



CASE STUDY

ASSESSING THE EUTF'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRRF

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Cover photos: 1) View of the Bidi Bidi settlement, Yumbe (Uganda), 2) Reception centre in Kalobeyei settlement, Turkana (Kenya), 3) Market square in Dadaab, Garissa (Kenya), 4) View of the Kalobeyei settlement, Turkana (Kenya).

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABLI-G	Area Based Livelihoods Initiative - Garissa
ACF	<i>Action contre la faim</i>
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AECID	<i>Agencia española de cooperación internacional para el desarrollo</i>
C4ED	Centre for Evaluation and Development
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
(the) DRC	The Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ETM	Emergency Transit Mechanism
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (also EUTF for Africa)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FGD	Focus group discussion
GCR	Global Compact for Refugees
GISEDP	Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plans
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRF	Global Refugee Forum
HoA	Horn of Africa
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGA	Income-generating activity
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IP	Implementing partner
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRCSSES	Integration and mainstreaming of refugee children into the Sudanese education system
KES	Kenyan Shilling
KII	Key informant interview
KISEDP	Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plans
KKCF	Kakuma / Kalobeyei Challenge Fund
KRC	Kabarole Research and Resource Centre
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
M	Million
MLS	Monitoring and Learning System

NDICI	Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument Global Europe
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ReDSS	Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat
RDPP	Regional Development and Protection Programme
RED	Response to Environmental Degradation Programme
RISE	Response to increased demand on Government Service Programme
ROM	Result-oriented monitoring
SPRS-NU	Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda
STEDE	Strengthened Socio-Economic Development and Better Employment Opportunities for Refugees and Host Communities in the Fafan Zone, Somali Region Ethiopia
SUPREME	Security, Protection and Economic Empowerment in Uganda
UBF	Uganda Biodiversity Fund
UGX	Ugandan Shilling
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSLA	Village savings and loans association
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Since 2016, the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF or ‘the Trust Fund’) finances projects designed to bolster the self-reliance of refugees. This case study examines the EUTF’s contribution to the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) approaches in the Horn of Africa. It evaluates the effects and sustainability of the EUTF’s support to the CRRF approach and highlights its legacy, providing recommendations for future programming.

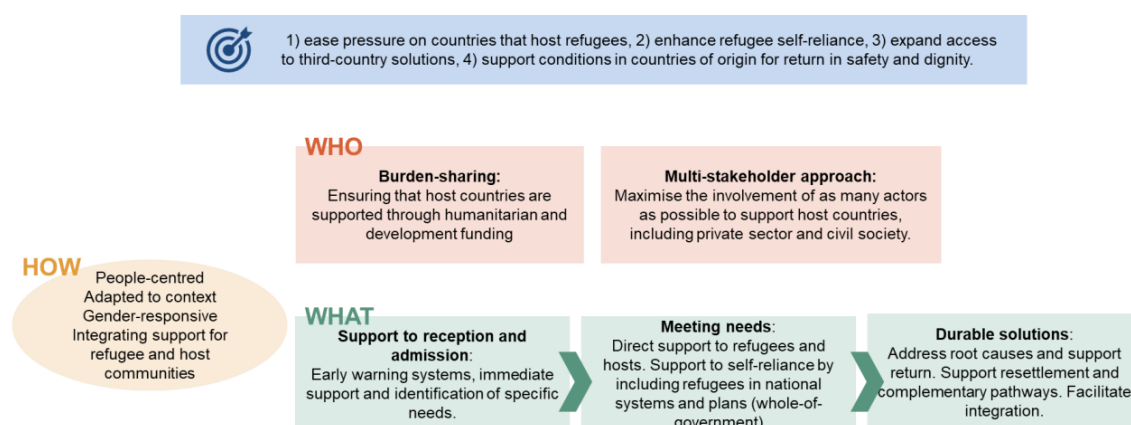
CONTEXT AND POLICY UPDATE

As of June 2024, the Horn of Africa (HoA) hosted 6M refugees and asylum-seekers. A significant proportion of refugees live in protracted situations, while millions of inhabitants from East Africa and the Great Lakes region continue to be displaced each year. Diminishing donor funding is proving insufficient to meet growing needs. Newly displaced refugees require urgent assistance while those in protracted situations continue to rely on both humanitarian and development aid, especially in the context of extreme climate events that have affected the region in recent years.

The process of overcoming the vulnerabilities linked to a person’s displacement, and consequently, ending the need for international protection and refugee status is known as a durable solution. This is typically achieved through voluntary return, resettlement to a third-country or local integration in the host country.

Countries in the region largely support the self-reliance and socio-economic integration of refugees they host. This is particularly the case in Uganda, which sets example on the global stage for progressive and welcoming refugee policies. Approaches have not significantly evolved in the last years, with the exception of Kenya, which has committed in 2023 to transforming refugee camps into integrated settlements, although it has yet to implement any revision to its long-term encampment policy. However, the implementation of the CRRF and of national refugee policies is impaired as the region has faced a lack of adequate burden-sharing and had to respond to other events requiring funds and attention, such as conflict and COVID-19.

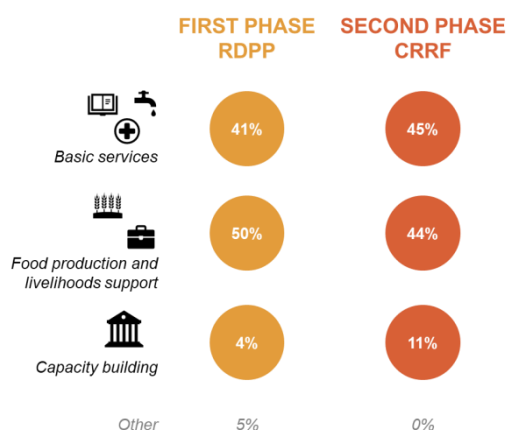
Figure 1: The main components of the CRRF



EUTF SUPPORT TO THE CRRF AND GCR

The EUTF funded 61 projects in the HoA window, for a total of 345.9M€, to support refugees achieve self-reliance and durable solutions. The first phase of projects, part of the EU's Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP), paved the way for CRRF and GCR-aligned programmes. The primary implementing partner of the EUTF for CRRF-related projects is UNHCR, and the main beneficiary countries are Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and Somalia.

Figure 2: Activities funded by the EUTF



Over the lifespan of the EUTF, livelihood activities to support self-reliance of target populations represent the largest share of the funding (46%), followed by basic services (44%) and capacity-building (9%). Activities supported by the EUTF slightly evolved over time. Most notably, policy support and capacity building increased in later programming, as a small number of innovative projects aimed at supporting the inclusion of refugees in national plans and service provision systems.

EFFECTS AND BEST PRACTICES

Contribution to refugee programming debates

EUTF-funded projects weighed on refugee programming debates by supporting alternatives to camps, integrated service delivery approaches, and more broadly deploying significant development funding to refugee-hosting settings. In Kenya, the EUTF made significant contributions to the development of Kalobeyei and its integrated approach, and later the expansion of this approach to Dadaab. The Trust Fund also supported urban refugees and facilitated the creation of dialogue spaces to exchange on specific issues affecting them, even as urban refugees are often overlooked in refugee programming, being regarded as less vulnerable than those living in camps.

While the EUTF invested significantly in monitoring and research, limited availability of contextual information on refugee-hosting areas and of outcome data from projects prevents a deeper understanding of the impact of these innovative approaches.

Effects on multi-stakeholder engagement

The EUTF acted as a catalyst for practitioners, helping various stakeholders develop expertise in refugee-related and durable solutions programming. One significant effect was internal: in some countries, the Trust Fund encouraged EU development teams to begin directing funding towards displacement situations. In Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, EUD teams, supported by staff fully dedicated to the EUTF, noted that displacement-related programming was entirely channelled through the humanitarian branch of the EU prior to the Trust Fund.

EUTF support also enabled UNHCR to enhance its capacities in durable solutions and self-reliance. EUTF CRRF-related funds, of which UNHCR is the primary implementer, allowed the agency to implement development-aligned activities in refugee settings for the first time in the DRC, grow staff skills and knowledge on development approaches and fund development-oriented field teams. However, significant challenges remain before UNHCR can fully embrace its role coordinating

programming for CRRF implementation. A key obstacle is the misalignment between development and humanitarian organisations' programming tools and funding mechanisms.

In line with the CRRF requirement to support a multi-stakeholder approach and building on its position at the intersection of humanitarian and development efforts, the Trust Fund enabled partners to enhance their expertise in self-reliance and development programming for refugees. Some implementing agencies worked in refugee settings for the first time, with the support of EUTF funds. Others leveraged EUTF projects to increase their refugee-related activities. The EUTF also supported traditionally humanitarian organisations implement development activities.

The EUTF did not appear to follow a localisation strategy, and only two national non-governmental organisations feature among the 39 partners supported in CRRF-related EUTF funding, receiving 2% of the funding. Despite the recommendations of the CRRF, voices of refugees and other participants were not systematically included in the design of projects.

Support to meet basic needs

EUTF projects focused on providing structural support for food production rather than direct food aid. This approach became even more crucial and challenging as cuts in food rations increased pressure on food security in refugee-hosting areas. Support for food production yielded positive and potentially sustainable effects. EUTF-funded initiatives in Uganda aimed to increase the productivity of agricultural plots through training and farming inputs distribution. Farmers reported that the techniques learned led to increased revenues. In Kenya, where refugees live within settlements and do not have access to personal farming plots, partners created common farming areas where farmers can work on individually allocated plots. Although the number of participants is limited, farmers reported being able to use funds from the sale of vegetables to help meet their basic needs. However, structural challenges, such as limited access to water, land, seeds and markets continue to limit these interventions' long-term impact on farmers' self-reliance and food production in refugee-hosting areas.

Projects sought to deliver basic services through long-term, sustainable activities, moving away from the traditional humanitarian approach often used in refugee contexts. Throughout the region, partners worked to build infrastructure that could benefit both refugees and host communities, significantly impacting the lives of people in catchment areas. Interventions included the construction of major infrastructure, such as a primary health facility in Dadaab, water supply systems in West Nile and schools throughout the region. Initiatives aiming at making existing infrastructure more sustainable, for instance by providing equipment (water tanks, energy-saving cook stoves) that reduce their operating costs, completed this effort.

However, the impact and sustainability of these initiatives are limited by government will and capacities that were not systematically strengthened. Government takeover of operation and maintenance costs is hampered by limited national budgets and a lack of foresight regarding these challenges in exit strategies. In addition, few projects worked to integrate refugees in national systems for basic service provision. When projects attempted to do so, they were constrained by the limited financial and institutional capacities of the government and had to resort to approaches that were not sustainable, such as covering refugees' health insurance premiums. Both traditional approaches and innovative designs involving the private sector, in particular in energy access, met sustainability challenges.

Support to livelihoods

EUTF projects supported livelihoods for refugees and members of the host communities alike, by providing skills training, financial assistance and material support. Trainings tailored to local environments and market demands enabled refugees and host community members to increase their revenues. Continuous support beyond the training sessions is crucial for achieving sustainable outcomes. For instance, the SPRS-NU Enabel project relied on existing established craftspeople to teach project participants in their areas. This allowed continuous coaching after training was over.

However, financial constraints often prevent most vulnerable individuals from attending training, as they cannot afford to forgo income during this period.

One of the major obstacles to the development of small businesses and income-generating activities for refugees and their host communities is access to funding. Various projects provide seed funding, a direct approach often complemented by support to Village Savings and Loans Associations. These associations are a preferred and efficient initiative to ensure business-owners have access to funding sources beyond the project, to grow or withstand unforeseen shocks. This approach to funding is crucial, especially as supporting formal financial inclusion remains challenging.

Beyond access to funding and skills, the limited development of markets within refugee settlements and camps, as well as challenging access to markets outside of these areas continues to be a barrier to the self-reliance of the refugee population. While partners focus on supporting skills and livelihood opportunities that are tailored to the market, interventions beyond this scope tend to be limited.

With support from EUTF-funded projects, refugees and host community members were able to increase their incomes. However, in a context of reduced rations, the additional income primarily serves to meet basic needs and is not saved or invested, which could help build resilience to shocks. This limits the positive effect of livelihood interventions on resilience and self-reliance in the long-term. A lack of income is also linked to social tensions and negative coping behaviours. In both Uganda and in Kenya, gender-based and intimate partner violence, along with theft and suicides, have increased since rations were cut.

Support to an environment conducive to self-reliance

Projects worked to strengthen social cohesion and justice, especially between host and refugee populations. Respondents from West Nile in Uganda indicated that conflicts, particularly between hosts and refugees, decreased due to the creation of shared dialogue spaces. In Dadaab, DRC facilitated inter-community and inter-generational dialogues that included hosts and refugees. The endline evaluation reported an increased perception of social cohesion among participants. While interventions to build social cohesion have proven effective, sustaining or expanding them is challenging. People trained in conflict mediation, access to justice, and other resource persons supported by the initiatives require financial support to continue the interventions at the end of the project.

EUTF-funded projects also had positive and indirect impacts on social cohesion. The approach that the EU championed from the first phase of funding through the RDPP – providing support to both hosts and refugees – helped build acceptance of refugees among the hosts and is praised as a best practice throughout the region. However, partners sometimes struggle to include host communities in their activities, which in turn can increase the perception that refugees benefit more from interventions and are less vulnerable than host community members.

The arrival and presence of large refugee populations in a delimited area places a strain on natural resources in hosting areas. Several EUTF-funded projects worked to mitigate this pressure, focusing particularly on reforestation and the protection of forests from further destruction. Long-term support is necessary to increase the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Practitioners emphasised the need for refugees to change their 'mindset' in order to transition from humanitarian to development and self-reliance funding. Many partners believe that refugees will be hesitant to seek employment and become self-reliant as long as they continue to expect 'free support'. In response, refugee-led groups warn against stereotypes and underline that self-reliance will only be achieved through a progressive strategy of reduction of humanitarian and development support, that addresses refugees' concerns. For instance, some refugees fear that participating in development activities may jeopardize their access to food aid or their chances at resettlement.

Support to governance and policy change

A small number of EUTF-funded projects focused on supporting national policy change and capacity sharing. Out of the total funding related to refugee situations and durable solutions, 9% of the budget was allocated to capacity sharing and policy change.

The EUTF conveyed a strong message to governments in favour of progressive refugee-hosting approaches, in addition to supporting a number of successful advocacy efforts. In Burundi, the EU's support gave weight to UNHCR's advocacy to urge the government to lift restrictions on the movement of refugees. In Kenya, the Shirika Plan highlights 'best practices' interventions that were directly supported by the EUTF. In certain instances, the EUTF directly facilitated policy change and dialogue. In Kenya, the Enhancing Self-Reliance project supported the drafting of the Refugee Education Policy. Support was most successful at the local level. CRRF-related EUTF-funded projects were involved in the drafting of 71 local development plans, in part to assist local governments in including refugees in their planning.

EUTF-funded projects also supported institutions that are well-positioned to advocate for progressive policies. At the regional level, projects worked with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), laying the groundwork for discussions around integration of displacement affected communities in policies. At the national level, few EUTF-funded projects also attempted to support whole-of-government approaches, with most efforts reported in Djibouti. Finally, projects' efforts to enhance the capacity and ownership of local authorities regarding the CRRF were especially effective, although long-term effects are limited by the insufficient financial and human resources available to local government institutions.

After the EUTF: difficult sustainability

The objectives of self-reliance for refugees can only be achieved if capacitated institutions assume key societal roles. Government organisations must be able to take over the provision of services in health, water, education, and energy and livelihood opportunities, which should be available to refugees within the settings in which they chose to live. To ensure this, investments in basic services need to be secured and sustained in the long-term. In the absence of relays to take over EUTF-funded interventions, achieving sustainability and self-reliance remains challenging.

Governments often lack the necessary technical, human and financial capacities to assume service provision roles, replicate successful models and support large development projects. Local government staff in Uganda noted being unable to continue activities they had been involved in for lack of time, dedicated skills or even vehicles and fuel. In general, strategies developed and supported are unlikely to be implemented without external funding. Partners have funded crucial services throughout refugee areas, as is the case of extension workers. Government do not have the financial means to take over these services and hire for these positions, even if community-based workers possess the required skills.

The CRRF places significant emphasis on the private sector as a key player and an alternative source of funding to replace traditional partners. In line with this framework, the EUTF funded a few projects aimed at supporting private entities to establish interventions in refugee-hosting areas. These initiatives have been successful but the penetration of private actors in refugee markets is still in its infancy and companies still require technical and financial support by partners to operate in refugee-settings.

The analysis of EUTF interventions and of their impact limitations highlights the lack of burden-sharing, which appears to have been rarely negotiated or implemented in the countries where the EUTF operates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: To effectively implement the CRRF and uphold its core principle of burden-sharing, donors should, as much as possible, maintain funding levels for durable solutions.

As a principal donor of displacement-related funds, and especially in the context of funding shortage, the EU should aim to maintain or even increase its funding directed towards displaced populations, particularly its development-related funding and encourage other donors to do the same.

Recommendation 2: The EU should intensify its efforts to advocate for the removal of policies that undermine refugee self-reliance

Restrictive policies limit the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the effectiveness of development funds aimed at supporting their livelihoods. The EU should enhance and streamline its advocacy initiatives to encourage countries to implement more supportive policies.

Recommendation 3: In countries where refugees are legally permitted to move, work and access basic services, the EU could sustain and increase efforts to financially support host governments in implementing its policies

In countries that actively promote the economic and social integration of refugees, the EU could allocate a larger portion of its displacement-related funding to help governments effectively remove legal and practical barriers to refugees achieving self-reliance.

Recommendation 4: Enhance the effectiveness of interventions by allocating funding to national organisations, particularly refugee-led organisations and formalising the role of refugees as project support staff

Channelling funding through refugee-led organisations can significantly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of activities. The EU should consider increasing its direct support to national NGOs in alignment with the 25% target established by the Grand Bargain. In addition, the EU could encourage its partners to subcontract national NGOs and refugee-led organisations.

Recommendation 5: Support the implementation of the CRRF through evidence building on innovative approaches

Refugee settings have traditionally been viewed through a humanitarian and temporary lens. The EUTF has played a vital role in encouraging the transition toward self-reliance programming for refugees. The EU should continue to invest in generating more evidence to understand the impact of these new approaches and policies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

In June 2024, over 43.7 million (M) people were refugees and asylum-seekers worldwide. Low- and middle-income countries hosted 71% of these refugees, with 66% of them living in protracted situations.^{1,2}

In 2016 the United Nations adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants which laid out the terms of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The CRRF was subsequently incorporated into the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in 2018.³ Both frameworks seek to strengthen **global solidarity with refugees** and **foster collaboration between host countries with limited resources and wealthier countries that accommodate fewer displaced people**. Every four years, representatives from states, development sector, refugee and host communities, private sector and civil society gather at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) to share good practices and pledge support to specific interventions. A key focus of the CRRF, the GCR and of pledges at the GRF is promoting the self-reliance of refugees and facilitating integration into their host countries.

The Horn of Africa (HoA), as a main refugee-hosting region, has demonstrated a strong commitment to the principles outlined in the CRRF and in the GCR. In 2017, five countries from the region – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Somalia – committed to implementing the framework.⁴ Since 2019, **over 120 pledges have been made by public institutions of HoA countries to advance the GCR.**⁵

Since 2016, the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF) funds projects designed to bolster the self-reliance of refugees, adopting a CRRF-like approach (certain projects were designed before the New York Declaration but follow similar commitments).

1.2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

This case study assesses the long-term **effects of the EUTF's support to the implementation of the CRRF** and related frameworks, including the GCR, in the HoA. This research provides 1) an overview of displacement trends in the HoA and the progress of the CRRF and GCR approach across the region, 2) an understanding of how EUTF funding bolstered these approaches, and 3) an analysis of the long-term effects and sustainability of EUTF programming, which includes assessing initial outcomes, identifying best practices and exploring opportunities for replication.

This study builds on a 2021 Case Study conducted by the Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) for the EUTF in HoA, which focused on the CRRF and examined interventions in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.⁶

¹ UNHCR, 'Mid-year trends: 2024', 2025. Retrieved [here](#).

² UNHCR, '10 facts about refugees', July 2023. Retrieved [here](#). UNHCR defines protracted situations as instances where more than 25,000 refugees from a single country have been exiled in a low- or middle-income country for at least five years.

³ UNHCR, 'Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework', accessed in April 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Somalia's commitment focused on Somali refugees abroad.

⁵ Global Compact on Refugees, 'Pledges and contributions', all pledges as of 30 January 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ Altai Consulting/MLS, 'CRRF Case Study Lessons learned from the CRRF and EUTF projects involved in refugee programming in the Horn of Africa', 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The case study delves into the following research questions:

1. Context and policy

- What is the displacement context in the Horn of Africa? How has it evolved since 2021?
- Which international and regional frameworks direct funding and activities in favour of displacement-affected communities? How have these evolved since 2021?
- Which displacement-related policies have been adopted since 2021 and how have these impacted the self-reliance of displaced people?

2. The EUTF and the CRRF approach

- How much funding has the EUTF dedicated to activities supporting the CRRF?
- What activities has this funding supported? Has the EUTF's support to the CRRF allowed complementarity between top-down and bottom-up approaches?
- Which aspects of the CRRF and of the GCR were not supported by the EUTF?

3. Best practices, effects, and sustainability of the EUTF

- What best practices and lessons learned can be identified from this support?
- Which effects remain after the completion of the projects? How have EUTF projects improved the long-term self-reliance of the beneficiaries?
- How have the newer projects built on positive outcomes and learned from past projects? Why were certain effects more sustainable than others? What could have increased the sustainability of activities?

2.2. METHODOLOGY

This case study was developed through a combination of approaches. The lead researcher first conducted a desk review of secondary research and literature, and an outcome analysis based on available project documents. The researcher then gathered qualitative data by conducting key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) between April and July 2024.

