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# Localisation and participation within the rollout of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in Kenya

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# Executive Summary

Kenya formally adopted the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in October 2017. Since then the country has made progress towards its implementation by undertaking self-reliance and inclusion measures for refugees. Under the leadership of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS), Kenya developed a roadmap and, although it has not yet been published, some important milestones have been achieved, including the establishment of technical committees that look into the issues around the CRRF and its implementation by Garissa and Turkana counties. The Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Programme (KISED) in Turkana County has been lauded as an important effort in the realisation of the CRRF. Garissa County has also been developing the Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (GISED), which has since received some seed funding from the European Union.

This rapid review analyses the extent of localisation and participation in the rollout of the CRRF process in Kenya. By focusing on localisation and participation, the review examines the extent to which the initiatives, activities, structures and processes of the CRRF have contributed to progress towards self-reliance and inclusion for refugees in Kenya. The following key findings have emerged from the analysis:

- Despite the restrictive legal environment, a degree of participation of refugees and host communities within the displacement environment existed before the rollout of the CRRF. Participation and localisation have been realised, for example, from the engagement of refugees in the informal-sector businesses in Kenya. There has also been an effort to open up the space for refugees to participate more fully in the economy by, for example, opening accounts with certain banks.
- Some aspects of participation in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya are strong, namely information sharing, consultations at different levels, partnerships involving different stakeholders in the planning process, and decisions and actions that are in concert with and support the process from some stakeholders. The KISED and the draft GISED demonstrate high-level participation and multi-stakeholder engagement in the search for durable solutions. These two interventions have – on paper at least – embraced community participation and ownership of the displacement-affected communities and made conscious efforts at localising the CRRF process. However, these have tended to be top-down processes which have frequently failed to translate into meaningful involvement on the part of displacement-affected communities.
- There exists a disconnect between the desired and the actual in relation to participation. This gap is related to the limited availability of space for participation that leads to ownership on the part of the displacement-affected communities. In turn, it also affects the

efforts to localise. The displacement-affected communities have not been at the centre of the CRRF rollout process, which remains largely top-down. There is therefore a need for effective and meaningful engagement of local actors in order to legitimate the process and make it sustainable.

- There has been a conscious effort to localise the CRRF rollout process. This is demonstrated by the active involvement of the host counties through their governments. Further, as a result of the focus on self-reliance and inclusion measures embedded in the development plans of the hosting counties, the county governments have made implementation of the CRRF a matter of priority.
- Certain stakeholders remain left out or have been minimally involved, thereby negating the spirit behind the whole-of-society approach. Partnership and cooperation have not been fleshed out; this has led to missing out on the 'nuts' and 'bolts' of the partnerships. This has also led to a disjointed rolling out where certain stakeholders, such as the county governments, remain ahead of others. In particular, the involvement of local civil society organisations and groups has been feeble and has negatively affected localisation and participation. This reveals the need to improve and expand on a number of aspects such as the mechanisms for engagement.

The above mentioned initiatives and processes point to positive yet slow developments in the localisation and participation in the CRRF rollout process in Kenya. The rollout process is contributing to positive changes, with a stronger focus on self-reliance, integrated refugee–host community programming, engagement of development actors and a commitment to support stronger participation of refugees and host communities in programming and policy processes (ReDSS, 2018). This review involves a careful examination of the dynamic nature of localisation efforts and the participation of displacement-affected communities in Kenya.

# 1 Introduction

Kenya has been hosting refugees since 1970. At that time, most refugees were from Uganda and did not exceed 15,000 (Wagacha & Guiney, 2008). The trend of refugee arrivals has remained dynamic, experiencing sharp rises, including around 1991, as a result of the collapse of the state in Somalia, during the surge in violence in Somalia in the late 2000s, and during the famine there in 2010–11. Kenya is ranked among the top five refugee-hosting countries in Africa (World Bank, 2019). At the end of March 2020, Kenya hosted 494,585 refugees, primarily from Somalia (53.7 per cent) and South Sudan (24.7 per cent). There are also refugees of other nationalities including Congolese (9 per cent) and Ethiopians (5.8 per cent) as well as persons of concern from Sudan, Rwanda, Eritrea, Burundi and Uganda. Forty-four per cent of the refugees in Kenya reside in the Dadaab camps, 40 per cent in Kakuma, while 16 per cent reside in urban areas (mainly Nairobi) (UNHCR, 2020). Protracted refugee situations on average range from 18 to 26 years (Majok, 2019). For example, in Kenya there are at least two Somali refugee populations: those that fled clan conflicts and state collapse in the early 1990s and those that fled violence during the late 2000s (Lindley, 2011). Protracted refugee situations continue to pose challenges to the search for durable solutions, both at the international and national levels.

In response to protracted refugee situations and increasing displacement figures globally, the UN adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016 (UN, 2016). In addition, the UN also adopted the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and its Annex, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), in December 2018. These instruments together introduced a paradigm shift in the conceptualisation of humanitarian assistance by advocating greater local integration and the promotion of the social and economic independence of refugees in host countries.

In October 2017 Kenya became one of several rollout countries of the CRRF, committing to use the framework as a normative and strategic blueprint for achieving greater self-reliance for refugees and expanding economic opportunities for host communities (Dick & Rudolf, 2019). The commitment to the CRRF follows a longer focus on finding durable solutions for displaced populations in Kenya, including hosting the Special Summit on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia in March 2017, which led to the Nairobi Declaration and Action Plan on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees (NAP) (Dick & Rudolf, 2019). Kenya signed the NAP and by doing so committed to:

- (i) enhance, with the support of the international community, education, training and skills development for refugees to reduce their dependence on humanitarian assistance, and prepare them for gainful employment in host communities and upon return;
- (ii) align domestic laws and policies, including civil documentation, in line with refugee status under the 1951 Refugee Convention obligations in order to enable refugees to access gainful employment and self-reliance; and
- (iii) progressively advance

alternative arrangements to refugee camps and facilitate the free movement of refugees and their integration into national development plans and access to services. (World Bank, 2019, p 10)

Among the notable efforts in Kenya to implement the CRRF is the establishment of the KISED (2016–30) undertaken by the County Government of Turkana in Kenya and UNHCR and supported by donors and partners. The nascent GISED (2020–22) is another practical effort at integrating refugees into County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and comprises measures to strengthen healthcare, education, water supplies, sanitation and hygiene, spatial planning, infrastructure, agriculture, livestock breeding, environmental protection, sustainable energy, the private sector and the protection of vulnerable groups (World Bank, 2019). The success of these initiatives, alongside the intentions of the CRRF, is unfolding and yet to be fully documented and analysed. However, in the interim, an appraisal of certain parameters of the process, such as localisation and participation, can already be offered.

