

Uganda

1 – 28 February 2021

The Ugandan borders have remained closed for asylum since March 2020 due to COVID-19. However, spontaneous movements to/from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continued via unofficial crossing points, owing to the dire humanitarian situation in these countries.

These movements cannot be fully verified and accounted for.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Cumulatively, as of 28 February 2021, there were **40,367 confirmed cases** of COVID-19, of whom, **397 were refugees** and **288 humanitarian workers**.

The cumulative number includes **14,989 recoveries**, **383** of whom were **refugees** and **283 humanitarian workers**.

Deaths reported were **334** since March 2020, **seven** of whom were **refugees** and **one humanitarian worker**.

1,462,164

Number of **refugees** and **asylum seekers** as of 28 February 2021.

1,433,796*

Total **refugees** in Uganda as of 28 February 2021.

28,368

Total **asylum-seekers** in Uganda as of 28 February 2021.

*Increase in number is attributed to the registration backlog and new-borns.

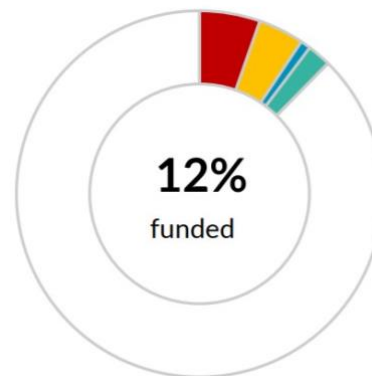


5-year-old South Sudanese Rose revises her lessons after school, outside her home in Imvepi settlement, northern Uganda. Photo ©UNHCR/Duniya Aslam Khan

UNHCR'S FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS 2021:

USD 344.8 million

UNHCR Funding (as of 28 February 2021)



Unfunded 88% - **302.2 M**

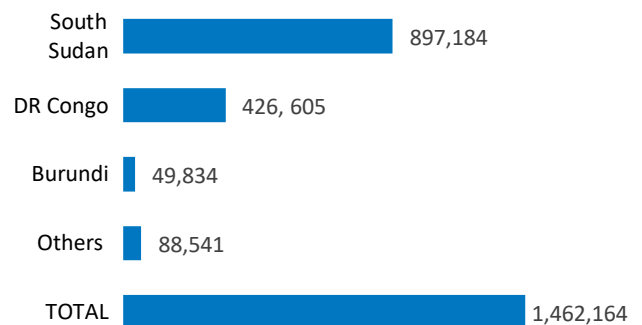
Funded 12% - **42.6 M**

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

POPULATIONS OF CONCERN

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers by

Nationality





Officials from the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Education and Sports, Italian Embassy, UNHCR, AVSI and Uganda Olympics Committee, at the launch of Game Connect, held on 17 February 2021 at the Italian Embassy in Kampala. Photo ©UNHCR/Leslie Velez

Contextual and operational highlights

COVID-19: Since March 2020, 397 refugees have tested positive for COVID-19, with seven reported deaths. On 28 February 2021, the cumulative nationwide figure for COVID-19 positive cases stood at 40,367 cases, with 14,989 recoveries and 334 reported deaths. In total, 288 humanitarian workers have tested positive for COVID-19 across the country. It is worth noting that the rate of COVID-19 infections and death have greatly reduced in Uganda. Kampala was reported to have the highest rates of COVID-19 cases among refugees (126 cases), followed by settlements located in Nakivale/Oruchinga (91), Adjumani (55), Kiryandongo (50), Kyangwali (43), Kyaka II (13), Bidibidi (5), Palorinya (5), Palabek (4), Rhino Camp/Imvepi (3), and Rwamwanja (2). UNHCR supported the Ministry of Health (MoH) to investigate 28,959 COVID-19 alerts and test 7,053 refugees for COVID-19 as of 28 February 2021. There are no individuals quarantined in the 11 centres within the refugee-hosting districts.

Uganda approves procurement of COVID-19 vaccine: On 1 February, the Ugandan Cabinet approved the procurement of 18 million doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine from the Serum Institute of India, which will be used to vaccinate persons aged 50 years and above, individuals with underlying health conditions, health workers, teachers and security personnel among other essential social service providers. The COVAX facility managed by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) has communicated to the Government of Uganda a tentative allocation of 3,552,000 doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, including 864,000 doses due to arrive in March 2021. Refugees are included in the country vaccination plan.

