



Africa Refugee Summit concludes with call for enhanced refugee participation and self-representation

Addis Ababa, Monday 2nd December 2019 – The Global Refugee-Led Network (GRN) in collaboration with Oxfam International), the Independent Diplomat and Open Society Foundations are concluding ‘The Africa Refugee Summit,’ today. Approximately 70 refugee community leaders living in Africa have convened in Addis Ababa for the meeting.

“This summit has provided refugees an opportunity to share their vision for refugee engagement and participation in addressing the needs of refugees, including achieving durable solutions. It has also given a chance for refugees to share key priorities for changes in policies and practice relating to the experiences of refugees in the continent,” said Robert Hakiza, a GRN steering committee member.

The summit comes ahead of the first Global Refugee Forum, which will take place from 16th-18 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

During the summit, participants shared their lived experiences as refugees and proposed solutions for more effective and sustainable global and African refugee policies. They discussed building an African network of refugee-led organisations, coordinated future activities, shared best practices, and planned their contributions for the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva as well as future engagements with the African Union and beyond towards restoration of peace, secure and decent lives and livelihood for the uprooted.

Despite global commitments to refugee participation, there remain major challenges to realizing this at local and national levels, as well as in international policy fora. The voices of refugees and host communities are underrepresented in the debates that shape their lives. At national and international levels, they are routinely sidestepped or left out altogether. As a result, policies, responses, peace processes and projects are developed without benefitting from their expertise and experience. Yet, their personal experience of displacement makes them best placed to offer practical and sustainable solutions.

The summit participants identified the critical importance of opportunities for refugees to come together and work collaboratively on areas of shared concern.

“Oxfam’s support for the GRN and refugee participation is inspired by our commitment to participation as a core principal of our work around the world. The summit has given refugees an opportunity to strengthen their network, consolidate their perspectives, and plan for their contributions in national, African, and global fora,” said Lydia Zigomo, Oxfam’s Regional Director in HECA.

Ends.

To editors:

Media representatives are invited to attend a multi-stakeholder dialogue on 2 December 2019, from 2-5pm at Azzeman hotel. During the dialogue, summit participants will share the key conclusions and recommendations of the summit. Summit participants will be also be available for one-on-one interviews.

Please follow the Global Refugee-Led Network on Twitter @GrnRefugees

About Oxfam in the Horn, East, and Central Africa (HECA) region

For over 50 years, Oxfam has been working in the Horn, East, and Central Africa (HECA) region, focusing its programs in ten countries: Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. We have a strong network of country teams who deliver our work and augmented by regional and global capacity on fundraising, advocacy and learning advisory support.

From humanitarian response to our work on helping crisis-affected people rebuild their lives, we aim to support activities that will achieve change at scale at all levels. Raising the voices of the communities we work with is critical to influencing a sustainable shift in local, national, regional and global policies and practices of both state and private sectors.

Our Vision

A transformed and stable Horn, East and Central Africa region, where people exercise their right to challenge power and have dignity and security to drive transformative change in their lived experiences.

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