In April 2020, the Research and Evidence Facility (REF), a project of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa (Horn of Africa window), undertook a rapid review of the implementation of the CRRF in relation to localisation and refugee and host community participation in ensuring the successful rollout and sustainability of the CRRF in Kenya. This review builds on fieldwork conducted as part of a larger study carried out by the REF in 2019, the *Comprehensive Refugee Responses in the Horn of Africa: Regional Leadership on Education, Livelihoods and Durable Solutions* (REF, 2020). Completed in January 2020, the larger study analysed the extent of implementation of the Nairobi Process and the CRRF and the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda.

## 2 Methodology and organisation of the report

This rapid review was undertaken between April and June 2020 and draws from extant literature and field data. The KISED P document (2016), a draft version of the forthcoming GISED P, and other policy and programmatic documents and processes were also analysed. Interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in Nairobi, Turkana and Garissa during the REF's earlier study (listed in Annex 1 of this review) were further analysed along the themes of localisation and participation.

The report is organised as follows: Section 3 analyses current levels of participation in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya, providing information on the strong as well as the weak points of participation and the wider impact this has created. The section utilises Sherry Arnstein's ladder of participation model, which is helpful in the analysis of the participation of populations in societal processes. The section also problematises the mechanisms for engaging refugees and host populations in the CRRF process in Kenya. Specifically, the processes in the two hosting counties of Garissa and Turkana, as well as the national process, are analysed. Section 4 brings out the perceptions of displacement-affected communities and governance stakeholders in the CRRF process. The section also assesses the ways in which the focus on the social development of communities has shaped further participation in the comprehensive responses to displacement. Section 5 speculates on the possibility for fostering a joined-up approach seeking to create a balance between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' tendencies expressed at various levels. This is done with a focus on how this can improve on the localisation of the CRRF process. Lastly, Section 6 suggests possibilities for learning – both from other CRRF rollout countries and from the Kenyan context – and presents a set of recommendations for future policy and programming.



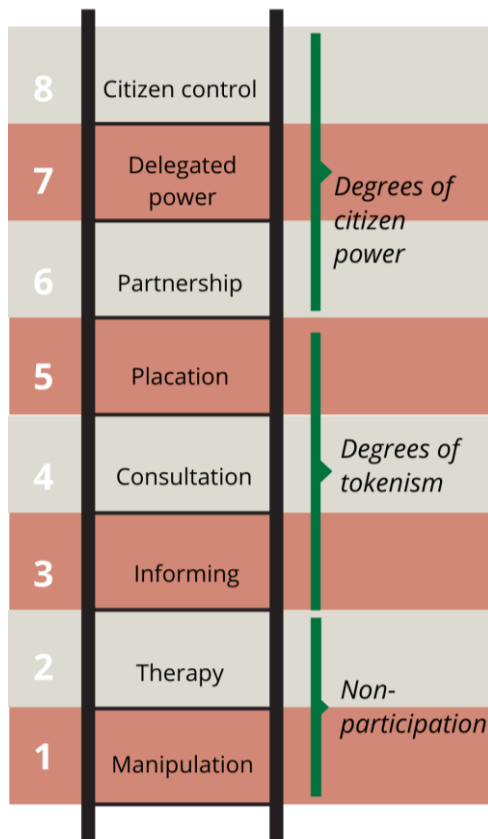
# 3 Unpacking ‘participation’: the current framework and the transformative potential of participation

The available literature suggests that overall, there is strong participation at multiple levels in the CRRF process in Kenya, some of which builds on existing aspects of participation and integration that were taking place before its rollout. Such participation is demonstrated by the multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and multi-lateral nature of the CRRF process. However, it is important to unpack the quality and functions of participation for displacement-affected communities in Kenya, in order to identify examples of good practice and areas for improvement.

## 3.1 The ladder of participation

Analytically, Sherry Arnstein’s (1969) eight-rung ladder of participation is a useful way to unpack how meaningful participation is unfolding in the CRRF rollout in Kenya, and to use as a framework for identifying what best practice may look like. In the ladder of participation Arnstein proposes the following rungs: 1) manipulation; 2) therapy; 3) informing; 4) consultation; 5) placation; 6) partnership; 7) delegation; and 8) citizen control. This typology emphasises people’s power in determining the planning processes in a city and has been widely used to analyse the demands for power in processes involving cities, businesses, urban renewal programmes, anti-poverty programmes, public schools, model cities and churches. It emphasises the different forms that empowerment through participation may take and how these may influence the end product or service.

**Figure 1: The ladder of citizen participation**



In this ladder the eight rungs are further clustered into three major categories ascending from non-participation, placed at the lower echelon of the ladder, to tokenism placed, at the middle echelon of the ladder, and finally to people’s control at the highest echelon. The highest echelon is the most desired and connotes that participants are empowered and have control over the planning processes. Higher levels of participation translate into an increased degree of decision-making clout, where participants have a voice and can enter into a partnership in which they are able to negotiate and engage with power holders. Addressing issues of localisation and participation through this prism enables one to determine whether the effort to localise and make participation possible has been meaningful and the outcome this may have yielded.

Source: Reproduction of original in Arnstein (1969).

