



# Scripts from Three Experiments on Aid and Messaging in Refugee Situations

January 2026

This file accompanies [a blog](#) by Thomas Ginn and Travis Baseler. Section 1 presents the sections from each experiment's script that specifically connect the aid and refugees. Section 2 presents the full scripts for the first experiment. Section 3 presents the full script for the third experiment.

# 1 Sections on Aid-Sharing

## 1.1 First Experiment: Uganda ([Baseler et al., 2025b](#))

When refugees come to Uganda, Uganda is a very generous host. Uganda lets refugees work, for example. They can apply for jobs and support themselves if they are hired by a business, and their work contributes to the Ugandan economy. Uganda also gives refugees freedom to move. There are many settlements and camps in Uganda where refugees can live, but if they have other opportunities outside of the settlement, they are free to live where they want to in Uganda. Some countries, even ones close to Uganda like Kenya and Ethiopia, are not as welcoming to refugees. In these countries, refugees cannot work legally. They must support themselves in the black market and hope they are not caught by authorities. In Kenya and Ethiopia, refugees also cannot live outside of the camps. They are not free to move to places where they might find a job or have family. Uganda is much more generous by allowing refugees to work and the freedom of movement to live outside of camps.

Because of this generous policy, many refugees in Uganda can support themselves. Since refugees can work, some of the aid money coming from international donors like Great Britain can be shared with Ugandans. This aid money shared between refugees and Ugandans can help with health, education, small businesses, and poverty. In countries like Kenya where refugees cannot work, more aid money needs to be spent on food and basic needs for refugees, and so it cannot be shared with the host country. In Uganda, since refugees can get jobs and live outside of camps, aid money and programs can be shared with Ugandans like you. Does that make sense? In Uganda, 30% of international aid money for refugees goes to supporting Ugandans.

This aid has been used to support schools and hospitals in areas where there are many refugees, including Kampala. The schools and hospitals are built for both Ugandans and refugees to use. International donors pay for these buildings and services because Uganda is a generous host to many refugees. For instance, Kisenyi Hospital was supported by donors to appreciate Ugandans' generous hosting of refugees. The World Bank also gave Uganda 500 million USD recently to support the Ministry of Education. In other countries, this money only goes to refugees who need the money since they can't work.

My organization, YARID, is another example where aid money is shared between refugees and Ugandans. YARID was founded by refugees from the Congo with the goal of helping people in Kampala — refugees from any country and Ugandans alike. YARID runs training programs on English, computer literacy, and small business practices for people in need. It is based in Kampala and has thousands of people since its founding.

The program I'm visiting you about today is run by YARID and is part of the aid-sharing

between refugees and Ugandans.

## 1.2 Second Experiment: Kenya (Baseler et al., 2025b)

*Delivered by Video*

Hi, my name is JeanPaul. I work for RELON Kenya, and today we're testing a pilot program. Our organization works in areas that host refugees. Refugees are people who do not feel safe in their home countries. Many have had family members killed by violent groups, and they were often forced to abandon their belongings, their land, and sometimes their family.

Kenya hosts many refugees. These refugees receive aid programs from other countries like the United States and Great Britain. This aid is important for refugees, but we also want Kenyans to benefit from this assistance and from hosting refugees in Kenya. Therefore, you have been selected to receive a one-time grant of 1,000 KSh as part of our pilot program today. Again, this money is coming to you because Kenya hosts many refugees, and we want Kenyans like you to benefit too.

Right now, most of the aid money is given to refugees because it is hard for them to find work. In Kenya, most refugees cannot move freely and must stay in camps in border counties like Turkana and Garissa. This means it is difficult for them to find jobs, as there are few economic opportunities in the camps.

