



Energising Development (EnDev) - Uganda

Piloting Energy Access in Refugee Settlements and Host Communities to Create Evidence for Market-Based Approaches

Country	Uganda
Pilot Activity	Energy Access in Refugee Settlements
Implementation	December 2017 – June 2018
Technology	Stoves, Solar
Financing	DFID
Objective	Piloting an integrated, innovative approach to create sustainable solutions for improving access to energy for refugees and host communities.

Energy in the Refugee Context in Uganda” is funded by DFID and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF). The aim is to pilot an integrated and innovative approach to natural resource management by creating sustainable solutions to improve access to energy, water and other ecosystem goods and services for refugees and host communities. Imvepi and Rhino Camp settlements located in Arua District/West Nile sub-region have been selected as implementation areas.

Background

With more than 1.2 million refugees, mostly from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Somalia and South Sudan, Uganda is one of the top-most refugee hosting countries worldwide. Due to the ongoing crisis in South Sudan, many further refugees currently cross the border to Uganda.

An assessment conducted by UNHCR in August 2015 revealed that 97 percent of refugees use firewood for cooking and that they have to walk 4-10 km on average to access firewood. The situation has been exacerbated by the use of inefficient three stone fires by 65 percent of refugee households.

Wood consumption in and around settlements surpasses natural replenishment and has consequently led to deforestation and forest degradation. It is furthermore contributing to conflicts over firewood between refugees and the host communities.

For domestic lighting, a majority of households uses firewood, dry cell batteries and phone torches, while so far only 5 percent use solar products.

The Pilot Project

The pilot project “Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and

Due to its vast experience in creating sustainable access to energy – EnDev Uganda is in charge of the implementation of the energy component of the project. In order to set a robust baseline, EnDev Uganda has implemented three assessments, interviewing 400 refugee and host community households, 30 energy business owners and 8 focus groups. First results from the assessments in the Rhino Camp and Imvepi settlements reveal that:

- the majority of households (85%) uses firewood for cooking and heating,
- 76% of households use a three stone fire for cooking,
- improved cook stoves only account for only 14%,
- the majority of cook stoves are distributed for free by donor agencies,
- households on average use 10-12 kg of firewood/day,
- charcoal is mainly used during the rainy season and in trading centers,
- use of kerosene, LPG and briquettes could not be recorded,
- solar lighting is mainly distributed to Persons with Special Needs (PSN) and Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVI),

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- 70% of households use improvised techniques of lighting using e.g. a set of dry-cell batteries.

Project Rationale

The reasons for addressing fuel needs are apparent. A lack of fuel results in undercooking and skipping meals, while some households sell food rations in order to buy firewood, thus affecting their nutritional status. Women and girls, who mostly collect firewood, are exposed to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

In addition, cooking is done in poorly ventilated kitchens which causes indoor air pollution and predisposes people to health conditions such as respiratory infections.

Deforestation has contributed towards soil exhaustion, flooding, siltation and eutrophication of surrounding water bodies which impacts upon access to water, agricultural productivity and economic opportunities.

The topic *access to clean, safe and sustainable energy* is still widely neglected in the national and international community. However, with the ongoing refugee crisis and the shift from a purely humanitarian to an integrated development perspective, there is a need to address the energy situation in a more effective and sustainable way.



A kitchen in the Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement

Therefore, DFID commissioned GIZ and ICRAF to implement a pilot project in the Rhino Camp and Imvepi Refugee Settlements and the host communities to jointly implement activities in the energy-water-agroforestry nexus.

EnDev Uganda is responsible for all activities related to energy access. The pilot project seeks to address the question **whether and to what extent market-based approaches can be successfully implemented in the refugee context to facilitate sustainable access to modern energy services.**

Approach

The baseline assessments in the Rhino Camp and Imvepi settlements and among the host communities suggest some promising interventions which are currently being designed:

- **Awareness Raising Activities** will point out the benefits of improved cook stoves e.g. saving time and resources, improve health conditions and household income. It is expected that this will trigger demand for good quality improved cook stoves. Through cooking demonstrations, households will become acquainted with the technology and learn about the choices they have. Furthermore, awareness activities explain possible future consumers the benefits and use of solar products for lighting, phone charging and income generating activities.
- **Training of Local Stove Artisans:** This intervention aims at equipping refugees and members of the host communities with a life skill for income generation. It will also provide the potential customers with an affordable stove model, which has been tested, is standardized and has an average life span of 2.5 years.
- **Support of Local Vendors of Energy Products:** Local energy markets in and around refugee settlements have potential, considering the high concentration of people and their demands. Well targeted support for businesses will improve access to energy products and raise income for local businesses. However, free handouts of energy products hamper the willingness to pay, posing a challenge to the sector.
- Endev will assist in **Setting up Energy Kiosks** which will be established in cooperation with a partner responsible for the design, operation and maintenance. They will be equipped with high quality cook stoves and

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PicoPV products and also offer other related services like phone and lantern charging.

EnDev Uganda closely coordinates with the GIZ Water Program ENWASS and ICRAF, all three under the umbrella of the DFID funded pilot, in order to leverage synergies between the interlinked sectors of energy, water and agro-forestry.

The pilot will thoroughly analyse the lessons learnt and develop recommendations for further up-scaling.



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