



CONCEPT NOTE

NAIROBI DECLARATION AND ACTION PLAN ON DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR SOMALI REFUGEES AND REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES IN SOMALIA

REGIONAL THEMATIC MEETING ON LIVELIHOODS AND SELF-RELIANCE FOR REFUGEES, HOST COMMUNITIES AND RETURNEES

On 25 March 2017, the IGAD Heads of States and Government held the first ever Special Summit on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia. The Nairobi Declaration and the accompanying Plan of Action that were adopted set out a comprehensive regional approach and commitments at four levels: accelerating solutions in Somalia by creating an environment conducive for voluntary and sustainable returns; delivering durable solutions, whilst maintaining protection and asylum space, and promoting the self-reliance and inclusion of refugees in countries of asylum; strengthening sub-regional co-operation; and increasing international responsibility-sharing. Together, they reinforce the commitments made by Member States at the Leaders' Summit in September 2016, and the regional application of the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF).

Central to the principles of the Nairobi Declaration and Action Plan is the promotion of self-reliance and economic resilience for refugees, returnees and host communities. IGAD Members States have committed to:

More specifically Section IV. Para 4 of the Nairobi Declaration calls member states to:

"Enhance, with the support of the international community, education, training and skills development for refugees to reduce their dependence on humanitarian assistance, and prepare them for gainful employment in host communities and upon return";

The Nairobi Action plans articulates interventions that would enhance self-reliance and inclusion and calls member states and partners to:

- Invest in comprehensive skills development for refugees, strengthening their employability, self-reliance, social inclusion, and resilience; and create an enabling business environment for Somali refugees to access employment opportunities, by benefitting from the private sector and through generating a favorable climate for domestic and regional investment to support both refugee and host communities.
- Endeavour to provide work permits to refugees, those with permanent residence identification, those married to nationals, and refugee graduates of national Universities with access to work within the bounds of domestic laws in the areas permitted to foreign workers.
- Provide alternatives that reduce dependency on humanitarian assistance, increase self-reliance, inclusion and social cohesion, and ensure meaningful access to socio-economic rights, in particular with regard to shelter, health and human services, access to justice and civil registration, education and livelihood opportunities.



- Provide access to arable land to rural-based refugees within the bounds of national laws and mobilize external financial assistance to facilitate the development of irrigation schemes to enable refugees and host communities to engage in agricultural production, building on the existing concepts and experiences of integrated settlements in the region.

In addition, IGAD Member States have made their own individual commitments, both within the Nairobi Action Plan, and in their own National Action Plans (or CRRF Road Maps). A synthesis of these commitments will be prepared in advance of the thematic meeting (see below). It should also be noted that commitments on skills development were made at the Djibouti Regional Conference on Refugee Education especially in relation to TVET. The first Annual Ministerial Stocktaking Meeting emphasized the importance of self-reliance, and the commitment to 'hold the second regional thematic meeting within six-months, which will be on livelihoods and will help promote self-reliance and increase economic growth in refugee hosting areas, as well as provide the opportunity to exchange best practices and innovations', including the need to explore 'how development partners and the private sector can be more effectively engaged

The proposed IGAD regional thematic meeting on Livelihoods and Self-Reliance for Refugees and Host Communities, is intended to convene Member States, development and humanitarian partners as well as the private sector in support of these commitments. The objectives of the meeting are to:

- (i) identify existing opportunities and the associated constraints towards sustainable livelihoods and job creation for refugees, host communities and returnees in the Horn of Africa
- (ii) identify opportunities for policy provisions and areas of strategic reform and programmatic interventions that would enhance/increase opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and job creation for refugees, host communities and returnees in the Horn of Africa;
- (iii) share existing experience and best practices on enhancing self-reliance and economic resilience for refugees, host communities and returnees;
- (iv) identify practical steps and milestones for delivering commitments on self-reliance and livelihoods as set out in the Nairobi Action Plan and National Action
- (v) galvanize resource mobilization, from member states and partners, in support of these steps.

Scope

The meeting will look at a range of issues connected to the access of refugees and host communities to livelihood and economic opportunities including challenges accessing supporting services and functions (e.g. financial, information, training, infrastructure, business development services, etc.); as well as barriers in the regulatory and policy environment preventing refugees and host communities to fully take advantage of available opportunities.

Background Work

A guiding background paper will be prepared before the meeting that will look into the following key aspects;

- 1) Review of existing opportunities and the associated constraints for economic self-reliance of refugees in HOA. This review will include examining the status of the following in each member state: legal rights to work and freedom of movement; access to work permits; de jure and de facto constraints for business registration; access to finance; skills and education; market access; access and use of existing natural resources including land and non-wood forest products; access to key socioeconomic infrastructure (physical markets, water sources, internet etc.); integration in social protection mechanisms.



- 2) Collating existing research and literature on refugee livelihoods and jobs in HOA. A number of large-scale research initiatives have already been undertaken assessing economic contributions by refugees, impacts of refugee presence on labor market outcomes for host communities, and the role of the private sector in job creation for refugee and host communities. Examples include Oxford University Refugee Studies Department 'Refugee Economies in Uganda and Kenya' IFC, 'Kakuma as a Market Place'.
- 3) Documentation of how countries have integrated refugees' livelihoods, and economic inclusion, in their national development plans and local areas development plans.
- 4) An overview of the Guidelines on the Right to Work for Refugees embedded in Articles 17, 18 and 19 of the 1951 convention

Participants

Participants from IGAD Member States' line ministries, including agencies with a lead on refugee matters; ministries of finance/treasury; ministries of planning and those responsible for local government/devolution/federalism or decentralization and ministries of agriculture and livestock development and ministries of labour.

Refugee and host communities' representatives, IFIs, partners engaged in securing durable solutions and the IGAD core group of partners to the Nairobi Plan of Action, the private sector and Somali diaspora will also be invited.

