

## A COST OR BENEFIT? REVIEWING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HOSTING REFUGEES IN UGANDA

### Introduction

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One of the most pertinent, but debatable issues worldwide is whether refugees are an economic benefit or a cost to host countries. Although the latter, commonly phrased as 'refugee burden' has previously dominated refugee literature, recent studies suggest that this narrative is only part of the picture.<sup>i</sup> <sup>ii</sup> The current massive influxes of refugees continue to make studying refugee impacts on host nations a relevant, but controversial issue.<sup>iii</sup> On the one hand, the 'refugee burden' notion underpins an additional cost on the already hard-pressed public budgets, hindrance to economic growth, market distortions, environmental degradation and political strain on already fragile countries. On the other hand, the potential economic benefits include expansion of food and other commodity consumption, labour market benefits through new skills, and benefits accruing from positive spill overs from infrastructure and welfare services provided to respond to refugee needs. It is important, however, to take note of the major gap in data on the macro and micro-economic refugee impacts that literature has widely identified. Despite this fact, some researchers have expressed different views on the impact of hosting refugees as the following review of the existing literature will expound.

There is an observation that refugee costs are much higher than the other macro and micro-economic benefits in the short-run due to the increased demand for the already limited services, especially education, health care and water supply. However, in the long-run, there are likely benefits from investments in medical centers, schools, roads and other capital assets<sup>iv</sup>. In this case, it is important to note the need to shift the analytics from emergency to long term economic impacts and understanding the humanitarian-development divide.

While considering countries' GDPs, UNHCR (2003) indicates that the impact of hosting refugees falls most heavily on developing countries as compared to developed countries. This therefore implies that the impact is disproportionate in relation to the national economic capacity. Comparing the world's average GDP per capita of about US\$ 5,150 to US\$ 230 for the LDCs, the report contends that the latter bears a bigger burden with over eight persons for every 1,000 inhabitants presented as a concern to UNHCR, a number that is more than double the global average of 3.4.

On a higher note, the Uganda Compressive Refugee Response Plan (2017)<sup>v</sup> indicates that cash transfers improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness of interventions. A study on the economic impact of refugees in Rwanda<sup>vi</sup> also concludes that cash aid to refugees has signifi-

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cant positive income spillover effects to host country businesses and households as compared to in-kind food aid. In addition, it was found that there was a US\$ 205 to US\$ 253 increase with an additional adult refugee cash aid received, and an increase by US\$ 49 to US\$ 55 in trade between the local economy and the rest of Rwanda. One of the explanations of low economic benefit accruing from the refugees who receive in-kind aid is the practice of selling their allotted food portions, moreover at a cheaper price compared to the local market prices (ibid), which affects local production. Such findings are fundamental in determining intervention decisions for refugee response, with the aim of maximizing positive impacts for host communities as well as refugee welfare.

Contenders of refugees being a burden to host countries for instance Landau<sup>vii</sup> are challenged by researchers like Campbell<sup>viii</sup> and Whitaker.<sup>ix</sup> As Jacobsen denotes; despite the economic and environmental burdens on host countries, refugees also bring with them resources like international humanitarian assistance, economic assets and human capital<sup>x</sup>.

### **What determines the extent to which refugees contribute or not to the host economies?**

Although refugees are known to actively engage in income generating activities/ trade with locals and are also normally seen to have transformative impacts on host communities, there are factors that influence the extent to which these impacts are achieved. The economic impact of refugees is dependent on the rules governing interactions between refugees and the host country, the structure of host economies and the characteristics of the refugees<sup>xi</sup>. However, a combination of the three is likely to produce much more and better results than if each factor is isolated.

It also depends on the form of refugee resettlement i.e., isolated camps are likely to see little positive refugee impact while settlements that are characterized by complete or nearly complete refugee integration with host country communities are likely to experience more positive impact. 'The more successful refugees are in the labor market, the higher will be their net economic and fiscal contributions to their host economies''<sup>xii</sup> This is also important for the change of attitudes of the native population to refugees. On the other hand, poor economic success is likely to lead to social and economic exclusion, which lead to social unrest, riots and terrorism as extreme manifestations, like it has been the case in the UK and France. This is a clear indication that refugee integration is the one most fundamental aspect if there is to be a positive contribution to their hosts.