### 3.2 Current levels of participation in Kenya: positive planning

The protracted presence of refugees in Kenya has meant that the socioeconomic integration of refugees pre-dates the CRRF rollout process. Previous studies have revealed that some economic and social integration was already taking place (Royal Danish Embassy, Norwegian Embassy & Government of Kenya, 2010). The engagement of refugees in the camps and in urban areas has been predominantly in the informal sector, where they have been involved in small business activities such as selling vegetables, food, jewellery, handicrafts, clothes and other accessories. In other cases, refugees have been able to find employment as hotel workers, tailors, barbers, cyber- attendants in internet cafés, and drivers (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2017). The following quotes, from focus group discussions with host community members in Ifo, one of the Dadaab camps, and refugee leaders in Kakuma, illustrate some of these aspects of participation:

When you go to the market, they buy animals, milk etc from us. We live together, intermarry and do great business together. (FGD with host community members in Ifo Camp)

We can access public schools in other areas outside of Turkana and are allowed to go if we can pay or get scholarships. This year we received the Minister of Education and county officials. They send education officers to inspect the schools. This was happening before but now it is more frequent. We have Equity Bank, which is interacting with us. The majority of us have opened up accounts and they came in to assist children performing well in schools and sponsored them. They give internships. They came to Kakuma in 2014. (FGD with refugee leaders in Kakuma)

These examples illustrate how refugee and host communities were already finding ways to widen participation in markets, employment, education and banking, even within a context of legal restrictions. Before the CRRF, there were efforts to open up the space for participation by allowing refugees to access public schools and frequently sending in government officials for consultations on matters relating to education. An increase in these efforts has been registered since the rollout process. At the same time various financial institutions, such as Equity Bank, have facilitated the opening of accounts from the time of the CRRF rollout and this implies improved participation in economic activities.

In relation to the CRRF process in Kenya, this review revealed that there is information sharing, consultation at different levels, partnership involving different stakeholders in the planning process, decisions and actions which are in concert with and support the process from stakeholders. The Kenya Comprehensive Refugee Programme (KCRP) (an all-inclusive planning process and complementary programming) inaugurated in 2013, takes into account the needs of refugees and host communities, prioritises activities and overall funding requirements of refugee operations in the country, and outlines the devolution of government and the establishment of CIDPs. The mode of operation of the KCRP process is indicative of the rise in stakeholder participation in the refugee/host community environment. In the same vein, high levels of participation are demonstrated by the increased activities of UNHCR, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies and the Government of Kenya, who continue to work with county government authorities to promote peaceful coexistence within and around the camps by implementing projects targeting environmental rehabilitation, water and infrastructure, and addressing energy requirements through partnerships at national and camp levels (UNHCR, 2015).

The development and implementation of KISEDIP demonstrates high levels of participation and multi-stakeholder engagement in the search for durable solutions. Through KISEDIP, community participation and ownership is promoted through the increased role of refugees and the host community in the prioritisation of needs, identification of service delivery and livelihoods interventions, and in monitoring the implementation of projects (UNHCR, 2018). The programme also incorporates an increased community voice and role in budget decision making and, in the design, and implementation of development interventions (UNHCR, 2016). KISEDIP is conceptualised around the Local Economic Development (LED) approach, which facilitates collaboration between public, business and NGO partners (UNHCR, 2016). The KISEDIP process is led by the government and runs in tandem with other national plans such as Vision 2030. An urban planning process embracing community engagement and consultation, taking into account the integration needs of refugees and

the pastoralist communities for a joint vision, has also been initiated (UNHCR, 2016).

The draft GISED P takes into account the entire population of Garissa County, including refugees and asylum seekers. GISED P is the result of a series of government-led formal and informal discussions and consultations involving persons of concern, UN country teams, civil society and the private sector in developing the ten-year comprehensive multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder initiative. All in all, GISED P indicates that the process has involved more than 50 organisations and institutions. The stakeholders were engaged in more than 50 consultative meetings at various levels. The plan takes into account the local cultural, economic and social dynamics in Garissa. Further, it is also pegged on the existing commitments towards the implementation of the CRRF in Kenya at the national and county levels (GoK, 2020). Although it is too early to determine the outcomes of GISED P, the high levels of involvement of stakeholders in the drafting process may serve as a pathway to the successful localisation of the CRRF in Garissa County.

### 3.3 Problematising current participation: towards meaningful mechanisms for engaging displacement-affected communities

The success of the implementation of the CRRF in Kenya lies in the creation of meaningful mechanisms for engaging both refugees and host communities. This begins from the inclusive engagement in the visioning to the actual implementation of programmes at both local and national levels. The draft GISED P plan states that it is a government-coordinated process based on local dynamics. The plan also indicates that it is the result of a process that involved all partners, including state institutions, civil society, the UN system, the private sector, asylum seekers, refugees and the host community. Through such a process, the outcome is collective because each stakeholder makes unique contributions based on their capacity and expertise and complementing the whole-of-society approach. While GISED P has not yet been officially launched in Garissa County, the CRRF rollout process has already begun. Interview participants from implementing organisations in Dadaab, as well as from donor organisations based in Nairobi, alluded to relatively high levels of involvement in the education sector. In their view, this level of participation is also contributing to decision making at higher levels.

On the one hand, the policy mechanisms examined above include strong commitments to participation in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya, with positive examples in the area of education. On the other hand, interviews conducted with refugee leaders, as well as additional literature, point to gaps in meaningful participation. Applying Arnstein's (1969, p 217) ladder framework to this context, it is evident that levels of participation remain at the lower echelons of 'non-participation' or 'tokenism' in that participants "may indeed hear and be heard" but, this is the extent of their participation, "they lack the power to ensure that their views will be heeded by the powerful". Our interviews suggest that the space for genuine participation remains constricted and that the objective of participation activities has tended to be to inform displacement-affected communities about decisions already made rather than to involve them in planning and decision making. This points to a disconnect between the desired and actual participation derived from the process. For example, in Dadaab, refugee leaders blame low levels of participation on the low levels of funding

(FGD with refugee leaders in Hagadera), perhaps also suggesting that the availability of more funding would have resulted in a higher number of meetings with more representatives, hence higher participation.