Figure 3: Summary of case study methodology



In total, 458 respondents were interviewed for this case study. This includes 11 respondents in eight EU delegations as well as respondents from implementing partners (IP) representing 25 EUTF-funded projects. Overall, perspectives of respondents (either IP or EU staff) were collected regarding 43 of the 61 identified relevant projects. In addition, 22 authorities from Kenya and Uganda, as well as 341 hosts and refugees in Dadaab, Kakuma and West Nile were interviewed (250 through FGDs, 91 in KIIs).

Data gathered from desk review, outcome analysis and interviews were analysed to respond to the research questions described above. As detailed in the subsequent sections, enhancing self-reliance for refugees is one of the CRRF's objectives. To analyse the support provided by the EUTF to foster refugee self-reliance, the researcher relied on the definition established by the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative.¹ It defines self-reliance as 'the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet its essential needs in a sustainable manner.' The initiative further developed an index for measuring self-reliance, which divides self-reliance into three main layers:

- **Are basic needs being met?** (healthcare, education, housing, food)
- **How are basic needs being met?** (employment, assistance from organisations, financial resources, debt)
- **Will basic needs continue to be met in the future?** (health status and long-term conditions that may impact the household's ability to be self-reliant, perception of safety sufficient to pursue opportunities, savings, social capital)



The index evaluates 12 domains that serve as indicators of a household's dependence on external support or, conversely, its self-sufficiency in meeting its needs. For this case study, the analytical framework embraced this concept of self-reliance, while also incorporating aspects of natural and political capital, specifically looking at refugees' access to natural resources, justice and peace.

The analysis of data is presented according to the CRRF and its main components. The research examined how EUTF programming supported a multi-stakeholder approach, host and refugees self-reliance (meeting needs and promoting durable solutions) and burden-sharing. Finally, the analysis looked at the sustainability of such support.

2.3. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

When reviewing these findings, it is important to consider the following limitations:

- **Some projects faced challenges implementing monitoring systems**, leading to concerns about the reliability of certain outcome data, which may also be incomplete.
- Staff of some **completed projects were not reachable** for this study. Analysis of these projects instead relied on available documentation.
- Some projects were still in progress at the time of research, which complicates the evaluation of **long-term effects**. When available, research relied on mid-term outcome data, whereas questions during data collection were particularly focused on assessing the sustainability of interventions.

¹ Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative, 'Self Reliance Index, 2.0: indicators to measure progress towards self-reliance', May 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

3. CONTEXT AND POLICY UPDATE

KEY TAKEAWAYS

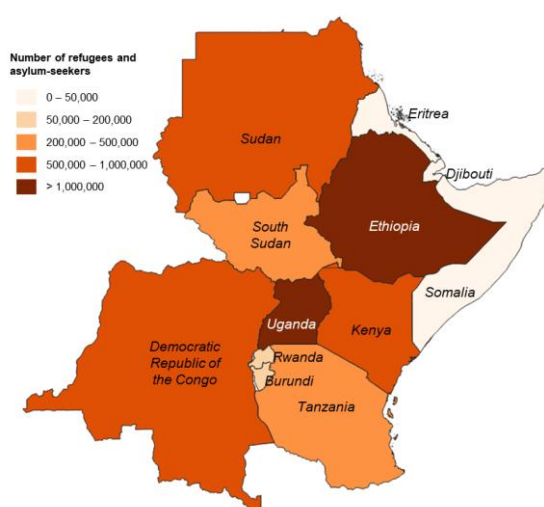
- As of June 2024, the Horn of Africa hosted 6M refugees and asylum-seekers. Many refugees live in protracted situations, even as millions of East Africans continue to be displaced each year.
- Throughout the region, refugee laws are generally progressive and mostly support the self-reliance and socio-economic integration of refugees. Approaches have not significantly evolved since the first case study, with the exception of Kenya, which committed in 2023 to transforming refugee camps into integrated settlements, although it has not yet revised its long-term encampment policy.
- However, the implementation of the CRRF and of national refugee policies is impaired as the region faces insufficient financial support and had to respond to other events requiring funds and attention, such as conflict and COVID-19.

3.1. DISPLACEMENT IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The HoA hosts among the world's largest displaced population. As of June 2024, the region hosted 6M refugees and asylum-seekers,^{1,2} a significant increase from the 4.6M reported in 2021, when the first CRRF study was published.

Since then, while **some refugees found durable solutions, new or renewed conflicts sparked further displacement**. In South Sudan, over 600,000 refugees returned home since the peace agreement was signed in 2018.³ However, in Ethiopia, conflict and climate-related caused displacement in the last years,⁴ and led to secondary movements among Eritrean refugees who left camps in Tigray for locations such as Addis Ababa and beyond.⁵ In Sudan, the conflict that began in April 2023 had resulted in the displacement of over 10M people by July 2024. This includes approximately 2.1M people who sought refuge outside of Sudan, with the majority now being hosted in Chad (623,000 people), South Sudan (742,000 people) and Egypt (500,000).⁶

Figure 4: Refugees in the Horn of Africa



A significant share of refugees in the Horn of Africa live in protracted situations. In Kenya, many are hosted in camps established in the 1990s. Kakuma was opened in 1992 to host the Lost Boys of

¹ UNHCR, 'Country operational portals', accessed August 2024.

² This accounts for the nine countries targeted by the EUTF: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda. If accounting for the countries in which EUTF-funded projects were implemented (including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi), the number of refugees is 5.5M.

³ UNHCR, 'South Sudan – Spontaneous Refugee Returns Dashboard', September 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ IOM, 'Over 3 million displaced in Ethiopia, more than half due to conflict: new IOM report', May 2024.

⁵ IIED, 'Protracted displacement in an urban world - Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia: building urban solutions', October 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ UNHCR, 'Regional Displacement Update: Sudan Situation', July 2024.

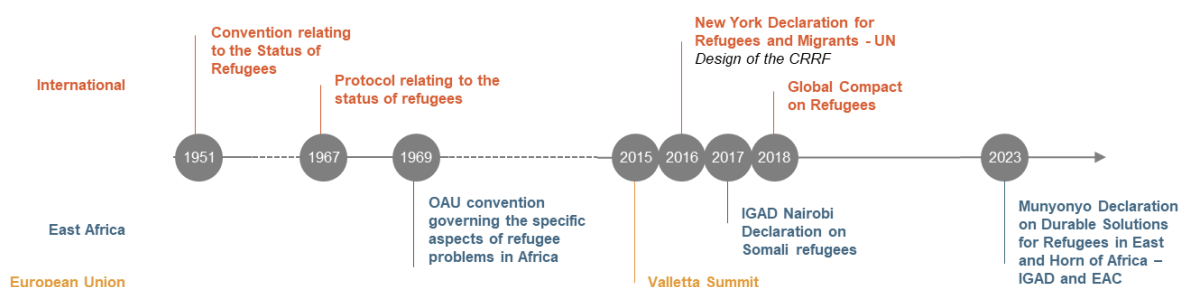
Sudan,¹ and the Dadaab refugee camps were set up in 1991 for those fleeing civil war in Somalia. By 2023, over half (54%) of Dadaab's residents were under 18 years old and had grown up in the camps.² In Uganda, the refugee population grew from 200,000 in January 2016 to 1.4M in January 2018, largely due to the flare up of the conflict in South Sudan. As of 2024, Uganda continues to host nearly **almost 1M South Sudanese refugees**.³ Meanwhile, in June 2023, Tanzania was home to more than 250,000 refugees, predominantly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the DRC), many of whom were displaced in the 1990s.⁴

Diminishing donor funding is falling short of addressing growing needs of refugees and host communities.⁵ Newly displaced refugees require immediate support, while those who live in protracted situations continue to depend on both humanitarian and development assistance. This support is increasingly needed, especially as the needs of both refugees and the communities hosting them were exacerbated by climate-related events. By the end of September 2023, nearly 1M refugees and asylum-seekers lived in drought-affected areas in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, and more than 250,000 newly displaced refugees had arrived in these areas since January 2022.⁶ The heavy rains and floods at the close of 2023 and into early 2024 further impacted refugees and host communities.

3.2. CRRF AND OTHER RELEVANT FRAMEWORKS⁷

Support to refugees and asylum-seekers began with a focus on urgent humanitarian needs. The 1951 Convention relating to the status of Refugees and its 1967 associated protocol established two sets of obligations regarding asylum and included provisions for sharing responsibilities among nations (burden-sharing). As displacement situations became protracted, refugee camps, initially created for immediate assistance, turned into permanent settlements. This shift prompted donors and partners to adapt their assistance towards development aid. Over time, various frameworks guided this transition, such as the EU's Linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) approach, initially developed in 1996,⁸ and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus.⁹

Figure 5: Timeline of frameworks adopted to guide support to refugees



In November 2015, at the Valletta Summit on Migration, the EU launched the EUTF. The fund was designed to support the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and LRRD approaches, and provide

¹ The Lost Boys of Sudan refers to more than 20,000 young boys from Nuer and Dinka ethnic groups who were displaced during the Second Sudanese Civil War (between 1987 and 2005). The Lost Boys travelled from then Sudan to refugee camps in Ethiopia and in Kenya.

² UNHCR, 'Tackling Kenya's longstanding refugee situation: the need for comprehensive solutions', April 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

³ UNHCR, 'Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Portal', accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ MPI, 'Tanzania's Open Door to Refugees Narrows', August 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ WFP, '2023 in pictures: Ration cuts threaten catastrophe for millions facing hunger', December 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ UNHCR, 'Drought situation: Affected displaced populations in the EHAGL region', September 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ For more information, please refer to the 2021 CRRF Case Study.

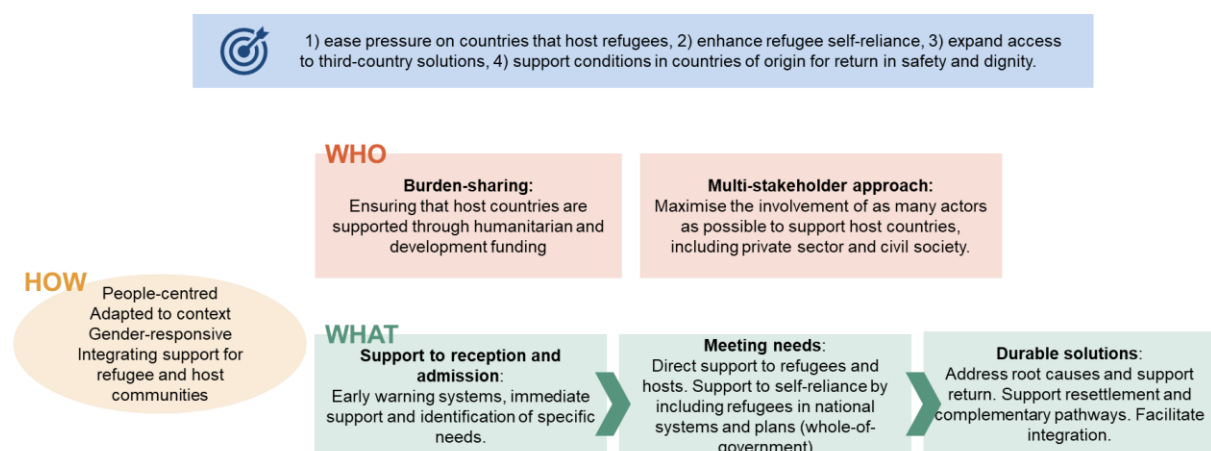
⁸ EUR-Lex, 'Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development - An assessment', 2015. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ Oxfam, 'The humanitarian-development-peace nexus: what does it mean for multi-mandated organizations?', June 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

(among other objectives) protection, integrated services and socio-economic development to refugees.¹ The following year the United Nations adopted the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**, which laid out a vision for a more predictable and comprehensive response to movement crises through the CRRF.² In 2018, the GCR outlined an action plan to operationalise and implement the CRRF, resulting in the establishment of Support Platforms and Global Refugee Forums, where stakeholders can pledge funding and support to implement the framework.³

The key objectives of the CRRF are to: (1) ease pressure on countries that host refugees, (2) build refugees' self-reliance, (3) expand resettlement access and other complementary pathways, and (4) foster return conditions. These goals broadly align with the framework for durable solutions, which identifies three pathways for ending situations of displacement: return and sustainable reintegration in the place of origin; sustainable local integration in the hosting area; and resettlement of refugees from their asylum country to third-country. The accompanying graph illustrates the CRRF approach and details the **type of support required, as well as the stakeholders responsible for delivering it**.

Figure 6: The main components of the CRRF



In the HoA, member states of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) adopted a series of declarations to localise and implement the CRRF. In 2017, IGAD adopted the Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia, known as the **Nairobi Process**. This framework was later expanded to include all refugee situations across the IGAD region. That same year, regional leaders also endorsed the **Djibouti Declaration on education for refugees, returnees and host communities**, and the **Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods & Self-reliance for Refugees, Returnees & Host Communities in the IGAD Region**. More recently, in June 2023, IGAD member states reaffirmed their dedication to these efforts by endorsing the Munyonyo Declaration of Durable Solutions for Refugees in the East and Horn of Africa.⁴ In December 2019, IGAD launched a **Support Platform** (one of only three so far) at the GRF. These Support Platforms, as outlined by the GCR, aim to consolidate funding and advocacy around specific refugee situations.⁵ The IGAD Support Platform specifically seeks to mobilise stakeholders in support to the Nairobi Declaration.⁶

¹ MLS for the EUTF, 'CRRF Case Study: Lessons learned from the CRRF and EUTF projects involved in refugee programming in the Horn of Africa', July 2021.

² UNHCR, 'The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework', accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

³ UNHCR, 'The Global Compact for Refugees', accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ IGAD, 'IGAD and EAC Member States Sign Munyonyo Declaration on Durable Solutions for Refugees in the East and Horn of Africa', June 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ UNHCR, 'Support platforms', accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ IGAD, 'Annual Ministerial Stock-Take Meeting of the IGAD Support Platform and the implementation of the plan of action for The Nairobi Declaration', November 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

While the increasing number of frameworks suggests ongoing progress in promoting self-reliance and burden-sharing as emphasized in the CRRF, it may unwittingly hide the challenges in translating these commitments into tangible action. The CRRF's focus on engaging development actors within refugee emergencies and protracted situations and on increasing assistance to the main refugee-hosting areas are not new, yet concrete operationalisation and burden-sharing efforts remain limited. Some researchers view the GCR/CRRF mechanisms as guardrails preventing regress, rather than catalysts for significant change.¹

3.3. EVOLUTION OF LEGISLATION




Countries in the region largely support the self-reliance and socio-economic integration of refugees they host. Since the initial case study, refugee laws did not significantly evolve, **with the one exception of Kenya**, which indicated in 2023 a willingness to support more self-reliance for refugees, despite not fully revising its long-standing encampment policy. Nonetheless, support for specific CRRF coordination structures has seen a decline in **momentum in some countries**, potentially as a result of inadequate burden-sharing. This section outlines key **refugee legislation in the HoA, especially in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia**, which are the main recipients of EUTF CRRF-related funding and host some of the largest refugee populations in the region.

Kenya's recent changes

Kenya's approach to refugee management is anchored in the 2021 Refugee Law, which updated the asylum framework and improved refugees' freedom of movement by eliminating penalties for being outside designated camps.² Despite this progress, Kenya continues in practice to implement its three-decade long encampment policy. In 2021 as well, the government had announced that it would be closing the camps of Dadaab and Kakuma by June 2022, although this did not happen.

Figure 7: Kenyan legal framework for refugees

KENYA

-  **Kenya applies an encampment policy.** Refugees have to apply for movement passes to move within the country and cannot live outside of camps.
-  **There are no explicit barriers to refugees' access to education and healthcare.** However, facilities remain mostly separated between the camps and host communities.
-  **Refugees can apply for to work permits.** These are expensive and refugees lack the required documentation: less than 100 refugees obtain work permits each year.

By 2023, the government, in coordination with the UNHCR, released a first version of its Shirika Plan, which stands for Socioeconomic Hubs for Integrated Refugee Inclusion in Kenya. The plan was formally launched in March 2025, and is set to span 11 years until 2036 and cost 943M\$.³ The Shirika Plan's goal is to transform the designated refugee-hosting areas (camps) into self-reliant communities where refugees can work, live and set up businesses. The Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps have already been reclassified as municipalities.⁴ The initiative will build upon the existing Kalobeyi and Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plans (KISED and GISED), both of which received support from EUTF-funded projects. Nonetheless, some activists expressed concerns that the plan may not lead to increased freedom of movement or enhanced rights for refugees outside of these new municipalities.⁵

¹ International Journal of Refugee Law, 'The unfinished work of the Global Compact on Refugees', 2018.

² NRC, 'Access to movement passes: a roadmap to self-reliance for refugee entrepreneurs in Dadaab', 2021.

³ Department of Refugee Services, 'Government Launches Shirika Plan to Enhance Refugee and host communities Inclusion', April 2025. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Government of Kenya, 'SHIRIKA Plan', July 2023.

⁵ The New Humanitarian, 'Kenya's new integration plan for refugees: Hope or hype?', March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

Challenging implementation in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan

Ethiopia was one of the early adopters of the CRRF, making nine pledges during the New York Summit in 2016. Among these pledges, the government committed to increasing the enrolment of refugees in education, improving access to essential social services, expanding access to an out-of-camp programme and facilitating work permits for refugees.¹ In 2019, the introduction of a new Refugee Proclamation aimed to enhance freedom of movement and livelihood avenues for refugees.² This progressive stance drew donor engagement, exemplified by a collective pledge of over 500M\$ from the World Bank, the EU and the United-Kingdom government towards an Ethiopian Jobs Compact during the 2016 summit.³

However, progress in implementing the CRRF has since stagnated. Following the 2018 elections, and later the conflicts in the country, support to the National Coordination Office, established to implement the CRRF, reportedly declined.⁴ The office has been inactive since January 2019, after a decision to absorb its functions within the Refugees and Returnees Service. The coordination of CRRF/GCR implementation now falls under the purview of the Humanitarian Assistance and Development Directorate within the Refugees Service.⁵ The execution of the Refugee Proclamation faces delays due to the absence of comprehensive regulations and directives associated to it. Refugees continue to struggle to access livelihoods and formal employment, while the encampment policy remains in effect.⁶

Before the conflict that began in April 2023, **Sudan presented a similar scenario.** Its legislation, rooted in the 2014 Asylum Act was progressive, yet effective implementation was challenging. For instance, while refugees were eligible for work permits, these were rarely granted.⁷

In Djibouti, although the government embraced progressive legislation and discourse on the international scene, governmental support for refugee programmes was limited. Following the adoption of the CRRF, Djibouti adopted the 2017 Refugee Law and Decree on Refugee Fundamental Rights, as well as the 2017-2022 CRRF Action Plan.⁸ This framework grants refugees freedom of movement, as well as the right to work and access to education, healthcare and social protection. Still, many refugees face hurdles in securing both formal and informal employment, due to high unemployment in the country as a whole and a general lack of awareness among employers regarding legal provisions for refugee employment.⁹

Uganda's continued progressive approach

Uganda is an example on the global stage for progressive and welcoming refugee policies. The refugee normative framework is based on the 2006 Refugee Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations. In the last five years, the government updated and renewed sectoral refugee-related policies, as well as national development plans, which continue to reflect a strong commitment to refugees' inclusion.¹⁰

¹ UNHCR 'Global Compact on Refugees: Ethiopia', accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² HPG, 'The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Ethiopia', September 2019.

³ HPG, 'The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Ethiopia', September 2019.

⁴ KII with UNHCR in Ethiopia.

⁵ To oversee the strategies and initiatives supporting the implementation of GCR and related GRF pledges, as well as partnership, coordination advocacy, and resource mobilization, four working groups on Education, Livelihoods, Protection, and Energy have been established. These groups, co-led by the Refugees and Returnees Service and UNHCR, serve as the primary coordination platforms. They are tasked with monitoring the progress of pledges and play a pivotal role in the coordination of CRRF/GCR implementation.

⁶ UNHCR, 'Refugee Policy Review Framework: Ethiopia', June 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ PROSPECTS, 'Country Vision Note: Sudan', 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

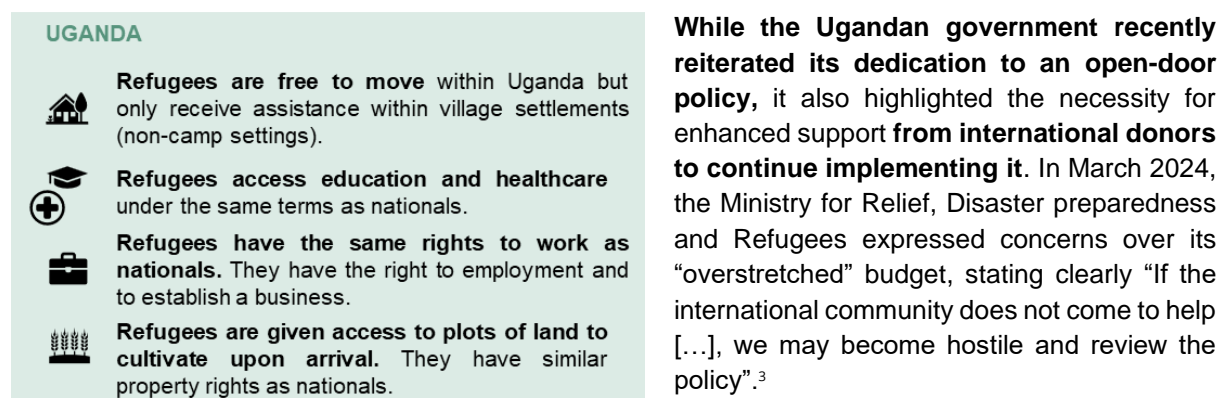
⁸ GCR, 'Djibouti Plan d'action national CRRF', 2017. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ UNHCR, 'Refugee Policy Review Framework: Djibouti', June 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

¹⁰ UNHCR, 'Refugee Policy Review Framework: Kenya', 30 June 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

In 2023, Uganda co-convened **the second GRF**,¹ making five new pledges, including the creation of 300,000 economic opportunities for refugees and their host communities before 2027. Additionally, the government committed to incorporating refugees in its climate adaptation strategies and reducing the carbon emissions resulting from deforestation in and around refugee settlements.²

Figure 8: Ugandan legal framework for refugees



Unchanged laws in the Great Lakes

Laws in neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda have remained largely unchanged over the past decade, continuing to support the self-reliance of refugees. In Rwanda, the 2014 legislation grants refugees the right to work, and to access Community-Based Health Insurance under the same conditions as citizens. Similarly to Uganda, assistance is tied to residency in camps or settlements, although refugees are allowed to move within the country.⁴ The Rwandan government’s 2016 Strategy for the Economic Inclusion of Refugees further emphasizes its dedication to fostering self-reliance among refugees, enabling them to work, establish companies, pay taxes and create jobs.⁵

Similarly, Burundi’s 2008 Asylum Law grants refugees the right to work, education, healthcare and freedom of movement under certain conditions (prima facie refugees arriving as part of a massive influx are required to stay within camps). However, practical challenges remain. For instance, administrative fees can hinder refugees from obtaining the essential work permits to engage in formal employment.⁶ In **the DRC**, the institutional framework for refugee management and coordination is based on the 2002 Refugee Law, and grants freedom of movement, right to work, access to education and healthcare to refugees on par with nationals.⁷

Restrictive laws in donor states undermining CRRF implementation?

