



THE AFRICAN REFUGEE LED NETWORK (ARN)

FINAL REPORT

THEME: *ENHANCING REFUGEE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION AND SELF-REPRESENTATION IN AFRICA*

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Table of Contents

ACRONYMS:.....	5
APPRECIATION:.....	6
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS DOCUMENT:	7
SUMMIT BACKGROUND:	8
WHAT IS THE AFRICA REFUGEE-LED NETWORK?	8
ARN MISSION:	9
ARN VISION:.....	9
DAY 1: TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2022.....	10
MORNING SESSION:	10
WELCOME AND DELEGATE INTRODUCTIONS:	10
SUMMARY OF EXPECTATIONS:.....	11
OPENING REMARKS FROM ARN AND FROM SARLN:	12
INTRODUCTIONS FROM PARTNERS AND ARN UPDATES:	13
<i>Laura, UNHCR regional office, South Africa:</i>	13
<i>Ed, Global campaigns and advocacy director at Oxfam:</i>	14
<i>Lukendo Mbokani Mpartha Jerry, General Secretary of ARN:</i>	14
<i>Mr. Tony Chiloane:</i>	16
<i>Mary Tal, ARN Steering Committee Member:</i>	16
AFTERNOON SESSION:	19
PRESENTATIONS FROM PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND ‘DUE DILIGENCE’:	19
<i>Mary, RefugePoint:</i>	19
<i>Sheila, Cohere:</i>	19
<i>Victor, Amnesty International</i>	20
<i>Valery, Independent Diplomat</i>	20
RELON REGIONAL REPORTS AND UPDATES:	21
<i>Updates from RELON Uganda, delivered by Keluel Agok:</i>	21
<i>Updates from RELON Kenya, delivered by John Paul Kasika Bahikye:</i>	22
<i>Updates from SARLN, delivered by Abdikadir Mohamed:</i>	23
<i>Updates from RELON Malawi, delivered by Pastor Cecile Losamandjo Pango:</i>	24
CLOSING THE DAY:	25
DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022.....	26
MORNING SESSION:	26
WELCOME AND RECAP OF THE FIRST DAY:	26
PRESENTATION BY MR. AMER ALKAYED, THE CURRENT CHAIR OF THE GRN:	26
PANEL DISCUSSION: PARTNERSHIP, FUNDING, AND REFUGEE PARTICIPATION IN HUMANITARIAN SPACES:.....	28
<i>Responses to “why is it important to fund RLOs and why now”:</i>	28
<i>Question to funders, “In a practical sense, what are your challenges to fund RLOs? How could you advise RLOs to fix these challenges?”</i>	30
<i>Question to RLOs, “In a practical sense, what are your challenges to work with funders?”</i>	31
THE WORLD CAFÉ: IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN SEVEN THEMATIC AREAS:	32
AFTERNOON SESSION:	51
MOVING AHEAD:	51

<i>RESOLUTION AND CLOSING THE DAY:</i>	52
DAY 3 THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022	53
MORNING SESSION	53
PARTNER PRESENTATIONS:	53
<i>Sibusiso Khasa, Amnesty International on Advocacy</i>	53
<i>Rejoyce Makhetha, Amnesty International on Activism</i>	54
<i>Mary Wangui, RefugePoint on RSRI</i>	55
<i>Sheila, Cohere on Reframe and Cohere Funding</i>	56
<i>Valery, Independent Diplomat on Diplomacy</i>	56
AFTERNOON SESSION:	58
SPECIAL SESSION AND RESOLUTIONS	58
END OF THE RESOLUTIONS	61
CLOSING REMARKS.....	62
APPENDIX 1: SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS	65

Acronyms:

AI:	Amnesty International
ARN:	African Refugee-Led Network
AU:	African Union
GRN:	The Global Refugee-led Network
ID:	Independent Diplomat
NGO:	Non-governmental organization
OSF:	The Open Society Foundations
RP:	RefugePoint
RELON:	Refugee-led Organization Network
RLOs:	Refugee-led Organizations
RSRI:	Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative
SARLN:	South Africa Refugee Led Network
UN:	United Nations
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
YARID:	Young African Refugees for Integral Development

Appreciation:

The African Refugee Led Network leadership and delegates acknowledges and appreciates the support and trust from donors by taking this opportunity to say thank you for your generous support for the ARN summit. Our gratitude goes to: Amnesty International, Cohere, the Hilton Foundation, Independent Diplomat, the Open Society Foundation, Oxfam, RefugeePoint, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative, the South African Refugee Led Network (SARLN), and UNHCR Uganda. We are thrilled to have your support. Through your donations, we have been able to host our summit on the theme **“Enhancing refugee meaningful participation and self – representation in Africa.”** Your donation has truly made the difference for us by uniting all the leaders of RLOs, and we are extremely grateful!



Photo by Robert Hakiza: Delegates from different RLO's and sponsors attending the 2nd ARN Summit in Pretoria- South Africa

Contributors to this document:



Dr. Christa Charbonneau Kuntzelman

Dr. Christa completed her PhD Political Science at Northwestern University in 2022. Her dissertation explored variation in how urban refugees in Uganda understand their rights, restrictions, and responsibilities, as well as considered effects of why knowing rights matters. Christa's research hopes to argue for expanded refugee rights in theory and in practice.

Her broader research centers on refugee representation, migration research ethics, and conceptualizing systematic partnership with refugees for research agenda setting, humanitarian provision, and migration policy and decision-making.

Christa was beyond honored to attend the Summit and be of support to all refugee delegates in attendance.



Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga

*"A country that is being led by dictatorship
Philosophy, even thinkers will be subject to
intimidations." -Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga*

Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga, *Executive Director of African Refugee and Migrants Aid (ARMA) and Eastern Cape Provincial Chairperson of South African Refugee Led Network (SARLN).*

I am very passionate about migrants, refugee, asylum seekers and issues of climate change.

I work closely with community based organizations, faith leaders, institutions of higher learning, the youth in high school and primary schools to promote social cohesion and Ubuntu around Africa. My scope of work focuses on the issues of migrants, refugee and asylum seekers and stateless community.

Dr. Christa Charbonneau Kuntzelman and Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga were appointed as notetaker during the summit.

SUMMIT BACKGROUND:

The Summit is organized and coordinated by the Africa Refugee-Led Network (ARN) in collaboration with the South African Refugee-Led Network (SARLN) Secretariat, who was the hosting network.

The Summit aims to bring together 70 participants from refugee-led organizations (RLOs) and Networks, refugee leaders, refugee activists, refugee entrepreneurs, representatives of government (policymakers), inter-governmental, AU Commission, NEPAD Agency, UN Agencies, civil society and private sector, academia, and other local and international development partners and foundations from across the continent.

Overview:

What is the Africa Refugee-Led Network?

The Africa Refugee-Led Network (ARN), formerly known as the Global Refugee-led Network-Africa (GRN-Africa) is the African Chapter of six regional groupings of GRN. It includes refugee-led groups across Sub-Saharan Africa and is led by 13 steering committee members. ARN was formed in 2019 during the first-ever Africa Refugee Summit that brought together 72 refugee leaders from across the continent.

With a vision to build a network of refugees and refugee-led initiatives to bolster refugees' ability to make meaningful contributions to decision-making processes and policy dialogues. It aims to advocate for refugee agency and self-representation, strengthening the collaboration between the network members, relevant global initiatives, and other stakeholders, to guarantee positive changes to development and humanitarian systems.

Furthermore, it aims to enhance refugee inclusion on local, national, and international levels. The ARN has so far helped four regions to establish their national refugee-led networks including in Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, and South Africa. There are more work in the pipeline to grow the network across Africa.

The scale and scope of refugee crises throughout the world require new modalities of working to increase both program effectiveness and cost efficiencies in the refugee response. Engaging and supporting refugee-led organizations (RLOs) is one way to do both. Refugees bring a wealth skills and experiences with them when they flee to new countries. These skills need to be identified and tapped into to better engage refugees in their own solutions.

Refugee communities, for example, often set up their own self-initiative groups in their countries of asylum. These groups know their communities better than anyone else and are often those who respond first to their communities' needs and priorities.

ARN Mission:

ARN exists to influence, coordinate, and advocate for inclusion and participation of refugees and RLOs in decision making at national, continental, and global levels through policy advocacy, research, capacity building, coordination, and partnerships.

ARN Vision:

To be an influential regional network that promotes participation and inclusion of refugees and RLOs in decision that affects their well-being.

“Nothing for refugees without refugees.”

DAY 1: TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2022

MORNING SESSION:



Photo by Pascal Zigashane: Moderator: MC Sedrick Murhula (on the left) & Mr. Tony Chiloane (on the right)

Welcome and Delegate Introductions:

The second African Refugee Leaders' Summit opened with greetings and remarks by Moderator Sedrick Murhula. Sedrick emphasized that the purpose of the Summit was to gather refugee leaders together from throughout the continent, to learn from one another, and to find ways to push forward our individual and collective work. At the heart of this work is the need to unite and know one another.

Given the importance of uniting, the floor was opened for all delegates to introduce themselves. Our moderator Sedrick invited each delegate to share their name, the country they were representing, and to name one expectation they held for the Summit. Over the next approximately 80 minutes, 42 introductions were given. Of these introductions were 35 refugee representatives, six representatives from partner organizations (Independent Diplomat, Cohere, Oxfam, RefugePoint, UNHCR, and Amnesty International), and from a visiting scholar, Dr. Christa Kuntzelman, and Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga who also served as notetaker for the event.

At the start of the conference, some delegates had not yet arrived. Each delegate was afforded the opportunity to make introductions over the course of the Summit. A list of all participants who came over three days is found in **Appendix 1**.

The total numbers of delegates were 37: fifteen (15) were from Uganda, thirteen (13) from South Africa, five (5) from Kenya two (2) from Malawi, two (2) from Nigeria.

Summary of Expectations:

The below list is not exhaustive but represents among the most frequently expressed responses of the delegate's expectations for the Summit.

- Learn more about the ARN and its structure.
 - Expand the network and incorporate more RLOs into it.
 - Learn about ARN's past achievements.
 - Promote the values and clarify how ARN is different.
 - Create a united platform and speak as one.
 - Enhance the network's visibility including to countries not yet represented.
 - Learn to connect across the grassroots levels.
 - Answer the big question "why are we here?"

- Develop strong and strategic plans for growth.
 - Plans must strengthen marginalized groups, like women led RLOs.
 - Clarify the strategic plan.

- Create positive outcomes that impact the lives of refugees in Africa and everywhere.
 - Recognize refugee talents.
 - Focus on durable solutions.
 - Exchange best practices.
 - Learn from one another.
 - Gain skills in advocacy and be able to transform lives.
 - Desire for concrete deliverables to take back to the communities who the leaders represent.

- Partners want to know how to support.
 - To know how external actors can contribute towards refugee efforts.
 - Learn RLO successes to shine light on this work.

Opening Remarks from ARN and from SARLN:

After concluding the introductions and summary of expectations, remarks were given by the Chairperson of the South African Refugee led Network (SARLN), Mr. Abdikadir Mohamed and by the ARN Chairperson and Global Refugee-led Network (GRN) Steering Committee member, Robert Hakiza.

Abdikadir and Robert each stressed that the purpose of the Summit is to create an open, welcoming space where all delegates can make meaningful contributions to shape and grow the ARN. It was all emphasized that the ARN is envisioned as a platform for networks of refugee leaders and refugee-led organizations (RLOs) to unite through shared resources and a united advocacy agenda to promote refugees' rights in all African nations that produce or host refugees.



“The ARN does not exist for a country, not for a region, but for a continent. We should have very high expectations for this Summit gathering because we are talking about a lot of people, and we know the stakes. Raise your voice and help us make this network more democratic to move forward”- SARLN Chairperson, Abdikadir Mohamed.

Abdikadir clarified that the representation in the room was not perfect and admitted that some nations had more delegates than others. This was due, in part, to the reality that delegates of certain nations could not obtain travel documents. For example, despite interventions by UNHCR and advocacy by various refugee leaders and refugee-led consortium, delegates from Tanzania were unable to get travel documents for a second year.

After Abdikadir concluded his remarks, Robert Hakiza spoke for approximately 15 minutes. In echoing the SARLN Chairperson, Robert stressed the themes that representation for refugees is stalled when people are barred freedom of movement and cannot join the room. He noted that people are being left behind, and that there is a need for ARN to come together through a strong advocacy agenda and strong strategic plans to work for refugee representation.

Robert again reiterated his hope that the Summit could be a platform to find solutions and mark a new path forward because the current system of spending billions of dollars is failing to find durable solutions, many barely survive, and too many markers (education, freedom of movement, ability to get livelihoods) are not being met properly. He called for strengthening our connections from the community to the national to the regional to the continental and global levels to make refugee voices & solutions known.



“In starting this Summit, we need to address everyone’s expectations and honor that very high expectations are required because more than 26% of global refugees are in Africa. More than EIGHTEEN MILLION PEOPLE. The conditions for refugees are so horrific that even some of the youths are leaving and dying in crossing. The people who should be the future of this continent are fleeing and dying.”

-ARN Chairperson, Robert Hakiza.

Robert also acknowledged the funding and logistical difficulties to arrange the Summit and apologized for the very short lead-up time. He recognized that going forward, more will need to be done to seek and incorporate refugee leaders input for Summit agenda and priority-setting.

Introductions from Partners and ARN Updates:

The floor was opened for each partner organization representative to speak for approximately ten minutes.

Laura, UNHCR regional office, South Africa:

Laura outlined some of the ways that UNHCR is trying to engage better with refugee leaders and RLOs—emphasizing three directions: (1) she shared her wish is for RLOs to be strengthened and rise to be strong service providers; (2) notes that she sees RLOs engaged in community-based protection, particularly with better representation and inclusion of women; and (3) that she sees refugees being engaged in advocacy boards.

Even though she finds progress, Laura observes that more must be done to build mutual responsibility and respect between UNHCR and RLOs, explicitly noting that UNHCR is trying to improve and asking RLOs to do so also.

Among her recommendations for improvement were for leaders to be fully accountable to their communities; to see more inclusion of refugee women, LGBTQ refugees, and other marginalized groups; for RLOs to demonstrate accountability through an adopted code of conduct that outlines how leaders should behave; and to develop strong documentation because refugees are the best advocates.

Finally, Laura suggested areas where ARN could focus collective advocacy, such as on refugee documentation and durable solutions.

“We need to collectively advocate for refugees to have access to documentation. We know that if you don’t have a document, it’s like you don’t exist.” - Laura, UNHCR.

Ed, Global campaigns, and advocacy director at Oxfam:

Ed spoke very openly about structural racism that creates inhuman policies and treatment for refugees and points that advocacy is one tool to chip away at these ineffective, patriarchal, racist structures. He compellingly rallied for refugees to strongly advocate that they are not less than anyone, and that all should have the same access to rights.

“We know that working in alliances works. We must keep building the ARN because we are the most powerful when we are together.” - Ed, Oxfam.

To encourage refugees and RLOs to grow their advocacy and collective efforts, he calls for leaders to:

- Get evidence and data.
- Evaluate the wealth of knowledge and skills, put this into sharp statistics.
- Understand where power in decision-making lies & target the actors who can make change.
- Get the data and evidence that disproves wrong understandings of refugees.
- Ask who you know and form coalitions.
- Push forward and USE YOUR POWER.

“You can always push forward by working together. NETWORKS, EVIDENCE, POWER.” - Ed, Oxfam.

