

REBUiLD

Boosting Livelihoods



Year 3 Annual Report

Re:BUiLD Program, 2023

In partnership with the IKEA Foundation, Re:BUiLD brings together the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Center for Global Development (CGD), Open Capital (OCA), Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and Nairobi City County Government (NCCG). Re:BUiLD is committed to generate and share evidence for innovative, sustainable livelihood solutions that can be adopted to support refugees and host residents in other cities in East Africa and beyond.



Introduction

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Refugees in East Africa: Boosting Urban Innovations for Livelihoods Development (Re:BUiLD) program is pleased to release the year 3 annual report. As we focus on the fourth year of our implementation, we would like to share the progress we have made as well as learnings, and adaptations from the year ending December 31, 2023. Launched by the IRC and the IKEA Foundation in 2021, Re:BUiLD is one of the largest private investments (€30 Million) for urban refugee livelihoods in East Africa. The program targets to reach 20,000 refugees and host residents in Kampala and Nairobi.

Going by the principles of the Re:BUiLD approach that is largely anchored on flexibility and adaptive program design, we are known for continuous experimentation and learning. In September 2023 we paused to reflect on what was working and reconsidered some interventions. Key adaptations were drawn from progress indicators to inform our focus going into the future, thanks to the long-term investment from the IKEA Foundation that has powered our adaptive nature.

In this report, we highlight the significant milestones, key moments and the program changes that are born out of our client responsiveness strategy and continuous monitoring of the delivery of our interventions across our three pillars. These will build our year 4 efforts to document, amplify client voices, change stories and more importantly share learnings and evidence throughout our spheres of influence at local, national, regional and globally.

Re:BUiLD program pillars

Pillar 1: Livelihood Services:

We aim at supporting 20,000 refugees and vulnerable hosts to find employment by attaining skills most sought out by employers, or by starting new or growing their existing small businesses.

Pillar 2: Evidence and Learning:

At Re:BUiLD, we are dedicated to gathering evidence and learning through testing with randomized control trials (RCTs), pilots, monitoring data, and share findings on what works or does not work in programs targeting to improve urban livelihoods.

Pillar 3: Influence and Adoption:

We have built a bold influencing agenda aimed at changing policies, practices and investments at national, regional and global levels.

As we forge ahead into our fourth year of implementing the Re:BUiLD Program, I am indebted to our clients, staff, partners and the IKEA Foundation for their immense and intrinsic contributions to the transformation of urban economies, enabling access and building sustainable livelihood opportunities for refugees and hosts in Nairobi and Kampala

With gratitude,

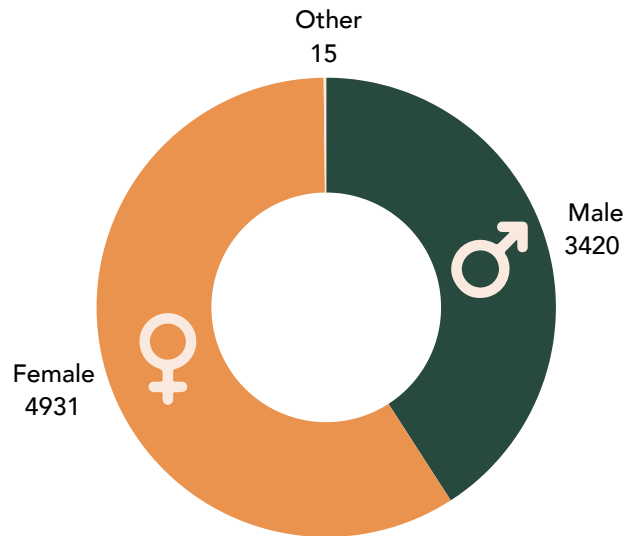
Priscilla Dembetembe, Re:BUiLD Program Director
www.rebuild.rescue.org - Priscilla.dembetembe@rescue.org

Progress to end of year 3

Gender of clients served

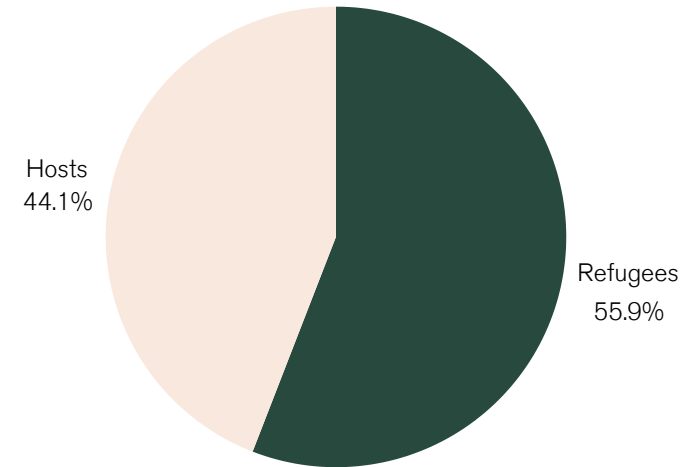
As at December 31, 2023, the Re:BUiLD program had reached **8,366 clients** through various interventions in Nairobi and Kampala.

