

# **Owned Spaces and Shared Places: Refugee Access to Livelihoods and Housing, Land, and Property in Uganda**

**November 2019  
Kampala**



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# Overview

1. Introduction
2. Assessment Overview
3. Key Findings:
  - a. Access to HLP
  - b. Tenure and Documentation
  - c. HLP Challenges and Dispute Resolution
4. Conclusions



**01**

# Introduction



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# Introduction

## REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

- REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT, its sister-organisation ACTED, and the United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT).
- REACH was created in 2010 to facilitate the development of information tools and products that enhance the humanitarian community's decision-making and planning capacity.

# Introduction



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- NRC is an independent humanitarian organisation working to protect the rights of displaced and vulnerable people during crises, and provides assistance to meet immediate humanitarian needs, prevent further displacement, and contribute to durable solutions.
- In Uganda, NRC works in the areas of education; information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA), livelihoods and food security, shelter and settlement, and WASH



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**02**

## **Assessment Overview**

# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- 2017 NRC study on housing, land, and property (HLP) rights in Uganda
- Information gaps on how HLP issues affect refugees and their decisions regarding durable solutions
- Need for a baseline understanding of current HLP conditions and movement intentions within Uganda
- Aiming to inform humanitarian strategic, operational and programmatic decision-making in Uganda and surrounding countries.
- Partnership with NRC, supporting ICLA programming
- Similar assessments undertaken in Kenya and South Sudan



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Humanitarian Aid



# OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- *Objective:* To develop a response-wide understanding of refugees' relationship with HLP rights in Uganda, and their impact on potential durable solutions and livelihoods, so as to inform the refugee response.
- *Research questions:*
  - What are the HLP issues refugees are facing in settlements and select host community areas in Uganda?
    - Does it differ by region?
  - What access do refugees have/perceive they have to HLP in settlements and select host community areas in Uganda? What are the conditions of housing, land, and property for refugees?
  - How does access to or lack of access to HLP impact refugees potential for sustainable livelihoods and decisions about movement in Uganda?
  - Are there differences in terms of access, experience, and issues relating to HLP by gender?
  - Are there any critical HLP rights and protection cases for partners to follow up?



# METHODOLOGY

## Primary data collection

- **3,164** household-level surveys completed
  - Representative at settlement/division level
  - 95% level of confidence, 10% margin of error
- **97** focus group discussions completed
  - With refugees and host communities (for context)
  - Disaggregated by gender
- **86** key informant interviews
  - With UNHCR, OPM, district local government, and partner staff working on HLP-related issues at the settlement level

**Secondary data** collected from available assessments and studies, across all levels of aggregation (response, regional, and settlement)



Sub-region	District	Refugee Settlement or Division	Estimated Refugee Households	Sample (95/10)
Midwest	Hoima	Kyangwali	12,634	117
	Kiryandongo	Kiryandongo	11,528	106
Northwest	Adjumani	Agojo	754	112
		Alere II	1,224	112
		Ayilo I/II	6,615	115
		Baratuku	1,469	110
		Boroli	2,555	147
		Elema	148	59
		Maaji I/II/III	6,859	115
		Mirieyi	904	104
		Mungula I/II	1,190	107
		Nyumanzi	8,359	114
		Oliji	274	88
		Olua I/II	2,448	114
		Pagrinya	6,392	111
	Arua	Imvepi	24,667	135
		Rhino Camp	29,655	125
	Koboko	Lobule	925	106
	Lamwo	Palabek	7,597	117
Moyo	Palorinya	31,398	120	
Yumbe	Bidibidi	57,372	116	
Southwest	Kamwenge	Rwamwanja	15,620	117
	Kyegegwa	Kyaka II	11,033	119
	Isingiro	Nakivale	21,318	115
		Oruchinga	1,370	109
Central	Kampala	Kampala Central	2,500	122
		Kawempe	13,000	114
		Mutundika	12,000	112

**TOTAL SAMPLE:  
3,164**

**Settlement: 2,810  
Urban: 354**

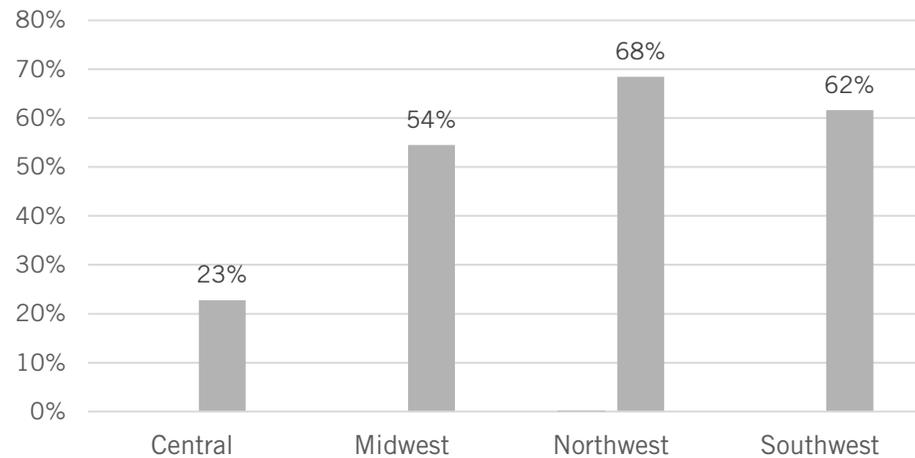
# 03

## Key Findings: Access to HLP

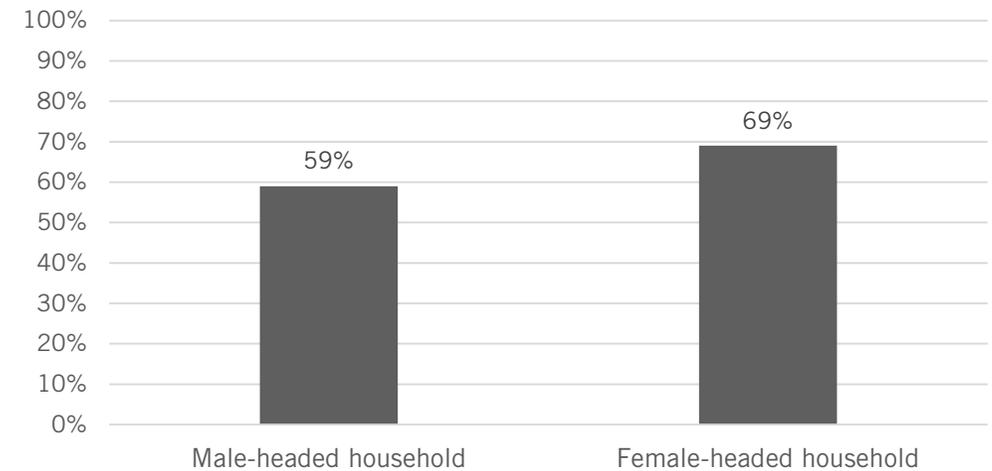
# ACCESS TO HOUSING

All refugees reported having access to housing, but reports of **damaged shelters were common**

