THE REFUGEE CRISIS RESPONSE IN UGANDA
PRELIMINARY LESSONS

Disclaimer: The elements presented in this document are preliminary lessons and reflections following a field mission which took place in November 2017. Further analysis will be conducted and a full case study report will be published in the spring of 2018.

Introduction

In May 2017, Belgium started to fund the ACROPOLIS G4D research group, whose final objective is to publish, by October 2018, a green paper including principles, indicators and major steps to be taken towards building a Comprehensive Approach for Belgium Development Cooperation. As part of the research process, it was decided that two country case studies were to be conducted, one in Uganda on the refugee crisis response focusing on the humanitarian-development nexus, and one in Burkina Faso on local security focusing on the security-development nexus. The preliminary reflections presented here follow the field mission held 11-30 November in Kampala and the Arua district in Uganda and are based on interviews, mostly with initial[1] members of the steering group of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The objective of these interviews was to gather qualitative and quantitative information in regards to the interactions between the different stakeholders involved in the refugee crisis response in Uganda. To that end, the representatives of

member organisations in the steering group (or a delegate) were asked to fill out a survey (see annex 1), providing data for a social network analysis. The first part of this document provides a few conclusions based on the responses received, followed by wider reflections on the current refugee crisis response and potentials and pitfalls of the CRRF as a tool to ameliorate it.

List of annexed documents
1. Survey
2. Members of CRRF interviewed
3. Network visualizations

I. (Preliminary) lessons from the questionnaire results

Predominance of state actors. The analysis of the composition of the CRRF network through a double lens – type of actors (i.e. government, society & market) and level of actors (i.e. local, national and international), see visuals #1 and #2 in annex 3 – suggests that it is mostly centred around state actors (and much less around society and private sector actors) at the national and international levels (and less at the local level).

Information sharing mostly centralized around both the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHRC) and the Refugee Department of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM-RD). The analysis of the interactions between CRRF actors in regards to information sharing suggests that (1) UNHCR and RD-OPM are central –as expected–; (2) the levelling down to the field does not materialize through decentralization but rather through deconcentration via the Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) in the districts, somehow skirting the elected Local Council

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[1] The CRRF being a new framework, the original list of members of its steering group evolves rapidly.

authorities (LC); (3) line ministries largely remain out of the scope of interactions of the major actors of the refugee crisis response, except for the Ministry of the Water and Environment; and (4) likewise, refugees and their representatives are to a great degree uninvolved in the institutional set-up of the refugee crisis response.

A differentiated (and different) influence on the response. Looking at the questionnaire results in regards to the influence of actors on the refugee crisis response and crossing it with the results from the question on the most important actors each one interacts with, hints at a double form of influence. On the one hand a strategic and political influence held by the tandem OPM-UNHCR on the basis of power and mandate, and on the other hand an operational influence held by implementing agencies (predominantly international non-governmental organizations – INGOs) and based on field resources and capacities.

A humanitarian-development nexus both existent and inexistent. Questionnaire results reveal that 50% of the members' activities fall under –according to them– pillar 3 of the CRRF, i.e. resilience and self-reliance, which is largely considered a developmental objective. Nonetheless, a double tension seems embedded within the CRRF, (1) humanitarian actors are central to its structure while development actors (such as line ministries) seem more marginal; and (2) the targeted population appears to differ between humanitarian actors (i.e. refugees) and development actors (i.e. host communities).

II. (Wider) reflections on the refugee crisis response

In-between realities: two sides of the same refugee crisis response coin. Questionnaire and interviews with actors both in Kampala and Arua suggested a two-folded reality of the refugee crisis response in Uganda. On the one hand, there is a strong and meaningful welcoming policy and emergency response to the flow of refugees from South-Sudan, whether it is for humanitarian, historical or security reasons. Likewise, the political will to own the response on the side of the Ugandan government is important, as is the coordination among actors, especially with UNHCR. Finally, guided by the "70% for refugees/30% for host communities" principle pushed by the Ugandan government, the balance between the support to refugees and host communities appears mostly reached. On the other hand, and in the shadow of this A side of reality, a set of underlining tensions compose a B side to this reality.

