

COMPREHENSIVE  
REFUGEE RESPONSE  
FRAMEWORK **UGANDA**  
**THE WAY FORWARD**

OCTOBER 2017

*Cover photo*

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# Introduction



2016 and 2017 have presented the highest ever recorded inflows of refugees into the country with the current numbers standing at over 1.3 million.

**Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda**  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda

Uganda has been hosting refugees for a long time, but the years 2016 and 2017 have presented the highest ever recorded inflows of refugees into the country with the current numbers standing at close to 1.3 million. After realizing the protracted nature of displacement in the region, Uganda adopted an integrated refugee management model as the best way of providing dignified asylum. This approach has been a success because of the enabling laws in the country that allow for refugees to have access to health, education, skills training and access to land as a way to promote self-reliance. We treat refugees humanely and with dignity, because we know that no one chooses to be a refugee. People are forced to leave their countries, homes and families because of unbearable conditions. We know that today it is them, tomorrow, it could be anyone of us.

We salute the host communities for sharing their limited and meagre resources with refugees. We realise though, that these host communities deserve to be supported to build their resilience in the face of increased refugee numbers so that the two groups can continue to live in peace, harmony and dignity. The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, launched in Uganda in March 2017, re-affirms what we have always believed in --- handling refugee issues in a holistic manner. The Framework is not a solution in itself but a platform for stakeholders to come together and find common solutions. This Framework needs to be supported by all to demonstrate how sustainable and inclusive investments in social services and in human capital among refugees and host communities can help break the cycle of conflict, cement peaceful co-existence and with time, as refugees return, help rebuild their countries of origin.



**Ms. Rosa Malango**  
UN Resident  
Coordinator in Uganda

In September 2016, 193 Member States adopted the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants. They pledged robust support to countries like Uganda using a dignified approach led by communities to support large movements of refugees. They pledged to support respect for life, empowerment of women and girls, protection of families and livelihoods. They pledged to invest in communities sharing their safe spaces with victims of conflict. In response, we the United Nations System in Uganda have partnered with refugees, host communities, Member States, Non-governmental organizations, civil society

associations and private sector leaders to tell Uganda's story and invite partners to invest in the transformational approach being led by the Government.

In June 2017, the world came to Uganda and witnessed first-hand the herculean effort as well as the incredible solidarity of its people as the UN Secretary-General and President of the Republic of Uganda co-chaired the Solidarity Summit. We must now invest in these communities to ensure that Government and partners can provide basic necessities as well as improved quality of services to refugees and the communities that host them.

# UGANDA

## Refugees and asylum-seekers

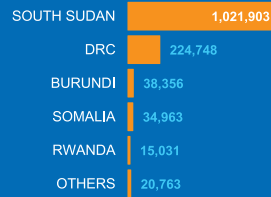
as of 01 September 2017

### KEY FIGURES

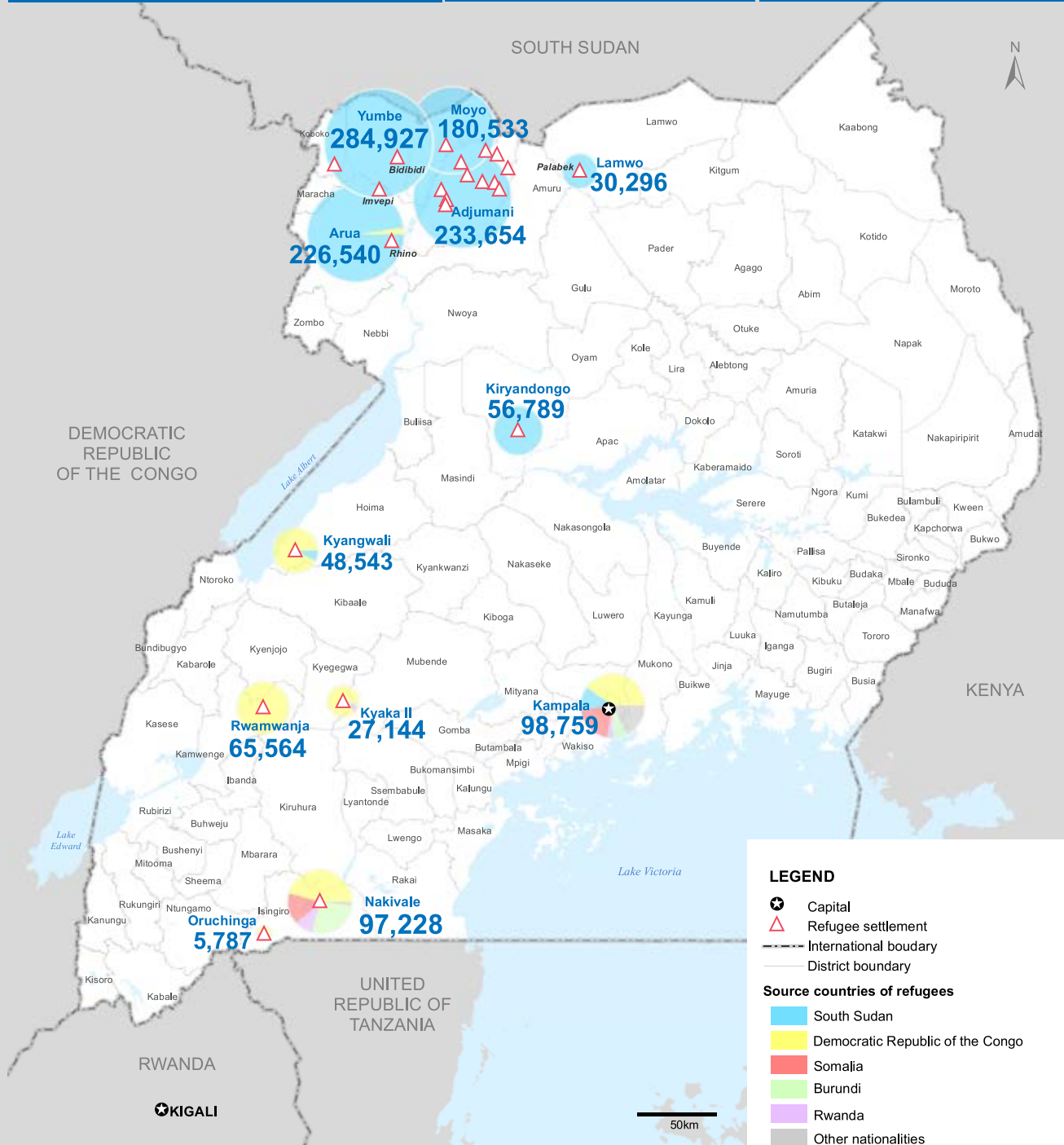
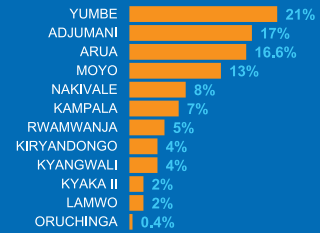
**1,355,764**  
total refugees and asylum-seekers