Percentage of HH reporting shelter damage

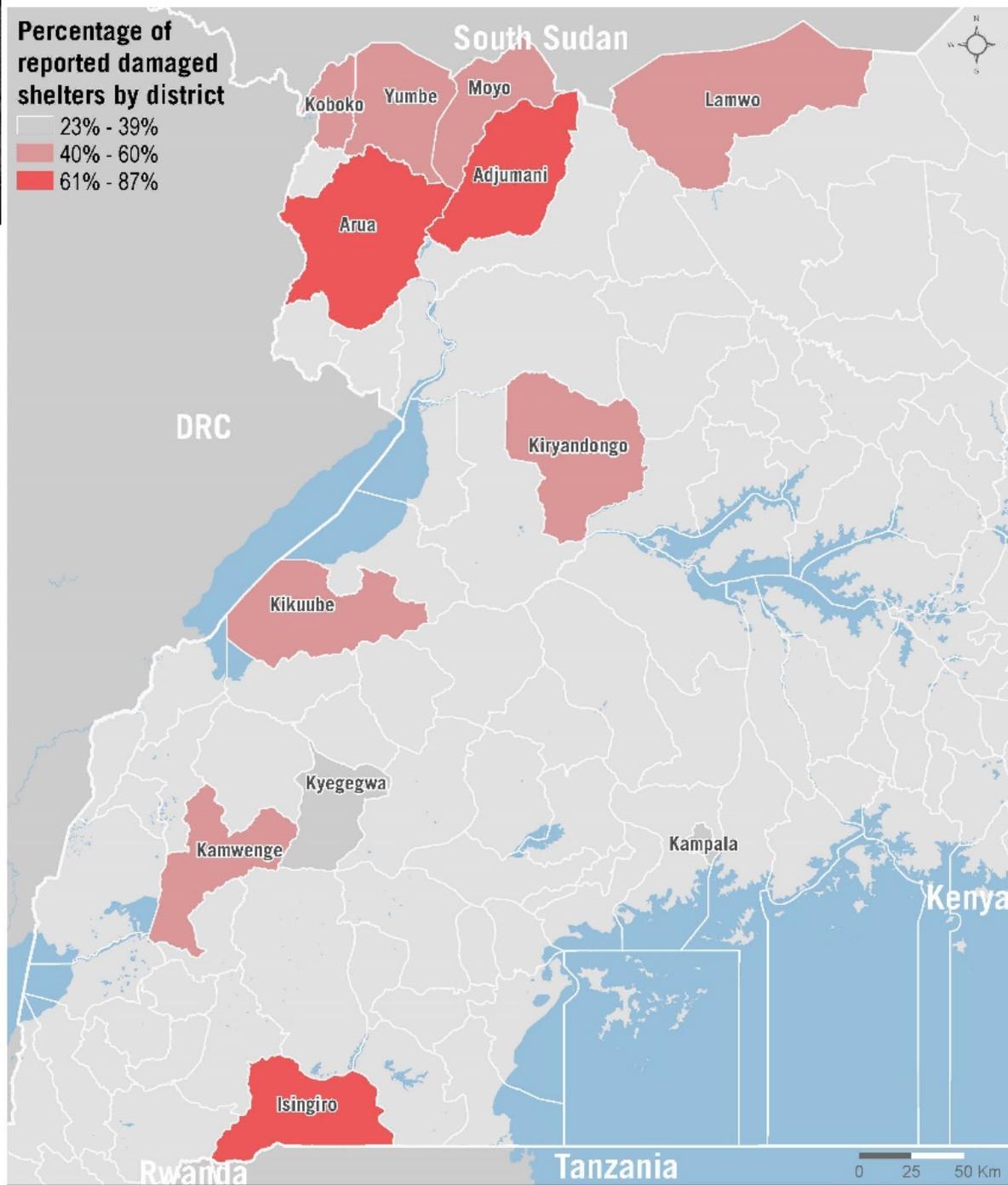


Percentage of settlement-based HH reporting shelter damage, by HH head gender





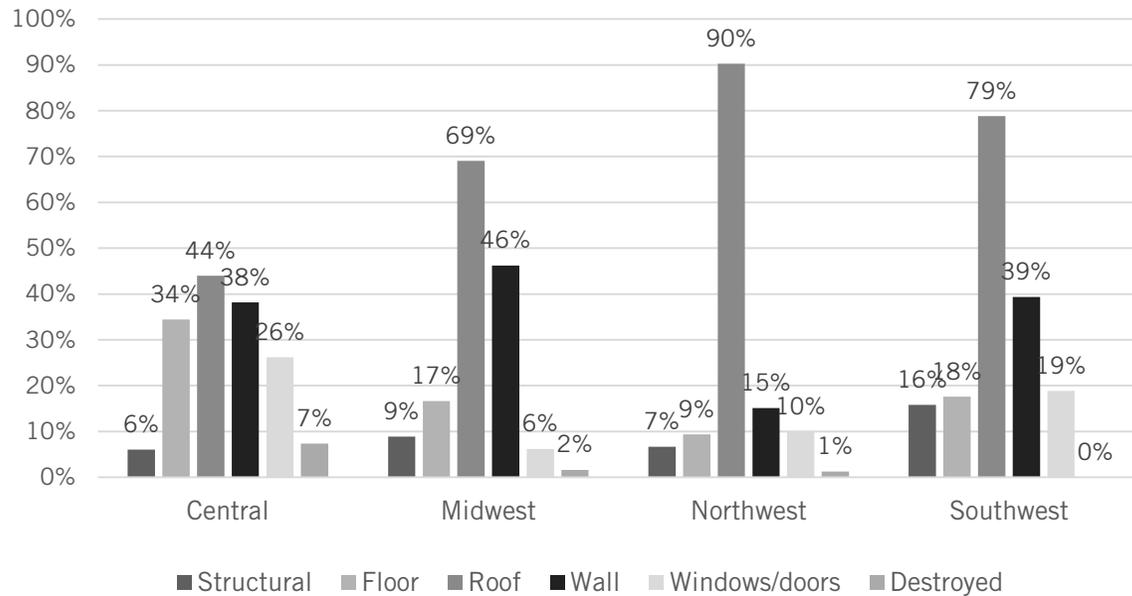
- By district, **Arua** (88%), **Adjumani** (87%), and **Isingiro** (86%) had highest percentages of HHs reporting shelter damage
- **Kyegegwa** (45%) and **Kiryandongo** (52%) reported the lowest percentages



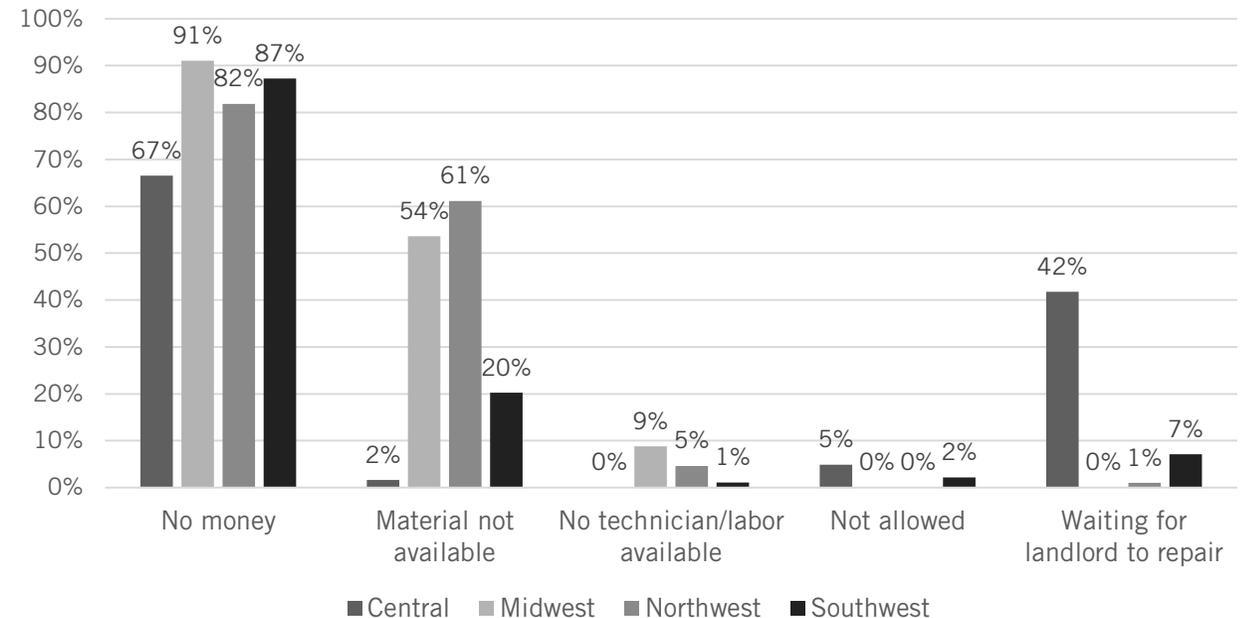
# ACCESS TO HOUSING

Around half of respondents in all regions reported that they were not planning to repair their shelters.

