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The Effect of Land Conflicts on the Livelihoods of Refugees: Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda

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Abstract

The study that was carried out in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, South Western Uganda sought to establish the causes of land conflicts, assess the effect of land conflicts on the livelihoods of refugees and the implications for refugee protection in Uganda. The research design was case study and largely qualitative although a small amount of quantitative data was included. Primary and secondary data were collected from a representative sample of 124 respondents. The study found out that competition for land between refugees themselves and host communities coupled with unclear land boundaries among other factors are responsible for the land conflicts in Nakivale settlement. Results show the prevalence of negative effects of land conflicts on the livelihoods of refugees. Land conflicts in refugee hosting areas have serious implications for refugee protection in Uganda.

Key Words: Land Conflicts, Livelihoods, Refugees, Refugee Protection, Uganda

1. Introduction

Refugee crises are not a new problem, but rather one that dates back to the earliest days of humanity. History books have several episodes of forced movements of populations. However, the term 'refugee' seems to have first been coined in 1573, when it was used to describe Calvinists fleeing political repression in the Spanish controlled Netherlands to seek refuge with their co-religionists in France (Medecins Sans Frontieres, 1997). Refugee populations are generated by wars, civil conflicts, ethnic persecutions, famines and other natural disasters. These populations often cross national borders and become international refugees within a different country (Michael Cernea, 2000).

Protracted refugee situations exist in most parts of the world, with the general exception of central and South America According to UNHCR's annual "Global Trends" report (2009), there was 16 million refugees worldwide. Developing countries hosted 80 percent of all refugees, underscoring the disproportionate burden carried by those least able to afford it as well as the need for international support. Major refugee-hosting countries in 2008 included Pakistan (1.8 million); Syria (1.1 million); Iran (980,000); Germany (582,700), Jordan (500,400); Chad (330,500); Tanzania (321,900); and Kenya (320,600).

The majority of the refugee situations were found in Africa (Ohta Itaru, 2005). To explain the scale of refugee problem in Africa, Crisp noted that while Africans constituted only 12 % of the global population, around 28 % of the world's refugees were found in Africa. Africa was therefore host to the largest number of refugees in the world (Crisp, 2000). The presence of so many protracted refugee situations in Africa can be linked to the fact that countries of asylum, donor states, UNHCR and other actors have given little attention to the solution of local integration (Ohta Itaru, 2005).

Uganda's history of hosting refugees dates way back after World War II when over 4,000 Polish refugees were hosted in Uganda in Mpumude in Mukono District in Central Uganda, much earlier than



the UN Refugee Convention of July 1951 and its protocol of January 1967. Countries neighbouring Uganda have been involved in internal and external conflicts. Therefore the refugees that Uganda hosts come from her neighbours both near and far. These conflicts last long forcing their people to stay in diaspora as refugees for many years. Uganda's long history with refugees has led to a unique refugee experience where refugees live in settlements and not Camps, like many other African countries. (UNHCR, 2009).

According to UNHCR (2009), the refugee population residing in Uganda in 2008 stood at 162,132. These included Burundi 3,183, Canada 1, Central African Republic 8, Congo 3, Democratic Republic of the Congo 76,498, Eritrea 796, Ethiopia 581, Greece 1, Kenya 1,908, Liberia 3, Malawi 1, Pakistan 18, Rwanda 16,162, Sierra Leone 1, Somalia 6,085, and Sudan 56,883. UNHCR Mbarara field office statistics indicate that there were 47,354 refugees in Nakivale refugee settlement as of 31st December 2009.

Nakivale Settlement located in Isingiro district, in south western Uganda is one of the eleven refugee settlements in Uganda. It was created in 1960 when there was unprecedented influx of Rwandese Tutsi refugees fleeing persecution from the new Hutu regime. To address this situation, the colonial government exchanged a few scattered parcels of land it owned in Nyabushozi area for land in Nakivale area owned by the Omugabe of Ankole. The Nakivale land then became the nucleus of what is today Nakivale refugee settlement (Bagenda et.al, 2003).

