

IMPACT OF UNDERFUNDING IN 2023 (September-December)



Jeina Kiko is a single refugee mother in Rhino Camp refugee settlement. Ever since the food ration cuts, she says she sleeps hungry so that her child can have a little more to eat. @Norwegian Refugee Council

Refugee Response partners in Uganda play a crucial role in providing protection, assistance, and solutions to the 1.5 million refugees and asylum seekers in the country. However, in 2023, partners face a significant challenge due to underfunding of its interventions, which is exacerbated by a growing influx of new arrivals. By the end of September 2023, 74,618 new arrivals were received and a total of 225,000 new arrivals have been received since 2022. While most refugees have fled violence in South Sudan or the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the recent conflict in Sudan has resulted in a total of 6,262 new arrivals from Sudan. The dwindling resources at a time when the needs are growing in the region is having an effect across all sectors and threatens to undermine or reverse modest gains made, leaving minimal resources to respond to growing protection needs. Consequently, the vulnerability of refugees is increasing.

The overall funding shortage is impacting the already limited livelihood opportunities and severely impacting food security. Since July 2023, 14% of refugees receive 60% food rations, 82% of refugees receive 30% rations, and 4% are discontinued from food assistance. While shifting to providing rations according to the level of needs is a positive development, this must be done closely together with strengthening livelihood activities to support the broader transition to self-reliance. Furthermore, there is a threat of a complete pipeline break for food assistance, anticipated in December 2023, if funding is not secured soon. Refugees in Uganda already receive the lowest level of food assistance in the region.

Child poverty rates are rising across Uganda, particularly in West Nile and Southwest regions, where rates reach 59% and 69% respectively¹. Child labor, school dropouts, and transactional sex are on the increase. A main protection risk for refugee children in Uganda is GBV and there is limited support available to them with one case worker managing an average of 128 children due to budget limitations.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/1856/file/Child%20Poverty%20Report:%20main%20report.pdf>




The increasing gap in hygiene and sanitation needs is heightening morbidity and mortality risks. Due to underfunding, soap and hygiene kits have not been provided since 1 July 2022. Latrine coverage decreased to 66% (from 68% in 2022) due to population growth (including new arrivals). The planned construction of 1,000 replacement latrines in the flooded areas of Palorinya and Adjumani settlements in 2022 has not been conducted due to limited funds. Insufficient medicines are available, and in some locations, health workers each provide consultation for an average of 80 patients a day.

Suicide is on the rise with financial problems and domestic violence as main contributing factors. There were 123 attempted suicide cases in refugee settlements, with 24 resulting in death since January 2023. There is only 10% enrollment in secondary school and a direct correlation between women’s education level and depression. Faced with mounting economic, social and protection pressures, refugee men, women, and children have increasingly resorted to harmful practices, such as reducing the number of meals per day, accumulating debt, and sending children to work.

Despite these challenges, it should be noted that the “Uganda refugee model” continues to be an inspiration around the world. Uganda has provided a haven to those fleeing from persecution and violence for more than 70 years. Refugees are afforded freedom of movement, the right to work, establish a business, own property, and access national services, including education and health care. Additional support – especially additional financial resources – is needed to make the Uganda refugee response sustainable.









Without additional funding, further reductions in services are expected, with severe implications for refugees and the communities hosting them.