Uganda announces re-opening of schools: Through a cabinet decision issued on 1 February, followed by a public address to the nation on 4 February, the President of Uganda approved the recommendation of the Ministry of Education and Sports to reopen Education Institutions for non-candidate learners in a staggered manner, as to ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety measures. The confirmed dates are as follows: Primary Six, Senior and Senior Five will report back on 1 March 2021 and study until 21 May 2021; Primary Four and Primary Five will report back on 6 April 2021, after Primary Leaving Examinations, which end on 31 March 2021. They will study until 4 June 2021; Primary One, Primary Two and Primary Three will report back on 7 June 2021 until 24 July 2021; Senior One will report back on 12 April 2021 until 3 July 2021; Senior Two will report back on 31 May 2021 after Senior Three and Senior Five classes break off

and will study until 24 July 2021. Hence, the academic year 2020 for primary, secondary, and post primary education institutions will end in July 2021. The President also approved for teachers to be included in the country COVID-19 vaccination plan as a priority category.

Tragic loss of six refugee children: On 17 February 2021, six children were killed, and five others severely wounded by unexploded ordnance (UXO) blast in Maaji settlement, Adjumani district. The children had dug up a rocket propelled grenade in the forest near the Maaji settlement. The ordnance went off as the children played with it. Three of the five survivors were taken to Kampala for specialised treatment, while two remained in Adjumani Hospital. Only one of the survivors is still hospitalised in Kampala, with the other four all discharged and back home with their families. While the presence of UXOs had not been an issue in the refugee response to date, UNHCR requested concerned authorities to review the scope of the problem. UNHCR and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) continue to work with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Adjumani to sensitize refugee communities on mine awareness. UNHCR is drafting a comprehensive plan of action for UXO mine awareness training targeting refugees in Uganda.

Spontaneous returns to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Since the beginning of 2021, a total of 859 Congolese refugees have reportedly returned to the DRC, mostly from Kamwenge district's Rwamwanja settlement and Kyegegwa district's Kyaka II settlement via Bunagana border in Kisoro district. Reduction in food and cash assistance and alleged poor medical services in the settlements remain the main reasons for leaving Uganda. The main areas of return in DRC are Gisigari, Knyandoni, Kiwanja, Tongo Busanza in Rutshuru territory and Goma. In February, the OPM Assistant Commissioner, UNHCR Assistant Representative (Protection) and the Head of Sub-Office Mbarara filed a mission to the border areas of Kisoro and Kanungu districts to review conditions for safe admissions, new arrival trends, security analysis, and management of spontaneous returns.

Review of mask production project: UNHCR completed an analysis of the non-medical mask production project launched in mid-2020 to support refugee livelihood during the COVID-19 crisis. A total of 1,156 refugee and host community tailors were engaged to produce nearly 890,000 masks in Kampala and 12 refugee settlements, with approximately USD 347,000 invested by UNHCR in labour and materials only. Tailors were from both the refugee (96 per cent) and host community (4 per cent). Women accounted for 75 per cent of the targeted population, with 72 per cent of the tailors aged 20 to 30 years. Only 2 per cent of the targeted population were over the age of 60, mainly men. The majority of refugee tailors were from South Sudan, followed by tailors from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (421) and host community tailors (43). Overall, the tailors made an average of \$109 (UGX 404,000) in a month. UNHCR is looking into building on this initiative to further expand livelihood for refugees, including by facilitating linkages with private sector entities willing to work with refugee entrepreneurs.



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

UNHCR Uganda and DRC discuss cross border issues: On 25 February, UNHCR Uganda and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) organized the first online cross-border meeting to discuss the current situation in the DRC and the spontaneous/pendular movements of Congolese refugees from Uganda. It was agreed that the two offices will enhance border monitoring on both sides and share regular

updates, including refugee cross-border movements, information on areas of return and preparedness measures on COVID-19, Ebola and the bubonic plague. This meeting will be held every three months.

UNHCR Uganda and South Sudan organize cross-border meeting: On 11 February, UNHCR Representatives to Uganda and South Sudan led a cross-border meeting at Elegu crossing point (Uganda's Amuru district) to discuss pendular movement of South Sudanese refugees and better coordination, information-sharing and analysis of refugee returns to South Sudan. In a meeting with Immigration officials at Elegu, UNHCR learnt that two buses packed with refugee children from Kiryandongo settlement crossed to South Sudan in early February. According to the Immigration officials, the children returned to South Sudan to take their final exams. UNHCR continues to advocate for the reopening of the borders and is considering establishing a desk at Elegu, the main crossing point between Uganda and South Sudan, to collect more accurate information on cross-border movement of refugees.