While the EU continues to advocate for legislative and policy reforms in HoA countries, it adopted a **new Migration and Asylum Pact** in May 2024. Critics have raised concerns this Pact may complicate the process to claim asylum safely for displaced populations. Certain regulations could also conflict with commitments established through the CRRF to broaden access to third country solutions and to ensure “safe and dignified reception conditions”.⁸

¹ UNHCR, ‘Global Refugee Forum 2023’, accessed in March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² Global Compact on Refugees, ‘Pledges and contributions’, accessed in March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Monitor, ‘Uganda threatens to shut doors against refugees over food shortage’, March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ UNHCR, ‘Asylum procedure in Rwanda’, accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ Government of Rwanda and UNHCR, ‘Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda’, 2016. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ UNHCR, ‘Refugee Policy Review Framework: Uganda’, June 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ UNHCR, ‘Refugee Policy Review Framework: Democratic Republic of the Congo’, June 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ UNHCR, ‘The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework’, accessed in May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

Figure 9: EU's New Pact on Asylum and Migration, adopted by the Council in May 2024^{1,2,3,4,5}

<p>Fast tracked review of applications based on group rather than individual characteristics</p> <p>Fast deportation endangers right to appeal</p>	<p>ASYLUM PROCEDURE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Border asylum procedure systematic for applicants who are from countries with asylum recognition rates below 20% 	<p>EURODAC REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of additional biometric data For children as young as 6 years old instead of 14 previously 	<p>SCREENING REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardised pre-entry screening procedure for third-country nationals 	<p>Applicants, including children, may be detained while the procedure lasts</p>
	<p>ASYLUM AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a solidarity pool EU countries will contribute to through financial contribution or relocation 	<p>QUALIFICATIONS REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonisation of the criteria for granting and withdrawing refugee status across the EU 	<p>FORCE MAJEURE REGULATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules may be suspended in case of "mass influx" or if a country on an external EU border is "instrumentalizing migration" In particular, expanding the number of people eligible for the border asylum procedure 	

Furthermore, some EU member states recently adopted legislation that contradicts the CRRF objectives. For instance, France's 2024 Asylum and Immigration Law restricted access to health services for asylum-seekers and migrants and aims to expedite asylum procedures and reduce opportunities for appeals.⁶ Reports as early as 2021 have suggested that donor countries could undermine the implementation of the Global Compact and the CRRF by 'being constructive abroad but obstructive at home'.⁷

¹ European Parliament, 'Press Release: MEPs approve the new Migration and Asylum Pact', 10 March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² The Conversation, Micinski, N., 'EU migration overhaul stresses fast-track deportations and limited appeal rights for asylum seekers', 22 April 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

³ Civil rights defenders, 'The EU's new migration and asylum pact hollows out the right to asylum', April 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Eurochild, 'Key points to navigate the EU Migration and Asylum Pact', March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ European Commission, 'Pact on Migration and Asylum', May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ Jeune Afrique, 'Loi sur l'immigration en France : que contient le texte discuté cette semaine à l'Assemblée ?', November 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ DRC, IRC, NRC, 'The Global Compact on Refugees three years on: Navigating barriers and maximising incentives in support of refugees and host countries', November 2021.

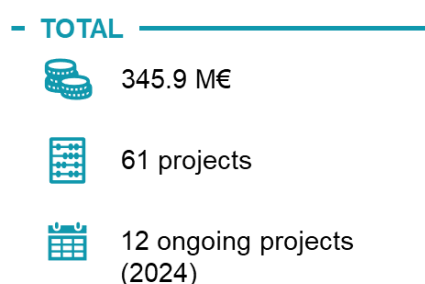
4. EUTF SUPPORT TO THE CRRF AND GCR

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The EUTF funded 61 projects in the HoA window, for a total of 345.9M€, to support refugees achieve self-reliance and durable solutions.
- The first phase of projects, which were part of the EU's Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP), paved the way for CRRF and GCR-aligned projects.
- The geographical distribution of EUTF funding matches displacement patterns in the HoA, with Ethiopia (79.4M€), Uganda (76.2M€), Kenya (52.2M€) and Sudan (51.6M€) the main beneficiaries.
- No regional strategy appears to have guided the design and award of the CRRF-related projects. Funding decisions were made at the Operational Committee, with EU Delegation (EUD)-level inputs on context and needs. High turnover and loss of institutional knowledge prevents an exhaustive analysis of these funding decisions.
- Over the lifespan of the Trust Fund, livelihood activities to support self-reliance of target populations represent the largest share of the funding (46%), ahead of basic services (44%) and capacity sharing (9%).¹
- Activities supported by the EUTF slightly evolved over time: policy support and capacity sharing increased over the years, accompanying a small number of innovative projects looking to support the inclusion of refugees in national plans and service provision systems.

4.1. EVOLUTION OF EUTF PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE CRRF

Figure 10: EUTF-funded projects considered in this study



The EUTF funded 61 projects, for a total of 345.9M€, aimed at supporting refugees achieve self-reliance and durable solutions, while also assisting the governments hosting these refugees.² This support was initially guided by the EU's Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) and aligned to the CRRF after its adoption. The first wave of funding provided 80.1M€ for 15 RDPP projects,³ which sought to address the needs of both refugees and host communities. These projects were developed either in parallel or prior to the adoption of the CRRF and operated within the constraints of national laws on refugees, such as supporting informal livelihoods where refugees did not have the legal right to work.

In line with the policy focus of the CRRF, projects contracted in the second phase incorporated **new components of advocacy and capacity sharing⁴ with regional, national and local institutions and agencies**. Thirty-seven projects, representing 210.8M€ of funding, are categorised as “CRRF-aligned”, and either explicitly support the CRRF or follow its approach. Of these CRRF-aligned projects, most

¹ The remaining 1% funded activities classified in ‘other’ like research.

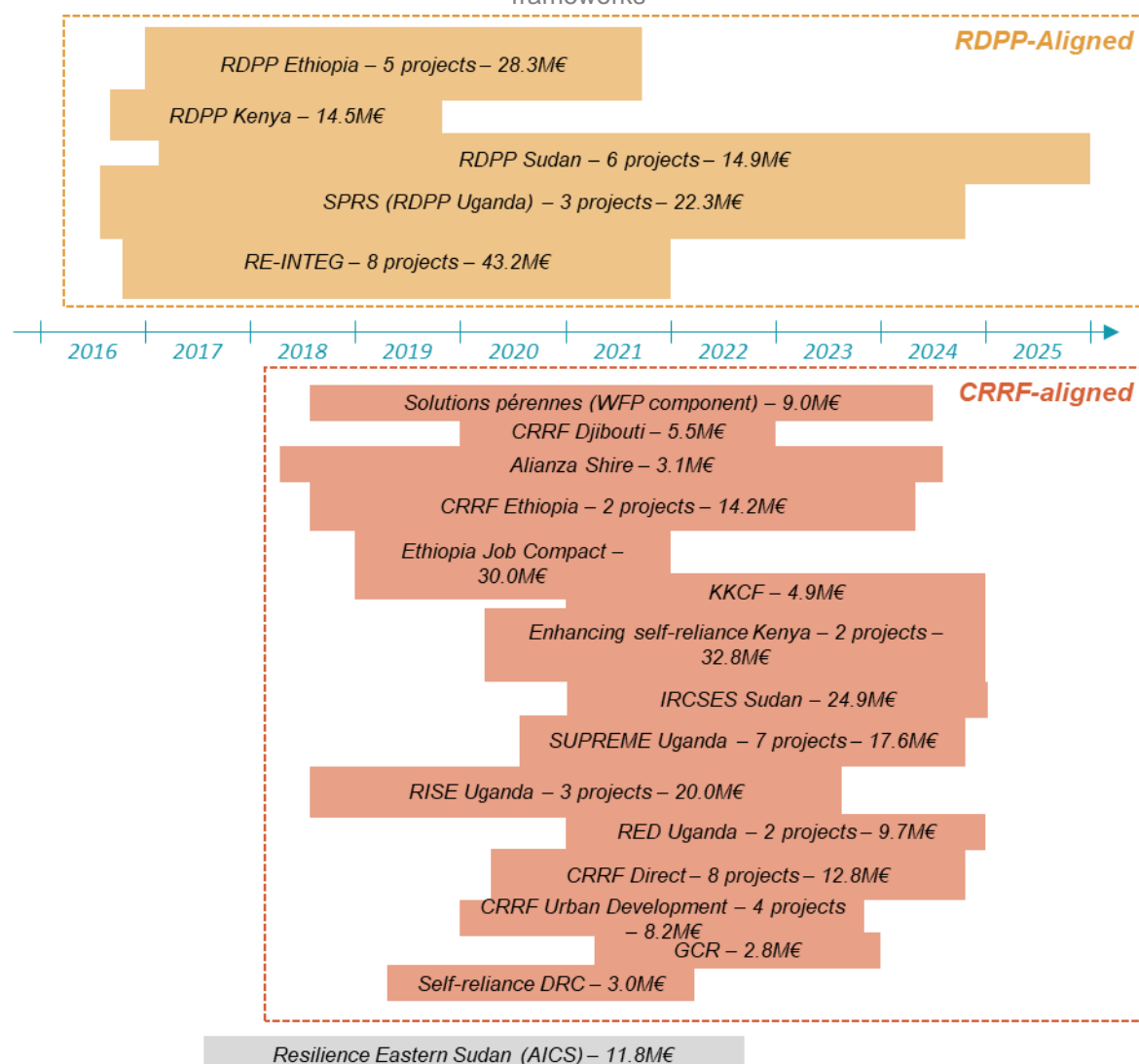
² The full list can be found in Annexes.

³ The 15 projects counted in this are shown in the Figure 8.

⁴ Capacity sharing is used to avoid using the formerly accepted formulation: ‘capacity-building’. This recognises a shift in thinking and language that is fundamental to work together to end poverty and move away from top-down approaches. Read more about this in Oxfam’s Inclusive Language Guide, [here](#).

focused on self-reliance for refugees in the countries that host them. This is to the exception of ten projects: the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda, which focused on resettlement, and nine projects (eight of which under the RE-INTEG programme¹ and one project in Burundi) focused on returns for refugees.² This case study concentrates on projects aimed at enhancing the self-reliance of refugees in their host countries.

Figure 11: EUTF-funded projects to support refugees' self-reliance and the RDPP and CRRF frameworks³



Despite the two identified phases of funding (RDPP followed by CRRF), it is crucial to highlight that EU programme managers do not recall any strategy, beyond that of the overall EUTF, that would have guided the design of CRRF-related projects under the EUTF.⁴ Funding was allocated based on considerations made at both **headquarters and delegation levels**, as well as national contexts in recipient countries. This explains some variations in the funding approaches: in **Sudan**, interventions

¹ The RE-INTEG programme or Enhancing Somalia's responsiveness to the management and reintegration of mixed migration flows programme (T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03) was implemented in Somalia. The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

² A case study on the ETM was published in 2021: MLS, 'Emergency Transit Mechanism', 2021. Retrieved [here](#). A Thematic Narrative on Durable Solutions covers the entire portfolio of the EUTF in support to GCR objectives.

³ Distinctions were made from the frameworks referred to in the description of action. Resilience Eastern Sudan is included in this analysis as certain components follow a CRRF-like approach, but neither the RDPP or the CRRF frameworks were mentioned as a key policy in the descriptions of action.

⁴ KIIs with different EU programme managers in Brussels and in the different countries of implementation.

were carried out in areas hosting displacement-affected communities without specifically targeting refugees or any other population. In **Uganda**, based on government recommendations, projects adhered to the “70-30 approach” whereby 30% of the participants of refugee-targeting projects should come from the host community. High staff turnover in the different EUDs poses a challenge to preserving institutional memory within the organisation. This makes it difficult to analyse strategies retrospectively.

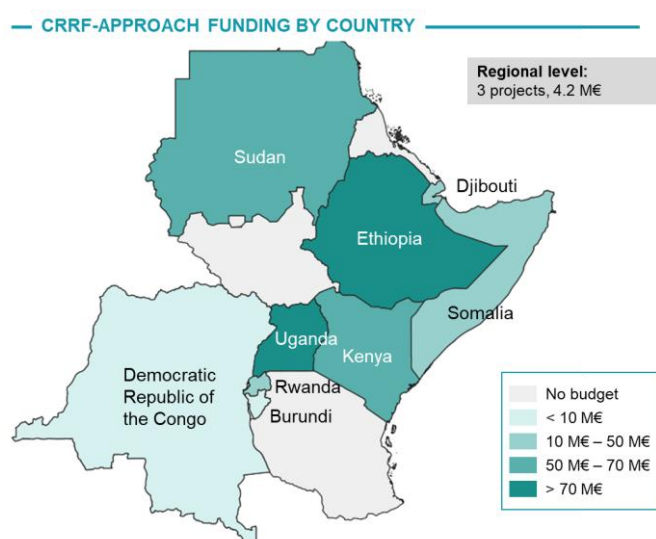
EUTF projects following the CRRF approach were implemented by **39 different partners**. The primary implementing partner of the EUTF for CRRF-related projects is UNHCR, which is responsible for implementing the CRRF, and executed ten projects in the HoA, accounting for 17% of the CRRF-related budget.

Figure 12: Main implementing partners of the EUTF for the CRRF



4.2. LOCATIONS OF EUTF'S SUPPORT TO THE CRRF

Figure 13: Funding per country



The geographical distribution of EUTF funding aligns with displacement patterns in the HoA. The main beneficiaries are **Ethiopia (79.4M€)**, **Uganda (76.2M€)**, **Kenya (52.2M€)** and **Sudan (51.6M€)**. Initially, funding was focused on the countries rolling out the CRRF – Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda. However, in the last years of funding, projects were signed to cover the Great Lakes region, to support returns to Burundi and as renewed conflicts in the DRC caused added displacements in the broader East African region.

The first case study found that funding had **disproportionately focused on camps and settlements** to the detriment of self-settled and urban refugees, who face unique vulnerabilities. Urban refugees are often regarded as less vulnerable than those living in camps. For instance, in Kenya, EU interlocutors observed a sometimes-inaccurate perception that urban refugees were already integrated and required less support than refugees in the camps. Nevertheless, starting in late 2019, the EUTF began the address urban refugee situations through the **CRRF Urban Development projects**.¹

¹ The CRRF: Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility programme (T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-67) is composed of four projects, implemented by ACAV, Cities Alliance, IRC, and the Koboko Municipal Council. The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

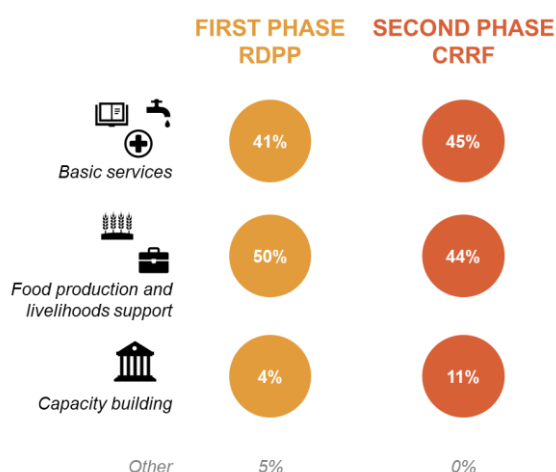
4.3. ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE EUTF

4.3.1. EVOLUTION OF ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE RDPP AND CRRF PHASES

Activities supported by the EUTF evolved over time. Throughout the duration of the Trust Fund, livelihood activities that promote self-reliance among target populations accounted for the largest share of funding, representing 46%.¹ The main evolution lies with the increase in policy support and capacity sharing over the years, as a small number of innovative projects aimed to support the inclusion of refugees in national plans and service provision systems.

RDPP projects were designed similarly across the region. One component, which makes up an estimated 41% of the RDPP projects' budgets, focused on delivering **basic services to refugees through “integrated service delivery”**. This approach involves strengthening service delivery with the aim to reach both refugees and the communities that host them. By improving the lives of host community members and alleviating stress on basic services, this approach fosters better relationships between refugees and their hosts. Additionally, this local integration strategy responds to increasing demands from governments for projects that support both national populations and refugees. On the other hand, in RDPP, **livelihood components** comprised 50% of the budgets, while only 4% were dedicated to strengthening national agencies and to policy.

Figure 14: Types of activities funded by the EUTF



The second phase of projects built on this established pattern while incorporating new approaches promoted in the CRRF. RDPP initiatives – such as training civil servants (e.g. teachers or health professionals) and rehabilitating infrastructure – continued under the CRRF phase, with the addition of new activities emphasising the integration of refugees into national systems. For instance, in **Kenya**, the second phase of the support to Kalobeyei included the registration and integration of schools and health centres within the camps within national systems. In **Djibouti**, the World Food Programme project *Solutions Pérennes* aimed to include refugees in the national social protection and health insurance schemes, while UNHCR trained refugee teachers for inclusion in the national education system, to teach in schools with both refugees and hosts. In **Sudan**, UNICEF initially planned to work with the Ministry of Education to include refugees in national education data collection, but this effort was interrupted by the 2021 coup d'état.

These activities were accompanied by a greater focus on advocacy and capacity sharing with local, national and regional authorities, which increased from 4% to 11% of the budget. **Despite this increase, most projects continued to adopt a ‘bottom-up’ approach, prioritising assistance to meet people’s needs**, sometimes without policy components to advocate for systemic change.

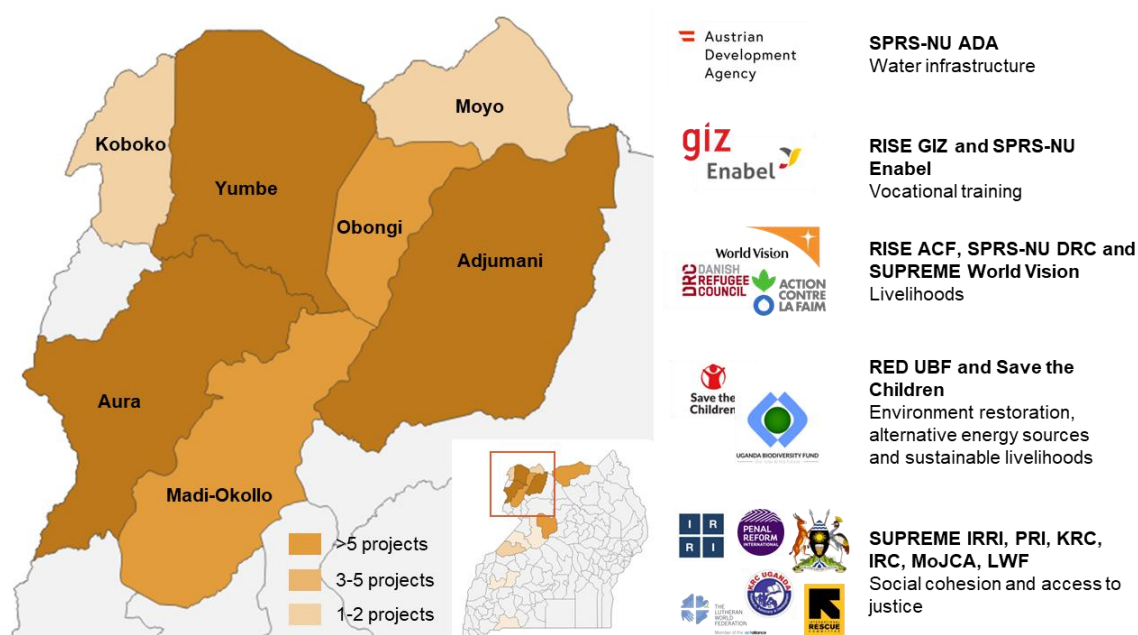
¹ In this section, only 60 projects are studied, excluding the ETM Rwanda.

Throughout both phases, **the focus on supporting livelihoods and income-generating activities remained consistent.** Activities included food production-related efforts (such as farming inputs and trainings), access to finance (like savings groups) and vocational training and entrepreneurship support.