Percentage of HH reporting shelter damage, by type



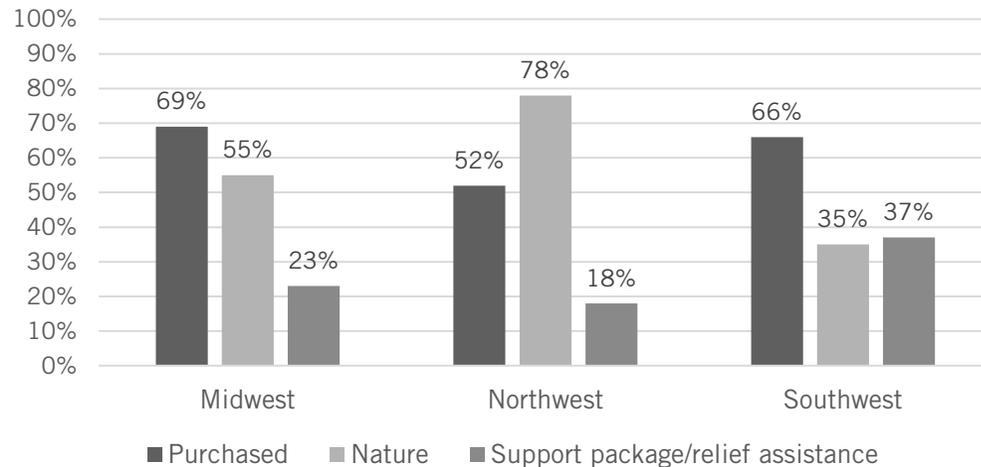
Percentage of HH not planning to repair their shelters, by reason



# ACCESS TO HOUSING

**96%** of refugees in the settlements reported **constructing their shelters themselves**, rather than acquiring housing

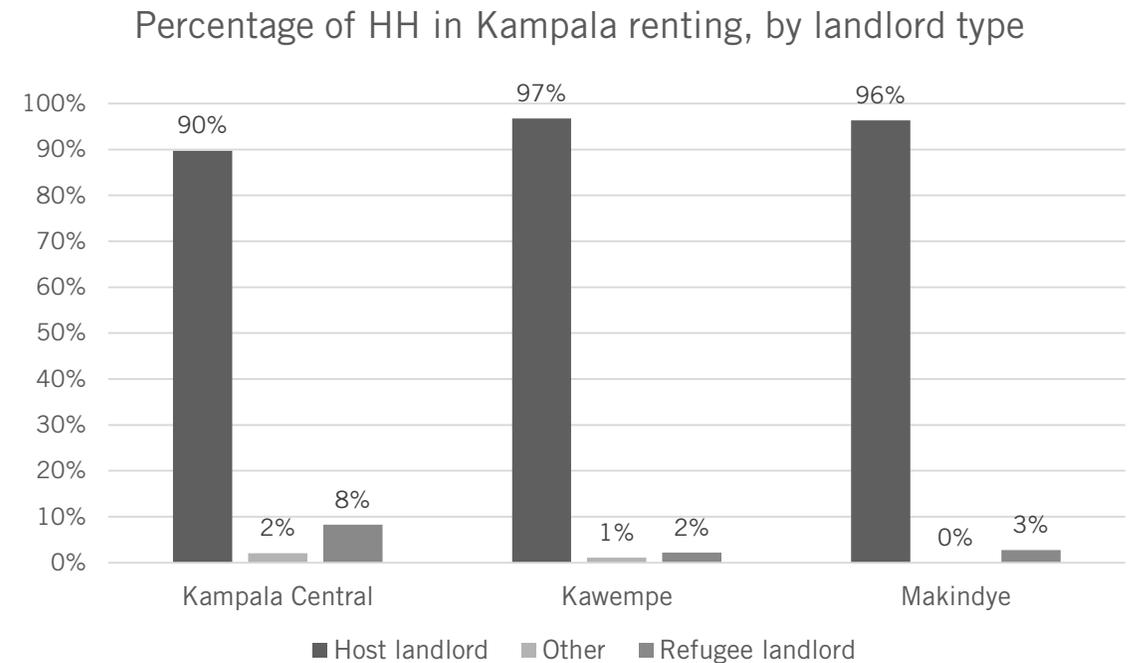
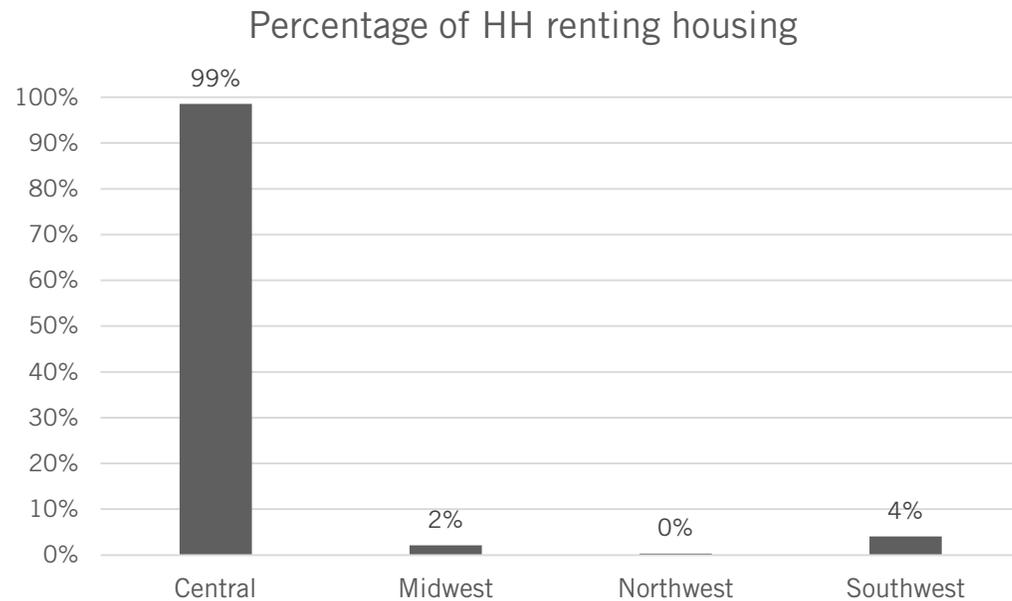
Percentage of HH using main source of materials for constructing shelters



From FGDs/KIIs:

- **Disputes** between refugees and hosts **over natural resources** (bamboo poles, grass, wood), when refugees tried to collect from nature
- Hosts expressed **concerns about deforestation** and less resources available due to refugees gathering building materials