Lukendo Mbokani Mpartha Jerry, General Secretary of ARN:

Following the greetings and advise by UNHCR and Oxfam, Jerry was invited and given ten minutes to update on the achievements and challenges of the ARN since the first Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2019.

ARN Achievements:

- RELON Kenya was formed in 2021 through funding provided by Open Society Foundation.
- Formation of RELON Malawi.
- Strong relationships formed to the SARLN.
- Participation at the African Union (AU) Summit held in Nairobi through support by ID.
 - ARN spoke on thematic areas of climate change, food & nutrition, COVID 19 and its challenges, infrastructure, and addressed how to finance humanitarian action in Africa.
- Following the AU Symposium, ARN had more representation through further conferences facilitated with the African Humanitarian Organization Network
- ARN has been engaged in research projects, including through the Refugee-led Research Hub (RLRH) through Oxford University on refugee incentive workers.
 - Findings include that incentive workers are essential for service delivery, but they are often exploited.
 - Volunteering and incentive work can help refugees build agency & independence.

ARN Challenges:

- The first Summit wasn't followed by concrete steps to build a functional and active ARN.
 - Delegates didn't always return, share findings, and grow networks.
 - Lack of human resources
 - Hard to build representation across all refugee hosting nations.
 - Lack of funding

Delegate responses to Jerry's presentation:

- Criticisms that Jerry mentions a lack of funding but has not provided any financial reports. Jerry responded that they are working on formalizing a transparent accounting and funding communication plan but clarified ARN has not yet directly received any funding.
- Other delegates questioned the human resources and noted that there is not clarity on the roles or structure within the Steering Committee.

Mr. Tony Chiloane:

Space was opened to the co-moderator, Mr. Tony, to introduce himself and welcome delegates.

“My expectation in going forward, I don’t want to see any African nation look at any African as a foreigner. This has to change.” – Mr. Tony Chiloane.

Mary Tal, ARN Steering Committee Member:

Mary was then given 10 minutes to present the ARN’s Strategic plan that covers the period of 2021 to 2023. Among the goals of her presentation were to outline how the ARN proposes to localize humanitarian support into our own grassroots communities. Per Mary, the ARN’s strategic report was created through a consultative process whereby they used a TOR, conducted a review of other literatures, and held a three-day consultation and workshop in Uganda.

“The goal of the ARN is to build networks in all 55 African nations and reach out, coordinate, and grow our networks to be inclusive. Africa has the most refugees, but the lowest funding. We must mentor refugees, learn from each other’s and learn from our sponsors.” - Mary Tal.

Delegate responses to Mary’s presentation:

The moderators allowed five questions in response to Mary’s brief presentation:

Q1: Delegates requested more clarity on the strategic plan beyond building a network in all countries. Second question is on the inclusivity when Congolese men are the leadership.

Q2: What are the strategies for issues like education, human trafficking, and education, among other issues?

Q3: A delegate remarked that the same people are present across leadership structures, stating, “ARN same people, GRN are the same, same at RELON.” They expressed feeling like only an observer rather than a participant. Specifically, they called for more women and diversity in participation.

Q4: A question was raised to Jerry on network, governance, and membership. Questions on volunteering (sounds that people have been doing this so long, but what next). Is it possible that we start loving the ARN as our own baby, and that we ask tough questions that are answered. We must be democratic in moving forward. Cannot ask questions about strategic plan because I did not see it on the slides. Request that we see it. Need to see the plan to know the roadmap of where we are going—there is no conflict, but this is for transparency and accountability.

Question to see the constitution of the ARN.

Q5 (How many countries were represented when the strategic plan was presented? This participant also called for flexibility in agenda, noting that many are not satisfied in the current ARN structure or in the Summit's current agenda.

ARN Responses.

Sedrick Murhula, Roberta Hakiza, Mary Tal, and Jerry Lukendo requested and were granted time to take seriously, to acknowledge, and to respond to the issues raised.

Responses by Jerry:

Among Jerry's responses were to provide more information on the formation of the Steering Committee and to frankly examine that they failed to get enough representatives from various countries to the first Summit, resulting in the current imperfect composition of the Committee with over representation of some groups. Jerry also offered that Uganda is over-represented in planning because of the ease to travel and conduct business there. However, he emphasizes that the current Committee is going to be phased out and clarified they are not a governance body, but they are trying to create the structure for this.

“Everything has a starting point, and we cannot question this totally, but we can and we will keep moving forward.” - Jerry

Responses by Robert:

Among Robert's responses was to say totally that they have made mistakes, and to emphasize that he is very happy to hear the feedback. The collective goal of the ARN is to be honest, transparent, and to learn together to keep going forward. He invited delegates to continue to always feel free to express their concerns because the Steering Committee exists to do better and serve the members.

To the women, he acknowledges that they must do better, and they will do better.

Intervention by co-moderator Tony:

“We are one. We want the ARN to succeed. Questions are not attacks but are necessary.” -Tony

Additional Questions following ARN responses:

As Robert welcomed delegates to share their concerns and to ask honestly, space was afforded to take more questions. Among the concerns raised were the following:

- Requests for a summary of the first Summit and more explanation of progress beyond that meeting
- Questions on how ARN strategically plans to accommodate other regions- not saying that this is a goal but questioning *how* this will be done.

- Requests that before continuing with the planned agenda, space be afforded to address the big issues, such as women's representation and broader inclusivity.
- Questions if elections are possible to make the platform more inclusive and representative.
- Requests for clarification on governance, including more information how elections were done before, the lessons learned from partial failures in elections, and what is being done to correct errors.
- Call to see organizational documents, including the constitution. To know how these were created and to better understand how they can be amended.

“Women are suffering the most, but they are not given roles. We need more due diligence to know how we pick leaders.” - Delegate

ARN Responses:

The delegates agreed to “park” some of these issues but allowed for responses from the Steering Committee.

Mary Tal asked to respond to issues of gender inclusivity and asked to highlight among the successes of women's representation facilitated by ARN. She notes that refugee women from Malawi and elsewhere spoke at a high level, including to representatives of Women's Peace and Security. Mary said progress is occurring and calls for everyone to keep using the past representation to move forward.

“We are not deaf or blind. We have made mistakes. We are here to listen and to improve. Thank you for raising all of these questions. They make sense. Please help us to move forward.” - Robert Hakiza.

The Steering Committee explained that elections correspond to GRN election time frames and cannot be changed. They also updated that the constitution is not yet adopted and agreed to discuss more.

(The delegates then took a break for one hour for lunch).

DAY 1

AFTERNOON SESSION:

Presentations from Partner Organizations on Accountability and 'Due Diligence':



Mary, RefugePoint:

Mary spoke for approximately 10 minutes. Highlights and summary responses:

- Different donors have different requirements & difference in strictness in criteria.
- RefugePoint did due diligence on ARN before deciding to sponsor and attend.
- She shared an honest reflection that if all the boxes needed checked (for due diligence), there would be no funding for the conference.
- RefugePoint and others are here because they want to see how ARN performs & want to know that they can do what they say.
- She acknowledges there is sometimes a challenge to bring in more women.



Sheila, Cohere

Sheila spoke for approximately 10 minutes. Highlights and summary responses:

- Reminder that partners speak to each other.
- They do due diligence by talking to each other.
- Some funding has come because of the leadership- and the connections to who is on your team can help you open some doors.
- Prove your impact & then funding becomes easier.
- She gave recognition of all the work that RLOs do.



Victor, Amnesty International

Victor spoke for approximately 5 minutes. Highlights and summary responses:

- He spoke from his personal experience of starting an NGO in Kenya and he knows the difficulties of doing this. He encouraged delegates to recall that there is a lot more than “box checking”.
- His work with AI tries to close the space between humanitarian NGOs and RLOs.



Valery, Independent Diplomat

Valery spoke for approximately 5 minutes. Highlights and summary responses:

- He says that there is nothing new in hearing criticisms as the problems are known.
- Due diligence also includes how the steering committee responds to the known challenges, and how they address member concerns.
- The more you can make yourself stronger by being together will help you grow more.

Sedrick closed the session by reminding that the donors are here to listen and observe, but he affirms that delegates can be critical and proceed without fear of partners withdrawing.

RELON Regional Reports and Updates:

The delegates agreed to table the discussion on legitimate representation, accountability, and diversity inclusion to allow each RELON network to share updates from their respective regions.

Updates from RELON Uganda, delivered by Keluel Agok:

The representative spoke for about ten minutes and then comments were allowed. Below represents the summary of updates provided by the representative of RELON Uganda, as well as summary of the delegate responses:

- RELON Uganda has grown to have 136 RLO members in database, with about 50 being currently active.
- RELON has provided training programs to members, including RLO capacity building in June in West Nile (30 representatives participated)
- The network is trying to decrease competition between RLOs by focusing on working through regional “focal points” to expand in and outside of Kampala.
- They are working to diversify their structure and leadership as there is an over representation of Congolese men.
- Update on funding: they have only OSF funding for the longer-term, but they recognize that the funders also have funding challenges.
- Example of on the ground advocacy and a success story whereby they were able to get cell phones reactivated after phones registered to refugees were shut off.
- They continue to have challenges in implementing & capacity building. He notes, however, that they expect difficulties to arise, and they are committed to learning and pushing through.
- Clarification that despite progressive laws for refugee protection and rights in Uganda, there is not always implementation, and they are always advocating to close the gaps.
- They recognize a need to better engage partners.
- Finally, they note there is a need to work on durable solutions for PRS refugees and the need for more best practices in this area.

Delegate Responses to RELON Uganda:

- Testimony by a RELON member that they have received a 300 USD grant from RELON.
“This was not a small grant because we really did a lot, and from this, we were able to be considered for more funding. We are even being considered now by other funders.” - RELON member and ARN delegate
- Delegates acknowledged RELON Uganda’s progress but called for continued work in uniting women into the platform and its leadership, as well as requests for work to bring in more RLOs from settlements.

Updates from RELON Kenya, delivered by John Paul Kasika Bahiky:

The representative spoke for about ten minutes and then comments were allowed. Below represents the summary of updates provided by the representative of RELON Kenya, as well as summary of the delegate responses:

- RELON Kenya was able to send delegates for participation at the AU Youth Summit
- They have done other work in advocacy and engagement.
- They are working through a team of partners through a consortium including Amnesty International to help build the member organizations.
- They completed capacity building through advocacy for 40 RLOs through help for ARN.
- Also completed capacity building on advocacy through IRRRI.
- RELON not as giving money but connecting the members to these opportunities.
- Capacity building on governance structures & financial issues (4 member RLOs have benefited).
- The more that RLOs work with their “big brother” NGOs, the more they can show their work & continue getting funding.
- Main aim is to sub-grant some of the funding. Not to do the programming directly, but to secure the funding to help empower more RLOs.

RELON Kenya Pascal Zigashane continues the updates:

- Pascal provided additional updates, including that RLO mapping was done in Dadaab, Kakuma, and in Mombasa.
- RELON is a platform for RLOs he testifies that information sharing happens.
- RELON contributed to a study on access to work & on permanent residence- and this is important because knowledge production is key to do advocacy.
- They have been doing advocacy through research picked by the list of 7 issue areas from the first Summit.
 - JeanPaul adds that they are working with legal partners to advance legal solutions, working with journalists & others to keep the momentum going & to do so with the actors who can drive power & change.
- Advocacy when camps were going to be closed.

Delegate Responses to RELON Kenya:

- Testimony by RELON Kenya member they, with help and facilitation by ID and ARN, were able to advance certain issues.
- Sharing that there is a WhatsApp group through which members successfully share issues and propose ideas.
- Calls for more skills trainings to maximize their collective advocacy and impact.

Updates from SARLN, delivered by Abdikadir Mohamed:

The representative spoke for about ten minutes and then comments were allowed. Below is the summary:

- He shares on the enormous challenges including xenophobia that might be unique in South Africa. These occur despite the progressive rights and laws that refugees have.
- Issues of durable solutions, including children born and raised here, but they are not nationals and cannot become one.
- With forthcoming (national) elections, they must do a lot of advocacies for refugee rights & protection.
- He shared about the court victory in favor of Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town and Somali Association for South Africa against Department of Home Affairs for the reopening of Cape Town Refugee Center that was closed since 2012.
- Update that ten RLOs are getting some funding from Cohere to continue their work & launch new projects.
- They have 73 members (68 official and 5 being registered).
- SARLN's pillars are guided by the South African constitution of diversity, inclusive, values, and access.
- Abdikadir described the new Refugee Act of 2017 and became law on 1 January 2020
 - RLOs participated during the public participation period for the refugee act & new refugee law.
 - They fought some of the worst elements of the act, such as fighting against the temporal reduction of 14 days to show to the reception center to 5 days.
 - Described that in S. Africa, if you go to your embassy, you can be penalized, including that people have lost their refugee recognition.
- They have registered the SARLN with the government & not a struggle to do this.
- SARLN has organized into various commissions, so they know where to turn when there is an issue or an opportunity.
- They previously held a national RLO conference in February 2022, hosted by UNHCR.
- Many other projects are coming.
- UNHCR and legal partners are working with SARLN on strategic litigation, including landmark litigation achievement of taking the S. African government to court for closing refugee reception offices.
- Also, through Scalabrini, getting another office open in Cape Town (engaging to open) and RLOs to inform where refugees are there to help locate an office & tour a potential office.

Delegate Responses to SARLN Presentation:

- SARLN member gave testimony that after TWENTY years of serving her refugee community, she has finally now received her first funding after working through SARLN and getting recognition.
- Other members shared testimony of receiving funds to fight xenophobic violence and address refugee mental health.
- Mr. Basubi shared of receiving funds through UNHCR Innovation Funding.

Updates from RELON Malawi, delivered by Pastor Cecile Losamandjo Pango:

Pastor Cecile spoke for about ten minutes and then comments were allowed. Madam spoke in French and translation was provided by Bahati Ghislain. Below represents the summary of updates provided by the representative of RELON Malawi, as well as summary of the delegate responses:

- She reports that there are around 150 RLOs in the camps. These have been self-supporting and without any funding.
- They support themselves by selling small things or through support by their families.
- They cannot grow because of lack of support, but they are working together to lift themselves up.
- The **three pillars** of the group are to amplify RLO voices, build RLO capacity, and secure funding to continue the work.
- They exist to amplify their voices of and build capacity of RLOs—including to advocate at the camp for RLO registration.
- They organize conferences and advocate to the government.
- Starting to allow funding for RLOs.
- Through Cohere funding, they conducted a training in capacity development for 10 RLOs that 9 completed.
- They are organizing a big conference with up to 120 delegates to connect RLOs to the government and international NGOs.

Achievements:

- UNHCR is now including women-led NGOs in various consultations (working group in the consultation in the region) ((regional consultation of NGO groups))
- They have created a website, social media platforms, and circulate a newsletter every three months.

Challenges:

- Problems to build trust with RLOs.
- Registration and certificates (they have people helping with that).

Delegate Responses to RELON Malawi Presentation:

As RELON is very new, many delegates had questions about its day-to-day functioning, the experiences of refugees in the camps, and how RELON Malawi is advocating to find solutions to these challenges.

Closing the day:

The moderators took time to acknowledge the remaining frustrations and concerns of delegates. The ARN leadership team pledged to take them seriously and asked for us all to remain patient as we move together to address the very fair and very legitimate concerns held.