- **3,420 Male**
- **4,931 Female**
- **15 Other**



Legal status of clients served

- **4,676 refugees**
- **3,690 Hosts**



The clients served represents **42%** of the total target reach for the five-year program of 20,000 clients.

- **Microenterprise clients - 4,213**
- **Service delivery - 4,153**

Client served per service



September 2023: program learning adaptations for year 4

1. Vocational skills training

Program adaptations were made based on cost-effectiveness, results, considerations and client feedback. Key outcomes from the vocational training led to the discontinuation of vocational skilling under the Re:BUiLD Program as transition into wage employment proved challenging, and clients previously supported with vocational skills requested support such as business grants to venture into self-employment. They were supported with additional soft skills to better equip them to enter the labour market.

2. Financial inclusion

The program scaled up financial inclusion activities to reach more clients as a result of the positive reception and uptake of the intervention. Urban Saving and Loans Associations (USLA) were transferred to local implementing partners to enhance program sustainability.



16 August 2023 – Kampala, Uganda. Hajjara Nampaji 34, checks for damage under a vehicle. Nampaji transformed from a nurse to a mechanic through Re:BUiLD's apprenticeship program. Re:BUiLD enrolled over 600 clients to gain hands-on skills to access decent employment opportunities since 2020. (PHOTO: Nathan Ijjo Tibaku/TheIRC)

Why I switched gears from nursing, now rocking car automotives – Hajjara Nampaji

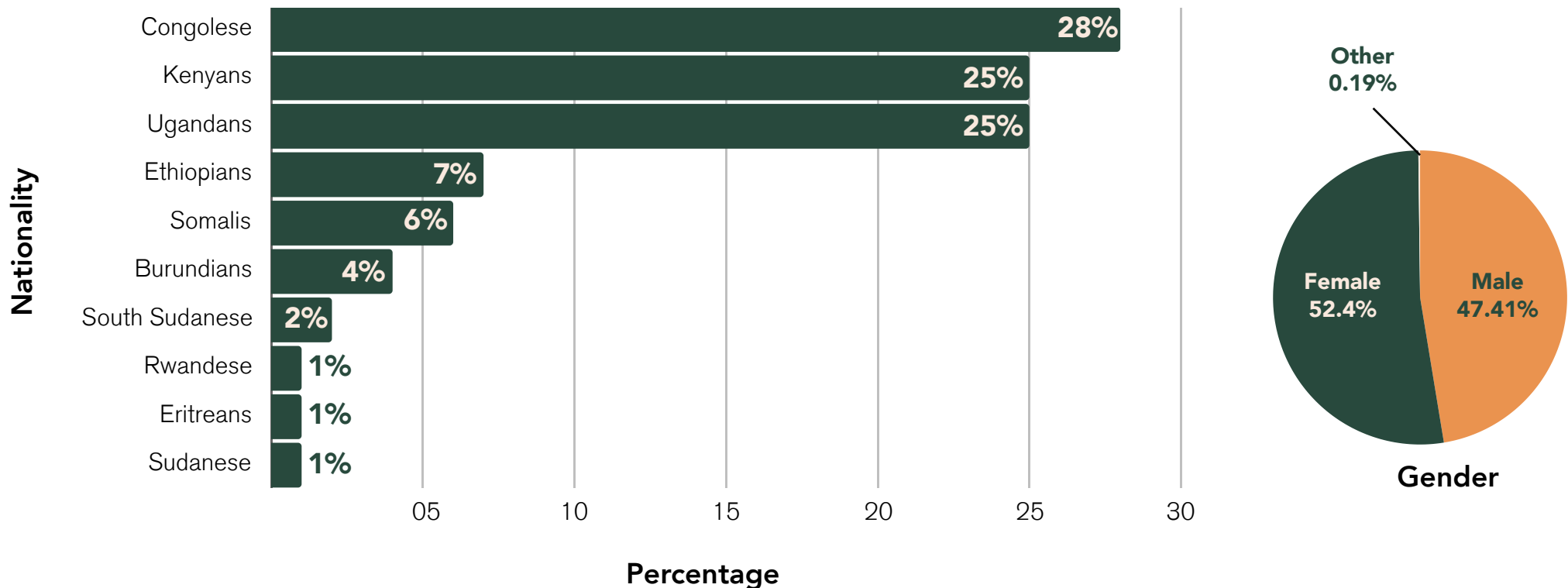
34-year-old Hajjara Nampaji is among the refugees and host community members who the Re:BUiLD Program supported with job placements and apprenticeships in Kampala. Employers like her manager, Hood Mukasa were engaged in this process to provide apprenticeship opportunities for skilled refugees and hosts, producing evidence and lessons that show what is effective thus developing a model that can be replicated in other locations.