**1,235,765** bio-metrically registered  
**119,999** pending bio-metric registration\*

### COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



### REFUGEE LOCATIONS



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

# Uganda and its Open Door Policy

Uganda is currently hosting the highest numbers of refugees in Africa, and the third largest globally. The total refugee population stands at 1.3 million, higher than at any time in its history. Women and girls represent 82% of the total refugee population, while children constitute 61%.

This has created a compounded refugee crisis, comprised of a recent refugee influx notably from South Sudan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, in addition to a protracted refugee situation. Forced displacement has become the single most defining humanitarian/development challenge globally, with the continuous influx of refugees into Uganda.

## In Uganda refugees have access to:

- Legal, physical and social protection
- Public health services
- A plot of land
- Universal primary and lower secondary education
- Economic activity

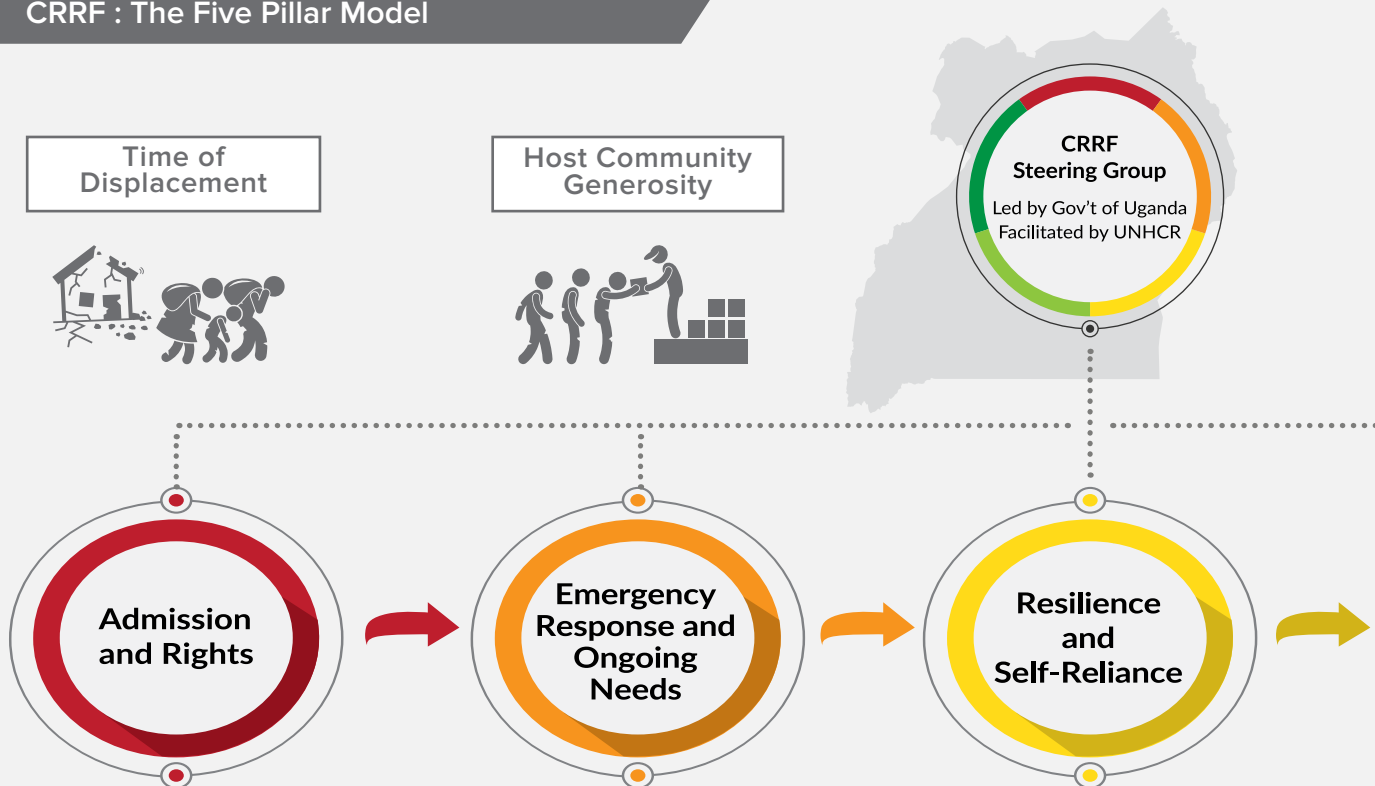
## Uganda is among the nations which has pioneered an out of camp policy in the region:

- Most refugees reside in rural settlements alongside Ugandan citizens thanks to the Government's non-encampment policy
- Due to freedom of movement, nearly 100,000 live as urban refugees in towns and cities



© UNHCR/Michele Sibiloni. Newly arrived South Sudanese refugees waiting in the Palorinya reception centre in Northern Uganda.