At closing, the moderator Sedrick asked all participants to write down (1) one thing that they enjoyed about the day and (2) one thing that could be improved. Participants were instructed to give these responses to visiting scholar Christa and Christa was asked to compile and present responses on day two of the Summit. In total, 26 delegates gave these responses to Christa for inclusion.

The group was dismissed for the day and all participants were invited to attend a group welcome dinner that evening at Ocean Basket.

DAY 2

WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022

MORNING SESSION:

Welcome and Recap of the First Day:

Moderator Sedrick welcomed the delegates at approximately 845am. He invited Christa to summarize the feedback from day one on what participants enjoyed and to assess what was missing (what could be improved). Over approximately five minutes, Christa gave a summary of the 26 received responses.

What did the delegates like from the first day?

In general, delegates liked having free communication and being able to express themselves; enjoyed learning about the ARN and RELONs, as well as about their successes; they appreciated the openness of ARN leadership to honestly assess progress and appreciated their willingness to make action plans to move forward; and they liked the ability to share their experiences and participate.

What did the delegates find was missing from the first day?

Over one-third of respondents who provided what they liked from day one declined to answer this question. For those who provided responses, several felt that ARN should have provided a more focused summary of the first Summit with an evaluation of the progress and gaps; wanted to talk about specific issue items (youth, mental health, mobility, education, disability, gender in leadership); wanted to discuss the strategic plan and constitution of ARN; and wished for more time to interact.

Presentation by Mr. Amer Alkayed, The Current Chair of the GRN:

Amer was welcomed to the forum and given ten minutes to introduce himself and introduce the GRN.



“What I’ve learned, there is a big gap between what we see at the international level and what we are experiencing ourselves. The challenges are very big.” - Amer Alkayed

Per Amer, the GRN works to coordinate refugees globally, to identify gaps, and work to address them through diplomacy and policy at the national, regional, and international levels. They work to empower refugees as delegates to propose solutions, and to ensure that solutions are implemented.

In addition to explaining the [structure and functions of the GRN](#), Amer shared some of its successes. Successes including GRN participation at the United Nations EXCOM and further shared they are advocating for observer status at this important forum.

In closing, Amer stated that he came to pass a “key message” for unity to make our voices heard and to stay united so we can make a change. *“If we are not united, we cannot make a change.”* We need to make sure that as we unite, we are more inclusive and representative. His goal of being here is also to help listen to the priorities, challenges, solutions, and message of the ARLN. And to remember all the minority groups like women, LGBTQI, disability, and so on.

Delegate Responses to Mr. Amer’s Presentation on the GRN:

Delegates asked Amer for more clarification on what the GRN hopes to achieve and to also clarify how smaller networks, like the ARN or RELONs fit into this group. The same delegate asked if GRN can provide funding to other RLOs. A third question focused on actions versus planning, with a focus of how things happening at high levels trickle down to communities. Per another, how does GRN support the grassroots levels. Fourth, a delegate wished to know about gender representation in the GRN and what they are doing for women refugees? Others asked how GRN works on various issues, such as education and access to scholarship. Finally, Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga asked for more information on how the GRN approaches diversity and inclusion from the perspectives of nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.

Amer’s Responses to these questions:

Mr. Amer was provided five minutes to respond the eight questions asked by delegates. There was repetition and crossover in his responses. Key responses are highlighted below:

- The GRN tries to bring voices and consensus of refugees together at all levels and advocates for more direct refugee representation.
- GRN does apply for funds and tries to funnel the money down to the chapters.
- They try to post opportunities for trainings, knowledge, and funding on social media and through the website.
- GRN engages a partnership approach, including with legal firms to push for progress on endemic struggles, like refugee access to documentation.
- Re: diversity and inclusion, Amer notes *“Including women is a HUGE priority because we know that they are always double victims.”* Moreover, they take all refugees equally without distinction to religion, nationality, sexuality, or any other consideration.

- GRN tries to support refugees at the grassroots levels and RLOs can register with the GRN to gain access to trainings and resources.

Panel Discussion: Partnership, Funding, and Refugee Participation in Humanitarian Spaces:

Upon concluding the presentation by Amer Alkayed, the moderators invited Robert Hakiza (YARID, ARN, GRN), Mary Wangui (RefugePoint), Victor (Amnesty International), Dawla Hussein Hassan (Kandaakiat) and Sheila (Cohere). This panel represents the perspectives of funders and of RLO leaders who have received funding.

Upon starting, the moderator posed the question “why is it important to fund RLOs and why now” to the representatives of Cohere, Amnesty International, and RefugePoint. Each was given 3-5 minutes to respond.

Responses to “why is it important to fund RLOs and why now”:

Sheila of Cohere:

- Cohere has been funding RLOs for ten years.
- They no longer call it “capacity building” because there is already capacity!
- The organization is moving from refugees as POC (persons of concern) to instead see and recognize them as professionals.
- Supporting RELON networks & allowing them to sub-grant. Cohere doesn’t want to micro-manage but wants to provide funding to leaders.

“We know that refugees know their needs and we are there to support them in the ways they need.” - Sheila, Cohere

Victor of Amnesty International:

“We will engage governments in different ways for advocacy, but we know that we are not best to speak for refugee issues. Refugees can do this themselves. We support refugees to be on the frontlines for advocacy. There is power in their direct advocacy.” - Victor, AI

Mary of RefugePoint:

- RefugePoint has been working with refugees for almost 20 years with a focus on durable solutions. Now, however, there is a need to respond in different ways when resettlement and funding are decreasing.
- Three reasons why we should work with refugees: (1) refugees understand their problems & solutions best. This is the reality, and we need to change our response. We need to recognize refugees; (2) RLOs and leaders are the first responders. They need resources to respond. Not to just give referrals, but to be able to provide the help; and (3) they have proven their potential. COVID showed this. We know this was happening before. We try to highlight their successes.

After thanking the respondents, Moderator Sedrick asked to Robert and Dawla, ***“How important is it for your RLO to have access to funding? How does this change your work?”***

Response from Dawla of Kandaakiat:

Ms Dawla is a recent RRLI funded group for Kandaakiat. She argues that people should fund RLOs directly because:

“We have skills & experience and we know what we want, particularly as women. Even when we come to a country with NOTHING, we come with our mind and skills. We work on behalf of the hosting communities and behalf of the government because we do the integration—refugees cannot survive without integration. This also improves security by fighting xenophobia.”

In response to what funding has done for Dawla and for her RLO Kandaakiat:

- Funding has made them visible.
- “Released phobia” by building a bridge from host to refugees.
- Allowed for the hosts benefit from refugees’ skills & knowledge.
- Funding from women international for livelihoods is having the effect to encourage refugee women, empowerment to feed their children, kids going to school, the women are getting courage and speaking for themselves.
- Their funding and training on green energy benefits the entire world. They are now focusing on how we can tackle global warming as women (local and refugees).

Response from Robert of YARID:

“In forming partnerships & getting funding, the challenge is that word “refugee” and the negative associations and perceptions that refugees are just vulnerable, no skill, cannot do anything—but this is changing. WE are changing this. We know that the refugee is just a human being, they are not different that way.”

- Two things that refugees are facing: recognition and connections. You cannot get funding if there is not a connection. People do great work & can show this work, but they still don’t get recognition.
- We also hear a response from funders that “you are supporting your community; this is what you are supposed to do. Why do you need funding?” *“But refugees understand that they shouldn’t have to just be volunteers. Their work should be recognized—this is changing as refugees are able to represent and advocate for themselves.”*
- A lot of things changed with funding. He had five years without funds. First funding 1500\$ which launched the sewing and tailoring program & this was HUGE amount of money that produced huge impact in the community.
- YARID as part of RRLI to raise money to give to RLOs, including 10 million USD that has supported 20 RLOs through 2million USD. Plan is to raise 40 million USD and increase number of RLOs funded across more regions.

Question to funders, “In a practical sense, what are your challenges to fund RLOs? How could you advise RLOs to fix these challenges?”

The moderator explained that many RLOs struggle to obtain funding, but we know that once you receive one form of funding, you are more likely to receive future funding. The intention of this question is to help all RLOs know how funders consider refugee requests and can be more competitive in funding requests.

Response from Sheila, Cohere:

- We know that the challenges to get funding are many!
- Capacity in the sense of the mandate is not to interfere with leadership of the RLOs, so even if you see a very bad executive but who blames the volunteer finance manager. Not interfering can be challenging when you see groups struggling.
- Third, it is hard to manage expectations- the need is massive and there will never be enough funding. If we asked randomly how much money is needed to solve your problems- we know there isn't enough.

To address these issues:

- For RLOs to be patient. Cohere will work with smaller RLOs and work to do capacity-building so that they are a more consistent funder. They will help them grow until they feel they are at another level.
- To organize leadership and work together.
- For RLOs to not fight back when you feel the training isn't relevant, but you can trust there is value and be patient.

Response from Victor, Amnesty International:

- There is a challenge of divided organizations, especially when they split. How do you pick where to support when everyone is equally good—but the need is to work together?
- Another challenge is fear. The fear that by working on an issue will jeopardize refugee status, so you see people working only on issues that are not controversial.

Solutions:

- There are networks and human rights advocates that can support so that you can engage without fear. There are many risks mitigation networks to release fear of protection challenges.

Response from Mary, RefugePoint

“Don’t shoot other RLOs down! Work together!”

- In the Kenyan context, there is a challenge of visibility and how the organization is working.
- There is a need for professional visibility on social media & through website.
- Be transparent and honest in what you post.
- Document and measure- when you say you are doing amazing work, how do you prove it? Show the participant lists, any documentation! *“It doesn’t have to be fancy,”* but I need to see something that shows you are existing—because we are accountable to funders also.
- Systems and structures need to be in place.
- You cannot be the sole person doing all the roles.
- If you seek funding as an organization and you are the only person, this is a problem.
- Work with people who believe in you, even if they are volunteers.
- Groups shouldn’t die if someone is resettled.
- Let us learn from each other. Visit others who are succeeding.
- Let you refer other groups if you can’t do the work.

Question to RLOs, “In a practical sense, what are your challenges to work with funders?”

Per Dawla, the biggest problem is when a funder has a program already in mind, but this is not the program that you need. There is a general mismatch or difference in priorities.

Robert echoes Dawla and adds that many funders will only fund “projects”, but not staffing salaries, rent, overhead or expenditures. He feels donors sometimes don’t fully understand what is required for RLOs to do the work.

Other Questions to all Participants:

Given the high significance and value of the presentation, the moderator opened space for delegates to ask questions to anyone on the panel. Over the next 12 minutes, seven delegates asked questions. The themes of these questions included (1) asking funders how or if working with RLOs is different from working with other NGOs or CBOs; (2) seeking advice on how to grow an organization when there really is just one person doing the work; (3) questions on how organizations engage in equal partnership; (4) various questions to clarify where each organization works and what they are doing; (5) questions on why salaries are excluded from funding; (6) how can RLOs respond when NGOs or others coopt or steal their ideas?

“How can a donor fund a “project” but not the person doing the project. Refugees are not tables or desks! They are humans and they need lives!”

Responses to all participant questions:

After providing a recap of the questions, the moderator requested that each panelist respond in under two minutes.

Among the responses:

- Dawla admits that there can be many hidden costs in applying for or receiving funds, particularly if they request audited reports. She advises to be upfront to funders and ensure *they* cover those costs, whenever possible.
- Mary notes that they often give small grants to see how the RLO uses it. They may increase funding over time.
- Mary also advises to present to the funders a percentage of cost that goes for programming and what goes for options and advises that some funders can be more flexible in what they fund.
- Sheila (Cohere) described how the organization is trying to be more progressive to identify RLOs to invest in. She describes as a challenge if the RLO becomes a flight risk—if one person leaves, the work may stop, and this is why they want to fund “organizations” and not “individuals.”
- Sheila also advises that if organizations are small (including of only one person) to work as a consortium.

“The more we connect, the more we can make a better network. Let us share and connect more.” - Victor of AI on the need for partnerships.

“Do not fear someone taking your idea! If it is your idea, you will do it better. If someone steals it, they will fail!” - Sheila of Cohere

The World Café:

Identifying Problems and Solutions in Six Thematic Areas:

At the conclusion of this panel discussion, we separated into seven groups to conduct the World Café to identify problems and solutions in seven thematic areas. The proposal was to conduct the first segment and identify problems with an intention to identify solutions after lunch. Due to changes in the itinerary, we were not able to complete these activities during the Summit and tabled them to be addressed in the Post-Summit Survey.

The survey afforded all accepted delegates, including those who attended the Summit and those who were unable to do so due to visa restrictions or other logistical difficulties, to indicate barriers, opportunities, and best practices in six distinct areas. These areas are: (1) refugee-led response in the humanitarian sector, (2) for refugee leaders and RLOs for partnership and funding, (3) for refugee and RLOs meaningful participation (in any area),

(4) for refugee-led response in areas of free mobility, refugee documentation, and refugee protection, (5) for refugee inclusion in decision-making, policymaking, and education, and (6) for refugee-led response in vital areas of refugee health and well-being, including mental health.

The Post-Summit survey expands upon our findings, but they are summarized also briefly here.

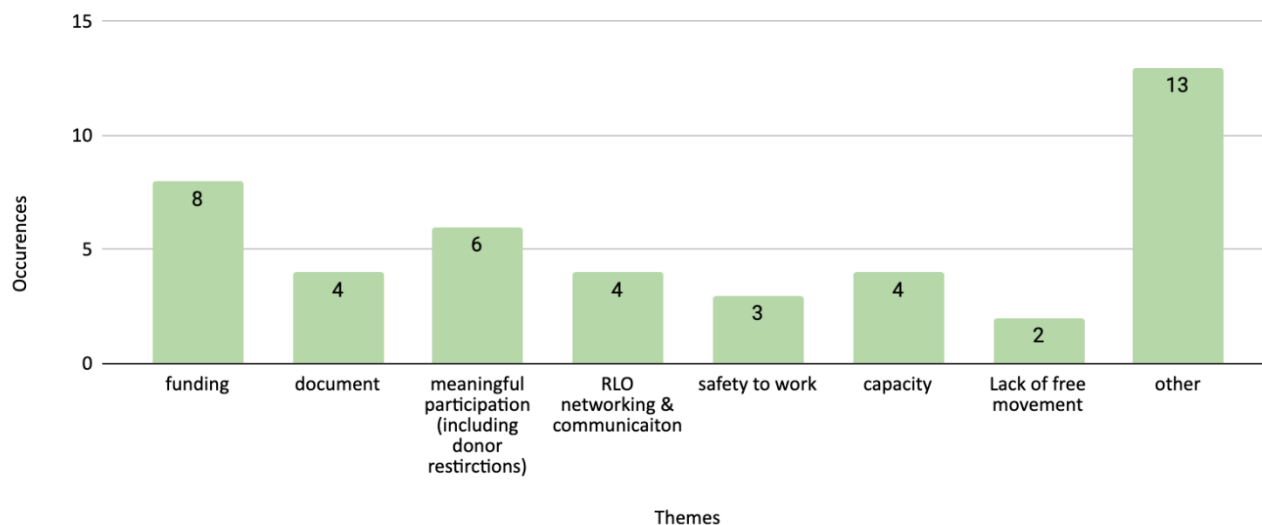
Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee-led Response in the Humanitarian Sector:

Barriers:

In total, delegates identified 19 unique barriers that refugees and RLOs face as they try to engage in the humanitarian sector, including to become engaged in humanitarian response. Among the most cited barriers, eight delegates said RLOs face difficulty to become involved in the humanitarian sector because of ***barriers to secure funding*** for their organizations. Per one delegate, smaller, less-funded RLOs simply cannot compete with larger international NGOs.