These impacts can also vary depending on the socio-economic class, gender, age and geographical location based on the baseline conditions of both refugees and host communities, as well as the effects of government or international interventions. However, there seem to be difficulties and ambiguity in directly attributing economic fluctuations

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or events to the presence of refugees. Such challenges are especially true for developing countries, where frameworks for aggregating refugees' economic activities are predominantly lacking. Nevertheless, the World Bank distinguishes between 'host population and host states to provide for different units of analysis for local/micro-level and national/macro-level data'.<sup>xiii</sup>

A study by Fiori and Rigon in December 2017<sup>xiv</sup> in Lebanon, India and Greece indicates that economic self-reliance for refugees through employment is possible only when there are no political and legal restrictions to the formal labor market. Their observation of self-reliance as more than just an economic issue, but as multi-dimensional, multi-scaler and multi-temporal issue<sup>xv</sup> is an indication that refugees can contribute economically when socio-economic and political dimensions are all considered in the equation.

### **Reviewing the Short-term costs and Long-term benefits of hosting refugees**

Commonly, refugee economic impact on host countries is more of expenditure/cost in the short-run and benefits in the future. For the latter to happen, refugees need to enjoy civil, social and economic citizenship rights, secure employment, self-employment, social services of which, according to Kabreab<sup>xvi</sup> are all likely to reduce refugee repatriation. This means the longer and well-integrated refugees are in the host countries, the higher the chances are for them to contribute to the host economies.

"In North America, western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, where refugees have citizenship rights and even prospects of becoming citizens through naturalization, refugees tend to stay permanently regardless of whether the conditions that prompted displacement are eliminate" (Ibid). His observation suggests that the situation in less developed countries produces opposite results, with high repatriation levels. This would therefore imply more positive economic impact in the developed countries than in LDCs. On the other hand, since such favorable refugee integration policies are not unique to developed countries alone, it serves to suggest probable future economic benefits for LDCs that have related policies.

### **A look at country experiences: What does research on Uganda tell us?**

Uganda's 'open door' Policies and its settlement model make it top of the class on refugee management. It is unique to Uganda to give refugees the right to work, own businesses and move freely. Rather than confining refugees in camps, the government avails them gazette land or communal land provided by communities. Important to note, however is that host community members have expectations in return, ranging from health centers, roads, schools, clean water among other services. Whether hosting refugees indeed brings these benefits is an unresolved debate, crucial in streamlining refugee interventions and management. The New Vision 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017 indicated that taking in refugees provides jobs and stimulates the Ugandan economy, as it

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contributes to Gross National Product and stimulates infrastructure development especially in remote areas<sup>xvii</sup>

Studies that have been conducted on socio-economy impact evaluations have attempted to respond to the widely recognized gap in knowledge about the impact of refugees in Uganda. However, findings show that refugees generate benefits for local economies in Uganda. For instance, an average refugee household receiving cash assistance increases annual real income in the local economy by UGX 3.8 million and UGX 3.7 million in Rwamanja and Adjumani settlements respectively.<sup>xviii</sup> At the same time, for refugees that receive food aid there is an increase of 2.9 million and 2.8 million. Also, giving refugees land in addition to the food or cash assistance increases the impact even more. In addition, host-country households benefit most from income spill overs, as World Food Program (WFP) aid stimulates production in and around settlements<sup>xix</sup>

Although there is limited specific impact data on Micro impacts at community/ host population visa vie macro-economic impacts, existing literature suggests that the former is more felt than the latter. However, as was observed by Zetter and colleagues, in 2014, these impacts do not uniformly affect host population, but creates 'winners' and 'losers' with the poorest of the poor or the most vulnerable being at the highest risk of being negatively affected. On the other hand, private landowners and business owners are likely to benefit from cheap refugee labor and increased demand accruing from an increased population.