Overview Impact of Underfunding at the end of 2023

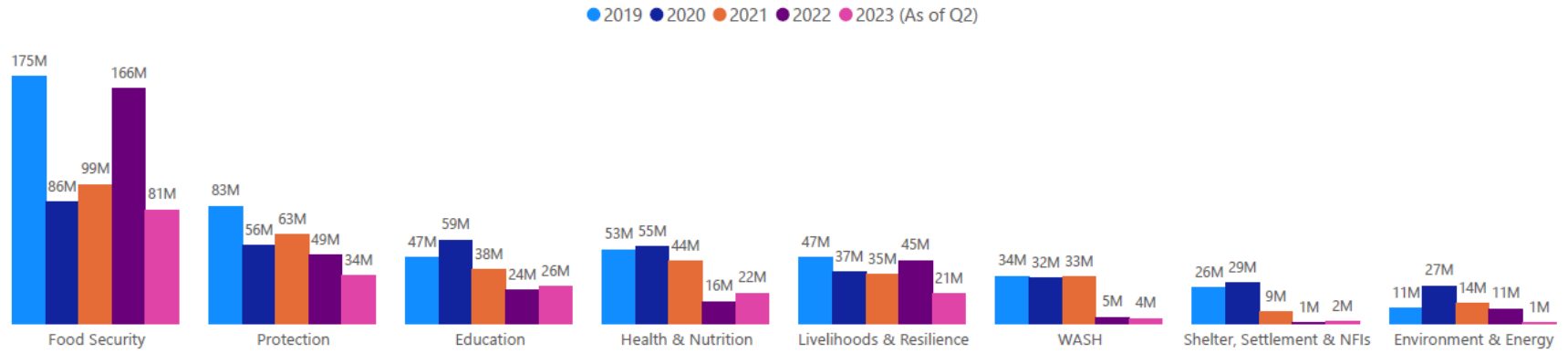
 <p>Health services will deteriorate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No essential medicines will be procured, which may contribute to preventable deaths. Some 2,600 healthcare workers will not be maintained, resulting in 550,000 patient contacts (consultations, prescriptions, treatments, and dispensing) not being provided. 	 <p>Food security will reduce further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11% out of the 25% defined as highly vulnerable refugees will receive only 30% food rations instead of 60%. Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) program beneficiaries will receive only 50% of their ration entitlement, which will contribute to malnutrition.
 <p>Hygiene and sanitation needs will increase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 70% of new arrivals will have no access to water, which will result in water rationing and contribute to rising tensions. Gap of 80,000 Household latrines required to prevent disease outbreak will remain. 3,000 Village Health Teams (VHTs) will not be paid increasing pressure on health services. 	 <p>Less access to quality education for all children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average class size will increase to 1 teacher for 90 children, which will contribute to increased dropouts. 400,000 learners will be without scholastic materials. 10,000 learners with disabilities will not be supported.
 <p>Deforestation in and around settlements will continue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household cooking energy for 15,000 households will not be provided, resulting in 270 hectares of forest being cut. 8.5 million trees will not be planted. 	 <p>Inability to protect those at increased risk of vulnerability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 295,000 refugees with poor mental health not supported, which increases cases of relapse. 28,000 refugees who face discrimination will not receive the specific support they require.

There is insufficient capacity and funding to cover the multiplicity of needs. The Uganda Country Refugee Response (UCRRP) partners have therefore identified the most pressing needs in each sector and calculated **USD 112.4 million** required from September to December 2023 to provide critical and minimal services for the remaining months of the year, that will help reduce the negative impact of underfunding.

Priority funding needs: September – December 2023

Sector	Funding Needed	Prioritized Activities
 Health & nutrition	USD 10.6M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary for 2,643 healthcare workers for three months. Procurement of essential medicines in 2023 and 2024. Nutrition interventions delivered, including pregnant and nursing mothers and children under five. Provision of preventative, promotive and curative services for communicable and non-communicable diseases.
 WASH	USD 9.3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation and maintenance of water systems in 13 settlements. Development of water infrastructure to facilitate transition to national systems and sector capacity building. Optimization of aged water systems. Sanitation and hygiene improvement of 500 emergency latrines and 17,000 HH latrines.
 Shelter & NFIs	USD 13.5M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demarcation for shelter and agricultural land for new arrivals. Upgrade and expansion of reception facilities. Rehabilitation and maintenance of settlement roads.
 Education	USD 0.83M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of scholastic materials and school supplies.
 Environment and Energy	USD 1.8M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of 15,000 household energy saving stoves. Establishment of woodlots for firewood and maintaining 3,701 hectares. Solarization of health facilities.
 Livelihoods	USD 10.2M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-harvest training and kits for refugees and host community farmers targeted by block farms. Land preparation for farming including land opening and furrowing. Intensive farming (OLUM) for food production-irrigation technology. Multi-purpose grants for new arrivals settled in 2022.
 Protection	USD 5.3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biometric registration and issuance of ID cards. Civil registration, including birth registration to address the gap of over 50,000 pending birth certificates. Prevention programmes & services provided to survivors of GBV. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) provided.
 Food Security	USD 61M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and cash assistance rations provided for 1.4M refugees at the settlement level. High Energy Biscuits provided to new arrivals at border crossing points. Hot Meals provided to new arrivals in all transit and reception centers. Settling-in rations provided at 100% rations to new arrivals.
Total	USD 112.4M	

Total contributions received per sector (2019 – 2023)



Critical Funding Needed vs Total Funding Requirement (2023)