In a 2018 study, Samuel Hall found that the involvement of refugees in decision making and programme design within KISED P was activity-based rather than a bottom-up arrangement. This led to instances of tokenistic participation, where host community representatives and refugee leaders were invited to meetings with pre-determined outcomes and refugees did not participate directly in high-level discussions or decision making. Under this arrangement, the agency of refugees is overlooked leading to programmes that are not responsive to their needs (Samuel Hall, 2018). The donor community also criticised the gap between the refugees and the agencies implementing programmes, as evidenced by the quote below (REF, 2020). To the question of whether the CRRF process has contributed to refugee and host community participation, the response suggests that there is not yet much meaningful participation, or that, where it has been present it was the same voices heard, and therefore the representativeness was questionable because of the lack of diversity.

I don't think it has [contributed to refugee and host community participation]. There has not been enough participation and where there is, it is always the same voices heard. (Interview with representative from donor community, 7 August 2019)

In general, the tokenistic participation of host communities and refugee populations takes these stakeholders through the “empty ritual of participation” without “the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process” (Arnstein, 1969, p 216). This unhinges the legitimacy of the process, which may in turn lead to the inability of the host community and refugee population to hold decision makers and service providers to account. Applying Arnstein's ladder framework, it is evident that refugees' and host communities' levels of power and decision-making clout remains low. This subsequently denies the process the legitimacy which would otherwise come through an evolved partnership, delegated power and refugee and host community control. It also points to the dynamics of power relationships in the CRRF process in Kenya.

In sum, the inclusion and involvement of donors, national government, county governments, UNHCR, other UN agencies, NGOs, civil society and the private sector in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya is strong and contributes to localisation. This is seen through the numerous programmatic implementation decisions made so far, which have led to the actualisation of programmes such as KISED P and GISED P. However, beyond high-level meetings and consultations, displacement-affected communities are yet to be adequately engaged (ReDSS, 2018). With this in mind, the meaningful involvement of refugees and host communities requires a rethink. Policy and programmes should put refugee and host communities at the centre of design, decision-making and implementation processes, so that their resources – including tradition and culture, values, habits, attitudes, social institutions, economy and power structures – can best inform the said processes. Once this is achieved, any interventions by other stakeholders can become catalysts to processes owned by displacement-affected communities. This subsequently releases external stakeholders' power and facilitates partnership between the displacement-affected communities and the national and local

governments, as well as other stakeholders. These shifts would mark the beginning of movement towards the top echelon in Arnstein's ladder.

This is not to say that no progress has been made at all. As a UNHCR staff member in Dadaab suggests in the following quote, the CRRF rollout in Garissa County did incorporate some ideas from displacement-affected communities:

The ideas from the ground have influenced decision making. We started with discussions from below which then informed the decisions at the high level. (Interview with UNHCR representative in Dadaab)

This level of involvement is consistent with what is stated as the process of GISED. However, the analysis above has illustrated a disconnect between written commitments to participation and the opinions of decision makers, and the perceptions of displacement-affected communities themselves. Part of this disconnect may therefore be around communication and transparency. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC, 2017) points out that such a process needs to empower refugees and host communities so that they have a voice, and that this can only be attained when there is transparency in the communication among all stakeholders. It further suggests closing the feedback loop, so that the demands and feedback of all stakeholders are channelled through a decision-making process that includes all – including those living in displacement-affected communities – leading to policy and implementation decisions. There should also be recognition that these decisions are not static, but in themselves provide a new basis for new demands and therefore require the ongoing participation of displacement-affected communities.<sup>1</sup> This proposed model of multi-directional and continuous engagement may help to disrupt the tokenistic approach criticised by host-community and refugee leaders in this study, perceptions which are further analysed in the subsequent section. It may also help UNHCR, government, and other decision makers to gauge the changing perceptions and needs of displacement-affected communities in a more nuanced, useful way.

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<sup>1</sup> Inspired by David Easton's (1957) work on the analysis of political systems.

# 4 Perceptions of displacement-affected communities and governance stakeholders in Dadaab and Kakuma of localisation and participation efforts

Understanding the perception of both displacement-affected communities and governance stakeholders of the CRRF process is useful in determining whether efforts at localisation and participation are gaining ground. This can help improve the process and ensure it is responsive to the experienced realities. This section delves into the findings on perceptions from the displacement-affected communities and governance stakeholders. The last part of the section analyses how the focus on social development has enhanced participation.

## 4.1 Perceptions of displacement-affected communities

A UNHCR representative interviewed in Dadaab (see Section 3.3) described how local concerns and ideas are taken into account: “The ideas from the ground have influenced decision making. We started with discussions from below which then informed the decisions at the high level.” Nevertheless, the displacement-affected communities consulted in this study generally had mixed feelings about efforts to realise participation and localisation in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya. Involvement of refugees in decision making was viewed to be on the decline in Hagadera Camp at Dadaab (FGD with refugee leaders in Hagadera). This sentiment was echoed by host community leaders in Ifo Camp at Dadaab (FGD with refugee leaders in Ifo), who called for frequent meetings with UNHCR, which they recalled had happened in previous years.

Before 2017, there were monthly meetings, now we have no meetings due to lack of funding. (FGD with refugee leaders in Hagadera)

The curtailment of consultation meetings may have led to the perception that the refugees’ voices are no longer being sought. Instead, people felt that they were only informed about projects when they were ready to start. In Kalobeyei, the host community was called to the launch of KISEDPA and given booklets to read. This meant that they did not influence decision making. Community members said that changes in programmes resulting from policy change within operating agencies were only communicated as an afterthought. This means that the beneficiaries are seldom involved in the processes that lead to these changes. They also felt there was a lack of contact with officials in Nairobi, who, in their opinion, rely on reports sent to them, which may be inaccurate.

We are not involved in decision making. We are just informed of projects. Organisations benefit and suppress the voice of refugees. (FGD with refugee leaders in Ifo Camp)

I don't know how UNHCR does its work – we are told we are given this programme as the hosts but how [is it] approved? You can't bring policy of Nairobi to Turkana. (FGD with host community leaders in Kalobeyei)

Refugee leaders in Ifo Camp also complained about the lack of transparency. They indicated that, when their leaders were called to meetings, they were coerced into submitting to decisions already made. They cited the relocation exercise from Dadaab refugee camp to Kakuma refugee camp as an example.