A study by World Food Program indicates that humanitarian aid distributed to refugees in Uganda has a multiplier effect which benefits the whole local economy. As the WFP Deputy country director, Cheryl Harrison was quoted in a WFP brief of 2016<sup>xx</sup>- *'Now we can say with certainty that when Ugandans provide land to refugees and WFP gives money, revenues are multiplied, and the economic benefits are divided between the refugees and the host communities.'* Indeed, it is indicated that the annual income in Ugandan economy increases by US\$ 1,100 and US\$ 850 when the assistance is given in form of cash and in-kind food respectively. It is also emphasized that cash-aid transfers not only empower refugees by giving them the ability to decide for themselves what they eat, but also boost their purchasing power.

Looking at the Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Plan (UCRRP) 2017, one can observe that even when livelihood support (the major aspect of refugee self-reliance) is identified in the priority areas of the plan, the financial allocations for this area is still among the smallest compared to other areas. Allocating less to livelihood support and self-reliance is likely to represent a more nuanced cost to the host economy. It is also likely to depict a prolonged emergency response and a delayed 'emergency-development' transition. A slow transition from emergency to development would mean a continued elevated cost to the humanitarian agencies and Uganda as the host due to refugee prolonged dependency.

**Percentages of sectoral allocations in the UCRRP 2017**

Education	9.0
Livelihoods	8.8
Logistics and telecommunications	6.9
Operational support	4.6

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Source: Author's calculations from UNHCR figures presented in the UCRRP 2017<sup>xxi</sup>

## **Lessons from Europe**

### **Germany**

The 2015-2016 spikes of refugees in Germany is a remarkable one, but not surprising, given that the country has received a reported 30% of all the asylum applications in Europe, over the past 30 years. This influx that has boosted Germany's population by more than 1% is notable. 65 percent of all asylum seekers between 2015 and 2017 were male, with more than 50 percent below age 24 and about a quarter of all refugees were children below age 15 (UNHCR, 2017). Whereas this population boom has negative implications for the country, incorporating these refugees into its workforce has the potential to mitigate the negative socio-economic impact of the crisis. However, economic, social integration and the extent to which refugees in Germany can work depend on their immigration status.<sup>xxii</sup>

Despite the integration provisions, the percentage of employed persons among the refugees remains small with most of the employed refugees being the ones that arrived prior the 2015/16 wave. Many factors including language barriers, bureaucratic hurdles and resentment in German society are some of the challenges faced. There seem to be a staggering number of refugees employed in Germany. For instance, only 9 percent of refugees who arrived in 2015 were employed by 2016. 22 percent of refugees that had arrived in 2014 and 31 percent of those had arrived in 2013. In 2017, however, there was a 45 percent increase in the employed refugees compared to 2016 (Ibid). With this backdrop, one can conclude that hosting more refugees of whom the majority cannot find employment will likely increase costs on Germany and any other host country that experiences the same.

Efforts by the German government to integrate refugees have aimed at increasing economic impact of hosting these refugees. Some of these interventions have included integration courses for which legislation was passed in 2016 for all asylum seekers to take, lest they lose government benefits and the legal right to remain in the country. Other initiatives focus on job placement. One challenge identified in the effort to economic integration is that the private sector mainly focuses on low-skilled jobs, internships and temporary positions that rarely lead to full-time employment.

Like in many other refugee hosting countries, the refugee crisis has triggered polarized political debate in Germany. This tends to focus on negative aspects like costs, social problems and security concerns, while underemphasizing the potential long-term benefits the influx of refugees could generate. Indeed, social welfare for asylum seekers alone was 5.3 billion Euros in 2015 and 21.7 billion euros in 2016. 5.3 billion euros were for integration measures and 4.4 billion euros for social welfare payments in 2016.<sup>xxiii</sup> In 2017, 21.3 billion euros were

