

Markets and livelihoods assessment - Isingiro, Uganda

February 2021

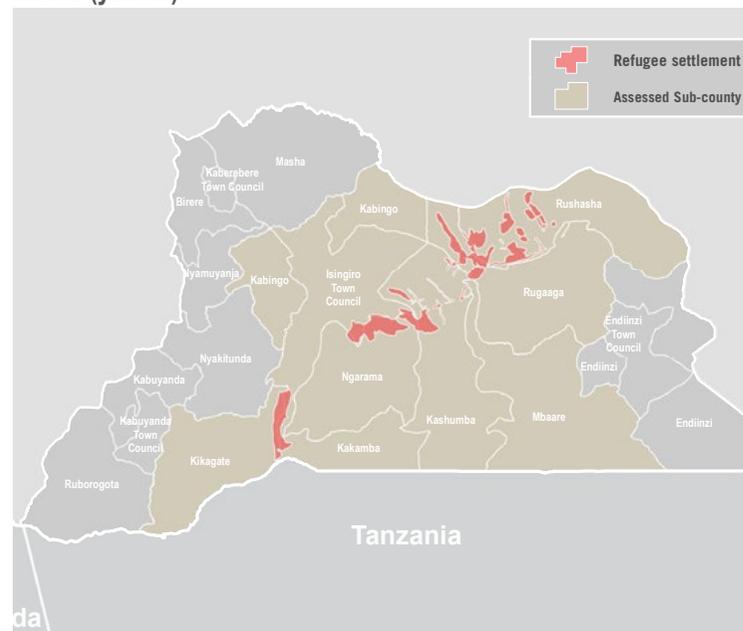


INTRODUCTION

Uganda currently hosts close to 1.47 million refugees¹, the largest refugee population in Africa. Most originate from South Sudan, but there are also significant populations from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi and other countries in the region. **Despite Uganda's enabling policy towards refugees, which affords them the right to work, guarantees freedom of movement and allocates households (HHs) a plot of land on which they can grow crops to meet their needs or sell at the local market, in practice the majority of households remain dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs.**² Given the protracted nature of their displacement, there is a growing recognition that challenges faced by refugees and the communities that host them cannot be met through a humanitarian lens alone.

In February 2021, REACH launched a rapid livelihood & markets assessment in the districts of Lamwo and Isingiro to identify which approaches and markets, agricultural and non-agricultural, provide viable opportunities for host and refugee households to compete in market systems and establish resilient and sustainable livelihoods. By providing up-to-date information on current barriers to inclusion into market systems, this situational overview seeks to inform partners and donors alike in their design of future programming in Isingiro. The findings for Lamwo district are detailed in a separate overview, which can be found [here](#).

Map 1. Isingiro district with Nakivale and Oruchinga settlements (red) and surrounding subcounties (yellow)



KEY FINDINGS

Household income



Two in every three households in Isingiro reported not earning sufficient income to meet their basic needs. This proportion was higher among refugee households (77%) compared to host community households (58%).

Agricultural livelihoods



Agriculture reportedly is the main source of livelihood for both refugee and host community households. Lack of access to land and low market prices are the main barriers preventing refugee and host community households from increasing income / commercialization from these activities.

Collectivisation



There was a consensus among key informants (KIs) that efforts to collectivize farmers' produce in communal storage facilities would help improve market linkages, regulations and stabilize prices to the ultimate benefit of farmers, wholesalers and consumers.

Non-agricultural livelihoods



A large proportion of refugee households is reportedly interested and would prefer to receive support for initiating non-agricultural livelihood activities. However, many assistance programmes currently seem focused on agriculture - suggesting there is room for an expansion of programming into other areas.

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METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING

To answer the research questions, REACH adopted a mixed-methods approach, conducting a household survey among both refugee and host community households complemented by semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). A total of 479 structured interviews were conducted with refugee and host community heads of households (HoHs). Two hundred thirteen refugee households were targeted using a simple random sampling (SRS) approach whereby GPS points were randomly distributed over the settlement area. Host community households were sampled using a single-stage cluster sampling approach. Cluster points were generated and distributed randomly across the sub-counties containing Nakivale and Oruchinga settlements. Six interviews were conducted at each of the cluster points for a total of 266 interviews. The sample provides findings significant at a 95% confidence level with a 7% margin of error for each population group, and this margin of error decreases to 5% with findings pertaining to the combined sample. Data was collected over two weeks from 15 February to 1 March 2021.

Findings from the household survey were contextualized by data from semi-structured interviews. Key informants were divided into three groups: humanitarian and development assistance workers, local government officials, and civil society leaders. A total of 11 key informant interviews were conducted.

Type of key informant	Number of interviews
Humanitarian & development workers	4
Local government officials	2
Civil society leaders	5
Total	11

LIMITATIONS

- The findings presented here are only representative of refugees living in the settlement and the host community living in the sub-counties containing the settlement. They cannot be extrapolated to the district as a whole.
- Questions that are only relevant to a part of the population (e.g. beneficiaries' experience with previous livelihood programmes were only asked to those respondents) will have a lower level of confidence and wider margin of error.
- Many households may have experienced a loss of income and/or livelihood activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related government restriction policies. This should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings.
- Respondent bias (social desirability bias) is likely to have influenced the responses to some questions. Heads of households might have felt pressure to give answers that are socially acceptable.
- For host community data, the exact population size per cluster could not be obtained. Therefore, cluster points were generated at random across sub-counties. This approach is likely to bias the results in favour of rural settings, since these households have a more than random chance of being selected in relation to their population size within the sub-county.