Throughout most of its initial existence, the settlement's refugee population solely consisted of Rwandese Tutsi refugees. This changed in the early 1990s when Kenyan and Somali refugees arrived in Nakivale and were settled close to the base Camp. Many Kenyan refugees were settled in Nakivale in 1992 having fled ethnic clashes between Kalenjin and Bantu people in parts of Western Kenya. Somali refugees were settled in Nakivale in 1994 after UNHCR, unable to support Somali refugees on the urban caseload, requested the GoU to allow Somali refugees to be settled in Nakivale. Somali refugees were not officially recognised by the government and, as such, prior to 1994 were not permitted to reside in refugee settlements. They were later followed by refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Sudan and Eritrea.

When Rwanda government was taken over by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) forces in 1994, most of the Rwandese Tutsi refugees returned home. However, they were soon replaced by their counterparts, this time, the Hutu, fleeing the aftermath of the 1994 genocide. The Government of Rwanda estimates that one year after the war ended a total of over 700,000 old caseload refugees had returned to Nakivale settlement (Bagenda et al 2003). Since then, Rwandese Hutus have continued to flock into Uganda, the largest influx occurred between 1998 and 2002 through Tanzania. This group was attracted by the prospect of acquiring land by refugees as a means of improving their livelihood through agriculture. Over 10,000 Congolese refugees joined in year 2000 (Ibid).

Host populations in Nakivale first welcomed refugees as those in need of protection and also as would-be beneficiaries of infrastructure to be left behind on their repatriation (Harrell-Bond, 2002). For decades, the Rwandese Tutsi refugees lived alongside indigenous Bahima and Bairu without major conflict. The only reported conflicts were a result of livestock wandering into gardens and destroying crops. These were settled through compensation to the affected party (Bagenda et al, 2003)

This began to change in the 1980s, however, as land shortages in the wider Ankole region started becoming an issue. This caused nationals, primarily pastoralists, to migrate to Nakivale in search of open land. From an historical viewpoint, the scarcity of land in the wider Ankole region is the result of several factors, including the advent of a cash economy and the transformation of customary land tenure, with increased emphasis on private property. These factors, coupled with population growth in the region, created a situation in which poor peasants (both pastoralist and agriculturalist traditions) were forced to migrate from their home areas in search of free land on which to settle. Nakivale settlement, originally approximately 86 square miles, and not formally demarcated, was the answer for many nationals searching for open land on which to graze their herds or settle (Pirouet, 1988; Bagenda et al, 2002). This has not been helped by persistent refugee flows from



Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Somalia, Burundi and Ethiopia resulting in increased xenophobia against refugees and a call for them to repatriate (ibid).

The quest for land by the nationals did not auger well with the self reliance strategy promoted in the refugee settlement. The self reliance strategy jointly developed in 1998 by OPM and UNHCR seeks to empower refugees to the extent that they will support themselves. This means that as the settlement receives more refugees, there will always be a great need for land to allocate to them for cultivation and other livelihoods. Bagenda et al in their field study of Nakivale in 2002 established that the move away from direct relief had created an increased need for land by refugees which land was also imperative for economically deprived Ugandans in the area. (Bagenda et al, 2003).

2. The Purpose of the Study

The research sought to examine how land conflicts had impacted on the livelihoods of refugees and the implications for refugee protection in Uganda.

3. Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the causes of land conflicts in Nakivale settlement.
- ii. To establish how land conflicts have affected the livelihoods of refugees in Nakivale settlement.
- iii. To analyze the implications for refugee protection in Uganda.

4. Research Questions

- i. What are the causes of land conflicts in Nakivale refugee settlement?
- ii. How have land conflicts affected the livelihoods of refugees in Nakivale settlement?
- iii. What are the implications of land conflicts on refugee protection in Uganda?

