

Uganda: 2020 Mid Year Report SOUTH SUDAN REGIONAL RRP

January - June 2020



881,282

SOUTH SUDANESE
REFUGEES HOSTED IN
UGANDA (30 JUNE 2020)

US\$ 512 M

REQUIRED IN UGANDA IN
2020

16%

FUNDING RECEIVED
(SEPT 2020)

64

RRP PARTNERS
REQUESTING FUNDING IN
UGANDA IN 2020

SITUATION OVERVIEW

In June, the Office of the Prime Minister - Department of Refugees (OPM) and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency jointly launched the revision and extension of the Uganda Refugee Response Plan (RRP) through to 2021 as to factor in the requirements for the COVID-19 response and to better align existing Government plans for refugee and host communities in refugee-hosting districts (eg. health, water and environment), moving towards sustainable service provision. The revised plan also includes sector strategies and budgets to address the needs of refugees from South Sudan.

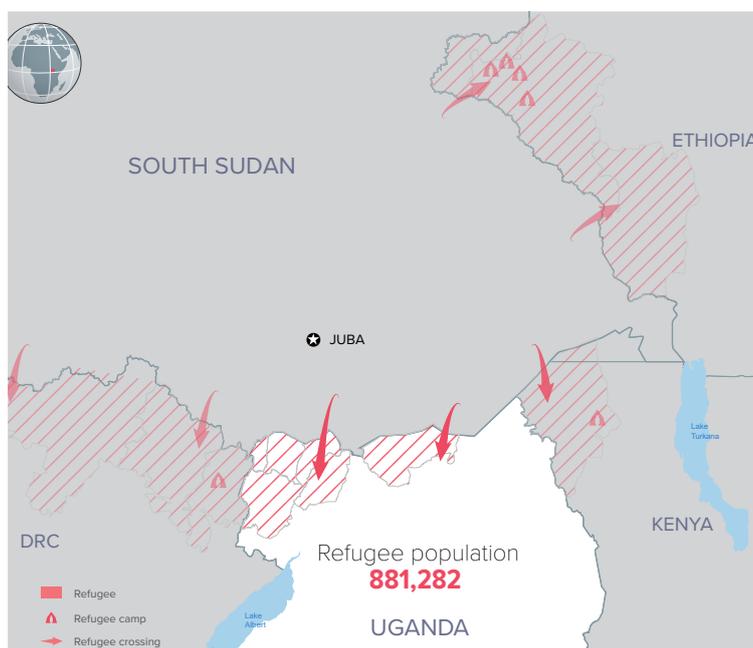
The RRP was still under revision as of 30 June, with partners adjusting their financial requirements and targets to cater for 905,138 South Sudanese refugees by the end of 2020 and 937,766 by the end of 2021.

With ongoing instability in the neighbouring countries, the refugee population in Uganda continued to grow with 1,425,040 individuals biometrically registered as refugees and asylum-seekers as of 30 June 2020. Among them were 881,282 refugees from South Sudan. The Government of Uganda continued to grant South Sudanese refugee status on a prima facie basis. In line with the 2006 Refugee Act, refugees enjoy freedom of movement, the right to work and establish businesses, the right to documentation and equal access to national services.

The vast majority of South Sudanese refugees live in settlements in northern Uganda, mainly in the districts of Yumbe (26 per cent), Adjumani (24 per cent), Arua (21 per cent), Obongi (14 per cent), Kiryandongo (8 per cent), and Lamwo (6 per cent), with smaller numbers in Kikuube district (0.4 per cent), and urban Kampala (0.5 per cent). More than 62 per cent are children.

Before the closure of the borders in March due to COVID-19, a total of 6,407 new refugee arrivals from South Sudan sought safety in Uganda, citing fears of sexual and physical violence, political uncertainty and insecurity as reasons for fleeing their country of origin. On 19 March, the Government of Uganda declared COVID-19 a national emergency and established several measures to contain the pandemic, including closure of borders, schools, and the airport, movement restrictions and limitation of public and social gatherings.

The COVID-19 crisis presented an extraordinary challenge for the protection of refugees, following the temporary suspension of admission and registration of new asylum-seekers. Refugees are amongst the most vulnerable population groups in Uganda, with limited capacities and opportunities to cope with the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although all refugees are affected, the pandemic disproportionately impacted women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, medically at risk and other groups with specific protection needs.



The movement restrictions limited availability of essential care and support to refugees, as well as disruption of existing learning systems, social networks and support mechanisms.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, the response was adapted to ensure that critical services continued to be provided. For all sectors, business continuity plans were developed and RRP partners engaged both in the response, coordination and the provision of adapted services in line with Ministry of Health guidelines and in cooperation with District Local Governments (DLGs) and COVID-19 Task Forces.