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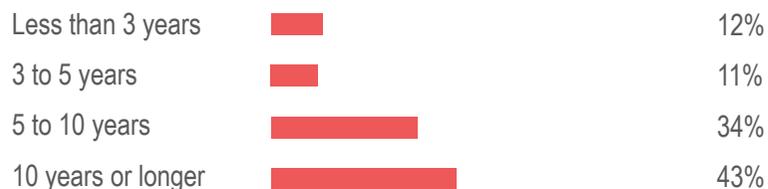
BACKGROUND

Isingiro is a district located in the south-western region of Uganda. It borders Tanzania to the south, Rakai district to the east, Mbarara and Kiruhura districts to the north, and Ntungamp district to the west. It currently hosts approximately 145,411 refugees in two settlements: Nakivale and Oruchinga. Of the two, Nakivale is much larger, hosting a total of 135,962 refugees. The majority of these, nearly 50%, are from the DRC, with other significant populations from Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. The district has a total host population of 616,700. Approximately 290,500 live in the immediate vicinity of the two settlements. The district spans about 1,100 square miles, has a relatively cool climate with an elevation of 5,000 ft. and a hilly landscape.³ It has two rainy seasons from March to June and from August to November. It should be noted that this assessment was carried out during the dry season, which could influence the responses to questions pertaining to market accessibility (as roads tend to be in better shape during these months) and livelihood activities such as charcoal burning or bricklaying (activities performed mainly in the dry season).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Most refugees living in Isingiro have reportedly been displaced by protracted unrest and armed conflict in their home countries. The largest proportion (43%) reportedly being displaced for longer than 10 years. This includes refugees from DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. Refugees from these countries have been steadily welcomed in Uganda over more recent years, since the second-largest proportion (34%), those displaced between 5 and 10 years, have similar nationalities and reported arriving in roughly even numbers from their respective countries in the years between 2011 and 2016 (see figure 1).

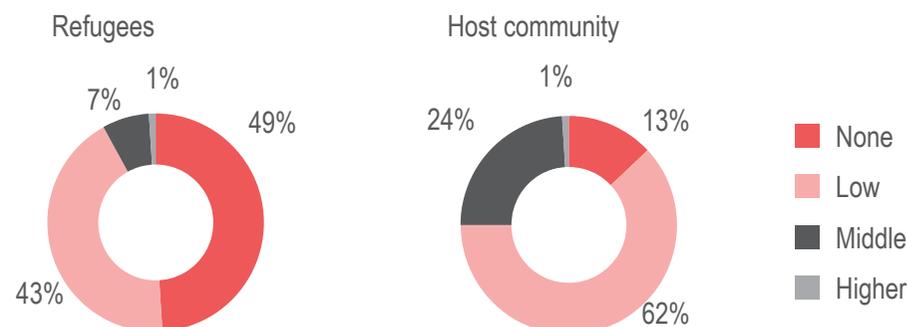
Figure 1. % of refugee households by reported years of displacement



The average household size in Isingiro was found to be six, with no significant difference between the size of refugee and host community households. Two out of every three respondents in the sample were female, which was equal among refugee and host community households. It should be noted, however, that this does not always mean the household is headed by a single female. Nonetheless, nearly half of female refugee respondents reported their marital status to be either divorced, separated, widowed or single. Among host community households, these proportions were much lower, with 70% reported being married and 18% reportedly widowed.

Refugee HoHs reported to have received less formal education compared to host community HoHs. In particular, the proportion of respondents who reported not having received any formal education at all is much larger (49%) among refugee HoHs compared to host community HoHs (13%). This is likely due to a combination of the generally lower level of education attained in their home countries as well as their education being interrupted after displacement.⁴ However, the majority of respondents in both groups, 75% among the host community and 92% among refugees, reported not having completed secondary school. Figure 2 illustrates the differences between the two groups.⁵

Figure 2. % of HoHs by reported highest level of education reached



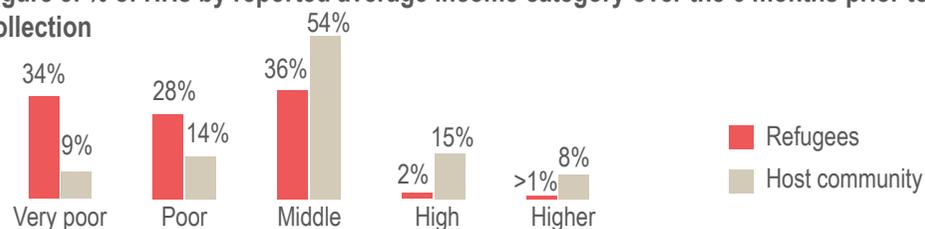
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Similar differences between host and refugee households can be observed when looking at household income. Respondents were asked to report their household's average monthly income over the six months prior to data collection. The graph below shows **refugee households are more likely to fall into the very poor and poor categories.**⁶ One in three refugee households fall into the very poor category, indicating a combined household income between 0 and 50,000 Ugandan Schillings (UGX), compared to only one in twelve among host community households.

Figure 3. % of HHs by reported average income category over the 6 months prior to data collection



Two in every three households in Isingiro reported not having sufficient income to meet the basic needs of their household. This proportion was higher among refugee households (77%) than among host community households (58%). Basic needs were defined as all expenditures necessary for the wellbeing of all members of the household including costs such as inter alia food, water, education, and healthcare (see figure 4).

Figure 4. % HHs reporting insufficient household income to meet basic needs over the 6 months prior to data collection



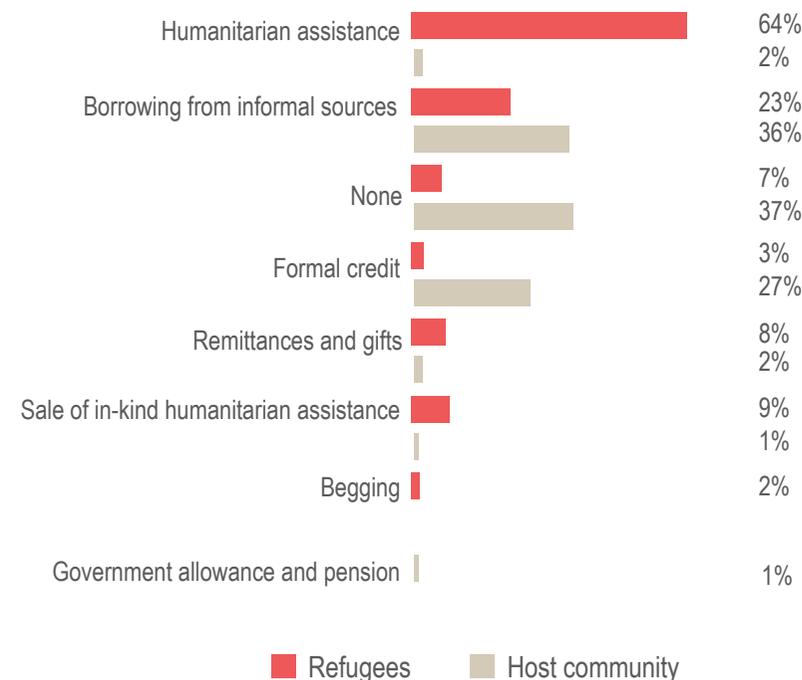
Households in Isingiro reportedly employed a range of coping mechanisms to deal with their lack of income over the six months prior to data collection. These differed significantly between host and refugee households. A large proportion of refugee households reportedly relies on cash assistance and the sale of in-kind assistance as a means of acquiring cash. Refugee households were less likely to borrow informally, and much less likely to access credit through formal institutions, than host community households. It is possible that host community households