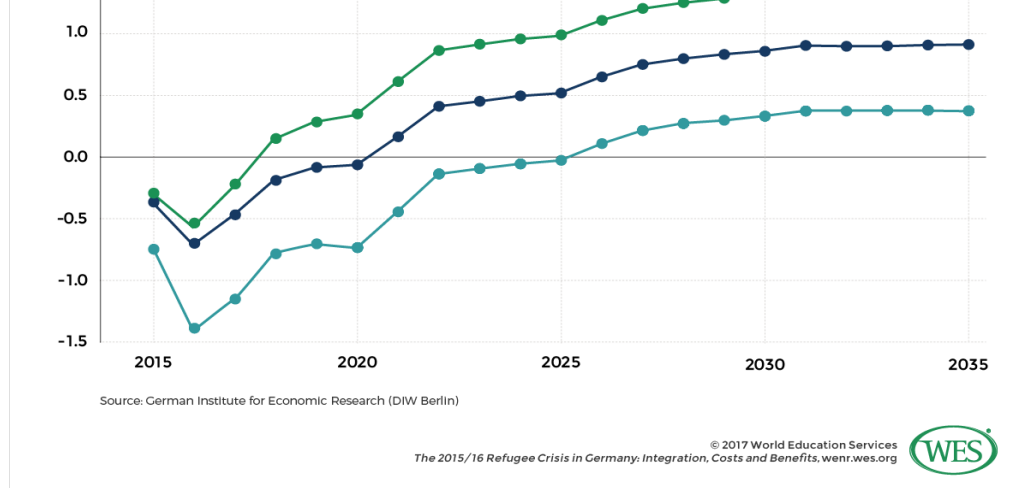
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Clearly, these projections indicate an upward trend in Germany's GDP as a result of hosting refugees. These results, however, are not an outright guarantee, as it will depend on the speed and success of integration efforts. Particularly, the current political debates in Germany, with the 'right-wing' gaining popularity in the face of the Nationalistic, Anti-immigration AfD Party, there is a likelihood that the country will take in less and less refugees in the near future. Already, the political backlash against Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Party (CDU) has seen the need to revise the 2015 'open-door' policy, thus a proposal for increased deportations and a call for establishing European asylum processing centers in North Africa, to contain migration flows. Indeed, by January 2017, 42 percent up from 33 percent in October 2016 of surveyed Germans considered refugees as a threat to German culture. 56 percent up from 49 percent disapproved Chancellor Merkel's refugee policies while 70 percent up from 62 percent believed that growing numbers of refugees would exacerbate crime rates. The backlash of such nature has potential to alter positive projections of benefits of hosting refugees.

Nevertheless, the International Monetary Fund report of 2016 indicates a promise for the refugee influx to offset the fast aging population and keep the labor market balanced<sup>xxiv</sup> (about 28% of German population are aged 60 years and over). As indicated earlier in this report, the majority of the refugees that came to Germany are young people who are eager to work. Important to note here also is that the difficulties of the passage to Europe give an advantage to young and energetic males, plus those that have some disposable funds to pay for human trafficking (Ibid). This is likely to leave out the weak and the disadvantaged especially women, the elderly and the poor who are likely to be vulnerable and less productive.

The question however remains what this would mean in a country like Uganda, where entry for refugees is non-discriminatory. To what extent does the structure of the refugee population influence the economic impact of refugees on a country like Uganda, and what difference in the impact can be traced among different countries?

## France

The French experience of refugees and immigration policies seem to have had an earlier resentment than many European refugee-hosting countries. The securitization of the immigration and the introduction of more repressive and restrictive controls have had a negative impact of the position of immigrants/refugees<sup>xxv</sup>. Such attitude towards immi-

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grants as a threat only seems to have served to reinforce and invigorate the right-wing populism. In the face of such a negative attitude towards new comers, integration is likely to be a far cry in the desert. Integration, as mentioned earlier is the major sure way to have positive economic impacts that refugees can create in the host countries. Immigrants are frequently linked with problems of crime, unemployment and deficits in the welfare budget, and general insecurity in France (ibid). Refugees have also been identified as a threat to national social and political cohesion, thus undermining the French national identity. With this backdrop, it is not surprising for one to conclude that France's exclusionary policies make it difficult for refugee integration. The strength of the right-wing and the general disapproval of Merkel's refugee policies seem to get inspiration and lessons from such countries as France. Nevertheless, the positive impacts on the French economy are vital to highlight, concentrating only on negative impacts is too narrow a focus.