With only 31 per cent of funding received for the South Sudan situation in the first half of 2020, RRP partners continued to face enormous challenges in stabilizing existing programmes and often meeting the minimum standards of service provision, let alone investing in long-term and more sustainable interventions. Notably, severe underfunding compromised the quality of child protection and education, and the capacity to fully provide mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).



Protection

6,407 new South Sudanese refugee arrivals granted access to the territory

17,370 South Sudanese children received comprehensive case management services

29,141 South Sudanese received psychosocial or psychological services

South Sudanese asylum-seekers continued to be granted refugee status on a prima facie basis. Protection monitoring along the South Sudan-Uganda borders ensured that 6,407 new refugee arrivals were provided with reception assistance and transferred to settlements by the end of March, when the borders were closed to contain COVID-19 and admission of new asylum-seekers suspended.

With over 53,000 refugee children at risk, including unaccompanied or separated children identified in Uganda, child protection is a critical priority in the Uganda response ensuring the safety, security, protection and development of children. Most prevalent risks identified since January include increased separation of children



656

South Sudanese refugees tested for COVID-19 by 30 June 2020



48

South Sudanese refugees tested positive for COVID-19, with 0 deaths reported



81%

of South Sudanese refugees and targeted host communities reached with COVID-19 related messaging



73

health centres supported or established for COVID-19 response, as well as **26 isolation centres & 16 quarantine centres**



27%

of health staff participated in COVID-19 related trainings



9,500

additional handwashing facilities established



112,765

refugee students (various nationalities) reached with remote learning (e.g. radio lessons, study packs etc.)



161

South Sudanese refugee households received cash/voucher support as part of the COVID-19 response

from caregivers and families, requiring alternative care, physical, emotional and sexual violence against children, child neglect and abandonment, as well as child marriage and child labour. Underlying root causes also relate to traditional norms and socio-economic constraints exacerbating existing child rights violations.

In the first half of 2020, 20,617 children from South Sudan were identified and registered for case management services. Comprehensive case management services were provided to 17,370 children from South Sudan who experienced or were at risk of violence, neglect, abuse or family separation. One major achievement in the first half of 2020 was the roll-out of a harmonized Child Protection case management system, which will improve data quality of case management services as well as the analysis of child protection trends. Stretched resources and the COVID-19 situation has impacted the sector's ability to provide community-based child protection activities which benefitted 39,856 children.

RRP partners provided psychosocial or psychological services to 29,141 South Sudanese refugees in the first six months of 2020. RRP partners adapted the response through different approaches after the enforcement of movement restriction, including by setting up a multi-partner hotline for tele-psychosocial and psychological services. Through the hotline, 1,300 cases were provided with psychosocial counseling.

An analysis of attempted and completed suicides in the refugee response from January to June 2020 showed a country-wide increase by 73 per cent in the second quarter of 2020 compared to January-March 2020. In settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees, the number of attempted and completed suicides increased from 55 in January-March to 94 in April-June. The most affected settlement hosting South Sudanese refugees is Bidibidi in Yumbe district, with 6 attempted and 2 completed suicides in January-March and 32 attempted and 2 completed suicides in April-June. Overall, the majority of attempted suicides involved females aged 15-24 years, while the majority of completed suicides concerned males aged 35-49. The analysis also shows a significant link between domestic violence and cases of suicide amongst women, with other major trigger events for suicide incidents being alcohol abuse and poverty. It is anticipated that the additional needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic will further stretch already limited resources and lead to additional psycho-social harm being unaddressed within refugee communities, with long term consequences for health, economic well-being and peaceful coexistence.

The number of SGBV incidents increased from 284 in January-March to 577 in April-June 2020. The main factors contributing to increased SGBV incidence during the COVID-19 crisis were economic hardship and inability to earn money; increased alcoholism and reduced food rations, triggering domestic violence; failure by the heads of households to provide for their family, leading to intimate partner violence; and limited access to financial support. All reported cases received psycho-social counseling, and in some instances, legal aid, material support or medical care. Supporting women in safe spaces was disrupted by the COVID-19 prevention guidelines prohibiting social gatherings. The SGBV Working Group arranged individual counseling and psycho-social support to survivors. An emergency SGBV SOP was developed in Parolinya to enable the frontline workers to follow guidelines on how to support survivors.

RRP partners provided targeted support to 51,002 South Sudanese refugees with specific needs during January-June 2020, including case management, material support, physical rehabilitation and provision of assistive devices, special education and assistance to access services. Nevertheless, the needs were much higher.