have either a larger or more affluent social support network that enables them to borrow informally. Moreover, key informants explained there are not many financial service providers offering small loans to refugees and those that do sometimes have collateral requirements the refugees cannot meet. Lastly, 37% of host community households reported not relying on any coping mechanisms at all.

"There are very few financial institutions that are able to provide refugees with small loans without collateral."

- Livelihood specialist

Figure 5. % of HHs by coping mechanisms reportedly employed over the 6 months prior to data collection⁷



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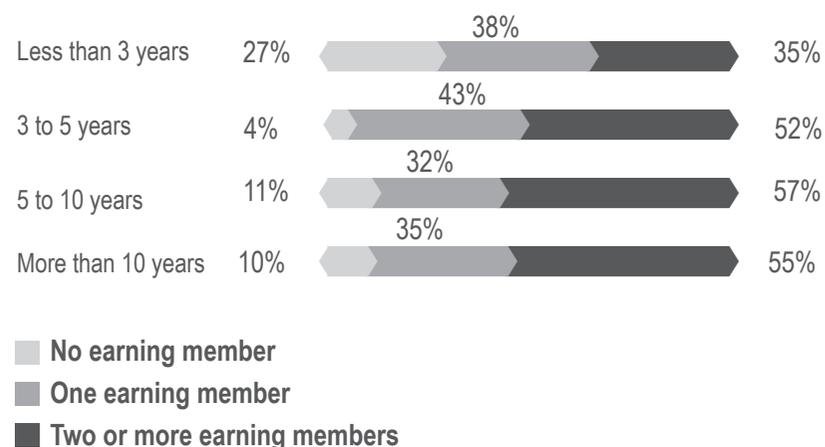


Lastly, the number of members per household earning an income was assessed. Having multiple adult members earning an income can increase resilience, as the loss of income in one area, for example due to a crop failing, can be cushioned by the income generated through the livelihood activities of other members, such as driving a boda⁸ or operating a small business. Overall, **a majority of households in both groups reported having two or more earning members**. This proportion was slightly higher among host community households (87%) compared to refugee households (80%). Importantly, **refugee households who have been displaced for a longer period of time are more likely to have multiple members earning an income** – indicating that refugee households are able to settle in an area and increase their livelihood activities, possibly by building and extending their network, as time passes.

Figure 6. % of HHs who reported two or more members currently earning an income



Figure 7. % of refugee HHs by reported number of members currently earning an income and years since displacement



LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

The vast majority of households considered an agricultural activity to be their main source of livelihood. This proportion was roughly the same among refugees (79%) and host community households (83%). Agricultural livelihood activities in this survey included mainly farming on own land, farming for subsistence on hired land, paid agricultural labour on land of others, and to a lesser extent growing cash crops on owned land or land of others, animal husbandry and fishing. Just over 30% of refugee households reported working on the land of others, often that of host community members, either for subsistence or as wage labourers. Host community households did not report working as wage labourers, although a significant proportion (22%) did report working on land they hired from others.

Figure 8. % of HHs reporting an agricultural activity as their main source of livelihood over the 6 months prior to data collection



Figure 9. % of HHs reporting agriculture as main source of livelihood by type of activity



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Isingiro is the main producing district for bananas in Uganda. However, key informants explained that while bananas are the main crop grown by the host community, refugee households mostly grow other crops such as maize, sweet potatoes and vegetables. This is because the substantial land required for the cultivation of bananas is often not available to refugees, and due to low prices and competition in the area, growing bananas on a small scale is often not lucrative enough to sustain a refugee household. Key informants further reported that other cash and perennial crops, such as coffee, rice, millet are also hardly grown by refugee households.

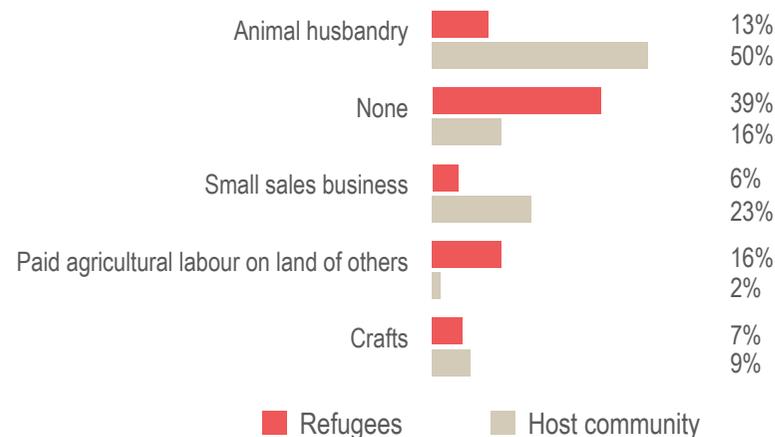
“Most of the agricultural activities by refugees are done on hired land in the host community. The little land that was given to refugee households in the past is already in full use and, with the Office of the Prime Minister giving land to new arrivals, the available land is even further reduced. Additionally, refugees that used to cultivate crops like vegetables in the wetlands have been stopped by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). Hence they currently have no land to cultivate and the only option is hiring land.”