### **Reflecting on the "open doors" symposium**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2017, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, in partnership with the French and Germany embassies held an informative and interactive discussion on the economic impact of refugees on host countries. Despite the usually homogenised view of refugees as an economic burden, the discussion revealed the need to change this narrative, for which stories from refugees themselves and refugee representatives were in confirmation. The dialogue focussed on German, French and Ugandan experiences regarding refugees' economic impact. It explored whether refugees are economic actors or a cost to their hosts.

Among the questions posed was how one can reconcile different personalities among refugees-those who are 'a cost' and those who are 'a benefit'. This was because the discussion revealed refugees not as a homogeneous group of people but a people like any other, that have different capacities, characteristics, aspirations and the fact that being a refugee is never a characteristic of a person.

While contextualising refugees as per the UN 1951 Convention, the 1967 UN Protocol and the 1969 OAU convention, the symposium explored the history, legal framework, challenges and opportunities of refugees in Uganda. Observing that by the end of May 2017, Uganda had the third largest refugee population in the world, after Turkey and Pakistan, there was a consensus that understanding the economic impact of hosting refugees is appropriately timed.

Uganda was applauded for the political good will towards refugees especially through its provisions in the constitution (chapter 4) and other legal frameworks that give refugees the right to engage in economic activities just as the locals of the host communities do. This indicates hope for potential of refugees to economically contribute to the respective areas they are hosted in.

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There was an agreement that there are few studies on refugees' economic contribution to Uganda. However, examples like the Rwandese refugees in Nakivale, and in the cattle corridors of Nakasongola, Ngoma and Nakaseke, who, up to date remain major producers of milk, ghee, beef and hides in the country highlighted the contributions refugees can make to their host communities. The major contribution refugees in Kiryandongo have made in producing maize for the country was also highlighted. Several examples of businesses owned by refugees in Kampala and outside were cited as an indication of the economic contribution refugees continue to make, including creating employment for Ugandans as well as other refugees.

The question of integration as the major driver for uplifting refugee economic engagement was emphasized, in addition to the need to develop refugee-centered interventions that consider their aspirations and interests. In this regard, the importance of identifying multipliers among the refugees to help them integrate faster (as is done in Germany) was identified as key.

Some of the challenges that hinder refugees from being economically productive were highlighted. These ranged from institutional constraints to limited organizational commitments, limited capacities and capabilities on the side of refugees and limited policy implementation.

One of the most important comments was that for real integration to happen, and for refugees to contribute more to the economies of host countries, there is need to consider the labor market dynamics especially the changing technological requirements. Also, the need to leverage the capabilities that exist among the refugees cannot be over-emphasized.

However, the question kept revolving around the capacity that Uganda possesses to fulfil the commitments it stipulates in its legal frameworks and other commitments.

### **Seeing refugees as an economic benefit: An over romanticized view?**

Warning on romanticizing refugees and their economic contribution was also highlighted in the 'Open Doors' Symposium. The keynote speaker, Prof. Deborah Mulumba observed the unavailability of disaggregated data regarding the categories of refugees that actually engage in productive activities. Additionally, the lack of evidence of whether these refugees possess modern skills, for instance farming skills remains a question. Deborah also hinted at the possible tension that arises when hosts do not get employed by refugee organizations, like the case has been in Moyo and Lamwo districts.

Most research is likely to be biased towards a somewhat better off category of refugees that have social networks, capital, connectivity, and this might overlook the limited level of empowerment of which most refugees may be victims, but which they would require to under-



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take economic activities. In this regard, crucial factors may be overlooked in the assessments.

*'There are underlying factors that hinder refugees from being economically productive, and one of them is the unfavorable working environment and policies. We have many things we can contribute in this country, but we are stopped to make things happen...look at the amphitheater that our NGO (OPPORTUNIGEE) is constructing in Nakivale: - It is a good thing, but local organizations are seeing it as a competition rather than a progress and a complement. It is as if we are required to look vulnerable even if we have money....'* A 30-year-old refugee from Nakivale settlement.