The persons with specific needs (PSN) sub working group conducted research into the impact of COVID-19 on refugees with specific needs, and which provided persons with disabilities and older persons. The research identified new and/or exacerbated barriers in accessing services, (health, food distributions and other humanitarian services) as persons with disabilities were disproportionately affected by restrictions on movement and public transport. PSNs also reported significant difficulties in implementing COVID-19 preventive measures, despite the importance of them being able to do so due to increased vulnerability to diseases.

A total of 358 peace-building initiatives were conducted for South Sudanese refugees, reaching 21,835 people. These included awareness-raising and information campaigns, trainings, community dialogues, and social and cultural activities to enhance social cohesion. Training of community leaders on various topics including land rights and tenure systems, conflict sensitivity, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, peaceful coexistence and peacebuilding was undertaken in Adjumani, Yumbe and Kiryandongo.

By June 2020, the Inter-agency Feedback, Referral and Response Mechanism (FRRM) helpline, received a total of 17,362 calls including 2,150 made by South Sudanese refugees. A total of 1,124 were resolved over the phone by operators and another 1,026 queries were referred to partners. In response to COVID-19 the FRRM has supported with several protection activities, including remote verification of refugee SIM cards, CBI related activities and remote monitoring. A new two-way bulk SMS system was launched enabling partners to disseminate key public health messaging across the refugee response.

Considering the challenges for outreach and mobility, the COVID-19 crisis prompted partners to redesign their programmes, putting a heightened focus on community-based response. A COVID-19 Community Engagement Strategy was developed, outlining roles that communities can play in the delivery of critical services, and how they can be empowered to perform such roles. Community structures, which have been at the forefront of protection monitoring, received protective equipment and additional airtime to provide support and follow-up on children and families, maintaining contact with partners on the ground.

Despite the progress and efforts made by partners, the gaps in protection services remain extensive, with several critical areas unaddressed even before the outbreak of COVID-19 in Uganda.

Limited police presence, the drastic reduction of mobile court sessions and legal representation hindered access to justice for persons of concern. The limited number of case workers to conduct timely identification and monitoring of interventions for children-at-risk and survivors of SGBV affected the response. Further, lack of funding for programs for adolescents and out of school youth and limited psychosocial support for refugees remained a concern. Several asylum-seekers' applications were not assessed in a timely manner and led to a backlog. Gaps in resources for targeted support to persons with specific needs and for effective mainstreaming of age, gender and diversity across the response also remain.

Education

80 per cent of South Sudanese of children enrolled in primary school

519 teachers trained on conflict-sensitive education, pedagogy and psychosocial support

Pupil to classroom ratio **improved to 126:1 in primary (compared to 140:1 in 2019)**

In Uganda, refugee children have access to universal primary education, pre-primary and secondary education, vocational skills and tertiary institutions. However, due to limited resources and infrastructure, many children remain out of school.

During the first half of 2020, education partners continued to support teaching and learning in 314 Early Child Development (ECD) centers, primary and secondary schools in and around refugee settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees, enabling 323,386 students to access education. The response supported construction or rehabilitation of 97 temporary, semi-permanent or permanent classrooms. Partners provided scholastics materials to 91,196 students, and 916 primary and 99 secondary teachers were remunerated by partners. These activities helped lower the pupil to classroom ratio to 126:1 in primary school (compared to 140:1 in 2019) and 84:1 in secondary school, bringing it closer to the national standard of 53:1.

In the reporting period, 519 mainstream Primary, Secondary and Accelerated Education Programme teachers were trained in conflict-sensitive education, pedagogy and psycho-social support. Some 164 textbooks were

distributed, helping to bring the ratio of pupil: textbooks to 7:1 in primary (against the national standard of 3:1). To encourage teacher retention and well-being, 116 teacher accommodations were constructed or rehabilitated. However, many planned activities have been deferred due to school closures in March 2020.

Owing to the school closure, RRP partners deployed resources to support the COVID-19 Response and Preparedness Plan of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), which focuses on three key areas: continuity of learning, protection of students, and safe school reopening. Approximately 228,189 home learning packages, developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), were distributed by RRP partners to refugee children in settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees. RRP partners ensured refugee inclusion into this plan and distributed materials to refugee children.

RRP partners promoted home-based education and child protection by empowering parents to develop social, emotional, cognitive and physical wellbeing skills of their children. Partners involved in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) provided psychosocial support to students while continuing individual home visits.



Environment & Energy

2.8 million seedlings were raised in West Nile and Kiryandongo district for both refugee and host communities

38,452 youth were trained in establishment and maintenance of woodlots

50 per cent of South Sudanese refugee households have no access to clean renewable energy

A total of 5.1 million tree seedlings were raised in 13 National Forest Authority (NFA) nurseries supporting refugee-hosting districts for the first planting season in 2020. Out of these, 2.8 million seedlings were raised to meet the seedling planting requirements for West Nile and Kiryandongo district for both refugee and host communities. By end of June, 1.4 million seedlings had been taken up by beneficiaries in those areas for planting.

