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# ROOT CAUSES OF REFUGEE FLOWS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION



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# WELCOME

So, you have found your way to *Refugee Skill Up* — welcome!

If you, or someone in your community, has experienced forced displacement and you wish to gain knowledge and build skills to ensure your or their needs are addressed, you are in the right place!

*Refugee Skill Up* works to ensure refugees have an effective and sustained voice in policy-making by addressing the information and capacity gaps refugees face. This toolkit serves as a resource to help you realize your full potential as an agent of change.

This toolkit is designed to help you lead a training for your community on *Root Causes of Refugee Flows and Conflict Resolution*.



## BACKGROUND

# WHY IT MATTERS

At the end of 2021, 89.3 million people were displaced across the world due to conflict. Refugees, as those who were forced to flee because of violence or political persecution, often want to be a part of the solution once the conflict is being resolved.

There are many different ways in which refugees can be involved in conflict resolution. For example:



South Sudanese refugees engaged in their country's peace process.



In the Syrian context, women in the diaspora came together to create their own political party to fight for Syria's future — the Syrian Women's Political Movement.



In Colombia, refugees have been integral members of the Truth Commission, a temporary body created in the country's peace agreement to determine and publicize the truth of what happened during the Colombia's prolonged armed conflict and clarify the human rights violations that occurred during this time.



South Sudan rebel leader Riek Machar (extreme left) and president Salva Kiir (in hat) signing peace agreement (PPU Photo)

## PEACE PROCESSES: AN OVERVIEW

# PEACE PROCESSES: AN OVERVIEW

Peace Processes. That sounds very high-level. Why and how should refugees participate?

## Reasons you can use to demand a seat at the table:

- 1 Peace processes are meant to be inclusive**—in order for them to be successful, they need to be sustainable, representative, and owned by the community. Therefore, all parties need to be represented at the table, including refugees, IDPs, and diaspora communities.
- 2 Nothing about us without us.** For example Chapter 5 of the Revitalized Agreement on conflict resolution in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) established the Commission of Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing, where all displaced communities affected by the conflict must be meaningfully included.
- 3 Including refugees in peace process increases the likelihood of finding a durable solution**, such as local integration, third country transfer, or voluntary repatriation for displaced communities. Refugees are not passive observers of peace efforts—they were forced to leave their country and have the desire and capacity to meaningfully contribute to a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

- 4 Established global frameworks call for refugee participation:** The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) both seek to create livable conditions in refugees' countries of origin so they can return safely and with dignity. The CRRF recommends that States, UN organizations and partners "facilitate the participation of refugees, including women, in peace and reconciliation processes".



Ok. I am now equipped with solid reasons why refugees should be involved. What should I be aiming for when I am involved in peace processes?

**You should keep in mind 3 main objectives:**



**Change the perception of refugee participation.**

Refugees should be meaningfully contributing to achieving peace, not just observing the process.



**Build knowledge on the importance of refugee participation.**

Refugees can contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and achieving durable solutions.



**Secure financial and political support for refugee engagement in peace processes.**



**LESSONS FROM  
THE SOUTH SUDAN  
PEACE PROCESS**

# LESSONS FROM THE SOUTH SUDAN PEACE PROCESS

Ok, now I understand why and how refugees should participate. Do you have any examples of refugees participating in peace processes?

Yes! Example: *The South Sudan Peace Process*

FEBRUARY 2018

A group of 7 refugees participate in a round of talks.

SEPTEMBER 2018

16 refugees address parties and stakeholders during a dialogue in Khartoum, Sudan.

2015

## The South Sudan Peace Process

South Sudan Peace Agreement signed.

2017

South Sudanese Peace Agreement stalled.

DECEMBER OF 2017 – SEPTEMBER OF 2018

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) tries to revive this process through a High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF), with refugee representatives accepted as observers.

MAY 2018

A group of 9 refugees participate in a round of talks.