Refugees could better support themselves in Kenya if they could find work and move to places where there are more jobs available. Then they would need less assistance from other countries like the United States, so even more aid money could be shared with Kenyans like you. If refugees could find good jobs and have the freedom to live where they want to in Kenya, more international donations could support Kenyan schools, hospitals, small businesses, and farmers. In Uganda, for example, refugees can work and live where they want to, and this means that international donors can support schools, hospitals, and businesses that benefit Ugandans.

My organization, RELON Kenya, is another example where aid money is shared between refugees and Kenyans. RELON Kenya is a network of organizations that are founded by refugees. Our goal is to help people in Kenya – refugees and Kenyans alike. Our organizations run programs like legal assistance, education, and business support and have helped thousands of people, both refugees and Kenyans.

Thank you for your time today and for hosting refugees in Kenya.

### 1.3 Third Experiment: Uganda (Baseler et al., 2025a)

*Delivered by Video*

First, I would like to tell you a bit about our organization’s mission and why we started this program. Our organization, the International Rescue Committee, was founded by Albert Einstein in 1933 to help people affected by crises. The IRC runs health, education, and small business programs in 40 countries around the world. Our programs serve refugees, internally displaced persons (“IDPs”), and the citizens in communities where refugees and IDPs live.

The IRC started the Re:Build program we’re talking about today because refugees live here in Kampala, and we want both refugees and Ugandans who live in Kampala to benefit. Refugees and Ugandans are participating in this program.

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The IRC’s mission is to support refugees and also the communities that host them. Refugees are people who do not feel safe in their home countries. They come to Uganda from Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, and other countries. They or their families have often been targeted by violent groups, and they were often forced to abandon their belongings, their land, and sometimes their family to find a safer place to live.

Our programs work in places that host refugees. We think it’s important to support and host refugees because we want everyone in our community, including refugees, our families, our friends, and our neighbors to be treated with compassion and not feel excluded or suffer discrimination.

The IRC started the Re:Build program because refugees live here in Kampala, and we want both refugees and Ugandans who live in Kampala to benefit. Refugees and Ugandans are participating in this program, both as mentees and as mentors.

Overall, this project is part of the international donations that are shared between refugees and hosts in Uganda. In Uganda, more than 30% of foreign donations for refugees go to supporting Ugandans. In addition to small businesses, these donations are used to support schools and hospitals in areas where there are many refugees, including Kampala. The schools and hospitals are built for both Ugandans and refugees to use. International donors support these buildings and services because Uganda is a generous host to many refugees. Refugees are allowed to live and work in Kampala, and more donations can go to Ugandans because refugees can earn an income.

Our goal in this project is to help both refugees and Ugandans in Kampala with their businesses, and we are happy that you are part of the project.

That is what we hope to achieve together at ReBuild.

## 2 Full Script for First Experiment: Baseler et al. (2025b)

### 2.1 Information Only Script—Uganda

**Introduction:** I'd like to tell you a little bit about our organization's mission. If you have any questions, please stop me, and I am happy to discuss. Our program works in areas that host refugees. Refugees are people who do not feel safe in their home countries. They or their families have often been targeted by violent groups, and they are looking for a place where they can feel safe. Refugees come to Uganda from the Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, and other countries, and the reason is that they believe they are safer in Uganda than the country where they were born. Many have had family members killed by violent groups, and they were often forced to abandon their belongings, their land, and sometimes their family.

#### **Empathetic Listening (Based on Kalla and Broockman (2020) Model):**

*Step 1: Uncover Honest Opinion.* What do you think of refugees in Kampala? What is on either side of the issue for you? What are some reasons that you would think of them favorably? How about unfavorably?

*Step 2: Connect Around Experiences with Refugees.* Have you had any experiences with refugees? How did that feel? Do you know any refugees?

<b>If No</b> - What kind of role do you see refugees playing in your community?	<b>If Yes</b> - Who are you closest to? - How are they doing? - What is their story? - What do you think that was like for them? - Tell me more?
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#### **\*\*Share personal refugee story \*\*\***

I am here working with YARID today because I...

