representative of RWC3 in Kyangwali, who have lived in the settlement for 11 years, confirmed this issue to be a general challenge in the settlement: "This time we don't have land" (Int. 26). A representative of RWC3 in Kyaka equally stressed the land to be a major issue in that settlement (Int. 28).

Everyone gets either food or cash from WFP

Another theme that was omnipresent when talking with the refugees in both settlements was the food or cash assistance as distributed by WFP. Many times, refugees uttered to me that the rations are inadequate for their needs. Instead of food, some refugees choose to get a monthly cash amount of 31.000 UGX[15]. What caught my attention was the fact that also the oldcomers in the settlements receive this assistance. Andrea told me how her family have been withdrawn from the system in eight years, but after their land was reduced in 2018, they are now getting the support from WFP (Int. 4). I did not talk with any refugee who did not receive either cash or food from WFP. When I interviewed the Team Leader in WFP, Kyangwali, he told me that close to all refugees receive aid form WFP, which is indeed a costly activity to carry out month after month. He explained that after the introduction of biometric verification systems in all refugee settlements, all refugees are now eligible for distribution. Previously the amounts distributed differed from person to person, but now everyone gets the same (Int. 27).

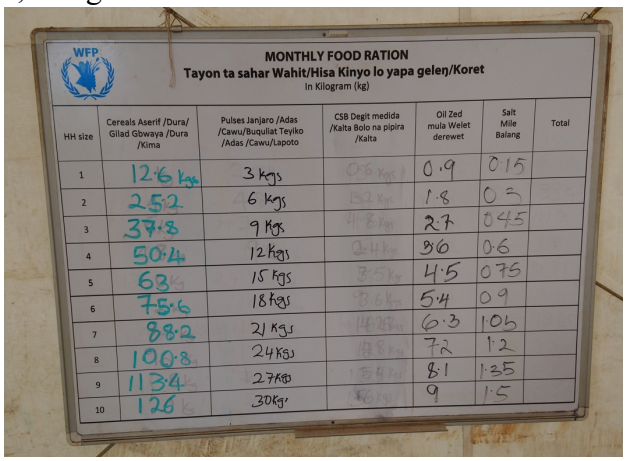


Table showing the food provisions as of May 2019.

[15] Equals approximately 57,5 DKK

Refugees filling their bags with pulses in Nyamiganda, Kyangwali. Afterwards they weigh it precisely to confirm that they get the right amount.

Other challenges in the settlements

In addition to the increased population and following land shortage, there was a consistent opinion among the refugees that accessing proper health service is a major challenge. The issue was not so much to access the facilities, but rather to receive treatment and medicine. When I talked with nationals in the host communities, I noticed a generally more positive view about the available health services. Unfortunately, it is out of the scope of this thesis to investigate that differentiated experience of the seemingly same health opportunities. Problems related to education were also stressed to be challenging for most of the refugees I talked to. Commonly were difficulties in paying school fees, and for those whose children attended the free public schools, purchasing scholastic material was challenging. It was not uncommon that children would not attend primary school, and some oldcomers explained that this issue prevailed after the land shortage. For the families having children in school, lack of teachers and high numbers of pupils – some stated up to 200 children per teacher – were emphasized as problematic. During the interviews with the representatives of RWC3, health and education were equally pointed out as main challenges for the inhabitants in both settlements (Int. 26 & 28).

Making ends meet

Given the large focus on livelihood creation in terms of self-reliance, as articulated both in the policy framework and by the officials, it seems relevant to investigate how the refugees make a living. As promoted in the NAP, a paradigm shift is happening where refugees are now seen as "active agents" in their own creation of self-reliance. In the JLIRP and in the interviews with officials, I further detected these sentiments about refugees as entrepreneurs. Joseph (2013: 40) argues that resilience is in practice often used to emphasize individual "responsibility, adaptability and preparedness" rather than the dynamics of systems. It could be argued to be the case in Uganda, and as will be demonstrated, there appears to be a lack of focus towards structural problems.

During my time in the two settlements, I met many people and they all had their own way of making ends meet. Some were engaging in trading and selling items or agricultural produce, others were driving Boda boda, some were working as hairdressers, others were teachers, one man was building a house in the town of Hoima for his resettled brother, a family was showing football matches on a big screen, and the list continues. The refugees told me about many different strategies to make ends meet, but one way of generating income continued reoccurring: "digging". It denotes basic farming work, and in this context, it means that refugees go outside of the settlement to work in the larger farms belonging to the nationals. This was commonly expressed as a way, and often the only way, to get some small money to cater for basic needs such as food, medicine or scholastic material.

Congolese and Spanish football matches on the schedule in Bukere, Kyaka.

Life as a refugee is often characterised by precariousness and difficulties in accessing essential needs and should not need further elaboration. The case of Kyaka and Kyangwali is no exception. The following paragraphs present empirical examples of refugees who have managed to navigate in the Ugandan system. These are people that are now seemingly doing what is expected from them. In the last paragraph, I will intertwine and reflect upon the analytical points from these empirical examples and draw lines to the previous parts of the analysis. It will be argued how the neoliberal ideas of a free market, free trade, and private property rights are affecting these people trying to navigate in the context of a refugee settlement in Western Uganda. Further, it is claimed how contextual barriers may hinder the refugees to exercise the rights as provided legally in the Uganda model.

"Life become hard, but it developed our minds"

> I met Filbert, a 29-years old Congolese refugee, outside his shop in Bukere, one of the busiest trading centres in Kyaka. Dressed in a nicely ironed pink shirt, black tie and jeans, and with polished shoes, his overall appearance outshined mine by lengths. He presented himself as a businessman and consented to do an interview. The interview took place on a bench outside his shop where customers are able to buy various types of shoes including football boots as well as fashionable wear mostly for men. Filbert came alone to Kyaka in 2010, empty-handed and with no info about the settlement (Fieldnotes 5/5 2019)

Now, nine years later, Filbert runs a clothing store together with his wife. It is their only livelihood activity although they also receive the monthly cash assistance from WFP (Int. 8). This displays the limits in understanding dependency as the reception of aid, and further dependency and self-reliance as binary (also stressed in e.g. Betts et al., 2014; Omata, 2017). With only two kids, of whom one is in school, the family can manage though Filbert told me that life is difficult. Money is not enough and they come periodically he explained. Filbert owns the inventory in the shop, but he rents the building from a Rwandan refugee, who has been in Uganda for 22 years. This proves the linkage to the economy outside Kyaka, but it also leads to the consequence that part of the income Filbert earns through his business is going out of the settlement. Whereas Betts et al. (2014) uncritically presents refugees' economic networks and connections as inherently positive, it may be suggested that it is not as simple.

Filbert servicing a customer, and the interview is put on a short pause.

Filbert started his business in 2016 with money gained from agricultural activity on the land allocated to him. Initially he was buying shoes in Kampala and selling them at the market in Bukere. After one year he developed the business to include clothes. By the end of 2017, the land he has used for farming was given to newcomers and solely a small plot for the family's mud house was left for them. "Life become hard, but it developed our minds" (Int. 8), Filbert said about that period. Fortunately for him and his family, he already had a young business that he developed culminating in opening the shop in 2018. By the end of the interview, he told me that he purchases the items he sells in the shop from different middlemen in Kampala, but he wishes to engage in partnerships instead that will give him the chance to purchase from abroad. Filbert is indeed a businessman navigating in a national economy with the desire to be involved globally. In that way he affirms the claim by Betts and development economist Paul Collier that refugees "lead complex and diverse economic lives" (Betts & Collier, 2017: 158).

Filbert's story made me aware of interesting dynamics characterising being a refugee in Kyaka. For example, how he managed to change his livelihood strategy when land was diminishing. Associate Professor focusing on global migration, Karen Jacobsen (2014: 2) states that livelihood assets are not just material, rather they include human capital as well as social capital. In terms of the material assets, Filbert had his young business ready to be developed, social capital as a citizen in Kyaka, and his

human capital comprised trading skills and experience in the current market of clothing in Western Uganda. Understanding the situation in that way enables us to see that a set of conditions under the given circumstances enabled Filbert to aspire as a businessman in Kyaka. In that way, he was resilient and able to adapt to the shock when it struck and eradicated his previous way of making ends meet.

Reid (2010: 70) argues that the discourse of resilience within neoliberal beliefs is that: "'Resilient' peoples [sic] do not look to states to secure their wellbeing because they have been disciplined into believing in the necessity to secure it for themselves". The case of Filbert displays that notion very well. He reacted to the new situation happening due to external factors out of his control. And he knew that to continue supporting his family, he had to expand the other business. In the JLIRP it is articulated how the scope of livelihoods needs to be widen, and the officials jointly talked about looking beyond land. Filbert indeed represents the refugee entrepreneur in the sense that he built the business that is now sustaining him and his family. The story of Filbert portrays a man with a strong business mind who has managed to navigate in the unstable situation in a refugee settlement. He has shown the "ability to survive through adaptability" (Duffield, 2011: 13), and is thus playing along the lines of what is expected from the refugees as established in the previous part of the analysis.