Six individuals also noted the ***barrier of refugee's meaningful participation***, indicating that they cannot directly self-represent or engage in the higher levels where humanitarian planning and decision-making occur. Additionally, four individuals found that RLOs cannot overcome ***logistical challenges, such as presenting required documentation***, such as funding documents, financial audits, or organizational documents. The issue to develop documentation is made more difficult as RLOs are not legally able to register in all hosting countries. Finally, four individuals found that ***RLO networks fail to adequately share information*** on opportunities for this engagement or provide knowledge and skills sharing to prepare other RLOs to engage. Other barriers were also cited.

Barriers to Refugee-led Engagement in the Humanitarian Space



Opportunities:

While refugee respondents cited many barriers, they also cited numerous ways in which RLOs individually and as networks can overcome these challenges. Nine delegates detailed how **RLO networks can become solutions**. RLO networks can unite and work collectively to improve refugee and RLOs' access to enter into the humanitarian space more effectively. In nine individual responses, delegates described that RLOs can share best practices, build trust among diverse refugee communities, and how networks can facilitate bridges or partnerships with all humanitarian actors from donors to governments to international NGOs, etc.

“The formation of the Refugee Led Network (RELON), ARN, and GRN platforms are among the good practices which have demonstrated the refugees have potential... Refugees are eager to take their own destinies into their own hands.” Quote by Summit delegate

Additionally, seven individuals shared how **RLOs, and networks can directly lead** and thus forge entrance into seemingly closed humanitarian spaces. Per one respondent, RLOs did this persuasively during the COVID-19 pandemic and can continue to build momentum by demonstrating their work. Another cited the success of direct refugee to refugee funding, as is occurring through the Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative (RRLI). Relatedly, delegates noted that entrance to humanitarian space should increase with **increased refugee meaningful participation, including entrance into all decision- and policy-making spaces**. Refugees also stated they can improve their humanitarian sector access and response through **professionalization and capacity building of RLOs**.

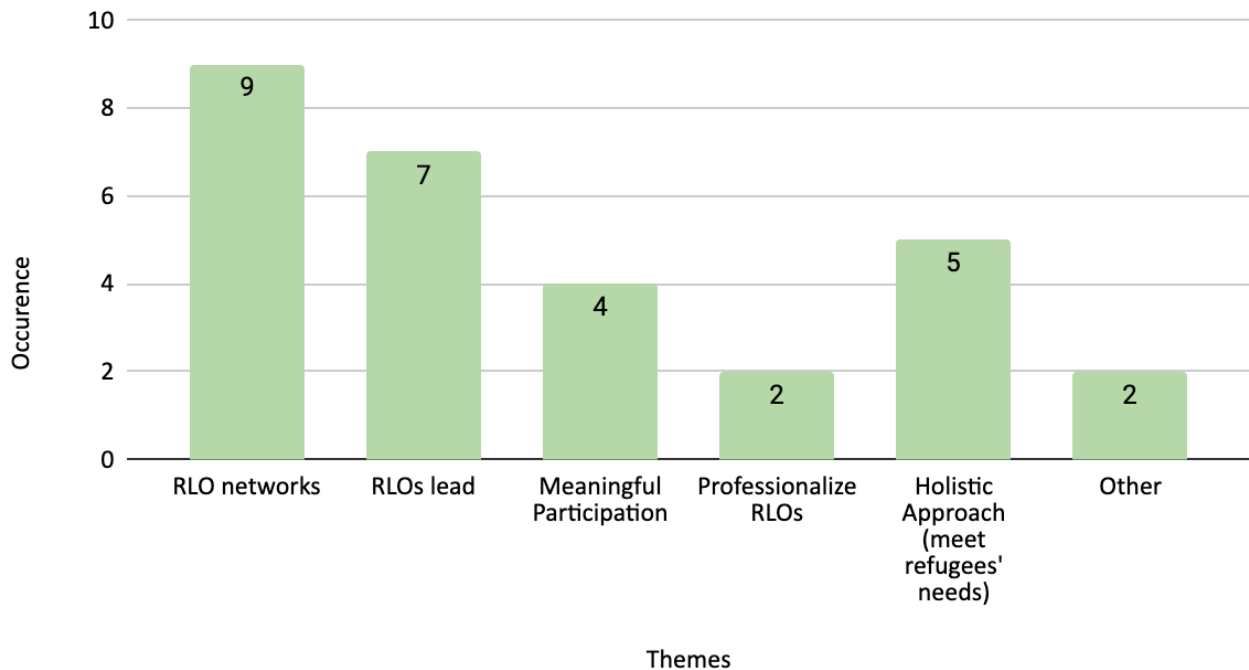
A final major theme revealed in the analysis that refugees' capacity for humanitarian sector response may increase when a **holistic approach is taken to improve refugees' lives**. Five delegates that refugees, like humans, need access to basic social service provision of healthcare, education, and basic needs, as well as increased safety and security

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to perform their work. Quote, “*With access to education, access to employment, access to health services... we wish to have bigger space in (these) opportunities.*”

Opportunities for Refugee-led Response in Humanitarian Space



Barriers and Opportunities for Refugees and RLOs in partnership and funding:

Barriers:

During the Summit meetings, RLO representatives frequently shared personal experiences of difficulties to secure funding, partnerships, or recognition for their efforts. The survey data provides additional insights on how refugee leaders and RLOs experience these barriers. Most directly, twelve of seventeen respondents shared they felt blocked from partnerships or funding because outside actors (including donors, NGOs, UNHCR, and others) **didn't trust RLOs or didn't believe that refugees were able to become partners.**

“Many international organizations do not feel safe partnering with RLOs.”

“There is a power dynamic. A lack of trust and discrimination of partners and funders towards refugees and RLOs.”

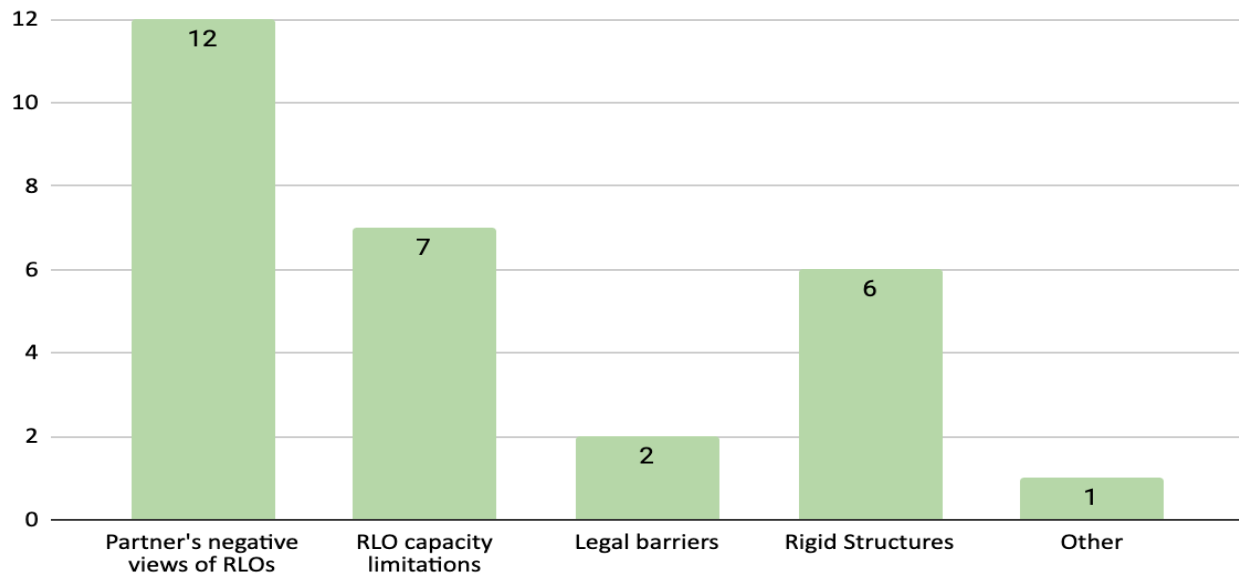
For some, the lack of trust is a cyclical issue. Refugees have a hard time securing additional funding but have easier time to get future funding after securing an initial partnership or investment. For seven respondents, refugees and non-refugees may each hold some blame in this cycle. For example, some RLO leaders acknowledged that there have been difficulties to properly complete grant requirements, in part because of **lack of training, capacity**

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development, or investment in RLOs. For others, **there are rigid requirements** that keep RLOs from this engagement. Finally, two delegates noted that legal or structural barriers from their host countries blocked them from becoming partners. Again, some nations enact legislation that bar NGOs from hiring or partnering with refugees and RLOs.

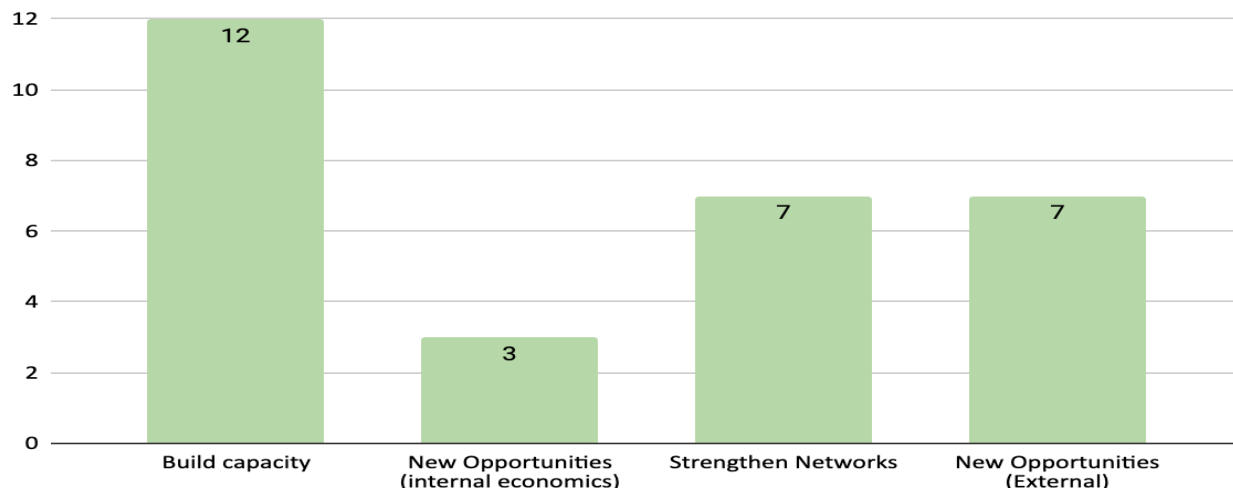
Barriers for RLO Funding or Partnerships



Opportunities:

In looking towards solutions, delegates' responses largely can be summarized into four themes: (1) the need to build refugee and RLO capacity, (2) the need to build or strengthen RLO networks, (3) the need for refugees to internally create more opportunities that reduce reliance on external actors, and (4) to acknowledge and access new opportunities that are being created by outside donors and partners.

Opportunities for RLO Funding or Partnership



To unpack the first area of building **RLO and refugee capacity**, many delegates spoke of the need to improve RLO documentation practices. Relatedly, seven individuals stated a need to **build or strengthen RLO networks**, particularly for RLOs who have partnerships or have received funding to share knowledge, best practices, and internally develop best practices. This includes the vital role of refugee-to-refugee mentorship.

Regarding **new opportunities** that can be accessed through external partners or through internal efforts, some delegates acknowledged refugee partners, such as COHERE, Independent Diplomat, stating these groups “not only offer funds but work together and with flexibility.” Another noted, “some few donors now fund groups regardless of registration status,” noting how some groups help RLOs overcome barriers of documentation. In considering how **refugees can internally create new opportunities**, one respondent noted.

“Few RLOs benefit from NGO agencies... we can focus more on income generating and investment which brings returns to sustain our projects.”

Per another, *“We can promote self-reliance and integration of refugees through social and economic activities.”* In this, RLOs are envisioning how to stand on their own to create opportunities where they may not currently exist.

Barriers and Opportunities for Refugees’ Meaningful Participation:

Refugees’ meaningful participation was a cross-cutting theme throughout the Summit. Meaningful participation was broadly considered to include participation in a range of forums (governmental, NGO, private sector, and refugee-led spaces, among others) and across levels from the community to level all the way to the international level.

Barriers:

Refugee delegates cited many barriers for their meaningful participation. Nine delegates spoke of a **lack of opportunities or of unequal opportunities**, making opportunities the most frequently cited barrier. Among these responses, some noted that refugees are not consulted until later stages of project or decision-making if they are consulted at all. This means that refugees have less agency to shape the trajectory of an intervention. Additionally, refugees are unable to decide which topics are on the agenda, meaning that refugees' priorities may be replaced by priorities of external actors. Other refugees described unequal opportunities as indicating only a select few refugees can participate, and participation is unequal for refugees of different genders, nationalities, or from different locations, such as urban, rural, or from camps and settlements. Across these responses, refugee delegates noted that it matters not just that refugees are in the decision-making spaces, but that it also matters who these refugees are.

“Refugees don’t have enough representation, but... here we bring the slogan ‘*nothing for refugees without refugees.*’”

“There is a lack of consideration by some donors, partners, and even host governments towards refugees... There is a lack of policies and regulations which would accompany and facilitate the process (of meaningful participation). There is also a lack of goodwill by the various host governments to come up with the policies to facilitate the process.”

Relatedly, seven refugees spoke to barriers for meaningful participation that arise from **insufficient refugee leadership**. Among these responses, individuals noted that some leaders who enter the higher-level meeting spaces are too quiet, lack confidence, or are otherwise unprepared to be in these spaces. Others noted that attending leaders lack transparency about what occurs in the meetings. Finally, some delegates criticize leaders as “gatekeepers,” or individuals who block other refugees from gaining opportunities for participation, instead only opening opportunities for their friends.

“Many leaders in the refugee spaces mostly recommend their colleagues and friends to some of these spaces.”

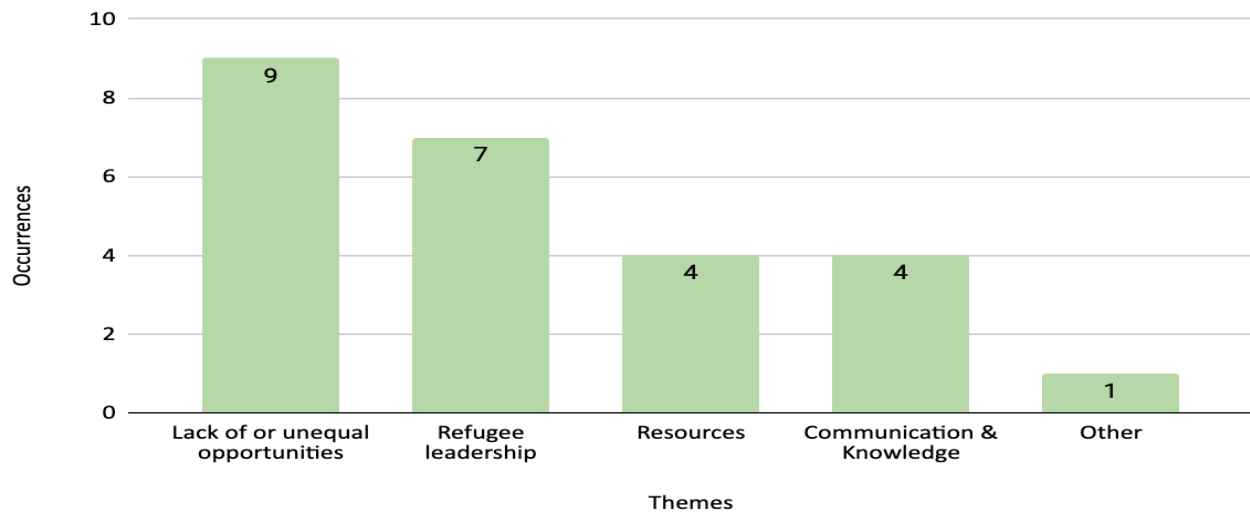
“Male (leaders) are dominating, we need to bring all categories of people to part of the decision-making.”