- Local refugee representative

The most commonly reported non-agricultural livelihood activities included operating a small business, with 8% among refugee households and 5% of host community households reporting this as their main livelihood. Enumerators observed small business activities often consisting of market vending and petty business such as selling sweet potatoes, bananas and other produce. An additional 4% of host community households reported a small service business as their main livelihood. This includes operating a small restaurant or food business, a hair dresser or salon among others. Refugee households did not report this as their main livelihood. However, since many households combine different activities, respondents were also asked to report any additional livelihood activities members of their household are engaged in.

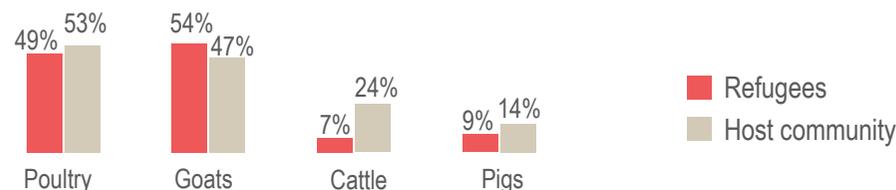
While respondents were able to select multiple response options, a significant proportion of refugee households (40%) and 16% of host community households reported no secondary livelihood activities. For many households, working their own land or the land of others takes up most of their time and this likely limits the capacity to engage in other livelihood activities.

Figure 10. % of HHs by most commonly reported secondary livelihood activities⁹



Host community households more often reported operating a small business as a secondary source of livelihood, while refugee households more often reported performing paid agricultural labour on the land of others. Just over 50% of host community households reported animal husbandry as a secondary livelihood activity. This proportion was much smaller among refugee households (13%). Key informants explained that this is due to the lack of land available to refugees, as many in the host community rear cattle and goats. Isingiro district is located in Ankole where cattle-rearing is an important part of traditional livelihoods for the host community. Indeed, graph 11 shows it is the host community that is mainly engaged in keeping cattle.

Figure 11. % of animal-keeping HHs by reported type of animals kept¹⁰

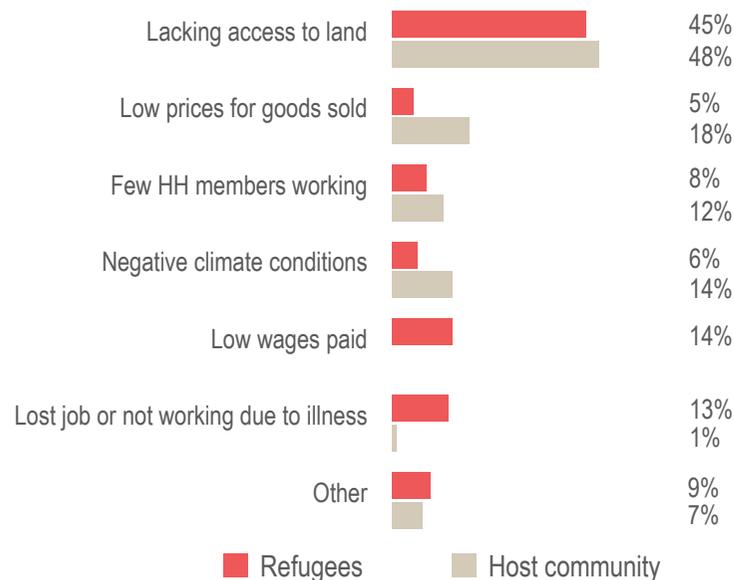




LIVELIHOOD CHALLENGES

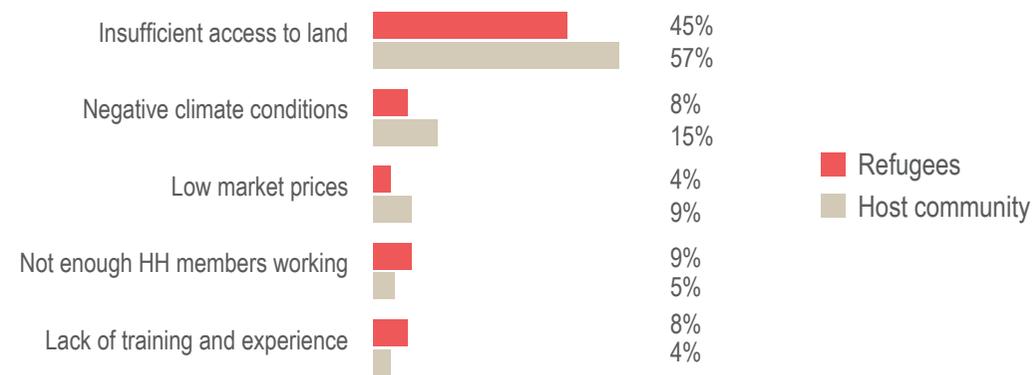
Both refugee and host community households reportedly face a number of challenges in their access to resilient and sustainable livelihoods. Key informants reported the challenge of inadequate and poor-quality land in the vicinity of the refugee settlements; the cost of hiring adequate land is often too high, and farmers are not always certain they will be able to break even on the cost. Consequently, **nearly 50% of both host community and refugee households who reported not earning sufficient income cited a lack of access to land as the primary reason.** Another important reason, particularly among host community households who reported insufficient income, are low prices for goods sold while refugee households often reported low wages as the primary reason (14%). Moreover, the district suffers from heavy rainfall, flooding and prolonged droughts. These conditions seemingly impact host community households more often, as they more commonly own agricultural land, because 14% of host community households who reported not earning sufficient income cited this as the primary reason for a lack of income versus only 6% among refugee households.

Figure 12. % of HHs by main reported reason for not earning sufficient income over the six months prior to data collection



Among households who reported growing crops, similar challenges to increasing the yield and/or commercialization of agricultural activity were reported. **For 45% of refugee households and 57% of host community households, a lack of access to land remains the primary challenge.** It is likely that other challenges which may be affecting people's livelihoods, such as climate conditions, low prices and a lack of manpower to perform income-generating activities, become challenges of secondary nature; it is possible that they may be prevalent but underreported, since respondents were only asked to cite what they perceived as the main challenge affecting their income from growing crops.