*Step 3: Connect Around Compassion Experiences.* I think having these conversations is important because it gives us a chance to think about how we want to treat everyone in our community, including refugees, because we've all faced tough times and needed others...

<p><b>Your Compassion Story</b> I remember when ...</p>	<p><b>Business Owners' Compassion Story</b> Was there a time when someone showed you compassion and you really needed it? Maybe a friend or parent? What was the situation? How old were you? How did that feel? Why?</p>
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*Step 4: Address Concerns.* Thank you so much for having this conversation with me... Earlier you mentioned (concern) as a concern? What are your fears? What is on your mind now? What are you picturing might happen? Do you have a personal connection to that concern?

*Step 5: Make Your Case.* I think it's important to support refugees and host refugees because I want everyone in our community, including refugees, our families, as well as our friends and neighbours to be treated with compassion and not feel excluded or suffer discrimination.

**Information About Hosting and Aid-Sharing:** When refugees come to Uganda, Uganda is a very generous host. Uganda lets refugees work, for example. They can apply for jobs and support themselves if they are hired by a business, and their work contributes to the Ugandan economy. Uganda also gives refugees freedom to move. There are many settlements and camps in Uganda where refugees can live, but if they have other opportunities outside of the settlement, they are free to live where they want to in Uganda. Some countries, even ones close to Uganda like Kenya and Ethiopia, are not as welcoming to refugees. In these countries, refugees cannot work legally. They must support themselves in the black market and hope they are not caught by authorities. In Kenya and Ethiopia, refugees also cannot live outside of the camps. They are not free to move to places where they might find a job or have family. Uganda is much more generous by allowing refugees to work and the freedom of movement to live outside of camps.

Because of this generous policy, many refugees in Uganda can support themselves. Since refugees can work, some of the aid money coming from international donors like Great Britain can be shared with Ugandans. This aid money shared between refugees and Ugandans can help with health, education, small businesses, and poverty. In countries like Kenya where refugees cannot work, more aid money needs to be spent on food and basic needs for refugees, and so it cannot be shared with the host country. In Uganda, since refugees can get jobs and live outside of camps, aid money and programs can be shared with Ugandans like you. Does that make sense? In Uganda, 30% of international aid money for refugees goes to supporting Ugandans.

This aid has been used to support schools and hospitals in areas where there are many

refugees, including Kampala. The schools and hospitals are built for both Ugandans and refugees to use. International donors pay for these buildings and services because Uganda is a generous host to many refugees. For instance, Kisenyi Hospital was supported by donors to appreciate Ugandans' generous hosting of refugees. The World Bank also gave Uganda 500 million USD recently to support the Ministry of Education. In other countries, this money only goes to refugees who need the money since they can't work.

My organization, YARID, is another example where aid money is shared between refugees and Ugandans. YARID was founded by refugees from the Congo with the goal of helping people in Kampala — refugees from any country and Ugandans alike. YARID runs training programs on English, computer literacy, and small business practices for people in need. It is based in Kampala and has thousands of people since its founding.

## **2.2 Information + Labeled Grant Script—Uganda**

**Introduction:** I'm here to offer an opportunity to participate in a pilot program that offers grants to small businesses in Kampala. As part of our program I'd like to tell you a little bit about our organization's mission and why we are starting this small business grant program in areas of Kampala that host refugees. If you have any questions, please stop me, and I am happy to discuss. Our program works in areas that host refugees. Refugees are people who do not feel safe in their home countries. They or their families have often been targeted by violent groups, and they are looking for a place where they can feel safe. Refugees come to Uganda from the Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, and other countries, and the reason is that they believe they are safer in Uganda than the country where they were born. Many have had family members killed by violent groups, and they were often forced to abandon their belongings, their land, and sometimes their family.

**[IDENTICAL EMPATHETIC LISTENING ACTIVITY HERE]**

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The program I'm visiting you about today is run by YARID and is part of the aid-sharing between refugees and Ugandans.