This example of a businessman operating in Kyaka is naturally particular and the accompanying characteristics cannot be generalized. That being said, there are plentiful shops and restaurants, concentrated around the trading centres in the two settlements, and I talked with more people doing some kind of business as a way of creating livelihood. In Kyangwali, I interviewed Peter (Int. 9), who owns a shop in the trading centre of Kasonga from where he sells basic items such as soap, detergent, salt, cooking old, etc. Being an oldcomer, his story is not unlike that of Filbert, but a major difference is that Peter owns the building where he runs the shop. I also encountered a pharmacist in the outskirts of Kasonga who had around ten customers during the 45 minutes I was there. And even though he only has himself to take care of, his immediate response to my question about life in Kyangwali was: "We are in village. We are very poor. We suffer for everything" (Int. 10). Without going more into details with these two stories, the point is that even businessmen doing seemingly good for themselves are struggling. Common for all three is that they are oldcomers, who have managed to adapt to the influx of newcomers and create livelihoods beyond agriculture. In that sense they are already following the sentiments as detected in the refugee response framework.

The restaurant manager stuck in a job without salary

Olive (Int. 7), a 19-year old Congolese refugee woman, works at the restaurant in Bukere, Kyaka, where I ate every day during my stay. Since she was always there, I assumed she was the owner, but she told me that she was the manager of the restaurant. When arriving in Kyaka by September 2018, she was allocated a small plot in Bwiriza at the outskirts of the settlement. She told me how she couldn't survive in this rural part of Kyaka, and therefore decided to move to Bukere instead. Before she got the job as a restaurant manager that enables her to pay for her new rented house, she slept in the nearby reception centre. Even though Olive works every day from morning till evening, she just receives 'motivation' by the end of the month. Motivation is an emic word I encountered several times during the fieldtrip. It resembles 'incentive', and I experienced that refugees deliberately said

motivation to emphasize a small amount of money that is not considered to be a salary. During the interview, Olive told me how she dreamt of pursuing education or, since she has already given up on that dream, starting her own business in the settlement. Lack of finance to initiate either is what holds her back. She wants to save money for starting a restaurant, but all her earnings are spent on rent and basic needs. In combination with the support from WFP, Olive manages to survive.

This story highlights a precarious situation that refugee may find themselves in. Olive is trapped in a situation with little, if any, opportunity to pursue her future goals. This state of being is what Amanda Hammar (2014: 15) refers to as *stuckness*: moving in no direction in space in terms of economics. Hammar elaborates on stuckness as diminishing "avenues to a meaningful future" and draws attention to the paradox of it being an active world of constantly seeking or creating opportunities within highly circumscribed time-space (Ibid.: 24). Olive is stuck because the motivation earned from the job is barely enough to cover basic needs, and the consequences of quitting is that she can't pay rent. She is moving nowhere at the moment, and yet she hopes to somehow safe up money to start her own business. For Olive, that would be the meaningful future, which she is restricted in pursuing.

This notion of being unable to extricate oneself is also explored by scholars Jefferson et. al (2019: 2), who refer to it as a "quality", and among other things they highlight the need to go beyond notions equating place with confinement and mobility with freedom. This seems relevant to consider in the case of Olive. It could be argued that she is not to be considered as confined since no force in a legal sense is keeping her in the settlement. As a refugee in Uganda, one is legally allowed to stay anywhere in the country. Further, she has the right to freedom of movement, and it is easily argued that she used that when she moved from Bwiriza to Bukere. Olive is however, as argued above, stucked in a situation where she is not moving in terms of 'making a life'. In the end of their article, Jefferson et al. (2019: 10-11) state the following:

> Stuckness, we suggest, is not a choice. Stuckness is a given and for many a curse. But a curse with which they (or many of them at least) deal or actively anticipate, either in the form of hope or foreboding.

This captures the state Olive finds herself in, but with one difference. During my rather formal interview, as well as during interactions as a customer at 'her' restaurant, it was evident to me that Olive deals with her stuckness in the form of hope *and* foreboding. At the same time, she was dreaming and talking about opening her own restaurant, she was also aware, and explicit about, that in Kyaka there are no opportunities (Int. 7).

Reflections on the three stories

These stories about refugee life in Western Uganda all show something about the Uganda model that are not addressed in the NAP, JLIRP or during the interviews I conducted with officials. The overall focus in the refugee response framework appears to be on people that "don't have something to do" (Int. 17) being dependent on humanitarian assistance. The JLIRP seeks to foster self-reliance by promoting livelihoods, in the form of jobs, to the refugees who do not have. In that sense both Peter,

Filbert, Olive, and the pharmacist represent the vision of the JLIRP. Opposing the vision is only that they receive assistance from WFP, but it seems to be the consequence of the newly implemented biometric system. However, an important aspect is left out of the discussion: namely what I would call *de facto barriers*. Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1459) argue that the reason of previous programmes failed leading to self-reliance among larger groups of people are due to factors "including reduced opportunities for legal pathways to work, poor host economies, restrictions on rights, a lack of administrative planning and limited arable land for farming". In the context of Uganda, Meyer (2006) and Kaiser (2006, 2005) previously pointed out that the restriction of rights both contradicted and hindered the SRS to be successful. In a legal sense, refugees in Uganda now have the right to work, to conduct business, and the right to freedom of movement. That being said, simply *having* the rights is not necessarily enough to *exercise* the rights. To illustrate, Kyaka is located 18 kilometers away from Kyegegwa, the main town in the district. Besides going there on foot, the only other option is hiring a Boda boda. The cost is 10.000 UGX[16] one way, which equals around one third of the monthly cash support provided by WFP. In a legal sense, the refugees in the settlement are allowed to go there, but in reality most of them can't choose that option. This is an example of a de facto barrier.

Drawing attention to the right to work and the right to conduct business, de facto barriers may also be observed. Despite having the right to work, many refugees are digging and CCs in both settlements declared that many refugees struggle to find jobs in the settlements (Int. 16 & 17). In terms of doing business, refugees are allowed to do so, but the market they can reach is limited. Ilcan et al. (2015: 5) as well draw attention to these "barriers to surrounding markets" in the context of Nakivale refugee settlement. Increasing numbers of inhabitants in the settlements are naturally increasing the numbers of potential customers, but likewise more people are also looking for a way to make ends meet. Further, there are naturally entry barriers to enter into business i.e. Olive who do not have the means to establish her own restaurant in spite of having the necessary skills to run such a business. The point is here again that simply having the rights in a legal sense is not equaling a de facto exercising of those provided rights.

Bringing back the point about Filbert renting a building for conducting his business and purchasing his goods from middlemen further represent what may be considered as factors hindering his business. Naturally, the middlemen as well as the owner of the building need to create a livelihood for themselves. Be that as it may, the fact that it is possible to rent out buildings in the refugee settlement has consequences for refugees that are not dealt with in the refugee response framework. According to economists E. K. Hunt and Mark Lautzenheiser (2015: 7), one of the defining characteristics of capitalism is the competitive struggle for more capital. Further, they state that the power of a given capitalist depends on the capital he controls (Ibid.). Whereas Filbert does relatively well compare to other refugees in Kyaka, the capital he controls is minimal, and in competition with property or land owners, his struggle appears substantial. That being said, and as already laid out, the particular circumstances in combination with commitment and hard work made it possible for Filbert to start up his business and overcome the obstacles he faced. In that sense he broke through some of the de facto barriers that are hindering other refugees to conduct business.

[16] Equals approximately 18,35 DKK

Professor in international development studies Jerry Buckland (1998) assert that self-reliance strategies may neglect the poorest and favour stronger groups with an asset base to build on. The case of Odile managing a restaurant highlights the challenges related to having limited assets. Being part of the working class, she only has control over her capacity to work. The notion of "absentee ownership" as put forward by Veblen (1923) appears to fit the situation in question. Basically, it denotes ownership and pecuniary interest in businesses that are not run by the owner. In that sense Olive is working for the benefit of the absentee owner of the restaurant. She is stuck and sees no alternative but to sell her labour-power in exchange for motivation. In an idealistic manner, Philosopher Slavoj Žižek elaborates that this freedom to sell labour power is undermining freedom as a universal conception. Thus this freedom is the opposite of real freedom as the labourer actually loses her freedom in exchange of being enslaved to the capital (Žižek, 2010: 60-61). This conclusively articulates Olive's present situation as she does not see any other opportunities than what she is currently doing (Int. 7). To clarify, this should not be understood as displaying the owner of the restaurant as a greedy exploitive capitalist taking advantage over a helpless victim, but rather as a demonstration of the dynamics affecting the refugees.

In their discussion of his ideas, Hunt and Lautzenheiser (2015: 330) state that Veblen understands the functioning of capitalism as institutionally build into the structures rather than "due to any inherent immorality on the part of the absentee owners". Considering that point in this context, it could be argued that the entrepreneurial refugees are not causing theses dynamics to take place, rather they are highlighting the functioning of capitalism. The property owner of Filbert's shop and the restaurant owner are not where I want to direct my critique. Instead, I want to verbalize the consequences of ideas such as private property ownership and free markets in the precarious context of a refugee settlement.