4.3.2. FOCUS ON KENYA AND UGANDA

In Uganda, the EUTF-funded refugee projects primarily focused on the West Nile region, which hosts the majority of the country's refugee population. The EUTF supported 17 projects organised into five programmes in this area. A significant portion of the funding – over 65% of the budgets – was dedicated to activities aimed at **improving livelihoods and fostering self-reliance among the population.** These activities can be broadly categorised into two areas: 1) vocational training and entrepreneurship support; and 2) initiatives to enhance land productivity and provide farming assistance, including sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. The remaining activities were geared towards promoting social cohesion and access to justice, particularly through the Security, Protection and Economic Empowerment in Uganda (SUPREME) projects.¹ Additionally, water infrastructure construction and management was addressed through the Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU ADA).²

Figure 15: Projects implemented in West Nile, Uganda



In Kenya, the EUTF funded **four relevant projects**. Throughout the Trust Fund's lifespan, two phases of multi-actor projects were implemented: the RDPP,³ followed by the 'Enhancing self-reliance' project. The RDPP focused entirely on Kakuma/Kalobeyei, while the second phase expanded its efforts to Dadaab. Both phases aimed to support the Kalobeyei and later Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic development plans (KISED and GISED). This support included improving basic service delivery, facilitating the transition of services to national and county governments, and enhancing livelihoods for refugees in both refugee-hosting areas. The Enhancing Self-Reliance project also incorporated a

¹ The SUPREME programme (T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68) is composed of seven projects. Six of them focus on social cohesion and access to justice, while one focuses on livelihoods. The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

² The SPRS-NU programme (T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-07) was composed of three projects, implemented by consortia led by ADA, DRC and Enabel. The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

³ The Regional Development and Protection Programme in Kenya (RDPP - T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-17). The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

component for policy advocacy and one to support the Department of Refugee Services.¹ The third project, implemented by DRC,² focused specifically on livelihoods in Dadaab. Lastly, the Kalobeyei Kakuma Challenge Fund (KKCF), managed by IFC aims to support private sector expansion within the Kakuma/Kalobeyei refugee camps and create employment opportunities for both refugees and their host communities.

Figure 16: Projects implemented in Turkana and Garissa, Kenya



RDPP in Turkana
Improve access to health and education, food-security and nutrition, child protection



CRRF in Turkana and Dadaab
Skills and competencies for income generation, food security. Advocacy for policies



ABLI-G in Garissa
Self-reliance, livelihoods support and peacebuilding



KKCF in Turkana
Attract the private sector

¹ The Enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Kenya programme (T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-69). The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

² With the Norwegian Refugee Council and International Trade Centre as consortium partners.

5. EFFECTS AND BEST PRACTICES

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- EUTF-funded projects weighed on refugee programming debates by supporting alternatives to camps, integrated service delivery approaches, and more broadly deploying significant development funding to refugee-hosting settings. However, there are still gaps in knowledge to understand the impact of these changes.
- The EUTF had a catalyst role among practitioners especially by supporting actors to develop expertise in refugee-related and durable solutions programming. However, projects could have more significantly increased the inclusion of refugee-led organisations and national actors in programming to improve the effectiveness of interventions.
- Support to food production had positive effects, which partners believe to be sustainable, but which in some cases are limited by the lack of access to land or to irrigation for refugees.
- The inclusion of refugees into national systems for service delivery is limited by the institutional and financial capacity of governments and many partners had to limit themselves to infrastructure construction when supporting basic service delivery.
- EUTF-funded projects worked to support refugees' livelihoods, often complementing humanitarian aid with the aim of building resilience. However, in such fragile contexts, faced with shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic, and the reduction in food rations, many refugees are using additional income obtained as a result of project activities to cover their basic needs, without being yet able to build their resilience.
- A small share of EUTF funding (9%), focused on supporting advocacy and capacity sharing. While some national and regional-level interventions contributed to policy change, this support was most successful at the local level.
- While the EUTF supported projects aimed at improving the situation of refugees, sustainability of these interventions is difficult to reach not only because of the fragility of programmes' achievements, especially in the face of external shocks, but also because government agencies and the private sector are not yet able to fully assume key societal roles in refugee-hosting areas.

5.1. CONTRIBUTIONS TO REFUGEE PROGRAMMING DEBATES

The EUTF received praise for its support to integrated service delivery, which started before the adoption of the CRRF. In Kenya, the EUTF made significant contributions to the **development of Kalobeyi and its integrated approach**. Although interest in the settlement strategy pre-dates the Trust Fund, the EU's support and funding were crucial in launching the project and securing the support of the Kenyan government and other donors.¹ The EU's long-term funding also enabled implementing agencies to expand this innovative approach to Dadaab. In Dadaab, the EUTF supported the GISEDIP as well as the integration of refugees and hosts in Garissa through the DRC-implemented *Area Based Livelihood Initiative in Garissa* (ABLI-G)² which was a pilot project with similar integration goals to the Kalobeyi-based projects. A second phase of ABLI-G and a third phase of the Enhancing Self-Reliance are now funded under other EU instruments.³

¹ KII with implementing partners in Kenya.

² The Area-based Livelihoods Initiative Garissa (ABLI-G): enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Garissa County project (T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-69-01) is implemented by DRC in Kenya.

³ KII with an implementing partner in Kenya.

The EUTF also supported urban refugees and facilitated the creation of spaces to discuss specific issues affecting them. The Cities Alliance component of the CRRF Urban Development project highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by urban refugees and the dynamics in cities that host them.¹ The ‘Sustainable integration of displaced communities in Sub-Saharan Africa’ project, a continuation of the EUTF-funded initiative funded through the EU’s Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument Global Europe (NDICI), aims to build on the shifts in attitudes initiated by Cities Alliance so far. Cities Alliance indicates that local authorities’ perspectives evolved thanks to the dialogues set up by the project, with mayors recognising that integrating refugees and adapting city planning might be a better option than hosting refugees in camps.² Further information about the CRRF Urban Development as an innovative approach can be found in the Case Study on the support project to the Koboko municipality. The EU also supported research on urban refugees through its Research and Evidence Facility project, which published a study on asylum in urban settings in Uganda.³

However, significant knowledge gaps remain regarding **the impact of these innovative approaches.** For instance, while Uganda’s refugee policies are often praised as exemplary, **data on how exactly policies affect programming and refugee self-reliance is limited.**⁴ Anecdotal evidence suggests that refugees in Uganda tend to have (slightly) better living situations than those in Kenya, where encampment policies are still in place.⁵ Refugees in Uganda may appear marginally less dependent on assistance than their counterparts in Kenya: for instance, UNHCR’s funding requirements for 2024 show that funding needs per refugees amount to 213\$ in Uganda compared to 266\$ in Kenya.⁶ Nonetheless, 60% of refugees in the West Nile region continue to live below the poverty line compared to 30% of the host community.⁷ In Turkana, 68% of refugees live below the poverty line, compared to 72% of the host community in immediate surroundings.⁸ Even at the government level, officials in Uganda expressed concern about their inability to assess whether policies or activities were effective, stating that organisations do not share enough information for them to make informed assessments.⁹ The EUTF, which funded 22 projects totalling 126.1M€ in both countries, **could have facilitated greater knowledge production to better understand the nuances of the impact of the self-reliance approach in Uganda compared to its neighbours.** This information could in turn support various actors in their policy advocacy efforts.

As observed by the MLS in monitoring reports over the years, **outcome data from EUTF projects is often lacking or of poor quality** and CRRF-related projects are no exception. When outcome data is available, it typically focuses on specific activities and outputs rather than on outcomes and overall vulnerability situations (now referred to as self-reliance).¹⁰ Projects often lack a comprehensive understanding of how participants rely on assistance and how this dependence evolves throughout project implementation, which can **limit evidence-building on the types of activities that best support self-reliance and the ability to learn from and replicate best practices.**

¹ KII with EUD in Kenya.

² KII with an implementing partner.

³ REF, ‘Asylum in urban spaces: the case of refugees in cities in Uganda’, 2022. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ HPG, ‘The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Uganda’, September 2019.

⁵ Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement, ‘Refugee Economies in Uganda: What Difference Does the Self-Reliance Model Make?’, 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ UNHCR, ‘Funding updates: Kenya & Uganda’, January and February 2024. Retrieved [here](#) and [here](#).

⁷ World Bank, ‘Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda: Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey’, 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

⁸ UNHCR, ‘After three decades, how are refugees in Kenya’s Kakuma refugee camp faring?’, 2021. Retrieved [here](#).

⁹ KII with authorities in Uganda.

¹⁰ Throughout the EUTF portfolio, only two projects have data on outcomes that mention self-reliance (RE-INTEG UNHCR in Somalia and the regional BORESHA project).

5.2. EFFECTS ON MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition to fostering innovative approaches, the EUTF acted as a catalyst for practitioners. The Trust Fund helped various stakeholders develop expertise in refugee and durable solutions programming. However, it could have been more proactive in including refugee-led organisations and other groups whose voices are rarely heard.

5.2.1. THE EUTF AS A CATALYST FOR OTHER PRACTITIONERS

5.2.1.1. EU and other donors

One significant effect of the EUTF was internal: in some countries, **the Trust Fund encouraged EU development teams to begin directing funding towards displacement situations.** In Rwanda, prior to the EUTF, all funding for refugees was channelled through European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), despite the protracted nature of the displacement crisis in the country. Rwanda currently hosts 135,000 refugees, most of whom were displaced in 2015.¹ A similar situation was reported in Burundi, Kenya and Uganda, where displacement-related programming was entirely funded by ECHO before the EUTF. In all three countries, the EUDs anticipate that the momentum to address forced displacement through development funds will continue past the EUTF.² The EUTF also laid the groundwork for EUD teams, reinforced by additional, EUTF-funded resources,³ to discuss the inclusion of refugees within regular programming. This means that refugees in the future would benefit from other EU programmes beyond those specifically targeting displacement, such as employment initiatives.

Respondents believe that the EUTF also acted as a catalyst for increased funding from EU member states. In Kenya, the Danish and Dutch governments reportedly increased their development funding dedicated to refugee contexts following the Trust Fund's engagement.⁴ One respondent noted that this catalyst effect arises from competition between member states: "when one of the member states goes, the others follow".⁵

5.2.1.2. Supporting UNHCR in its role coordinating CRRF implementation

EUTF support enabled UNHCR **to enhance its capacities in durable solutions and self-reliance** to a certain extent. Tasked in the New York Declaration with organising and coordinating the implementation of the CRRF, UNHCR is the primary implementer of EUTF CRRF-related funds. In the DRC, EUTF funding enabled the agency to implement development-aligned activities in refugee settings for the first time. Staff working on the 'Self-reliance of South Sudanese refugees in the DRC' project reported that they gained new skills and knowledge to conduct development-oriented activities. EUTF funds also allowed the agency to deploy development-focused field teams. In Kenya, UNHCR works in consortia with other United Nations agencies on EUTF-funded projects. Through this experience, the agency built its coordination skills: UNHCR now reportedly holds regular talks with UN-Habitat outside of project needs and has gained more and more experience with engaging local governments.⁶

However, **significant challenges remain before UNHCR can fully embrace its role coordinating programming for CRRF implementation.** The principal issue is the misalignment between the

¹ UNHCR, 'Country operational portal: Rwanda', accessed in June 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² KIIs with EUD representatives.

³ The Trust Fund regulation provided for fees to contract operational managers in Brussels and in each EUTF eligible country. In addition, depending on the size of the financial support from the EUTF to a country, the EUDs received funds to reinforce the teams of Contract & Finance units, to deal with EUTF projects and contracts.

⁴ KIIs with EUD representatives.

⁵ KII with an implementing partner.

⁶ KIIs with implementing partners.

programming tools and funding mechanisms of development and humanitarian organisations. While the EUTF disburses funds for specific projects based on activities and objectives established over several years, UNHCR typically relies on annual operational budgets tied to yearly funding appeals and activity plans. This discrepancy led to numerous inefficiencies, including reporting and accountability issues. All interviewed EUDs noted that reporting from UNHCR was systematically late or insufficient. In Kenya, UNHCR occasionally reported on activities not funded by the Trust Fund or used EUTF funds for partner agreements, making it difficult to distinguish between EUTF and country operational funding. In Djibouti, the EUD is reportedly initiating an audit of the funds allocated to UNHCR, as they struggled to track the purposes for which the funds were disbursed. Communication breakdowns also occurred: in Ethiopia, UNHCR and the EUD stopped direct interactions with the agency only communicating with the EU headquarters in Brussels. Additionally, differences in human resourcing between development and humanitarian organisations present challenges. Indeed, UNHCR has limited ability to hire managers for specific projects, leaving the EU without stable interlocutors for following up on project performance or reporting. Some respondents even noted that they sometimes limited their collaboration with UNHCR as a result of these challenges.¹

UNHCR is working to adapt its tools and methods and bolster its capabilities to implement the CRRF. Since 2022, coordination with development actors is one of UNHCR's strategic directives.² The agency launched a new result-based management system (COMPASS) and started developing multi-year programming in specific countries to encourage long-term planning. UNHCR also created new positions such as Development Officers dedicated to coordinating with host governments and development donors.³ A 2023 evaluation of the UNHCR's humanitarian-development efforts found that the agency invested in increasing its capacity for data analysis and collecting data relevant to development programming.⁴ Other donors are also stepping up to support UNHCR's transition: for instance, the German cooperation agency GIZ⁵ is currently implementing a programme specifically aimed at "supporting UNHCR in facilitating the operationalisation of the GCR in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus".⁶

5.2.1.3. Develop new expertise to support refugees' self-reliance

In line with the CRRF requirement to support a multi-stakeholder approach and building on its position at the intersection of humanitarian and development efforts, the Trust Fund enabled partners to **enhance their expertise in self-reliance and development programming for refugees.**

The EUTF's support provided IPs with the opportunity to begin working in refugee settings. In Kenya, the EUTF's involvement in KISEDIP marked the first time the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) worked in refugee camps. The long-term funding allowed the agency to build up their expertise: during the first phase FAO was uncertain about how to integrate their development experience into a multi-agency approach and primarily focused on trainings. In the second phase, they expanded their activities to equipment distribution and the development of an agri-business strategy.⁷

Other organisations had engaged in displacement settings prior to the EUTF's involvement but leveraged **EUTF funding to enhance their efforts.** Cities Alliance initially included refugees in its initiatives under a Swiss Development Cooperation grant. However, the EUTF's support made

¹ KIIs with EUD representatives.

² UNHCR, 'UNHCR's strategy on engaging development actors', 2022. Retrieved [here](#).

³ UNHCR, 'Development Officer Profile', accessed in June 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ UNHCR, 'UNHCR's Engagement in Humanitarian-Development Cooperation Post-2021: How to Stay the Course', July 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit.

⁶ GIZ, 'Support to UNHCR in facilitating the operationalisation of the Global Compact on Refugees in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus – Project factsheet', 2022. Retrieved [here](#).

⁷ KII with an implementing partner.

displacement a core thematic for the organisation, to be mainstreamed in all interventions.¹ Similarly, UN-Habitat began working in Kakuma in 2015, as a sub-contractor for a UNHCR initiative funded by the Government of Japan. The EUTF funding for the second phase of KISED (EUTF project Enhancing Self-Reliance) allowed UN-Habitat to become an equal partner to the UNHCR and participate in strategic decision-making.² The agency developed new expertise in urban planning for integrated settlements and plans to continue engaging with this topic beyond the EUTF through the World Bank-funded Kenya Urban Support Programme in Kakuma and Dadaab.³ The partnership between UN-Habitat and UNHCR to address urban planning in camps and settlements has now been extended to Uganda, Ethiopia⁴ and Bangladesh.⁵

The EUTF also helped traditionally humanitarian organisations to start implementing development activities. In Garissa, DRC was viewed primarily as a humanitarian actor. Through the ABLI-G project, the EUTF was able to support the intensification of the organisation's development activities in Dadaab. DRC now focuses on enhancing self-reliance and applying a systems approach to development activities. World Vision in Uganda noted that EUTF support enabled the organisation to associate development and humanitarian approaches in contexts of mixed displacement (new and protracted). In Kenya, EUTF support to World Food Programme (WFP) initiated a shift towards development approaches. For the first time, the agency implemented long-term irrigation and farming activities. The sustained funding in Kenya (across two phases in Kakuma/Kalobeyei) allowed the WFP team to learn and adapt over time. For instance, the initial structures for the horticultural farms in Kalobeyei were too fragile to withstand the winds, prompting the construction of stronger, reinforced structures thereafter. These new activities also helped WFP develop their teams' capacities on development approaches. In a project financed by the EUTF, WFP created a position dedicated to development activities and hired a field team specialising on refugee self-reliance.⁶

5.2.2. LIMITED LOCALISATION EFFORT

The EUTF does not seem to follow a localisation strategy. Only two national organisations feature among the 39 partners supported in CRRF-related EUTF funding. In Uganda, two projects were implemented by national non-governmental organisations (NGOs): the Response to Environmental Degradation (RED)⁷ project implemented by the Uganda Biodiversity Fund (UBF)⁸ and the SUPREME project implemented by the Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC). The EUTF grant was significant for UBF and allowed it to expand its operations to refugee-hosting areas and to develop its monitoring capacities.⁹ The second NGO, KRC is also based in Uganda and implemented social cohesion activities. Together, these two projects account for 5.2M € of CRRF-related funding, or 2% of relevant funding. The fact that these two projects were funded in Uganda may be explained by a belief among EUD staff that the EUTF enabled them to directly fund smaller national organisations they would not have been able to fund with other instruments. However, it is unclear why the team believed so, as the rules governing EUTF contracts were not more flexible in allowing managers to award projects to smaller organisations compared to other funding options.

Despite the CRRF's recommendations, there were limited opportunities for the EUTF to **engage with civil society or refugee-led organisations. In addition, the voices of refugees and other**

¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² KII with an implementing partner.

³ KII with an EUD representative.

⁴ UN-Habitat, 'Kebribeyah Settlement Profile. Somali Region, Ethiopia', July 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ KII with an implementing partner.

⁶ KIIs with implementing partners.

⁷ The Response to Increased Environmental Degradation and Promotion of Alternative Energy Sources in Refugee Hosting Districts (RED, T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-83) included two projects, implemented by UBF and Save the Children. The programme page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

⁸ At the head of a consortia including other national organisations.

⁹ KII with an implementing partner in Uganda.

participants were not systematically included in projects' design, which limits the positive impact of activities on the lives of project participants who are not adequately involved.¹ This finding aligns with the earlier CRRF case study where the MLS noted that, in some cases, **refugees and host communities felt like passive participants in project design**. On several occasions, project stakeholders, including local authorities, refugees and host community members, felt they had had a limited role in the conception or design of activities they benefitted from. In one case, some project participants reported not being able to choose the seeds they were given to grow. In another, recipients of goats were left confused as to why they received only male goats and did not understand the objective of the activity they benefitted from.² In Ethiopia, the EUD indicated that the RDPP programme's activities were designed following "just a one-week visit", which included limited participation from the intended beneficiaries and EUD staff. This lack of thorough stakeholder engagement was cited as a downside of the EUTF's emergency and flexible nature, which requires rapid turnarounds.³ In contrast, UN-Habitat, which was given the necessary time to design land use plans and regeneration strategies for the Kakuma/Kalobeyi and Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya, was mentioned as a good example of participatory approach. Community leaders were involved in developing these plans through a participatory approach, which is expected to enhance ownership and acceptance among the local population when the plans are implemented.

Host governments and other relevant institutions do not seem to have been systematically involved in the design of projects. In Uganda, institutions responsible for organising refugee-hosting efforts expressed disappointment over their lack of involvement in project design and their limited awareness of initiatives as they were being implemented. This limited involvement may reduce the potential effects of these activities. In Ethiopia, the mayor of Assosa was not formally associated to the CRRF Urban Development project. Unlike the Koboko component, where the municipality received the grant directly, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) acted as the implementing partner in Ethiopia. The project's final report highlighted a "weak participation and support" from the town administration, resulting in displacement issues not being prioritised or included in local development plans.⁴ This may have undermined both the effectiveness and the sustainability of the intervention. Although the GCR-IGAD project⁵ supported the IGAD Support Platform, the Platform itself was not involved in any other EUTF projects, despite its goal of facilitating and coordinating technical and financial support for forcibly displaced individuals.^{6,7}

The engagement of refugees and host communities in the implementation of activities, as community-based trainers or facilitators, appears to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions. In Uganda, many projects relied on community-based workers to conduct trainings and provide ongoing coaching to beneficiaries. These workers, who were either refugees or hosts, were praised by most project participants. In some cases, they continued to offer advice even after the project ended. For example, community-based facilitators hired by GIZ in West Nile continued to support former project participants and are now compensated directly by them. In contrast, interventions led by consultants faced challenges due to a lack of local knowledge. In West Nile, the RED project implemented by UBF amended its activities to include refugee beneficiaries after the project had already started. UBF, based in Kampala, needed to conduct these activities themselves (rather than through consortium members with a local presence) and chose to hire a consultant to help

¹ International Journal of Project Management, 'Beneficiary participation is an imperative, not an option, but does it really work in international development projects?', January 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² FGDs with project participants in West Nile and in Turkana.

³ KII with EUD representative.

⁴ IRC, 'Final Evaluation Report of Promoting Inclusive Urban Development Project in Assosa Town', March 2023.

⁵ The 'Delivering durable solutions to forced displacement in the IGAD region through the implementation of the global compact on refugees' project, (T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-80-01) is referred to as GCR-IGAD project. The project page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

⁶ KIIs with implementing partners and government officials.

⁷ IGAD Support Platform, 'Objectives', accessed in June 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

find land and train refugees in sustainable land management. Unfortunately, in one of the locations, the rocky terrain is unsuitable for farming, and no irrigation is available for the beneficiaries to use.

As the use of community-based workers increases, issues may arise regarding compensation. Organisations in Uganda do not appear to follow standardised payment amounts for these community-based staff.¹ Payment among EUTF projects varied between 100,000 Ugandan Shillings (UGX) and 800,000 UGX per month (25€ to 200€) with no clear differences in experience, training or skills among the staff. This could impact the projects' cost-efficiency and implementation, leading to market distortions and detrimental competition among implementing organisations.

5.3. EFFECTS ON REFUGEE AND HOSTS SELF-RELIANCE

Interventions funded by the EUTF aimed to enhance the well-being of refugees and their self-reliance, especially in a context of decreased funding. These initiatives focused on **meeting the basic needs of the population**, increasing **livelihood opportunities** and fostering an **environment conducive to resilience and self-sufficiency**.