5. Methodology

The study was conducted using a case study design. The study was conducted in Nakivale refugee settlement located in Isingiro district, South Western Uganda. According to UNHCR Mbarara field office statistics, December 2009 there were 47,354 active refugees originating from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan. Out of the total number of refugees, 40,102 are Congolese, Burundian and Rwandese refugees.

The settlement is administered by a Commandant under OPM. OPM is responsible for land allocation and security in the settlement. There are several relief agencies operating in the settlement. UNHCR, as the UN refugee body coordinates all the activities in the settlement. Other humanitarian agencies and organizations are GTZ, WFP, Norwegian Refugee Council, AIRD, Save the Children Uganda, Medicines Sans Frontieres, Right to play, Red Cross, Medical Team International, African Humanitarian Action (AHA), Nsamizi Institute of social research among others.

The main economic activity in settlement is animal rearing, crop farming and petty trade by both refugees and host populations. Fishing in Lake Nakivale forms part of the economic activity for both refugees and host communities.

The study participants included Settlement Commandant, NGOs, RDC, prominent business people, Local Leaders (Local Council Councilors of Kashumba, Ngarama, Rugaaga sub counties), Isingiro District Officials, OPM, UNHCR office and people in the center of the conflict (people whose land titles were cancelled) as key informants. The study specifically targeted the refugees from Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Burundi. This was because they formed the majority of the refugee population and used land as their major source of livelihood.

Data was collected from one hundred twenty four people. The researcher used cluster sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques to obtain the study participants. The data for this study was collected using interview, focus group discussions, documentary review and observation methods. The data was analysed using SPSS.



6. Findings

6.1 Introduction

The chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the research findings from the study conducted in Nakivale settlement. The findings from interviews; focus group discussions and observation are presented in an integral manner. The findings are on the causes of land conflicts in Nakivale settlement, impact of land conflicts on refugee livelihoods, and implications for refugee protection in Uganda.

6.2 Causes of Land Conflicts in Nakivale Refugee Settlement.

Respondents were able to enumerate a number of causes of land conflicts in Nakivale settlement. The majority of the respondents believed that the major causes of the land conflict were unclear boundaries, unresolved land ownership, and poor management of land allocations to refugees by settlement administrators. Other causes were land grabbing, jealous and envy, Cattle keeping being incompatible with crop farming, land left unoccupied and unutilised, and the controversy brought up by land scarcity, high population and self reliance strategy.

6.2.1 Unclear boundaries

The majority of the respondents said the cause of the land conflict was unclear boundary. The study findings revealed that even after the survey done in 2005, government has not come out to show residents of Nakivale the boundaries between the settlement and host communities land. During an interview with one of the leaders in Isingiro district furiously said

“The major problem in Nakivale is unclear boundaries. People don’t know where the settlement separates with the land that belongs to the citizens of Uganda who live in Nakivale. We have said this but nothing much is being done” (Interview, May 2010).

It came out clearly during the study that where as the settlement Commandant was describing the settlement as being an area covering 84 square miles including the ridges/hills around Nakivale valley, the respondents were describing the settlement as the area covered by the valley. This is in agreement with the previous studies which revealed that Nakivale settlement was not formally demarcated (Pirouet, 1988; Bagenda et al, 2002). It is therefore not surprising that some people especially those in the hills don’t know that they are actually living in the settlement and seeing refugees brought to the land they believe is theirs will certainly fuel conflict.

6.2.2 Unresolved land ownership

Land ownership which remains unresolved was seen as another major cause of the conflict. The host communities claim ownership which OPM disputes. The study revealed that the so called 84 sq. miles of Nakivale settlement was not based on a precise survey but on improvised aerial survey exercise meant to achieve a purpose which the government of that time was keen about. As a result, a number of citizens’ customary tenures were included in the 84sq miles. One of the key informants stressed that government did not have all that land,

“The fact of the matter is that in order for Uganda to secure funds from Geneva to assist in settlement of Rwandese refugees, UNHCR required Uganda to produce a map showing the extent of the land on which it was going to settle Rwanda Tutsi refugees. What the then Uganda government did was to carryout an aerial survey covering the Nakivale area along ridges of the surrounding prominent hills and presented that to UNHCR as the area”(Interview, May, 2010).