Drawing our attention to the NAP and JLIRP, they both aim at getting the refugees to be self-reliant through working. However, the policies do not consider the de facto barriers impeding the ability of the people to exercise the rights as provided by the legal framework. The focus is on "employability", but as the above examples show, even when the individual is employable, they are not necessarily to be considered as self-reliant. The three males are self-employed whereas Olive is employed by an employer. In any case, these refugees struggle "to meet their essential needs and enjoy their human rights in a sustainable manner and to live with dignity"[17] (UNHCR, 2017: 3). The focus in the policies as well as from the perspective of the CCs is on the individual rather than on the structures. The institutional factors governing the situation are not dealt with, and that is what I want to highlight here. I am not attempting to draw attention to the fact that refugees struggle in Uganda. Everyone involved are naturally aware about that. The point is that institutional and contextual factors highly matter too, and focusing simply on the "employability" of individuals may not lead to comprehensive solutions.

Both the NAP and JLIRP have the goal to eliminate dependency on external entities. Despite working from morning till evening, Olive is nonetheless dependent on the support from WFP. This is a natural consequence of the market deciding the salary, or motivation, to be paid. Assumingly, the

[17] The most recent definition of self-reliance by UNHCR

restaurant owner will just hire another refugee in the case that Olive demanded a higher payment for her work. As stated by Betts and Collier (2017: 159):

> By creating situations in which there are extreme differences in market power between those who control opportunities and desperate individuals who seek them, we are more likely to leave people open to exploitation

As neoliberalism advocates for primacy of the free market (Harvey, 2005; Thorsen, 2010), it can be argued that it is important to stress the consequences of it. Ilcan et al. (2015: 5-6) likewise draw attention to how the settlement approach in Uganda may foster these exploitive labour relations.

In spite of the support from WFP, which is expected to be phased out after individuals have received it for five years (Int. 27), there are no other general support structures in place for the refugees in Uganda. Duffield (2007: 17) uses the distinction of "insured" and "uninsured" life. By that he means that populations of the Global North are insured by the welfare system thus they do not have to be self-reliant. The uninsured population of the Global South are, on the other hand, expected to rely solely on their own resources (Ibid.). These notions, as Duffield connects to contemporary development discourses, appears to be present in the refugee framework in Uganda as well. It is expected that refugees are self-reliant and not dependent on external entities such as INGOs or the Ugandan state. Nevertheless, the current system in Uganda appears to have some de facto barriers hindering the refugees to achieve this goal. Easton-Calabria and Omata (2018: 1468) argue that these "uninsured" populations are "valued in terms of their ability to effectively manage life's challenges at their own risk" mainly as the means to reduce obligations of states and humanitarian actors. It may be argued that these sentiments are visible in the refugee response framework manifested in the focus on reducing aid and getting people a job rather than focusing on them being able to meet essential needs.

Community-based organizations

During the fieldtrip in Western Uganda, I came across several refugees who have either founded or were part of so-called CBOs – Community-based organisations. In a text dealing with such organizations as contemporary service providers in urban Tanzania, Professor in sociology, Brian Dill, defines CBOs in general as membership organizations. This means that only members are eligible for either taking a decision-making position or voting for other officeholders. In theory all people from the community in which the CBO operates are able to join the organization. Further he states that the activities of CBOs often produce public goods or in other ways benefit the community in which they operate (Dill, 2010:3). The following paragraphs will be concerned with such organisations started within the refugee settlements based in local communities. The reasons for starting those CBOs may vary, but they all show signs of carrying this aspect of *doing something good* for the community, and many people seem to find meaning or purpose through their involvement. In the following, concrete examples of CBOs in Kyaka and Kyangwali will be presented with a focus on the aspect of funding and how meaning is created for the people involved. In the last paragraph, the findings will be discussed more analytically, and I will argue how the CBOs are both opposing and integrated in neoliberal ideas

and wider structures. It will be discussed how the current refugee response framework affects the CBOs and it is argued that the involvement of more private businesses are favoured.

A wide range of purposes

The interlocutors I talked with represent CBOs with varying purposes, but common for all of them is the local rooting and the aim to meet needs detected in the very same local community. In Kyaka, I talked with representatives from two different schools. One of the schools, located in Swesve, is part of the organization *Youth Initiative for Development in Africa* (YIDA), which carries out other activities as well (Int. 5). In the other case, the school called *Jesus Care Junior School* (JCJS), found in the village of Intambabiniga, is the only activity carried out by the CBO of the same name (Int. 6). Both schools were opened to give the local children in the community the opportunity to be taught in the language they know from DR Congo; Kiswahili (Int. 5 & 9). The two schools provide education in a manner not accessible in the public schools, and YIDA even provide education at a level that attracts nationals to send their children to this school in favour of other options in the host community. Right now, the ratio of pupils are 90% refugee and 10% nationals. Beginning in 2019 the school has aimed to meet the 70/30 divide[18], which the founder believes is an idea coming from UNHCR (Int. 5). The pupils at JCJS are solely refugees coming from the local community even though the doors are open for everyone (Int. 6).

In Kyangwali I came across a few CBOs with diverse purposes as well: *Kyangwali News* which, as the name indicates, is a news agency in the settlement (Int. 13); *Humanity Support Organization* (HUSO) that started as a VSLA, but is now working with a livelihood project involving piglets to the benefit of both refugees and nationals alongside environment conservation (Int. 11); *Solidarity Action for International Development* (SAID) that works with livelihood creation and sponsoring of orphans (Int. 14); and finally *Youth Organization Building African Communities* (YOBAC) that works with different projects such as a women's group, orphanage support, and entrepreneur training (Int. 15). Whereas *Kyangwali News* appears to place itself outside the development or social work spectrum, the founder told me that the future goal is that the organization can function as an IGA. Not only for the founder and a few members of the organization, but the aim is to provide the opportunity for people, especially the youth, to be reporters and earn an income through these means (Int. 13). The other three organizations are all working with various projects to meet needs in the local communities. Common for the CBOs mentioned here is that they offer services or projects for non-members as well. The CBOs carry out projects aiming to create livelihoods for the participants, but the CBOs themselves may also function as IGAs. However, I ascertained that even in the case of YOBAC, an organization established in 2016, the activities carried out are not resulting in financial outcomes for the members as yet. It is a future goal to be realized (Int. 15). On that note, it should be considered that some of the projects, namely education, are intrinsically not gaining income as such. Moreover, I detected both aspects of entrepreneurship and innovation in these organizations. In that regards, the CBOs represent

[18] The idea is that 70% of the intervention, or benefit, goes to the refugees and the remaining 30% goes to the host communities.

the notion of refugee entrepreneurs, and thus they play into the sentiments as identified in the current refugee response framework in Uganda. By that they also portray the general shift in development discourses to not regard refugees as "vulnerable victims" (Black in Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018; Krause & Schmidt, 2019).

Funding, registration, and partnerships

Being an ever-returning theme, financing was once again mentioned as one of the main challenges during the interviews with the CBOs. When researching on the topic in Kampala, Easton-Calabria (2016) likewise identified the CBOs' struggle to meet basic needs of running an organization. I found that in many instances the financing comes from members contributing. To give a few concrete examples, the founder of HUSO explained to me how the organization has emerged as a VSLA. At all meetings, everyone had to contribute a little, and after a little time, members in need could get economic assistance from the savings. After a while, the savings grew to a size where it was possible to provide loans with interest outside the member group (Int. 11). In YOBAC you must pay a one-time registration fee of 50.000 UGX[19] to be a member, and additionally members are encouraged to contribute with whatever they can (Int. 15). Thus, the members are in the centre of the CBOs. As opposed to the authoritarianism found in mainstream corporate and government organizations, CBOs are more participatory (Andrews et. al., 2010; Zachary, 2000). In my experience, this participatory feature was indeed reflected in the CBOs I encountered in Western Uganda.

Furthermore, it was remarkable how external funding and partnerships appeared to be drivers of the development of CBOs. In terms of funding, a pivotal point was made during the interview with Kyangwali News. They told me that OPM are aware of their activities, but the next step is to be registered officially as an CBO. Albert added that being registered is crucial in order to get funds. He estimated the total cost to be 500.000 UGX[20]. Currently Kyangwali News relies solely on financial support from the founder, who now resides in USA (Int. 13). Contrary, YOBAC is registered and is like any of the other CBOs looking for external funding (Int. 15).

YIDA is an example of a CBO that is registered and relatively well-funded. Manifested in the permanent buildings, large compound, and a well-equipped office where the interview took place. However, as the founder told me, it all started with contributions from parents to the pupils as well as other community members. Since that time, primarily international grants have aided in building the school and developing the organization. Additionally, YIDA is partnering with other NGOs and INGOs, which is something that has started to happen from early 2018. Even UNICEF is contributing by training the teachers, which was previously targeted refugees but now more nationals have joined the sessions (Int. 5). If the increased interest from NGOs the last one and a half year is linked to the

[19] Equals approximately 92 DKK
[20] Equals approximately 916 DKK

implementation of CRRF, might be difficult to assess. In any case, the fact that a CBO from Swesve, Kyangwali is able to get both external funding and international partners appears quite unique, and it points to a refugee system with opportunities. The importance of funding is obvious, and regarding partnerships Easton-Calabria (2016) emphasizes the significance of those in terms of giving recognition to the CBOs and their activities.

One of YIDA's classrooms that was realized as a consequence of the funding they received.