The projects funded by the EUTF demonstrate that **a path to self-reliance is achievable**, providing valuable lessons that could potentially be replicated. However, when **specifically assessing self-reliance outcomes, the results remain modest** compared to the level of funding provided. Limited numbers of beneficiaries could thrive without additional support, raising concerns about the sustainability of interventions, especially given the heightened vulnerabilities caused by external shocks, such as food ration cuts or climate-related disasters.

This section primarily examines projects implemented in Kenya and Uganda, although other relevant projects are mentioned.

5.3.1. MEETING BASIC NEEDS

EUTF projects emphasised structural support for basic services and food production rather than direct aid provision. Support for food production yielded positive effects that partners believe to be sustainable, though in some cases they are hindered by refugee's limited access to land and irrigation. Also, the inclusion of refugees into national systems for service delivery is restricted by the institutional and financial capacities of governments. Limited in their possible support to these expanded national systems, many partners focused primarily on infrastructure construction.

5.3.1.1. Food production

Due to a decrease in donor funding, **WFP had to reconsider its approach to food distribution, thereby significantly impacting the context in which EUTF-funded projects operate**. By the end of 2023, WFP had implemented reductions "in size and scope of life-saving food, cash and nutrition assistance" across all countries included in this study.² As the main source of in-kind and cash support to refugee households, the ration cuts have inflicted a devastating blow to refugees' resilience and are causing major changes to development programming. In Uganda, WFP established a categorisation system whereby refugees receive different rations based on their vulnerability levels. However, due to funding limitations, they can now provide the highest rations to only 14% of the refugee population, down from the initially targeted 25%.³ Similarly, WFP in Kenya began moving towards a differentiated assistance approach.⁴ Partners had to adapt to the impacts of this significant shift as **the pressure to**

¹ One guidance note exists to establish a minimum compensation amount for community-based volunteers on health topics. Ministry of health Uganda, 'Village Health Team', 2010.

² The New Humanitarian, 'What WFP cuts mean for people in hunger crises around the world', December 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

³ The New Humanitarian, 'How a WFP food aid revamp has gone wrong for refugees in Uganda', December 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ This refers to the provision of varying amounts of rations according to refugees' vulnerability. KII with the WFP in Kenya.

feed both refugees and host communities has increased, jeopardising projects aimed at fostering self-reliance. EUTF-funded projects primarily focused on enhancing agricultural production on available land, particularly in Kenya and Uganda.

Upon arrival, refugees in Uganda are allocated plots within refugee settlements. However, the quality of these plots varies and they are too small. While it is generally accepted that a household requires one to two acres of land to achieve self-sufficiency, most refugees only have access to 0.5 acres.¹ **EUTF-funded projects aimed to increase the productivity of these small plots** in accordance with Uganda's GRF pledges,² by providing training and distributing improved seeds or seeds of newly introduced crops, such as soy, rice and sunflower which were not widely grown before.³

Picture 1: Line planting and trenches on refugee plot in Bidi Bidi



Picture 2: Line planting and trenches on host plot in Terego



At baseline, selected farmers who participated in the RISE GIZ project **used low-quality seeds and had limited knowledge of good agricultural practices.** As a result, the project was able to make significant progress through relatively basic training sessions.⁴ RISE GIZ interventions helped improve 13,336 farmers' income from the sale of agricultural production from less than 300,000 UGX a year to 4.7M UGX (~75€ to 1,200€).⁵ The RISE ACF⁶ project trained farmers on the Optimised Land Use Model, and found that 71% of its trainees produced enough food for both consumption and sale, up from a baseline of 0%.⁷

Meanwhile, the RED UBF project focused on training **farmers in specific climate-smart agricultural practices and sustainable land management techniques.** Simple adjustments such as digging trenches to retain water at the edges of fields or implementing line-planting resulted in higher yields for farmers.⁸

Beneficiaries expressed appreciation for their newly acquired skills, noting that these **techniques had led to increased revenues.**

Before this GIZ project, life was so challenging for us. Since we came from South Sudan we were struggling. When this project came and our group was selected, we were trained in good agricultural practices. We have now expanded to large scale productions and now our families are free from food insecurity, and we can now afford all basic needs of our homes.

Candire Farmers Group, Adjumani

¹ HPG, 'The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Uganda', September 2019.

² Global Compact on Refugees, 'Pledges and contributions', all pledges as of 30 January 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

³ GIZ 'Endline Survey Report – RISE Component 3', January 2023.

⁴ FGDs with participants in RISE GIZ activities.

⁵ When adjusted for inflation. GIZ 'Endline Survey Report – RISE Component 3', January 2023.

⁶ *Action contre la faim*.

⁷ ACF, 'Endline evaluation study report for response to increased demand on government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE) project', August 2023.

⁸ KIIs with participants in RED UBF activities.

The RED UBF project employed two approaches to share and showcase new practices. Some farmers were trained to implement new techniques on their own land, which became demonstration sites for neighbouring farmers to visit and learn about climate-smart techniques.¹ In addition, the project established demonstration sites accessible to groups of farmers who could collectively try out the new techniques. However, **members of these groups had less ownership over the demonstration sites that were not on their land.** They needed to be compensated by the project for their time spent working on these sites, as it prevented them from cultivating their own plots.² This lack of ownership may hinder the long-term sustainability of the activity.

In Kenya, where refugees live in settlements, personal farming plots, when available, are usually very small. As a result, partners developed common farming areas, where **different farmers can work on individual plots.** The camps of Dadaab and Kakuma/Kalobeyei face significant water scarcity, making farming difficult. In Dadaab, the ABLI-G project established demonstration farms to train farmers in agricultural techniques that require limited water. These farms also provided farmers with plots equipped with drip-line irrigation. While the number of participants and the scale of these efforts is limited,³ farmers who participated reported that they could use the money made from selling vegetables to help meet their basic needs.⁴

Picture 3: Drip-irrigation in demonstration site in Dadaab



Picture 4: Sunken beds in demonstration site in Dadaab



The creation of common farming areas allows for the scaling up of agricultural activities, especially when significant infrastructure investment is necessary. In Kalobeyei, WFP and FAO constructed water pans, along with three horticultural and three open-field farms. Water from seasonal rivers is collected in these water pans and pumped into the farms. With irrigation, farmers can grow food for their own consumption. Those with more resources and time can transition their operations from subsistence to commercial farming by growing more labour-intensive and investment-heavy vegetables, which they can sell to increase their income. According to WFP, after a few weeks, beneficiaries who were selected but uninterested in farming dropped out, leaving committed farmers with larger plots that they progressively turned into more lucrative businesses.

Partners noted that efforts made through successive EUTF-funded interventions helped change the mindset from **small-scale farming as a supplement to food rations to larger scale food production that fully addresses basic food needs.** Support for larger block farming (5-10 acres) is reportedly becoming more common among projects, moving away from a previous focus on kitchen gardens. Improvements in irrigation infrastructure by WFP show that farming can be done at a larger scale. While

¹ KIs with supported farmers, West Nile.

² FGDs with demonstration sites management committees, West Nile.

³ IBF, 'Ex-post Evaluation for the EU Trust Fund Regional Development and Protection Programme in Kenya', May 2022.

⁴ FGDs with farmers in the horticultural farms, Kalobeyei, Turkana.

self-reliance improved for some beneficiaries, partners lament that the investment required to sustain this limited improvement is substantial.¹

Picture 5: Water pan in Kalobeyei



Picture 6: Horticultural farm in Kalobeyei



Training farmers also had positive incidental effects in the intervention areas. First, trained farmers were able to share their newly acquired skills with others. Additionally, due to increased revenues, some farmers were able to rent additional land, either collectively or individually, thereby expanding their production capacity.² In Kakuma and Kalobeyei, which operate within a somewhat closed market, the RDPP Learning Evaluation Team reported in 2021 that the rise in farming blocks and kitchen gardens had lowered vegetable costs.³

The knowledge imparted to farmers during training also has long-term benefits. All beneficiaries interviewed in Uganda indicated they would continue to apply the skills they had learned. Some beneficiaries mentioned they would be able to use these skills upon their return to South Sudan. The RISE ACF project concluded in July 2023 and interviews with project participants in May 2024 suggest that the benefits of the training have lasting effects. Beneficiaries also noted they intended to buy seeds in the future using the proceeds from their previous yields, indicating a growing self-reliance compared to farmers who have to rely on seed distributions.⁴

My household food intake has improved we no longer depend on the World Food Program for food anymore and my family has enough food for feeding everyone.

Refugee participant in the ACF project in Arua, Uganda

However, the support needed to maintain common farms and irrigation infrastructure, combined with the lack of exit strategies for certain activities, limits the self-reliance of farmers in Kenya. Thanks to continuous funding from the EU to WFP and FAO in Kalobeyei, WFP was able to repair or improve infrastructure where needed. However, two water pans for open-field farms collapsed during the floods of April-May 2024 in Kenya and are non-functional. WFP plans to repair these with phase three funding, which is provided by NDICI. Additionally, the nets need to be replaced every three years, and WFP also hopes to address this under phase three funding. The required involvement of the partner in maintenance, combined with the absence of an exit strategy to cover these costs in the long term, is hindering the sustainability of the project investments and the self-reliance of farmers. Users of the farms pay a monthly fee to cover salaries for security guards and water operators. In Kalobeyei Village 1, farmers have undertaken their own repair work on a damaged water pan intake. However, many farmers may not be able to contribute enough to cover substantial repairs and maintenance of the infrastructure.

¹ KII with implementing partners in Kenya.

² FGDs and KIIs with participants in UBF and World Vision activities.

³ RDPP LET, 'RDPP in Kenya (Kalobeyei): Endline assessment', April 2021.

⁴ KIIs and FGDs with project participants in West Nile.

To scale-up farming practices, refugees encounter structural challenges related to land access.

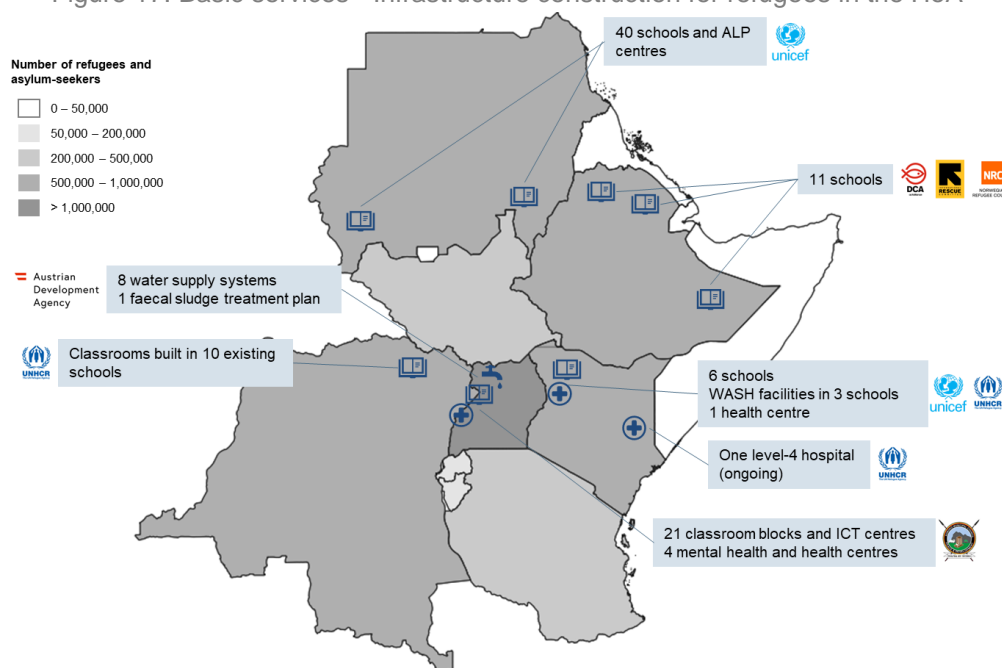
Among the ACF beneficiaries in Uganda, 71% improved their food consumption and sales; however, this figure represented 90% of the beneficiaries of the host communities but only 58% of the refugees. This discrepancy highlights the challenges faced by refugee farmers in accessing land. UBF also faced challenges in securing land for demonstration sites in and around refugee settlements. Landowners sometimes offered plots of poor quality, that were filled with rocks. Some partners noted that landowners would rent this land to refugees in hopes that they would clean it and increase its value, only to terminate the lease afterward. In Kalobyei, refugees are not permitted to leave the camps, and over-crowding has led to families settling on areas designated for farming. Attracting host community members to farming plots to support the diversification of their otherwise pastoral livelihoods has also proved difficult. In both Kalobyei and Dadaab most host community members stopped coming, as farms were established within the refugee camps.

Finally, scaling up farming efforts in both countries will require improved access to water. In Uganda, while irrigation was recognised as a challenge, it was not prioritised. Few projects in Uganda focused on irrigation, even though partners acknowledged it as a crucial factor for increasing food production.¹ ACF had planned to assist farmers with small-scale irrigation but encountered limitations due to a lack of water sources.² In Kenya, farmers with existing farms rely on water from boreholes in addition to water pans, especially when rainfall is insufficient. Expanding farmland will necessitate greater water access, which could involve options currently discussed, such as digging more boreholes, implementing effective desalination methods for saline groundwater or constructing a dam.

5.3.1.2. Basic services

Projects sought to deliver basic services through long-term, sustainable activities, moving away from the traditional humanitarian approach often used in refugee contexts. Throughout the region, partners worked to build infrastructure that could benefit both refugees and host communities, significantly impacting the lives of people in catchment areas.

Figure 17: Basic services - Infrastructure construction for refugees in the HoA



¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² ACF, 'Endline evaluation study report for response to increased demand on government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE) project', August 2023.

In Uganda, the proportion of the refugee population using piped water increased from 10% at baseline to 77% at the end of the SPRS-NU ADA project in November 2020.¹ In the DRC, UNHCR focused on adding classrooms to existing host schools, to facilitate the integration of refugees into local structures.² In Dadaab, UNHCR is constructing a level-4 sub county hospital (primary facility), which is planned to serve 700,000 people. In Kakuma/Kalobeyei, WFP equipped one borehole to provide water for farms and consumption.

Other projects also aimed to make existing infrastructures more sustainable. In Kalobeyei and Kakuma, UNHCR built water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools serving both host and refugee populations. One of the visited schools was paying 40,000 Kenyan Shillings (KES, ~290€) per week for water deliveries. UNHCR constructed a water tank and installed solar pumps, enabling the school to store and use water from boreholes. In Uganda, RED Save the Children provided schools with energy-saving cookstoves, which helped reduce reliance on firewood, that children previously had to collect.³ Save the Children also supported the construction of individual cookstoves, resulting in significant changes in energy provision within households. By reducing users' smoke inhalation, these cookstoves have significant health benefits, in addition to allowing households to spend less money and time on firewood. One beneficiary reported that she had divided by four the amount of time per month she had to fetch wood.⁴

Picture 7: Cookstove in a school in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement



Picture 8: Cookstove in an individual house in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement



However, the impact and sustainability of these interventions are limited by government capacities that were not systematically strengthened. Government takeover of operation and maintenance costs is hampered by limited national budgets and a lack of foresight regarding these challenges in exit strategies. The SPRS-NU ADA project was implemented through the North – Umbrella for Water and Sanitation, an agency of Uganda's Water and Environment Ministry. This institution was strengthened to collect water tariffs, but the rates were based on what refugees could afford rather than the needs of the agency, resulting in insufficient funds to cover operation and maintenance costs. By the end of the project, while collection was 75% successful, it did not generate enough revenue for the institution to break even. Consequently, the government or the utility was expected to subsidise part of the cost, especially in the absence of a differentiated or progressive tariff structure (such as social tariffs for the first 15 litres per day per person).⁵ By June 2024, three years after the project's conclusion, the North – Umbrella for Water and Sanitation phone lines were

¹ ADA, 'End of project evaluation of the water, sanitation and hygiene component of the Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and host communities in Northern Uganda', March 2021.

² KII with an implementing partner.

³ Visit of a school, discussion with school cook.

⁴ FGD with participants in Save the Children activities.

⁵ ADA, 'End of project evaluation of the water, sanitation and hygiene component of the Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and host communities in Northern Uganda', March 2021.

disconnected, with anticipated declines in service delivery for both host and refugee communities. In Kakuma/Kalobeyei, some bathrooms built by UNHCR in schools were damaged by floods in April-May 2024 and by July, the ministry of Education had not yet repaired them.

Sometimes, differing standards and poor coordination hinder effective handover. Authorities in Uganda noted that they often become involved only at the project's end, when sustainability concerns arise. This lack of early involvement means they are made aware of infrastructure they should be including in their budgets only after the fact. Additionally, partners sometimes fail to align on civil servant salaries, which limits staff retention after handover. In Kakuma, UNHCR completed a Huduma/Biashara centre intended to host government and county services. Although the infrastructure is finished, services have yet to establish permanent staff there, in part due to a shortage of civil servants to manage this new service point.

Some partners are also concerned about potential competition between hosts and refugees when governments assume control of services. For instance, partners managing water access for refugees in Kakuma worry that water management companies might prioritise providing water to host communities during droughts.

Few projects worked on integrating refugees in national systems for basic service provision. When projects attempted to do so, they were **constrained by the limited financial and institutional capacities of the government and had to resort to approaches that were not sustainable**, such as covering refugees' health insurance premiums. In Burundi, under the CRRF DIRECT project, UNHCR supported vulnerable refugees to get Medical Insurance in an effort to encourage all urban refugees to enrol themselves in the scheme they are legally entitled to. However, once the project concludes, the direct support provided by UNHCR will cease.¹ In Kenya, UNHCR worked on registering hospitals within the national health system and facilitating the registration of refugees in the National Health Insurance Fund. UNHCR pays a premium of 500 KES per household per month to ensure that refugees are included in this system. This arrangement allows health centres operated by the Kenyan Red Cross and IRC to receive reimbursement for part of their costs from the government, which is critical as UNHCR funding to support operations is decreasing. However, the integration of hospitals into the health insurance fund may involve costs for the government. UNHCR is currently gathering data to determine whether the use of medical services by refugees in Turkana is higher than that of the host communities. Regardless, UNHCR believes that the expenses incurred by the hospitals in Turkana that have been included in the government's health insurance exceed the total amount of paid premiums.² Therefore, the viability of this scheme heavily relies on political will. Furthermore, as Kenya transitions towards a universal health system, the government will likely expect UNHCR to cover the premium for all refugees who cannot afford them, which the agency is unlikely to have funds for.

Several projects focused on energy access, an area that often lacks priority in humanitarian settings. However, both traditional approaches and innovative designs involving the private sector met sustainability challenges. In Ethiopia, the RDPP project implemented by Dan Church Aid developed electric infrastructure in the two camps of Barhale and Aysaita. By the end of the project, the percentage of refugees using electricity from renewable sources had increased from 55% and 70% in the camps of Barhale and Aysaita to 87% and 93% respectively. However, at the project's conclusion, Dan Church Aid noted that UNHCR, which was supposed to cover the electricity bills for refugees had not allocated the necessary budget.³ To address the energy needs of refugees who faced difficulties in connecting to national systems, IFC and the Spanish cooperation agency AECID⁴ supported **private sector initiatives to establish commercial energy solutions** in Kakuma (KKCF project) and Melkadida (Alianza Shire) in Ethiopia. In Kakuma, the IFC supported Renewvia Energy Limited in setting up its

¹ KII with an EUD representative.

² KII with an implementing partner.

³ Dan Church Aid, 'Terminal evaluation of integrated protection and development assistance for Eritrean refugees and their host communities in Afar region', December 2020.

⁴ *Agencia española de cooperación internacional para el desarrollo.*

operations, and the company is now functioning independently. It is expected to continue its operations without any additional support from the KKCF project. Renewvia is providing solar energy to 2,900 households in Kakuma.¹ In Ethiopia, Alianza Shire is a public-private partnership aimed at improving energy access for refugees by providing power for communal services and creating solar-home systems businesses. However, private partners are unlikely to remain in the area beyond the project's completion, threatening the sustainability of this intervention.

5.3.2. LIVELIHOODS AND SELF-RELIANCE

EUTF projects supported livelihoods for refugees and hosts alike, by providing skills training, financial assistance and material support. As a result, participants in these interventions increased their self-reliance. However, growth is constrained by the size and accessibility of markets. Additionally, especially as food rations were reduced, refugees and hosts who are struggling to meet their basic needs spend every added revenue on basic needs and are not able to invest in growing resilient livelihoods.

5.3.2.1. Access to skills

Projects aimed to tailor training to local environments and market demands. These initiatives enabled trainees to develop or expand their income-generating activities (IGA). According to a tracer study, 78% of participants in the SPRS-NU Enabel long training reported an increase in income following the formation.² Similarly, the RISE GIZ project reported that 78% of its beneficiaries were employed by the end of the project, compared to just 24% at baseline.³ In Dadaab, DRC trained 1,848 young refugees and hosts in market-related and digital skills. Trainees received certification from the national trade authority and the computer society. However, the scalability of these initiatives is limited by the lack of available training centres. In Dadaab, UNHCR and partner organisations previously operated seven centres but only three are currently operational due to funding shortages.

Long term presence and coaching are crucial for achieving sustainable outcomes. The SPRS-NU Enabel project relied on established craftspeople to train project participants in their domains of activity, allowing for continuous coaching after the training concluded.⁴ **This continuous support is especially vital for refugees and hosts in remote areas, who lack access to continuous formation** that would help them adapt to changing circumstances. In Kalobeyei, farming refugees frequently consult FAO agronomists who visit the camp regularly. In Uganda, beneficiaries who were trained by RED Save the Children on nursery and seedlings said that one training session was insufficient to prepare them for challenges like diseases or other unexpected events. Save the Children linked them to another organisation (Enabel) to provide follow-up training, though this is not a systematic practice. Refugees and hosts trained by Save the Children to build energy-saving cookstoves significantly benefited from their learned craft, but as most people in their communities now have cookstoves, they are looking for training on how to make portable cookstoves for sale in the market. Trained tailors in Dadaab reported that they often needed assistance to connect online or to find patrons to stay updated with the latest fashion trends.⁵

Training has indirect effects on people's lives and livelihoods. **Beyond enhancing IGAs, trainees can also generate revenue by training others.**

Some beneficiaries are hired by NGOs to provide trainings to other community members or offer their *I have a contract with an NGO who brings me women to be trained in tailoring. The*

¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² Enabel, 'Tracer studies of the Skills Development Fund', 2021.