"I want to run my own garage. I know I can. I will utilize it to train and dispel dread from the hearts of young ladies. If I can do this from the basics of wheel alignment, getting into that engine room, to engine overhauling, it means any girl can also do it. I am proud. Everyone gets surprised when they see me on the job as a mother and a Muslim woman," says Nampaji.

Read more on the [Re:BUiLD website](#).

Randomized Control Trials (RCTs)

Wave 1 RCT- Re:BUiLD concluded the implementation of the two large-scale randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in Kampala, Uganda and Nairobi, Kenya. The RCTs sought to study the effect of mentorship and cash grant programs on economic and social outcomes for microenterprises owned by refugees and vulnerable host entrepreneurs in urban settings **4213 clients** being placed for the service (**UG 2109, KE 2104**) (**M 47.41%, F 52.4% and others 0.19%**). **Residency: 50% host and 50% Refugees.**



Wave 1 RCT Breakdown

Wave 2 RCT - The design of Wave 2 RCT was completed. The study tests whether an intervention aimed at expanding and diversifying social networks can improve microenterprise success and social cohesion among refugee and host micro-entrepreneurs in Kampala and Nairobi. The recruitment and registration of eligible participants began in the last quarter of the year. The Wave 2 RCTs will involve 4000 individuals from Nairobi and another 4000 clients in Kampala. Implementation is set for the year 4 i.e 2024.

Service Delivery in Uganda

Progress on ensuring people are employed

In May 2023, as part of the program's pause and reflect strategy, an evaluation was conducted in Uganda where **891 clients** participated. This study sought to evaluate the economic status of clients after undergoing skilling in the first two years of the program. The findings showed that **46%** of the clients had not yet transitioned to employment. This was attributed to several factors highlighted by clients during the evaluation, including insufficient job opportunities, inadequate soft skills, and a lack of networks with potential employers. In efforts to bridge these gaps and improve transition rates to wage employment, the program provided bridging services to the clients who had not secured employment.

Bridging services - UG

Wage employment – UG

A total of **173 (83M, 90F; 80R, 93H)** clients received soft skills and job readiness training which covered key topics including CV writing, preparing for job interviews, goal setting, teamwork, stress management, decision making, identifying values and skills (strengths and weaknesses), conflict resolution, attitudes, job retention, job readiness, and communication skills.

Self-employment – UG

A total of **134 (89F, 45M; 88R 46H)** clients participated in entrepreneurship and life skills training, led by Re:BUiLD program staff. The training utilized the IRC's [Learn to Earn \(L2E\) curriculum](#), which takes a holistic approach to enhancing the capacity of clients to start and run their own businesses, and provides key information on general business and finance.

Catalytic fund – UG

The Program collaborated with three community-based organizations: **Grassroot Livelihood Center, Lubya Sensitization and Development Organisation, and Muswangali Zone Farmers Group**. These partnerships aimed to train clients in backyard vegetable gardening, soap making, and body oil production. Additionally, the program enhanced the clients' knowledge of record-keeping and bookkeeping, further equipping them with financial literacy skills. A total of 375 clients were reached with these services.

581 clients engaged in climate resilience skills development

Climate resilience

Re:BUiLD through its partners has progressively supported climate resilience-themed programming and empowerment for clients with skills to enable them to tap into opportunities in the green economy.

- **Kandaakiat for Women Empowerment & Development (KOWED):** Trained a total of **241 clients (176F, 65M)** in urban climate resilience initiatives. Out of these, **61 clients (44F, 17M, 21H, 40R)** were trained on hydroponics and vertical garden construction.
- **BONDEKO:** Trained a further **180 clients (132F, 48M; 152R, 28H)** on urban farming techniques at the KCCA youth center at Kabalagala in Kampala.
- **Raising Gabdho Foundation (RGF):** Trained **120 clients (82F, 38M; 81R, 39H)** in urban climate resilience-related areas.

Refugee rights and entitlements

- **163 community leaders (88M 75F)** from Makindye, Rugaba, and Central Divisions were **trained on refugee protection**, with emphasis on the right to work and the role leaders can play to enhance inclusivity.
- **Launch of the Refugee Handbook on Access to Justice:** Re:BUiLD in collaboration with the Judiciary in Uganda launched a guide for justice actors to support refugees in their quest for justice and protection.
- **68 community leaders, 19 Refugee Led Organizations (RLOs)** from Makindye, Rubaga and Kampala Central division trained on GEDI principles and safeguarding and were sensitized on peaceful coexistence principles.