Burundi voluntary repatriation: UNHCR Uganda and Burundi held a tripartite technical meeting with the Government of Burundi on 9 February to discuss voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees living in Uganda. With 1,120 individuals wishing to return to Burundi to date, UNHCR is seeking to facilitate voluntary repatriation by road transiting through Rwanda, as approved by the latter. Based on the reception capacity of Burundi, UNHCR Uganda's plan is to organize bi-weekly convoys of 200 individuals, starting at the end of March. Refugees will require a negative COVID-19 certificate prior to their travel, which is a requirement to enter Burundi and Rwanda. The latter only accepts a SARS-CoV2 Real Time Polymerase (RT-PCR) test as the only valid COVID-19 test to enter the country.

Refugee Status Determination: The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) held its first session this year in Kyangwali refugee settlement, from 23 to 26 February 2021. During the session, 589 applications involving 2,091 individuals mainly from Rwanda and DRC were adjudicated. Overall recognition rate was 61 per cent. The Refugee Appeals Board (RAB) also held its first session in Kampala and adjudicated 10 appeal applications concerning Eritrean, Congolese and Ethiopian asylum seekers. The RAB confirmed three decisions of the REC, set aside six applications and deferred another one for additional clarification. UNHCR participated in both sessions as an observer, providing logistical and technical support.

Game Connect launches in Uganda: The Embassy of Italy in Kampala, in partnership with AVSI Foundation launched "Game Connect" on 17 February 2021. The project is aimed at improving the psychosocial wellbeing and mental health of refugees and host community youth aged 15-24 years, in Kampala and three refugee settlements, including Rwamwanja, Palabek and Adjumani. Game Connect is a collaboration between the Olympic Refuge Foundation, AVSI Foundation, Right to Play, Youth Sport Uganda, Uganda Olympic Committee and UNHCR.



EDUCATION

Achievements and Impact

Engagement with Ministry of Education: The UNHCR Representative held a meeting with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) Permanent Secretary. Attended by technical teams from MoES, Education Response Plan (ERP) Secretariat and UNHCR, the meeting discussed UNHCR's support towards phased school reopening in refugee-hosting areas. The Permanent Secretary (PS) clarified that, while schools could apply some flexibility in the approaches to be adopted, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on social distancing, sanitation and use of face masks for safe school operations should be observed. MoES is reviewing support foreseen from UNHCR to ease reopening of schools in refugee-hosting districts.

On the occasion, UNHCR donated two vehicles to MoES to support of monitoring of ERP activities. This is complementary to the donations of motorbikes, desktops, printers, tablets, UPS units, office furniture, and internet modems made in 2020 for continuous data collection, information management and ERP coordination in refugee-hosting districts.

Return of learners to school: With respect to the current candidate classes (Primary Seven, Senior Four and Senior Six), which re-opened in October 2020, data from settlement schools indicates that 11 per cent of Primary Seven did not return to school, including 16 per cent of girls who were enrolled before COVID-19 school closures. At Senior Four level, 19 per cent of learners did not return to school, including 20 per cent of girls enrolled before COVID-19 struck. At Senior Six level, 95 per cent of children returned to school, including 100 per cent of girls enrolled prior to COVID-19 school closures.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, more than 15 million learners in Uganda, including 600,000 refugees were enrolled in schools.



HEALTH

Achievements and Impact

During the month of February, 165,968 consultations were registered across the refugee response, with 22 per cent nationals and 78 per cent refugees. On average, each clinician provided 49 consultations per day. Overall, the major disease burdens were malaria (30.7 per cent); Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI) at 10.9 per cent, skin diseases (6 per cent), Lower Respiratory Tract Infection (LRTI) at 6 per cent and intestinal worms (5.5 per cent). Among children under five years, malaria was leading at 34.1 per cent, followed by URTI (15.4 per cent), skin diseases (6.9 per cent), LRTI (10.6 per cent), and watery diarrhea (6.1 per cent).

Crude mortality rate stood at 0.1 against the standard of 0.75 deaths per 1,000 population per month in February 2021, with leading causes of death being malaria (11.7 per cent), LRTI (10.7 per cent), and Neonatal death (8.7 per cent). Under-five mortality rate was at 0.12, which is within the public health standards of less than 1.5 deaths per 1,000 population per month. The major causes of death were malaria (15.2 per cent), LRTI at (9.1 per cent), neonatal death (27.3 per cent) and acute malnutrition (6.1 per cent). Children vaccinated against measles were 5,302, and 5,224 received diphtheria and polio vaccine. Of the 3,206 live births registered, 96 per cent were conducted at health facilities by skilled health workers. Sixty-seven per cent of the deliveries were refugees and 33 per cent nationals.