³ GIZ, 'End line evaluation study for RISE Project: Response to increase demand on Government Service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda', July 2023.

⁴ KIIs with participants in the SPRS-NU Enabel interventions.

⁵ FGD with participants in Save the Children and ABLI-G activities.

services independently. For instance, two interviewed tailors trained by the SPRS-NU Enabel project started instructing other women in their neighbourhood, earning 50,000 UGX (~12€) per month per trainee.

NGO pays me per student trained for three months.

Refugee participant in the GIZ project in Palorinya, Moyo District, Uganda

Additionally, refugees applied **skills learned in financial management to their personal lives**, resulting in noted improvements as reported by several respondents.¹

Encouraging participation in training programmes among refugees and other vulnerable communities remains a challenge. Financial constraints often prevent vulnerable individuals from attending training, as they cannot afford to forgo income during the training period. The location of training courses can also pose a barrier, as many vulnerable individuals are unable to pay for transportation to training sites. Research conducted by the Centre for evaluation and development (C4ED) on the RISE GIZ project revealed that, out of the 3,165 selected candidates, only 44.5% completed the technical short-term trainings.²

The integration of refugees into national training programmes is hindered by the limited resources of both refugees and governments. In Rwanda, refugees are legally permitted to join national training programmes, but few do so as the costs are prohibitive. When development actors support refugees to access these programmes, they often support participation in shorter training courses to accommodate their short funding cycles.³ The SPRS-NU Enabel project worked on strengthening Ugandan national and non-governmental vocational training institutions and helped design more flexible courses that aligned with market needs. However, the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) report on the project noted that the supported training institutions were likely to struggle to provide accessible entrance fees for refugees and host communities, thus threatening the sustainability of the intervention.⁴

5.3.2.2. Access to financial services and to funding

One of the major obstacles to the development of small businesses and IGAs for refugees and their host communities is access to funding. Many refugees lost their savings in their displacement, and formal financial institutions can be difficult to access. To address this issue, various projects provide seed funding, a direct approach often complemented by support to Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA). These alternative fundings sources are vital given the limited micro-finance options available for refugees and their lack of inclusion in the formal financial system.

Seed grant funding generally produced positive results, helping beneficiaries increase their self-reliance and revenues. In Dadaab, a seller used 54,000 KES (~390€) in seed funding provided by DRC to open a salon and expand his retail shop.⁵ In Madi-Okollo, World Vision provided seed funding to farmers from both host and refugee communities. One farmer, who received 1M UGX (~250€), was able to start a vegetable farm, rent additional land and open a small shop for agricultural products. However, successful commercial farming appears to be higher among host community members who own land, compared to refugees who face additional rental costs.

¹ KIIs with participants in the SPRS-NU Enabel, Save the Children and World Vision interventions.

² C4ED, 'Research report – Annex 9 - EUTF Economic Project Impact evaluation research in Uganda', December 2023.

³ KII with an implementing partner.

⁴ ROM, 'Support programme to the refugees settlement and host communities in Northern Uganda', March 2018.

⁵ KIIs with refugees in Dadaab.

Picture 9: Tomato farm in Madi-Okollo



Picture 10: Shop in Madi-Okollo



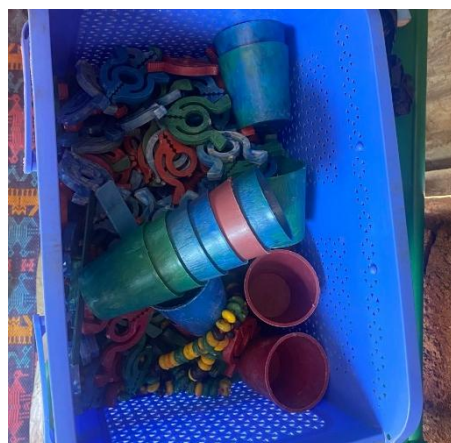
The RED project in Uganda specifically focused on ensuring that supported activities were sustainable and environmentally friendly. For example, the God's Mercy group in Bidi Bidi recycles plastic waste from the refugee settlement into everyday items for sale. The group received initial funding to compensate members for their labour in the early months.¹ Another beneficiary received funding to start a rabbit farm and is now able to cover her children's school fees and other basic needs.²

Achieving self-reliance remains challenging as even successful ventures struggle to grow due to limited capital and vulnerability to unforeseen shocks. While the owner of the rabbit farm can now meet her basic needs and save some of her income, she lacks the means to invest in growing her business. A chicken seller who was thriving a few months before being interviewed for this study lost most of his chicken due to a disease that he could not afford to treat. **Progress can also be slow.** By November 2023, the percentage of beneficiaries of the RED Save the Children project who could meet their basic needs while sustaining natural resources had increased from 34% at baseline (in 2021) to 38%.³

Picture 11: Rabbit farm in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement



Picture 12: Recycled plastic items sold by God's Mercy group



¹ FGD with RED Save the Children beneficiary group in West Nile.

² KII with RED Save the Children beneficiary in West Nile.

³ Save the Children, 'RED EUTF Project Mid-term evaluation report', November 2023.

Seed funding only facilitates the initial steps of business development. Refugees require access to funds in the long-term to handle unexpected events and facilitate business growth. **VSLAs are a preferred and efficient intervention to meet this need.** The RISE ACF project established 593 groups (with an average membership of 30 people each), of which 67% were able to save at least 2M UGX (~494€) per 12-month cycle by the end of the project. That the VSLAs supported by ACF before July 2023 were still active in mid-2024 is a first indication as to the sustainability of the approach. Initially, the ACF project did not plan to include refugees in the VSLA activities, assuming they would have limited income and would not be interested in saving. However, they later included refugees after realising that they not only had the capacity to save but were also willing to do so.¹ This shift in perspective reflects an evolving understanding of the relevance of self-reliance programming for refugees. In Ethiopia, the STEDE project,² which was implemented by Mercy Corps, supported 266 VSLAs, 86 of which were in refugee camps. Findings from an EUTF evaluation of the project demonstrated that the intervention positively impacted employment, savings and resilience. VSLA beneficiaries showed a nine-percentage-point increase in the likelihood of having stable employment and experienced improved food security.³

This project has changed our lives. Our family needs have been met. Our households have become self-sustaining, and we do not depend on food rationing by the World Food Program anymore.

Ready to Frame youth group, RED Save the Children beneficiaries, Imvepi

When combined with livelihood support and training, loans obtained from VSLAs can strengthen both individual and group IGAs. The Good Neighbour Group, supported by SUPREME World Vision in the Omugo Refugee Settlement, received training in VSLA management, financial literacy and climate smart agriculture, along with small animals to rear. As a collective, they borrowed to purchase a grinding mill, which now generates revenue for the group. As individual members increased their livestock herd the group identified a lack of veterinary services in the community as a challenge. Consequently, they sponsored one member to attend school and learn veterinary practices.

Several organisations observed that VSLAs tend to be more stable when led by strong leadership. Additionally, partners made efforts to support groups that were established for several years, such as those involved in joint farming or who had been trained by other organisations. This enhances the sustainability of their initiatives. For its support of VSLA, the SUPREME World Vision project specifically selected groups that had been in existence for at least three years.

This endogenous approach to funding is crucial, especially since supporting formal financial inclusion remains challenging. In Kenya, many refugees lack necessary identification due to delays in refugee status determination. Although UNHCR negotiated with Equity Bank to accept asylum-seeker registrations as identification to open a bank account, M-Pesa does not allow individuals without a refugee identification card to open a mobile money account. Even refugees with the necessary identification struggle to find organisations willing to provide financial products tailored to their situations. Bank often deem refugees unqualified clients due to their lack of access to guarantors and limited savings.⁴ In Uganda, banks are particularly cautious about refugee mobility (pendular movements between their country of origin and the refugee settlements) since it affects their ability to recover funds if needed.⁵ In Dadaab, DRC encountered challenges finding a micro-finance institution that could offer sharia-compliant products to the predominantly Muslim population of the camp.⁶ In

¹ ACF, 'Endline evaluation study report for response to increased demand on government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE) project', August 2023.

² The Strengthened Socio-Economic Development and Better Employment Opportunities for Refugees and Host Communities in the Fafan Zone, Somali Region Ethiopia (T05-EUTF-HoA-ET-40-02) was implemented by Mercy Corps. The project page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

³ C4ED, 'Research report – Annex 1 - EUTF Economic Project Impact evaluation research in Ethiopia', December 2023.

⁴ FGDs with VSLA members in West Nile and Turkana.

⁵ UNHCR, 'Uganda: Refugee policy review framework county summary as of 30 June 2023', March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ KII with an implementing partner.

Ethiopia, STEDE's evaluation found that the population's lack of awareness of the availability of interest-free (sharia compliant) loans decreased their willingness to engage with micro-finance institutions.¹

To address these challenges, SUPREME World Vision operates its own micro-finance institution, Vision Fund, which lends to groups instead of individual refugees thus allowing them to lower their lending requirements. RED Save the Children collaborated with several banking institutions, including Stanbic, to open bank accounts for supported VSLAs. Keeping their savings on bank accounts also protects VSLAs, as the groups establish safeguards on withdrawal for their bank accounts, protecting savings from individual members who might attempt to steal them. Banks are also able to provide loans to groups that have maintained accounts with them over time and can demonstrate regular account activity, even after the partners and the guarantee they offer are no longer present.²

5.3.2.3. Access to market: value-chain and market approaches

Beyond access to funding and skills, **the limited development of markets within refugee settlements and camps, as well as challenging access to markets outside of these areas** continues to be a barrier to the self-reliance of the refugee population. While partners focus on supporting skills and livelihood opportunities that are tailored to the market, interventions beyond this scope tend to be limited.

In Uganda, some partners worked on establishing market linkages. When distributing sunflower seeds, the RISE GIZ project ensured that they provided seeds for plants varieties that a local oil mill would purchase.³ Similarly, when assisting landowners in establishing woodlots, RED UBF connected them to companies willing to buy the timber once it was ready for harvest. Although these linkages are valuable, they often position partners as major players in the market, which can limit the sustainability of activities. **Some partners also sought to establish companies that directly create these links in the value chains.** WFP and the KKCF project supported a company called the Hive, which buys honey from farmers and sells it throughout Kenya. While this provides an outlet for farmers' honey, the company still relies on WFP to operate.

Picture 13: Honey processing machine in Arua



Picture 14: Cassava grinding machine in Arua



Several projects supplied groups and individuals with **machinery to enhance value addition, leading to increased revenue.** For instance, RED UBF provided groups with honey processing and cassava grinding machines, leading to an immediate revenue increase for these groups. However, it is too early

¹ C4ED, 'Research report – Annex 1 - EUTF Economic Project Impact evaluation research in Ethiopia', December 2023.

² KIIs with implementing partner and private sector representative.

³ GIZ, 'End line evaluation study for RISE Project: Response to increase demand on Government Service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda', July 2023.

to determine whether this increase will be sustainable. One host community member received beehives and a honey processing machine, along with training in post-harvest handling and value addition. His apiary business sold 20 litres of honey in the first quarter of 2024, in addition to wax, body butter and candles made from honey. He also employs three refugees on a part-time basis to help with his operations.

Picture 15: Cooking equipment in the food processing hub in Kalobeyei



Picture 16: Bakery room in the food processing hub in Kalobeyei



In Kalobeyei, FAO established and equipped a food processing hub for different groups to expand their vegetables sales (by drying vegetables), bakery and cooking businesses. Group members are optimistic that the availability of machinery will allow them to scale-up their businesses and enhance their revenues. In the DRC, UNHCR constructed hangars for refugees to store their produce, enabling them to sell it when market conditions are favourable rather than immediately after the harvest.¹ However, refugees still face limitations to fully capitalising on these resources, like access to operations and maintenance services.

Transport consistently emerges as a major barrier to market development, especially in Uganda, although few partners worked on this issue. While partner staff highlight poor road conditions as a significant obstacle to service delivery, refugees often express greater concern about transport costs than the state of the roads. The limited number of vehicles on the roads enables bicycles or tricycles owners to charge high prices, making transport one of the highest operational costs for certain groups. The God's Mercy group, who recycles plastic in the camp, estimates they spend half of their revenue to pay for transport to the plastic collection sites and to the recycling machine. They plan to purchase a vehicle with the second phase of support from Save the Children. Another refugee explained that moto-taxi riders often inflate prices when transporting people carrying produce to sell, hoping to take a percentage of the profits, at times multiplying transport costs by four. One group successfully acquired a tricycle with support from Save the Children, and their transport business is thriving. In Dadaab, refugees and host community members report that the road connecting the camps to Garissa town and to the rest of Kenya is often targeted by Al-Shabaab and is damaged during rainy seasons, disrupting the supply of fuel, material and goods.

Economic development is particularly challenging in remote refugee-hosting areas where access to both demand and supply is restricted. Refugees in Kenya lack freedom of movement, which severely limits their access to markets since they often depend on brokers from the host community to obtain goods and reach customers. Refugees must pay these brokers a fee, which is reflected in the final prices, and makes refugee-led businesses less competitive against host-led businesses.² **Additionally, customers are scarce in this closed and remote environment.** In Dadaab, DRC trainees in tailoring and electricity estimate that 80% of their customers were agency

¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² NRC, 'Access to movement passes: a roadmap to self-reliance for refugee entrepreneurs in Dadaab', 2021.

staff and compounds. In Kalobeyei, FAO supported a group to provide grass cutting and spraying services which reports struggling to find demand for their services outside of the partner compounds. Traders in a WFP-built market in Kalobeyei also reported a lack of customers, particularly when WFP distributions (either in cash or kind) are delayed. The market was strategically situated near the distribution centre to be closest to refugees who have just received funds and goods. Despite this, traders continue to face difficulties due to the low economic development of the camp.

Ensuring that refugees and host community members living in remote areas have access to essential material for production, as well as sufficient end consumers, is a significant challenge. This is especially true when it must be achieved indirectly, to avoid distorting the market and hindering self-reliance. For this reason, some advocate for greater freedom of movement for refugees, which would enable them to connect with existing markets by relocating to urban centres.¹

5.3.2.4. Access to formal employment

Access to formal employment remains challenging for refugees, particularly in camp or settlement settings. While refugees can pursue self-employment, they often struggle to find long-term, full-time jobs in camps and settlements. To complement entrepreneurship and farming, the IFC implemented KKCF project aimed at facilitating the establishing of private sector companies into Kakuma/Kalobeyei. The project estimates that it supported the creation of 500 direct jobs in and around Kakuma and Kalobeyei.

Legal restrictions may also prevent refugees from accessing wage employment. In Ethiopia for instance, refugees have only been granted the right to work in the recently passed (and not yet implemented) Refugee Proclamation of 2021.² The CRRF Mercy Corps project reported in 2022-2023 that among 285 project participants who found employment, the 170 refugees were all self-employed, while the 115 hosts were in wage employment.³ In Kenya, the challenging process of obtaining work permits for refugees alongside restrictions on their freedom of movement also limit what support partners can provide. In Dadaab, DRC supported trainees in gaining digital skills to enable them to secure remote employment, for instance as translators, researchers or graphic designers. DRC assisted them in establishing profiles on the Upwork platform and provided access to a room with computers and Wi-Fi. However, this initiative is still in its early stages and DRC estimates that only 58 of 500 trainees now earn a revenue as freelancers. One freelancer explained that he struggled to find as many missions as he had hoped for because he lacks more in-demand skills like coding. In Uganda, while there are no restrictions to refugees' right to work their limited geographical mobility as a result of practical challenges, such as transport costs impede them from pursuing jobs in nearby urban centres.

Women face more significant challenges than men when it comes to securing formal employment. RISE GIZ's impact evaluation found that women have difficulties entering male-dominated trades. They also struggle to balance employment with domestic labour, which often falls solely on them.

With support from EUTF-funded projects, refugees and host community members were able to increase their incomes. However, in a context of reduced rations, **this additional income primarily serves to meet basic needs and is not saved or invested, which could help build resilience to shocks.** This limits the positive effect of livelihood interventions on resilience and self-reliance in the long-term. **A lack of income is also linked to social tensions and negative coping behaviours.** In both Uganda

¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² UNHCR, 'Additional provisions within the revised national refugee law in Ethiopia', 2019.

³ Mercy Corps, 'Strengthened Socio-Economic Development and Better Employment Opportunities for Refugees and Host Communities in the Fafan Zone, Somali Region Ethiopia (STEDE)', May 2023.

and in Kenya, gender-based and intimate partner violence, along with theft and suicides, have increased since rations were cut.^{1,2,3}

Livelihood interventions are also highly affected by local conflict. Tensions and violence erupted in Kakuma and Kalobeyei during the field visit for this case study, with newspapers reporting five fatalities resulting from clashes between refugee communities.⁴ Throughout the camp, activities were disrupted by tensions and fear. Host community members were also affected and some were hesitant to enter the camp to sell their products. In one instance, farmers harvested peas earlier than scheduled due to fears of theft.

5.3.3. CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SELF-RELIANCE

Self-reliance can only be achieved in a conducive environment where the revenue gains of both refugees and host communities are protected and sustainable. Thus, EUTF-funded projects supported social cohesion and aimed to protect the natural resources refugees and hosts rely on.

5.3.3.1. Social cohesion and access to justice

To attain self-reliance and resilience, refugees and host communities need to live and operate in a peaceful environment, where they are protected and valued. **Interventions focused on economic support interventions can indirectly enhance beneficiaries' sense of self-worth.** By developing individuals' skills, creating opportunities for them to generate their own income, and supporting groups in which they are included and can take on responsibilities,⁵ partners help improve

beneficiaries' sense of belonging in their communities. A participant in a SPRS-NU Enabel training, who lives with a disability, reported that her increased income and role as a tailor significantly reduced her fear of leaving her home. The God's Mercy group, which was formed by school dropouts, single mothers and unmarried parents who face societal shunning, provided its members with a new voice and sense

Before this training and internship, I did not know what to do and I was unable to support myself sometimes. Now I feel complete and a changed person. I focus on my work as a mechanic and my client base is growing each day.

ACF beneficiary in Arua

of community through their collective and its recycling mission. A participant in the RED UBF project, who became the secretary of her group, shared that she no longer felt shame about being a single mother, thanks to the respect and status her role in the group afforded her within the community. However, it should be noted that it remains uncommon for women to hold leadership positions within these groups: in nearly all the groups visited for this study, even though women made up over 80% of the members, the chairperson was a man.

Projects also aimed to strengthen social cohesion and justice within the community, especially between host and refugee populations. In West Nile, EUTF-funded projects organised community dialogues and trained resource persons to witness, mediate or refer conflicts as needed. Respondents from various areas indicated that conflicts, particularly between hosts and refugees, decreased due to the creation of **shared dialogue spaces**. One notable example that respondents often point to is that host families now allow refugee children to collect mangoes outside of the settlements.⁶ The mid-term evaluation of the KRC-led SUPREME project found a significant reduction in tensions in their

¹ United States Committee for refugees and immigrants, 'Starvation and suicides among refugees in Kenya Camps', May 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

² The New Humanitarian, 'Dadaab Voices: Despair as refugee food rations in Kenya slashed by 60%', June 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

³ The New Humanitarian, 'Why refugee ration cuts in Uganda risk long-term social damage', March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ Radio Tamazuj, '5 killed as refugee groups clash in Kenya camp', June 2024.

⁵ KIIs with participants in RED UBF interventions.

⁶ KIIs with participants in KRC interventions as well as authorities in Yumbe.

intervention areas: at baseline, 75% of respondents believed quarrels were common, and 59% perceived sexual-based violence as frequent. Two years later, those figures had dropped to 38% and 44% respectively.¹ Projects also supported access to legal recourse by establishing and funding mobile courts, educating refugees about their rights and training both informal and formal justice actors. Interventions led by the Lutheran World Foundation as part of the SUPREME project resulted in a 26-percentage-point increase in the population that felt safe in their community, while the incidence of intra- and inter-community conflicts decreased by 36 and 75 percentage points, respectively.²

We can now solve our conflicts sustainably, without needing the engagement of other partners.

Community leader in Dadaab

In Dadaab, DRC facilitated inter-community and inter-generational dialogues that included hosts and refugees. The endline evaluation reported an increased perception of social cohesion among participants.

Including security forces in dialogues with refugees also fostered trust and strengthened vertical social cohesion between populations and authorities. Police officers noted that refugees were now more willing to report crimes to them due to improved trust.

While such interventions have proven effective, sustaining or expanding them is challenging.

Resource persons trained by the SUPREME project implemented by the International Refugee Rights Initiative expressed their willingness to continue mediating conflicts after the project's end, but they required financial support to take time away from their IGAs to do so. A group of these resource persons created a community-based organisation and applied for funding from donors to continue operating. This group, the Women Fellowship Advocacy and Network, received funding from UNHCR to provide gender-based violence prevention sensitisation and mediation. Similarly, the paralegals trained and supported by the Ugandan NGO KRC will continue to receive reimbursements for their expenses through future funding. Despite these solutions, both groups reported insufficient resources to expand operations and sensitise new refugee arrivals, who can often be a source of conflict. Relevant institutions, such as Refugee Welfare Councils or the Office of the Prime Minister lack the capacity to assume responsibility for these activities or their funding. The adoption of bylaws could increase the sustainability of initiatives. For instance, in West Nile, interventions led to the adoption of bylaws to fine people who let their animals stray on farmed land.³ However, overall, institutions are limited in their resources to implement such policies.