Figure 13. % of HHs growing crops by most commonly reported challenges to increasing income from agriculture over the six months prior to data collection



Nonetheless, low product prices were cited as a primary challenge by nearly 10% of host community crop-growing households. Additionally, households who reported sometimes selling or trading goods at the marketplace frequently reported low prices as the primary challenge they faced in generating a sustainable income (38% and 13% among host community and refugee households respectively). Figure 14 further shows low demand for produce was frequently mentioned as a challenge by host community households, indicating a potential lack of linkages between farmers and market buyers. It should be noted that both refugee and host community households reported similar levels of access to a nearby marketplace (94% and 97% respectively).

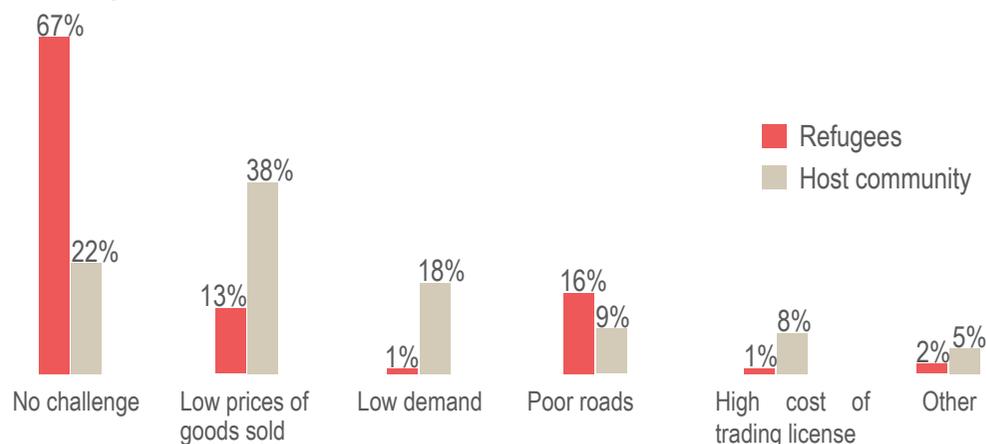
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One potential explanation for this difference offered by key informants was that many refugees sell their produce to wholesalers or middlemen who visit them at their location and then transport the produce to sell in different markets, while the host community generally has better access to public market places where they can sell produce independently.

Figure 14. % of HHs engaged in trading at the marketplace by most commonly reported challenges

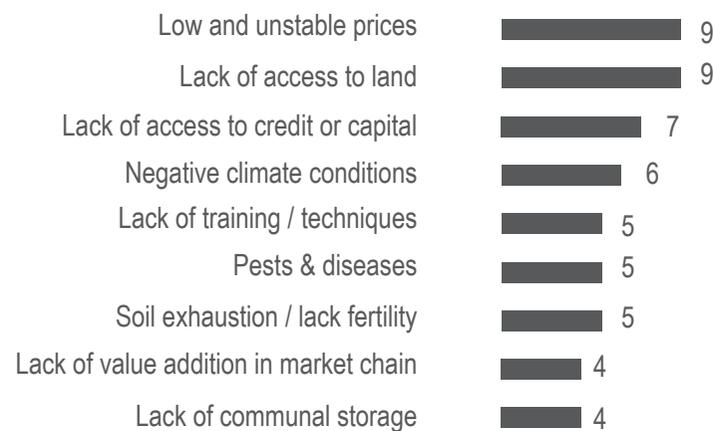


Qualitative data from key informants show similar challenges for farmers. Nine out of eleven key informants mentioned low and unstable prices as a key challenge (see figure 15). Prices are known to drop significantly during harvest times and without adequate storage facilities, farmers are generally unable to turn down offers – even if they perceive the price as unfair. In particular, refugee farmers reportedly most often work on small plots of land and do not have linkages to market buyers outside of their immediate environment. Hence, they are reliant on the limited number of middlemen or wholesalers venturing into the settlement to make an offer on their produce.

“The biggest barrier is fluctuating prices. During the peak of harvest season, the prices of bananas and other crops go down considerably. Bananas have a shorter shelf life and are perishable. Hence where there is large-scale production, some traders take advantage and exploit farmers.”

- Local entrepreneur

Figure 15. Number of key informants mentioning challenges for farmers (n = 16)



Some key informants expressed the view that if farmers were better able to collectivise their produce and access communal storage facilities, they could improve their bargaining position vis-à-vis wholesalers and enjoy a better regulated market system with more stable prices. In turn, this could form the basis for increasing yield and commercialisation, as farmers might be more willing to take a risk on hiring more land or procuring the inputs necessary to increase production.

“Both refugees and host community members do not have a proper connection to bigger markets outside the district where they can sell agricultural products at higher prices.”

- Livelihood focal person, non-governmental organisation (NGO)

“Post-harvest handling facilities¹¹ are inadequate and the existing ones do not work efficiently, so people still sell from gardens at low prices.”

- Local government official

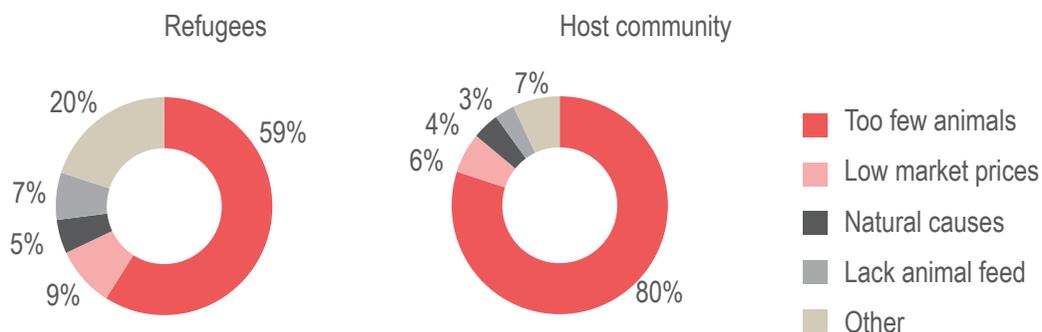
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When asked about challenges in increasing income from animal husbandry, households in both groups reported similar challenges. A large majority of households that are currently keeping animals (80% among host community households and 59% among refugee households) reported their main reason for not earning sufficient income from this activity was not having enough livestock. The second most cited reason by both groups was low market prices such as dairy and meat. Notably, around 7% of refugee households (part of the 20% reporting “other” reasons) reported keeping animals was not a priority for the household, indicating they were not seeking to increase income from this activity despite currently keeping one or more animals. In most cases, such households may keep one or a limited number of animals as a financial asset to sell in times when the household requires a larger sum of cash. In the meantime, such animals like chickens or a goat can provide subsistence for the household by producing limited quantities of milk or eggs.