Elijah Okeyo, Uganda Country Director, the International Rescue (IRC) described the handbook as a fundamental resource - Re:BUiLD on October 13, 2023 in Kampala

(PHOTO: Nathan Tibaku/TheIRC)

Service Delivery in Kenya

Progress on ensuring people are employed

The program through private sector engagements provided clients with opportunities to develop on-job skills within various sectors, including catering, food and beverage, IT, and retail, enhancing their practical experience and employability.

Apprenticeships

- **15 clients (10F,5M; 9R,6H)** completed a 3-month apprenticeship program at Tasya Mart, a local supermarket based in Nairobi.
- **5 clients (2R,3H; 4F,1M)** were fully employed at Tasya Mart upon completion of the apprenticeship program.

Bridging services

Re:BUiLD offered job-readiness and soft skills training to a total of **319 clients (116M, 203F: 136R, 183H)** which enhanced their ability to access wage employment. Upon completion, **54 clients (32F, 22M; 25R and 26H)** reported that they had secured employment opportunities in the engineering, beauty, and media sectors.

- Job readiness and soft skills - **319 clients (116M, 203F: 136R, 183H)**
- Learn to Earn entrepreneurship training - **70 clients (14M, 56F: 40R, 30H)**

54 jobs secured

Private sector engagement

Re:BUiLD program staff organized an employer's roundtable discussion, which convened **81 employers** across various industries including hospitality and tourism, beauty and cosmetics, textiles, digital and IT, media and journalism, engineering, and supply chain, including supermarkets.

- **22 clients (10R,12H; 13F,9M)** successfully linked to employment opportunities through pledges from the employers' roundtable engagements.

Enabling people to manage financial risks

The IRC entered a derisking facility agreement that established a Loan Guarantee Fund (LGF) with Equity Bank LTD Kenya and UGAFODE in Uganda. In Kenya, an initial six groups comprising of **65 members (53R, 12H: 46F,19M)** were linked to the bank and collectively saved **€1,609** within a period of 6 months from July 2023. Subsequently, **18 clients** were able to access loans through the LGF, amounting to **€2,613**. The clients utilized the loans to expand their business portfolios and to meet some of their basic needs. In Uganda, program stepped up the registration of USLA groups to unlocks more potential for the members to access bank accounts and formal lending services from UGAFODE under the LGF partnership.

Urban savings and loans associations (USLAs)

- KE- 20 new USLAs formed in year 3, with a total of **377 clients (287F, 90M; 47H, 330R)**
- IRC partnership with Equity Bank in Kenya – The program pilot intervention aimed at boosting refugees’ access to formal lending services launched. A total of **€2,613** accessed as loans in the six months to December 2023.
- UG - 27 USLA groups comprising of **708 members (528F, 180M;116 H, 592R)** were formed.
- UG – USLA group savings stood at approximately **€9,406** as at December 31, 2023.

KE

330

refugees enrolled and supported through USLAs in KE

€2613

accessed loans

UG

592

refugees enrolled and supported through USLAs in UG

€9,406

group savings

Inclusive value chains

- **Darling Kenya: 20 clients (20F; 13R; 7H)** in beauty and cosmetics were placed at Styles Industries (Darling Kenya) for hairdressing and beauty training. These were examined and certified by the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA). 80% of these clients reported they were using these skills to earn an income.
- **Castro Mancave:** The program provided the **9 clients** with tools to support their on-job training in barbering in a collaboration under the Mancave Barbering Induction Program.

Building cohesive communities, unlocking equitable access to services

Unlocking gender barriers, referrals, and protection mainstreaming

Re:BUiLD delivered wrap-around services aimed at addressing individual challenges and gender-related barriers that affect participation in livelihood service. This included mapping and awareness creation on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) services. Referral pathways and a referrals directory were developed in collaboration with the inter-agency working group in Nairobi. These enabled partners and staff to support requests for legal assistance and SGBV-related needs through referrals to UNHCR, the Department of Refugee Services (DRS), and other humanitarian organizations.

- SGBV support - **12 female refugees**
- Legal assistance referrals to UNHCR - **20 (2F, 18M)**
- SGBV awareness - **93 female clients (63R, 30H)**
- Awareness on rights and entitlements - **411 refugee clients (221F, 190M)**
- Business licensing training - **28 (9M, 19F; 11R, 17H)** vocational training and apprenticeship clients that received start-up kits

The IRC developed an adaptive Economic and Social Empowerment (EA\$E) [curriculum](#) for Re:BUiLD, considering the program's urban setting. A total of **109 clients (57F, 52M;68R, 42H)** participated in an EA\$E training, aimed to promote women's empowerment by facilitating safe decision-making, power dynamics and the use and control over economic resources, while also working towards reducing violence between intimate partners.