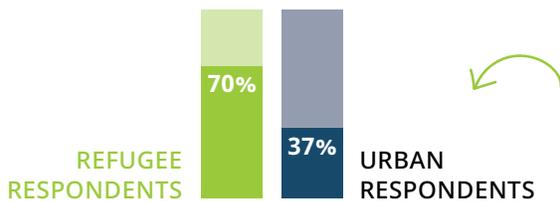
2018

12 SEPTEMBER 2018

Signing of the Revitalized Agreement on Conflict Resolution in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) by the government of South Sudan, opposition groups, and 17 stakeholders (including civil society, women, youth, and faith leaders).

## What skills do refugees need to effectively participate in processes like this High-Level Revitalization Forum?

### Understanding of the peace process and context.



It is important to note that the participation of refugees in the South Sudanese peace process was largely symbolic. According to a recent survey, 61% of South Sudanese refugees said they were not aware of the High-Level Revitalization Forum, and 32% did not know the R-ARCSS was signed.

Many refugees are not informed because they live far from South Sudan, and have limited access to radio, TV, and internet. Their level of awareness contrasts starkly with that of citizens in urban areas: **70% of refugee respondents** reported **feeling uninformed about the process**, compared to only **37% of urban respondents** in South Sudan.

## What efforts can be taken to inform refugees of peace processes, so that they can effectively participate?



### Establish It In The Text Itself.

The R-ARCSS states that parties and stakeholders must ensure adequate dissemination of the peace deal to *“South Sudanese people inside the country, in different cities and refugee camps in neighbouring countries, and in the diaspora, so that the people can understand, support, and own it.”*



### Civil Society Information Campaigns.

Funding and general efforts to inform refugees on this peace process have not been sufficient. So, refugees themselves have worked hard to spread knowledge about the process.



**BEST PRACTICES  
FOR PEACE PROCESS  
ENGAGEMENT**

# BEST PRACTICES FOR PEACE PROCESS ENGAGEMENT

Ok. I understand the importance of participating in peace processes as a refugee. Are there any specific strategies I can use to maximize my impact? **Yes!**

## Tactics:



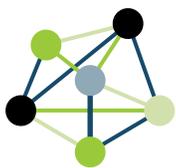
### Prioritize Your Battles.

- Take on fight by fight.
- Identify your priorities: what is most important to you?

#### EXAMPLE

Include women at 30% within all of the different negotiation bodies.

- You can't take on every fight.



### Build Strategic Allies.

- Identify people that will support you, such as Oxfam, UN agencies etc.
- Create a clear political common denominator you can unite around.

→ **GO TO MAP YOUR DIPLOMATIC LANDSCAPE**



### Secure Independent Financing.

- Enables independent activity.



### Create Connections To The Ground.

- Legitimacy rests with connections on the ground.



### Utilize The International Community.

- Support can go beyond funding.



### Lead Your Own Initiatives.

- You need to be creating the substance, creating the messaging, and sitting at the forefront.



When working at the UN level, remember that the UN as an institution cannot do anything on its own. The UN is made up of states who are the decision-makers, and even states, aside from the 5 permanent members, have limited power.

The UN's institutions service the wishes of sovereign states—they are good at managing what the governments want to do.

## Example: Best Practices in Uganda



### Building capacity of local structures, actors, and peace educators.

E.g. through workshops on Peace Building, Mediation, and Conflict Management.



### Create awareness.

What are the current challenges facing refugees? How can the gaps between policy makers and refugees in Uganda be bridged?

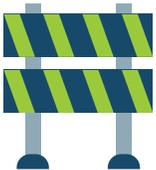
**Platform for refugees and policy makers to discuss freely.** How can information be effectively disseminated across refugee settlements in Uganda? Who provides directions? E.g. Leaders, government officials, etc.



These are excellent tactics and it's useful to see how they were applied in practice. Are there any challenges that I should keep an eye out for? **Yes!**



**Fake news** — misinformation can fracture your movement.



**Barriers to participation created by the host country. This can include:**

- Fear of being targeted or misunderstood by other actors (e.g. host governments).
- Limited access to travel documents for international travel.
- Shrinking civil space.
- Role of host country in your country's peace process, which can conflict with your own goals.