## CRRF : The Five Pillar Model



# Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

The New York Declaration calls on UNHCR to develop and initiate, through a multi-stakeholder approach, a comprehensive refugee response that protects and promotes the rights of refugees as enshrined by international law, whilst easing the pressure on the country of asylum.

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) is detailed in Annex 1 of the 19 September 2016 New York Declaration and its practical application will inform the development of a Global Compact on Refugees to be adopted in 2018.

## CRRF's key features

- Protection-driven: the mandate to initiate and develop the framework rests with UNHCR, in close coordination with relevant states
- Holistic: it covers everything that happens from the time of displacement until a durable solution is found: local integration, resettlement or voluntary repatriation
- A multi-stakeholder approach: it involves mobilizing the comparative advantage of other stakeholders
- Human rights oriented: it seeks to protect the rights

of refugees under international law and enhance opportunities and solutions

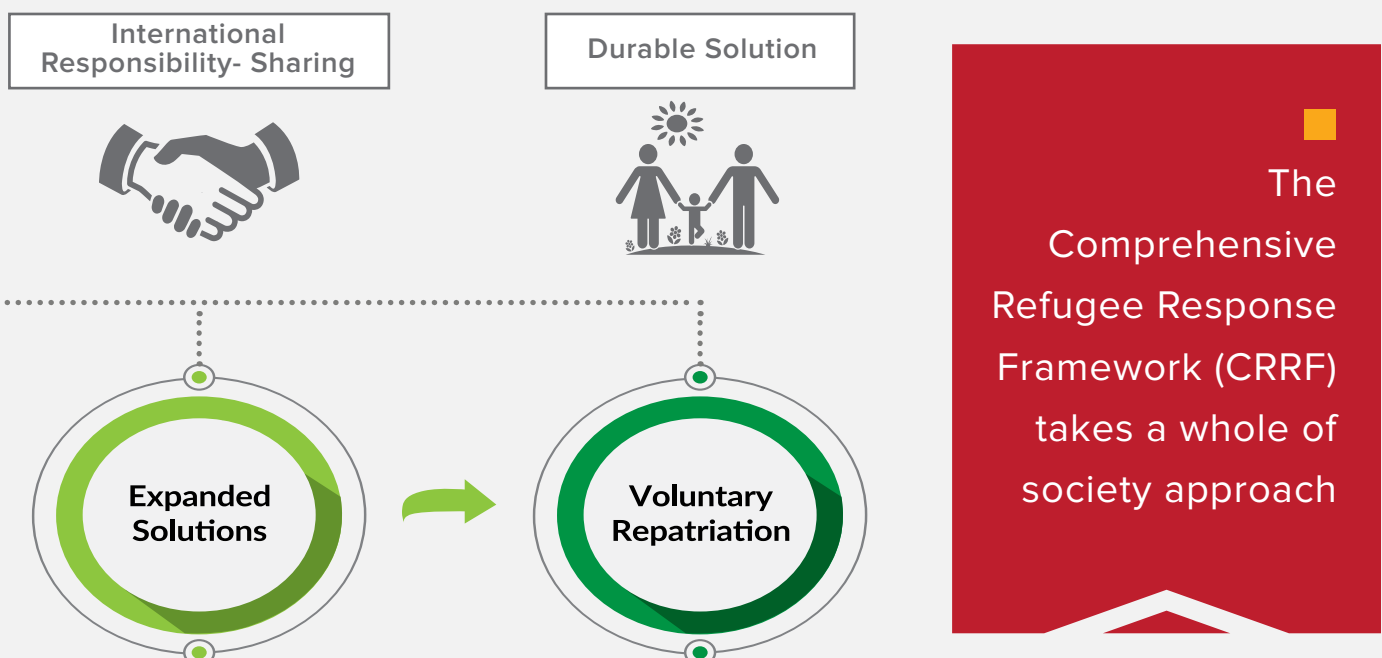
- Responsibility-sharing: it aims at easing the pressure on the country of asylum, including by supporting host communities. It articulates the necessity of providing sustainable support to refugees and host communities alike
- Addressing root causes: it seeks to enhance support to the country of origin

## CRRF's global objectives

- Ease pressure on the host country
- Enhance refugee-self reliance
- Expand access to third country solutions
- Support conditions in countries of origin

## CRRF in Uganda

In Uganda, given its long history of providing asylum, a comprehensive response is already being pursued under the leadership of Government and UNHCR, and the country is applying many of the principles set out in Annex I of the New York Declaration.



# 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations

## Supports all pillars

The CRRF outlines a broad range of policies and rights to be implemented in response to mass displacement. The majority of these rights are addressed by the 2006 Refugee Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations, including: access to territory and the principle of non-refoulement, provision of individual registration and documentation, access to social services including education and health, the right to work and the right to establish business.

