Prime Minister leads workshop on an innovative approach to meet refugee needs in Uganda

Kampala, Uganda, 15 June 2017 – The Prime Minister of Uganda, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda has called on the international community to enhance its support to refugees and host communities in Uganda, to enable them to continue to live together in peace and harmony. The Prime Minister also said that Uganda will continue to maintain an open-door policy to give refuge to people fleeing danger in upholding its international obligations.

The Prime Minister spoke at a workshop in Kampala, where key government members, donors, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), other UN agencies and developing partners, international financial institutions, NGOs and the private sector met to discuss the next steps in rolling out the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Uganda. Supported by UNHCR, CRRF is a cutting-edge initiative designed to support the ongoing response to refugees and host communities in a more harmonized and sustainable way. The CRRF was officially launched by the government in March this year.

“To date, Uganda has been pursuing an integrated refugee management model where refugees and host communities live together, sharing health, education and other facilities. But, as the influx of people continues, we need to also focus on the long-term development needs of refugees, give them hope and treat them with respect and dignity,” said Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, Prime Minister of Uganda.

Uganda is now hosting more than 1.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers, more than at any time in the country’s history. Uganda’s current refugee settlement model has been widely praised, but with thousands of refugees fleeing into Uganda every day, the country urgently needs the support of the international community to help protect refugees and host communities, and to ensure they co-exist in safety and dignity.

“The CRRF is a new way of working. UNHCR is supporting the government in a call to action,” said Bornwell Kantande, UNHCR’s Representative in Uganda. “It is crucial that we, along with the government and a broad range of stakeholders, enact a new and more harmonized approach to protect and support refugees from the first day they arrive in Uganda until the day they decide to return home, or move on to a third country.”

The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants and the CRRF aims to ease the pressure on host countries and communities, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand solutions and support conditions in countries of origin for return. Uganda is already responding to calls made by the CRRF through a progressive refugee policy and approach, and by including refugees through its National Development Plan 2.

“Meeting the immediate humanitarian and long-term sustainable needs of these refugees and the host communities is not a responsibility Uganda should carry alone. The CRRF is a platform that will bring all stakeholders together to find common solutions to refugee challenges,” said Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, Prime Minister of Uganda.
At the workshop it was agreed that a CRRF secretariat and steering group will be formed to follow up on commitments and pledges that will be made at a Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees being held in Kampala on June 22 and 23rd.

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