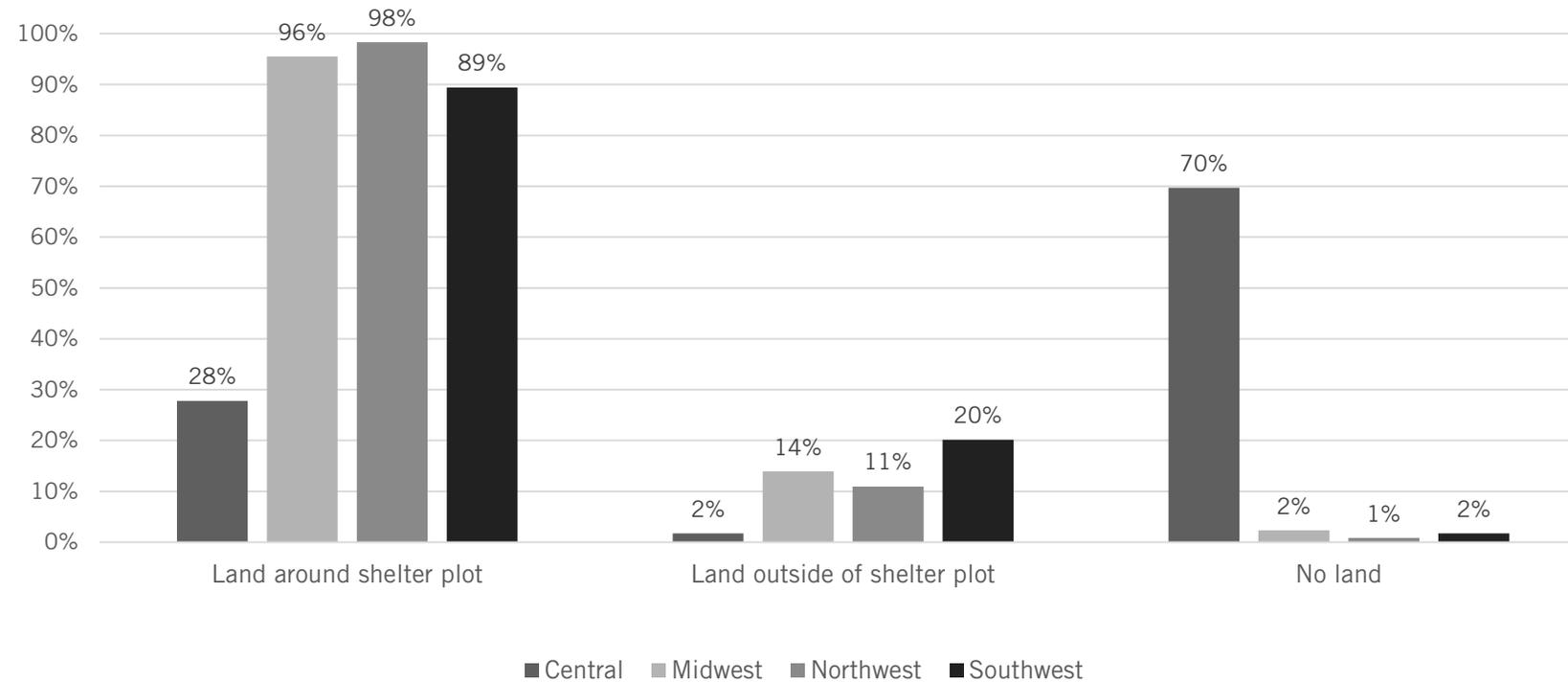
# ACCESS TO HOUSING



- **70%** of respondents in Kampala said **rent was unaffordable**, with **77%** spending at least half of their monthly income on rent
- **51%** of respondents in Kampala reported **rent as their top household expenditure**

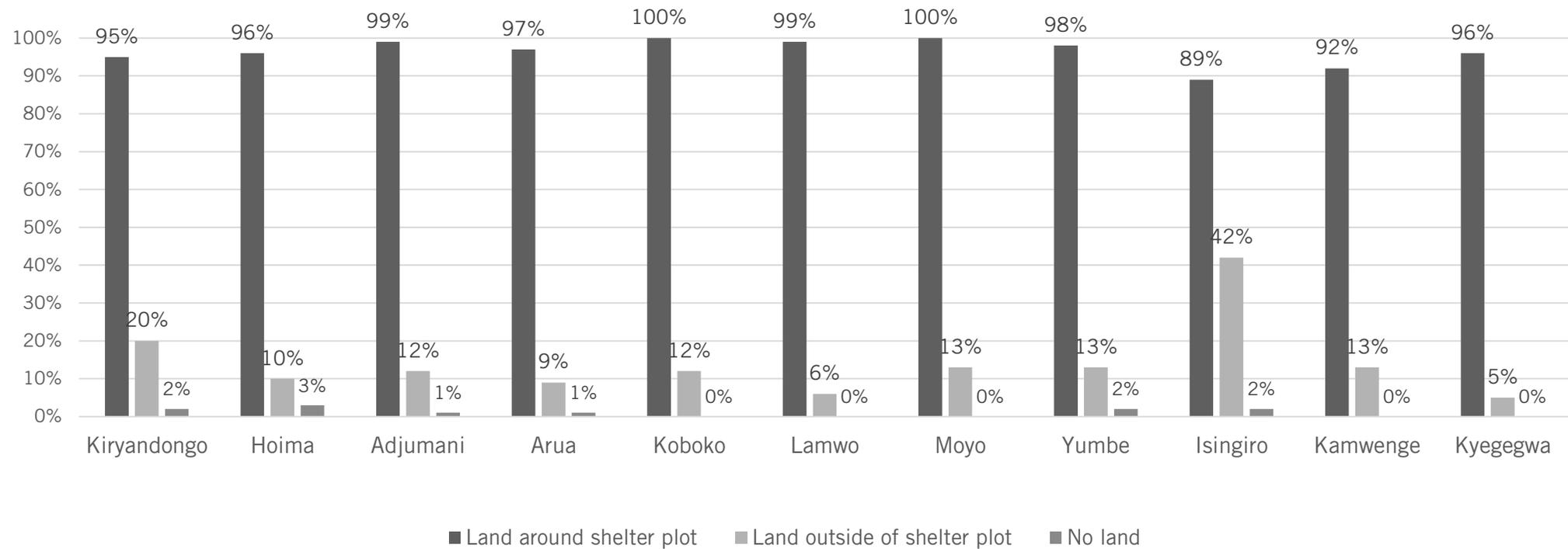
# ACCESS TO LAND

Percentage of HH with access to different types of land



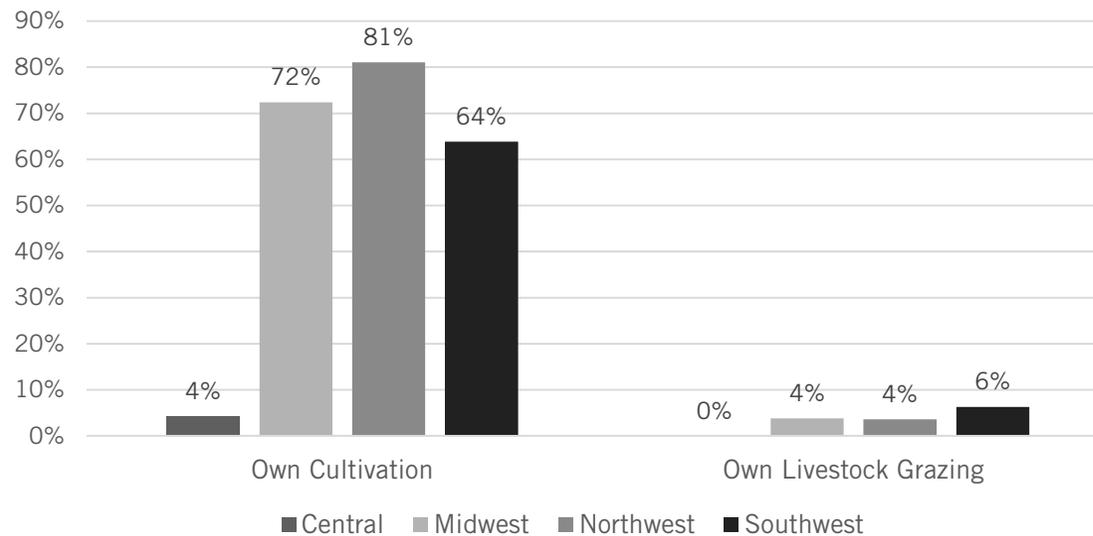
# ACCESS TO LAND

Percentage of HH with access to different types of land, by district



# ACCESS TO LAND

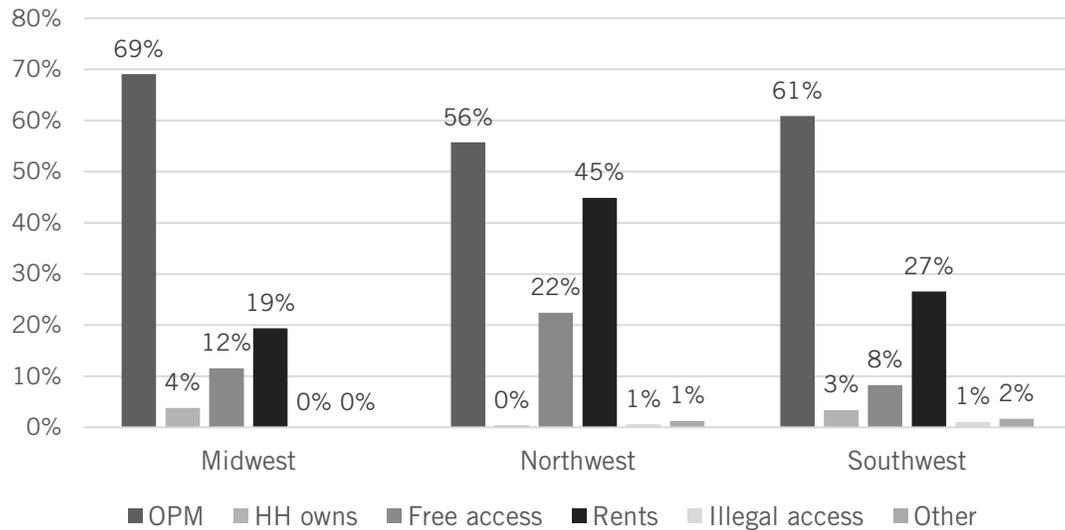
Percentage of HH with access to land surrounding shelter, by use