## Settlement Transformation Agenda

### Supports Pillar three, with indirect support to Pillars two, four and five

The inclusion of refugees in national development plans is one of the policy actions indicated in the New York Declaration. The Government of Uganda included refugees in its Second National Development Plan through the Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA).

This decision provides a clear entry point for a range of actors to support the objectives of refugee self-reliance through development interventions and contributes to easing the pressure on the host country and communities.

## Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE)

### Supports Pillar three, with indirect support to Pillars two, four and five

ReHoPE is a self-reliance and resilience initiative led by the UN and World Bank. It is a key building block to deliver on the CRRF in Uganda, given its multi-stakeholder approach spanning the humanitarian-development divide.

ReHoPE is integrated into the UN Development Assistance Framework and represents the combined development response of all UN agencies to the refugee hosting districts.

# Open Borders

## Refugee Registration and Documentation

Since March 2015, the registration of refugees has been carried out by the Government of Uganda through the Office of the Prime Minister. Refugees are now registered in the Refugee Information Management System (RIMS) thereby further reinforcing the Government's core mandated responsibilities to manage refugee protection and deliver essential services. By the end of 2017, the RIMS system will be upgraded to enable data to be transferred to UNHCR's ProGres registration platform. Refugees are also provided with ID cards and family certificates.

The overall coordination of the **emergency response system** in Uganda is led by the Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR, **supported by UN agencies and partners.**

## Key Achievements

- Border monitoring and reception at border collection points
- Transport of refugees from border points to transit or reception centres

Life-saving **multi-sector emergency services** at transit and reception centres, including biometric registration into the Government Refugee Information Management System

- Transfer to settlements and land plot allocation to each household (planning parameters typically provide for a plot size of 30 x 30 metres however, in West Nile, plots are in some cases smaller)
- Emergency shelter assistance in settlements. This currently follows a minimal approach (tools, plastic



sheeting and poles) which has been deemed no longer appropriate given the protracted nature of the refugee mass influxes and the protection risks caused for refugees. In 2016, the operation shifted to a semi-permanent shelter approach which requires more funding

- **Multi-sector life-saving assistance** in settlements covers a broad range of activities including primary health

services, education, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene services

- Persons with specific needs, in particular unaccompanied or separated children, and survivors of sexual and gender based violence, are prioritized in the delivery of life-saving assistance
- Refugees are provided with identification cards and family certificates



### South Sudanese mother finds safety in Uganda

By: Claire McKeveer/UNHCR

BIDIBIDI, Uganda - Aisha, 28, fled on foot, with her youngest son strapped to her back, as armed marauders closed in on her home in Yei, South Sudan. “They attacked us, they wanted to kill us even, but I was holding a small baby,” said Aisha, convinced that the gaze of four-year-old Jonathan looking back into the eyes of one of their attackers saved their lives.

During the assault, her eldest son, 13-year-old Godwin, sensed the grave danger they were in and was distraught. But Aisha kept reassuring him that everything would be okay, and focused on keeping the children’s spirits up as they trekked through the bush to Uganda. “I encouraged the children. I told them things will be better. Because something happened in our home, that’s why we came here for safety.”

Godwin and Jonathan are now safe at the Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda. She and the children now live in a new mud hut or tukul she built from grass and mud bricks. “I’m just dreaming that my children will find a way to study and that I can feed them.”

© UNHCR/David Azia. South Sudanese refugee Aisha with her children outside their shelter in the Bidibidi refugee settlement, Uganda.

# Protection

Children bear the brunt of conflicts. Once displaced, and particularly when they are unaccompanied or separated from their primary caregivers, children are vulnerable to psychosocial distress, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and other forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. Among the current population of refugees and asylum seekers registered in Uganda, more than 750,000 are children under the age of 18. That is 61% of the total refugee population in the country.

UNHCR continues to prioritise measures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender based violence. Sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war, especially against women and girls. Increasingly, men and boys are being targeted. It is a gross violation of human rights, and a reason that many refugees take flight.

Child Friendly Spaces and Early Childhood Education Centres have been established to build resilience, heal trauma and mobilize the community towards child protection. Structured activities include informal education classes, counselling and games.

## Key Challenges

- An unprecedented number of children separated from families or caregivers
- A high rate of sexual and gender-based violence
- Early marriage and teenage pregnancy
- A high level of child labor linked to the lack of basic necessities
- Psychosocial distress due to children witnessing extreme violence
- Lack of a comprehensive response for children due to limited funding for child protection, especially in the emergency response
- Limited livelihoods activities which has increased the vulnerability of women and girls who are the bread winners of the families
- Limited access to education (secondary school) and vocational training which has increased the

vulnerability of the adolescent girls thus subjecting them to the traditional roles of getting married at an early stage

## CRRF - the Way Forward

- Strengthen child protection systems through coordination at the district level
- Support non-formal and vocational institutions at district level to provide more opportunities for refugee youths and adolescents who cannot continue formal education
- Identify and assess children-at-risk (including separated and unaccompanied children), and provide individual case management
- Placement of children in alternative care arrangement, which includes mainly foster care
- Capacity building to different stakeholders on SGBV concepts and gender mainstreaming
- Cash based interventions for women and girls
- Joint planning and commemoration of 16 days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign

■ Among the current population of refugees and asylum seekers registered in Uganda, more than 750,000 are children under the age of 18. That is 61% of the total refugee population in the country.





© UNHCR/Jiro Ose.