Government officials coerce us to [attend] meetings so we don't contribute due to fear. Head of RAS made it clear that no one was to talk. Head of Operation and RAS are hard on us. We were called in a meeting only to be addressed not to talk. Leaders were told to go and inform their people about relocation to Kakuma. (FGD with refugee leaders in Ifo Camp)

At the same time, some of the interviewees indicated that they were involved in decisions taken on their behalf. For example, the host community in Hagadera indicated that their ideas were taken on board.

Yes, we do participate in meetings. We come together and discuss our relations with refugees. Some time ago we had a discussion on the change of the currency and we were concerned about how refugees will be able to access banks etc to be able to transact their money. We were advocating for them. (FGD with host community leaders in Hagadera)

Yes. Our ideas are taken on board. Example is that we have championed for refugees to be included in education, etc. (FGD with host community leaders in Hagadera)

This was particularly because the local community do participate in meetings where they discuss their relations with the refugee community. However, it is important to analyse the extent to which involving displacement-affected communities is an exercise in satisfying certain organisational requirements around participation to maintain face value, and the extent to which it is intended to empower the latter to take control. As shown by the following quotation, while there may be a sense of participation in meetings, there is less certainty on how the contributions of displacement-affected communities influence decision making.

We had discussions and gave feedback but we didn't have a decision-making function ... No changes ... you have meetings with partners and they come with their agenda and we discuss this. It shouldn't be like that and they don't make changes. For example, they tell us what they will do for shelter and even if we disagree, we have to accept it ... We told the UN that we have our priorities and the UN said they are setting the agenda. (FGD with refugee leaders in Ifo Camp)



## 4.2 Perceptions of governance stakeholders

The CRRF rollout in Turkana County began in 2016 with a preparatory stage. Currently Phase I (2018–22) is underway at an estimated cost of US\$5 million (UNHCR, 2018). In Garissa County the process to establish GISEDIP started in 2019 and culminated in the draft plan in the same year (UNHCR, 2019). The European Union had already given a pledge of €5 million in 2019 (Citizen News, 2019). Local governance stakeholders in the two major refugee hosting counties, Garissa and Turkana, opined that the CRRF should follow the CIDP context and should take care of basic needs such as food, water and health. Communities in these two counties have coexisted with refugee populations and have traditionally shared in the provision of services such as education. In the past, the government has offered certain services to schools, such as assessment, registration and special needs, as well as carrying out capacity building for education officers (interview with government representative in Turkana). The CRRF therefore seeks to bolster these already existing efforts. The rollout process should give prominence to the counties and their governments and should be embedded in the fabric of the county governance. It is their opinion that clear rules of engagement need to be put in place between the national government, county government, UNHCR and UN agencies and donors, as well as all other stakeholders. In agreement with the above, county government officials in Garissa noted:

We are not giving much interest into the whole thing because we are not the owners. It is like we are being told that it will go on without us. Managed from state house. There is this one of integrated development framework we are doing with UNHCR which will be out soon [referring to the Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan].  
(Interview with Garissa County representative)

The officials from Garissa opined that the county structure is best placed to articulate the hopes, desires and fears of the communities in relation to the CRRF rollout. This is because they “are representatives of the host communities” as well as “the trustees of the communities” (interview with Garissa County representative). As it is presently, the CRRF rollout appears as if it is a push from the international community and local actors do not have any influence on the process. A major obstacle to the implementation of the CRRF, however, is the security dimension to the refugee situation adopted by the national government. Although at its nascent stages, the local governance stakeholders have great hopes for the success of the CRRF process but insist that it must take into account the local dynamics and be managed by locals. This is evidenced by the two governors of Garissa and Turkana taking the frontline in championing the success of the initiation and the rollout process.

## 4.3 The focus on social development of communities and how this shapes further public participation in comprehensive responses to development

The overall goal of KISEDIP is to boost the local economy by enabling the environment and building skills/capabilities for refugees and host communities in Turkana West to increase their self-reliance, access inclusive national service systems and successfully function in their new market environment

(UNHCR, 2018). As already mentioned in Section 3, the available documentation suggests that there is information sharing, consultations at different levels, partnership involving different stakeholders in the planning process, decisions and actions that are in concert, and there is support for the KISED process among some stakeholders. This high-level participation implies some meaningful input into the comprehensive responses to displacement. As argued in the REF study of 2020, this is the result of previous processes that predate the CRRF process. For example, the ability of the local population in Kalobeyi to request accommodation, school places and jobs from the national and international aid organisations in Turkana (Dick & Rudolf, 2019) exemplifies high levels of participation that are the result of earlier efforts aimed at localisation and improving participation and which weave into the CRRF process. Betts et al (2019) showed that residents of Kalobeyi have achieved slightly higher levels of dietary diversity, food consumption, calorie intake and food security as a result of their engagement in kitchen gardens. Social cohesion and refugee–host relations have also improved. In a study conducted in Dadaab in 2019 on value chains, the International Labour Organization (ILO) noted that there is optimism with the CRRF process in relation to greater economic participation for both refugees and host communities at the county and national levels (ILO, 2019).

Subsequently, this means that the overall goal of the CRRF rollout aimed at attaining refugee and host community self-reliance and inclusion in the national and county dynamics, though nascent, is unfolding and making a wider impact. It also implies that the engagement of displacement-affected communities in this range of initiatives continues to shape public participation in the comprehensive responses to displacement.

## 5 Fostering a joined-up approach to balance ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ tendencies and improve localisation

Renewed debate on localising humanitarian assistance was triggered by the UN Secretary General’s call at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, urging that humanitarian action be made as ‘local as possible’ and ‘international as necessary’ (Barbelet, 2018, p 1), as well as put people at the centre. The ensuing debate and initiatives have registered different interpretations by different actors. Most definitions of localisation allude to the need to recognise, respect, strengthen, recalibrate, reinforce or return some type of ownership to local and national actors (Barbelet, 2018). At its core, localisation refers to a shift towards more support for and maximisation of the role of local, national and regional actors in humanitarian action. The process denotes a shift in the sector’s power dynamics, culture, financing and incentive structures that have traditionally closed and centralised the sector and thereby discouraged the engagement of local and national actors. Once made, this ‘intentional shift’ addresses these inherent barriers and translates into local ownership that is informed by the complexities of the socio-cultural contexts of humanitarian action, and accompanied by the complementarity principle that openly recognises the capacities of all actors – international, regional, national and local (ICVA & HPG, 2016).

