



U-LEARN: Supporting Localisation in the Uganda Refugee Response

Localisation is a priority for the Uganda refugee response and a Grand Bargain commitment. The Government of Uganda reiterated this at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum when it pledged to 'strengthen[...] the role of national and local responders.' The first Localisation Strategy for the refugee response is currently under development.

Aligning with response priorities, localisation has been selected as one of U-Learn's key themes of work since inception in 2020. This factsheet summarizes the workstreams implemented to accelerate local humanitarian leadership and to ensure the respect and inclusion of diverse views in critical response platforms.



Localisation in Learning, Research and AAP: Assessment results (2025)

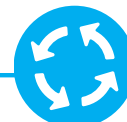
An assessment of the current practices around learning, research and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) in Uganda's refugee response was conducted. The objective was to see if and how localisation is supporting and can support quality in the refugee response through the use of evidence and engagement of affected populations in decision-making in the response to drive quality. Local findings show that:



Local actors share information through various channels, but the limited management and (digital) publication of information hinder wider sharing, visibility and use by all actor types.



Local actors in the response have expertise in data collection, but face limitations for greater roles in research.



An increasing number of local and international actors implement mechanisms for accountability to affected populations, but feedback loops are not closed.

Recommendations formulated in this report will:

- ✓ Allow actors to better respond to gaps;
- ✓ Facilitate capacity exchanges that support the localisation of learning, research and AAP;
- ✓ Enable learning, research and AAP-focused organisations to further "localise" their work.

<https://ulearn-uganda.org/localising-research-learning-and-accountability-to-affected-populations-in-ugandas-refugee-response/>





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Settlement-Level Actor Mapping (SLAM) : Settlement-level actors mapped to facilitate connections and diversity

In partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), SLAM supports data visualisation of actors present in the OPM's Partnership Coordination & Monitoring System, SLAM is a publicly available visualisation of actors using various parameters including geographic location, thematic focus, type of actor, and target population, among others.

SLAM's primary goal is to increase the visibility and accessibility of local actors' information, making it easily available to key stakeholders which in turn fosters connections, partnerships and collaboration, thus supporting more localised humanitarian efforts. The SLAM tool was initially developed by U-Learn in collaboration with partners including RELON and Charter4Change (C4C).

<https://ulearn-uganda.org/slam/>



AAP in Action programme: Equipping local actors for increased response quality



Although there is an assumption that local actors are best placed to be accountable to affected communities, AAP training provided to response actors highlighted some gaps in current practices by all types of actors that required hands-on coaching. This led to the development of the *AAP in Action* programme. Due to high demand from local actors, U-Learn is currently offering its *AAP in Action* training programme to local actors to improve AAP capacities across six settlements and raise the quality feedback collection and use. To read more about the practical training and mentoring approach of AAP in Action, see the [Spotlight on Mainstreaming Accountability Culture in a Refugee Response Context](#).





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Researching community-based adaptation to climate in Nyumanzi, Adjumani

Using an area-based approach, U-Learn collected in-depth context-specific community insights on climate-related hazards and adaptation strategies in Nyumanzi, Adjumani. It then published a granular analysis of the challenges and existing locally-led solutions in different sectors. The need for a formal disaster preparedness plan also emerged. The detailed recommendations are actionable and align with local aspirations and needs. Given the similar setup of settlements across northern and northwestern districts, and their shared exposure to climate-related hazards, these findings may also be indicative of the challenges faced by communities in other settlements.