Figure 16. % of animal-rearing HHs by reasons reported for not earning sufficient income



NON-AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOOD CHALLENGES

Common non-agricultural activities in Isingiro as reported by key informants were selling convenience goods, selling cooked food such as chapatti, sand and stone mining, brickmaking (in the dry season), and boda driving. Construction was also mentioned both in terms of government-run development works and humanitarian cash-for-work programmes whereby refugees in particular are hired to construct homes for persons with specific needs. Other skilled work such as carpentry, tailoring, and welding was also frequently mentioned by key informants.

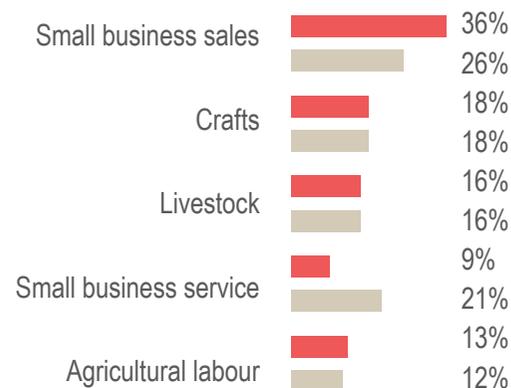
It should be noted that, of the 16% of households that mentioned a non-agricultural livelihood activity as their main source of livelihood, only a small percentage cited any activity other than operating a small business. This could mean that either these activities are not performed as frequently as perceived by key informants, or that households do not earn a sufficiently large enough income from these activities to report them as their main source of livelihood. Furthermore, as noted in figure 10, 39% of refugee households and 16% of host community households reported having no secondary livelihood activity at all.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The household survey further asked how many household members were currently not earning an income but could work if given the chance. **Three out of every five refugee households reported having one or more members seeking work.** This proportion was just under half (47%) among host community households.

When asked what type of work those members preferred to look for, households most often reported operating a small shop, crafts, livestock husbandry, and small service businesses such as salons, tailors and restaurants, or paid agricultural labour. There were slight differences between host and refugee households, with the first more often selecting small service businesses while the latter more often reported looking to start a small shop to sell items.

Figure 17. % of underemployed HHs by reported type of work sought¹²



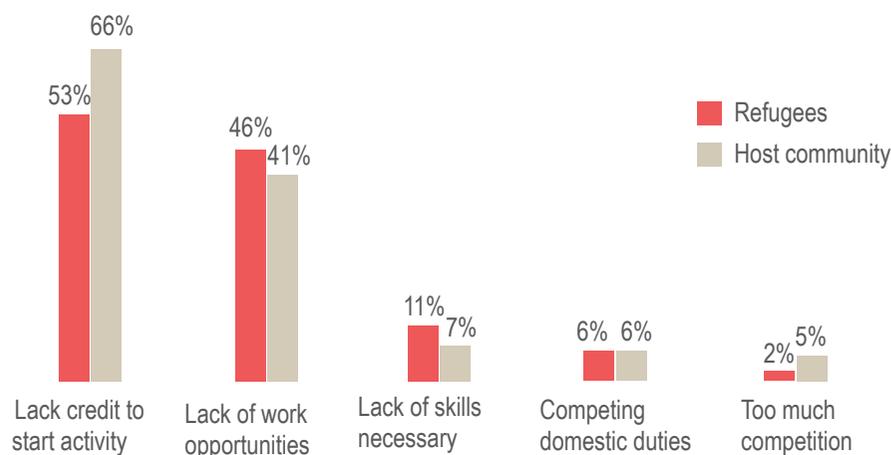
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Lack of credit to start the activity and a lack of work opportunities were the most commonly reported challenges in finding a job in the sectors preferred by households. The household survey data, in line with the views expressed by key informants, suggests these challenges apply equally to refugees and host community households. A slightly higher proportion of refugee households (11% versus 7%) reported lacking the necessary skills to engage in a preferred activity (figure 18).

Figure 18. % of underemployed HHs by most commonly reported challenges to finding preferred work¹³

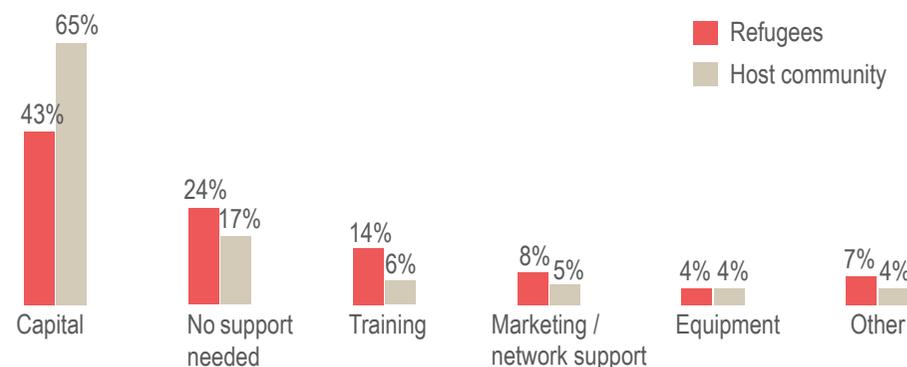


TYPE OF SUPPORT NEEDED TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

The household survey also assessed the type of support households see as most useful in a) finding a job in their preferred sector, and b) for increasing income or yield from agricultural activities such as crop cultivation and animal husbandry. Some of the types of preferred support reported by respondents can help address the challenges as reported in graph 18.

