Uganda Learning,
Evidence, Accountability,
and Research Network

Contents

Reflections from Refugee Response Blog Space – Guidelines for Blog Submissions

Want to write a blog for Uganda Refugee response blog space? Please read and follow these guidelines before submitting your draft or pitch.

About U-Learn

U-Learn (Uganda Learning, Evidence, Accountability and Research Network) is designed to promote improved outcomes for refugees and host communities in Uganda. In collaboration with government and a wide range of implementers and stakeholders, U-Learn focuses on facilitating learning, conducting assessments, and amplifying refugee voice and choice in the protracted refugee crisis.

Through the Learning Hub, our goal is to support a wide range of refugee response actors to learn from each other, foster critical reflection and adapt their work using evidence and insights, such as innovations, good practices, lessons etc.

About the blog space

One of the ways to generate and encourage uptake of evidence and insights is by using formats and language that is informative and communicates in a clear and accessible way. The U-Learn blog space provides this platform, and showcases good practices and reflections about diverse approaches to refugee response for refugee participation, self-reliance and humanitarian-development nexus, so actors can make better informed and evidence-based decisions, and change in practices.

We envision an organisations adapting their ways of working after reading about a good practice that has been effective for another organisation i.e. from refugee response actors for refugee response actors. This blog fosters critical thinking about what's happening in the Uganda refugee response space and is an easy to access avenue for actors to share their work, engage with audiences and cultivate an online community.

Who is our audience?

The refugee response blog serves all refugee response actors. Primarily, our audience consists of actors in the Uganda refugee response, especially settlement and national level decision makers and implementers in position to influence, and improve programming using high-quality learning, evidence and insights.

More broadly, the blog caters to global audiences including donors, humanitarian actors/implementers, private sector, refugee response coordination teams and other actors looking to learn from experiences in Uganda. Our blogs are also shared with our mailing lists as well as global thematic groups or learning hubs when relevant to feed into global debates.
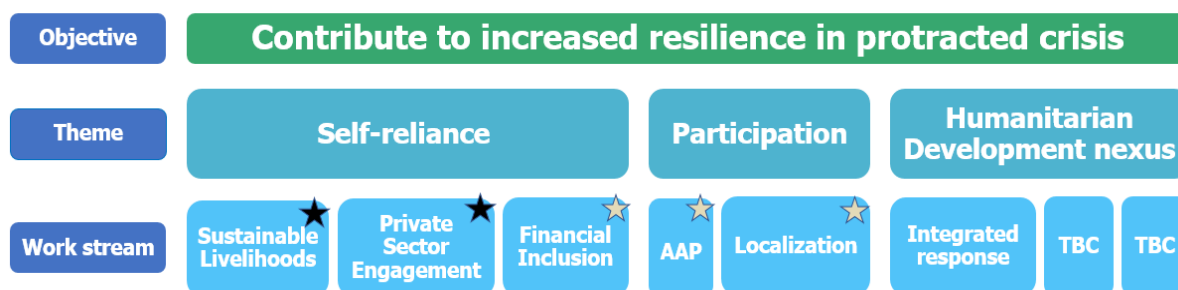
Who can Submit a blog?

U-Learn encourages diversity! Anyone working in the refugee response can submit a blog, including but not limited to UN agencies, Government, INGO, NGO, private sector actors, academics, RLOs, CBOs, refugees' leaders, the refugee community themselves etc.

The blog content – What to include in your article

The blog space focusses on the refugee response, therefore all blogs should be related directly or indirectly to Refugee response.

1. **Topic selection:** The blog space thematic focus is guided by the U-Learn learning agenda (in graphic below), blogs in line with priority themes: self-reliance, refugee participation and the humanitarian-development nexus, will be given priority, but we also accept blogs on trending topics in the humanitarian space, and global refugee response space. Preference will also be given to blogs whose insights cut across all themes of refugee response and are not sector-specific.

Learning Agenda: Themes and Work streams

Objective	Contribute to increased resilience in protracted crisis							
Theme	Self-reliance			Participation		Humanitarian Development nexus		
Work stream	Sustainable Livelihoods ★	Private Sector Engagement ★	Financial Inclusion ☆	AAP ☆	Localization ☆	Integrated response	TBC	TBC

★ *Priorities for project year 3 (April 2022 – March 2023)*

While the blog is intended for refugee response actors to share about the work they are doing, the blog needs to provide reflection or lessons beyond the project/activity implemented by one specific actor, e.g. the core intent is not to promote the NGO/specific activity. For example, if you are writing a blog on Financial Literacy Training, focus on how the training has contributed to refugee self-reliance and opposed to number of trainings your organisation conducted or number of officers trained.