**Description of the Grant:** As part of this project you will be placed in a program that gives cash grants to micro-entrepreneurs. The grant is worth 500,000 UGX total. At least 300,000 UGX must be used for purchasing equipment for your business. This money can be used to purchase anything related to your business, such as machinery or inventory. The 300,000 UGX cannot be used for personal expenses such as rent, medical fees, or school fees. Whatever money remains from the 500,000 UGX will be given to you as cash. This grant is intended for business use, but we understand if there is an urgent need in your household. Therefore there are no rules for this remaining cash – you can spend it on anything you want.

You will have some time to think about what you want to buy, and we will set up an appointment for a later date. I will return to visit your business on that date and accompany you to make the purchase. Remember, at least 300,000 out of the 500,000 UGX must be spent on purchases for your business, which we will make together at a supplier. This is to ensure that enough money is used on capital or inventory. After you've made your purchases of at least 300,000, we will give you whatever money remains from the 500,000 as cash. So, for example, if you spend 300,000 on inventory for your business, we will give you 200,000 in cash. If you spend 200,000 on inventory and 200,000 on tools, we will give you 100,000 in cash. The total will always be 500,000 and you must spend at least 300,000 on your business. Do you have any questions right now about the program?

You will not need to do anything for us. We have already determined that you are eligible for the grant. You will never have to pay back the grant to us or to anyone else. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the program at any time. Do you agree to participate?

The grant program is completely separate from your opinion about refugees. Today, we will exchange contact information, but we will not be doing any transactions today. You will have up to 1-2 weeks to decide what you want to buy and set up an appointment. Make sure to take enough time to consider what you want, shop around, and compare prices. You can also use your some of your own money if you'd like to buy something that costs more than 500,000 UGX.

### **2.3 Grant Only Script—Uganda**

I'm here to offer an opportunity to participate in a pilot program that offers grants to small businesses in Kampala.

**Description of the Grant:** As part of this project you will be placed in a program that gives cash grants to micro-entrepreneurs. The grant is worth 500,000 UGX total. At least 300,000 UGX must be used for purchasing equipment for your business. This money can be used to purchase anything related to your business, such as machinery or inventory. The 300,000 UGX cannot be used for personal expenses such as rent, medical fees, or school fees. Whatever money remains from the 500,000 UGX will be given to you as cash. This grant is intended for business use, but we understand if there is an urgent need in your household. Therefore there are no rules for this remaining cash – you can spend it on anything you want.

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spent on purchases for your business, which we will make together at a supplier. This is to ensure that enough money is used on capital or inventory. After you've made your purchases of at least 300,000, we will give you whatever money remains from the 500,000 as cash. So, for example, if you spend 300,000 on inventory for your business, we will give you 200,000 in cash. If you spend 200,000 on inventory and 200,000 on tools, we will give you 100,000 in cash. The total will always be 500,000 and you must spend at least 300,000 on your business. Do you have any questions right now about the program?

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Today, we will exchange contact information, but we will not be doing any transactions today. You will have up to 1-2 weeks to decide what you want to buy and set up an appointment. Make sure to take enough time to consider what you want, shop around, and compare prices. You can also use your some of your own money if you'd like to buy something that costs more than 500,000 UGX.

### **3 Full Script for Third Experiment: [Baseler et al. \(2025a\)](#)**

*Delivered by Video*

Hello and welcome to the Re:Build program, run by the International Rescue Committee (or "IRC"). My name is *NAME*, and I'll be narrating this introduction today.

Re:Build stands for "Refugees in East Africa: Boosting Urban Innovations for Livelihoods Development." The IRC is leading this project to improve economic conditions for both refugees and Ugandans in Kampala. Our service is designed to support you with your business. Congratulations on being selected! I'm here to describe the Re:Build microenterprise program: what you can expect from us, what we ask from you, and what we ultimately hope to achieve together.