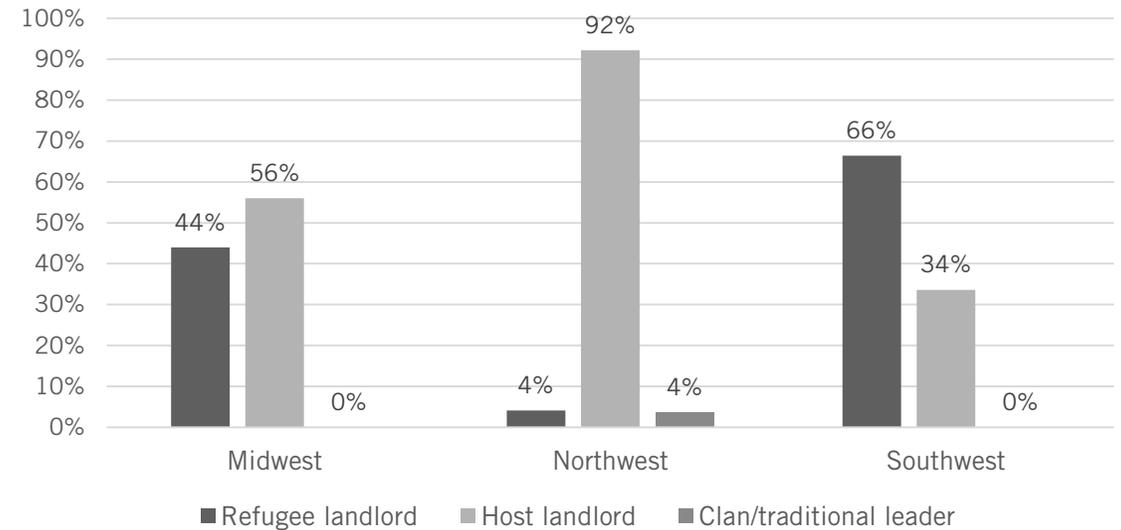
- **Almost 95%** of settlement-based refugees reported accessing land surrounding shelter through **allocation from OPM**
- Land surrounding shelter plot was commonly used by settlement-based refugees for **cultivation**
- Of those that cultivate on shelter plots in settlements, **81%** reported that the **land was not sufficient** to provide food for the entire household in the most recent harvest/agricultural season

# ACCESS TO LAND

Percentage of HH accessing land outside of shelter plot, by method of access



Percentage of HH accessing land outside of shelter plot through renting, by landlord type



- **83%** of those renting paid on **an annual basis**, rather than monthly or one-time payment
- Some FGD respondents noted **sharecropping arrangements** (paying rent in harvested crops), or **4-month rental arrangements** for the agricultural season

# ACCESS TO PROPERTY/ASSETS

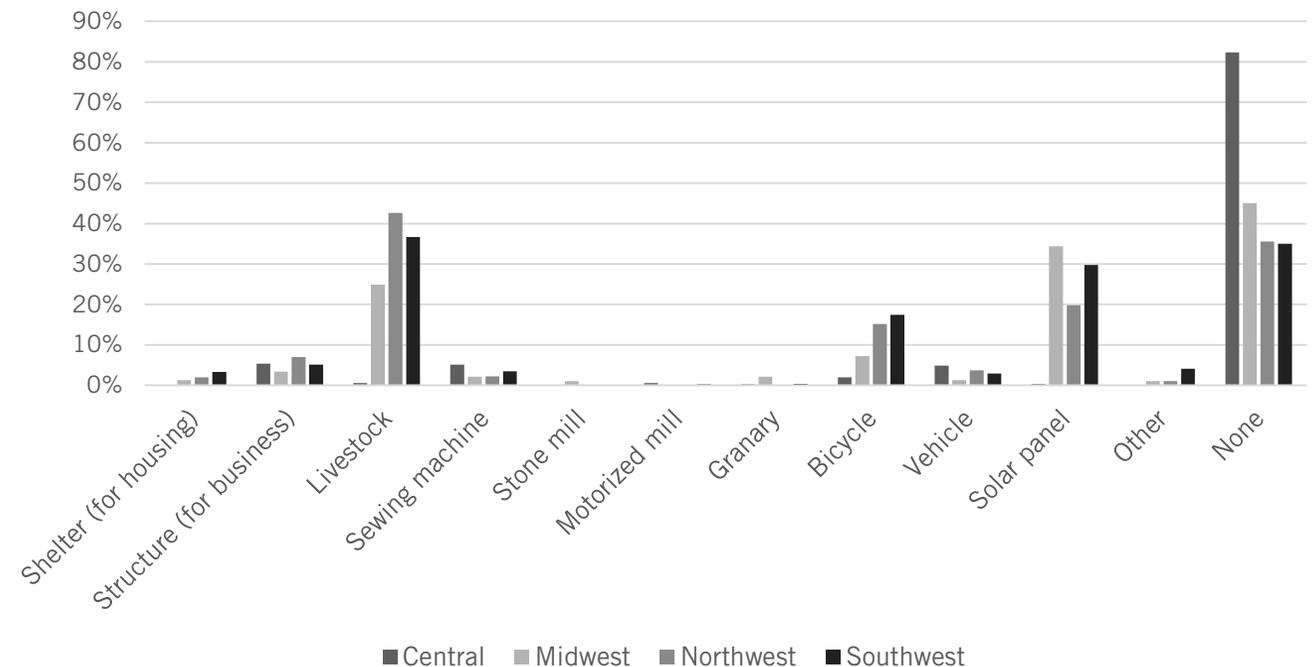
## ■ Settlements

- Around **65%** of HHs reported owning **at least one asset**
  - Livestock
  - Solar panel
  - Bicycle
- Only **26%** of HHs reported having an asset that was **income-generating**

## ■ Kampala

- Only **18%** of HH reported owning **at least one asset**
  - Building structures (for business)
  - Sewing machine
  - Vehicle
- Only **10%** reported having an asset that was **income generating**

Percentage of HH owning assets, by type



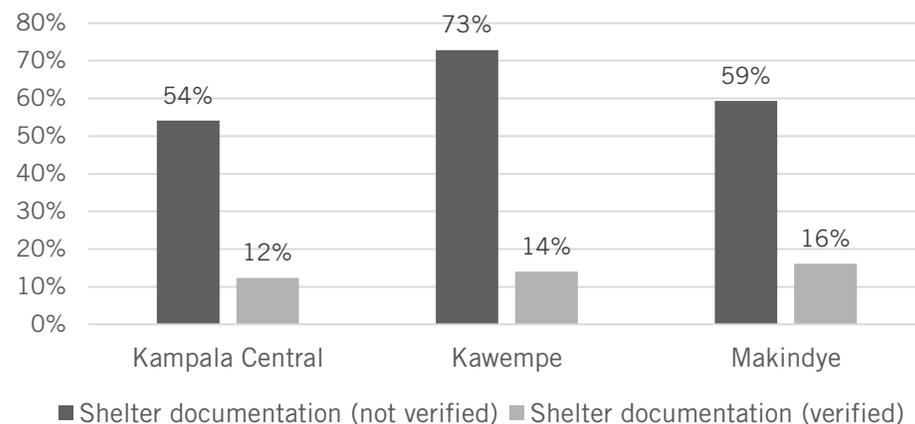
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## Key Findings: Tenure and Documentation