Rather funding than legal restrictions appears as the limiting factor for the CBOs to develop. And in order to apply for funding, official registration is paramount. The estimated cost equalling 16 times the monthly WFP cash provision is relatively high for most people living in the settlements. In addition to the enhanced opportunities for raising external funds, an official registration with and recognition by OPM may further lead to the allocation of a plot of land. Contrary to YIDA, JCJS is not as far with the funding. By winning a competition, a one-time grant from COBURWAS[21] was provided to build the school's humble semi-permanent buildings. Even though some NGOs have visited, no partnerships have been established so far. Some have provided materials, but as stated by the interlocutor: "The NGOs do the best they can and then they go away" (Int. 6). JCJS relies solely on school fees being paid by the parents. In the same manner that the refugees in a legal sense are granted certain rights, but at the same time face de facto barriers, the CBOs are also constrained by the system in which they operate. The expenses for registration with OPM are relatively high resulting in the CBOs facing a financial barrier to being officially registered as a CBO.

Creating a sense of meaning in the pursuit of livelihoods

Another interesting thing about the CBOs is that they create meaning and purpose for both members as well as the participants in activities and projects organized by the CBO. The founder of YIDA told me how her nearest family moved to Kampala, but she decided to stay in the settlement because of the organization. Even though she works full-time with the project, her livelihood is based on remittances and a side-project where she makes shoes (Int. 5). Thus, it appears that financial gain is not the underlying reason for her commitment to YIDA. Concerning HUSO, the founder utilizes the CBO and its

[21] *COngo BUrundi RWAnda Sudan*. A CBO started within Kyangwali in 2005 by refugees recognizing the problems the population faced in particular related to education. Since then, the organization has expanded its activities and are now registered in the US. https://www.coburwas.org/index.html

projects as a means for creating livelihood in addition to his job as a teacher. The profit they generate benefits the members of the organization (Int. 11). During that interview, it was evident to me that this CBO means a lot to him. The way he enthusiastically showed me various documents and spoke in a dedicated manner about HUSO, made this clear to me.

Kyangwali News is an initiative started to create a community for everyone interested in the refugee settlement. For the team, the project is about "passion and commitment" (Int. 13). During the interview with the leader of YOBAC, he explained that people joins the organization to do something good for the community. There is a commonly shared sentiment among the members that it will benefit their children in the long-term (Fieldnotes 12/5). Clearly, the CBOs I encountered add meaning and purpose to the refugees involved. The engagement and commitment I experienced when meeting and talking to representatives from the CBOs, stands in sharp contrast to a statement from CC Kyaka (Int. 16) that many livelihood projects struggle to function because the participants stop showing up. This was affirmed by some representatives of the NGOs I interviewed as well.

Another example of how people find purpose through the CBOs is the project established by YOBAC called *Wamama Semaneni Group* (WSG). I met some of the members in the group on one of their regular Saturday meetings, and we had a talk about the project (Int. 12). 15 women, all newcomers arrived in Uganda late 2017 and now residing in the village of Mombasa (not to confuse with the Kenyan coastal city), meet twice a week in the chairman's house where they do different types of craft. Everyone contributes a little to buy materials and the final products are sold within the community and at the local markets. All profit goes to the group, and in the future, they hope that members can take out some of that profit to sustain their own lives. The women started the group together because one by one, they did not have enough capital. They enjoy the sense of sisterhood by belonging to the group

Members of Wamama Semaneni Group: one is knitting a poncho and two are making their signature baskets.

and it gives them more and bigger opportunities. By the end of 2018, they decided that they wanted to start this group and took contact to YOBAC, which provided the necessary training in business management and entrepreneurship (Int. 12). This made me realize that the members of CBOs as well as the participants may also think along the lines of neoliberalism. And by offering entrepreneurial training, YOBAC both acts entrepreneurial and regard other refugees as potential entrepreneurs. In that regard, resembling the views of the paradigm shift as presented in the policy framework. The members of WSG hope that this group can lay the basis for their livelihoods in the future, but they also enjoy a more immediate gaining in terms of belonging to a group alongside creation of purpose and meaning in their lives (Int. 12). As suggested in the RSC brief, the social value in livelihood programmes should be acknowledged and further incorporated into humanitarian planning (Easton-Calabria et al., 2017: 4). CBOs and their activities seemingly offer a way to accommodate that.

Whereas the view of jobs as the ultimate goal of self-reliance in the refugee response framework has been identified, the CBOs show signs of representing something else. Veblen's analysis of capitalistic America may offer a suggestion to what that *something else* is and where it is coming from. In his analysis of society he divided people into two classes: the capitalists and the working class (Hunt & Lautzenheiser, 2015: 324). Whereas the former is motivated by pecuniary gains, the latter is concerned with "the work, whereby they get their livelihood" (Veblen, 1914: 188). These endeavors may be denoted as business, representing competitive behavior, and workmanship, representing cooperation, respectively. Naturally, the CBOs are not disinterested in making profit, but it does not seem to be their primary goal. Illustrated well in the case of WSG aiming to create livelihood for the community through cooperative efforts. In that sense the focus is on each individual's wellbeing rather than the potential maximum profit of the organization itself. CBOs may thus be said to represent workmanship, which are serviceable to the community as a whole (Hunt & Lautzenheiser, 2015: 329). In WSG all women from the local community are welcome to be part of the group regardless of the hypothetical possibility that including only part of them as workers might lead to greater profit. Thus, CBOs represent a view at self-reliance that are not solely looking at economic factors having jobs as the only and ultimate goal. Rather they pursue to assist and enable the local community to be self-reliant understood more broadly i.e. meeting basic needs in a sustainable manner.

Integrated in and opposing neoliberal thinking

It seems evident that the CBOs represents a way for refugees to both create meaning, purpose and potentially livelihoods. Being rooted in the local communities, generates a sense of grassroot movement to the CBOs. Contrary to the local foundation is the need for official registration with OPM in order to get funding making the CBOs part of a wider national structure, and in some cases even international. In several of the names of the CBOs like YIDA, SAID, and YOBAC, the names indicate an international focus. In the interview with founder of HUSO, the reply to my question about their future plans was "We wish it to be international" where after he continued by stating how they are inspired by COBURWAS (Int. 11). In the case of YOBAC, the founder explained to me that the goal of the organization is "Better living for all Africans", and the hope for the future is to be registered as

an INGO (Int. 15). Clearly the dreams and hopes for the future of some of these CBOs stretch outside of the settlement and even the country of Uganda.

In that sense, the CBOs represent both the local and global simultaneously. One could further argue that the requirement of registration and competition for external funding, places the CBOs within the realm of neoliberalism. This competitive environment resembles the idea of a market, where the strongest eventually will win. Again, I want to highlight YIDA and how they have managed to build permanent buildings and establish partnerships with international organizations. They are even implementing an UNHCR invention: the 70/30 divide. As a contrast to YIDA is JCJS with no partnerships, a desperate need for more funding, and a few mud houses comprising the school. To a great extent, the two organisations aims for the same, but only YIDA have cracked the code to gain the funding enabling the organization to progress. Just as durable solutions are only for the lucky few (Hansen, 2018), the same can be said about the CBOs and funding. In the current system, it appears that a registration with OPM is a necessity, though not a guarantee for opportunities.

Also to consider is the CBOs in relations to the refugee policy framework in Uganda. In both NAP and JLIRP, CBOs, or community-based organizations to be exact, are mentioned a single time in each policy document. In each case, CBOs are referred to as a non-state/non-governmental stakeholder that are envisioned to be part of the DLG's planning (MGLSD, 2019: 71; OPM, 2019b: 20). The JLIRP states how it is expected that CBOs:

> will help raise resources and civic awareness, keep in check actors, policy makers and regulators for effectiveness delivery of the outputs articulated in this plan. This response plan is aimed at guiding them to supplement government efforts and have a role to cooperate with DLGs to ensure harmonised interventions (MGLSD, 2019: 71-72).

These expectations place responsibilities on the CBOs that appears to be far away from their initial rooting in the local communities. Especially the task "keep in check" is conspicuous. All the CBOs I talked with were concerned about their local community and not about the effective delivery of certain outputs decided on a higher level. What I found to drive these CBOs is the local participation. For example, I asked the founder of YOBAC why they are not simply just a part of COBURWAS. He replied that they take care of needs not identified, or dealt with, by COBURWAS. They want to work independently within an organization which values, goal, and vision are determined by the members (Int. 15.). The point of the founder of YOBAC echoes the conclusion made by Fonchingong & Fonjong (2003: 216) who state that self-reliance is best achieved if NGOs and governments merely provide technical and financial support, whereas the people themselves will find the solutions to the problems in the community.

The JLIRP states that the CBOs' interventions should "supplement government efforts" thus their activities are put in relation to national decisions. This implies that the CBOs are expected to be part of a larger coordinated plan thus not solely focusing on the needs of the community in which they are based. So even though CBOs are seen as non-governmental actors, they are expected to work closely together with government actors. Thus they become entangled in the wider refugee response in Uganda. It may be argued that this way of including the CBOs resembles the type of participation

that Social Anthropologist David Mosse (2001) criticizes. He disapproves participation which are primarily operational, oriented upwards, validating higher policy goals in favour of looking downwards to orient action (Ibid.: 27).