Engaging Refugee Led Organizations (RLOs) and partners

As part of efforts to assess the capacity of RLOs and enhance service delivery in the community, the program built the capacity of 9 RLOs. Representatives of the RLOs; 18 members - 2 from each organization – were trained on gender equality and social inclusion in their programming. The program also completed a [safeguarding](#), safe [programming](#), fraud, and corruption training for 38 IRC and partner staff, to enhance their knowledge and skills on recognizing, preventing, and addressing safeguarding issues in program delivery.

Evidence and learning

Microenterprise support in Kampala and Nairobi

The delivery of the program's microenterprise interventions aimed at promoting self-employment through randomized control trials (RCT) continued in year 3.

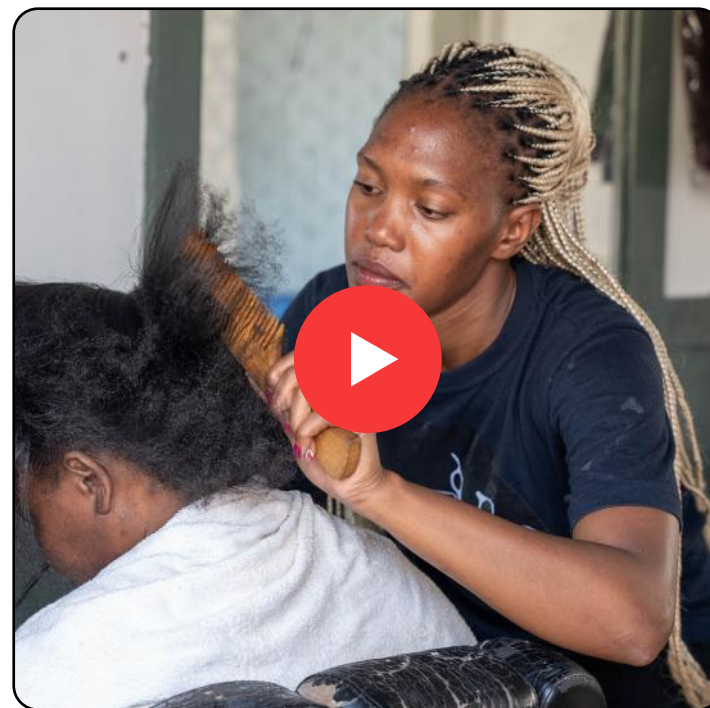
In Kampala, RCT participants were provided with business cash grants at week 6 and by the end of the first quarter, 60% of mentees' businesses were verified. Subsequently, mentor meetings were conducted for both the 2022 and 2023 cohorts, discussing various business topics and best practices.

- **RCT Wave 1 milestone:** 2,501 clients were reached under the microenterprise intervention.
- **Data collection:** The program conducted multiple midline surveys to assess the progress of microenterprise clients at 3, 6, and 9 months.

In Kenya, RCT wave 1 interventions were completed in February 2023, with a 98% success rate of the targeted sample of both mentees and mentors. Endline surveys (9 months) were completed in October 2023.

- **RCT Wave 1 Milestone:** A total of 2,563 participants reached under the microenterprise intervention.
- **Data collection:** The program surveyed participants after month 1, 3 and on the 6th month to assess progress. The endline surveys at the 9th month were completed in October 2023.

Clear documentation of what worked well, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations from Wave 1 implementation aided in making improvements to the design of Wave 2 RCTs. These lessons guided the multiple ideation workshops for wave 2 of the RCTs with the participation of Wave 1 principal investigators, IRC staff, the technical advisory committee, and the IKEA Foundation.



Mitchelle Nthambi, 26-year-old business owner- Kingship Beauty Palor

Mitchelle speaks highly of mentorship, business grant at her thriving salon and nails business.

(PHOTO: Edgar Otieno/TheIRC)

Program monitoring and evaluation

The Program conducted three surveys; wage employment, post-bridging service, and client satisfaction survey.

- **The wage employment survey**

The wage employment survey sought to understand the economic status of clients served in years one and two of the program through apprenticeship and vocational training. The survey reached 80% of 1,911 intended clients, where approximately 54% of the clients reported being engaged in some form of economic activity. 22.5% of these clients reported being self-employed, 13% engaged in wage employment, and 14% involved in casual labor.

- **Post-bridging services survey**

This survey strategically informed the program's plans for year four. It was aimed at understanding the short-term effectiveness of the program's bridging services interventions in supporting clients to secure employment. 916 clients participated in this survey, of whom 16% were found to be employed in wage-based jobs, while 25% reported as self-employed. Additionally, 68% of participating clients said their earnings had increased since the start of the program.