Below are potential topics we are looking for. Please note that this list is not exhaustive:
- Good practices and/or lessons emerging from the Uganda refugee response
- Innovations in the national/global refugee response
- Current and emerging trends
- On-going or successfully completed programs/projects/activities and their impact
- Personal stories, commentaries, and/or perspectives from aid workers or beneficiaries
- Working with stakeholders such as private sector, settlement-level actors etc.
- Reflections on how global humanitarian / refugee debates translate in the Ug refugee response in practice.

2. **Originality:** Blogs should be original, and only shared with U-Learn. Cross-posting with other blog spaces can be agreed upon after discussion and agreement between the U-Learn team and author(s), and will be clearly indicated in the blog.

3. **Word Count:** Blogs should be approximately 1000 words or 1-2 pages.

4. **Format** - Use short paragraphs, meaningful sub-headings and avoid long sentences. Make your article as clear as possible for your audience, while still maintaining your point. If your post contains more than a single main point, consider using section breaks with titles or submitting a series of posts on the same topic.

5. **Writing Style:** U-Learn is intentional about inclusivity in our resources for audiences of all literacy levels. Your writing should be easy-to-understand, for both technical and non-technical actors, to facilitate uptake of your information. We currently only accept blogs written in English.

6. **Re-Imbursement**: U-Learn blogs are submitted on a voluntary basis and as such there is no payment provided.

Blog publication process

The process of publication of the blog from the first submission, depending on a number of factors, takes on average 21 (twenty-one) working days. If your blog idea is tied to a specific event, plan to submit the first draft at least 3 weeks in advance. In some cases, U-Learn can support the writing of the blog through our TELS service.

1. **Agree on topic** – For those who submit a draft in pitch/idea form, U-Learn will review your pitch and provide guidance on whether it aligns with the goal of the blog. We will try to get back to you in 5 days, after which, the next step is to write up your blog in full.

2. **Review -** Once you submit your full blog, the U-Learn communications team will review in consultation with technical experts.

3. **Editing –** After review, we will edit the article according to feedback and comments from the team**.**

4. **Sign-off -** All edits and suggestions to the content will be sent back to the writer for approval before publication.

5. **Publication –** The blog will be published on the U-Learn website here.

6. **Dissemination -** We will share blogs with the U-Learn mailing list (2000 members), as well as on the U-Learn social media channels. We ask contributors to support with promotion through their own social media accounts and also explore whether their organisations can do the same. Please be sure to tag U-Learn @ULearnUganda in any social media posts.

Blog form

Once the first draft of the blog is submitted, the U-Learn communications manager will review the content and lay-out for alignment with our guidelines, and may recommend edits if relevant. Please consider the following when structuring your blog:

Title – Once you identify what your blog article is about, draft a short, clear and concise title as this determines if someone will continue to read the full article. The article can be in form of a question, a phrase, or even two phrases (with a sub-title).

Introductory paragraph - This highlights the objective of your article to the reader. It can also act as a summary of what you want readers to know, and acts as a hook that invites them to read more.

Body – The main body of the blog carries on from the introductory paragraph and contains more detail. Write clearly, concisely and engagingly while supporting your argument with evidence. The body typically consists of two to three paragraphs: the background - what is the situation/backdrop of your argument? and the way forward - includes lessons and key takeaways. The body can also contain more data, quotes, references etc.

The last paragraph acts as the conclusion of the article and include a call to action, and links to further reading where applicable.

Hyperlinks / Footnotes - Please use hyperlinks whenever possible and only use footnotes when necessary.

Images/Videos – Media like images and videos should include a brief caption (with location, date, names where possible, and details about what's happening in the photo) and photo credit. Remember to have consent from the subjects of your media. We only allow images that respect the safety, dignity and values of the subjects.

We encourage you to have a minimum of two images, visuals or both per article, and maximum of four. Please make sure your images are high quality images, and send them as separate attachments if sharing via email. U-Learn also offers support for development of graphics for your article if required. The images/visuals must accurately reflect the subject being discussed and not be misleading. You can also share a video file to embed in your post.

Author bio - Your article should include a brief bio of the author(s) of 50-100 words, and a high-resolution image.

If you have any questions/comments about the blog guidelines, or need further guidance with a particular piece of writing, please get in touch with our communications manager via email on kullein@ulearn-uganda.org. We'll be more than happy to discuss approaches and appropriate language in more detail.

U-Learn is a consortium funded by UKAID under the BRAER (Building Resilience and an Effective Emergency Response) programme and delivered by the Response Innovation Lab (hosted by Save the Children), in consortium with IMPACT Initiatives and the International Rescue Committee.