Next, refugees noted that there is a **need for better communication** so that more refugee delegates can access open opportunities. This includes a need for expanded refugee networking platforms to share both opportunities and share knowledge to ensure leaders are representative and transparent to their communities.

Finally, refugees spoke of a need for **more resources to bolster their meaningful participation**. As in other categories, resources are broadly considered and include funding for travel and logistics to attend conferences. However, resources also include training to

know how to advocate and be successful in meeting spaces. Like in other barriers and opportunities, refugees again spoke to the need to access documentation, both travel documents and RLO registration documents.

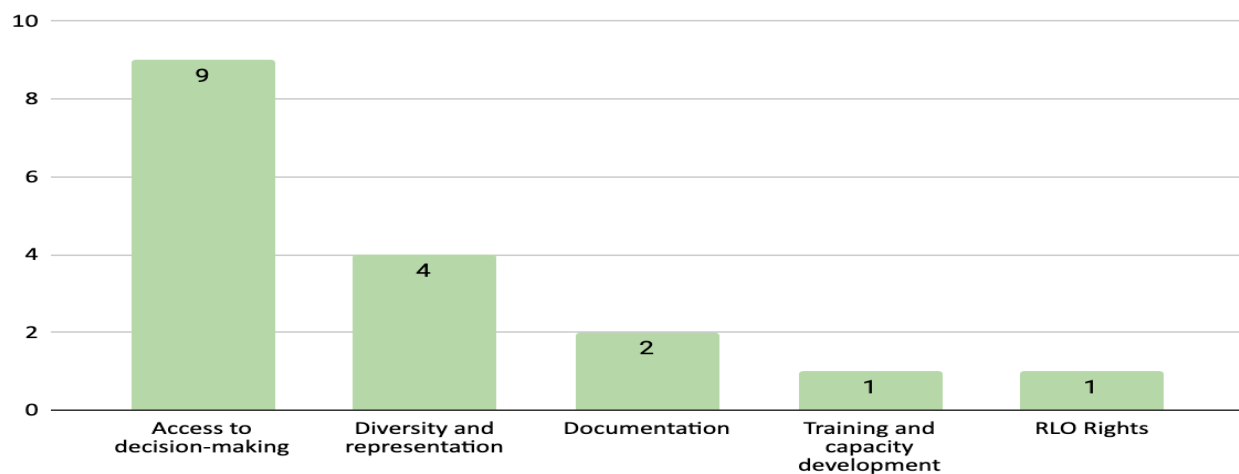
Barriers for Refugees' Meaningful Participation



Opportunities:

Across sixteen responses, refugees indicated numerous solutions and opportunities to ensure there can be meaningful refugee representation in all decision-making spaces. We group these responses into five general categories, which are displayed below.

Refugees' Opportunities for Meaningful Participation



The most common proposed opportunity was for refugees to work through advocacy and partnership **to expand refugees' access to decision-making spaces**, with nine refugees citing the need to do this. For refugees, there is a lot at stake in inclusion as refugees know their situations best and because refugees also know solutions.

“The best opportunities are to have a seat in every decision-making sphere so that refugees are not left out when policies are shaped and implemented.”

“If refugees have opportunities to be among the area where they make big decisions for them it is something good because they know better their problems they are going through.”

To ensure refugees' access, two refugees spoke to the need for **documentation** and asked for interventions so RLOs could register, gain travel documents, and otherwise access what is needed for their engagement. One leader additionally spoke for the need for **increased training and capacity development**. They note that the opportunities for training are many, stating,

“Refugee leaders need leadership training, and (need) skills to manage what they are also already doing in a very brilliant way, even how to speak to others, education and training is key in every job we do.”

Finally, four refugees spoke of the need for opportunity to **expand refugee inclusivity and diversity within decision-making spaces**. As noted, there are often very limited opportunities for refugees to participate, and this participation is rarely “meaningful.” To maximize these opportunities and ensure the best possible outcomes, it matters *which refugees* are in the room. Per one delegate, this importantly means ensuring that before leaders attend a meeting, that they “**take back power to the grassroots people by designing and programming with them.**” In this way, achieving the goal of “nothing about us without us” necessitates accountable leadership, representative participation, and inclusivity all the way from the bottom to the very top.

Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee-led Response in areas of free mobility (movement), refugee documentation, and refugee protection:

The topic of refugee documentation and its relationship to both free mobility (movement) and as a form of refugee protection was a critical topic that was discussed frequently throughout the Summit. This topic was at times a very sensitive topic, particularly as delegates spoke of missing opportunities for international conferences, speaking engagements, and decision-making or planning meetings due to not having travel documents.

This includes also that many delegates who were invited to attend the Summit were blocked from attending because their host nations refused to issue travel documents. At both Summits (2019 in Ethiopia and 2022 in South Africa), individuals faced discrimination and heartbreak to report to the airport and be blocked from boarding the plane.

These injustices are compounded when considering the high fees that refugees pay to pursue travel documentation--money that is not refunded if their pursuit is unsuccessful.

In this section, we now unpack this important issue area to highlight how refugees understand the barriers and opportunities for refugee-led responses in these critical areas of refugees' free mobility (movement), their documentation, and refugee protection.

Barriers:

Across 17 responses, delegates identified numerous barriers. Two South African delegates spoke of having to travel long distances, among other challenges. Quote,

" This is a nightmare, especially in South Africa. First with the closing of home affairs, people had to travel as far as more than 2000 km to go renew their documents which was not even a guarantee. Because of this, many became undocumented. Now with the online application which maybe an advantaged for young educated people, but what about uneducated one, elderlies who don't even know how to open an email?"

In the below chart, we highlight two distinct barriers: that of **state or international discrimination against refugees** and of **bad national policies**. In all, five delegates spoke of discrimination, including that nations may "fear refugees competing in the world of market or globalization" and another stating, "there is an unwillingness of hosting nations to issue the right documents to refugees."

Next, five additional respondents spoke about bad policies and emphasized how policies can change greatly depending on the hosting state. This unequal access to documentation means that refugees may be unequal to access their internationally codified rights when states refuse to offer them.

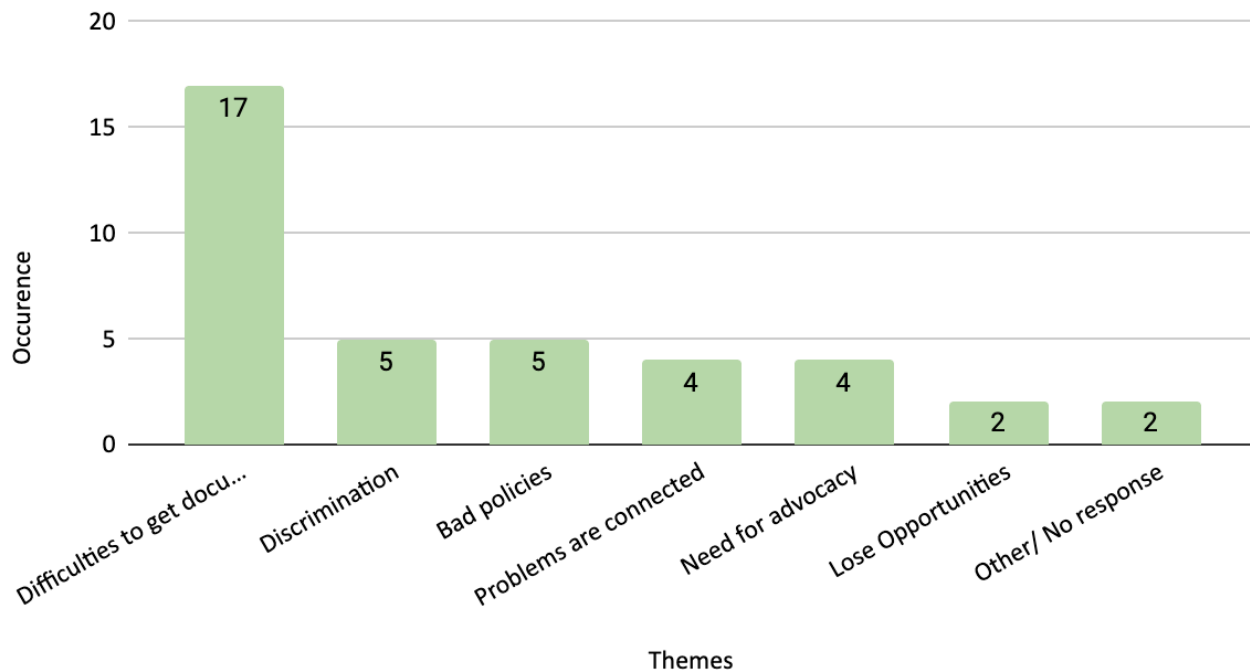
"The lack of legal travel documents, bad laws and policies that restrict the movements of people or that contravene the peoples' rights to freedom of movement."

Four respondents reflected that the **issues of free mobility, documentation, and protection are intertwined** and cannot easily be separated. One delegate described succinctly, "without documents, we are not protected." Their interconnected nature potentially poses problems for refugees to address these issues. Per four additional respondents, RLOs and networks **should prioritize advocacy efforts** to address these connected areas, with one respondent feeling RLOs are currently "failing" and "just not doing enough" to ensure all displaced persons can get the documents they need to in turn obtain protection and rights to movement.

"In refugeehood, the most (important) barrier to free mobility is a lack of the right documentation. And without documentation, there is no protection and no free mobility."

Refugees noted the high costs of lacking documentation, including that **they can lose out on many opportunities** from travel to employment due to not having barriers. The documents include identity documents that can show refugees' legal status to remain in a hosting country, and also includes convention travel documents (CTDs)-- which function like passports.

Refugee-led Response Barriers: Mobility, Documentation, Protection



Opportunities:

The discussed opportunities for refugee-led response for mobility, documentation, and protection are summarized below. Most commonly, eight refugee delegates spoke of how **refugee leaders, RLOs, and networks can engage advocacy** directly or in partnership to make progress in these critical areas. Among these responses, individuals again noted the interrelated nature of issues and pointed how getting CTDs or identity documents needed for travel can help refugees better advocacy in these and all other issues.

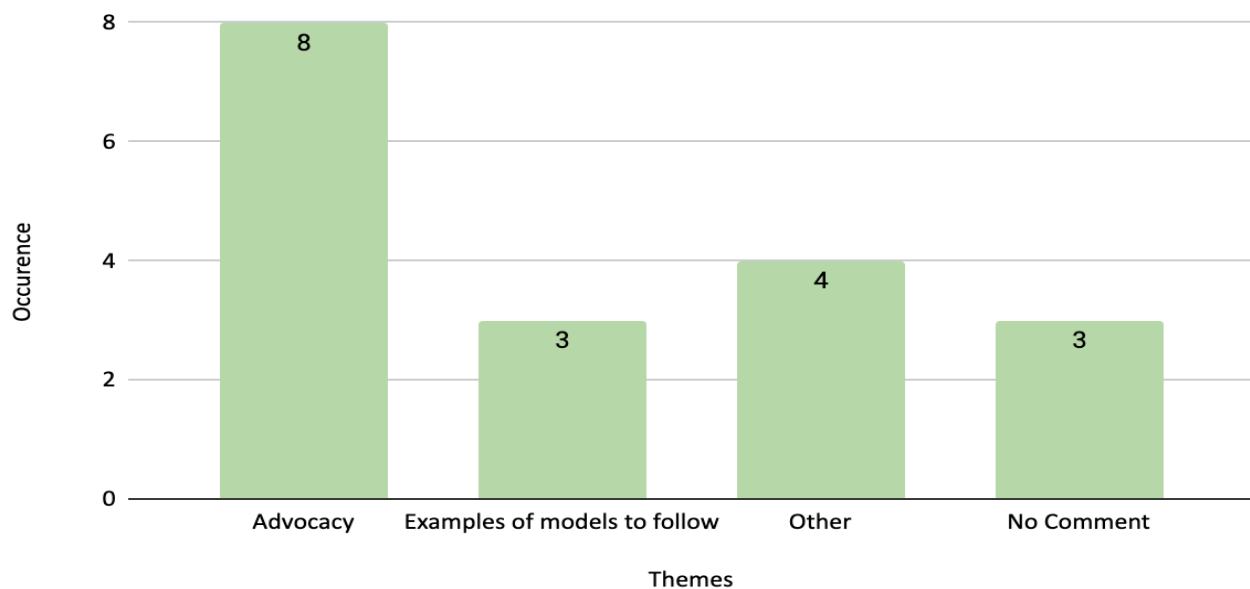
“RLOS are the opportunity that can help (other) refugees in these areas by acting as a voice for other refugees who can't speak for themselves.”

“If they get opportunities of free mobility and documentation they can advocate for their fellow refugees and get enough funds more than others to talk on their behalf.”

Three delegates spoke to ***potential models that refugees can point towards in their advocacy***. The nation of Uganda was mentioned as one such model with one respondent noting, “for the case of Uganda, when refugees are applying for CTDs, they are being granted and there is freedom of movement within the country.” These responses add weight that through sharing individual experiences through refugee-led networks and platforms, the displaced themselves can identify collective advocacy goals based on existing best practices that occur at the local or national level.

Finally, through analysis, four responses for this area emphasized the need for refugees’ mobility, documentation (both identity documents and CTDs), and protection, rather than provide examples of opportunities or best practices.

Refugee-led Responses to Mobility, Documentation, and Protection



Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee Inclusion in Decision- and Policy-making and Education:

Refugee inclusion in decision- and policy-making spaces has been a cross-cutting and highly salient area across all responses. The issue of education has been less addressed. In analysis, only one respondent spoke to the issue of refugee barriers to education. Although only one respondent spoke directly to education, their response is listed in full below due to the richness and expansive nature of their response. The following subsections will focus on refugees’ barriers and opportunities for inclusion in decision- and policy-making.

Education Barriers:

“The barriers for education: limited opportunities for scholarship, a lack of recognition for refugee documents coming from francophone countries, a lack of employment for refugees holding academic documents from Ugandan institutions, and a lack of refugee recognition for government institutions which provide scholarship opportunities.”