- **Client satisfaction survey**

The program conducted this survey to collect feedback and insights from clients who had received services from Re:BUiLD. The survey focused on gauging client satisfaction, assessing the effectiveness of the project, understanding service preferences, and identifying preferred communication channels. The results indicated that 77% (307) of clients expressed satisfaction with Re:BUiLD's services. Furthermore, 92% of respondents affirmed that Re:BUiLD effectively catered to the needs of both refugees and host communities.

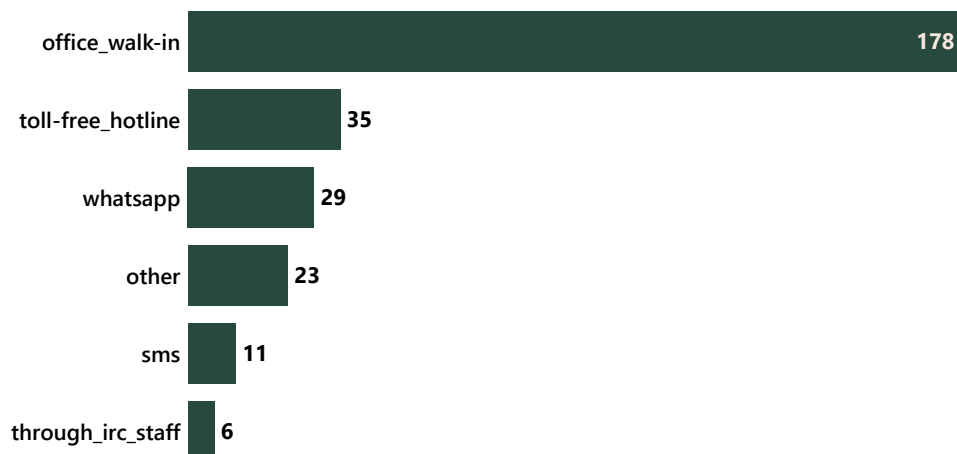


ReBUiLD Wage Employment Survey 2023

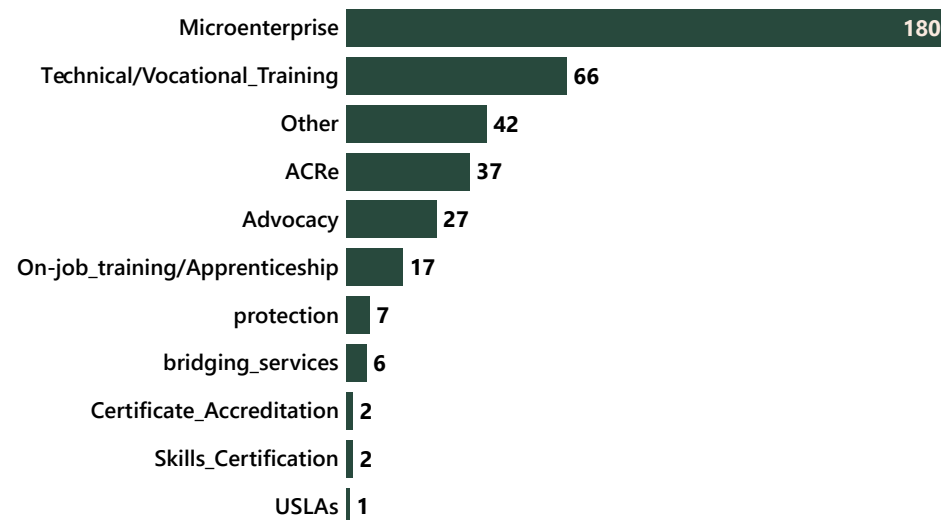
Client Responsiveness

- Re:BUiLD recorded 294 client feedback entries in Uganda. Majority of the clients were interested the program’s microenterprise and vocational training services. Key outstanding programmatic feedback was captured through the stakeholder reference group (SRG) reports to inform decision-making. The most feedback channels preferred by clients in Uganda are office walk-ins at the Livelihood Resource Center (LRC) and Toll-free hotline.
- In Kenya, the program received 1,177 feedback entries, with 638 (54%) from refugees and 539 (46%) from host clients. Most feedback (72%) pertained to the microenterprise service, including inquiries about the RCTs, mentorship, and business grants progress. Other feedback covered vocational skills, apprenticeship, and some requests beyond the program’s scope. The most preferred feedback channels our clients used in Kenya are SMS and the Re:BUiLD program Website.