If government has never gazzeted Nakivale land, then that area has never been demarcated as government land. This allowed citizens of Uganda that claimed ownership of land in Nakivale to turn their customary tenure into a lease title. This could explain why other opportunists such as the then leaders of Mbarara district came in to lease some of the land for themselves. They knew the status of the land and the policy of government that allowed them to secure land titles. The study findings revealed that people started acquiring land titles as far back as 1968 when Uganda Land Commission was the land controlling authority. This finding is contrary to the previous studies that attributed the



land conflict in Nakivale to the corrupt Mbarara lands office that was being accused of issuing land titles in error.

6.2.3 Poor management of land allocation

Poor management of land allocation to refugees by settlement administrators was given as one the major causes of the land conflict in Nakivale settlement. The study findings revealed that the settlement administrators put refugees near nationals' homes. Sometimes refugees are placed in nationals' gardens a practice that annoys the nationals and spoils the relationship with refugees. The respondents to this study felt that the Settlement Commandant was using refugees to chase away the nationals. This act was exposing refugees to danger and fueling conflict between the refugees and host communities. This is contrary to what is expected of Uganda government. The 1951 Convention and the Refugee Act 2006 make it an obligation of the state to provide security/ protection to refugees in its territory.

6.2.4 Land grabbing

The study findings revealed that the two groups were accusing each other over land grabbing. Some of the respondents felt that land conflict arose as a result of nationals grabbing settlement land and trying to protect it from being utilized by the refugees. During data collection, one of the key informants admitted that some of the leaders were so greedy that they had acquired a lot of land. He wondered how one person could decide to fence miles and miles of land. The study however established that there were people living in Nakivale who never grabbed land. This finding is a shift from the view presented by the previous studies that concluded that all the people who live and or own land in Nakivale are basically encroachers. Therefore, there are genuine people that have lived in Nakivale time immemorial and there are people who took advantage of unclear land ownership and leased the land.

6.2.5 Jealous and envy

The study revealed that there was jealous and envy by nationals owing to the fact that refugees were being favoured or better placed. The refugees felt that some of the neighbouring peasants envy the refugees as being favoured and better placed. Some of the refugee respondents believed that the nationals were jealous of the agricultural produce of refugees. In one of the FGD, it was indicated that during the harvesting period, the host communities were buying food items other than the food rations from refugees.

"The nationals are just envious of the speed at which we are developing especially when they find themselves coming to buy the agricultural produce from us. Almost the cabbages, tomatoes, maize that the nationals feed on are bought from us" (Focus Group Discussion, April, 2010).

This is a new development otherwise it used to be the refugees going out to host communities to buy such food items. This finding is consistent to earlier study finding of Bagenda et al (2003) which indicated that refugees appeared to enjoy a privileged position in terms of their ability to be allocated land at the expense of nationals. Isingiro District Council Committee of Inquiry Report (2008) indicated that one of the reasons for the persistent conflict between citizens and refugees was that citizens felt that refugees were enjoying better livelihoods and were amassing wealth from the land yet the citizens had inadequate land for cultivation and inadequate for rearing animals. A similar study conducted in Kakuma Refugee Camp revealed that there was a strong feeling among the locals that the refugees were being well treated while they were being left to starve (Odhiambo, 2004). Considering that several projects and programmes in Nakivale settlement targeted only refugees, the host communities are likely not to be able to develop alternative livelihood strategies and thus feel abandoned. This is likely to sow seeds of envy.

6.2.6 Incompatibility of Cattle keeping with crop farming

Unlike the Rwandese Tutsi refugees who were cattle keepers and who could graze their cows freely with other people in the host communities, the Hutu, Congolese, and Burundian refugees that



came in 1990s and 2001 were cultivators. The Rwandese Hutu, Congolese, and Burundian refugees were not mixing well with the nationals who are cattle keepers.