A total of 9,453 individuals were tested for HIV across all settlements, of which 158 tested positive and enrolled into HIV care and treatment. The mothers that attended the antenatal care clinics for the first time were 5,784 and were tested for HIV, in a bid to prevent mother-to-child transmission. A total of 17,537 patients are currently receiving HIV treatment in the settlements, 37 per cent of whom are refugees and 63 per cent nationals.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

During the month of February 2021, water supplied to refugees in the settlements stood at an average of 16.4 liters per person per day. This was achieved by increasing pumping hours for the 185 water schemes and ensuring 1,130 handpumps remained operational. The sector continued to engage water attendants to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements at water collections points. Handwashing stations and soap were provided at all communal meeting points, water collection points and health facilities, together with increased risk communication on COVID-19.

Hygiene promoters and Village Health Teams (VHTs) continued to work together to disseminate messages door-to-door, complementing other communication channels such as radios, *bodaboda* talks and printed messages on billboards. Soap distribution was maintained at 250 gr per person per month to support hand hygiene in response to COVID-19.

The Water and Sanitation Development Partners Group (WSDPG) held its annual retreat under the theme “Water Supply and Sanitation for Hosting Communities and Refugees”. The discussions focused on progress made towards transition of management of Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services to national utilities. The forum noted commendable progress made and sustained efforts to increase the number of water schemes and settlements to be transferred in 2021.



ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS TO ENERGY

Achievements and Impact

Approval of the proposal to borrow special drawing rights: On 1 February 2021, cabinet approved the proposal to borrow special drawing rights equivalent to USD 78.2 million from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group to finance the “Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate-Smart Development (IFPA-CD) Project”. The project will cover aspects of sustainable management of forests and protected areas leading to increased revenue from forests and wildlife protected areas. In addition, tree planting on private land and the impact of refugees on forestry and environment in refugee-hosting districts will also be addressed. The project will be implemented in the Albertine region and the refugee-hosting districts in West Nile and Lamwo.

Development of Sustainable Energy Response Plan: Documents supporting the development of the Sustainable Energy Response Plan (SERP) for refugees and host communities were circulated to the inter-agency task tea, including a draft costed workplan, draft coordination and governance structure and draft report from the stakeholder consultations at settlement and district levels. The draft four-year costed workplan estimates that approximately USD 572 million are required to implement the SERP. This covers the cost of baseline assessments, increased access to finance, increased sustainability of firewood and charcoal, increased access to alternative cooking options and efficiency in cooking, institutional clean cooking, increased access to electricity, policy and regulations, capacity building, multi-sector energy access support, and improved energy use in humanitarian organizations.


SHELTER, SETTLEMENT AND NFIS**Achievements and Impact**

In Nakivale settlement, a site was handed over for the construction of a motor vehicle workshop, which is expected to be completed within three months. This will reduce travels to Mbarara for car service and provide appropriate working space. Similarly, construction of a motor vehicle workshop in Kyaka II is underway.

A 21-kilometer (km) road rehabilitation from Kityaza to Rubondo was completed, reducing the travel time from Base Camp to 15 minutes, and easing food distribution and medical services to and from Rubondo. In Kyaka II, construction and rehabilitation of Kyaka II road settlement (a total of 63.1 km roads in nine zones of Bukere, Buliti, Kakoni, Kabarogota, Byabakora, Mukondo, Itambabiniga, Bwiriza and Sweswe) is ongoing. In Rwamwanja, road maintenance and rehabilitation work (a total of 53 km), along Ntenungi, Kyempango, Nkoma, Mahani and Buguta roads are progressing. In Kiryandongo, road rehabilitation is expected to end in April 2021,. Once completed, the road network will ease movement of goods and services in the respective settlements.

Installation of solar streetlights for improved security of refugees was completed in the South West, targeting trading centres and villages hosting new arrivals. They were distributed as follows: Matanda (10), Ntoroko (8), Nyakabande (10), Nakivale (20) and Kyaka (8). In Kyangwali, solar light installation works at the warehouse compound was completed and handed over to the management team (Alight and African Initiatives for Relief and Development).

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Road rehabilitation remains a major challenge throughout the settlements. Most of the roads are in a bad state and need improvement.