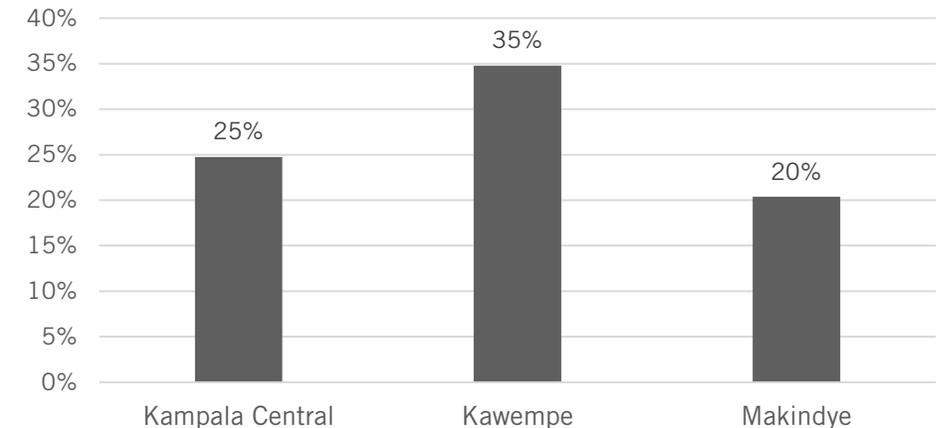
# TENURE AND DOCUMENTATION: HOUSING

- Only **2%** of households in settlements reporting having documentation for their shelter
- **76%** of households in Kampala reported having documentation for their shelter
  - **Rental receipt** was the most common type (81%), but only **14%** were able to show the document for verification.

Percentage of HH in Kampala with shelter documentation



Percentage of HH in Kampala with perceived risk of eviction



- **Larger households** in Kampala more likely to report risk of eviction



# TENURE AND DOCUMENTATION: LAND

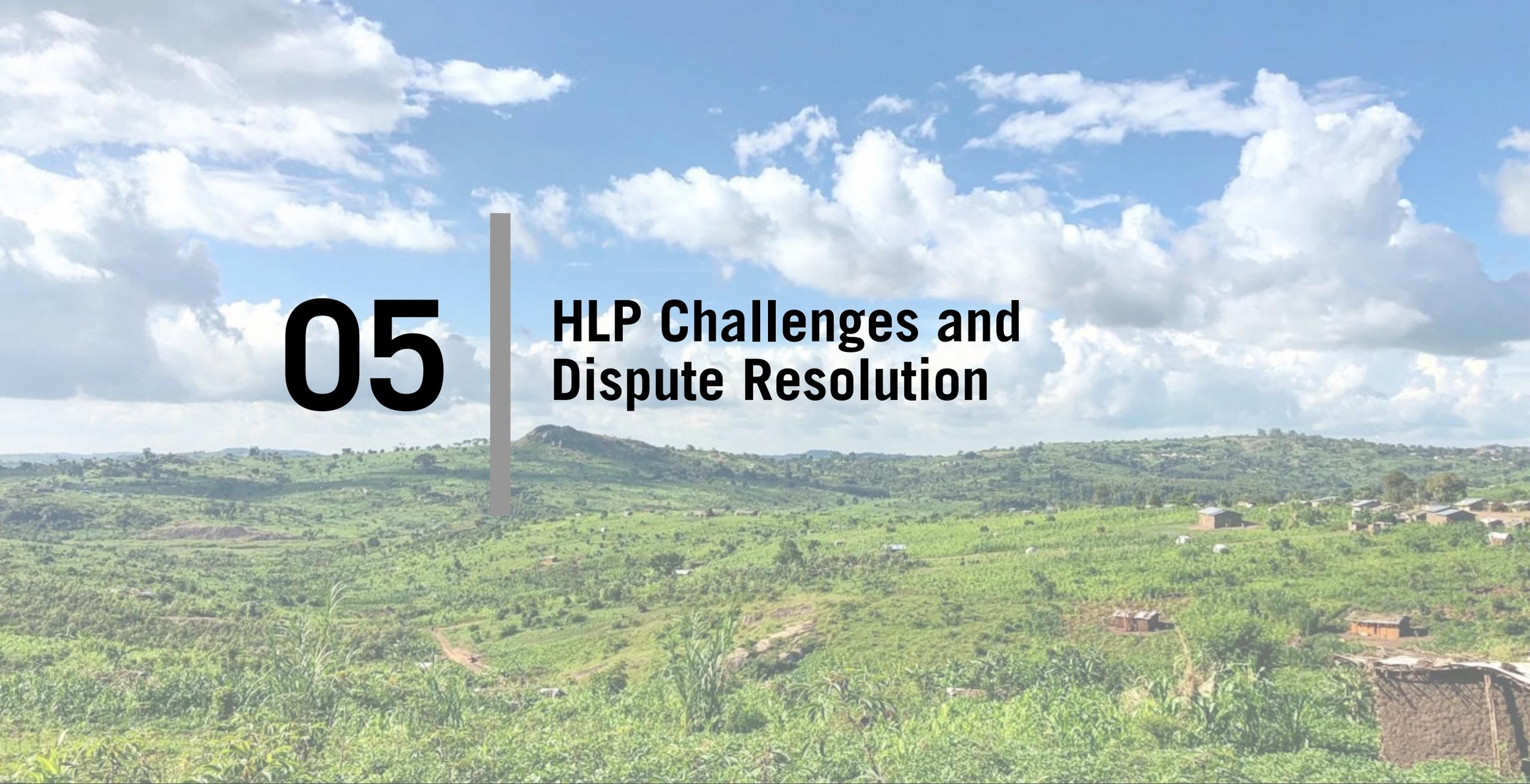
- The **majority** of refugee households who reported having access to land outside of their shelter plot, **do not have formal agreements or documentation**
  - Of the **56%** of land outside of shelter plots accessed through renting, ownership/leasing, or free access, households had **formal agreements for only 10%** of it.

## Qualitative findings:

- Hosts cited **lack of ownership documents as source of conflict**, perceived to be exacerbated during refugee influxes
- Instances of **refugees illegally purchasing land or entering into informal agreements** where they are exploited by sellers because they are not aware of land tenure laws

# TENURE AND DOCUMENTATION: PROPERTY

- **83%** of property items owned by households in settlements **did not have any kind of documentation to prove ownership**
  - **Purchase receipt (86%)** was most commonly reported type for those that had documentation
- In Kampala, **70%** of property items owned by households **had documentation**
  - **78%** of property items had purchase receipts
  - **28%** of property items had rental receipts