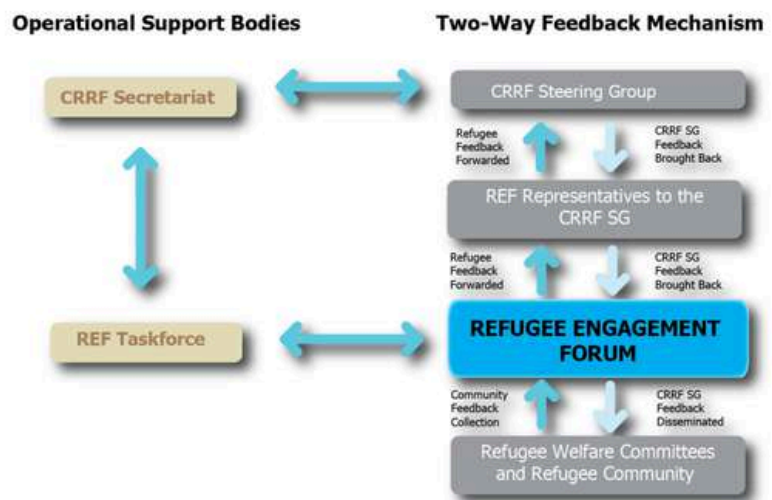


Working with the Refugee Engagement Forum

The first of its kind, the Refugee Engagement Forum (REF) is a successful model to systematically ensure that refugee voices are taken into account by the CRRF Steering Group.

U-Learn's support the REF includes: capacity-building, facilitating the CRRF Steering Group meetings and other important response fora and supporting the consultation of constituents to prepare representatives' participation in meetings. As a result of the REF's work, refugee voices and opinions were included in the development of the final CRRF Action Plan 2021-2022.

Uganda's Comprehensive Refugee Response Coordination Structure and the REF



Back in 2021, this two-way feedback mechanism was little known or understood among refugee response actors in Uganda.

U-Learn developed the [Good Practice Study on the REF](#) (and the shorter [Brief](#)) to support the REF, which was thus recognised as a global AAP good practice by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Accountability and Inclusion Resource Portal ([blog](#) and in their library) and by UNHCR in a global guidance on [Localisation in UNHCR-led coordination structures](#). In 2022, the GoU launched the District Engagement Forum. This forum mirrors the REF and brings together technical and political leadership from refugee-hosting districts





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Supporting strategic reflection on the localisation agenda and implementation of commitments in the Uganda refugee response

U-Learn has put its learning services (convene, synthesize, ...) and analytical expertise at the disposal of key response actors dedicated to advancing localisation.

Curating evidence, providing inspiration and sharing insights

In 2023, U-Learn, in partnership with the Charter for Change Working Group (C4C WG) in Uganda, summarized learnings from Uganda and from three organisations championing localisation in Kenya, the Philippines, and India.

<https://ulearn-uganda.org/localising-humanitarian-action/>

U-Learn supported the GoU with the formulation of the outcome document on Localisation for the Global Refugee Forum in 2023:

https://globalcompactrefugees.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/grf_outcome_document_localising_refugee_response.pdf

A comprehensive **Localisation Evidence Brief** was published in 2024. It serves as a central resource where stakeholders can find an overview of key coordination mechanisms, gaps, recommendations, and valuable insights from various national and settlement-level local actors.

<https://ulearn-uganda.org/localisation-evidence-brief-strengthening-localisation-in-ugandas-refugee-response/>

Creating spaces for strategic reflection with diverse audiences

U-Learn, in partnership with the CRRF Secretariat localisation task force, the Western Uganda Humanitarian Platform, the Grand Bargain National Reference Group, C4C and other key stakeholders, participated in the organisation of a range of consultative and strategic reflection meetings on localisation in Uganda at both the district and national levels from 2024.

Applying this same consultative approach, U-Learn is currently supporting the Government of Uganda's Localisation Task Force to develop the *Uganda refugee response Localisation Strategy* which will be the first official reference framework dedicated to advancing the country's localisation agenda.

What is U-Learn?

U-Learn is a public good designed to promote improved outcomes for refugees and host communities in Uganda. In collaboration with the Government and a wide range of stakeholders, U-Learn focuses on facilitating learning, conducting assessments, and amplifying refugee voices and priorities. Running since 2020, U-Learn is an NGO consortium delivered by Response Innovation Lab (hosted by Save the Children), International Rescue Committee, and IMPACT Initiatives, and is principally funded by UKaid. USAID BHA, ECHO and DANIDA have supported or are co-funding some of the activities.



Facilitating cross-sectoral learning and encouraging uptake of key evidence amongst refugee response actors.









Conducting in-depth assessments to fill critical knowledge gaps in the refugee response



Empowering refugees and host communities to make their voices count at all levels of refugee response planning.

For more information

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