Such is a reminder that instead of being excited about refugees' economic contribution on host economies; we need to consider some of the unseen socio-economic and political challenges that linger behind the economic lives of these refugees.

### **A general reflecting on the interviews**

Literature studied in this report was supplemented by 'people's voice' through interviews. 2 refugees from Nakivale resettlement 3 from Kampala, 1 from Kyangwali and 2 government representatives were interviewed. These were selected depending on the availability of contacts especially phone numbers (most interviews were conducted on phone, while one physical interview in Kampala). This was majorly because the size of study, time and budget could not permit field visits. The three categories of refugees from Nakivale, Kampala and Kyangwari were selected to bring the blend of urban (mainly self-settled refugees) and rural refugee experiences. Government representatives were selected depending on their role on refugee management in Uganda. Some of the responses include the following,

*'Refugees in Nakivale settlement are engaged in agriculture and they produce maize, milk, beans and tomatoes, which they sell to fellow refugees and nationals in the neighbourhood. Some refugees are engaged in construction and transport. A good number owns taxis that mainly operate in Mbarara town. They also pay taxes. Refugees are the majority customers in the banking sector in Kabingo, near Nakivale settlement. Also, every Tuesdays and Fridays, nationals bring their products to Kitazyia and Juru areas to sell to the refugees''*

Indeed, such an assertion by a 20-year-old refugee from Nakivale settlement serves to emphasise many of the observations made during the 'open doors' symposium. The economic activities this respondent highlights are a manifestation that refugees are not living passively, but work to make lives better for themselves and their families, thus directly or indirectly contributing to the economic growth and development of their host population and the economy at large.

*'When you look at telecommunication - MTN, AIRTEL, AFRICEL and other companies, you realise that there are a lot of their' products be-*

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*ing sold in refugee settlements. Almost all the refugees have smart phones and use internet every day. Items that refugees are selling in their shops are bought in Kampala and other towns in Uganda and from nationals. There are very many mobile money agents in these settlements of which most are owned by Ugandans and refugees as their major customers.”* 25-year-old refugee from Kampala.

One would easily think that this very respondent was interviewed by Alexander Betts and colleagues in 2014 to challenge myth 4 on refugees being technologically illiterate and unable to use electronic equipment. Their research found out that refugees actually interact with technology beyond just mobile phones.

One, Patrick Muvunga, a refugee originally from Goma, eastern Congo and currently in Nakivale settlement shares his story: *‘I am an artist and I started training art skills to other youth in 2014 in Nakivale refugee settlement. Our work has been exhibited in Zimbabwe, Makerere University and Germany. I am currently training other youth to become entrepreneurs like myself. Through ‘OPPORTUNIGEE’ an organisation I cofounded, we are equipping youth with business skills to start their own income generating activities. We are now having 8 successful start-ups that are contributing to changing lives of refugees in the settlement. We are also building an amphitheatre that will in future be used to connect refugees and nationals through art and performances.”* *‘I think when we leave Uganda we shall also leave behind beautiful houses and other structures to the Ugandan population to use”*

*‘I am running a football academy that supports youth. I also do poetry. I also want to highlight that refugees are a great market for businesses of Ugandans. In urban areas like in Kampala where refugees don’t live in designated settlements, they are tenants and, so they pay rent thereby contributing to the economy of Uganda. For instance, there is a centenary bank branch at Kabingo trading centre near Nakivale settlement for which about 80% of its customers are refugees from the settlement. ... if the settlement was not there, then that branch would have closed”*- 27-year-old refugee from Nakivale settlement.

The above two interesting responses tend to almost tell it all. The talent and passion these young men possess corroborate the observations made by another 40-year-old refugee business owner from Kampala who asserts that refugees do not leave their skills, talents, brains and skills back in their original countries and they are able to utilize them in host communities (*see the next respondent*). *In addition, the same observation was raised by participants of the ‘open doors’ symposium. Such is an indication that refugees, indeed are just like any other person and that being refugee is not a characteristic of someone, but a situation that can happen to anyone at any time.*

*‘Most people think that refugees are not human beings like others. It is true that back home, refugees have lost their families, their property, homes, but the truth is that they come with their heads, their brains, their skills, hands and all abilities. When they reach host coun-*

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*tries, they don't cross their hands but work. For instance, Congolese are good at tailoring, art, music and they share their cultures with Ugandans. Ugandans are being taught by Congolese in tailoring and hair dressing....."* 40-year-old business owner from Kampala.