Centralisation versus coordination. The role and presence of OPM –illustrated by its inscription on most INGO T-shirts– shifts the nature of the executive's role from one of coordinating government structures to one of operating (parallel) government structures through a proliferation of centralized actors by proxies.

Ownership versus control. The other side of the wide and deep appropriation of the refugee crisis response by OPM is an increasing tension over control. Control of the territories and population and the competition it may induce with local elected authorities and officials (the LCs). And control of resources linked to the refugee crisis response and the risk of government patronage / corruption over these resources. The issue of transparency over the refugee data information and the implication of this data in terms of economic and political resources is one example of such tension.

CRRF between national political appropriation and international technical driving. Although the national ownership is clear and important, it is mainly one of political nature while the more technical and operational aspects appear (still) mostly driven by international partners.

CRRF as tool to build trust and a reminder of the humanitarian-development nexus (but) in a context of (funding) competition between actors. The B side of the (potential) coordination of international actors under the CRRF in terms of trust and streamlining of the humanitarian development nexus is the underlining competition of these actors for financial resources in a context of an underfinanced response to the refugee crisis.

Humanitarian-Development nexus or the tension between "bridges" and "transplants". Although the CRRF was built with the nexus in mind, there is still little (common) understanding on how to go "from talk the talk to walk the walk". Two issues appeared as obstacles during the mission: (1) a comprehension of the nexus through the lens of an internal comprehensiveness (i.e. "how can I, as humanitarian actor, do development work?" and vice versa) rather than an external comprehensiveness (i.e. "how can we operationalize the nexus together?"); and (2) the willingness of actors to involve other actors is not necessarily based on the content or their added value but rather on the resources they can bring to the table through this involvement.

Reluctant/constrained partnership versus trusting partnership. Interviews suggested two key elements regarding the constrained-trusting nature of the partnership: (1) a real common vision on a specific element (e.g. resort to cash basket) can be an important catalyst for closer partnerships; (2) there is a certain reluctance among donors to actively and truly engage with the government due to high reputational risk linked to the fear of an exploding scandal over the misuse or corruption of provided funds for the refugee crisis response.

Preliminary conclusions

- **Although the CRRF may induce the adoption of a common language among actors, it does not necessarily induce a common interpretation or appropriation of this language.**
- **Whether it is in the context of the humanitarian-development nexus or the relationship with the government, actors often want the involvement of other actors but not necessarily as they are.**

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ANNEXES

ORGANISATION	
NAME	
FUNCTION	
DATE	

Confidentiality	**Your responses are strictly confidential. This means that your answers will be anonimized.**

QUESTION 1 - PRIORITIES OF ACTIONS

Please indicate below to which pillars of the CRRF your organisation contributes. We ask you to indicate this contribution in percentages: how much % of your activities are linked to each of the 5 pillars. If you do not contribute to a particular pillar your contribution is 0%. The total should be 100%.

Pillar one	Admission and Rights	Provision of rights: access to territory, provision of individual documentation, freedom of movement, and the right to work.	
Pillar two	Emergency Response	Humanitarian assistance: registration, provision of food and non-food items, shelter and water and other community services.	
Pillar three	Resilience and Self-Reliance	Development assistance: livelihood initiatives, enhanced service delivery, skills development and activities to promote peaceful coexistence.	
Pillar four	Expanded Solutions	Third country solutions: resettlement, scholarships, work placements.	
Pillar five	Voluntary Repatriation	Voluntary repatriation of refugees: supporting peace, security and development in the region, supporting returning refugees and host communities in country of origin.	
		TOTAL	**100%**

QUESTION 2 - RELATIONS

2.1. During the last six months, what were the 5 most important organisations you had contact with in your response to the refugee crisis?