## Fatuma's Story

**By: Carol Aketch/UNHCR**

As the sole breadwinner in a household of ten, Fatuma barely ekes out a living among the urban poor in Kampala. She arrived in Uganda in 2012, after her home in Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, was attacked by militias.

Fatuma's back was badly injured and her right leg was paralyzed. She and her family fled for their lives, crossing into Uganda. Unaccustomed to rural life, Fatuma decided the family should move to the capital, Kampala. They settled in one of the city's heavily crowded slums where housing is very cheap. With six dependent children, a grandchild aged two, two younger sisters, and a young brother-in-law, providing food and shelter are her priorities.

Fatuma has chronic back problems. Thanks to Uganda's generous health care system, she and her family members are able to access free medical services at the nearby Kisenyi Health Facility. But, when drugs are out of stock, or

special treatment is needed in private health facilities, she has to pay medical fees or purchase medicine herself.

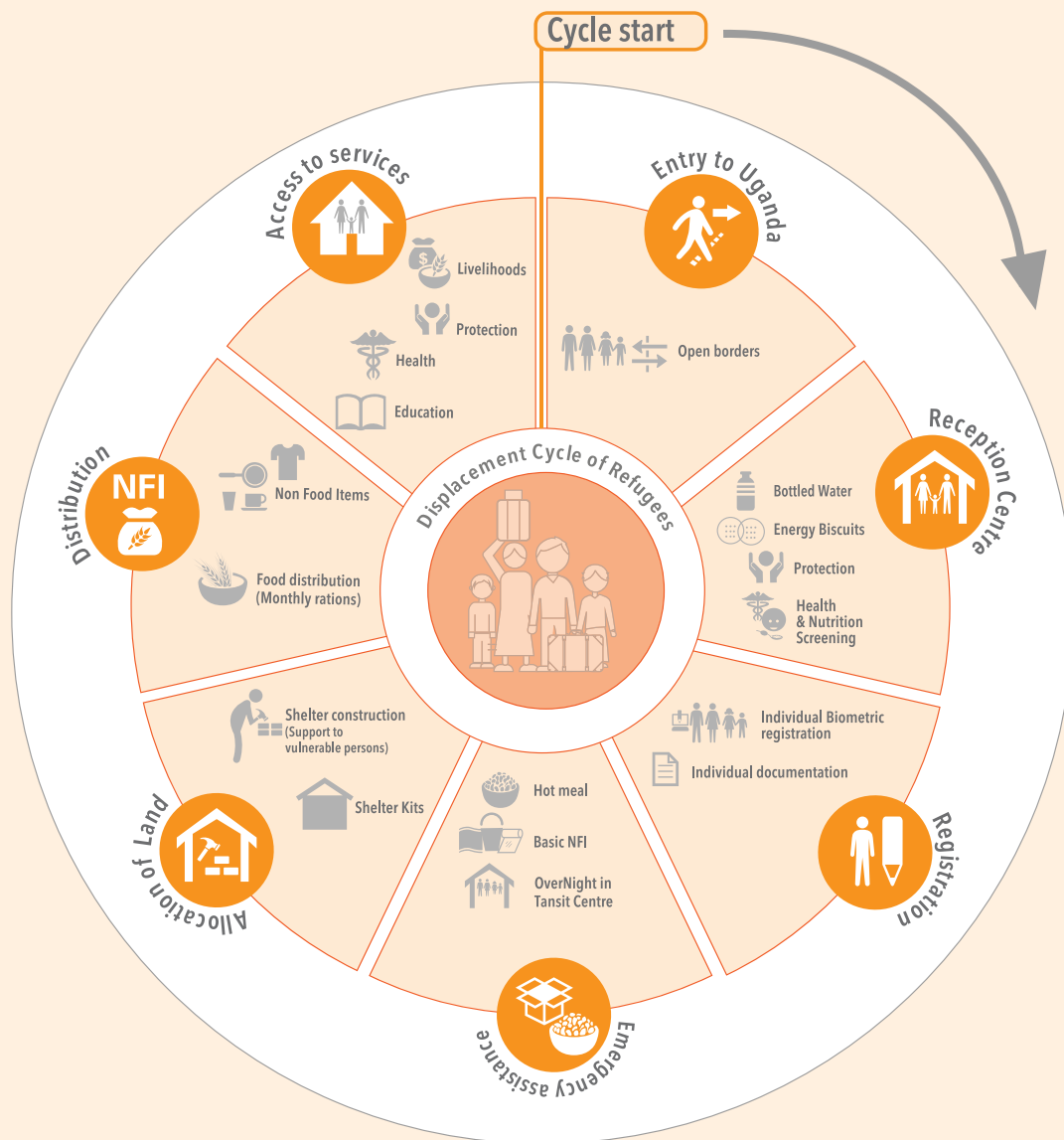
Fatuma lives peacefully with her neighbours. However, though rare, occasional incidents of hostility from neighbours leave her feeling fearful, vulnerable and unable to protect her family. There is sometimes resentment by nationals who feel that refugees receive preferential treatment.

Through InterAid Uganda, UNHCR's implementing partner, Fatuma received crutches and she signed up for skills training opportunities targeting persons living with disabilities. She was selected to participate in a training course in catering at a Government Economics Institute. When Fatuma graduated she received a start-up kit comprising cooking stoves, pans and utensils. That is how she went from begging on the street to making bread to sell in the neighbourhood.

# Responding to an Emergency Together

With the continuous influx of refugees into Uganda, UNHCR, the Ugandan government and partners ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided in a time-critical and consistent manner allowing refugees to live in safety, harmony and dignity with their host communities, and together protect their natural environment while contributing to social cohesion.