First, I would like to tell you a bit about our organization's mission and why we started this program. Our organization, the International Rescue Committee, was founded by Albert Einstein in 1933 to help people affected by crises. The IRC runs health, education, and small business programs in 40 countries around the world. Our programs serve refugees, internally displaced persons ("IDPs"), and the citizens in communities where refugees and IDPs live.

The IRC started the Re:Build program we're talking about today because refugees live here in Kampala, and we want both refugees and Ugandans who live in Kampala to benefit. Refugees and Ugandans are participating in this program.

Now let's talk about the Re:Build microenterprise program itself: what you can expect

from us, what we ask from you, and what we ultimately hope to achieve together.

I'm going to provide a lot of information today, because ReBuild is a big, exciting program! But you don't need to worry about remembering all of it. Everything I say in this video is described in your participant handbooks. We will also have time to talk more and answer your questions about the program after this video. This video will be approximately 15 minutes long, so please make sure to write down any questions you have so you don't forget. Can everyone find the section for notes in their handbook?

First, I will talk about what you can expect from us. We started this microenterprise program because we know that capital to start and grow a business can be hard to obtain. Therefore, the first part of programming will be a business grant. Everyone will receive their grants after about six weeks via mobile money.

You will receive a business grant of 2,000,000 UGX to help your business get started or expand. We encourage you to use this grant for your business. As part of this research, we are very interested to learn how you use the grant cash – therefore we request that you be truthful as you report back how you used the cash. How you use the cash will not affect your inclusion in this program or your eligibility for future programs.

The reason the grant is coming after six weeks is so that you have time to make a plan on how to spend the grants. Again, we encourage you to invest this grant in your business so that you can continue benefiting from this money for a long time in the future! That is the business grant part of the ReBuild program.

The second part of ReBuild is money for transportation. You will receive 15,000 UGX. These will also come via mobile money. This money should cover your transportation costs for this meeting and a meeting in six months to receive a certificate. You will need to save the transport money so you can join us for the final meeting.

The third part of ReBuild offers a chance to earn money in addition to the business grants and transport! This part is called the lottery. You will have a chance to win cash prizes when your business is open. When your business is open, you will be entered into the lottery.

Here's how it works. First, please let us know when your business is open. Then, our IRC staff will come visit your location and ask when you normally work. This step is very important so that we can come back and visit your business later.

The first lottery is in 8 weeks. All of the businesses that are open after 8 weeks will be entered into the lottery. The lottery is random and done by a computer at the IRC. There will be many lottery winners, but not everyone who enters the lottery will be selected by the computer.

Let's say your business is picked by the computer. The IRC staff will make a surprise

visit to see if your business is open and serving customers. This is called the “spot-check”. Each winner must pass the spot-check before they win the cash prize. If they do not pass the spot-check, the computer will draw a different winner. Therefore, it does not help you to say your business is open when it is not.

If you are working hard at your business, you do not need to worry about the spot-check. For example, if we come for the spot-check when you are buying supplies, that is ok – we will try again another time. We just want to make sure that the winners of the lottery have businesses that are open and serving customers.

If the lottery winners pass the spot-check, they get a cash prize. Remember, however, that the winners are selected randomly by a computer. You may have an open business and not be selected. Please do not get upset if you are not selected. Each cash prize is 75,000 UGX.

Now, we want to encourage you to stay open for a long time, so we will repeat this lottery two more times. Each lottery will work the same way. The first round of the lottery will be in 8 weeks, which is about two months from now. The second round of the lottery will be in 16 weeks, and the third lottery will be in 24 weeks. That is at the end of the ReBuild microenterprise program.

That is the lottery part of the ReBuild program. It’s ok if you have questions. We will do a demonstration of the lottery after the video is over, and please ask your questions at that time.