Localising the CRRF process is key to the success of the whole-of-society approach. As illustrated in the previous section, and supporting the findings of the larger REF study of 2020, perceptions on ownership of the CRRF process are mixed. The CRRF process remains a matter of high-level meetings, with a lack of meaningful engagement from the bottom up (REF, 2020, p 34). While there are efforts to engage a great number of stakeholders, there also exists a disconnect in the involvement of stakeholders, where sections of stakeholders have been side-lined from the discussions and decision-making process. In cases where refugees have been selected to participate in discussions, their representativeness has been questioned, because selection has sometimes been done based on social, economic and political capital, thereby leaving out vulnerable groups (REF, 2020). The mixed reactions also point to inadequacies in the mechanisms for coordination and inclusion in the CRRF process at the national and local levels and hence have implications for localisation.

Some interviewees supported the view that there has been good and progressive coordination between the national and county governments and the implementing partners in the two counties of Garissa and Turkana. This view suggests that there are efforts to give voice to as many

stakeholders as possible and thereby localise and make the process participative. In these interviewees' view coordination has improved and become more inclusive. There is, however, a need to bring more participants on board.

We began the discussions with few organisations and now more and more are getting involved. Even communication has improved. We are developing frameworks with the county and national government to ensure this works best. The one in Kakuma is working well. We have gone to Kakuma to do benchmarking. If people can move freely, work etc. Here they cannot move past Hagadera and we want to change that. We want to develop a homegrown process. (Interview with key informant, Dadaab)

There is also the view that certain core ministries at the national level have not featured in the process, despite controlling critical aspects of governance.

At the national level, however, there is need to expand coordination to the Ministry of Planning and other lead ministries to help unpack solutions. (Interview with key informant, Nairobi)

The absence of such ministries has a significant impact on the decisions made at meetings and suggests that there is a gap in terms of the diversity of stakeholders involved. A section of interviewees also suggested that the process is still very fragmented and there is not yet a joined-up approach that brings together stakeholders' representative of Kenyan diversity.

It is about bringing everyone together to make it practical and have one common agenda. As it is right now the approach is still fragmented and this could be attributed to the nascent stage it is at. It is about coming up with a common response. We are not yet there though. (Interview with UNHCR representative, Dadaab)

For example, while the contribution of the private sector is deemed important in this process, there have not been sufficient discussions with them or meaningful inclusion in the process.

We have not engaged too much. We went to a conference and people were participating and we had only two people from [the] private sector but the meeting exhibited a basic lack of understanding of the private sector. Once it came to writing the policy recommendations there was a variance and this is not projected in the subsequent discussion. (Interview with representative from the private sector)

The above gaps call for fleshing out the whole-of-society approach promoted in the CRRF. The whole-of-society approach is a key pillar in the CRRF, which calls for enhanced, comprehensive, predictable and sustainable responses in the search for durable solutions. In addition, it aims for a multi-stakeholder approach that includes national and local authorities, international organisations, international financial institutions, civil society partners (including faith-based organisations, diaspora organisations and academia), the private sector, the media, refugees, the host community, development partners and volunteer groups (UN, 2016, paragraph 69 and Annex 1, paragraph 2). Importantly, partnership and cooperation are key drivers of this approach; however, this rapid review has shown that there exists a gap in implementing these ways of working. For example, an

interview with a representative of an international organisation in Nairobi revealed that critical ministries, including the Ministry of Planning, needed to take a more prominent role in order to “expand coordination” and ensure that “strong ministries participate in the coordination of refugee affairs”. The 2020 REF study also indicated that “only a handful of ministries had actively taken on additional responsibilities with the Ministry of Education at the forefront” (REF, 2020, p 32). This could lead to a lack of comprehensiveness from government, given the fractional approach to the rollout. Enhancement, comprehensiveness, predictability and the sustainability of refugee responses can only be achieved if there is a deliberate effort to include refugee responses in all policies, which requires all ministries to systematically include refugees’ issues as part and parcel of their concerns. In order to be meaningfully implemented, this would require appropriate budget allocation and clearer lines of accountability, as indicated below.

Inclusion means a shift in budget allocations – as well as entrusting money to the GoK [Government of Kenya] to provide these services but at the same time making GoK accountable for the same. In this way we make the intervention sustainable and able to be mainstreamed in, say, 5-year time period. (Interview with representative of an international organisation)

In this way the entire national and county government system would be better placed to achieve a common goal through an integrated government response. This can only be achieved when each ministry takes into account the implications of the decisions and omissions they make, seeks synergies and avoids negative impacts to the key pillars of the CRRF through policy coherence. It also involves bringing on board institutions and groups outside government. Further, it requires building trust, common ethics and a cohesive structure among all stakeholders. This is in line with the CRRF call to mobilise additional actors and resources such as the private sector in the spirit of ‘leaving no one behind’. Including civil society partners (such as faith-based organisations, diaspora organisations and academia), the private sector, host communities and other local groups will further contribute to localising the CRRF, since these groups bring on board critical contributions to the process based on the experiences and networks they have, as well as the capacity to disseminate information on the CRRF, thereby helping to complete the feedback loop identified as a key action in Section 4.

# 6 Conclusions and recommendations

Genuine localisation and participation have the potential to transform the CRRF rollout process in Kenya by enabling the development of meaningful partnerships, and by placing displacement-affected communities alongside local governance stakeholders, national government, civil society organisations and others, as crucial actors – rather than beneficiaries without agency. By ensuring localisation and participation, the whole-of-society approach is attainable. The CRRF rollout process has achieved important milestones. These achievements are evident through the planning and implementation so far of KISED P and the planning of GISED P. In the two rollout counties there is evidence of efforts to include stakeholders and to develop a common vision. There is also evidence of enthusiasm on the part of the county governments to implement the process by first integrating refugee issues into CIDPs.