A total of 38,452 youth were recruited, trained and engaged in establishment and maintenance of woodlots in Kiryandongo, Imvepi and Rhino camp using the cash for work (CfW) modality. Sensitization on energy saving practices was conducted for 2,410 households, while 1,289 households accessed cooking baskets. Lorena cookstoves were constructed for 553 households and a total of 3,570 kg of briquettes distributed to families using fuel-efficient stoves.

In Era and Eria Central Forest Reserves (CFRs), 222 hectares were restored. Of these, 45 ha in Era CFR and 1.5 ha in Eria CFR were affected by fires, which are to be replanted during the second planting season for 2020. An additional 28ha shall be restored in the two CFRs. Beyond tree planting, emphasis has been placed on tree growing in order to guarantee long-term tree survival.

The Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan (WESRRP) was launched by the Ministry of Water and Environment in March 2020 which provides a framework for integrated planning and implementation of water and environment sector activities in refugee-hosting districts, bringing together humanitarian and development actors to address immediate humanitarian crises and support long-term investments.

Increased deforestation and environmental degradation around refugee settlements coupled with delayed rains, change in rainfall patterns, and scarcity of wood fuel, present major challenges. Continuous community sensitization is paramount to enhance uptake of seedlings. Availability of land to establish woodlots remains a challenge for refugees.

Access to clean and sustainable energy continued to remain a challenge, as firewood collection for refugees

from central forest reserves is increasingly constrained by government laws and restrictions could spark conflicts between refugees and hosts. A total of 50 per cent of South Sudanese households have no access to clean renewable energy. About 15.6 per cent of health centers in refugee settlements in West Nile and Kiryandongo district have no access to a power source, while another 27.2 per cent still use diesel generators either alone or in combination with solar photovoltaic.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees, especially those with specific needs, were unable to access clean fuel for cooking due to the movement restrictions. Those trained in making energy baskets and briquettes were able to make their own fuel and/or technologies for cooking, leading to an overall interest in clean energy solutions.



Food

577,045 South Sudanese refugees received monthly **in-kind food assistance**

269,129 South Sudanese refugees received monthly food assistance through **cash transfers**

28 per cent of South Sudanese families have a **poor or borderline Food Consumption Score**

By the end of June 2020, 846,174 South Sudanese refugees were receiving food assistance in the settlements and Kampala either in-kind or through cash transfers. To curb the spread of COVID-19, the emergency food assistance to all urban refugees in Kampala started in June 2020 through cash transfers.

Due to resource constraints, general food assistance was reduced by 30 per cent in all settlements from April 2020. The reduction in food rations was introduced almost simultaneously with the movement restrictions imposed by the Government to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, limiting the possibility for refugees to look for additional livelihood opportunities. According to the post distribution monitoring report of the first quarter of 2020, 93 per cent of the respondents reported reduced availability of food and other necessities due to COVID-19 and the related restrictions.

Across many of the economic indicators considered by the WFP food security and essential needs assessment of Kampala-based refugees (April 2020), female headed households, a disabled person or an older person were more severely affected by the pandemic and containment measures. For example, households headed by a disabled person were less likely to have acceptable food consumption and were much less likely to have savings than households headed by a non-disabled person. PSNs also reported significant gaps in access to information, with only 8 per cent of persons with disabilities reporting that they had received sufficient information about COVID-19.

There is a need to standardize general food assistance across the refugee response in Uganda and increasingly roll out cash-based transfers for both general food assistance and livelihood and food-for-assets interventions. To respond to the different level of vulnerability of different refugee populations, food rations need to be diversified.

It remains critical for the Food Security sector strengthen linkages with the Livelihoods & Resilience sector to help promote refugee self-reliance, especially through agricultural interventions. Such cross-sector coordination is fundamental to design programmes that help refugees access markets, sell off surplus produce and, as a result diversify their nutritional diet and meet other needs.

Additional food security and nutrition and market assessments are needed to help inform food assistance programming and link market support to food and cash-based interventions.

It is of paramount importance to ensure a healthy food pipeline in order to reduce the risk of malnutrition among refugees and their reliance on negative coping mechanisms to secure food.