--> please write the names of the organisations in the left column.

2.2. During the last six months, on average, how often did you:

a) have contact with these organisations? Contact can be meetings, letters, phone calls, emails?
b) take part in coordination meetings to avoid overlap or increase division of labour?
c) execute joint programmes (joint programme proposal/budget)?

--> please select a number on the scale from 0 to 5.

NAME ORGANISATION		NO	LITLLE A LOT
	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5

2.3. During the last six months, on average, how often did you:

a) have contact with the following organisations? Contact can be meetings, letters, phone calls, emails.
b) take part in meetings with organisations to avoid overlap or increase division of labour?
c) execute joint programmes (joint programme proposal/budget)?

--> please select a number on the scale from 0 to 5.

NAME ORGANISATION		NO	LITLLE A LOT
Refugees Department of Office of Prime Minister	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Office of Prime Minister (other than Refugees Dept.)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Local Government	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Internal Affairs (Security Departments)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Works and Transport	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5

Ministry of Health	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Education and Sports	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Water and Environment	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Refugee representatives	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
The National Planning Authority	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Chief Administrative Officers	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Local Councils (LC5)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
United Nations Resident Coordinator (Uganda)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5

World Food Programme (WFP)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
International NGO's	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
National (Ugandan) NGO's	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Development donors	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Humanitarian donors	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
Private sectors actors	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
International Financial Institutions	a) Contact	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	b) Coordination	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5
	c) Joint Actions	0	1 -------- 2 -------- 3 -------- 4 -------- 5

3.1. To what extent can the following organisations influence the response to the refugee crisis?

--> please select a number on the scale from 0 to 5.

	NOT	NOT MUCH ... A LOT
Refugees Department of Office of Prime Minister	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Office of Prime Minister (other than Refugees Dept.)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Local Government	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Internal Affairs (Security Departments)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Works and Transport	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Health	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Education and Sports	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Water and Environment	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Refugee representatives	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
The National Planning Authority	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Chief Administrative Officers	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Local Councils (LC5)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
United Nations Resident Coordinator (Uganda)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
World Food Programme (WFP)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
International NGO's	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
National (Ugandan) NGO's	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Development donors	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Humanitarian donors	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
Private sector actors	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5
International Financial Institutions	0	1 --------- 2 --------- 3 --------- 4 --------- 5

Members of the steering group of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) interviewed with the questionnaire

Preliminary remarks

- Despite multiple attempts during and after our mission, we have (yet) not been able to receive a positive response from multiple line ministries to our interview / questionnaire requests. While this element is in itself a research result (which we shall look into during the case study analysis), questionnaire results from the following line Ministries are thus missing from the analysis: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and Ministry of Water and Environment.
- Certain steering group members not yet being designated, we have either not been able to identify the active member within the steering group (i.e. Refugee representatives), or have identified actors to get a better sense of representativeness on the basis of the first steering group meetings attendance and/or its Terms of reference (i.e. National NGO forum, Private Sector Foundation Uganda).

List of organisations and institutions who have filled out the questionnaire

Organisation/Institution
Office of Prime Minister
Ministry of Local Government
Ministry of Internal Affairs
Ministry of Education and Sports
Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
National Planning Authority
Local District Governments – Chief Administrative Officer (Arua)
Local Councils (Arua)
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations Resident Coordinator
United Nations Development Programme
World Food Programme
International Non-Governmental Organisation – Danish Refugee Council
National Non-Governmental Organisation – Uganda National NGO Forum
Local Development Partner – Japan
Local Development Partner – Department for International Development (DFID-UK)
Local Development Partner – European Union DG International Cooperation and Development
Humanitarian Donor Group – European Union DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
Private Sector – Private Sector Foundation Uganda
International Financial Institutions – World Bank