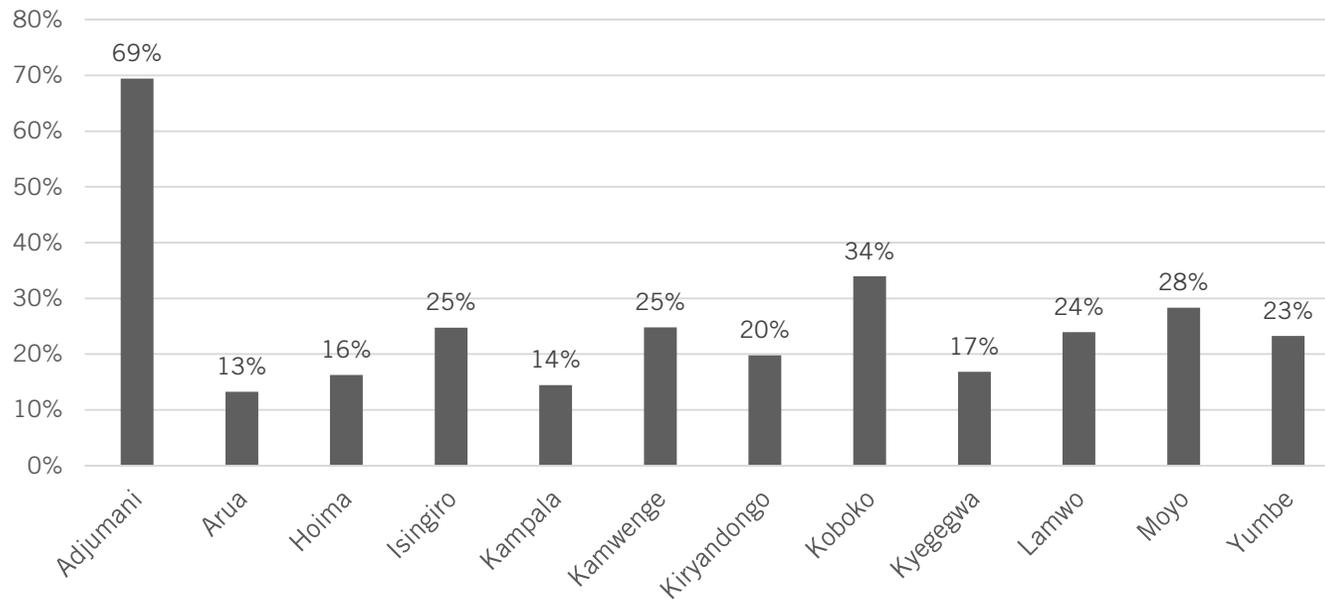


**05**

## **HLP Challenges and Dispute Resolution**

# HLP CHALLENGES

Percentage of HH reportedly facing HLP challenges, by district

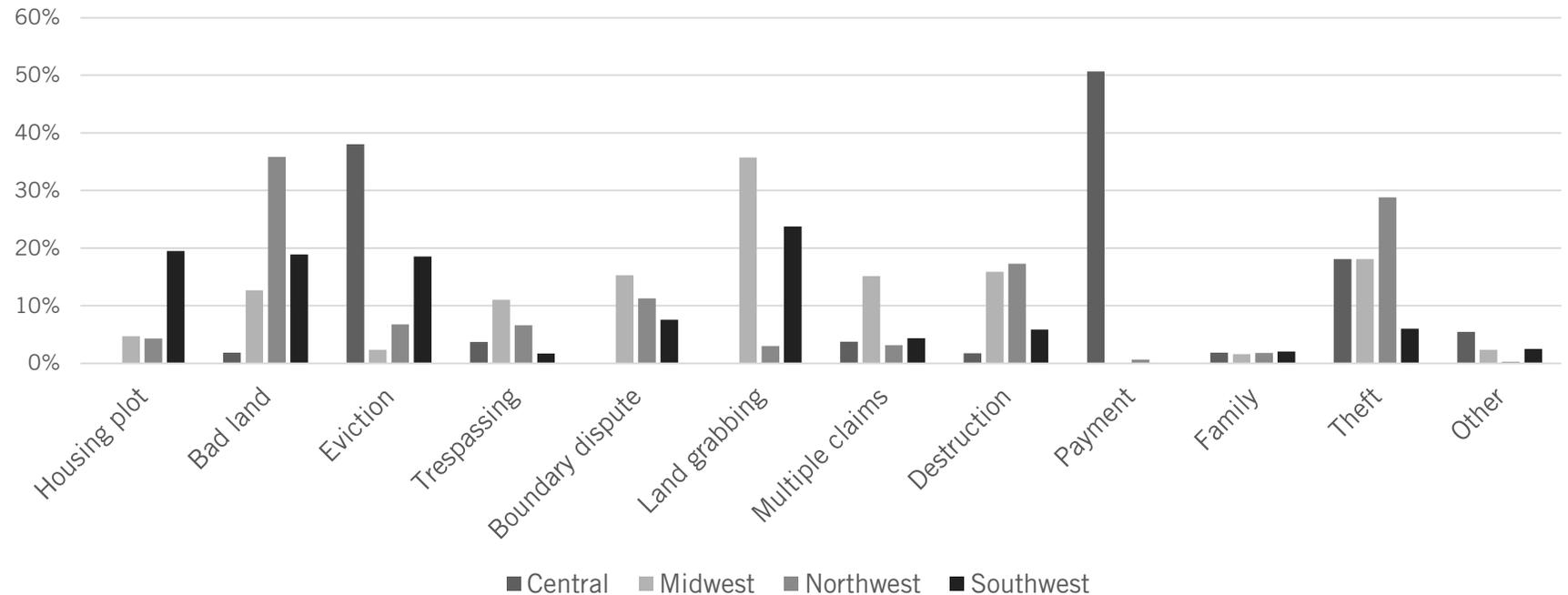


- Households headed by **widows** were more likely to report HLP challenges (**40%**) compared to those headed by people who were married, single, or divorced (**27%**)
- Most common types of HLP issues in settlements:
  - Unsuitable land or unusable land
  - Theft
  - Destruction of HLP
- Most common types of HLP issues in Kampala:
  - Forced evictions
  - Rent payment disputes

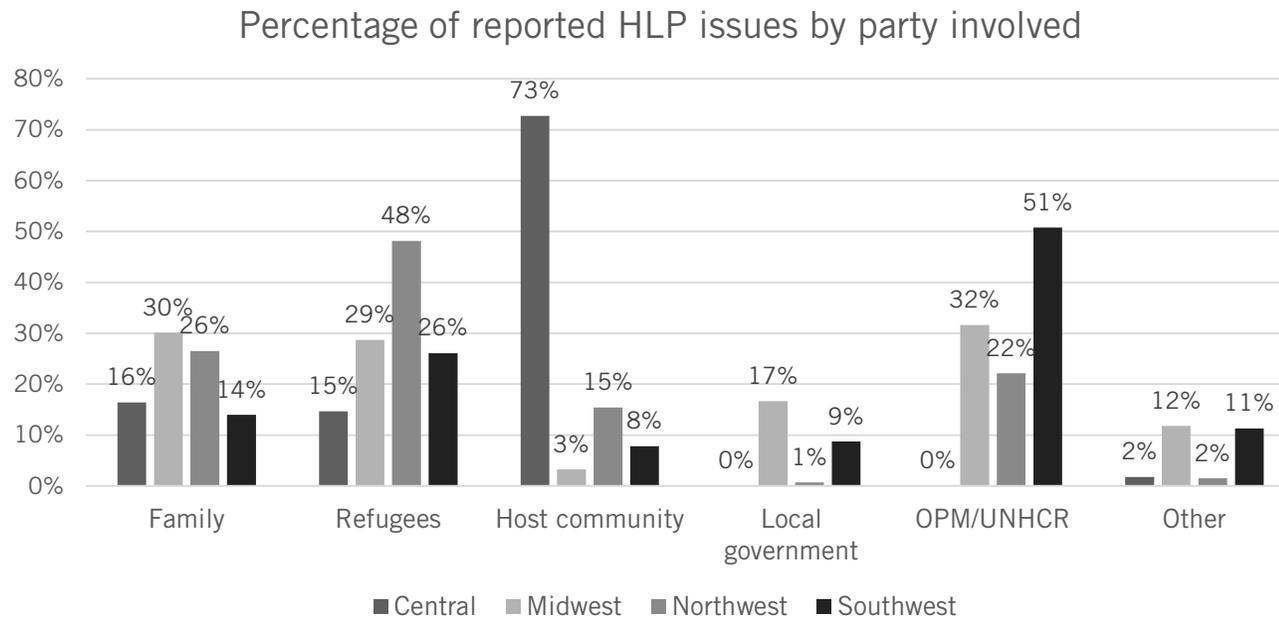
# HLP CHALLENGES

- HLP issues relating to housing and shelter plots more commonly reported by female-headed households
- HLP issues relating to land for agriculture more commonly reported by male-headed households

Percentage of reported HLP issues by type



# HLP CHALLENGES



- Issues with other **refugees** more common in **Bidi Bidi, Palorinya, Lobule**
- Issues with **OPM/UNHCR** more common in **Rwamwanja, Imvepi, Kyaka**
- Issues with **family members** more common in **Ayilo, Palorinya**
- Issues with **host community** more common in **Kampala**