Feedback, channel used (Uganda)

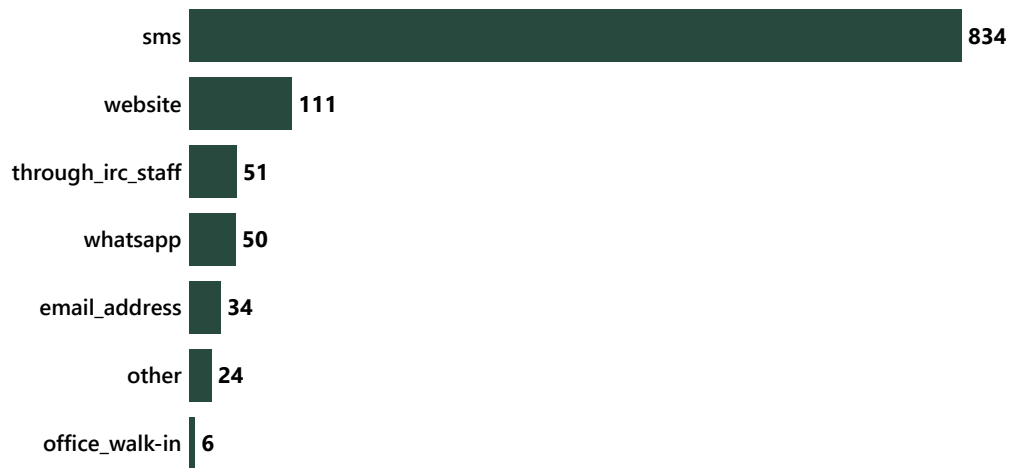


Feedback, by Sector (Uganda)

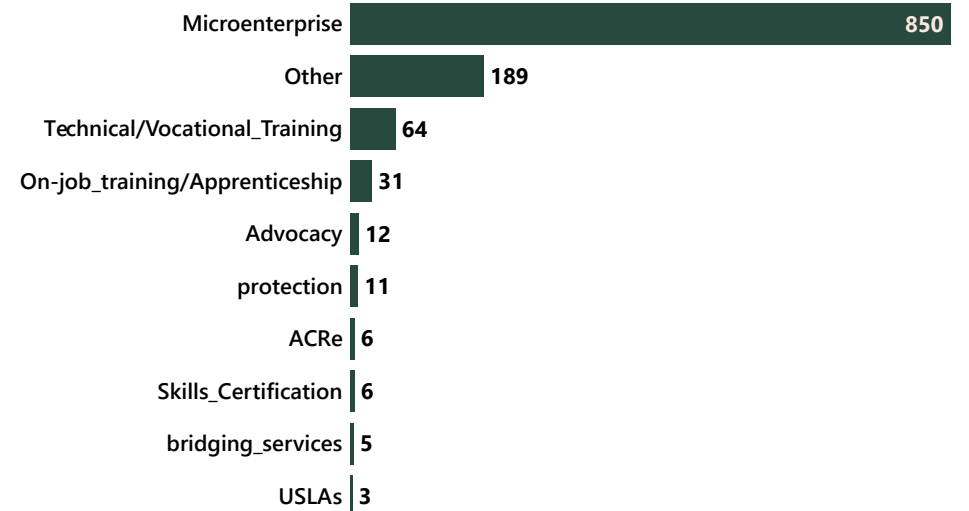


Uganda Feedback

Feedback, channel used (Kenya)

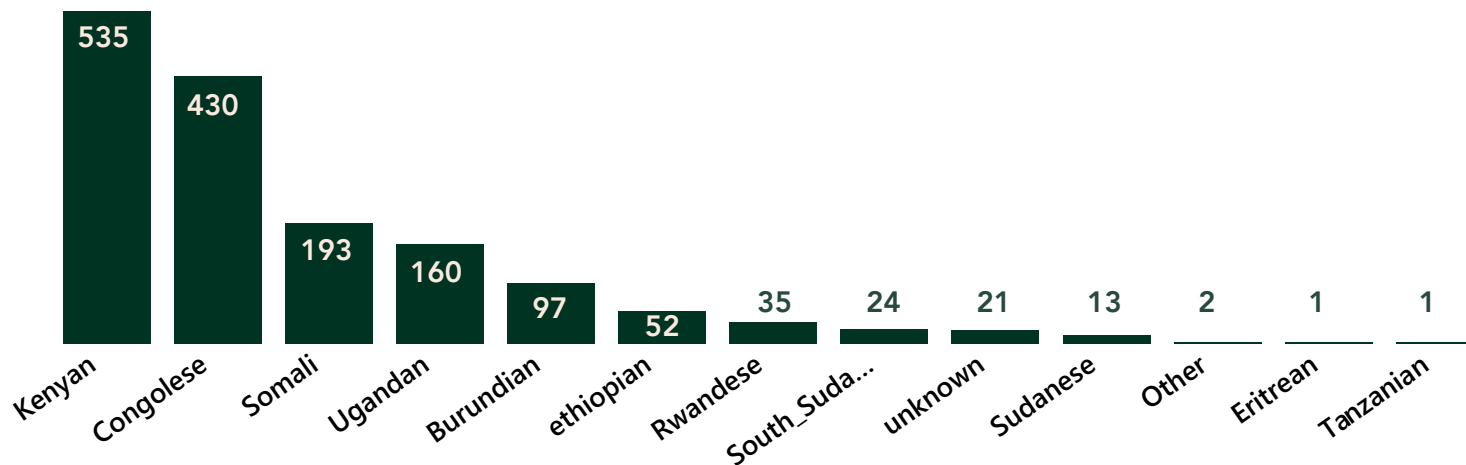


Feedback, by Sector (Kenya)