The policies have an increased focus on CBOs, but rather than enhancing their potential and opportunities in the local communities, they are expected to join the large group of stakeholders taking part in the refugee response. The case of YIDA's development from barely anything to providing quality education attracting nationals shows the potential if CBOs get entangled in the bigger system. However, this submission to a higher structure possibly advance standardization resulting in a loss of the original cause of action (Nygreen, 2017). It could be argued that such a loss may lead to a feeling of less participation and ownership. These factors appeared to be both motivational and characterizing for the refugees involved in CBOs. As suggested by Dill (2010: 42), the CBOs in Dar Es Salaam failed to meet expectations mainly due to "the exogenously derived institutional blueprints that delineate and regulate CBOs and the dominant norms of the recipient society". Mosse (2001: 32) likewise criticizes participation that is "oriented towards concerns that are external to the project location". In the same fashion, Binns & Nel (1999: 406) state about a successful self-reliance project in the Mpofu district in South Africa that: "community-owned and driven initiatives exemplify the potential which exists when communities identify a problem and take up the development challenge themselves". Naturally, such conclusions are context-specific, but nonetheless they may be relevant to consider in the setting of CBOs in Western Uganda.

In the refugee response framework, I have identified the underlying assumptions that bringing more stakeholders onboard, as well as widening the scope of those stakeholders, are undoubtedly positive and will lead to a better refugee response. Whereas CBOs are expected to take a more prominent role, as laid out in the JLIRP, the magnitude of the number will supposedly be strictly restrained by the financial barriers for registration. Further, even when registered the competition for funding and partnerships may prove troublesome. These competitive dynamics resembles a free market based in neoliberal thinking. At the same time, following the notions of Veblen (1914), competitive behaviour is embodied in the endeavour of business rather than workmanship. The latter is what the CBOs appear to primarily represent. Instead, the refugee response framework strongly advocates for more private sector involvement sharing to a great extend the ideas as proposed by Betts and Collier in their collaborative work *Refuge* (2017). With the special economic zones in Jordan as reference, the two authors argue that a model in which businesses and private actors are involved in the refugee response, naturally need "significant business investment" (Betts & Collier, 2017: 175-76). It may be reasonably argued that the same applies for the situation in Uganda. Just like the businesses need investments to develop, the same applies for the CBOs. Easton-Calabria (2016: 74) suggests that dedicated funding to sustaining and strengthening CBOs would be an important step to take. Betts et al. (2019: 37-38) recommend similar ideas and both seems to follow the lines of Sandbrook & Barker (1985: 150) who argued that "Ideally, grassroots development would be the focus of Western aid". The point here is that the policy framework in Uganda seemingly favours the involvement of more private businesses into the refugee response rather than enabling more CBOs to flourish independently. Thus, by focusing on private businesses, this approach fits the contemporary view at self-reliance having primacy of

markets at its centre (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2017: 1461). That focus may not correspond with the cooperative nature of CBOs offering social value and opportunities to the local community in terms of a broader understanding of self-reliance. Whereas the inclusion of CBOs in the refugee response may be regarded as an advancement, a primary focus on higher level coordination rather than the rooting in the local communities could strip away the essence of the CBOs. However, the mere possibility for refugees to organize themselves in CBOs are indeed commendable compared to other refugee contexts where restrictive policy frameworks does not allow for it.

Sub conclusion III

This part of the analysis has displayed how the lived realities of the refugees in the two settlements represent a discrepancy compared to the notions detected in the refugee response framework. By exploring selected empirical examples, it has been demonstrated how refugees who are seemingly doing what is expected from them still struggle to create a livelihood for themselves. The last paragraphs about CBOs have shown how they may offer something more than simply a possibility for income in the pursue of livelihood. However, de facto barriers may hinder both refugees and CBOs from creating self-reliance. Moreover, it was discussed how the CBOs oppose and at the same time are entangled in the wider system operating in a competitive environment resembling the notions of a neoliberal market. This last part of the analysis has shown the effects on a local level and discussed the implications for refugees in Western Uganda. Thus, this part has answered the second part of the RQ.

6. Conclusion

Uganda have hosted refugees almost since the beginning of the international institutionalized response to people in need of protection. Developing from policies based on control, the Uganda model is today widely commended for being progressive and often narrated as a role model for refugee hosting. Many of the elements found in the grand UN Global Compact on Refugees and Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework are not new in the context of Uganda. The focus on self-reliance, enhanced coordination and cooperation were already introduced with the Self-reliance Strategy in the late 1990's and further encouraged with its predecessor, Development Assistance for Refugees, in 2005. In that regards, the current policy framework is rehashing previous policies.

What is new in this supranational framework is the incipient assumption that economic and social inclusion in the host society is to be regarded as a durable solution for refugees. In Uganda's refugee policy framework this notion is reinforced with a primary focus on fostering economic growth for host communities and refugees. This thesis has demonstrated how the policy framework promotes a narrow understanding of self-reliance manifested in the conviction that it is to be created mainly in the realm of livelihood and jobs. The analysis of the National Action Plan shows that the aspects of burden-sharing with the international community, inclusion of more stakeholders, streamlined coordination, and the assessment and identification of needs are deemed as forming the solution to the refugee situation. Moreover, it has been established that the key principles in the current policy framework are connected to ideas found within neoliberalism.

These notions regarding the primacy of economic factors in terms of self-reliance and how to create it for refugees is identifiable among officials representing The Office of the Prime Minister. As part of a proclaimed paradigm shift from "care and maintenance" to "development", refugees will be more included and regarded as "agents of change" with a focus on their entrepreneurial potential. This signifies a transferring of responsibility from the state to the refugees themselves implying an emphasis on the individual rather than the system. Thus, to conclude on the first part of the research question, the findings in this thesis have demonstrated how the solution to the refugee situation is reckoned to be found within the current system. Moreover, the neoliberal principles of a free market, free trade, and strong private property rights are promoted in the refugee response framework as the means to create self-reliance.

As a discrepancy to Uganda being narrated as a role model refugee hosting country, the situation explored in Western Uganda paints another picture. All sectors involved struggle to meet the needs of the refugee population that have increased drastically the last years. By highlighting the problems for refugees who are working and doing what is expected from them, it has been demonstrated how Congolese refugees in Kyaka and Kyangwali refugee settlements face de facto barriers to enjoy the rights as provided in the legal framework. The elaboration of selected empirical examples has showed and discussed dynamics in the current system fostering exploitative relations between people with divergent opportunities and assets. This points towards contextual and structural matters, which opposes

the views identified in the refugee response framework emphasizing the individual as the source for finding solutions.

Furthermore, this thesis has shown how Community-based organizations (CBO) offer something more than simply the potential for livelihoods. The creation of meaning and purpose as well as a participatory nature appears to characterize these organizations. Akin to the refugees, CBOs face de facto barriers to progress. Instead of investing directly in CBOs, the current policy framework favours the inclusion of more private sector and business actors. Notwithstanding, the policy framework also indicates that in the future the CBOs are expected to be included in the wider refugee response. This may be argued to be an advancement, but it also implicates a reduction of the original features of the CBOs as well as an altered expectation of their functioning.

This thesis has clearly, and in line with its point of departure in the traditions of critical theory, expressed a critical stance towards the current system. What should be clarified though, is the equivocal critique of the state of affairs. On one hand, the author of this thesis is clearly advocating for a different refugee response framework. To be specific, one build upon real solidarity and not in the form of neoliberal principles in disguise. Such a change, if it is even happening, will not arrive and manifest itself swiftly. With that in mind, it could be argued that a more realistic critique founded in the acceptance of the global capitalistic order would be more appropriate to propose. Such a critique would likely have been along the lines of Betts' and Collier's *Refuge* (2017) and emphasized the urgent need for equitable funding. However, this is already written explicitly in the current global refugee response framework. A sufficiently funded model, in which refugees are able to enjoy the rights they are entitled to and where real durable solutions are a realistic future option for the majority, would naturally be praised. To avoid the obviousness of such an argument, this thesis has instead highlighted implications of the current refugee hosting model in Uganda.

Self-reliance approaches are governing mechanism based on certain suppositions determining the lives that we accept as legitimate. I have attempted to put forward a more nuanced understanding of self-reliance. By doing so, this thesis contributes to the literature critically discussing the promotion of self-reliance in development. Ideally, in the time ahead the international refugee regime will adopt balanced views on self-reliance resulting in an enhanced focus on structural problems rather than placing primary responsibility on the individual. Ultimately, and considering the state of affairs that we currently embrace in what is broadly conceived to be one of, if not the most, progressive refugee system in the World, I take myself the freedom to put forward this question: Will the repeatedly upgrading and reformation of policies governing refugees, anno 2019 globally manifested in the CRRF and GCR, eventually lead to a solution satisfactory for the subjects they are promoted to favour?

Or do we in fact need to reconsider the underlying assumptions and principles forming these policies?