To review, these are the three parts you can expect from us:

1. business grants
2. money for transportation
3. the chance to earn more money through a lottery

That is what you can expect from the ReBuild program. At the end of the six months, we will have a graduation ceremony with a certificate for everyone who completes the ReBuild microenterprise program.

Now, I will discuss what we ask from you. The project has two goals: to support you and other clients like you and to research what programs will work best for others in the future. Since this is a research project, other clients like you may get a slightly different program. All programs are designed to support you as much as possible within our budget, and your specific program was randomly assigned by a computer.

Since it is a research project, we are also partnering with a firm called Consortium for Research in Uganda (or “CRU”) that specializes in research and surveys. They have already

contacted you during this project and will continue to follow-up with you. You are not required to complete these surveys – they are entirely voluntary – but we would appreciate your participation so we can learn how to make these programs better for others in the future. There will be surveys in 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, and 18 months, and CRU will provide a small bonus of 10,000 UGX for participating in each survey.

Please know that your answers to CRU will not affect support from the IRC. The IRC will not even know the answers you give to CRU. The IRC and CRU are independent from each other. We want you to give CRU your most honest and true answers so the program can be improved in the future.

We will also have an automated system to call you occasionally to ask about the program and how your business is doing. Again, these are not required, but we would appreciate your participation. These will help us improve the ReBuild program for you and for others in the future. There will be a small bonus for each of these calls, and we will demonstrate the system during today's event.

If your contact information changes, please let us know! If you get a new phone, for instance, we hope you will let us know at 0740 312 273. This number is also printed in your handbook.

Remember: this program is completely free for you. You will not owe anything to IRC, now or in the future. Your participation is always voluntary, and you can choose to withdraw from the program at any time.

To review, here are the two things we ask from you as part of the ReBuild program:

1. participation in surveys
2. communicate if your contacts change

Lastly, I will say what we ultimately hope to achieve together. The IRC's mission is to support refugees and also the communities that host them. Refugees are people who do not feel safe in their home countries. They come to Uganda from Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, and other countries. They or their families have often been targeted by violent groups, and they were often forced to abandon their belongings, their land, and sometimes their family to find a safer place to live.

Our programs work in places that host refugees. We think it's important to support and host refugees because we want everyone in our community, including refugees, our families, our friends, and our neighbors to be treated with compassion and not feel excluded or suffer discrimination.

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Overall, this project is part of the international donations that are shared between refugees and hosts in Uganda. In Uganda, more than 30% of foreign donations for refugees go to supporting Ugandans. In addition to small businesses, these donations are used to support schools and hospitals in areas where there are many refugees, including Kampala. The schools and hospitals are built for both Ugandans and refugees to use. International donors support these buildings and services because Uganda is a generous host to many refugees. Refugees are allowed to live and work in Kampala, and more donations can go to Ugandans because refugees can earn an income.

Our goal in this project is to help both refugees and Ugandans in Kampala with their businesses, and we are happy that you are part of the project. That is what we hope to achieve together at ReBuild.

Now let me summarize and provide the timeline for the next steps. This is also printed in your handbook.

- Today: launch meeting
- Starting next week: inform the IRC when your business is open
- Week 6: Business grant
- Week 8: First lottery
- Week 9: Spot checks of winners
- Week 12: Survey by CRU
- Week 16: Second lottery
- Week 17: Spot check of winners
- Week 24: Third lottery
- Week 25: Spot check of winners
- Week 26: Graduation: certificates for all
- Months 6, 9, 12, and 18: surveys by CRU

Thank you so much for your attention today. Congratulations for being selected and welcome to the program! Now, one of our staff members will be with you shortly to discuss this project and answer any questions you may have. We look forward to working with you! Welcome to Re:Build!

## References

- Baseler, Travis, Thomas Ginn, Ibrahim Kasirye, Belinda Muya, and Andrew Zeitlin, “Cash and Small Business Groups for Ugandans and Refugees,” 2025. Center for Global Development Working Paper 716.
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