The refugees struggle to put the arable land available under cultivation which land the cattle keepers want to keep as pasture land for grazing their cows. The situation is worsened by lack of physical planning which would have enabled the administrators to allocate land to refugees in consideration of refugees and host communities occupations. The struggle between the cattle keepers and crop farmers was seen to be one of the causes of the land conflict in Nakivale. Bagenda et al (2003) indicated that during the time when relationship between refugees and host communities was still good, similar cases of livestock wandering into gardens and destroying crops occurred and were settled amicably through compensation to the affected party. Therefore the situation has been complicated by the land conflict because each party treats the other as an enemy. There is no doubt that refugees thought that the nationals intentionally left their cows to wander in refugees gardens and in turn refugees subjected harsh punishment as a deterrent measure.

6.2.7 Unoccupied and unutilized land

In 1994, when the Tutsi refugees went back to Rwanda, the Kenyan, Sudanese and Somali refugees, who were non pastoralists were confined in the Camp leaving most of the land unoccupied and unutilized. This attracted opportunists in government who connived with Mbarara Land Board and leased the land. Earlier studies had already alluded to the fact that because of land shortages in the wider Ankole, pastoralists started to migrate to Nakivale in search of open land. This however can be attributed to weaknesses and capacity gaps in the management of Nakivale settlement. OPM should have detected the anomaly and prevented the encroachers from taking ownership of settlement land.

6.2.8 Land scarcity, high population, and self reliance strategy

The study revealed that the strategy of self reliance amidst land scarcity was a cause of the land conflict. Land scarcity as a result of population increase of both refugees and host communities had not augured well with self reliance strategy that was being promoted in the settlement. One of the key informants said the population had increased tremendously.

“The population has certainly tremendously increased. For example there were about 1,500 Tutsi refugees in Nakivale settlement in 1960 compared to over 40,000 refugees currently living in Nakivale. The same applies to the population of nationals in the host communities. All this population requires land for their livelihood (Interview, May, 2010).”

The refugees struggle for land to cultivate and yet the host communities want the same land for grazing their cows and goats.

The other element was that the more land one has the more self reliant one becomes. This therefore creates a struggle for land between the two groups. In view of the fact that the refugees have not started applying fertilizers, such pieces of land are too small to enable refugees realize self reliance.

6.3 Impact of Land Conflicts on Livelihoods of Refugees in Nakivale Settlement

Land conflict had negatively impacted on the livelihood of refugees. The study revealed that the major impact of the land conflict was limited interaction of the refugees with the host communities, limited household earning, and unfair treatment of one another. The other impact identified were limited/loss of access to land, insecurity and environmental degradation.

6.3.1 Limited interaction between refugees and the host communities

The conflict had created a situation in which the refugees were not interacting freely with the nationals especially after an incidence of clashing. As a result of the conflict some of the refugees feared going to the host communities as they used to do for fear of being persecuted. This meant that they would not be able to provide casual labour and get other food items such as bananas which are not part of the food rations UNHR gives them.



The land conflict was reported to be negatively affecting the market for the produce of refugees. Whenever there was a clash, the refugees lose market for the agricultural produce and food rations as the nationals stop purchasing them. The limited interaction between the two parties therefore negatively affects household incomes and the general livelihood outcomes.

6.3.2 Unfair treatment for one another

The nationals were reported intentionally grazing their animals in refugees' crop gardens affecting production. One of the refugee respondents stressed that the refugees had reached the extent of killing host communities' cows once they are found wandering and destroying refugees' gardens. The study findings also revealed that when animals stray to refugees' gardens, they are taken in custody for several days before the refugees accept to negotiate.

6.3.3 Limited/ Loss of access to land

The study findings showed that some refugees were abandoning the allocated pieces of land. The refugees were reported to be suffering very much. During data collection it was reported that other refugees especially those from Congo had preferred to go back and die in their own country than dying in a foreign country. This was confirmed by the settlement Commandant Nakivale.