Health & Nutrition

85 per cent of South Sudanese refugee children recovered from Severe Acute Malnutrition
80 per cent of health centre IV and district hospitals in the refugee hosting districts were accredited by MoH

The number of consultations per clinician per day in refugee hosting districts has **improved to 52 (standard is ≤50)**

RRP partners continued to support the national health care system, as well as health facilities and referral services in and around settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees. Crude mortality rate and under-five mortality rates improved to 0.1 death every 1,000 people per month below standard of 0.75 and 0.1 death every 1000 people per month (below the standard of 1.5) respectively despite the resource constraints and competing priorities resulting from response to disease outbreaks (cholera, measles, Ebola, COVID-19). Some 85% of severely malnourished South Sudanese children recovered against the expected standard of 75%. Increase in equitable access and utilization of the quality integrated health services has been ensured with the health facility utilization rate of 1.1 for South Sudanese refugees (acceptable 1- 4 visits per year).

In the first half of 2020, efforts continued to implement the Health Sector Integrated Refugee Response Plan 2019-2024 (HSIRRP) and to improve integration of humanitarian health services into the government health care system.

The accreditation of health centers in refugee hosting districts by the Ministry of Health (MoH) is an important step to strengthen the district health care system to cope with the increased populations; 80 per cent of health centers IV and district hospitals in the refugee-hosting districts were accredited by the Ministry of Health (MoH). The number of consultations per clinician per day in refugee-hosting districts has improved to 52.5 (standard is ≤50).

With the COVID-19 pandemic and anticipated refugee influxes through to 2021, the capacity and available resources for primary healthcare institutions will continue to be overstretched. In addition, many refugees have faced challenges in accessing health services during the reporting period, due to restrictions on public transport. As part of the preparedness and response to COVID-19, Ebola and other communicable diseases, there is a need to strengthen infection prevention and control (IPC), strengthen surveillance, increase stock of essential medical drugs and improve the capacity of health care providers to effectively respond to potential disease outbreaks, especially at district and local levels.



Livelihoods & Resilience

43,274 South Sudanese families received emergency livelihood support in the first half of 2020
517 income-generating activities established in the first half of 2020 to benefit South Sudanese refugees

Only 21 per cent of refugees have access to credit. More access to financial services is needed for both refugees and host communities

RRP partners in the Livelihoods and Resilience Sector (LRS) endeavored to stabilize and build diversified, sustainable and resilient livelihoods, with emergency livelihood interventions serving as a basis to develop longer-term strategies. In acknowledging that the duration of their displacement is not closely related with their degree of vulnerability, emergency livelihood support targets new refugee arrivals and vulnerable long-term refugees. In line with individuals' skills, knowledge and aspirations, emergency livelihood support promotes immediate job creation, supported by initial capacity building.

As most new arrivals identify agriculture as their primary livelihood activity at the point of arrival, interventions remain largely focused on agricultural production and stabilizing the livelihoods of refugee households, building on their knowledge and skills. While some progress was made towards supporting new refugee arrivals and vulnerable households, a gap remained in transitioning refugee households from emergency-focused livelihood interventions to more sustainable options. Additional efforts and resources are needed to increase investment in income generating activities, facilitate access to savings and credit, and to sustainable employment opportunities, and to strengthen engagement of local government and private sector in the delivery of services to refugees and host communities (e.g. agriculture extension and registration of small businesses).

The development of the Jobs and Livelihoods Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities to expand livelihood opportunities in refugee-hosting areas, led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) is ongoing in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), the Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) and the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB). The plan will articulate key priorities for promoting sustainable socio-economic development for refugees and their host communities.

An increase in resilience among refugees has been observed since 2018, but refugee and host populations remain at risk of recurring shocks. While both physical and agricultural assets contribute to the increased resilience, refugees have fewer of these compared to host communities. Emerging evidence suggests that social cohesion enables resilience through increased interactions with the host community in order to build trust, but may undermine resilience through reinforced economic inequalities¹. Refugees have limited access to arable land (0.4 acres) compared to host community households (2.1 acres)². Both refugee and host populations have insufficient access to financial services, with only 21 per cent of refugees accessing credit³, and poor adoption of good agricultural practices (GAP)⁴. The lack of market-relevant skills particularly disadvantages youth. Urban refugees are often disconnected from assistance opportunities. Future livelihoods assistance needs to enable a transition from emergency livelihoods assistance to establish the foundation for sustainable economic inclusion.

COVID-19 has affected livelihoods, resulting in a loss of income. Reduced food assistance for refugees and an increase in food prices⁵ added to these challenges. Yet, there is an opportunity to shift from a focus on food assistance to increased support to livelihoods. The adoption of GAP through trainings in emergency assistance has enabled households to increase household production from one to three months of food equivalent⁶. Equally, COVID-19 has demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of markets through the emergence of new market opportunities.

¹ FAO and OPM.

² FAO and OPM.

³ FAO and OPM.

⁴ Various sources, including FAO and OPM (2020) and Reach and WFP (2020).

⁵ WFP Market Update, May 2020

⁶ FAO (2020). Final Report for CERF Underfunded Emergencies.