Visual #1 – Network composition

Type of
organisation

State
Society
Private Sector
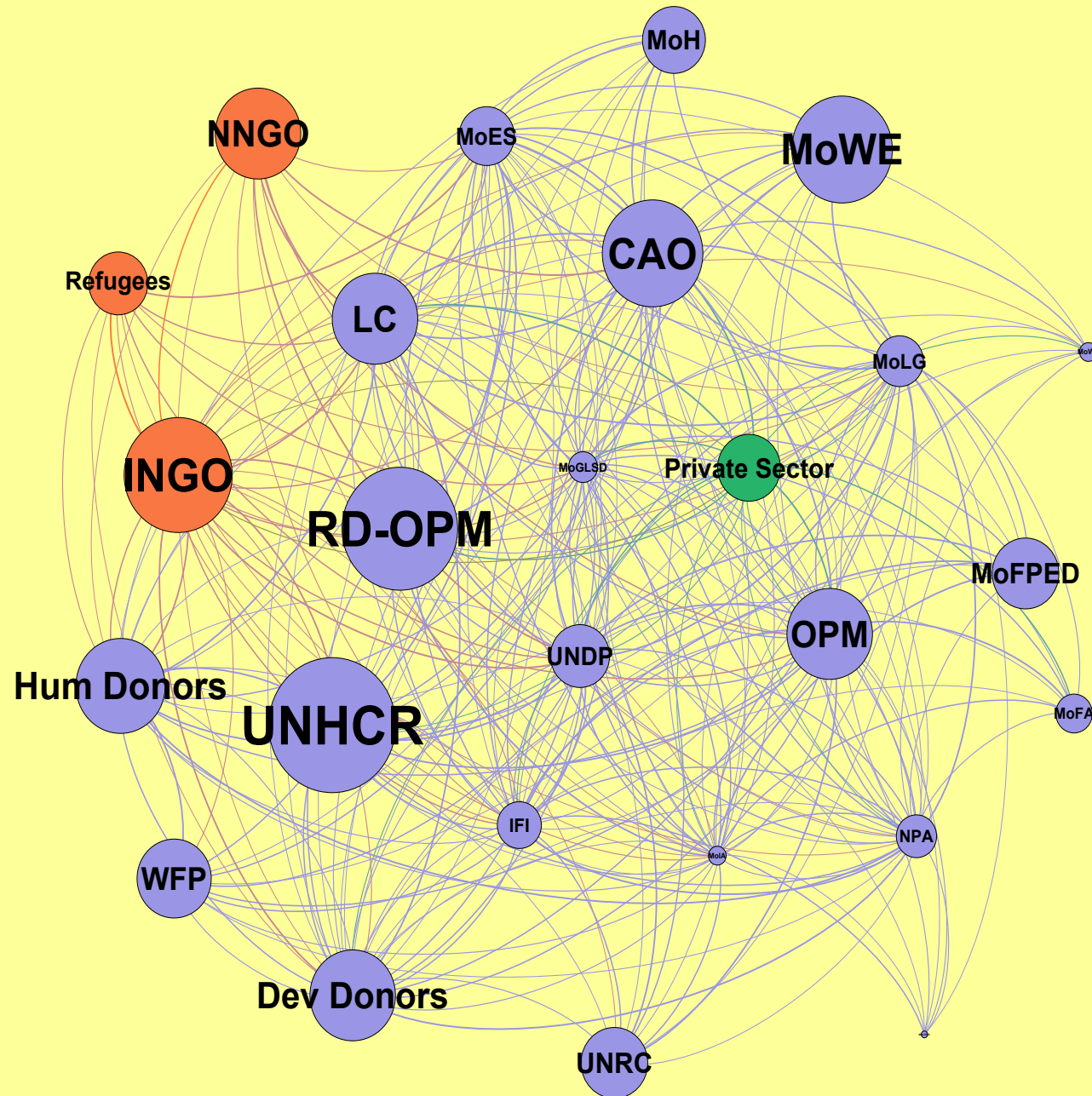
Visual #2 – Network composition

Level

National
International
Local