*'To increase the economic contribution of refugees to the countries that host them just requires supporting what they are doing. Refugees have the potential to make things happen by themselves. Among the refugees, we have engineers, doctors, business men. Refugees can make a bigger contribution if the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) assists them to do it. Refugees will not even need food distribution at the end of the month if this is done"* 36-year-old refugee from Kampala

*"Uganda has done much about refugee management, we have the liberty to do business, the right to move anywhere in the country. However, some refugees fear to invest in business because they are not certain of when policies can change against them, which might cause loss of businesses in case Uganda decides to adopt an anti-refugee policy"*

The fear that this 45-year-old refugee from Kyangwali settlement expresses is an indication that economic contribution that refugees can make is dependent on several and sometimes unobvious factor. This tends to sound a caution not to over romanticise the economic impact refugees can create. Like the keynote speaker at the symposium put it, we need not to overlook such issues including gender dimensions.

*'Broadly, refugees are a burden to the country in terms of strain to social services, environment degradation and provision of security"-* Principle Refugee Protection Officer, Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda.

Although this seems to contradict what most respondents said, it cannot be ruled out, as refugee economic impact is ideally both positive and negative and the either results depend on numerous factors, environments and experiences of different hosts and the characteristics of the refugees they host. Indeed, the report has indicated some of the expenditure figures that are directed towards refugee hosting and integration, yet costs that are not financially determined cannot be forgotten in the cost equation.

### **So, what do we make of this report?**

The last respondent, who ideally corroborates Landau (2003) and other authors that assert the 'refugee burden' notion prompts an 'open-ended' conclusion that allows researchers to do context specific studies with the flexibility to create relevant and disaggregated data which informs specific experiences. As the report has expounded, it is evident that findings from an economic impact evaluation of refugees is

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bound to produce different results altogether. What is important is the ability to identify the positive and negative impacts and help policy makers to make decisions that can maximize the former while minimizing the latter.

This report is a manifestation of the efforts current researchers are putting to contribute to the process of changing the narrative of looking at refugees as an economic burden to host countries. Highlights from the 'open-doors' symposium, literature reviewed and voices of the refugees themselves serve to 'beef-up' this concluding remark.

One of the most important aspects of refugee-impact analysis is the speed, level and quality of integration. Clearly, the report has indicated that how well refugees are integrated has a lot to do with how they contribute to the economies of their hosts. The report has highlighted, however that such impacts are likely to be realized in the long -run, of which this ties into better understanding of the 'emergency-development divide' and the need to transform to the latter. This, however, requires proper implementation of favorable refugee policy frameworks and an observation of refugee rights.

Although it was not for comparison purposes, the report made a brief observation of refugees in France, Germany and Uganda. The different, but sometimes related experiences of the 3 countries in terms of labor market refugee integration tend to raise a question on how to reconcile and relate results on labor market integration in a developing country like Uganda; where unemployment is one of the highest in the world, and on the other hand, in economies like German or France where the unemployment rate is low. This could be an area for further research as part of the refugee socio-economic impact evaluations. In addition, since the report has highlighted that difficulties that refugees face to access Europe including crossing the Mediterranean Sea tends to indirectly eliminate the weak, one ideally expects high economic benefits given that the energetic and able bodied (majorly youth) are most likely make up the majority refugees in Europe generally. Also, how such a finding relates to Uganda and other similar countries that have no such 'eliminating factors' should be of fundamental interest.

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<sup>i</sup> Zetter, R., 2012. Are refugees an economic burden or benefit? *Forced Migration Review*, (41), p.50

<sup>ii</sup> Taylor, J.E., Filipski, M.J., Alloush, M., Gupta, A., Valdes, R.I.R. and Gonzalez-Estrada, E., 2016. Economic impact of refugees. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113(27), pp.7449-7453.

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