Partners noted that social cohesion heavily depends on the context. For instance, in West Nile, there is a cultural and linguistic proximity between refugees from Central Equatoria (South Sudan) and host communities.⁴ Similarly, in the Somali region of Ethiopia, refugees and hosts share languages and traditions and sometimes have family ties. This aspect is important to consider when analysing the effect of EUTF-funded projects on social cohesion. In places like Gambella (Ethiopia), where the relationship between hosts and refugees⁵ is more strained, similar positive results may be harder to obtain.⁶

Interventions also had a positive indirect effect on social cohesion. The approach that the EU championed from the first phase of funding through the RDPP – providing support to both hosts and refugees – helped build acceptance of refugees among the hosts and is praised as an early best practice throughout the region. Supporting groups that include both refugees and hosts also fosters connections, which, in turn, influence social cohesion. It can also increase the effectiveness of the

¹ KRC, 'KRC-Uganda Mid-Term evaluation final report: advancing peaceful co-existence and respect for human rights among refugees and host communities in Northern Uganda', April 2023.

² LWF, 'Supporting a peaceful and safe environment in Northern Uganda Project – End term evaluation', June 2023.

³ KII with participants in KRC interventions.

⁴ HPG, 'The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Uganda', September 2019.

⁵ Gambella is the location of conflicts and tensions between the two major groups of the region, the Nuer and the Anyuak. The fact that the majority of South Sudanese refugees in Gambella are from the Nuer ethnic group is adding to tensions among geographic and budgetary sharing of resources in the region.

⁶ KII with an implementing partner.

activities themselves: in Ethiopia, Mercy Corps found that supporting mixed groups of refugees and hosts allowed refugees to benefit from the hosts' knowledge of the administrative system and business licensing requirements. In Uganda, mixed VSLAs enabled some refugees to access land at non-inflated prices from hosts they knew and had relationships with.¹

UN-Habitat constructed public spaces in the Kalobeyei settlement to increase social cohesion and social capital among hosts and refugees. These areas provide space for people to play sports, engage in discussions and meet one another. However, maintaining public spaces can be challenging. In Kalobeyei, where the population is particularly vulnerable, vandalism has become an issue: people stole the metal bars attached to playground slides three times to sell for scraps.

Picture 17: Public meeting room in Kalobeyei



Picture 18: Play court in Kalobeyei



Picture 19: Destroyed swings in Kalobeyei



Partners sometimes struggle to include host communities in their activities. First, the livelihoods of hosts and refugees can differ significantly. In Turkana hosts are primarily pastoralists while refugees traditionally engage in farming.² Due to the drought that affected East Africa in recent years, pastoralists had to send their livestock away for water, which made it even more challenging for FAO to support their livelihoods. Additionally, when infrastructure is built in refugee camps, such as the training and demonstration centres ABLI-G built in Dadaab, host communities are less likely to access them. For their next phase of programming, DRC partnered with two local host community-led organisations to better reach Garissa's population.³

In addition, the perception that refugees benefit more from interventions and are less vulnerable than host community members can create tensions. In West Nile, many practitioners and authorities believe that host communities are now more vulnerable than refugee populations. In fact, data contradicts this perception. In 2020, 74% of refugees in West Nile lived below the national poverty line, compared to 35% of hosts.⁴ Sharing and updating this data along with understanding the basis of these perceptions is crucial to, among other things, reduce tensions. A 2019 research paper by the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) on Dadaab found that tensions between hosts and refugees were fuelled by hosts' feeling of neglect, despite being somewhat mitigated by shared cultural traits.⁵ Given the recent ration cuts, it is likely that more **and more refugees will leave their settlements or camps, to access opportunities outside of their hosting areas.** This will lead to more interactions between the two groups, making activities aimed at reinforcing social cohesion even more important.⁶

¹ KIIs with implementing partners and EUD representatives.

² RDPP LET, 'RDPP in Kenya (Kalobeyei): Endline assessment', April 2021.

³ KIIs with implementing partners in Kenya.

⁴ OPM, WFP, UNHCR, Development Pathways, 'Analysis of refugee vulnerability in Uganda, Working paper', January 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

⁵ ReDSS, 'Dadaab solutions paper', April 2019. Retrieved [here](#).

⁶ The New Humanitarian, 'Why refugee ration cuts in Uganda risk long-term social damage', March 2024. Retrieved [here](#).

5.3.3.2. Restoration of the environment and preparedness to climate change

The arrival and presence of large refugee populations places a strain on natural resources in hosting areas. Several **EUTF-funded projects worked to mitigate this pressure**, focusing particularly on reforestation and the protection of forests from further destruction.

As refugees settle in host areas, human demand for space or land, construction material and firewood increases significantly, often resulting in deforestation. To address this issue, projects linked reforestation to livelihoods, for instance by establishing woodlots for hosts and refugees (areas where trees are cultivated for timber). These initiatives encourage both hosts and refugees to sustainably manage the native tree species for their respective qualities (e.g. pharmacological or nutritive aspects) and reduce incentives to cut down existing trees. This strategy was adopted by UNHCR in the DRC and, on a larger scale, UBF in Uganda. The RED UBF project also provided beehives to owners of woodlands and wetlands, emphasising the importance of trees for pollination, rather than solely focusing on their timber value.

Picture 20: Woodlot in Terego



Picture 21: Beehives on a wetland area



These interventions' impact on biodiversity or deforestation practices is primarily measurable over the long term. Partners in Uganda found it challenging to persuade the government to prioritise these interventions, especially as politicians increase their focus on projects with immediate and visible effects in anticipation of the 2026 elections.

5.3.3.3. Accompany behavioural change among refugees

Practitioners emphasised the need for refugees to change their 'mindset' in order to transition from humanitarian to development and self-reliance funding. Many partners believe that refugees will be hesitant to seek employment and become self-reliant as long as they continue to expect 'free support'. In response, refugee-led groups warn against stereotypes and underline that self-reliance will only be achieved through a progressive strategy of reduction of humanitarian and development support that addresses refugees' concerns.¹

Some refugees fear that participating in development activities may jeopardize their access to the food aid on which they still depend. In Uganda, WFP started implementing differentiated assistance, which entails a categorisation of refugees along three levels of vulnerability. The category a refugee belongs to determines the amount of food aid they receive (60% of a standard ration, 30% or no ration). In Kenya, although such a categorisation is not yet in place, refugees are concerned about losing their food rations, especially if the activities they engage in do lead to long-term income

¹ Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative, 'Self Reliance Index, 2.0: indicators to measure progress towards self-reliance', May 2020. Retrieved [here](#).

increases.¹ In Djibouti, the WFP-led EUTF project had to revise its implementation strategy after the rural refugees who were initially targeted refused to be included in the national social protection systems, fearing that doing so would result in the loss of their WFP rations. The project shifted its focus to urban refugees who do not receive rations.²

Another factor that may prevent refugees from diminishing their reliance on assistance is the lack of social protection.

While livelihood programming helps refugees generate income, they are often insufficient to ensure resilience. Refugees are particularly vulnerable to shocks because they are excluded from social support systems and have limited social networks to rely on. VSLAs can enhance resilience to a certain extent by enabling refugees to borrow money in emergencies. However, these funds are loans rather than emergency savings. In Rwanda, where aid is tied to residency in camps, some refugees may opt to remain registered in the camps, even if they live elsewhere, to ensure they can access assistance as a social safety net in times of need.³

People in our community who come to us for help in times of emergency and when they are lacking money to address unforeseeable situations. We have emergency funding strategies and savings to help members in times of need.

Member of the Ready to Frame group supported by RED Save the Children

Refugees are also concerned that achieving self-reliance and living outside of camps could diminish their chances for resettlement. In the Somali region of Ethiopia, UNHCR noted that both hosts and refugees aspire to resettlement – refugees for themselves, and hosts for their refugee family members who would send remittances.⁴ In Rwanda, the impact of the hope for resettlement is also noticeable according to the EU. Two projects in the country target different refugee populations: from Burundi and from the DRC. Congolese refugees reportedly have more resettlement opportunities compared to Burundian refugees and are, as a result, reportedly less inclined to engage in livelihood activities.⁵

5.4. EFFECTS ON GOVERNANCE AND POLICY CHANGE

Efforts to promote self-reliance among refugees heavily depend on effective policy and its implementation. As such, advocating for refugee rights and supporting policy changes is a crucial component of self-reliance initiatives. A small number of EUTF-funded projects focused on supporting national policy change and capacity sharing. 9% of the total funding related to the CRRF and RDPP approaches was allocated to capacity sharing and policy change.

5.4.1. LIMITED DIRECT POLICY EFFORTS

A few EUTF-funded projects successfully supported advocacy efforts, yet policy change is a slow process that is impossible to attribute to a single actor. However, the EU's support added weight to UNHCR's advocacy, with varying degrees of success. In Burundi, the EUTF's support enabled UNHCR to conduct intensive advocacy to urge the government to lift restrictions on the movement of refugees.⁶ UNHCR observed a shift in governmental discourse, as the Minister of Interior ultimately adopted a more progressive stance on refugees' freedom of movement.⁷ In Ethiopia, coordination meetings organised by UNHCR resulted in a commitment from the local government to develop an

¹ KII with an implementing partner.

² WFP, 'Cinquième rapport intermédiaire (Mai 2022 – Juin 2023) - Action pour l'autonomisation, l'épanouissement et les solutions pérennes sociales pour les populations hôtes, les réfugiés et les migrants les plus vulnérables sur le territoire djiboutien', June 2023.

³ KII with an implementing partner.

⁴ KII with an implementing partner.

⁵ KII with an EUD representative.

⁶ KII with an EUD representative.

⁷ UNHCR, 'Refugee Policy Review Framework: Burundi', 30 June 2023.

inclusive roadmap for transforming Kebribeyah camp into an integrated settlement. Regionally, ReDSS noted that their advocacy efforts, which were channelled through support to the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), were more effective for having the EU as a donor. In Sudan, the IRCSES project¹ reported having sensitised Ministry of Education staff to the benefits of including refugee children within national schools.² However, in Kenya, despite the EU's membership in various working groups, there is no evidence that they directly supported UNHCR's advocacy activities that led to the Shirika Plan.³

However, by supporting certain projects, the EUTF conveyed a strong message to governments in favour of progressive refugee-hosting approaches. The Shirika Plan highlights as best practices interventions that were directly supported by the EUTF, such as the KISEDPP. By adhering to a 50/50 targeting approach since the RDPP (50% refugees, 50% hosts) the EUTF demonstrated that there can be advantages for national populations in sustainably hosting refugees. A significant portion of the budget allocated to the Djibouti WFP and UNHCR interventions was intended to benefit host communities, which reportedly contributed to the government's approval of these projects.⁴

Finally, in certain instances, the EUTF directly facilitated policy change and dialogue. In Kenya, the Enhancing Self-Reliance project supported the **drafting of the Refugee Education Policy**. This support began with UNICEF as part of the first phase of interventions and was continued under the second phase, before stalling due to change in personnel within the government. The Cities Alliance component of the CRRF Urban Development project initiated regional dialogues connecting mayors of refugee-hosting cities to discuss the specific dynamics of refugee integration. The partner reports that a mayor in Somalia reconsidered his stance on encampment after participating in these dialogues. However, this structure remains heavily dependent on the involvement of Cities Alliance and may not continue beyond the IP's engagement.⁵

At the local level, more projects aimed to support local development plans that included refugees. This approach assists local authorities in adapting national policies to their specific contexts and can advocate for the inclusion of refugees in budget planning. According to MLS data, 71 such plans were supported by CRRF-aligned projects, primarily in Uganda (62). CRRF Direct, through its Oxfam and CARE⁶ components, supported resource management plans and forest restoration plans in Western Uganda. The RISE GIZ project supported the West Nile Local Economic Development Strategy, ensuring it included refugees. Save the Children and its partner the World Agroforestry Centre trained district authorities in West Nile on gender mainstreaming and assisted in the development of gender-responsive environmental management plans. The implementation of these plans, however, remains contingent on the availability of government budget.

5.4.2. SUPPORT TO INSTITUTIONS TO INCITE A CHANGE IN APPROACHES

EUTF-funded projects also supported institutions that are well-positioned to advocate for progressive policies, particularly regional bodies. Two projects collaborated with regional institutions: CRRF Direct, implemented by ReDSS which worked with the ICGLR, and a project aimed at operationalising the IGAD Support Platform (GCR-IGAD). IGAD is the only regional organisation to have developed a Support Platform in the HoA. The ICGLR is a smaller and less well-known organisation, which means its influence is still limited. Consequently, the support provided may need to be more sustained before tangible results are observed. In fact, the final evaluation of the project found

¹ The project 'Integration and mainstreaming of refugee children into the Sudanese education system' (T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-65-01) was implemented by UNICEF. The project page on the European Union website can be found [here](#).

² KII with implementing partners.

³ KII with an EUD representative.

⁴ KIIs with EUD representatives.

⁵ KIIs with implementing partners.

⁶ Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere.

no discernible impact of the intervention on national level policies.¹ Although regional organisations are well positioned to engage with actors across all countries, they can be slow to effect change. Nevertheless, according to both the partner and the evaluation, the project laid important groundwork for initiating discussions, especially through events and focused research, on the integration of communities affected by displacement.²

At the national level, few EUTF-funded projects attempted to support whole-of-government approaches. Including institutions that are not typically involved in refugee affairs is essential for effectively implementing the CRRF.³ Djibouti stood out as a best practice case, where the WFP project involved the Ministry of Social Affairs in its implementation. This collaboration familiarised the Ministry with issues regarding refugees, which had previously been managed solely by the Ministry of Interior.⁴ Discussing with all institutions and understanding the opinions and motivations of each ministry also increases the effectiveness of partners' advocacy support in favour of progressive policies. For instance, in Uganda, some perceive that security actors are advocating for an encampment policy or are at least promoting restrictions on the rights of refugees.⁵ Understanding the motivations behind this position could enable partners to provide information and data to address their concerns. At the local level in West Nile, including district-level government staff in projects' coordination structures fostered a sense of ownership over project outputs and refugee issues, facilitating a "whole-of-government" approach at the local level.

EUTF-funded projects worked at the local level to enhance both the capacity and ownership of local authorities of the CRRF approach. In Ethiopia, UNHCR's efforts to strengthen local governments were particularly effective in the Somali region where the CRRF's implementation is more widely accepted than at the national level.⁶ The project also directly funded positions for CRRF liaison officers within regional governments to support a whole-of-government approach. In Kakuma and Dadaab, the World Bank and UN-Habitat supported the establishment of two new municipalities to replace the camps. UN-Habitat developed regeneration strategies for the settlements and will support the county in drafting land use plans for host community areas which will prioritise the interventions needed to fully operationalise the settlement and transition into a town.⁷ **However, at the local level, even more so than at the national level, institutions lack sufficient financial and human resources for implementation, limiting the effectiveness of this support.**

5.5. AFTER THE EUTF: DIFFICULT SUSTAINABILITY

The objective of self-reliance for refugees can only be achieved if capacitated institutions assume key societal roles. Government organisations must be able to take over the provision of services in health, water, education, and energy while livelihood opportunities should be available to refugees within the settings in which they choose to live. While the **EUTF supported projects aimed at improving the situation of refugees, achieving sustainability and self-reliance remains challenging.**

5.5.1. GOVERNMENTS NEED SUPPORT TO TAKE OVER SERVICE PROVISION

Governments often lack the necessary technical, human and financial capacities to assume service provision roles, replicate successful models and support large development projects. Consequently, crucial ongoing support provided by EUTF-funded projects is likely to cease when these projects end. For instance, as part of the RED Save the Children project, government officers

¹ DRC, 'CRRF Direct: Endline evaluation – Displacement responses through regional cooperation and technical exchange', 2023.

² KII with an implementing partner.

³ MLS, 'State of Migration Governance – Regional report', 2022.

⁴ KII with an implementing partner.

⁵ KII with an implementing partner.

⁶ KII with an EU representative.

⁷ KII with an implementing partner.

participated in business vetting committees to select green initiatives for seed funding. To continue their efforts, committee members need time, skills to guide groups in designing budget plans and pitching their ideas, and seed funding. In addition, the developed and supported strategies are unlikely to be implemented without external funding. In Kakuma/Kalobeyei and Dadaab, UN-Habitat helped create resource mappings, priority lists and budgeted implementation strategies. However, the budget allocated to these municipalities is too limited to implement these strategies without significant support. Kakuma municipality officials reported that their yearly budget allocation from the government for the 2024-2025 business year was 20M KES (~140,000€). There is sometimes a lack of political will to allocate resources to refugee-hosting areas. In both Kenya and Uganda, these areas are among the poorest in the country.

Governments also lack the resources to fill certain roles such as supporting extension workers effectively without the funding provided by partners. In Kenya, FAO supported county extension workers when they intervened in horticultural farms. Throughout West Nile, various projects also took on the role of extension workers, spraying fields to combat pests and offering information on seeds and agricultural techniques. The government does not have the financial means to hire for these positions, even if community-based workers possess the required skills.

Local authorities also lack the information and data necessary to continue interventions. In West Nile, district authorities did not have district environmental plans that outline the area's natural resources, which is a significant obstacle to development planning.¹ Enabel updated Yumbe county's environmental plan at the beginning of the RED Save the Children project, but lacks the resources to maintain these updates.

Direct budget support from the EUTF to institutions was limited within CRRF-related projects, leading to challenges when institutions lacked the capacity to carry out projects. In 2024, member states increased the IGAD budget by 9.5% from the 2023 allocation,² which itself had seen a 10% increase from 2022.³ Despite this commitment from member states, budget constraints still pose challenges for the organisation. Under the GCR-IGAD initiative, designed to support IGAD in operationalising the GCR Support Platform, a project manager was only appointed six months into the project, and once appointed, was not fully dedicated to the project, even though his salary was entirely covered by EUTF funds. The ROM found that the outcomes of the GCR-IGAD project were not sustainable, largely because stakeholders had not acquired the necessary institutional and human capacities.⁴

5.5.2. EARLY ENTRY OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The CRRF places significant emphasis on the private sector as a key player and an alternative source of funding to replace traditional partners. In line with this framework, the EUTF funded several projects aimed at supporting private entities to establish interventions in refugee-hosting areas. The EUTF, adhering to its mandate and positioning between humanitarian and development interventions, especially compared to more long-term donors, primarily supported innovative and pilot approaches meant to pave the way for larger-scale support. The main EUTF-funded project in this regard is the KKCF in Kenya, a multi-donor project implemented by IFC.

The private sector often overlooks the potential markets refugee-hosting areas represent. To counter this perception, IFC conducted a study demonstrating that, while refugees in Kakuma are still dependent on assistance, they operate within a substantial market that includes 2,000 businesses and has an annual household consumption of 56.2M\$.⁵ This study helped convince private sector

¹ KII with local authorities in Yumbe.

² IGAD, 'IGAD Ambassadors Unanimously Endorse 2024 Budget, Signal Expansion with New Headquarters', December 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

³ IGAD, 'Committee of Ambassadors Boosts IGAD Budget 2023 with 10% Increments', December 2022. Retrieved [here](#).

⁴ ROM, 'Final ROM report for the IGAD project', 2024.

⁵ IFC, 'Kakuma as a marketplace', 2018. Retrieved [here](#).

companies that Kakuma/Kalobeyi represents a viable market. As a result, the project facilitated the establishment of operations for 125 companies in the area, leading to the creation of 500 permanent jobs. However, most companies continue to rely on the IFC's financial and technical (advisory) support. Similarly, in Uganda, the SUPREME World Vision project helped businesses establish operations in settlement areas but struggled to retain large companies in the long term. Smaller companies also require considerable assistance to set up their operations, including building financial systems and navigating administrative challenges.¹

The penetration of private actors in refugee markets is still in its infancy. Furthermore, refugees are often hosted in remote areas that lacked investment and private sector involvement before their arrival, because, among other reasons, of their accessibility. Certain regions may not be attractive enough for profit-driven organisations before a significant period. Additionally, the transition and coordination between development and private actors will be challenging, as development funding may distort markets that private companies are trying to enter. Projects like ABLI-G, whose second phase is funded under NDICI are anticipating the challenge of the transition from development approaches to government-led service provision and private sector growth by adopting market systems approaches.

5.5.3. LIMITED BURDEN-SHARING

The lack of burden-sharing limits the impact of EUTF interventions and the sustainability of their effects. **Burden-sharing** appears to have been rarely negotiated or implemented in the countries where the EUTF operates. This critical aspect of the CRRF is often overlooked in spite of the fact that host countries need to be directly and financially supported to facilitate the local integration and self-reliance of refugees. Without adequate funding to scale up and sustain short-term or innovative EUTF projects, the long-term effects of these interventions remain extremely fragile and limited. In the 2021 CRRF case study, the MLS had already identified that burden-sharing had not materialised, especially as the inclusion of refugees in national budgets with support from donors did not occur.

The EU often committed phase two funding for EUTF-funded projects that could be replicated or were politically significant. Examples include the Kakuma and Dadaab interventions, as well as GCR-IGAD support, and the Cities Alliance projects, all of which are set to receive funding under NDICI. In Ethiopia, the EU is considering funding part of the first phase of the Kebribeyah integration roadmap through NDICI, and discussions are reportedly ongoing with the World Bank for further support.² However, there does not appear to have been a systematic approach to secure donor funding for supported institutions or developed policies, nor to cover the long-term operation and maintenance costs of infrastructure or national service delivery systems.

If no burden-sharing scheme is put in place, the entire responsibility for funding education, health and other basic services for refugees, and the protection of the environment will **fall on hosting governments**, who already face funding shortages to cover the needs of their national populations. As a result, these governments may be compelled to cut funding for refugees and revert to less open or progressive policies, ultimately placing refugee populations in even more vulnerable situations.

¹ KII with an implementing partner in Uganda.