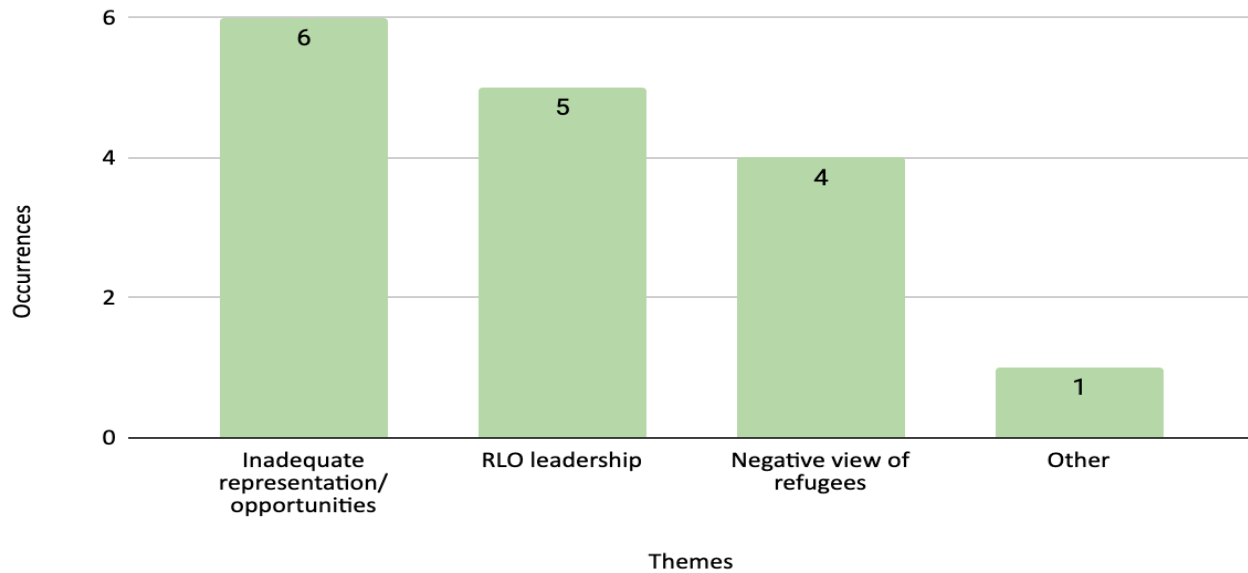
Barriers for decision- and policy-making:

The most commonly cited barrier is **inadequate representation or limited opportunities** for refugees to participate in decision- and policy-making. For two respondents, the opportunities are limited because of discriminatory and exclusionary policies whereby funders or non-refugee actors block refugee participation. For respondents, this exclusion can arise from bad policies in a host country.

Five respondents noted that even when refugees can access these spaces, there are sometimes **problems in refugee and RLO leadership** that inhibits their effectiveness. Issues in leadership include that refugee participants lack knowledge of the structures of how these spaces work and are thus underprepared. Others noted that RLO leadership who attend decision-making spaces may be less successful because they don't represent the views of their communities well or that RLOs don't coordinate well before or after meetings.

Finally, four individuals felt RLOs and refugee leaders are limited because **donors, policy- and decision-makers hold negative views of refugees**. For some, these negative views are rooted in an outdated and wrong perception that refugees are only recipients, but not actors. For another, refugees are excluded because outside actors' view refugees as threats or competition, rather than as collaborators.

Barriers for Refugee Response in Decision- and Policy-Making

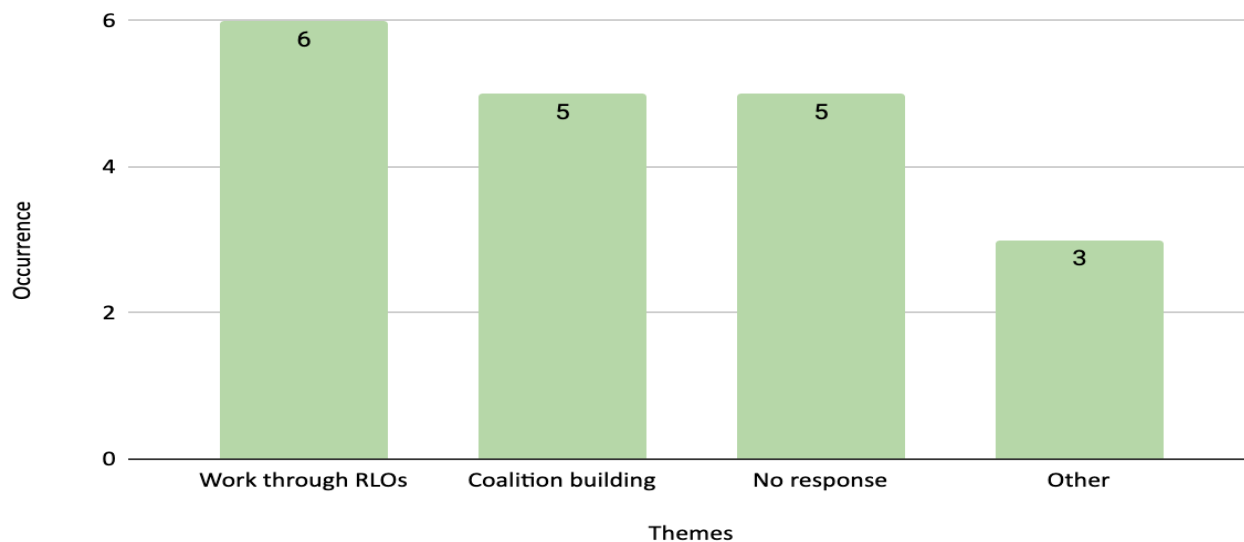


Opportunities for decision- and policy-making:

Six survey respondents noted that ***RLOs can work together*** to forge entrance into decision- and policy-making spaces. Per one representative, this is facilitated because “**RLOs have rights and can hold meetings.**” Per another, RLOs can make progress to gain entry by “**appointing leaders who are capable of representing their interests... Leaders with skills and knowledge.**” These quotes signify the types of knowledge and capacities that refugee leaders have, and underscores how these characteristics qualify them to engage in spaces that are often closed.

The second most common response occurred when five respondents noted how refugees can work through ***coalition building*** to stakeholders within and outside of refugee communities. This includes to “**meet governmental leaders--from continental and regional representations.**” Another individual expressed the need for RLOs and leaders to share these contacts more broadly to encourage future refugee consultations. Finally, a third person shared how once the door is opened through these coalitions, RLOs can “**expand their space and gain courage to work.**”

Opportunities for Refugees' Inclusion in Decision- and Policy-Making



Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee-led Response in Refugees' Health and Well-being, including Mental Healthcare:

It is well established that many refugees globally fail to access their rights or access basic social services of healthcare and education-- and this occurs even in nations that are noted for their generosity in hosting refugees. This section considers refugees' barriers to access healthcare, including mental healthcare, and considers opportunities for refugee leaders and RLOs to push for expanded healthcare access.

Barriers:

Survey respondents identified numerous barriers for healthcare access. We summarize the findings into six distinct categories. The most commonly cited barrier was that ***refugees experience discrimination when they seek healthcare***. The barrier of discrimination highlighted that some refugees are treated like outsiders, with care that is totally different than or more expensive than care given to citizens. Others noted that discrimination occurs when refugees have a different language, culture, or religion than their hosts.

“Barriers include limited communication and limited understanding in host communities of where refugees came from, what they have experienced or experiencing. Language and culture as well as religion can also be a barrier. Racism and discrimination are also barriers.”

Next, five refugees spoke of ***limited or inappropriate medical services***. For some, services were inappropriate because they were provided in ways that violate a groups' cultural norms. For others, services were deemed inappropriate because they did not respond to medical or mental health needs that refugees prioritize. Additionally, refugees noted inconsistent structural capacities for different hosting regions to equally provide medical care.

“Spaces are not user friendly or tailored to refugees. Most refugees go to the health centers, and they don’t have spaces where to share their battles on mental health.”

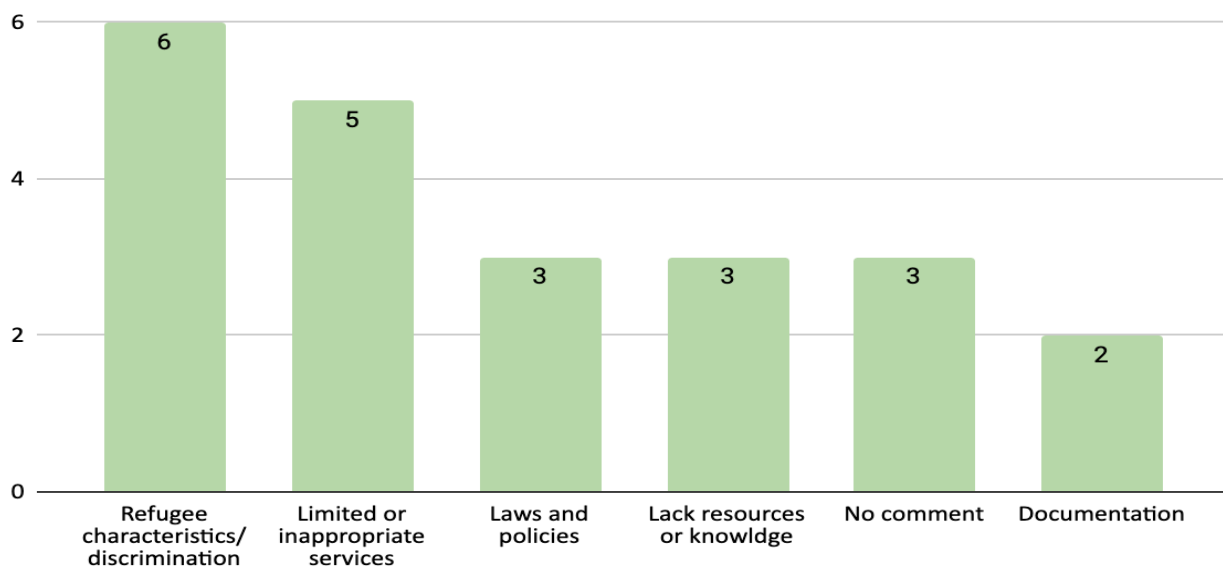
Beyond limited or inappropriate medical care, three refugees noted that **bad laws and policies inhibit their healthcare access**. Some alleged that their hosting nations fail to honor international commitments to provide refugees with healthcare access. Per one individual.

“Health and well-being is at a catastrophic point in South Africa. They don’t even care about what the constitution says or international laws and conventions signed by SA.”

Another respondent described bad laws and policies as explicitly blocking RLOs from being able to provide healthcare services, including mental health care. They further noted that more RLOs can do more to provide mental health awareness and promote these services.

Finally, three individuals noted how refugees **lack knowledge of how to obtain healthcare or lack resources to do so**. Two additionally noted that some refugees **lack the needed documentation** to get healthcare.

Barriers: Refugees' Health and Well-being, including Mental Health



Opportunities:

Although six refugees were unable to identify how refugee leaders and RLOs can expand refugees’ healthcare and mental healthcare access, several respondents identified pragmatic and meaningful steps forward. Chief among these responses were for refugees and RLOs to **engage in more healthcare advocacy**, and two respondents additionally called for **expanded partnership or coalition building** to expand access.

In focusing on the seven responses for **healthcare advocacy**, two directly noted that refugees have also earned medical degrees or created programs for mental healthcare. The implication being that refugees need not always look outside their communities, but that they can also learn from within and based advocacy on their internal knowledge and strengths.

“Using the skills within refugees to respond to issues of health and well-being. For example, in South Africa we are currently training refugees to become lay counselors to provide awareness, prevention and care for mental health issues among refugees.”

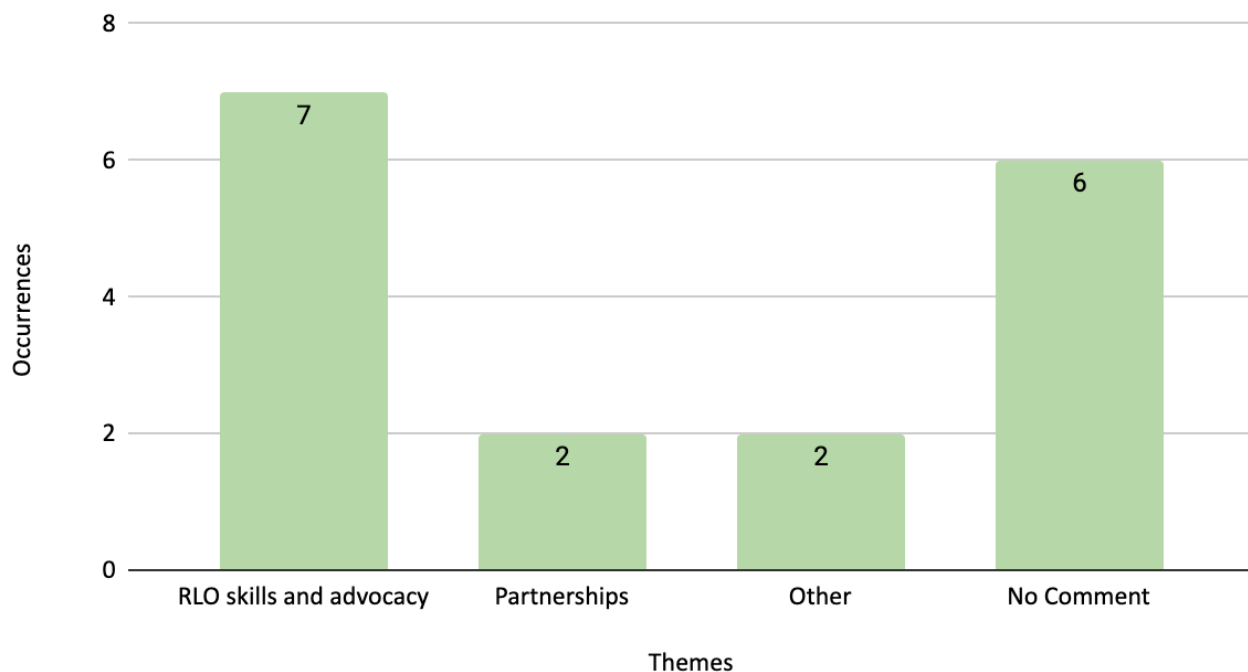
Other respondents noted that many host nations do afford refugees with healthcare access and suggest conducting advocacy to ensure refugees throughout the nation can equally access these rights. The stakes of this advocacy are incredibly high, as one person notes, “healthy refugees mean healthy communities.”

In turning to **partnerships for increasing refugees’ health access**,

“(We need to) engage the right partners and direct sufficient funding to RLOs that will enable them to implement some of these programs since they’re more closer & connected to their communities than any one else.”

