

CRRF-messages based on reports from our embassies in Kampala, Dar es Salaam & Nairobi

The role of UNHCR

- The CRRF approach will only work if UNHCR learns to step back and lead from behind.. Anchoring CRRF in the national development agenda and with active involvement of development partners remains critical to the process. UNHCR being seen to retain overall control, thus placing the whole issue in the humanitarian domain with the ‘help’ of development actors, will not be the right point of departure.
- As the aim of the process is to secure new policies and partnerships that extend beyond humanitarian actors and place refugees on the development agenda, UNHCR must focus on facilitating the process, allowing relevant government departments and development actors to lead the operationalization. At the same time, UNHCR must of course fulfill its core protection mandate in respect of refugees.

The scope of CRRF

- CRRF should not be seen as a project or a programme but rather as a New Way of Working, comprising all existing and new initiatives in support of an inclusive approach to managing protracted displacement and promoting durable solutions for refugees and IDPs. CRRF should seek to develop a joint strategic framework, and in this process recognize and incorporate existing initiatives among development as well as humanitarian actors. Where relevant, the CRRF should seek to provide a platform for a coherent, regional approach among involved governments, with the support of all involved bilateral and multilateral actors and relevant regional organizations.

The need for government leadership

- The government should lead the dialogue with all relevant and interested bilateral and multilateral partners, to ensure full buy-in by partners.
- All relevant, affected parts of government should be included in the dialogue – that is, line ministries at the central level as well as local government entities in refugee-hosting areas.
- This is essentially not a matter for Governments’ refugee departments. Refugee departments have a limited scope, typically being dependent on continued humanitarian funding and therefore on a continued operational partnership with UNHCR. They have no incentive for letting go of a successful, although limited, business model and letting other parts of government take part – or take over.

Establishment and placement of a CRRF-Secretariat

- Building a coordinated framework with buy-in from all relevant partners will in most cases require a secretariat with dedicated resources.
- Preferably, such a secretariat should be located within a government department with sufficient clout with regard to the development of strong planning frameworks, both in terms of legal and social rights of refugees and with respect to development of refugee hosting areas. Typically, the prime minister's office would lend itself to this.
- If such an arrangement cannot be secured, an alternative host could be a well-connected, influential development actor with convening power.
- The secretariat should not end up with a refugee department, UNHCR or another humanitarian actor as that will be interpreted as continuing business as usual, typically of a humanitarian nature.

The role of development and humanitarian actors

- Development partners, also beyond the UN-system and the World Bank, need to be engaged in dialogue, planning and operations around CRRF from the very beginning. The aim is to ensure that there is a joint understanding of the problems to be addressed and the way to do it, that existing humanitarian and development efforts of relevance become more visible and coordinated, and that new, relevant opportunities are identified and explored – in short that greater coherence between humanitarian and development efforts is ensured.
- The full inclusion of the broadest possible range of development and humanitarian actors is critical to ensure that additional resources become available to support solutions to protracted displacement. Mobilization of additional resources from multilateral and development partners and donors will be critical to ensure sustained support from affected governments and communities to the model and should thus be an important part of the CRRF-agenda from Day One in the various situations where the framework is rolled out.
- The need for additional resettlement places also must be elaborated specifically from the early stages of the situation specific processes. This will require that UNHCR facilitates a dialogue with host government and potential resettlement countries, focused on a strategic approach to resettlement that is based on protection needs and cognizant of the burden on host countries.
- Similarly, UNHCR should facilitate a process through which alternative legal pathways are explored in order to identify medium- to longer-term opportunities for refugees to relocate, e.g. to access education or gainful employment.