However, this rapid review has also identified significant shortfalls to meaningful localisation and participation of displacement-affected communities in the rollout of the CRRF in Kenya. While the evidence reviewed illustrates interest on the part of the national and county governments to put in place coordination and inclusion mechanisms at the national and county levels, the process remains incomplete. More needs to be done to flesh out the operational dimensions of the whole-of-society approach in order to arrive at the full realisation of the CRRF process. Operational decisions will need to leverage actors with an interest in and momentum for whole-of-society approaches (particularly county governments), while remaining sensitive to the wider political context of the securitisation of refugee presence in Kenya (as evidenced through announcements to close Dadaab, for example).

While some aspects of the CRRF rollout are based on the specific political economy of Kenya, there are lessons to be learned that may be useful to other contexts, particularly elsewhere in the Horn of Africa. Similarly, there are key lessons to be reviewed in the Kenyan context from the more than a dozen countries that have begun to roll out the CRRF since 2017. A detailed investigation into the extent to which displacement-affected communities in these examples feel involved in policy and programme decisions is outside of the scope of this report. However, that these examples are grounded in principles including freedom of movement, the right to work and the value of socioeconomic integration, suggests that refugees are included (to some degree) as active stakeholders to be supported, rather than as humanitarian aid recipients. On this basis, examples of possibilities for learning from other rollout countries include:

- As part of the presidential pledges made at the Leaders' Summit in 2016 following the adoption of the New York Declaration of 2016, new Refugee Laws in Djibouti came into force in 2017. These laws streamlined refugee status determination procedures and granted more opportunities for socioeconomic integration. The new laws also facilitate improved access to social services such as healthcare, education and employment opportunities (UNHCR, 2017). These steps depart from an earlier situation of encampment in Djibouti and have gone a long way to facilitating self-reliance and the inclusion of refugees. In the Kenyan context, national level advocacy by the Donor Working Group on the importance of resuscitating the stalled Refugee Bill in parliament is critical and can draw on the case of Djibouti. Support for local organisations lobbying for the resumption of this process is also crucial.
- In January 2019 Ethiopia passed a law that gave almost one million refugees the right to work and live outside the camps. It is hoped this move will provide more dignity for refugees and reduce reliance on foreign aid, as well as fostering refugees' inclusion in Ethiopian society (Balla, 2019). The 'Jobs Compact', an agreement between the Government of Ethiopia and international partners (the World Bank, DFID, the European Investment Bank and the EU) has gone a long way in supporting Ethiopia's pledge to provide jobs to refugees within the framework of the CRRF (Senidu, 2017). The jobs compact aims to support the industrialisation, employment and refugee policies of the Ethiopian government towards the realisation of decent jobs for Ethiopian nationals and refugees (EUTF, nd). Initially implemented in Jordan in 2016, the jobs compact is part of the agreements between donors and governments that host refugees, and is actualised through grants, concessional loans and other incentives, and aimed at stimulating economic development and enabling host countries to provide basic services to refugees and local populations (Barbelet et al, 2018). Learning from the experiences in Jordan and Ethiopia, and in addition to the suggestion above, the Government of Kenya should develop wider initiatives that facilitate large numbers of refugees' full participation in the economy, going beyond the Kakuma Kalobeyei Challenge Fund initiated by the International Finance Corporation.
- Uganda's refugees and asylum seekers are entitled to work. They have freedom of movement and can access Ugandan social services, such as health and education. Refugees in Uganda are either self-settled or live in organised settlements in designated lands. Regulatory policies such as the 2006 Refugees Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations embody progressive provisions that are socially and economically enabling to refugees. For example, more than 78 per cent of refugees in rural settlements are engaged in agricultural activities, while 43 per cent are actively engaged in the labour market of their host communities (World Bank, 2016). This study found that, despite the effort to contribute to the local economy, the space for refugees in Kenya remains constricted. As Kenya is encouraged to resuscitate the stalled Refugee Bill, additional advocacy by the donor community, as well as from local, national and regional organisations, should be mounted to demand more space for the inclusion of refugees in the local political economy of the country.

Although nascent, the CCRF rollout process in Kenya is already bringing to the fore examples of best practice. The following recommendations are presented below.

- A major constraint to the realisation of the rollout process in Kenya is the encampment policy. Further policy formulation that assures increased participation of displacement-affected communities in the local livelihood processes is needed. This may begin with the development of frameworks that facilitate active participation, as well as the meaningful engagement of displacement-affected communities in jobs, education and livelihood activities so as to increase their agency. The Donor Working Group is critical in conducting national-level advocacy to address policy constraints and encourage parliament and the executive to ease the encampment policy and gradually open up the space for the participation of refugee communities. Support for local organisations lobbying for policy reform is critical to bolster efforts by the Donor Working Group. IGAD should also support the development, enactment and monitoring of these processes.
- Communities need better engagement about what the CRRF means in practice for them and what these transitions would actually look like. There is a need to improve the relay of communication and public information about the CRRF process. This study has revealed that there is a clear gap relating to the transmitting of information. It is only in this way that meaningful engagement of displacement-affected communities can happen. UN Agencies and national and local government authorities should consider implementing this recommendation.
- Similarly, there is a need to close the feedback loop by establishing clear channels for displacement-affected communities' feedback and priorities to be communicated to decision makers. As well as being multi-directional, feedback should be ongoing, in recognition that decisions are not static but rather create new conditions, priorities and demands from affected communities. Projects supporting KISED and GISED may employ a range of mechanisms including SMS and mobile technology, focus group discussions, questionnaires, one-on-one interviews, community forums and suggestion boxes to ensure that even the most vulnerable are included. Closing the feedback loop by reporting back to displacement-affected communities and other stakeholders on the changes that have been made (or not made, including a justification for such decisions) is also critical. Finally, regularising the process of participation must occur *prior* to project implementation, so that communities and other stakeholders are clear from the outset the mechanisms they may use to hold government authorities, UN agencies and implementing partners to account throughout the lifespan of programmes. UN Agencies and government authorities should be encouraged to embrace mechanisms that ensure accountability to affected populations.
- In relation to the above recommendation, this review reiterates the need to incorporate refugees and host communities into the planning, implementation and monitoring of the CRRF rollout process, as recommended in the earlier REF study of the CRRF in Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia and Uganda. This must incorporate displacement-affected communities into the programming of activities by donors as well as by implementing agencies right from the start of projects. One way of doing this is to adhere to the principles and framework of



commitments made by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC, 2012), which commits to empowering displacement-affected populations to play active roles in processes that affect them. The commitments framework encompasses improved participation, information provision, feedback and complaints handling. The role of IGAD in monitoring this process should take prominence.