Figure 19 shows that **capital, either in the form of a loan or grant, was most often reported as the most useful type of support in finding or initiating work by both refugee households (43%) and host community households (65%)**. This is likely because capital represents a cross-cutting resource that supports all activities previously reported as preferred types of work.

Figure 19. % of underemployed HHs by most commonly reported type of support to find work



Household members who wish to start a small business, sell crafts, procure livestock or start a small service business often reported they lacked credit to initiate the activity. They might need to purchase stock, material or inputs including agricultural inputs such as seeds, animal feed or animals themselves. Notably, however, nearly one in four refugee households and 17% of host community households said no support was needed in finding work. It should be mentioned here that this question was put to all households, not only those with members seeking work. Since only 60% of refugee households and 47% of host community households reported one or more members seeking work, many of the remaining households stated that no support was needed.

Training was also cited as a need by 14% of refugee households and 6% of host community households. This matches with the proportions of refugee and host community households who reported lacking the necessary skills as a challenge in finding work (figure 18). Marketing and/or network support can help overcome a perceived lack of work opportunities, the second-most reported challenge in finding work. However, this was not frequently reported as the most useful type of support by households, indicating that households perceive other types of support such as capital or training as more beneficial. Lastly, equipment involves tools necessary to engage in crafts such as carpentry or mechanics, but can also include agricultural inputs such as hoes, spades, fertilizer or quality seeds. This was reported by 4% of refugee and host community households.

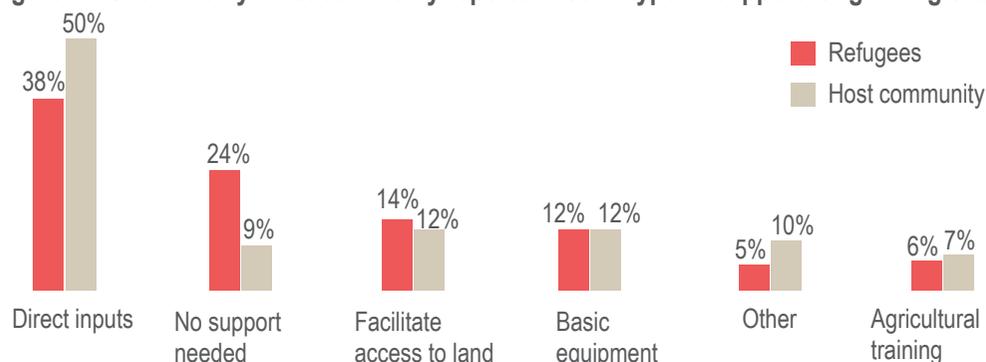
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For households already engaged in crop cultivation and livestock rearing, the survey asked them what would be the most useful type of support for increasing income and/or yield from those activities. These results are displayed in graphs 20 and 21 below.

Figure 20. % of HHs by most commonly reported useful type of support for growing crops



The provision of direct inputs, such as quality seeds and fertilizer, was seen by the largest proportion of both refugee (38%) and host community households (50%) as the most useful type of support to enhance crop production. Importantly, nearly one in four refugee households reported no support was needed, while only 9% of host community households said the same. Enumerators explained that many refugee households preferred to receive support in initiating types of work other than agriculture. In many cases, they engage in agriculture as a means of survival and because it is the only option available to them. However, they perceive the amount of land available to them as insufficient for generating enough household income and would prefer to engage in another activity if support was available.

Facilitating access to more land is also frequently reported as a need by households of both groups. Key informants suggested one way this could be done is by forming farmers' collectives that bring together host and refugee farmers to enable them to hire or purchase larger tracts of land from private owners or the government to cultivate together. These groups can be supported with basic equipment, direct inputs and training on agricultural techniques to ensure the yield from the land is sufficient to cover costs and generates income for the farmers.

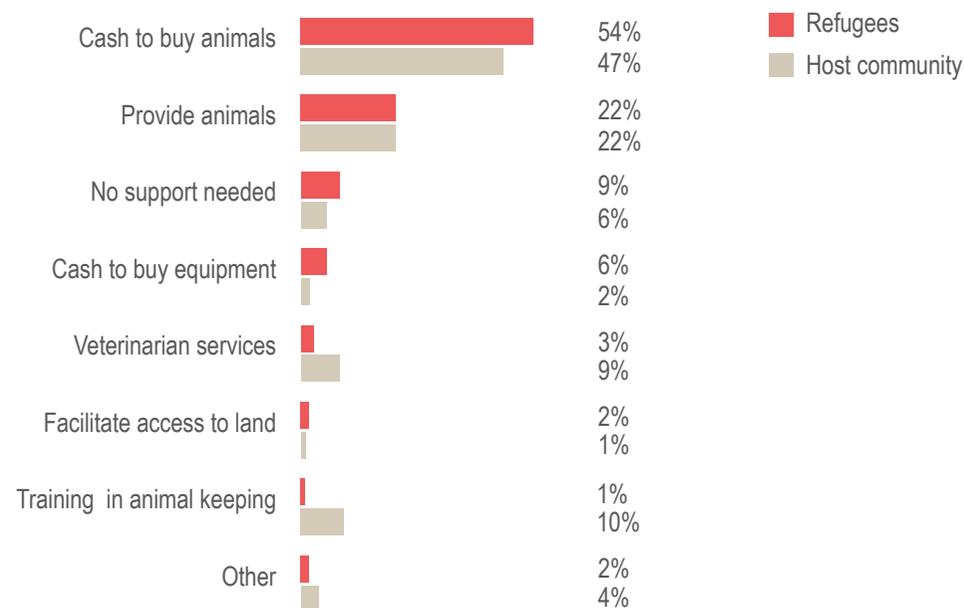
"Grouping farmers to form associations is the way forward. NGOs and the government should come in and group farmers together. This will ensure a sustainable supply chain."

- Local entrepreneur

"Farmers need to be guided on the source where quality seed and other inputs can be obtained of the type that suits the climatic conditions of the area."