Shelter, Settlement and NFIs

100 per cent of newly arrived refugee families received NFIs

10 per cent of persons with specific needs received support in building semi-permanent shelters

Only 29 km of refugee settlement roads were rehabilitated

Following the announcement of border closures, including to asylum-seekers on 19 March 2020, all transit centers along the Ugandan borders with South Sudan were closed to avoid the risk of COVID-19 spread. All new refugees who arrived in the settlements before the closure of the borders received emergency shelter kits and were allocated a plot of land. Several transit and reception centers were turned into institutional quarantine

facilities for the district, hosting refugee and host communities.

Out of the targeted 241 km of roads to be rehabilitated in 2020 in settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees, only 29 km have been completed due to inadequate resources and movement restrictions.

In the first half of 2020, 969 of the targeted 4,199 persons (23 per cent) have been trained/employed in sustainable construction to support sector to achieve sustainable shelter.

Overall, gaps and challenges in provision of shelters for persons with specific needs remain. For the South Sudanese response, the number of semi-permanent shelters built for persons with specific needs represents only 10 per cent of the needs for those refugees who are not able to build their own shelters. Another critical challenge relating to household shelter is the limited supply of renewable construction materials, with a resultant impact on the environment.

In view of COVID-19, there is a need to improve shelter in transit and reception facilities to prepare for new arrivals and to work with the health sector to ensure sufficient infrastructure for isolation, waiting sheds and quarantine facilities. If borders are opened, these facilities may not be able to accommodate a large influx of refugees.

Once borders are re-opened, RRP partners must ensure transit centers, collection points and reception centers remain decongested at all times, given the risks associated with COVID-19. Furthermore, it is imperative to stock shelter kits and non-food items to prepare for the potential reopening of the borders.



WASH

Per capita access to water for South Sudanese refugees remained at **18 liters per person per day** (l/p/d)

Family latrines constructed improving the **household latrine coverage to 59 per cent**
45 per cent of water pumped in the settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees used renewable energy

Per capita access to safe drinking water for South Sudan refugees remained at 18.0 liters per person per day (l/p/d) with completion of 5 piped water schemes, bringing the total to 147. Partners constructed over 5,000 family latrines in the first half of 2020, increasing the household latrine coverage to 59 per cent, in addition to installing 761 institutional handwashing facilities and another 837 at household level.

The Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan (WESRRP) was launched by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in March 2020, providing a comprehensive framework to guide service delivery of WASH services in refugee hosting districts. A secretariat and a steering committee were set up to oversee implementation of the WERRP. Transition of management of water services to the Government mandated utilities continued with 7 per cent of overall water supplied daily shifting from NGO partners to National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) and Umbrella Authorities. Five settlements instituted Water Service Boards linked to sub-county water management structures.

In response to COVID-19, pumping hours increased the water schemes in settlement hosting South Sudan refugees. Water attendants were placed at water collection points in the settlements in northern Uganda to enforce social distancing and to share COVID-19 messages. Soap distribution was doubled from 250g/person/month to 500g/person/month to support hand hygiene. Sensitization on hand hygiene and general hygiene promotion through the local media, house-to-house visits and public fora were increased.

Overall, there is a need to continue the harmonized approaches in the implementation of WASH programmes in the settlements and refugee-hosting districts in line with WERRP, which is expected to be rolled out at district level. Service delivery modalities in the settlements are structured around humanitarian principles and do not consider tariff policy or transition plans for operation and maintenance. It is essential that WASH initiatives are in line and coordinated with District Development Plans (DDPs) and Catchment Managements Plans (CMPs). There is also a need for a shared knowledge management platform to help partners deliver services in line with government frameworks and priorities. Enforcement of statutory policies and regulations from Ministry of Water and Environment need to be enhanced.

CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

4,950 households in Kampala received multi-purpose cash-based assistance

A rapidly adapted Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) was developed

A 'Markets and COVID-19: functionality and price monitoring tool' was developed

RRP partners continued to work to harmonise approaches to cash and voucher assistance. They have been developing a more common, collaborative and integrated interagency cash-based assistance – within the refugee response as a priority, but to the extent possible with wider relevance and utility for agencies implementing cash-based programming. Specifically, more digital and financially inclusive forms of cash delivery have been emphasised.

Many different stakeholders are involved in increasing the scale and quality of cash transfer programming in the refugee response in Uganda and decided to focus on two issues; market assessments and feasibility, and harmonization of approaches to achieve the scale and quality needed.