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Appendix 1 – Abbreviations and acronyms

CC	Camp Commandant
CARA	Control on Alien Refugees Act
CAO	Chief Assistant Officer
CRA	Coordinator of Refugee Affairs
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DAR	Development Assistance for Refugees
DCA	Danish Church Aid
DLG	District Local Government
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EFC	Emergency and Field Coordinator
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GoU	The Government of Uganda
HUSO	Humanity Support Organization
IGA	Income Generating Activity
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IRRI	International Refugee Rights Initiative
JCJS	Jesus Care Junior School
JLIRP	Jobs and Livelihood Integrated Response Plan
MLG	Ministry of Local Government
MGLSD	The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social development
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NY Declaration	2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
RDE	Royal Danish Embassy
RQ	Research Question
SAID	Solidarity Action for International Development
SRS	The Self-Reliance Strategy for Refugee Hosting Districts of Adjumani, Moyo, and Arua
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Associations
WSG	Wamama Semaneni Group
YIDA	Youth Initiative for Development in Africa
YOBAC	Youth Organization for Building African Communities

Appendix 2 – Interviews

Below is a list of the interviews I conducted during the fieldtrip in Uganda. Informal talks are not noted in this list. Interview 1- 30 is used directly or referred to in the thesis. Interview 31-59 is not, but have nonetheless still formed the research.

The interviews are divided into five groups: refugees, nationals, NGOs, experts/background, and officials. Some interviews naturally fall into more than one group. Those are placed where they have most relevance.

Interviews used directly or referred to in the thesis							
No.	**Interlocutor, gender, age**	**Title/position**	**Interpreter**	**Language spoken**	**Place**	**Date**	**Comments**
Refugees							
1	Lonji, M, 24	Tailor. Congolese oldcomer living in Kampala	Mercy	Luganda	Kisimenti, Kampala	08.04.2019	Mercy, a friend of mine, functioned as interpreter solely for this interview. Interview recorded
2	Kasadi, M, 69 Kashama, M, 38 Kasongo, M, 43	All are tailors and Congolese oldcomers now residing in Kampala	Catherine	Kiswahili	Bukoto, Kampala	02.04.2019	Group interview. Catherine, a friend of mine, functioned as interpreter solely for this interview. Interview recorded
3	Gloria, F, 30 James, M, 20	Both Congolese newcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	Kishawhili primarily, English secondarily	A small shop, Intambabiniga, Kyaka	01.05.2019	Three other people were present in the shop during the interview. Interview recorded
4	Andrea, F, 59	Oldcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	Kiswahili	The family's home in Byabokora, Kyaka	03.05.2019	
5	Vcitoria, F, 23	Founder of YIDA. Rwandanese oldcomer living in Kyaka		English	YIDA's office, Swesve, Kyaka	04.05.2019	Albert was present
6	Ilunga, M, 26	Teacher and founder, JCJS. Rwandanese oldcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	English and French	At the school in Intambabiniga	04.05.2019	Part of the interview in English
7	Olive, F, 19	Restaurant manager. Congolese newcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	Mostly Kiswahili, but also French and a little English	At the restaurant in Bukere	05.05.2019	
8	Filbert, M, 26	Businessman. Congolese oldcomer living in Kyaka		English	At the shop in Bukere	05.05.2019	Albert was present

9	Peter, M, 25	Shop owner. Oldcomer living in Kyangwali	Albert	English and Kiswahili	In the shop in Kasonga, Kyangwali	09.05.2019	
10	Solomon, M, 35	Pharmacist. Oldcomer living in Kyangwali	Albert	Mostly English and a little French	Outside the Pharmacy in Kasonga	09.05.2019	
11	Abraham, M, 31	Founder of HUSA. Oldcomer living in Kyangwali	Albert	Mostly English	Abraham's home in Kasonga	10.05.2019	Albert assisted the few times Abraham and I experienced a language barrier
12	Wamama Semaneni group	Women's group. All adult females. Newcomers living in Kyangwali	Albert	Kiswahili	At the chairman's home in Mombasa, Kyangwali	11.05.2019	Group interview. The women were also during their craft while I was there
13	Johnson, M Moses, M	Representative for Kyangwali News. Newcomer living in Kyangwali Data collector Kyangwali News. Newcomer living in Kyangwali		English	Outside on a bench in the village	11.05.2019	Albert was present
14	Steven, M, 28	Representative of SAID. Social worker. Oldcomer living in Kyangwali		English	In the family's home in Kyangwali	12.05.2019	Albert was present
15	Albert, M, 22	Founder and leader of YOBAC. Oldcomer living in Kyangwali		English	At the school where YOBAC have meetings, Kyangwali	12.05.2019	The interview took place after the meeting with YOBAC.
Officials							
16	Ryan, M	Camp Commandant Kyaka		English	At OPM's field office in Bujubuli, Kyaka	06.05.2019	Albert was present. Interview recorded.
17	Jeanette, F	Camp Commandant Kyangwali		English	At OPM's field office in Kasonga, Kyangwali	13.03.2019	Albert was present. Interview recorded.
18	Geodfrey Byaruhanga, M	Emergency and Field Coordinator, OPM		English	Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Refugees, Kampala	23.05.2019	Interview recorded
Experts and background							
19	Ulrik Jørgensen, M	Team Leader at the Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala		Dansk	The Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala	04.03.2019	Interview recorded
20	Peter Bo Larsen, M	Country Director, Dan Church Aid Uganda		Dansk	Endiro Cafe, Tank Hill, Kampala	06.03.2019	Interview recorded
21	Naomi Kabarungi Wabyona, F	Programme and Communications Officer at IRRI		English	International Refugee Rights	22.03.2019	Double interview. Interview recorded

	Olivia Bueno, F	Interim Executive Director at IRRI			Initiative, Ntinda, Kampala		
22	Victor Vuzzi Azza, M	Senor Advisor at The Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala		English	The Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala	03.04.2019	Interview recorded
23	Christian Palomäki Arnesen, M	First Secretary at the Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala		Dansk	The Royal Danish Embassy, Kampala	03.04.2019	Was not allowed to record
24	Jacob, M,	Junior Professional Officer, World Food Programme, Uganda		English	Crested Towers, Kampala	04.04.2019	Interview recorded
25	Marylin, F	Former NGO-worker		English	Endiro Cafe, Acacia Mall, Kampala	11.04.2019	
26	Edward, M, 40	Chairman in RWC3 in Kyangwali. Congolese oldcomer living in Kyangwali	Albert	English and Kiswahili	In the office for RWC Kyangwali	11.05.2019	
27	Edrine, M	Team Leader World Food Programme, Kyangwali		English	In WFP's office in Kasonga, Kyangwali	13.05.2019	Albert was present
28	Maki, M	General Secretary, RWC3, Kyaka. Congolese oldcomer living in Kyaka		English	N/A	May and June 2019	Interview took place over WhatsApp. Transcript available
29	Angela, F	CRRF Secretariat Uganda		English	The Office of the CRRF Secretariat, Kampala	23.05.2019	Interview recorded
NGOs							
30	Adam, M	Area Manager DRC, Kyaka		English	DRC field office in Bujubuli, Kyaka	07.05.2019	Albert was present
Interviews not used directly or referred to in the thesis							
Refugees							
31	Ikolo, M	Congolese newcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	Kiswahili	At the family's home in Kyaka	02.05.2019	Ikolo's family were present as well and the wife took a little part in the interview at times
32	Martha, F	Congolese newcomer living in Kyaka	Albert	Kiswahili	Near Martha's home. On the road around Bwiriza.	02.05.2019	
33	Ndomba, M, 53 & Imani, F	Congolese oldcomers living in Kyaka	Albert	Kiswahili	At the family's home in Byabokora, Kyaka	03.05.2019	Double interview
34	Sandrine, F, ?	Burundian newcomer, awaiting a plot of land in Kyaka		English	Reception centre, Swesve, Kyaka	04.05.2019	Albert was present
35	Temu, M, 35	Trading maize. Newcomer living in Kyangwali.	Albert	Kiswahili	Maratatu, Kyangwali	10.05.2019	

36	Emmanuella, F, 19 Divine, F, 28	Niece and aunt. Newcomers living in Kyangwali	Albert	Kiswahili	Outside family member's house in Nsonga, at Lake Albert, outside Kyangwali	14.05.2019	Albert's friend Amani was also there with us that day
Nationals							
37	Prudence, F, 20	Working for an NGO that works with developing the host community		English	At the NGO's office, Russese, outside Kyaka	07.05.2019	Albert was present. Prudence is included as a national since she live in the area
38	Jendyose, F, 25	Teacher at a refugee school		English	At the NGO's office, Russese, outside Kyaka	07.05.2019	Albert was present
39	Ubaidah, F, 32	Peasant farmer	Albert	Kifunbiro(Local language)	Outside her home, Russese, outside Kyaka	07.05.2019	
40 **41**	Baadal, M, 72 Obelia, F, 19	Farmers	Albert	Kiswahili mostly, and English a little	At the family's home in Ruyonza, just outside Kyaka	07.05.2019	Double interview with the father and daughter
42	Sarah, F, 25	No job herself, husband is fisherman		English	On a bench in Nsunsu near Lake Albert, outside Kyangwali	13.05.2019	
43	Innocent, M, 40	Teacher at his own school in Marembo		English	Inside his shop in Bukinda just outside Kyangwali	14.05.2019	Albert and Amani was present
44	Charity, F	Peasant farmer	Albert and Amani	Kiswahili mostly, and English a little	Outside the women's house in Bukinda, just outside Kyangwali	14.05.2019	Amani is Albert's friend who was there that day
NGOs							
45	Charles, M	Area Coordinator Acted, Kyaka		English	At Acted's office in Bujubuli, Kyaka	06.05.2019	Albert was present. The interview also concerned more general aspects, but it's placed under NGO-interviews nonetheless
46	Brian, M	Logistics and Stores assistent Finnish Church Aid		English	At FCA's field office in Bujubuli. Kyaka	06.05.2019	Very new in the job. Not that experienced as yet
47	Janet, F Freedom, M	Teamleader for Livelihood, DRC Livelihood Officer, DRC		English	At DRC's field office in Bujubuli, Kyaka	06.05.2019	Albert was present. Double interview. Was not allowed to record
48	Deborah, F	Livelihood Focal Point, World Vision		English	At World Vision's field office in Kasonga, Kyangwali	09.05.2019	Albert was present
49	Andrew, M	Livelihood Officer, Lutheran World Federation		English	LWF's office in Kasonga, Kyangwali	10.05.2019	Albert was present