- Agricultural extension worker

Figure 21. % of HHs by most commonly reported useful type of support for animal husbandry



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For increasing income from livestock, it should be noted that most households currently engage in animal husbandry on a small scale. Therefore, the provision of more animals or cash to buy animals was most often selected as the most useful type of support. The type of animal, however, can be relevant, since households who do not have access to land for grazing may not be able to maintain cattle or goats on a larger scale. In those cases, it is possible that animals provided by humanitarian programmes are sold for income not long after. For them, key informants suggested, animals such as poultry and pigs may be more useful. Representatives of farmers' collectives further suggested mainly training on agricultural techniques, provision of capital or credit, and inputs such as seeds and fertilizer as the most useful types of support (figure 22).

Figure 22. # of KIs from the civil society (n = 5) reporting the types of support most useful for supporting agriculture and animal husbandry

Training in agricultural techniques	5
Facilitate access to credit	3
Provision of quality inputs	2

Other key informants, such as those working to strengthen livelihoods in Isingiro as part of the local government or humanitarian and development organisations, were asked to describe the programmes they were currently implementing and the challenges they faced. The types of programmes they described focused on extension services such as training in agricultural techniques, pest and disease control, and timing and techniques of planting. However, as noted earlier, **many refugees prefer to receive support that enables them to engage in non-agricultural activities.** This type of programming was not often reported by key informants, indicating there may be a gap between beneficiary preferences and implementation. Furthermore, programmes to secure the provision of credit and training to enhance financial inclusion were also not reported as often when compared to the needs and preferences reported in the household survey.

Figure 23. # of key informants mentioning the type of livelihood programmes being implemented in Isingiro (n = 6)

Training agricultural techniques & marketing	6
Small business coaching & mentorship	3
Providing direct inputs	3
Credit and financial inclusion	2
Creating/supporting collectives	2

Key informants implementing programmes to enhance financial inclusion explained one of the biggest challenges was gaining trust and ensuring buy-in from farmers. Both host and refugee households often have limited experience in interacting with financial institutions and the products they offer, and key informants explained they remain wary of getting involved. Registration remains another challenge for many refugees according to key informants. Other challenges expressed by key informants related to the implementation of livelihood programmes are a lack of coverage by extension workers due to underfunding. As a result, extension workers are not always able to follow-up and reach all beneficiaries and communities, in particular when transport options are limited during the rainy season due to a poor road network.

“Many people in both the refugee community and host are unaware of our services and have never used banks. For example, there are many people that don’t trust the financial systems, hence they avoid our services.”

- Local NGO worker

Markets and livelihoods assessment - Isingiro, Uganda

February 2021



CONCLUSION

This assessment sought to investigate the humanitarian-development nexus to identify which approaches and markets, agricultural and non-agricultural, provide viable opportunities for host and refugee households to engage competitively with market systems and establish resilient and sustainable livelihoods.

The findings indicate that two in every three households in Isingiro reportedly do not earn sufficient income to meet their basic needs. Among refugee households, this proportion is even higher; with three out of every four households. The majority of both refugee and host community households reportedly rely on agriculture as their main source of livelihood. However, limited access to land, unstable market prices and a lack of market linkages reportedly remain primary challenges for households in both groups. The creation and support of farmers' collectives could help to address some of these challenges according to key informants. Through these collectives, farmers could access more land as well as communal storage facilities that could help improve their linkages and bargaining position vis-à-vis wholesalers. In turn, this could form the basis for increasing yield and commercialization as farmers may be more willing to take a risk on hiring more land or procuring the inputs necessary to increase production.

The findings further indicate important differences between refugee and host community households. Refugee households generally reported earning less income, having received less formal education, and being more likely to face challenges in accessing formal or informal credit. The limited land available to most refugee households is mostly what dictates feasible agricultural activities in terms of the types of crops grown or animals kept. This, in turn, has an impact on the income generated and the ability to expand or further commercialize these activities. Findings from the household survey also suggest that many households with limited access to land would prefer to receive support that enables them to engage in non-agricultural activities such as learning a craft or setting up a small business. Currently however, much of the livelihood programming in Isingiro seems geared towards supporting agriculture, indicating there is an opportunity to expand programming and better align it with population preferences.

NOTES

- 1,462,164 individuals as of 24 March 2021, according to [figures published by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\) and the Government of Uganda](#).
- [Uganda's refugee policies: The history, the politics, the way forward](#). The International Refugee Rights Initiative (2018).
- [Isingiro District Investment Profile](#) (2017), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & Uganda Investment Authority.
- For a comparison on primary school attendance rates and other indicators between countries such as the DRC, Uganda and Rwanda, visit the Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC) website [here](#).
- Respondents were asked to report the highest form of education they had reached. Low = incomplete primary, complete primary, or incomplete secondary school. Middle = completed secondary, completed or incomplete vocational training, incomplete university, incomplete professional degree. Higher = completed university or completed professional degree. Chi-square tests returned a result of $< .05$, indicating that the distribution differences between host and refugee household respondents are not due to randomness in the sample and can be extrapolated to the population with a 95% confidence level and 7% margin of error.
- Households were asked to report their average monthly income over the past six months. To ease response and analysis, a total of seven income categories were defined based on the distribution of household income data previously collected as part of the Vulnerability and Essential Needs Analysis (VENA). These income categories included 0 – 20,000, 20,001 – 50,000, 50,001 – 100,000, 100,001 – 300,000, 300,001 – 500,000, 500,001 – 1,000,000, and above. The bottom two were then recoded as very poor, 50,001 – 100,000 was classified as poor, 100,000 – 500,000 as middle, 500,001 to 1,000,000 as high and above as higher.
- Respondents could select multiple options. Percentages may not add up to 100%.
- In East Africa, the term boda refers to a motorcycle or bicycle taxi.
- Respondents could select multiple options. Percentages might not add up to 100%.
- Respondents could select multiple options. Percentages might not add up to 100%.
- Post-harvest handling can include cooling, cleaning, sorting, packing and other actions aimed at mitigating against the deterioration that sets in when a crop is removed from the soil or plant it grows on.
- Question put only to refugee and host community households who reported having one or more members seeking work. (n = 253).
- Respondents could select multiple options. Percentages might not add up to 100%. (n = 253).

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).