While the expansion of cash-based intervention was already a priority under the RRP, the outbreak of COVID-19 prompted partners to fast track the CBI modality for the provision of emergency assistance. A 'Markets and COVID-19: functionality and price monitoring tool' was developed with a twice-monthly snapshot factsheet to understand the impact of COVID-19 on commodity prices and functionality of markets in refugee communities across Uganda and provided timely information to actors on a regular basis.

A major achievement was the cash-based response to urban refugees in Kampala, providing unrestricted cash transfers via mobile money to cover the cost of rent, NFIs and food. A rapidly adapted Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) was developed to support cash response programme design in the settlements, including a specific MEB for urban response.

There is agreement among RRP partners that scaling up provision of cash-based assistance by digital means of delivery represents a much safer and more optimal option for providing assistance, with any expansion of this programme remaining contingent on required market functionality, accessibility, availability, stability of prices, and liquidity.

CRRF

The Government of Uganda has been implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) since March 2017 and the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), embracing existing initiatives, mechanisms and policies seeking to address the needs of refugee and host communities. Application of the CRRF in Uganda places a strong focus on self-reliance of refugees and host communities and strengthening local service delivery for both. The "National Plan of Action to implement the GCR and its CRRF" is the guiding document to provide for the direction and milestones for implementation. During the Global Refugee Forum held in Geneva in December 2019, the Government of Uganda issued pledges in regards to maintaining the open door policy; promotion

of access, quality and inclusiveness of the national education and health system; sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems; inclusion of refugees into national development plans and national statistical systems; and ensuring the integrity of the asylum system.

The multi-stakeholder and whole-of-society refugees response comes together under the leadership of the CRRF Steering Group, which is co-led by the OPM and the Ministry of Local Government as a national arrangement to implement the GCR. This high-level Steering Group is the policy- and main decision-making body for CRRF implementation and is responsible for coordinating leadership amongst key line ministries, as well as mobilizing resources from non-traditional actors in the refugee response to support the transition and integration of humanitarian-based services into Uganda's national service delivery system. In March, the CRRF Steering Group held its tenth meeting in Kampala.

The Refugee Engagement Forum (REF), a novel national refugee platform and which met once in the first half of 2020, brings together refugee leaders from all settlements and Kampala. This platform represents refugee voices in Uganda, ensuring that refugees play a central and vital role in the refugee response. The REF is held quarterly before every CRRF Steering Group, which includes two elected members of the REF. This representation ensures that issues and decisions affecting refugees are timely brought to the attention of the CRRF Steering Group.

The Government of Uganda has included refugees in its national and district development planning. Whereas under the National Development Plan II (NDP II), refugees were included through the Settlement Transformative Agenda as an annex, the NDP III (2020/21 -2024/25), which will be launched in July 2020, takes a further step to include refugees in national planning and statistics. The District Development Plans (DDPs) for the refugee-hosting Districts, also include the refugee population in the settlements, thus taking into consideration the needs of the entire population in the District to inform area-based interventions by development actors. This improves the alignment of humanitarian and development investments.

To align the humanitarian response to Government sectoral priorities and policies, comprehensive refugee response plans have been developed under the respective Line Ministries. These enable Uganda to clearly highlight where the international community may usefully channel support for a comprehensive and people-centered response in its refugee-hosting districts in the long run, while providing humanitarian interventions in the medium-term. The Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (ERP), the Health Sector Integrated Refugee Response Plan (HSIRRP), and the Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan (WESRRP) are already in place, whereas the Sustainable Energy Refugee Response Plan (SERRP) and the Jobs and Livelihoods Plan are under development. These plans are annexed to the national sector strategies and will be further merged with the 5-year national sector plans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

South Sudan Data Portal - <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/southsudan>