“Refugees are being included in the host government national health plans... Also, create online spaces where refugee speaks about their mental health ”

Opportunities: Refugee-led Response to Health & Mental Healthcare



Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee-led Response in Refugees' Livelihoods:

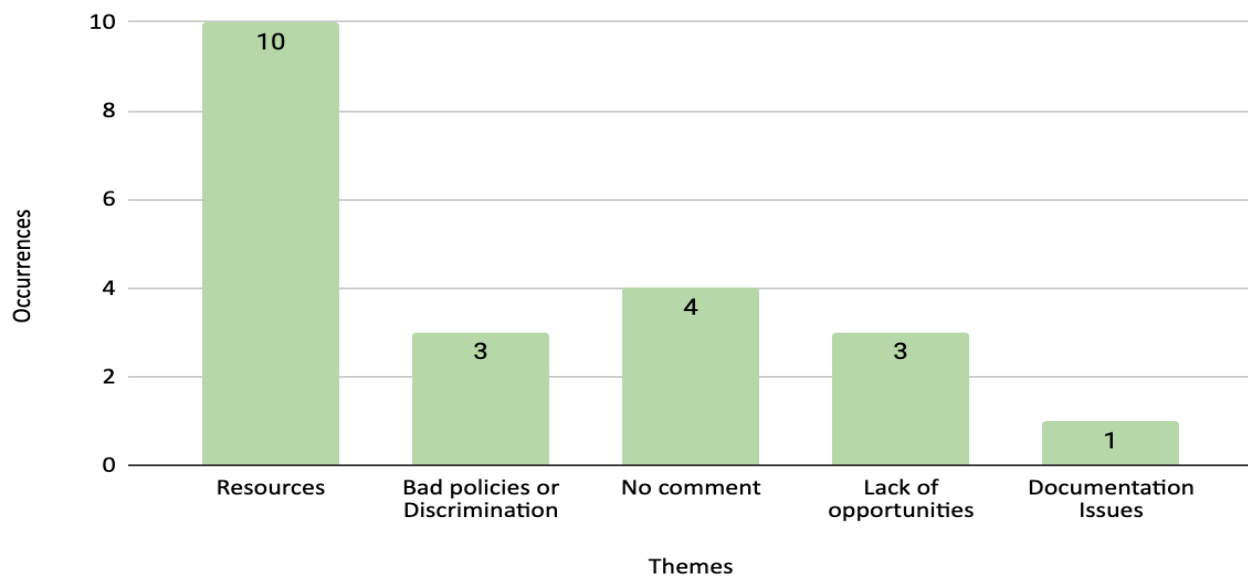
Barriers:

Ten refugee respondents noted that a **lack of resources** (financial, knowledge-based, or otherwise) blocks them from accessing jobs and livelihood opportunities. In some cases, this occurs when talented and capable individuals are unable to secure start-up funding to launch a business. In other cases, a lack of resources refers to insufficient training opportunities for refugees to learn or transfer their skills and expertise into a new context.

“They don't have enough funds... Even the ones who try to work on themselves have problems paying taxes or accessing loans in banks because of their status.”

A smaller number of refugees pointed to **bad policies and host community discrimination** as blocking refugees from accessing work to sustain themselves, and one individual mentioned how **lacking documentation** blocks refugees from working in some context.

Refugee Barriers for Livelihoods (Employment)



Opportunities:

In the analysis, six respondents stated there is a **need for increased refugee funding and increased refugee economic opportunities**. To make this a reality, four individuals noted how **RLOs can form partnerships to create training for refugees, share best practices or lessons learned, and continue in advocacy**. Finally, one individual described that refugees cannot access their economic rights until other rights, such as rights to movement are honored.

SURVEY CONCLUSION:

The wealth of knowledge, experiences, and insights gained through Survey analysis inspires us to continue advocacy for refugee-led voices and participation in all areas. As stated throughout the Summit and the survey, there can truly no longer be anything about refugees without refugees. Our survey analysis in all ways points to refugees' own investment to strengthen themselves, their organizations, and their networks in pursuit of creating conditions where refugees can live dignified lives, access the support and resources they need, and where they can maximally contribute towards their host and home communities. This analysis is not possible without the responses of 17 survey respondents. Again, we offer our sincere gratitude to all who completed, as well as to those who wished to but were unable to do so.

DAY 2

AFTERNOON SESSION:

Moving Ahead:

The moderator welcomed all delegates back after the lunch break. The intention was to present the responses to the challenges in the seven areas and then return to break-out groups to discuss solutions and best practices in response to these challenges. From a strong democratic imperative, however, the delegates requested to instead spend the afternoon discussing the bigger picture, structural issues of the ARN. Chiefly, delegates wanted clarity in the constitution and governance documents, clarification of the roles of ARN Steering Committee members, updates on ARN's registration and funding, to discuss solutions for the lack of representation in gender and minority groups in the composition of the Steering Committee, among other issues.

The note taker was soon asked to take notes at the front of the delegate. As a result, this portion documents the themes of the day, outlines some of the proposals, and attempts to focus on resolutions made at the end of the second day. The meeting minutes and notes are, however, less thorough due to her restrictions. Participants will be able to submit comments on this section in the event anything further needs documented.

The moderators, Sedrick and later Abdikadir, requested delegates to feel welcome to express themselves, but asked for forward motion, for proposals of solutions rather than restating the well-known issues, and for individuals to not repeat what has been said in order that the meeting may continue.

Robert Hakiza, chair of the ARN asked to speak to delegates and was permitted to do so. Upon starting, some expressed frustrating that Robert was only repeating what had been said previously. Several delegates requested funders and ARN Steering Committee to leave the room for a more open and confidential dialogue, but this did not occur.

Robert called all present ARN delegates to the front of the room. Robert explained the structure and results of the elections of the 2019 Summit, again admitting to and owning the imperfections of the Steering Committee Composition. He additionally explained four open slots that have occurred as some have been resettled and another delegate found employment that precluded her from continuing in her role. As a result, the committee initially had more women but now fewer, as well as the committee lost its disability advocate/representative.

In discussing whether future elections were possible, Robert requested patience and asked to follow through with what has already been decided so that the timing of elections can correspond more broadly to the elections across other regions within the Global Refugee led Network. He stressed that all the current leadership board would step down, with none being elected again. He reiterated, however, that all leadership stands committed to working with

the incoming leadership to ensure a smooth transition and to continue strengthening the network.

After speaking for approximately ten minutes and after releasing the ARN leaders back to their seats, the floor was opened for general discussion and suggestions on how to proceed.

Again, many of the contours of the debate are not included in depth, but I again summarize the main themes and proposals:

- Need for more transparency and accountability in ARN meetings, who is present, what is decided.
- Need for clear communication strategy, including sharing notes, resources, opportunities, and for periodic Zoom or other meetings—the Summit cannot be collective if only a few leaders are consistently engaged.
- Need for more diverse representation both in gender and in issue areas (representation of marginalized groups: youth, disability, LGBT, etc.)
- Calls for clarification on the status of ARN consultation adoption.
- Confirmation of ARN registration and clarity because it might be registered in Uganda.
- Many proposals centered on the workable frameworks of how elections will be conducted.
- Many proposals of how to fill a Working Committee.
- Many proposals of how to fill the open 4 Steering Committee slots and contestation of who should be eligible to run in these elections.

Resolution and Closing the Day:

The delegates ultimately accepted three outcomes through a vote:

- Passed a motion to fill the existing four openings in the Steering Committee but tabled until day three to discuss how.
- Passed a motion to expand women's representation in the Steering Committee but tabled until day three how to do this.
- Passed a motion to form a Working Committee to support the Steering Committee in various areas but tabled until day three how this will occur. The initial agreement is to allow the Working Committee six months to conduct this work.

The day adjourned with delegates committed to arriving 30 minutes early on day three so we can productively conclude the resolutions and amazing work, as well as finish various agenda items with our partners.

DAY 3

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022

MORNING SESSION

Partner Presentations:



Sibusiso Khasa, Amnesty International on Advocacy

After doing a brief welcome, the moderators invited Sibusiso Khasa of Amnesty International (Sibusiso.khasa@amnesty.org.za) to present on advocacy. Among the highlights of his presentation, Sibusiso defined advocacy and helped us understand advocacy through the metaphor of a tree where we see manifestations of an injustice, but the roots of the problem are often deep and not easily visual. He also proposed many strategies to engage in advocacy, including to set **SMART Goals** (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed).

To make SMART goals, he suggested to conduct stakeholder and power mapping analysis in order to achieve maximum influence by targeting one's advocacy efforts towards the persons or allies who can help drive change.

Finally, Sibusiso encouraged us to remember that advocacy is a long process and encouraged us to remain patient to see how change can happen gradually.

After the presentation, ten minutes were afforded for questions and answers by delegates. Among the themes in the questions were: (a) how to proceed if advocacy is slow or doesn't work, for example, when governmental or decisionmakers refuse to meet you for advocacy; (b) how to advocate when cultural norms are at a stake and injustices become 'taken for granted' by victims; (c) related to point b, how to advocate when those who abuse rights know they are doing wrong; and (d) how to engage advocacy in restrictive environments whereby advocacy can put one into danger, particularly if political leaders view advocacy as a threat.

Sibusiso Khasa responded to each question in turn. Some of the responses overlap and are presented as a summary below:

- When you cannot engage decision making stakeholders directly, work through collective efforts.
- Progress can be slow and occur over time, be broad in how you assess change and build upon even the small steps forward.
- When working in culturally sensitive areas, know who the leaders are who can help bring change. Make connections and push forward.
- There are always risks in advocacy and you should engage in analysis to understand and work to mitigate these risks.
- When risks are too high, work in coalitions to lower risks.
- If stakeholders continue to refuse meeting you, work through the media or engage in other tactics to force an agenda.
- Remember the “tree analysis” and look for the “roots” as a starting point if you cannot engage the visible “branches”.



Rejoyce Makhetha, Amnesty International on Activism

Next, Rejoyce Makhetha of Amnesty International shared on activism (Rejoyce.Makhetha@amnesty.org.za). Madam Rejoyce gave a very quick 8 minutes presentation where she had to necessarily consolidate elements of her presentation. In her presentation, Rejoyce defined activism as acting, acting on behalf of a cause, and action that goes beyond what is routine or conventional.

Through dialogue with the delegates, we identified that among our biggest assets for activism are our voice, courage, information about a situation, the people we represent and work with, our data and research, and unity, collaboration, and teamwork.

“We all have something positive to bring to the table for activism. We do not divide and conquer, but we UNITE and WIN!”

Rejoyce introduced us to the concept of **asset-based community activism**, where we look at the strengths of the community, conduct asset mapping and identify knowledge and skills of community members, and we identify the institutions that operate. We also discussed different forms of power that can push us forward collectively.

Rejoyce alerted us to the resources available through [Amnesty Academy](#) and offered that AI can give trainings upon request to coalitions.

In closing, she encouraged us to see that activism can take very little to get started. We just need our brains and need each other. And we know we can, and we are making a difference!

Q & A to Rejoyce Makhetha, Amnesty International on Activism

Due to concerns of timing and to move to our special agenda, delegates were encouraged to pass written questions to Rejoyce. Rejoyce committed to individually responding to these questions as she was able.

Mary Wangui, RefugePoint on RSRI

Third, Mary Wangui (wangui@refugepoint.org) of RefugePointed on the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI). The RSRI is a platform for RLOs to join to help groups know how to approach evidence and tools for programming. The purpose of the RSRI is to redefine self-reliance not just as considerations of money to think of it as economic and social well-being. It is the wholeness of communities, families, and not just one component.

Their holistic approach: starts with entry and how they identify & assess clients (who comes in and how do you bring people into your program), stabilization (give what they need to meet the needs, but not through money because the money won't go towards program when someone is hungry. The approach is to meet the needs so that programs can go on), empower them through assistance once they are stable (give the tools so that people can document what is working and go forward), and graduate.

Mary then provided a discussion of the platform and the tools that are available through RSRI. Their goal is to use the platform to reach five million refugees through these programming to support all refugees.

Q & A to Mary Wangui, RefugePoint on RSRI

After a succinct ten minutes presentation, the organizers allowed for five minutes of Q and A, with promises that Mary would be available for additional conversation.

Among the topics addressed were how RefugePoint works to avoid refugee dependency and how their stabilization progress works in practice. Mary explained more about the individualized plans and interventions, with notes that all parties need to work towards self-reliance. Sadly, this means some participants have been dropped when they are unwilling to do the work. We discussed at length that not everyone can be self-reliant, and in this case, RP tries to refer those vulnerable persons onward.

Sheila, Cohere on Reframe and Cohere Funding

Fourth, Sheila from Cohere spoke on the resources and platform through Reframe and described their funding strategies.

Sheila has previously presented about the work of Cohere. She additionally explained more on their funding, including clarification that some donors prefer to directly fund RLOs while others prefer Cohere to manage the funds. Cohere works through “Reframe” to verify RLOs and be a publicly available database for direct funders to connect. They also work through other models to funnel funding with Cohere as the intermediary.

Sheila also described processes of how Cohere identifies RLOs and partners, works through long-term relationships with them and builds capacity to help them continue. She described they do not “drop” RLO partners, but they may limit funding until they see adequate accountability and governance structures in place to know the funds will be properly used.

Q & A to Sheila, Cohere on Reframe and Cohere Funding

Due to concerns of timing and to move to our special agenda, delegates were encouraged to pass written questions to Sheila. Sheila committed to individually responding to these questions as she was able.

Valery, Independent Diplomat on Diplomacy

Finally, Valery of Independent Diplomat gave a presentation on diplomacy and refugee engagement in high level spaces. This was an engaging, but very brief (12 minutes) presentation.

“Diplomats represent member states, but their decisions impact people. YOU NEED THE PEOPLE IMPACTED BY DECISIONS TO HAVE SPACE TO THOSE WHO MAKE THE DECISIONS.”

Mr. Valery carefully explained the work of ID to invest in refugee leaders such that they know diplomatic procedures and know how to succinctly convey a message. They train refugee delegates to know follow-up actions and to comprehensively know how to make impact in high level and decision-making spaces. He reminded that it doesn’t matter how good you are, but if no one hears your message, you will not make progress.

Mr. Valery provided the following steps to build a comprehensive advocacy strategy:

- Set your goal and know the *effect* that you want!
 - *“Insufficient focus on effects at every stage of diplomacy is a frequent cause of failure,”* particularly when goal isn’t or isn’t clear.
- Break down your goal into outcomes that will help.
- Break down the outcomes into as many different action items that you think will help them achieve your goal.
- Know your audience and don’t waste your time talking about things they don’t address. Know who is the right stakeholder to engage.
- Speak to fewer people but be very strategic in who you speak with, why, and how.

- Have follow-up points and keep the momentum going.

“Don’t be used as a puppet to meet their agenda without also advancing your own agenda. You have to play the game.”

Q & A to Valery, Independent Diplomat on Diplomacy

There were many follow-up questions for Mr. Valery. This included questions on how to diplomatically engage without getting rotated or angry. Among the responses, Mr. Valery advised us to know we must be open to conversation, to focus on engagement rather than issues, and to build relationships over time to push an agenda forward. He also reminded of the diplomatic and political restrictions of the people we talk with, including they may not have a mandate to engage.

Other questions were raised about how ID is working to help in various areas where things on book are good, but where implementation is bad. Valery informs that ID bridges normal ways of diplomacy, tries to bring refugee voices directly into the room, and does this because they believe this is where change will happen. Valery again says everything is politics and we need to know how to play the game to make change happen through implementation, because there are many known and unknown reasons why this doesn’t occur.

Closure and Final Notes on Partner Presentations

The Steering Committee will request all these presentations to be shared to the delegates. Any delegate who cannot access the training is welcome to reach out to the presenter or to Christa for detailed notes.

After concluding this session, we broke for lunch with an agreement to return for the concluding, special session.

DAY 3

AFTERNOON SESSION:

Special Session and Resolutions

During the deliberations on the 17th of November 2022, the third day of the summit, RELON's representative requested the ARN leadership to recuse themselves for fair decisions and to allow all representatives to deliberate privately on issues raised by members of the ARN. This was a closed-door meeting, limited only to delegates. The meeting was chaired by Abdikadir, the Chairperson of the SARLN. Sister Lindi was appointed for presentation of the resolution. Dr. Christa and Mr. Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga were appointed for official notetaking duties in the special session.