6.3.4 Insecurity

The study findings indicated that children of refugees feared to study from secondary schools located outside the settlement. Refugees feared to send their children to secondary schools in the host communities because of fear for their security. One of the district leaders observed that the refugees were not safe. He went on to say that he feared that anytime the nationals will clear the refugees. Such sentiments clearly show that the relationship remained bad compromising livelihoods of refugees.

6.3.5 Environmental degradation

The land conflict was seen as a driving force behind refugees invading Nakivale lakeshores in search of fertile soils. One of the refugee respondents said that, *"The land that we would be using for food production was encroached on by the host communities leaving us with no option but to invade the wetland that seemed not to be occupied"* (Interview, May, 2010).

The refugees were being accused of cutting trees in large numbers, for home use, selling it to the nationals, or burning charcoal. This concern is in line with Homer Dixon's finding that scarcities of renewable resources were contributing to violent conflicts in many parts of developing world (Homer, 1991). If this destruction of the environment is not checked, it can itself further fuel conflict in Nakivale.

6.4 The Implications for Refugee Protection in Uganda

The on going land conflicts in Nakivale refugee settlement raise serious challenges concerning refugee protection in Uganda.

6.4.1 Refugee physical security

Land conflicts between refugees and host communities have compromised Uganda's capacity to ensure physical protection of refugees. Land conflicts have been characterised by physical fighting between refugees and host communities, murder and killings between rival groups competing for the same pieces of land. As one of the officials of the OPM noted, *"Land conflicts in Nakivale refugee settlement have made life hard for us in ensuring the physical security of refugees. Government has increased the police presence in the settlement but this has not solved the problem. These days crimes related to land conflicts have increased which is an indication of the direct connection between land conflicts and crimes"* (Interview, May 2010)

Many respondents interviewed agreed that insecurity had increased in the settlement as a result of the land conflicts among refugees themselves and with the host communities.



6.4.2 Refugee rights

Refugee rights like right to life, right to peace and security, freedom of movement have been violated as a result of land conflicts. Uganda as a signatory to International refugee conventions has an obligation of protecting rights of the people legally recognized as refugees. The study found out that refugees have lost their lives due to land conflicts. Refugees are afraid of going to some areas in the settlement fearing for their lives. This has compromised refugees' movements which are a basis for livelihoods and day to day survival.

Due to the land disputes, there has been a tendency to look at refugees as economic migrants. Refugees are looked at people who do not have genuine protection concerns but as people who are looking for land. This way of looking at refugees is dangerous as it leads to the adoption of policies limiting refugees' access to land or forced repatriations aimed at reducing on competition for the available land. For example, the Uganda Government has of recent implemented a policy where Rwandan refugees have no access to land in the refugee settlements where they are settled as a way of forcing them to return home. This has seriously undermined Rwandan refugees' livelihoods, food security and sources of incomes as the majority depend on land.

6.4.3 Change in government policy from settlement to encampment policy

Uganda has for along time practised the settlement policy where refugees are settled in settlements similar to ordinary Ugandan villages and settlements. On being granted refugee status, refugees are given some pieces of land for crop cultivation and animal rearing as an empowerment strategy. Refugees have been able to grow their own food and supplement on the humanitarian assistance got from relief agencies like World Food Programme, UNHCR and others.

However, today there is a discussion by Government of Uganda that there is need to harmonize refugee policies in East Africa and adopt policies aimed at hosting refugees in camps as opposed to refugee settlements. While this change of heart may have come as a result of regional integration in East Africa and the need to have uniform policies by member states, competition for land between refugees and host communities in refugee hosting areas has greatly contributed to this debate. Uganda which has for along time been looked at as a home for refugees risks becoming a hostile destination for the majority of refugees in the Horn and Great Lakes region of Africa.