Uganda Refugee Response Portal - <https://ugandarefugees.org/en/country/uga>

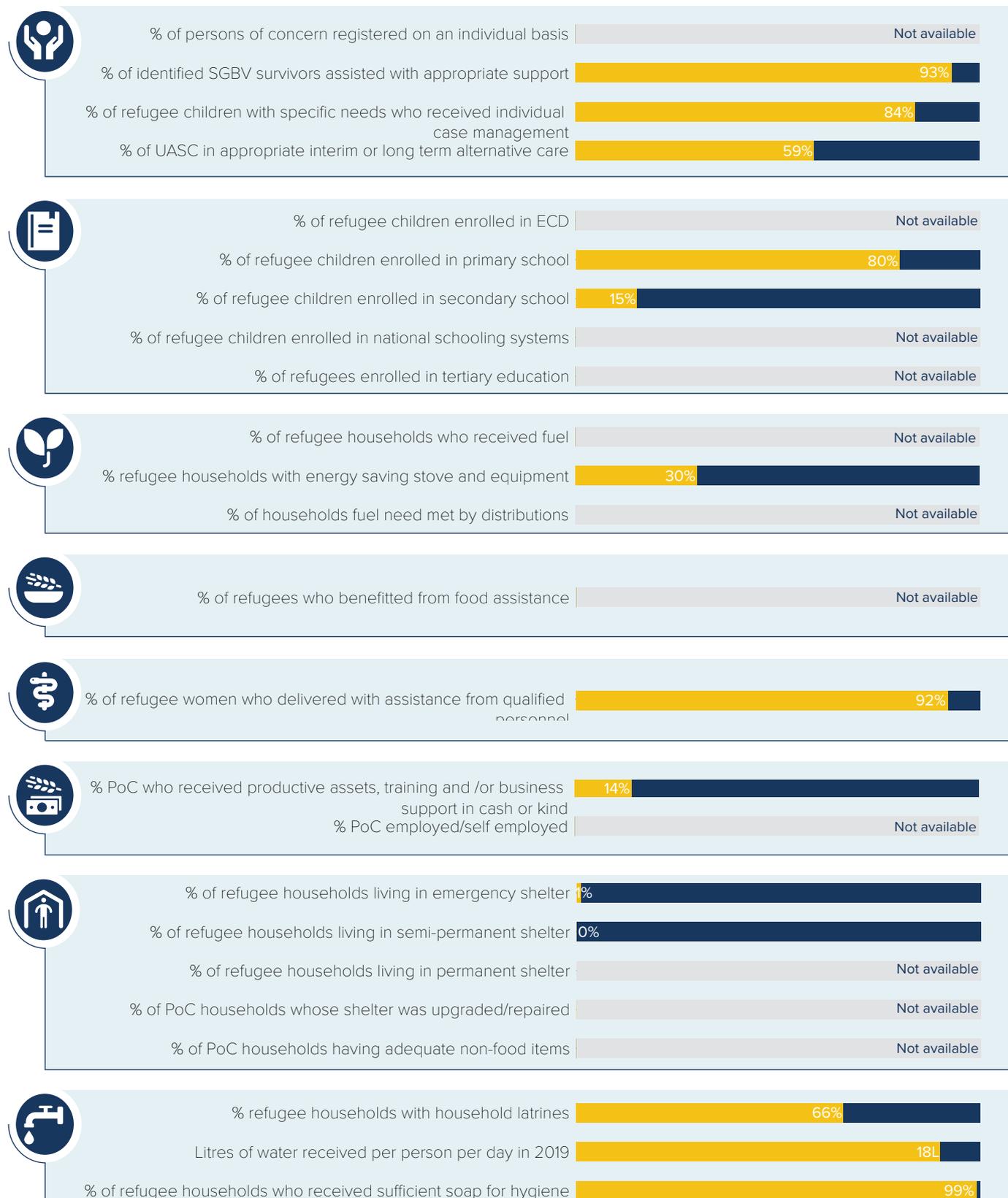
Joel Boutroue, Representative to Uganda, boutroue@unhcr.org; **Leslie Velez**, Snr. External Engagement Coordinator velez@unhcr.org

RRP PARTNERS

- Action contre la Faim
- African Women and Youth Action for Development
- Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
- American Refugee Committee
- Association for Aid and Relief, Japan
- Association of Volunteers in International Service
- Building Resources Across Communities
- Care and Assistance For Forced Migrants
- CARE International
- Caritas Uganda
- Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid
- Catholic Relief Services
- Cooperazione e Sviluppo
- Danish Church Aid
- Danish Refugee Council
- Enabel
- Finn Church Aid
- Finnish Refugee Council
- Food and Agriculture Organization
- Food for the Hungry
- Humane Africa Mission
- Humanity & Inclusion
- Impact Initiatives
- Inter-church Organization for Development Cooperation
- International Aid Services
- International Organization for Migration
- International Rescue Committee
- IsraAid
- Jesuit Refugee Service
- Johanniter
- Lutheran World Federation
- Lutheran World Relief
- Malteser International
- Medical Teams International
- Mercy Corps
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- OXFAM
- Peace Winds Japan
- Plan International
- Prime Skills Foundation
- Right To Play
- Samaritan's Purse
- Save the Children International
- Self Help Africa
- Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
- Trócaire
- Tutapona Trauma Rehabilitation
- Uganda Red Cross Society
- Uganda Women for Water and Sanitation
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- United Nations Children's Fund
- United Nations Office for Project Services
- United Nations Population Fund
- UNWOMEN
- War Child Canada
- War Child Holland
- Water Mission Uganda
- Welthungerhilfe
- Windle International Uganda
- World Food Programme
- World Health Organization
- World Vision International
- ZOA International

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

South Sudan Data Portal - <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/southsudan>

Uganda Refugee Response Portal - <https://ugandarefugees.org/en/country/uga>

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