- UN agencies, implementing partners, and national and county governments also need to engage more with grassroots organisations based in Garissa and Turkana to ensure greater participation and localisation of the CRRF process of the displacement-affected communities. This can be done by widening the space for their participation in consultative meetings related to the CRRF. Such involvement should be wary of always inviting the same voices to speak: a key finding of this review is that, where consultations on the CRRF rollout have taken place, to date these have tended to rely on the same voices rather than seeking more diverse perspectives.
- In the effort to localise and increase participation, special emphasis should be given to women, youth and vulnerable groups who have traditionally been kept on the periphery in humanitarian and development programming, despite their specific needs that may otherwise remain unmet in the rollout process.
- Above all, there is a need to synchronise top-down and bottom up ways of working, to harmonise all interventions and to improve coordination of the efforts currently underway. Existing platforms bringing together government ministries, UNHCR and other UN agencies, local and national NGOs, representatives from refugee and host communities and the private sector should be strengthened so as to improve coordination of CRRF efforts. This will facilitate partnerships, ownership and the active participation of multiple stakeholders in the rollout of the CRRF, and help bring to life the whole-of-society approach necessary for the realisation of durable solutions for displaced populations in Kenya.
- Stakeholders in the CRRF rollout process also need to come together to deliberate on the issues that underpin the whole-of-society approach, such as the principles of partnership and cooperation. This may work best at the KISED and GISED Steering Committees and cascaded down to the thematic working groups led by the county governments. Embedding these concepts is key because this will result in a realistic partnership and meaningful localisation. This is so particularly because the CRRF ushers in a new way of working unknown to many stakeholders, who may have other issues, such as a lack of trust for each other and common ethics.

# Annex 1: Details of research locations and participants

## Nairobi

Key informant interview(s)	Details
<b>Government agencies</b>	
Representative from Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS)	
<b>Donors</b>	
Representative from EU delegation to Kenya	
Representative from World Bank	
Representative from Embassy of the Netherlands	
Representative from UK Aid Kenya	
Representative from Danish Embassy	
<b>UN agencies</b>	
Representative from UNHCR Kenya: Education and Programmes Office	
Representative from UNHCR Regional Livelihoods Office	
Representative from UNHCR Regional CRRF Office	
Representative from UNHCR Kenya: CRRF Office	
Representative from the Office of the UN Special Envoy for the Somali situation	
<b>Implementing agencies</b>	
Representative from International Labour Organization (ILO)	
Representative from Norwegian Refugee Council: Regional Office for East Africa and Yemen	
Representative from Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS)	
Representative from Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)	
Representative from Danish Refugee Council: Urban Refugee Programme	
<b>Private sector</b>	
Representative from Sanivation	
Representative from the International Finance Corporation (IFC)	

## Kakuma/Kalobeyei

Key informant interview(s)	Details
<b>Implementing agencies</b>	
Representative from Action Africa Help International: UNHCR implementing partner for livelihoods	
Representative from World Food Programme: UNHCR operational partner for livelihoods	
Representative from Lutheran World Federation: UNHCR partner for secondary education in Kakuma camp, and livelihoods partner	
Representative from the Windle Trust: UNHCR partner for secondary school education in Kakuma and Kalobeyei	
Representative from Don Bosco: UNHCR partner for vocational training	

Representative from SNV: UNHCR private sector partner for livelihoods – market-based approach to energy
<b>County government</b>
Representative from Turkana West Sub-County Directorate for Education and Quality Assurance
Representative from Turkana West Sub-County Department of Agriculture
<b>Community leaders</b>
FGD with five refugee leaders, Kakuma
FGD with six refugee leaders, Kalobeyei
FGD with seven host community elders, Kakuma
FGD with six host community leaders, Kalobeyei

## Garissa/Dadaab

Key informant interview(s)	Details
<b>Implementing agencies</b>	
Representative from Danish Refugee Council: UNHCR implementing partner for livelihoods	
Representative from Norwegian Refugee Council: UNHCR implementing partner for livelihoods	
Representative from Lutheran World Federation: UNHCR implementing partner for education	
Representative from the Windle Trust: UNHCR implementing partner for education	
Representative from Peace Winds Japan: UNHCR operating partner for livelihoods	
Representative from Save the Children: UNHCR operating partner for education	
Representative from the Red Cross: UNHCR operating partner for livelihoods	
Representative from UNHCR Office on Education	
Representative from UNHCR Office on Livelihoods	
Representative from UNHCR CRRF Office	
Representative from UNHCR Office of Head of Operations	
<b>County government</b>	
Representative from the Office of the Deputy County Governor	
Representative from the Office of the County Secretary and Head of County Public Service	
<b>Community leaders</b>	
FGD with nine refugee leaders, Ifo	
FGD with six refugee leaders, Hagadera	
FGD with 14 host community elders, Ifo	
FGD with six host community leaders, Hagadera	
<b>Informal discussions</b>	
Informal discussion with two staff from UNHCR	
Two Informal discussions with two staff from implementing organisations	
Informal discussion with three members of the local community in Dadaab Town	

# Acronyms

CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development
EU	European Union
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa
FGD	Focus group discussion
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GISEDP	Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Programme
GoK	Government of Kenya
ILO	International Labour Organization
KISEDP	Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Programme
LED	Local Economic Development
NAP	Nairobi Declaration and Action Plan on Refugees
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RAS	Refugee Affairs Secretariat
REF	Research and Evidence Facility
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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