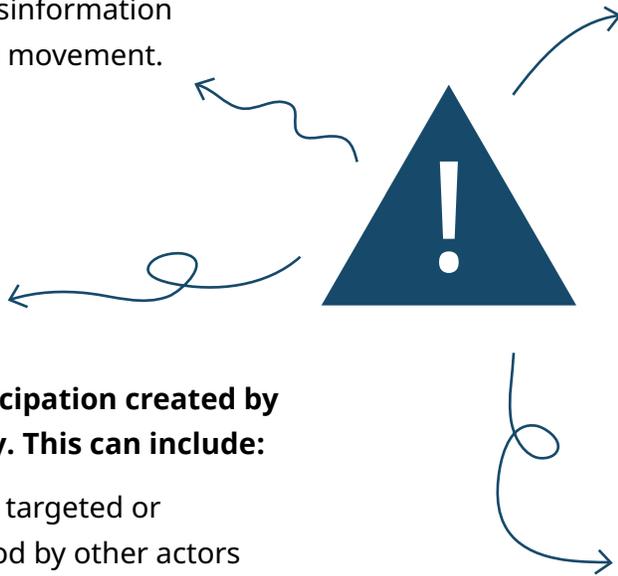
**Politicization/ simplification of issue** can make it difficult to tackle the root causes of the conflict you are trying to resolve.

EXAMPLE

In Uganda, societal issues are too often seen through an ethnic or tribal lens.



**Limited funding/recognition of peace building initiatives.**





# EXERCISE 1: BUILD A PICTURE OF THE LANDSCAPE



Fill out

Use this worksheet to map your diplomatic landscape



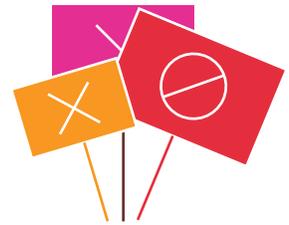
Who is definitely for the idea?

.....  
.....  
.....



Who might be in favor?

.....  
.....  
.....



Who is definitely against?

.....  
.....  
.....



Are there divisions of opinion within a single target entity?

.....  
.....  
.....



Who are your allies that can help persuade?

.....  
.....  
.....



Who is favorable but needs convincing?

.....  
.....  
.....

# EXERCISE 2: BUILD YOUR DIPLOMATIC ACTION PLAN



Fill out

Use this worksheet to develop your diplomatic action plan.

## 1 Idea

.....

.....

.....

## 2 Develop your idea

**Why is it needed?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**What are the risks?**

• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....
• .....	• .....

**How will it work?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

### 3 Work out decisions and who makes them

**What decisions need to be made?**

1 .....  
 2 .....  
 3 .....  
 4 .....

**Where do those decisions sit?**

1	<input type="radio"/> Multilateral level	<input type="radio"/> National level	<input type="radio"/> Local level
2	<input type="radio"/> Multilateral level	<input type="radio"/> National level	<input type="radio"/> Local level
3	<input type="radio"/> Multilateral level	<input type="radio"/> National level	<input type="radio"/> Local level
4	<input type="radio"/> Multilateral level	<input type="radio"/> National level	<input type="radio"/> Local level
	E.g. UN or EU	E.g. individual country	E.g. local legislature or mayor

**Who makes the decisions?**

1 .....  
 2 .....  
 3 .....  
 4 .....

**Who influences those decisions?**

1 .....  
 2 .....  
 3 .....  
 4 .....



Your ability to achieve your effect rests on **clarity**. The clearer your answer to each of these questions, the clearer your goal, and the easier your job will be.

## Refugee Skill Up: Root Causes of Refugee Flows

*Refugee Skill Up: Root Causes of Refugee Flows* is one installment of Refugee Skill Up: a train-the-trainer workshop series developed by Independent Diplomat and the Global Refugee-led Network (GRN). Refugee Skill Up aims to address both the information and capacity gaps RLOs face while simultaneously empowering refugee leaders as expert trainers on these issues. By training refugee leaders as trainers on these subjects, Refugee Skill Up disrupts the traditional model of refugees as recipients of training. It equips RLOs with the knowledge, capacity, and network to realize their full potential as agents of change.

**Learn more about this work and provide your feedback at [www.refugeeskillup.org](http://www.refugeeskillup.org).**



### Acknowledgements

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