50	Ann, F	Project Manager for Agriculture SNV		English	SNV's office in Kasonga, Kyangwali	10.05.2019	Albert was present
Officials							
51	Moreen, F	Police Officer, Kyaka		English	At the Police Office, Bujubuli, Kyaka	06.05.2019	Albert was present
52	Hamza, M	Coordinator of Refugee Affairs, Kyegegwa district		English	Kyegegwa Desk Office	08.05.2019	Albert was present
53	Faith, F	Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Local Government, Kikuube District, Western Uganda		English	N/A	24.05.2019	Interview was conducted over the phone. Interview recorded
Expert and background							
54	James, M	Field Associate UNHCR, Kyaka		English	UNHCR Field Office, Bujubuli, Kyaka	02.05.2019	Albert was present. Was not allowed to record
55	Hannah, F	Lawyer in UNHCR dealing with resettlement		English	UNHCR Field Office, Bujubuli, Kyaka	07.05.2019	Albert was present. Was not allowed to record
56	Roland, M	Associate Protection Officer UNHCR		English	UNHCR Field Office, Kasonga, Kyangwali	10.05.2019	Albert was present. Was not allowed to record
57	Henry, M	Chairman in RWC2 Mukendo Zone, Kyaka. Oldcomer living in Kyaka		Kiswahili	Outside on a bench in Bukinda, just outside Kyangwali	14.05.2019	Albert translated through the phone.
58	Jean Christophe Saint Esteben, M	Country Director, Danish Refugee Council Uganda		English	DRC Headquarters, Kampala	21.05.2019	
59	Dina, F	Solutions Development Officer UNHCR and "CRRF Focal point"		English	UNHCR Headquarters, Kampala	21.05.2019	

Appendix 3 – CRRF in Western Uganda

During my fieldwork in Western Uganda I was curious about how CRRF is informing the refugee response in the settlements of Kyaka and Kyangwali. In order to get an idea about that, I decided to conduct interviews with various stakeholders. It seemed relevant to interview the two Camp Commandants in each of the settlements. Given their authority and position, these interviews signify sentiments coming from a top-level. As the right hand of OPM in Uganda, it further appeared significant to delve into the opinions held by staff within UNHCR. To note here is that UNHCR has designated people employed as CRRF Focal Points. There were no such employees represented in either of the two settlements, but I consulted one in Kampala, who used to be in that position before the closure of the UNHCR Office in Hoima district[22]. In Kyaka, a Field Associate consented to do an interview revolving around CRRF as one of several themes in spite of him not officially being able, or allowed as far as I know, to provide information about CRRF. In Kyangwali the interviews with representatives from UNHCR did not concern CRRF.

I also discussed this topic with representatives from the NGOs, and these interviews represent views and opinions from practitioners involved in the actual refugee response. This stakeholder seemed significant since I assumed they would have a topical understanding of possible changes brought along with CRRF. In terms of refugees, they represent the views from the ground, and I expected those interviews to elucidate actual changes as experienced by the people CRRF is, supposedly, all about. Lastly, the findings will be considered in relation to the 'official' opinion as articulated in communication from OPM. This aspect is important to consider as well since it stipulates expectations and evaluations on a more general level. Moreover, it provides a baseline to consider the other views, experiences and sentiments in relation to.

Improved coordination and more stakeholders

When I interviewed officials as well as representatives from UNHCR and various NGOs, a commonly expressed experience of CRRF occurred: improved coordination including more stakeholders. Both CCs talked about the sector plans, which are still being worked on at national level, as manifestations of the improved coordination brought along with CRRF (Int. 16 & 17). Additionally, the CC in Kyangwali mentioned that one of the changes she has experienced is the inclusion of refugees in the management. Previously refugees were included on a settlement level, but now they are part of meetings at higher level as well as contributors in the decision-making. She stated:

> So to make sure that these plans that are made, are made with the involvement of the what [*sic*], these leaders that present the views of the what, of their communities (Int. 17).

[22] Kyangwali used to be in Hoima district. However, in 2018 Kikuube was established and now Kyangwali is under that local district government.

Moreover, the CC drew attention to DRDIP[23] now being part of the refugee response in and around the settlement (Int. 17). In general CC Kyangwali expressed positive sentiments about CRRF, but the most concrete change that was mentioned was the inclusion of refugees on a higher level. The CC in Kyaka stated that he is in general in favour of CRRF, and understands it as a way of handling challenges holistically by making it possible to deal with challenges in specific areas and connect it with the refugee response. According to the CC Kyaka, the district development plans now cover the whole population including both refugees and nationals in the host communities, which creates continuity. "It brings better results. Through government systems, which are continuous, we are able to have long-term kind of intervention". Further, he highlighted how CRRF is harnessing on existing structures and take advantage of existing opportunities (Int. 16). In that sense, CC Kyaka perceives CRRF to be strengthening the way Uganda is already doing things. Thus it can be stated that the changes stressed by both CCs are taking place on either national or regional level.

UNHCR

The representatives I interviewed from UNHCR also shared the opinions about improved coordination. Field Associate in Kyaka explained that OPM, UNHCR and the local government have signed a partnership contract after the implementation of CRRF. Before the settlement were like independent districts (Int. 54). In that sense, UNHCR remains to have this extraordinary role as always being part of the coordination of the refugee response. In Kampala I interviewed now Solutions Development Officer (Int. 59), but previously employed in Hoima district to roll out CRRF. Her role while working in Hoima was to widen the scope of engagement and include not only traditional stakeholders such as development partners but also private sector actors. This was initiated by the implementation of CRRF. Further, a gap was detected in the coordination between OPM and the local government since the district delivers essential services such as water, education, and health. This gab is now considered as closed with the refugee response integrated in local development plans. Moreover, the monthly meetings held on settlement level are now with the inclusion of the local government, which is expected to take the lead in the future (Int. 59). Both these interviews with UNHCR representatives appeared to me as somehow not genuine in the sense that both interlocutors seemed to be restricted in what they were actually allowed to say. They just presented information on behalf of UNHCR rather than actual views and opinions. This was illustrated by the fact that except for inadequate funding, no critical stances were expressed. The Field Associate in Kyaka even told me how both nationals and refugees are able to use water systems and health clinics. This integration of services was already part of the SRS initiated 20 years ago. I sensed that the misinformation was grounded in the positive promotion of CRRF rather than implying ignorance or direct lying. What should also be remembered is that UNHCR has been a primary driver in the development of both SRS and CRRF.

[23] Development Response to Displacement Impact Project. A project established together with the World Bank. The objective is … *to improve access to basic social services, expand economic opportunities, and enhance environmental management for refugees and host communities in the 11 targeted refugee host districts of Uganda.* The project was initiated prior to the implementation of CRRF. See http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/512841532690959822/pdf/Uganda-DRDIP-Final-ESMF-July-24-2018.pdf

The perspective of the local districts

As it was clear to me that CRRF has contributed with integrating the refugee response in the local development plans, I decided to consult representatives from the two districts in which the settlements are located. In Kyegegwa District I interviewed Coordinator of Refugee Affairs, and in Kikuube district I consulted the Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) about the refugee situation as well as the implementation of CRRF in the district.

The Assistant CAO in Kikuube highlighted that coordination has been improved and streamlined with more stakeholders now on-board. Putting emphasis on CRRF as something taking place at top-level, the Assistant CAO said: *"*It's a phenomena that is known more up than down in us, the host community" (Int. 53). Further, it can be interpreted from this statement that the Assistant CAO identifies with and represent the host community. Thus when referring to top-level, it means national or regional level rather than district level. What is relevant to note here is that the refugee settlements in Uganda are governed by OPM whereas the local governments govern the host communities. However, as pointed out by the Coordinator of Refugee Affairs (CRA) in Kyegegwa, Kyaka is in the district, "…it's not an island". He further stated that coordination is both the opportunity and the challenge with CRRF (Int. 52). To me these sentiments signify that even though coordination is deemed as improved, there still seems to exist obstacles given that OPM and the local governments have different interests and priorities. Related hereto, the CRA actually told me that after the implementation of CRRF, the district of Kyegegwa has experienced direct funding coming from UNHCR and GoU to district projects benefitting both refugees and nationals (Int. 52). Given the context of a chronically underfunded refugee response and underdeveloped rural host communities, it appears natural that disagreements about where the funding is to be used occur. Even in terms of more direct funding, it should also be stressed that the needs of refugees have equally increased as well. Therefore more direct funding, does not necessarily mean more available finance to be spent per inhabitant in the district.