The RELON delegates made the following resolutions:

1. Appointment of additional members:

After the deliberations on women inclusivity in the ARN, the RELON representatives voted to appointment the following members:

- ✓ Gaudence Mutabazi-Uwizeye
- ✓ Cecile Losamandjo Pango
- ✓ Halima Mohamed Mohamud
- ✓ Liliane Mukidi
- ✓ Jessy Inge



Photo by Pascal from SARLN: From left to the right: Gaudence Mutabazi-Uwizeye, Cecile Losamandjo Pango, Halima Mohamed Mohamud, Liliane Mukidi, Jessy Inge

2. Working Committee formed to perform the following duties:
 - Review the constitution.
 - Review the funding for transparency and accountability.
 - Create terms of references including to clearly define each role within the Steering Committee.
 - Oversee a timeline for submission of the drafted constitution January to 1st June 2023.
 - Each country (RELON) will delegate its chairperson and Secretary to work with the steering committee. In case one of the representatives is not available, the country has the right to appoint someone to represent them.
 - Prepare for elections.
 - Communication strategy and progress reports to RELON/ ARN members.
 - Prepare ARN's strategic plan.
 - Clarify ARN's structure and sub-structures.
 - Request if ARN registration can be put on hold.

3. Financial statements:
 - Financial statement to be audited.
 - All the financial statement made into other accounts be audited.

4. Action plan to be reviewed:
 - Documenting Action Plan.

5. Global Refugee Led Network:
 - Review of global representation.
 - Gender equality at GRN.
 - One male and one female represent ARN to GRN.

6. Structure:

After the discussion RELON's representatives requested that the working committee and current leadership must work together to make sure they agreed on the following:

 - Proper Structure at ARN HQ, (Structure and sub-structures)
 - Regional Structure (Structure and sub-structure)
 - Opening of bank account

7. Develop a strategic plan on communication.
8. Recruit from countries that are not represented.
9. Virtual meeting to be held by working committee and steering committee.
10. Virtual meeting about the progress of the work assigned to the steering committee and working committee.

List of RELON's represented in the closed-door discussion:

1. RELON KENYA
2. RELON UGANDA
3. SOUTH AFRICA REFUGEE LED NETWORK
4. RELON MALAWI
5. RELON NIGERIA

List of leaders present in the closed-door session. See the attached attendance register.

FULL NAMES	Country representing
Ayoo Irene Hellen	Uganda
Abdikadir Mohammed	South Africa (Chaired the session)
Pascal Zigashane	Kenya
Abel Dambew	South Africa
Gerhard Saayman	South Africa
Hoda Abdi	South Africa
Mncedisi Khoza	South Africa
Tony Chiloane	South Africa
Cheng Laban	Nigeria
Jessy Inge	Kenya
Blaise Thomas Kasiama	South Africa
Malipo Lukandamiza	South Africa
Malipo Muhashale	South Africa
Liliane Mukidi	South Africa
Claude M. B. Kayitare	South Africa
Kuol Arou Kuol	Uganda
Keluel Agok	Uganda
Halima Mohamud Mohamed	Uganda
Noella Kabale	Uganda
Dawla Hussein	Uganda
Cecile Losamandjo Pango	Malawi
Lydia Igiraneza	Malawi
Ganzamungu Zihindula	South Africa
Martin Mande	South Africa
Gloria Shukrani	South Africa
Gaudence Uwizeye	South Africa
Huddah Abdi	South Africa
Basubi Ibrahim	South Africa
Bahati Ghislain	Kenya
Lindi Tlou	South Africa

List of the leadership of the African Refugee Led Network:

Position	Full Names	Country
Chairman	Robert Hakiza	Uganda
Deputy Chairman	Jean Paul Kasika	Kenya
Secretary	Jerry Lukendo Mbokani Mparha	Uganda
Assistance Secretary	Jasmine Asekome	Nigeria
Treasurer	Mary Tal	South Africa
Assistant Treasurer	Remy Gakwaya	Malawi
No post allocated	Lilian Mukidi	South Africa
No post allocated	Gaudence Mutabazi-Uwizeye	South Africa
No post allocated	Halima Mohamed Mohamud	Uganda
No post allocated	Cecile Losamandjo Pango	Malawi
No post allocated	Jessy Inge	Kenya

End of the Resolutions

The steering committee was called back in the room by the chair of the meeting, Mr. Abdikadir, the SARLN Chairperson, He requested from the RELON's representative, if they are happy, that Sister Lindi can present the resolutions taken by RELON's representatives. The response to the question was "YES".

Sister Lindi presented the resolutions and everyone in the room agreed with her presentation.

Mr. Robert Hakiza, Chair of the ARN was called to give the Steering Committee's views on the resolutions. Mr. Robert requested 10 minutes for adjournment to discuss with the rest of the leaders.

The chair granted the 10 minutes and the meeting resumed at 16:32 by welcoming the entire team of ARN.

Chairperson of ARN, Mr. Robert Hakiza opened with following remarks:

- Appreciations to all the leaders from all RELONs for the resolutions taken.
- The resolutions and views from the leaders are welcomed and accepted.
- Constitution can still be amended while the registration is ongoing.
- Application for registration is already in process, anytime from now the certificate will be issued. It will be impossible to stop the registration.
- ARN doesn't have a bank account.
- Funds for donations came from Oxfam and OpenSociety and the financial report will be shared with everyone.
- All the financial statements will be audited.
- We are worried about the representation of women, because SARLN does have 3 women that represent ARN. Suggestion, what if we give the position of one woman from SA to another RELON?

- Colleagues, this work needs commitment and dedications. How can we be sure that people elected will do their job accordingly?
- It's good for us to work together, we appreciate all our funders and sponsors.

End of ARN Chairperson, Mr. Robert Hakiza submissions on the resolutions.

Closing Remarks

SARLN Chairperson closing remarks:

- Appreciations of the work well done by the entire ARN team, and the decisions taken by steering committee.
- Thanks to the leadership of ARN for accepting SARLN to host the summit.
- Many thanks to Mr. Martin Mande for all his efforts and contributions to ensure logistics were in place.

Mr. Sedrick from GRN Steering Committee questions:

1. When is the timeline on the election? Response: Two years until we meet again for General assembly (GA). There's no election in six months.

Mr. Malipo Lukandamiza requested the leadership to reach other countries to join ARN. Secretary general will convey a virtual meeting with the Working Committee and Steering Committee to form its structure that will have their chairperson and secretary.

Meetings will be held virtually to understand the challenges that the team is facing and to report to RELON's.

Mary from RefugePoint:

Many thanks to the South African team for hosting us and for the hospitality we received. Many thanks to everyone who attended the meeting, and we are not here to impose or to scrutinize. ARN is not an individual but a team. We stand with you, and we are happy because there was a progress. We are looking forward to having more engagement with ARN.

Sheila from COHERE:

I am not going to repeat what other have said. However, we have challenges, every day and we need for you to understand that. Looking beyond the Summit, remember that organizations and people that you are working with are not your enemies. We at COHERE are ready to partner with ARN and your feedback is needed. Let us be part of the change.

Mr. Valery from Independent Diplomat:

Congratulation to ARN for reaching an agreement. But I am having mixed feelings. However, make sure that the work is done. From ID's point of view, we are ready to work with ARN and

make sure that everything is done. The mixed feelings that I was talking about is, there is still more challenges to come, but let ARN leadership and its members be positive. The Steering Committee needs to work on some of the point that needs finalized.

In addition, let us have keep our platform clean and not post negatively on Twitter about the network. Because of the credibility of the organization and ourselves, this might have negative impact on ID working collaborations with the heads of states and AU.

ARN Chairperson, Mr. Robert Hakiza closing remarks:

I am very happy that everything went very well, many thanks for everyone for leaving everything behind and came to attended to the meeting. I appreciate the sacrifice and contributions from everyone to this Summit. Our gratitude to our partners and donors for being here with us. Please our partners convey our gratitude to the teams you work with. Thank you!

Many thanks to our moderators, Mr. Sedrick and Mr. Tony for doing the great work. Thank you to the management of the RH Hotel Pretoria for a friendly hospitality and a very wonderful staff. Even though our brother lost his cellphone.

Many thanks to our colleagues from SARLN for doing great job and all the arrangement well done. Many thanks to GRN for your support.

GRN Chairperson, Mr. Amer closing remarks:

In the beginning, I was considered as an outsider, when I was asked to go outside, we are the charters of the organization. We agreed in addressing the issues of refugee. We are available you can reach us. We'll be working in partnership with law firms that advocate for refugees and taking personal legal matters to court on a pro-bono basis as we can. You can reach our global network and we are open for any organization.

List of organizations represented during the outcome of the resolutions:

- Global Refugee Led Network
- RELON Kenya
- South Africa Refugee Led Network
- RELON Malawi
- RELON Uganda
- RELON Nigeria
- RefugePoint
- Independent Diplomat
- Cohere
- Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative
- Amnesty International

End of the summit.

Appendix 1:

Summit Participants:

Below are the delegates who were able to attend the Summit:

****Below is a partial list and some names or contact details may be missing.***

Delegates from Kenya:

[Gilbert Asukulu Lwangila](#), [L'Afrikana](#)

[JeanPaul Kasika Bahikye](#), [African Youth Initiative for Development](#) and [RELON-KENYA](#)

[Bahati Ghislain](#), [Founder, KINTSUGI](#)

[Jesse Inga Volonté](#), [Founder, Solidarity Initiative for Refugees](#) and [Newly Elected ARN Member](#)

[Pascal Bahati Zigashane](#), [Executive Director, Action Pour le Progrès](#)

Delegates from Malawi:

[Lydia Igiraneza](#), [Vijana Africa](#)

[Pastor Losamando Cecile Pango](#), [Deputy Director, RELON-Malawi](#), [Founder, Women for Action](#), and [Newly Elected ARN Member](#)

Delegates from Nigeria:

[Asekome Jasmine Omonefe](#), [Founder, Caring Hands Empowerment Foundation](#) and [RELON- Nigeria](#)

[Cheng Laban Ndoh](#), [Founder, Great Step Initiative](#)

Delegates from South Africa:

[Huddah Abdi](#), [Somali Association of South Africa](#)

[Tony Chiloane](#), [Moderator for the Event and Refugee Ally](#)

[Abel Dambew](#), [Refugee Leader](#)

[Daniel Byamungu Dunia](#), [Director, African Solidarity Network](#)

[Basubi Ibrahim](#), [Advocate and Champion for Disabled Refugees](#)

[Blaise Thomas Kasiama](#), [SARLN Chairperson of the Congolese Community in the North West](#)

[Claude Marie Bernard Kayitare](#), [Pax Afrika Network](#)

[Mncedisi Khosa](#), [Sunnyside Basketball Club](#)

[Lindi Tlou](#), [Refugee Leader](#)

[Martin Mande](#), [Co-founder, Xaveri South Africa](#)

[Malipo Lukandamiza Mbalanga](#), [Founder, Chairperson and Executive Director of African Refugee and Migrants Aid \(ARMA\)](#), and [Eastern Cape Provincial Chairperson of South African Refugee Led Network \(SARLN EC\)](#)

www.africarefugee-lednetwork.org

Email: Info@africarefugee-lednetwork.org

Abdikadir Mohamed, Somali Association of South Africa and Chairperson SARLN
Kayamba Lugenne Mukidi “Liliane”, Founder, Tusimame Wanawake and Newly Elected ARN Member

Malipo Muhashale Jacques, Synergie de la Diaspora Congolaise Pour le Developpement
Gaudence Mutabazi-Uwizeye, Rwandan platform for Dialogue, Truth and Justice (RDTJ) and Newly Elected ARN Member

Pastor Gerhard Ronald Saayman, Refugee and Migrant Support Centre and SARLN
Gloria Sifa Shukrani, Musician and Advocate

Mary Magdalene Tal, Founder, Whole World Women Association, member SARLN and ARN
Dr. Ganzamungu Zihindula, Co-founder of Benzohkuhle Feeding and Remedial Centre, and member SARLN

Delegates from Uganda:

Ayoo Irene Hellen, TOCH Uganda and Mediators’ Association in Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement

Robert Hakiza, Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID), RELON-Uganda, and ARN

Simpeze (Patrick) Hakiza, Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID)

Noelle Kabale Kalu, Founder REAL and Refugee Women Voice

Bibe Kalalu, Founder Angels Refugee Support Group, Uganda and ARN

Kaneza Divine, United Refugee Drivers Association (URDA)

Paul B.B. Kithima, Director, Bondeko Refugee Livelihoods Centre and CEO of GLOs, The Grassroots Consortium

Dawla Hussein Hassan Kodi, Director, Kandaakiat

Keluel Agok Kuch, Refugee Leader, and Programme Coordinator at RELON-Uganda,

Kuol Arou Kuol, Peacebuilder and co-founder of SPEAK

Lukendo Mbokani Mparha Jerry, OneYouth OneHeart Initiative, RELON-Uganda, and ARN

Halima Mohamed Mohamud, Women’s Refugee Leader, and Newly Elected ARN Member

Sedrick Murhula, Refugee Advocate and Member of ARN

Bella Nshimirimana, Co-founder, Mirror Group Network and Member of RELON-Uganda

Pastor Bolingo Ntahira, Founder & Executive Director, Hope for Children and Women Victims of Violence, RELON-Uganda, and ARN

Judith Okala, Livelihood and Women Empowerment Manager, YARID

Below are the delegates who were selected for attendance but unable to attend due to inability to obtain a travel document, inability to obtain a South African visa, or other barriers. Despite their inability to join in person, these delegates are equal and invaluable members of the ARN.

Delegates from Angola:

Melinda Katanda, *Association for Insurance and Protection of Refugees*
Kopel Musengeli, *Congolese Refugee Leader*
Joseph Mugenzi, *Rwandan Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Cameroon:

Issa Yamine Mohamed, *Chadian Refugee Leader*
Ouamonguene Tatiana, *Refugee Leader from Central African Republic*

Delegates from Gabon:

Francois Mongumu Ebuta, *Congolese Refugee Leader*
Kassongo Nzumba Ez, *Congolese Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Kenya:

Emmanuel Wetnhiak Ambrose Malok, *Sudanese Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Mali:

Ibrahim Abdulah Muhamed Ghali, *Nigerian Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Nigeria:

Ndaga Yvonne Endam, *Refugee Leader from Cameroon*

Delegates from Sudan:

Angelo Michael Wan Anykoey, *President, South Sudanese Refugee Solidarity Association*
Catherine Raphael Hassan Kur, *South Sudanese Refugee Leader*
Dak Bathumi Akul Abwol, *South Sudanese Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Tanzania:

Mwenga Nundu, *Refugee Leader, Nyarugusu Refugee Camp*
Boniface Akembe, *Refugee Leader, Nyarugusu Refugee Camp*

Delegates from Uganda:

Caesar Bishovu, *RELON-Uganda* and ARN
Siham Ahmed Roraye, *Refugee Leader from Somalia*
Binezera Dyna Roselyne, *Refugee Leader from Burundi*
Nyalok Thot Luak, *South Sudanese Refugee Leader*

Delegates from Zimbabwe:

Nsala Elie Tshikuna, *Congolese Refugee Leader*

Below are the stakeholders and other participants who attended and supported the Summit.

****This list may be incomplete.***

Amer Alkayed, President, Global Refugee Led Network
Laura Buffoni, UNHCR Regional Office, South Africa
Sibusiso Khasa, Amnesty International
Dr. Christa Charbonneau Kuntzelman, *Independent Scholar (USA)*
Rejoyce Makhetha, Amnesty International
Valery Mboah, Independent Diplomat
Sheila Namugga, Cohere
Victor Nyamori, Amnesty International
Ed Pomfret, Global Campaigns and Advocacy Director, Oxfam International
Mary Wangui, RefugePoint