## Emergency Response





# The Food Chain

**On arrival, most refugees rely on food assistance** until they are able to provide for themselves using land and taking advantage of livelihood opportunities, both provided by the Ugandan government. Refugees receive high-energy biscuits and water at the border crossing points and hot meals in transit/reception centres, while they wait to be settled to their residential plot.

**A settling-in ration** is provided when refugees move to their new plots and monthly food rations or cash transfers are provided thereafter. Refugees also receive supplementary rations of specialized nutritious food to treat and prevent severe and moderate acute malnutrition and also micronutrient deficiencies. In some areas, refugees and host community farmers are supported to improve post-harvest food management both at household and community level and to access markets for any surplus they produce.

## Key Challenges:

- Funding shortages: around 200,000 people who have been in the country since before mid-2015 have only been receiving half rations since August 2016
- High demand for food in the region means that key commodities such as cereals not arriving on time, led to distribution delays in May 2017, and many received incomplete food baskets
- Lack of livelihood opportunities continue to affect the nutritional status of refugees and host communities in the settlements
- A lack of nutritional food for children aged 6 -23 months old, causing suffering from wasting, stunting or anaemia.
- Inadequate funding for infant and young child feeding program, to support eligible children, pregnant and lactating women

## CRRF Response - the Way Forward:

- **Food Aid Study and Report** – UNHCR and the World Food Program are carrying out a food aid study across Uganda to determine who is most vulnerable and how to target those people in a more efficient way. To be completed by end of 2017
- **Scaling up nutrition:** Strengthening nutrition interventions taking place during the first 1,000 days of young children's lives

- **Food security and agriculture:** Increasing food production at household levels, especially in refugee-hosting districts
- **Implement nutrition specific interventions** namely vitamin A supplementation among under 5 years children and Iron-folate supplementation for pregnant women
- **Strengthen Maternal and Child Health programs** to target all pregnant and lactating women, infants at 0-6 months with improving initiation and exclusive breastfeeding and children aged 6-23 months with the provision of complementary food i.e. fortified food
- **Strengthen management of acute malnutrition** through improved surveillance, identification and treatment of severe and moderate acute malnutrition while emphasizing on social behavioural communication change toward optimal nutrition actions
- **Strengthen nutrition sensitive programs** such as agriculture related programs or other livelihood activities including the application of cash and voucher approaches

Refugees receive high-energy biscuits and water at the border crossing points and hot meals in transit/reception centres, while they wait to be settled to their residential plot.



@WFP/Hugh Rutherford.

## Cash assistance provides food of choice

By: Claire Nevill/WFP

**Adjumani, Uganda** - Wuoi Reng's knees bend and flex like those of a supple teenager, as he pours steaming milky tea into eight cups. "I don't feel 71 anymore!" he says with a toothy, playful grin. "With the cash I get from the World Food Program (WFP) we eat well now. I feel healthy and some days I even leave my stick at home!"

In 2013, when fighting broke out in South Sudan, rebels took Wuoi's cows and burned his houses to the ground. The family escaped to Uganda, resettling in Nyamanzi, Adjumani district, where they have lived for almost four years now. At the beginning, Wuoi and his family received food assistance from WFP. In November 2015 they switched to cash. Every month, Wuoi or Mary take turns to collect \$US 47 to feed their family of ten.

This month it's Wuoi's turn to visit WFP's cash distribution site. "When I walk away with the money, I feel free," he says. "I like the choice I have now to buy the food we want to eat, instead of receiving it in-kind. I usually go straight to the market to buy tea and fresh milk."

WFP currently injects \$ US 900,000 into the local economy every month through its cash transfers to refugees. The benefits of these cash transfers reverberate throughout the host community. Research conducted by the University of California, Davis and WFP in 2016 found that an average refugee household like Wuoi and Mary's, receiving cash food assistance at Adjumani Settlement increases annual real income in the local economy by \$US 1,072. The income multipliers come about when the refugees buy goods from the markets in and around the settlements using cash given to them by WFP.

# Water Challenges

The high number of refugees entering Uganda is putting constraints on the ability to deliver effective water, sanitation and hygiene services. Currently, there are more than 30 partners working to ensure that refugees and the local population in refugee-hosting areas have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services.

**Minimum Water Needs:** 24 million litres of water are needed every day to provide refugees and their host communities with a minimum of 20 litres per person, in line with UNHCR standards.

## Key Challenges:

- At a cost of US \$80,000 per day, the water trucking response is costly and unsustainable
- Delays in water delivery due to poor weather and truck break downs
- A high funding gap for the provision of water at 70%

## CRRF – the Way Forward

- **The transition away from water trucking is already being pursued in some locations and will be implemented by the end of 2017**
- UNHCR has taken the lead in setting up a **National**

## Water and Sanitation Humanitarian (WASH)

**Coordination Platform** - anchored under the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE)'s department of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, with co-lead arrangements with both MoWE and UNICEF

- **Hydrogeological prospection** to identify potential locations where high yielding boreholes can be drilled
- **Water-point mapping:** strengthen related data collection
- **Rehabilitate existing water systems** in and around the refugee settlements
- **Install sustainable water supply systems:**
- **Develop dams** to take the pressure off drinking water sources
- **Broaden partnerships to allow room for innovation and capacity development**
- **Support government structures** to integrate data on water facilities in the refugee settlements in the existing systems
- **Align refugee interventions with the long-term development actions** through sector coordination both at national and district/ settlement levels

■  
There are more than 30 partners working to ensure that refugees and the local population in refugee-hosting areas have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services.