² KII with an implementing partner in Ethiopia.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: To effectively implement the CRRF and uphold its core principle of burden-sharing, donors should, as much as possible, maintain funding levels for durable solutions.

As a principal donor of displacement-related funds, and especially in the current context of funding shortage, the EU should aim to maintain if possible or even increase its funding directed towards displaced populations, particularly its development-related funding and encourage other donors to do the same.

- The EU should advocate for high-income countries and member states to fulfil their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their gross national income to official development assistance.
- The EU has already committed 10% of NDICI's budget to migration and forced displacement-related activities. Projects that address forced displacement should be systematically aligned with the objectives and outcomes of the GCR, which establish clear priorities to enhance funding effectiveness.¹
- The EU can reinforce its role as a catalyst for development- and nexus-related funding in refugee-hosting areas. The EU can encourage other donors by raising awareness of the urgent situation in refugee-hosting areas, and by co-funding projects with donors who may have less experience in refugee settings.
- The EU holds significant influence among implementing partners and other donors, including its own member state agencies and funding institutions. In light of diminishing funding availability, piloting or supporting innovative financing strategies will be essential. With support from the EU, the IRC has recently published a white paper on a Humanitarian Debt Swap. The approach proposes reallocating funds that would have paid interest rates to complement existing aid by restructuring the commercial debt of refugee-hosting and highly indebted countries.²

Recommendation 2: The EU should intensify its efforts to advocate for the removal of policies that undermine refugee self-reliance

Restrictive policies limit the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the effectiveness of development funds aimed at supporting their livelihoods. The EU should enhance and streamline its advocacy initiatives to encourage countries to implement more supportive policies.

- While engaging with the Refugee Coordination Models in its countries of operation, EU institutions should work to align advocacy efforts between its crisis response (ECHO) and development (INTPA) teams, as well as with UNHCR. To effectively bolster its advocacy efforts, the EU could also ensure consistent messaging among its partners. Quarterly meetings of EU-funded projects could be organized at country-level to discuss advocacy needs, the positioning of different state actors, and to align messaging.
- To support these efforts, the EU could encourage its partners to ensure they conduct stakeholder analysis and mapping during their inception phases, providing them with time and resources to do so.

¹ In 2023, an Oxfam analysis of migration funding in Libya, Tunisia and Niger found that projects prioritised EU's domestic concerns over development objectives, limiting their eligibility to be counted towards official development assistance. Oxfam, 'From development to deterrence? Migration spending under the EU Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument', September 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

² IRC, Airbel Impact Lab, 'Humanitarian Debt Swap Proposal'. Retrieved [here](#).

Recommendation 3: In countries where refugees are legally permitted to move, work and access basic services, the EU could sustain and increase efforts to financially support host governments in implementing its policies that include refugees

In countries that actively promote the economic and social integration of refugees, the EU could allocate a larger portion of its displacement-related funding to help governments effectively remove legal and practical barriers to refugees' achievement of self-reliance.

- Through its funding and collaboration with UNHCR, the EU can continue to support refugee agencies and local governments in strengthening refugee status determination services, ensuring that asylum seekers' applications are processed quickly and that individuals can access the benefits and rights associated with the refugee status.
- More generally, lack of burden-sharing remains a significant gap in the implementation of the CRRF. The EUTF funded several projects to support the inclusion of refugees in national systems. These pilot initiatives should be continued and expanded, potentially through long-term budget and technical support instruments.
- When allocating budget support to recipient institutions, the EU could consider deploying projects to support recipients with financial and administrative management, thus strengthening recipients' accountability and transparency practices and improving their capacities.
- When supporting government institutions directly, the EU should also ensure that recipient countries commit to funding positions necessary to manage operations for the duration of the project and after its end to ensure sustainability.

Recommendation 4: Enhance the effectiveness of interventions by allocating funding to national organisations, particularly refugee-led organisations and by formalising the role of refugees as project support staff

Channelling funding through refugee-led organisations can significantly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of activities.¹ The EU should consider increasing its direct support to national NGOs in alignment with the 25% target established by the Grand Bargain. In addition, the EU could encourage its partners to subcontract national NGOs and refugee-led organisations.

- Recipient countries should promote the localisation of funding by asking the donor community to adhere to targets for funding directed towards national and refugee-led organisations. This goal could be aligned with the Grand Bargain's aim of allocating 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national entities.
- The EU can enhance the benefits of subcontracting arrangements for national actors by promoting effective capacity sharing. This can be achieved by ensuring that budgets allocate resources for the overhead support of subcontractors and for operational and technical capacity sharing between implementing agencies (primary- and sub-contractors). Additionally, the EU could advocate for the inclusion of specific indicators in logical frameworks to monitor capacity sharing.

Many organisations already involve refugees and host community members as community-based facilitators in their implementation efforts. Refugees living in camps and settlements, particularly in remote areas where they have relied on humanitarian aid, possess a deep understanding of the sector's language and operations, coupled with knowledge of the local context. This makes them valuable partners, especially since they remain within their communities after projects conclude, thereby enhancing the sustainability of interventions.

¹ The New Humanitarian, 'Flipping the Narrative: We need to talk about international aid and refugee self-reliance', April 2023. Retrieved [here](#).

- Donors could facilitate the adoption of a salary grid to clarify the salaries and compensations that these workers are entitled to, based on their training, qualifications, and roles. This would help mitigate competition between partners and ensure that refugees receive fair and equitable wages for their contributions.

Recommendation 5: Support the implementation of the CRRF through evidence building on innovative approaches

Refugee settings have traditionally been viewed through a humanitarian and temporary lens. The EUTF has played a vital role in encouraging the transition toward self-reliance programming for refugees. The EU should continue to invest in generating more evidence to understand the impact of these new approaches and policies.

- **The EU could require from future projects to include data collection on self-reliance and the aid-dependency levels among project participants both at baseline and endline.** To ensure data is harmonised throughout EU-funded projects, the EU could adopt a standardised measuring scale for assessing refugee self-reliance. The index prepared by the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative could serve as a foundation for this, as it includes a questionnaire specifically designed to evaluate refugees' self-reliance. The index has already been adopted by some EU partners, including DRC which is rolling it out to measure the self-reliance of its participants under the second phase of the ABLI-G project, which is funded by NDICI.
- **Innovative approaches should lead to additional M&E and learning requirements.** When relevant, projects or activities should be explicitly marked as innovative. For innovative approaches, additional resources should be made available to the IP to document progress, and disbursements could be conditioned to this evidence-building. From the EU's side, additional time could be made available, for instance a working group of project officers with forced displacement expertise could be involved to review approaches and learning needs. Eventually, best practices or findings on innovative activities could be shared with the Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement, a partnership between the World Bank and UNHCR, which is supported by the EU and aims to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of data that informs policy and programming.

6.2. PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to continue supporting the most vulnerable refugees in meeting their immediate humanitarian needs.

- **The EU should continue to support UNHCR and WFP in the implementation of a differentiated or “vulnerability-based” approach in their humanitarian aid.** The approach has already been implemented in Uganda and is about to be replicated in Kenya. Donors should support agencies in regularly updating their classification survey and reinforcing feedback and complaint mechanisms habilitated to review households' categorisations.
- **Design strict exit strategies and handover plans for all infrastructure.** These strategies should be developed in coordination with local and national governments before construction and include requirements for the government to allocate budget to operation and maintenance costs, as well as to human resources. All relevant partners should hold regular (yearly or other, as relevant) meetings to assess progress towards the implementation of the exit strategy and indicators should be included in projects' logical frameworks to track progress.

Recommendations to best support refugees in meeting their immediate needs through food production.

- In locations where refugees have access to land and for refugees who want to practice agriculture, projects should provide support and training on refugees' land, if possible, rather than on demonstration sites. Where refugees do not have access to land, allocating plots in common farming sites can be sustainable.
- Projects and donors could consider funding the salaries of extension workers through budget support to local governments, for instance following the model launched by the SUIDAC project. Governments and communities could also discuss how to support endogenous funding schemes by which end-users contribute to part of the costs. Indeed, the continuous coaching and learning in-farms, as well as support for pest control and access to seeds that extension workers provide is paramount to ensure the sustainability of farming activities. Projects could also advocate with authorities to hire community-based facilitators (including refugees) who have the required skills as extension workers.
- Donors should ensure that food production interventions are supported in the long-term, either through long funding phases or adequate exit strategies. This is especially relevant in places where interventions build irrigation infrastructure, as improving and maintaining such infrastructure takes time. Projects should also develop business plans and strategies for funding maintenance after their completion.

Recommendations to support skills development and livelihoods for refugees and hosts

- Continue supporting VSLAs, especially those that have been active for several years. VSLAs have enabled refugees to access savings and insurance schemes that enhance their resilience and allow them to invest in and expand their businesses.
- Expand on digital livelihoods support initiatives by providing refugees with digital skills beyond basic literacy. This could allow refugees to gain access to skilled employment like coding, creative content production, and more. The Jobtech Alliance, a community of gig-matching, job-matching, education, and digital commerce solutions platforms, could be a partner in these interventions.
- Consider providing formal (and digital) linkages to advisors for training graduates. Long-term advice and coaching are vital for the success of these activities.
- Consider compensating participants during training to ensure they can commit to learning and attend classes without incurring financial losses. This needs to be associated to careful targeting, avoiding recruiting for training heads of household with existing stable incomes.
- Provide certifications to graduates. These certifications should be recognized in both their host and origin countries and, ideally, should be transferable at the international level for cases of resettlement. Partners should ensure that services to officially translate certificates are accessible to refugees where they live.
- Gather information on skills, aspirations and existing degrees of refugees. Partners could then tailor their support better to the skills and interests of the refugees.
- Continue to support the development of an enabling environment for economic development. This involves scaling up support for building sustainable water and electricity supplies, as well as continued investment in road and transport infrastructure. Ongoing support for business registration and formalisation can also create a more conducive environment, where employers and employees adhere to labour laws, health and safety regulations, and environmental standards, while contributing to the economic development of the region.

Recommendations to support a conducive environment for self-reliance

- Support mobile courts and train resource persons who are closer to refugees and host community members. These resource persons can help ensure that all populations have

access to safe dialogue spaces and information on formal justice mechanisms, when necessary.

- Fund long-term projects that identify sources of deforestation and loss of biodiversity and propose remedies for environmental damage. In the initial phase, finding and funding alternatives to fuel consumption, and making fuel available from diverse sources can help alleviate pressure on surrounding woodlands.
- Additionally, the EU could organize tree-planting programs with local communities and explore options for introducing payment for environmental services schemes to compensate landowners (host communities) in refugee-hosting areas for adopting environmentally sustainable practices.

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PROJECTS CONSIDERED RELEVANT FOR THIS STUDY

Table 1: List of projects considered relevant for this study

Programme Name	EUTF ID	Project Name	Lead IP	EUTF Budget and Status
Regional				
CRRF: Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-67-01	CRRF Urban Development and Mobility: Promoting Inclusive Urban Development in Assosa town, Ethiopia (CRRF Urban Development IRC)	IRC	€3,724,872 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-67-02	Technical assistance to Koboko Municipality (CRRF Urban Development ACAV)	ACAV	€1,000,042 (completed)

	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG- 67-03	CRRF Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility: Regional Networks and Dialogue (CRRF Urban Development Cities Alliance)	Cities Alliance	€600,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG- 67-04	CRRF: Inclusive Urban Development and Mobility in the Municipality of Koboko (CRRF Urban Development Koboko)	Koboko Municipal Council	€2,799,958 (completed)
Soutien aux réfugiés Sud-Soudanais et aux communautés hôtes en RDC	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-71-01	Soutien aux réfugiés Sud-Soudanais et aux communautés hôtes en RDC (Self-reliance of South Sudanese refugees in the DRC)	UNHCR	€3,000,000 (completed)
CRRF: Displacement responses through regional cooperation and technical exchange (CRRF DIRECT)	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-01	Strengthening Resilience through Enhanced Local Disaster Risk Management Capacities (CRRF DIRECT Oxfam)	Oxfam	€1,400,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-02	Strengthening Emergency Preparedness and Inclusive Natural Resources Management in Refugee Hosting Districts (CRRF DIRECT CARE)	CARE Denmark	€1,500,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-03	Protection, health and livelihood for refugees in Burundi (CRRF DIRECT UNHCR)	UNHCR	€500,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-04	Protection, health and livelihood for refugees in Burundi (CRRF DIRECT IRC)	IRC	€2,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-05	Dukorane Umurava – Upscaling Economic Inclusion of Refugees and Host Communities to Gicumbi District (CRRF DIRECT GIZ)	GIZ	€1,600,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-06	Sécurité et bien-être accrus des réfugiés du camp de Mahama et de leur communauté d'accueil, complémentarité socio-économique renforcée entre ces groupes (CRRF DIRECT Maison Shalom)	Maison Shalom	€1,000,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-07	CRRF DIRECT – Displacement responses through regional cooperation and technical exchange (CRRF DIRECT DRC)	DRC	€800,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-79-08	Protection and Assistance for Burundian Returnees - UNHCR (CRRF DIRECT Protection and Assistance)	UNHCR	€4,000,000 (complete)
Delivering durable solutions to forced displacement in the IGAD region through the implementation of the GCR	T05-EUTF-HOA-REG-80-01	Delivering Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in the IGAD Region Through the Implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR IGAD)	IGAD	€2,800,000
Sudan				
Regional Development and Protection Programme in Sudan: Enhancing alternatives to first and secondary movement from Sudan (RDPP Sudan)	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-01	Support Migrants and Host Communities in improving Access to Safe Water and Sanitation – Eastern Sudan (RDPP SD AICS)	AICS	€2,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-02	RDPP in Sudan: Employment and entrepreneurship development for migrant youth, refugees, asylum seeker and host communities in Khartoum State (RDPP SD UNIDO)	UNIDO	€3,443,200
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-03	RDPP in Sudan: Vocational training for refugees and host communities in Eastern Sudan (RDPP SD GIZ)	GIZ	€2,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-04	RDPP in Sudan: Strengthening Protection Services for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Sudan (RDPP SD UNHCR)	UNHCR	€3,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-05	RDPP in Sudan: RDPP SD Landell Mills	Landell Mills	€1,454,203 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-11-06	RDPP in Sudan: RDPP SD RVO	RVO	€3,000,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-12-02	Strengthening Resilience for IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities in Al Geneina, Beida Sirba, Kerenik – West Darfur (Resilience Darfur SD IMC)	IMC	€4,719,200 (completed)
Strengthening resilience for refugees, IDPs and host communities in Eastern Sudan (Resilience East SD)	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-13-01	Strengthening Resilience for Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in Eastern Sudan (Resilience East SD AICS)	AICS	€11,845,810 (completed)
Integration and mainstreaming of refugee children into the Sudanese education system and improving the quality of education	T05-EUTF-HOA-SD-65-01	Integration and mainstreaming of refugee children into the Sudanese education system (IRCSSES) UNICEF	UNICEF	€24,850,000
Somalia				

Enhancing Somalia's responsiveness to the management and reintegration of mixed migration flows (RE-INTEG)	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-02	Facilitating Sustainable Return Through Laying Foundations for Somalia in the Horn of Africa (RE-INTEG IOM)	IOM	€4,823,088 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-03	Enhancing Somalia's responsiveness to the management and reintegration of mixed migration flows (RE-INTEG UNHCR)	UNHCR	€5,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-04	Durable Solutions for IDPs and Returnees in Somalia (RE-INTEG CARE)	CARE NL	€9,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-05	'Wadajir' – Enhancing durable solutions for and reintegration of displacement affected communities in Somaliland (RE-INTEG WV)	World Vision	€3,911,922 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-06	Innovative durable solutions for IDPs and returnees in Mogadishu through enhanced governance, employment and access to basic and protective services (RE-INTEG UN-Habitat)	UN-Habitat	€9,453,392 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-07	Enhancing Integration of Displacement Affected Communities in Somalia (RE-INTEG CW)	CW	€4,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-08	Durable Solutions and Reintegration Support to Displacement affected communities in Jubbland state of Somalia (RE-INTEG NRC)	NRC	€3,988,007 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-09	Supporting the development and implementation of policies for the return, reintegration and protection of IDPs and refugees (RE-INTEG IDLO)	IDLO	€2,884,702 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-10	Amplifying Durable Solutions in Somalia (ADSS) With Africa's Voices Foundation (RE-INTEG AVF)	AVF	€150,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-13	Enhancing integration of displacement-affected communities in Somalia – Baidoa (RE-INTEG CW 2)	CW	€997,987 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-SO-03-15	Emergency operational response to COVID-19 in Somalia to support the prevention of large-scale community spread (COVID-19 Emergency Response WHO)	WHO	€5,000,000 (completed)
Ethiopia				
Regional Development and Protection Program (RDPP)	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-15-01	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia-Shire Area (RDPP ET IRC)	IRC	€7,939,115 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-15-02	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia-Dollo Ado Area (RDPP ET NRC)	NRC	€7,850,117 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-15-03	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia – Jigjiga Area (RDPP ET Save the Children)	Save the Children	€5,156,015 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-15-04	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia-Bahrale and Aysaita Areas (RDPP ET DCA)	DCA	€3,939,703 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-15-05	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Ethiopia in Urban Areas of Addis Ababa and Shire (RDPP ET Plan)	Plan International	€3,437,562 (completed)
Stimulating economic opportunities and job creation for refugees and host communities in Ethiopia in support of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Ethiopia	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-40-01	Capacity building and technical assistance to CRRF structure and Ethiopian government institutions (CRRF ET UNHCR)	UNHCR	€4,200,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-40-02	Strengthened Socio-Economic Development and Better Employment Opportunities for Refugees and Host Communities in the Jigjiga Area (CRRF ET Job Creation)	Mercy Corps	€10,000,000
Shire Alliance	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-51-01	Shire Alliance: Energy access for host communities and refugees in Ethiopia (Alianza Shire)	AECID	€3,050,000
Ethiopia Job Compact	T05-EUTF-HOA-ET-60-01	Financing agreement Ethiopia Job Compact sector reform and performance contract – budget support (Ethiopia Job Compact)	-	€30,000,000 (completed)
Uganda				
Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP): Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU)	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-07-01	Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU Enabel)	Enabel	€7,900,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-07-02	Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU DRC)	DRC	€9,683,436 (completed)

	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-07-03	Support Programme to the Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SPRS-NU ADA)	ADA	€4,697,021 (completed)
Response to increased demand on Government Service (RISE)	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-39-01	Response to increased demand on government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE GIZ)	GIZ	€10,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-39-02	Response to Increased Demand on Government Service and creation of economic opportunities - Emergency Preparedness (RISE CARE)	CARE	€935,074 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-39-03	Response to increased demand on Government service and creation of economic opportunities in Uganda (RISE ACF)	ACF	€9,000,000 (completed)
Security, Protection and Economic Empowerment (SUPREME) In Uganda	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-01	Strengthening, Protection and Economic Empowerment (SUPREME) in Uganda – Livelihood Component (SUPREME Livelihoods WV)	WV	€9,581,489
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-02	Increased access to justice, improved security and protection of refugees and host communities in northern Uganda (SUPREME JLOS MoJCA)	MoJCA	€4,707,262
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-03	Strengthening Safety, Protection and Peaceful Co-existence for Women and Youth in Northern Uganda (SPACE) (SUPREME SPACE IRRI)	IRRI	€750,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-04	Supporting a Peaceful and Safe Environment in Northern Uganda (SPESE) (SUPREME Justice LWF)	LWF	€648,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-05	Promoting sustainable access to justice for socially deprived women and children in Northern Uganda (SUPREME Justice PRI)	PRI	€519,749 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-06	Strengthening Integrated Systems to Accelerate Access to Gender, Child and Youth Justice (SUPREME JLOS IRC)	IRC	€750,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-68-07	Advancing Peaceful Co-existence & Respect for Human Rights among Refugees & Host Communities in Northern Uganda (SUPREME JLOS KRC)	KRC	€643,500
Response to Increased Environmental Degradation and Promotion of Alternative Energy Sources in Refugee Hosting Districts (RED)	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-83-01	Response to Increased Environmental Degradation and Promotion of Alternative Energy Sources in Refugee Hosting Districts (RED Save the Children)	Save the Children	€5,100,000
	T05-EUTF-HOA-UG-83-02	Restoring and conserving degraded fragile ecosystems for improved Community Livelihoods among the Refugee and Host Communities of West Nile Region and the mid-Albertine Rift (RED UBF)	UBF	€4,600,000
Kenya				
Regional Development and Protection Programme in Kenya: Support to the Kalobeyei Development Programme (RDPP Kenya)	T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-17-01	Regional Development and Protection Programme in Kenya: Support to the Kalobeyei Development Programme (RDPP KE UNHCR)	UNHCR	€14,567,689 (completed)
CRRF: Enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Kenya	T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-69-01	Area-based Livelihoods Initiative Garissa: enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Garissa County (CRRF KE ABLI-G)	DRC	€5,000,000 (completed)
	T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-69-02	CRRF KE Enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host communities (CRRF KE Self-Reliance)	FAO, UNHCR, UN-Habitat, WFP	€27,770,000
Piloting private sector solutions for refugees and host communities in North-West Kenya (Kakuma Kalobeyei Challenge Fund)	T05-EUTF-HOA-KE-58	Kakuma Kalobeyei Challenge Fund (KKCF IFC)	IFC	€4,850,000
Djibouti				
Solutions pérennes pour les populations hôtes, les réfugiés et les migrants les plus vulnérables à Djibouti	T05-EUTF-HoA-DJ-41-01	Solutions pérennes pour les populations hôtes, les réfugiés et les migrants les plus vulnérables au Djibouti (Solutions pérennes WFP)	WFP	€9,070,000
Appui aux réfugiés et communautés d'accueil à Djibouti (CRRF DJ UNHCR)	T05-EUTF-HoA-DJ-70-01	Autonomisation et épanouissement des réfugiés via l'éducation, l'accès aux services de protection sociale et les opportunités économiques (CRRF DJ UNHCR)	UNHCR	€5,500,000 (completed)