**COORDINATION****Achievements and Impact**

Follow-up to VENA exercise: The Vulnerability and Essential Needs Assessment (VENA) found that, 91 per cent of refugees living in settlements in Uganda are highly vulnerable from an essential needs point-of-view. General food assistance is insufficient to meet essential food needs with 100 per cent rations, and due to the recent reductions in rations only a third of the food Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) is covered. Very few refugees have livelihoods or resources to cover the gap created by the small rations, which means that, essential needs go unmet and protection risks increase. Instead of a general reduction in rations, assistance should be proportionate to the need through prioritization. As a follow-up to VENA, the UNHCR-WFP Joint Targeting and Programme Excellence Hub is providing support to the two country offices to move forward with revising the analytical framework and beneficiary selection criteria, in addition to operationalizing the prioritization exercise.

Working in partnership with:

Government - Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), District Local Government (DLG), Ministry of Agriculture Animal, Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD), Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC).

Refugee Hosting Districts – Adjumani, Isingiro, Kampala, Kamwenge, Kikuube, Kiryandongo, Koboko, Kyegegwa, Lamwo, Madi Okollo, Obongi, Terego and Yumbe.

UN - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Migration Agency (IOM), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations World Health Organization (WHO).

NGOs - Action Africa Help (AAH), Action Against Hunger (ACF), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD), African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD), Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD), Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD), Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), American Refugee Committee (ARC), Andre Foods International (AFI), Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AARJ), Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI), Associazione Centro Aiuti Volontari (ACAV), A-Z Children's Charity, Baylor, Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC), Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL), CARE, Care and Assistance for Forced Migrants (CAFOMI), Caritas Uganda (CU), Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID), Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Child Voices International, Communication and Education (PACE), Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD), Community Technology Empowerment Network (CTEN), Concern World Wide (CWW), Cooperazione e Sviluppo (CESVI), DanChurchAid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Doctors with Africa (CUAMM), Drop in the Basket (DiB), Finn Church Aid (FCA), Finnish Refugee Council (FRC), Food for the Hungry (FH), Friends of Kisoro, German International Cooperation (GiZ), Give Directly, Global Aim, Global Refugee International (GRI), Healing Kadi Foundation, Help Age International, Humane Africa Mission (HAM), Humanitarian Assistance and Development Services (HADS), Humanitarian Initiative Just Relief Aid (HIJRA), Humanitarian Open Street Map Team (HOT), Humanity & Inclusion (HI), IMPACT, Infectious Disease Institute (IDI), InterAid, Inter-church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO Cooperation), International Aid Services (IAS), International Center for Research in Agro Forestry (ICRAF), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), IsraAid, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Johanniter, Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Lutheran World Relief (LWR), Malteser International (MI), Medical Teams International (MTI), Mercy Corps (MC), Mondo, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Nsamizi Training Institute of Social Development (NSAMIZI), OXFAM, Peace Winds Japan (PWJ), Peter C. Alderman Foundation (PCAF), Plan International (PI), Programme for Accessible Health, Real Medicine Foundation (RMF), Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services in Eastern Uganda (RHITES), Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU), Right to Play (RtP), Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment in West Nile (RICE-WN), Salvation Army, Samaritan's Purse (SP), Save the Children International (SCI), Self Help Africa (SHA), The Uganda National Apiculture Development Organization (Tunado), Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Trocaire, Tutapona Trauma Rehabilitation (TTR), Uganda Law Society (ULS), Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS), Uganda Refugee Disaster and Management Council (URDMC), War Child Canada (WCC), War Child Holland (WCH), Water Mission Uganda (WMU), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Windle International Uganda (WIU), World Vision International (WVI), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), ZOA – Uganda (ZOA).

External Relations

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Denmark 9.6 million | **European Union** 4.8 million | **Germany** 3.2 million | **Japan** 2.5 million | **Qatar** 1.8 million | **Republic of Korea** 1.7 million | **Netherlands** 1.6 million | **Remon L Vos** 1.3 million | **Sweden** 1.2 million | **Ireland** 1.2 million

Education Cannot Wait | UN Children Fund | IGAD | BOREALIS AG | Unilever (UK) | Fast Retailing Co. Ltd (UNIQLO) | Other private donors

OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Germany 10.9 million

Sweden | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Norway 80 million | **Sweden** 66.9 million | **Netherlands** 36.1 million | **Denmark** 34.6 million | **Germany** 22.1 million | **Switzerland** 16.4 million | **Private donors Spain** 13.3 million | **Ireland** 12.5 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million

Algeria | Armenia | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Portugal | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private donors

The Refugee Response in Uganda is coordinated jointly by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

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