## A mother's struggle to access safe water in Uganda

By: Rocco Nuri/UNHCR

**Rhino Camp, Uganda** - Kiden sits on a row of hundreds of empty jerry cans orderly lined up before a water point at Rhino Camp, a refugee settlement in northwest Uganda.

Her head in the palm of one hand, she stares towards the far edge of the road desperately waiting for the arrival of a water truck from the Nile River. The tank supplying water in her community has run dry and has not been refilled for days. Under a scorching sun, her children are at home and have gone unbathed for nearly three days.

"We don't have enough water to drink, let alone have the chance to bathe," says Kiden.

Kiden fled to Uganda with her three children and husband in August 2016, as war was raging in their hometown Lanya. Like many refugees in Uganda, 22-year-old Kiden depends on humanitarian partners to get access to safe drinking water. According to UNHCR,

24 million of litres of water are needed every day to provide refugees and their host communities with a minimum of 20 litres per person, in line with UNHCR standards.

In the refugee settlements in northern Uganda, around 45 per cent of the water is pumped from underground aquifers through hand pumps and sun-powered boreholes. Trucks supply the rest, shuttling back and forth from the west bank of Africa's longest river. Water trucking costs UNHCR approximately US \$80,000 a day.

With a funding gap of more than 70 per cent, UNHCR is facing challenges to both inject capital to stabilize the provision of emergency water and embark upon longer-term projects. Back in Rhino Camp, it is early afternoon when the water truck arrives, leaving a cloud of dust behind and a pungent smell of burning oil in the air. Kiden manages to fill a 10-liter jerry can before the water runs out. That will have to last until the next water truck arrives. But at least her children will enjoy a long-awaited bath.



© UNHCR/Rocco Nuri. A South Sudanese girl lines up her jerry cans at a water collection point in the Rhino Camp settlement, Uganda.



## Health

It is estimated that Uganda has one doctor for every 24,000 citizens. The nurse-to-population ratio is 1 for every 11,000 people, and many of these medical workers are concentrated in urban areas. The massive influx of refugees into northern Uganda in the past year is putting a massive strain on the country's already overburdened health care system.

In the 87 health facilities supported by UNHCR in settlements across the country, 72% of consultations are made to the refugee population. In these facilities, an integrated comprehensive primary health care package is offered to refugees and the host population, secondary care is also provided at district and regional hospitals, while tertiary healthcare services are provided at the national level for free. District health services provide emergency health services, health screenings at the borders and continued healthcare and maintenance programs.

### Key Challenges

- Budget support – to meet running costs there is a need for more government financial support in hosting communities where refugees make up 50% of the population
- Infrastructure - there is a need to construct new facilities or rehabilitate existing government facilities

to accommodate the increased number of patients

- Referral - Support to rehabilitate government mini-hospitals within the vicinity of refugee settlements and support to district hospitals and regional hospitals where refugees access services. Replace and properly equip and increase ambulance fleets
- Logistical support – increase coordination and supervision capacity of district governments

### CRRF- the Way Forward

- Ensure all health centers that are constructed are registered with the Ministry of Health which ensures that they are provided with medicine and properly staffed
- Ensure those health centers can properly respond to the size of the population in refugees hosted areas
- Increase co-ordination with the MOH at the district and national levels to ensure refugees are actively involved in planning, finance and health program decisions
- Ensure that all partners work with districts, to ensure that when refugees are repatriated, the health centers can be maintained without the help of humanitarian organizations



@UNHCR/Jiro Ose. Children are screened for malnutrition in the Nyumanzi settlement in northern Uganda.

## Education

In Uganda, refugee children have the same access to education as their Ugandan counterparts, including free universal primary education, and access to pre-primary, secondary and tertiary education.

UNHCR works closely with the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES), to ensure all refugee and host community children to access education.

The majority of refugee children, around 88%, live in refugee settlements. They attend school alongside children from the host community, both within and outside the settlements. In Kampala, schools with a high numbers of refugee children enrolled receive material and technical support from UNHCR.

The DAFI Scholarship is a key pillar in UNHCR's support to higher education. DAFI scholarships are funded by the German Government and have benefitted almost 300 hundred students in Uganda. The scholarships allow refugee students to enrol and obtain a degree in universities in their countries of asylum.

### Key Challenges

- As the refugee population increases so too does the number of out of school children
- Even with universal primary education, there are costs, such as school materials, and fees prevent many refugees from attending school
- Fees and others costs for secondary school students prevent the majority of refugee from attending secondary school
- There is a critical need for more classroom space, latrines, administrative buildings and libraries
- In settlements, schools are set far apart, so many children must walk long distances to attend classes presenting safety and security concerns
- A shortage of teachers and a poor standard of teacher accommodation
- A need for investment and partnerships to increase the number of tertiary scholarships awarded, as well

as investment in quality vocational skills training, to build on the Government's "Skilling Uganda" program

### CRRF – the Way Forward

- Education Cannot Wait- A new global fund, for which UNHCR is currently coordinating the first response window in Uganda, worth \$USD 3.3 million. Partners and education actors will receive fast track funding to support double shift schooling, semi-permanent infrastructures and improved coordination with the Ministry of Education and Sports
- A call for investment and partnerships to increase the number of tertiary scholarships awarded, as well as investment in quality vocational skills training
- Country wide construction of additional permanent and semi-permanent school structures and upgraded living quarters for teachers

■  
UNHCR works closely with the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES), to ensure all refugee and host community children access education.