Kenya Feedback

Feedback, by Client Nationality (Uganda & Kenya)



Breakdown by Nationality Uganda & Kenya

Influence and Adoption

In East Africa, Re:BUiLD has been at the forefront of efforts to protect refugees' rights to decent work. The program launched impactful campaigns in Kenya and Uganda and produced a policy brief to advance refugee employment rights and opportunities. The program concluded a six-month campaign on decent work for refugees with the release of the [Decent Work Policy Brief](#) at the decent work summit in [Kampala, Uganda](#), and the [Decent Work Conference in Nairobi](#). These events brought together key players to advance the cause of refugees' right to decent work, including UNHCR, ILO, government representatives, businesses, labor unions, and the Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE).



To enable urban refugees to access city services, Re:BUiLD worked with Nairobi and Kampala City before the GRF in December 2023, securing the submission of a [joint pledge with the GRF Pledge ID – 07293 \(Re:BUiLD/IRC\)](#); GRF Pledge ID – 08072 (NCCG); and Pledge ID – 08760 (KCCA). Re:BUiLD ensured the city commitments were included in the [Second Report on Local Action for Migrants and Refugees](#) and [officially endorsed by the Mayors Migration Council, PLAVU, and Pamoja Trust](#), Re:BUiLD partners. The city has committed to integrating refugees into development plans, creating innovation centers for skill development, designating specific sectors for refugee issues, and establishing mechanisms for coordinating Nairobi's and Kampala's responses to refugees, including baseline assessments of the needs and livelihoods of refugee populations.

Kampala City Mayor Erias Lukwago alongside the Nairobi City County Executive Committee Member (CEC) for talent and skills development Rosemary Kariuki (right) follow deliberations at a workshop convened by Re:BUiLD in Nairobi in October 2023 to support the drafting of joint city pledges to the 2023 Global Refugee Forum.

(PHOTO: Joseph Sosi/TheIRC)

Caroline Njuki, Chief Technical Adviser on Jobs & Education - The International Labour Organization (ILO)

“Agencies have helped refugees develop their skills, but to be employed and work, a refugee must have a work permit, which cannot be obtained without a refugee ID. However, there is a significant backlog in the production of this important document. It is an instance of the law offering up opportunities and administrative barriers standing in the way.”

Our participation in the Africa Forum on Displacement in Ghana in November 2023 brought attention to the needs of urban refugees in the private sector. At the forum, the program stressed the significance of attending to these needs to improve integration and self-reliance. In addition, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was consulted more closely on skills certification and [recognition of prior learning](#).

The Shirika Plan: Kenya is implementing a comprehensive plan called the Shirika Plan in an effort to improve the integration of refugees into the nation. Re:BUiLD took part in a stakeholders' discussion during the reporting period to gather opinions on the problems pertaining to the plan's various pillars. In order to make sure that urban refugee priorities are integrated into the Shirika Plan, Re:BUiLD is collaborating with the Nairobi City County Government (NCCG). This collaboration includes participating in and interacting with urban space actors. During the year, the program further supported the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) to advance development of the [Refugee Act 2021](#) regulations.

Key moments and publications that shaped the program's year 3

The program together with partners convened and participated at key regional and global events as part of the influence and adoption strategy. The key moments were used to disseminate learnings and publications to key stakeholders in refugee livelihood programming.

- Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2023
- Decent Work Summit in Nairobi and Kampala
- Launch of the Handbook on refugee access to justice in Uganda
- 2023 Financial Inclusion week
- European Microfinance week –November 2023
- World Refugee Day - June 20, 2023

Key learnings and publications released in year 3

- Decent work policy brief
- Livelihoods Cost Effectiveness Brief 2023 Re:BUiLD, Kenya Wave 1 RCT
- Handbook on refugee access to justice in Uganda
- Re:BUiLD Skills Certification Brief
- Adaptive Management in Refugee Programming: Lessons from Re:BUiLD
- Financial Service Providers (FSP) Insights and Learning from Nairobi & Kampala
- Re:BUiLD in Action Newsletters
- Multimedia content on YouTube with 275 subscribers