7. Conclusion

The study established that the major cause of the land conflicts is that government has neither owned the 84 square miles nor has it followed the law to acquire land in Nakivale and yet it's aware of the constitution that stipulates that land in Uganda belongs to the citizens of Uganda. Besides it has not come out to clearly demarcate the boundaries so that the host communities know where their activities must stop. OPM just looks on until the population of refugees becomes big thereby increasing the demand for land and starts handling the matter as a crisis. Leaving the refugees and the host communities to sort out the confusion created by government is a matter of irresponsibility and an indicator that government has failed to perform its mandate of protecting both the refugees and citizens of Uganda. Considering that Uganda's population is said to be growing at a rate of 3.4% per annum, the country cannot afford to continue portioning large pieces of land to refugees when indigenous populations are in dire straights.

Government has not put in place a policy to guide land allocation by the settlement Commandant in Nakivale. The management of land allocation and management of Nakivale settlement in general have been poorly done. All the authority has been invested in OPM and the settlement Commandant in particular on behalf of central government disregarding other levels of governance such as Higher Local Government and Lower Local Governments in which Nakivale is located. OPM is promoting direct confrontation between refugees and the host communities resulting in continued conflicts.

The study indicated that the land conflicts have not only undermined the livelihood strategies and thereby negatively impacting on livelihood goals of refugees in Nakivale settlement, but have also led to environmental degradation especially on Lake Nakivale whose shores with its rich soils are seen



as a solution to land scarcity. The land conflicts have generally increased the vulnerability of refugees whose asset base is already weak.

Land conflicts have undermined refugee protection in Uganda.

8. Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the government of Uganda should follow the laid down procedure in the land acquisition Act in order to acquire the land in Nakivale. The government should establish the citizens that were in Nakivale before 1960 or people that bought land from such people and let them acquire land titles or compensate them including facilitating them to move to other parts of Uganda. Government should negotiate with the people that took advantage of land in Nakivale not being gazzeted and got land titles for big chunks of land to have the sizes of such land reduced.

Once government has gazetted the settlement land, it should pronounce itself over the exact boundaries. The government should put clear demarcation between the refugee settlement land and the land that belongs to the citizens of Uganda. The host communities should not be given chance any more to claim ignorance of the boundaries. Management committees composed of various stake holders including local leadership should be put in place to ensure that the boundaries are not tampered with any more.

Government should develop a policy on land allocation to avoid haphazard land allocations that have been a source of conflict. The government should carry out physical planning to guide allocation of land to refugees in consideration of their occupations and those of the host communities.

Government of Uganda in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners should develop a livelihood policy framework to harmonise the programmes in Nakivale settlement. Aid agencies and OPM should intensify livelihood programs in Nakivale settlement based on an in depth livelihoods assessment in order to meet the demands of increasing populations. Land being limited and yet a critical resource in livelihood promotion, there is need to carryout soil fertility enhancement activity to allow intensification take place. Intensification will address the issue of small plots and limited land available for cultivation. UNHCR needs to work with government to ensure that extension services are provided to both refugees and host communities.

Similarly, livelihood diversification should be promoted so that refugees and host communities in the settlement don't have to depend on land to satisfy all their livelihood needs. Environment conservation such as agro forestry coupled with energy saving stove techniques should be integrated in livelihood programs to address environmental degradation. These programs should target both refugees and host communities.

The government of Uganda together with UNHCR and other partners should carry out a market assessment to determine how much is being produced, how much of the goods are coming in the settlement, and who is bringing what. Refugees should be allowed to directly access the market outside the settlement for their produce in order to get fair prices.

Building on the positive image both refugees and host communities already have on the benefits that accrue from good relationship between the two groups, the government of Uganda with support of the agencies operating in Nakivale should intensify sensitisation on the need for both refugees and host communities to stay together harmoniously . The two parties should be sensitized on the rights and obligations of refugees and citizens of Uganda. It should be emphasized that it is important to look at themselves as a resource to each other. Mechanisms of managing emerging conflicts should also be established.

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