The NGOs are guided by CRRF

The representatives from the NGOs I interviewed, all knew about CRRF, and it seemed to carry a great deal of importance for their interventions. The Area Coordinator in Acted called CRRF "a binding document guiding all stakeholders" (Int. 45). Further, they seemed to agree on the fact that it has improved coordination by integrating the refugee response activities with the local government plans for the district. To illustrate, the Livelihood Focal Point from World Vision stated that the NGOs are in general more in contact with the local government now (Int. 48). In that sense I experienced the representatives of NGOs to buy into this sentiment about the positive aspects connected to the refugee response being integrated in the development of the district as a whole. Project Manager in SNV told me about how CRRF is guiding their work. Before they did development work with the host community, but now they work with both refugees and nationals. The Project Manager stressed that in order to avoid confrontations in between the beneficiaries, they have a focus on making sure that the nationals sees the refugees as an opportunity rather than a burden (Int. 50). One of the means to achieve this is the so-called 70/30-divide. It was mentioned several times by officials and practitioners, and

basically it is the idea that 70% of the intervention, or benefit, goes to the refugees and the remaining 30% goes to the host communities. Whereas I heard mainly positive opinions about this initiative during the interviews in the settlements, Victor, the Senior Advisor from RDE, questioned its actual applicability (Int. 22). We discussed if it is even possible to make a divide so clear in the interventions carried out. Whereas the inclusion of the refugee response in the local government planning appears genuine, the 70/30 carries the connotations of a 'buzz-word' in my opinion. That should be understood as it was frequently mentioned and not looked at critically.

When I interviewed the Team Leader in WFP, he boldly stated that, *"*the way we are working now is totally different" whereupon he explained that CRRF is a key guiding document for them as well. Specifically he mentioned how WFP is now taking part in several activities such as agriculture and market support programme (with SNV) and livelihood activities with World Vision as well as they have adopted a focus on nutrition (Int. 27). I want to stress here that the activities he mentioned are not new in nature as such. The novelty lies in the fact that WFP is involved in them. In that sense,

"Work in progress"

During a majority of these interviews it seemed clear to me that the concrete changes that were mentioned were all taking place at top-level. The most concrete initiative mentioned was the 70/30-divide, which appears to be something that has been well articulated down the structures. Thus I attempted to inquire if there have been any tangible changes on the ground, and I recognized that it did not really seem to be the case. The Area Manager in DRC critically stated that "It has not yet come down as much as it should*"* (Int. 30) and gave, as it was often the case, limited funding a big part of the blame for that. He was in general critical towards CRRF and questioned whether you can talk about a comprehensive response when one part (the funding) is not working (Int. 18). Even though it was refreshing to get a more critical view at the implementation of CRRF, mainly funding was emphasized as the root of the problems. And whereas some NGOs have expanded their activities, and new partners have come on-board, UNHCR's funds to DRC have decreased in 2019 (Int. 30). This happened after the implementation of CRRF, and without neglecting the constraints faced by UNHCR in terms of funding, they have nonetheless made the decision of expanding the activities of WFP among others instead of retain the level of funding to DRC. Clearly, I do not have profound information about the internal priorities as well as earmarked funding in UNHCR. I can merely ascertain that DRC, the largest implementing partner in Kyaka (Int. 30), used to get more funding from UNHCR. In general it can be stated that from the perspective of the NGOs, CRRF is seen as a key document in guiding the response, but examples of changes on ground were very limited according to the representatives I talked to.

That CRRF is not finally implemented as yet was commonly expressed to me by both CCs and the representatives from the local governments. However, both CCs nonetheless put forward some actual changes that had happened on the ground. CC Kyangwali said that schools and health centres have already been put up in the host community. In the settlement, the reception centre has been improved and infrastructure in form of access roads has been established (Int. 17). CC Kyaka has seen an increased focus on the long-term aspects in the projects started since the implementation of CRRF. Moreover, infrastructure was also highlighted as a place where improvements have been detected (Int.

16). In the same fashion that I sensed UNHCR-representatives to be restricted, I also acknowledged this when interviewing the CCs. Its not my intend to dispute that schools and health centres have been put up, but I want to stress the drastic increase in population as a determining factor as well, and not only CRRF. CC Kyangwali told me that the reason for setting up schools and health centres in the host communities is likely due to CRRF. However, one of the key elements in Uganda's refugee policy since SRS is the sharing of services between nationals and refugees. Thus, the mere placement of schools and health centres seems unambitious to be commended as a positive change caused by CRRF. The same can be said in terms of the infrastructure, namely access roads. Given that the population in both settlements has tripled in less than two years, I suggest that the involved actors in the refugee response would have proposed improved access roads even if CRRF has not been implemented in Uganda. Since the CCs also stated how CRRF is "not yet intense on the ground" (Int. 17) and "CRRF is work in progress" (Int. 16), I identify the uncritical display of changes to be rooted in an eagerness to endorse CRRF. This is not necessarily stemming from their own point of view, and a bias may be detected. When it comes to the representatives from the districts they did not tell me about any changes on ground and instead they emphasized that the implementation of CRRF is moving on slowly (Int. 52 & 53). To me this disparity indicates different stakes rather than different perceptions of the CRRF given that the CCs are representing OPM, whereas the local governments are not.

Have never heard about CRRF

When interviewing refugees and nationals, I was naturally interested in their perception of the CRRF and to explore whether or not they have experienced some changes brought along with it. However, I realized that knowledge about CRRF has not been communicated to the refugee communities. So even though the CRRF calls for more inclusion of refugees in the planning and organizing of the response, currently it appears to take place at a top-level. Of all the refugees I talked to, only the RWC3 in Kyangwali heard about it before (Int. 26). The ignorance about CRRF appears to not only concern refugees:

> There is a need to let everyone get to know what CRRF is all about in a very bigger way (…) Both beneficiaries and also the staff. They need to know about this (Int. 16)

This was stated by the CC in Kyangwali during the interview, and it seems to summarize the situation for non-high-level stakeholders. Also, it corresponds well with the experience I had while talking with refugees in particular but also NGO-workers and nationals. The Area Manager in DRC also highlighted this: "when you move down, it's not that explicit" and added further that 20% of the staff might not even know about CRRF (Int. 30). Field Associate in UNHCR said that "The community might not know about CRRF" (Int. 54). Despite the hedging, this statement from the Field Associate at least proved that UNHCR is aware about the issue of people on the ground not knowing about CRRF. This unfamiliarity may be interesting to see in the light of the 70/30-divide. Given that this idea is now guiding the interventions in the district, it may seem odd that beneficiaries are unaware. However, the

challenge of inadequate interventions in terms of low target numbers might be the answer for this. This challenge was highlighted in some of the interviews with the NGOs.

Despite that the refugees appeared to be uninformed about CRRF, I still pursued the goal of examining the impact of CRRF by asking refugees about changes experienced the last two years. Naturally this was mostly relevant for the refugees who have been there for at least some time. I found unanimity among the refugees in both settlements: the last two years have been characterized by many new refugees settling resulting in shortage of land for everyone. As a consequence of that nearly all refugees have started to get support from WFP. Some refugees mentioned changes experienced the last two years, but it was sporadic and only the accessibility of water was reoccurring. What has really had an impact on these people is the massive influx of new refugees to the settlement.

The official opinion

In this last paragraph, the findings will be considered in relation to the official communication about CRRF and its implementation in Uganda. To my knowledge, the only available evaluation report online is a UNHCR two-year progress assessment from December 2018 covering all 15 CRRF-countries. However, I was able to gather UNHCR's country-specific report for Uganda 2018 as well as the CRRF Annual Report 2018 from OPM. The later will form the basis for this part of the analysis, but it should be noted that both are concerning Uganda as a country. Therefore I will just briefly attend to the major lines of the report to form an idea about the perceptions on national level.

Already in the foreword it seems clear that the report is meant to showcase the achievements of the CRRF in Uganda rather than an actual review. In the last page but four, a few anticipated challenges are mentioned. The results, as presented in relation to previously stated expected goals, are all within the realm of coordination at top-level. The two advancements as laid out in the conclusion are:

> Setting up / strengthening national arrangements to coordinate and facilitate the efforts of all stakeholders working to achieve a comprehensive response; Meeting the needs of refugees and host communities, including through the development of comprehensive sector plans, articulating clearly where additional support is needed (CRRF Annual Report 2018: 39).

Whereas improved coordination as mentioned in the first point resonates well with the experiences regionally in Western Uganda, the second seems far away from the lived reality as articulated by the interlocutors. Whereas the remaining sector plans are underway, I cannot say that the interviews I carried out, neither the observations I made, point towards the needs of refugees and host communities being met. The opposite is actually the case. I am not sure who the intended receiver is for this report, it should be noted that OPM is the sender. As I experienced with the CCs, also representing OPM, there appears to be an incentive to weight the positive aspects about CRRF more than the negative.