# HLP DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- About half of all households **attempted to resolve** reported HLP disputes, with a slightly higher percentage in Kampala
  - **52%** of disputes in settlements were **successfully resolved**
    - Reported reasons for disputes remaining unresolved included: failure to identify/follow up with party, unfamiliarity with reporting procedure, and delays or lack of response from authorities
    - Households sought support from RWCs (55%) and community help desks (54%)
  - **62%** of disputes in Kampala were **successfully resolved**
    - Reported reasons for disputes remaining unresolved included: lack of money, failure to identify/follow up with party, and unresponsive landlords
    - Households sought support from family (40%) and LCs (27%)



**06**

## **Conclusions**

# CONCLUSIONS

- Both Ugandans and refugees face challenges accessing adequate housing and exercising their land and property rights in Uganda.
- Refugees are inherently more vulnerable in certain scenarios, because rights are sometimes vague, not respected, and not well understood. Social support networks are broken and access to livelihoods is limited.
- Formal agreements and documentation for HLP are uncommon.
- Lack of access to agricultural land, and lack of formal agreements/ documentation may hinder refugees' ability to access land, cultivate, and start businesses, which threatens self-reliance.
- Households headed by women, especially widows, may face greater challenges accessing HLP and resolving issues.
- Refugees in Kampala cited are challenged by unsteady rental agreements and payment issues, which will become more common if refugees move from settlements to urban areas.



# CONCLUSIONS



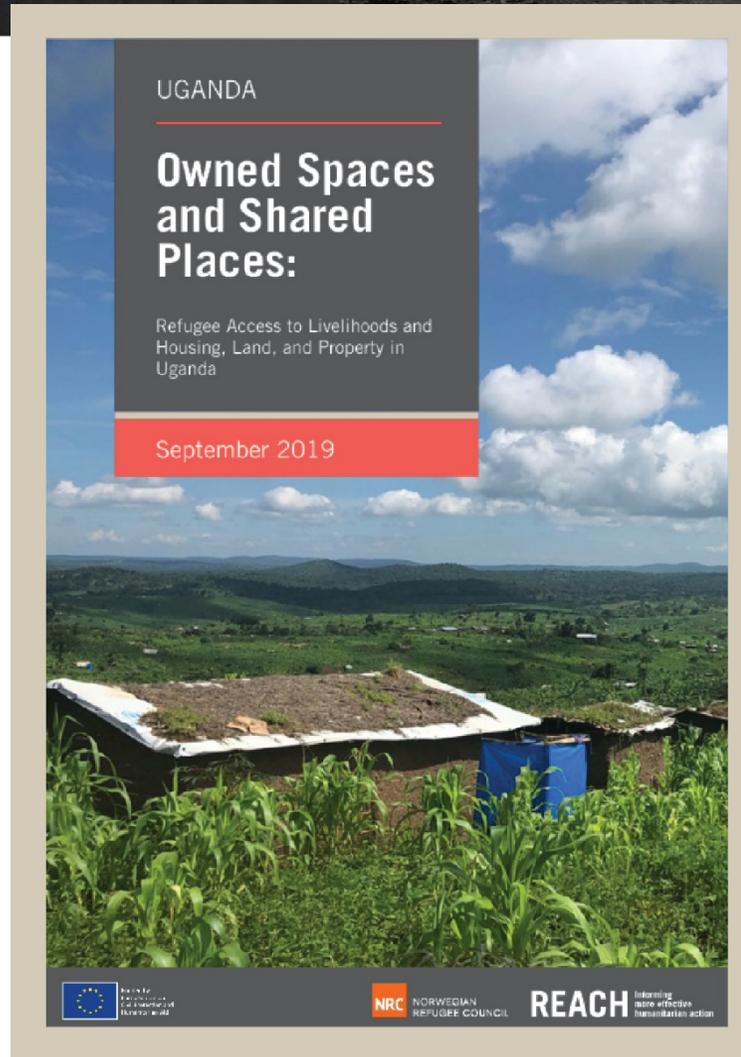
Improved access to HLP and protection of rights for refugees can contribute to improved livelihoods and integration into the economic and social systems, and overall well-being, in areas of displacement

# Check out the assessment products:

- 25 settlement level factsheets
- 3 Kampala division factsheets
- 4 district level factsheets (Adjumani, Arua, Isingiro, Kampala)
- 1 report
- 1 de-sensitized dataset

Available for download at:

<https://www.reachresourcecentre.info/country/uganda/>



## Refugee Access to Livelihoods and Housing, Land, and Property

May 2019  
UGANDA

### CONTEXT

Uganda is currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the region with over 1.2 million refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Burundi. Recently arrived refugees have joined Rwandese, Somali, and other refugees that have lived in Uganda for decades. Due to the large number of refugees, the range of countries of origin, and the varying lengths of displacement, there are key information gaps on how access to or lack of housing, land, and property (HLP) for refugees impact their potential for sustainable livelihoods. In partnership with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), REACH conducted an assessment from 3 December 2018 to 15 March 2019 to collect baseline data on refugees' access to livelihoods and HLP. The assessment aims to provide a better understanding of the conditions of refugees access to livelihoods and HLP, the linkages, and other factors influencing sustainable livelihoods and potential movement within Uganda.

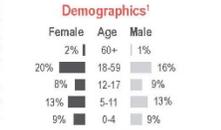
### METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods approach was used, driven by a household-level structured survey, semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). The quantitative household-level survey produced results representative for the refugee population in 30 settlements (considered as 25 due to five combined settlements in Adjumani) across 11 districts, as well as select divisions of Kampala (Makindye, Kampala Central, and Kawempe) with a 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error at the settlement level for all questions asked to the entire sample size. A total of 3,165 households were interviewed for this assessment. All questions referring to a subset are footnoted.

KIIs and FGDs were used to triangulate the data and provide context to quantitative findings. KIIs targeted settlement leadership, including Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) commandants and UNHCR staff, refugee welfare committee leaders, district local government officials, and key partners working in relevant sectors. Semi-structured FGDs were stratified by gender and conducted with refugees and host community groups in each location.

Findings in this factsheet are representative of refugee households living in Imvepi refugee settlement. A total of 135 refugee households were interviewed in Imvepi.

### POPULATION PROFILE OF REFUGEES IN UGANDA



Female-headed households (HHs): **67%**

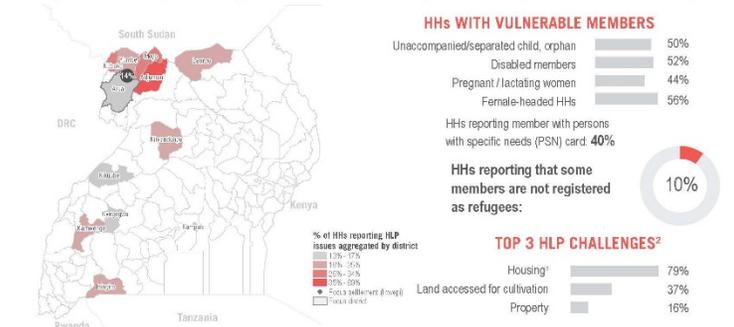
Average household size: **7**

### Displacement demographic

- Top countries of origin:<sup>2</sup>
- 1 South Sudan (65%)
  - 2 DRC (27%)
  - 3 Burundi (3%)
  - 4 Somalia (2%)

### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF IMVEPI IN ARUA DISTRICT

Imvepi opened in February 2017 to accommodate South Sudanese refugees after the Pakorinya settlement in Moyo district quickly reached its full capacity. Although the settlement no longer receives new arrivals, many refugees are registered at the reception center in Imvepi before being transferred to another settlement, such as the Omugo zone extension in Rhino camp.



<sup>1</sup>Figures based on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) population figures updated as of April 2019.  
<sup>2</sup>This question was only asked to the 14% of respondents facing HLP challenges. The level of confidence may thus be lower than 95%.  
<sup>3</sup>Respondents could answer more than one option for this question.

**QUESTIONS?**



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