@ Rebecca Vassie/UNICEF

## Volunteer refugee teachers ensure children learn

By: Rebecca Vassie/UNICEF

Gabriel Makuach, a career teacher, has lost count of the number of times he has had to flee South Sudan and settle in refugee camps. Now living in the Nyumazi settlement in Adjumani, he came up with the idea of forming free community schools on available land within the settlement. Then he asked teachers from the refugee community to volunteer to teach the children.

The logic was that it would solve the problem of the lack of space for learning, create jobs in the refugee community and reduce congestion in the government schools.

St. Egidio was the first community school that was set up in Nyumazi refugee settlement. Through a combined effort, parents cleared the land on which the school now stands, while others dug pit latrines. Teachers agreed to volunteer,

under the stewardship of Mr. Makuach. The head teacher says, "I was educated under a tree. There is no reason you cannot learn amongst the elements if that is all you have."

Today, more than 700 South Sudanese children learn under the mango trees at St. Egidio. Another seven community schools have been established in different densely populated parts of the settlement. They cater to children between primary one and primary 3, all of whom would otherwise be squeezing into the crowded government school or sitting at home, missing out on their education.

UNICEF has also provided scholastic materials and temporary structures such as tents, which are serving as classrooms and hygienic latrines. UNICEF also ensures the pupils and teachers have access to safe drinking water through sinking boreholes within the school grounds.



## Energy and Environment

Uganda's progressive model of providing land to refugees is generous. At the same time, as the number of refugees arriving to Uganda continues to grow and the demand for energy rises, the situation presents a danger to the environment. Millions of trees are being consumed as refugees cut them down to provide wood for cooking and home building.

Refugees are also clearing trees and vegetation for farming, and soil exposed to heavy rains is eroding. Settlement sites are being littered with degradable and non-biodegradable materials. And the use of fire wood is endangering the health of women and girls who do most of the cooking indoors. As firewood becomes scarce, refugees are moving further in to host community areas to collect wood, causing resentment and conflict.

### Key Responses

- Advocacy and awareness programs on environmental/forest management laws and regulations
- Tree marking – to protect rare and endangered species and trees in water catchment areas
- Promotion of tree planting in both host and refugee communities
- Promotion of appropriate technologies for safe biomass use
- Promotion of sustainable land management and integrated soil fertility management
- Promoting sustainable and alternative livelihoods
- Sanitation and hygiene campaigns to promote safe disposal of solid waste materials

### CRRF - the Way Forward

New Environmental Health Strategy – An Environmental Health technical working group, including UN agencies, line ministries, partners, the private and development sectors, and academics, co-chaired by UNHCR and the Office of the Prime Minister will soon be established to oversee the progress of the strategy which is aimed at providing services to refugees and the host community in a more holistic way, while preserving and protecting the environment. Focusing on water, energy, solid waste, wastewater, storm water, hygiene promotion, vector control, air and land quality, and climate, the strategy will be rolled out between 2017 and 2022. The long term goal is to integrate environmental concerns into humanitarian interventions, including master settlement planning, the phasing out of water trucking and improved infrastructure.



© UNHCR/Rocco Nuri. South Sudanese mother cooks dinner in a homemade mud stove in the Bidibidi settlement, Uganda.





@UNHCR/Fred Noy

## Host Community Engagement

In Uganda, the humanitarian response follows the '70-30' guiding principle. This means that 30 percent of the humanitarian support should be provided to host communities. The principle recognizes the generosity of the host communities and also means they receive some of the dividends of hosting refugees.

Refugees and host communities live side by side and access the same services, including schools, health facilities and water points. There is no clear division between refugees and nationals. Many of the districts that host refugees already face severe development challenges, which are often exacerbated by the refugee influx. This has led to a heavy strain on social services and infrastructure.

Refugees have now been included in several development plans – both the National Development Plan II and the UN Development Assistance Framework. This makes refugees and the host communities that host them part and parcel of the same processes. They face the same challenges and opportunities. In some cases, nationals may even face more challenges.

In order to address those challenges a holistic approach must be taken, to look at area-based interventions that target the needs of the entire district. The Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) strategy has already taken some steps in this direction, being a resilience and self-reliance framework that targets communities in the entirety of the district.

### Key challenges

- Integrate planning and coordination for both refugees and national districts
- Ensure adequate focus given to both communities – in terms of development and humanitarian support

### CRRF - the Way Forward

- Further integration of refugees into District Development Plans to provide comprehensive support to districts
- Build on comprehensive mapping of the districts and engage more actors to not only support refugees, but also nationals in the entire district.





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## Fish Farm Nets Benefits for Refugees and the Host Community

**By: Rocco Nuri/ UNHCR**

Lake Rwamunga, Uganda - 32-year old Janine, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is a member of a village fish farming association on Lake Rwamunga, in western Uganda. Established a year ago with the help of UNHCR and the United Nations Development Program, it brings refugees and locals together to make a living.

The fish farming association is made up of 20 refugees from the Oruchinga settlement and five Ugandans from a nearby village. They take turns feeding and harvesting fish, and sell the day's catch. "The UN gave us the nets, cages and training," says Janine. "We provide the time and commitment."

The group receives business training, emphasizing savings and loan best practices. Technical support, including how to produce low-cost fish food pellets and other innovative ideas, is also provided.

By ensuring that both the refugees and their hosts benefit, the savings and loan program in Uganda is part of a new response to displacement that is gaining traction worldwide.

Last year's New York Declaration reinforced the need to enhance refugee self-reliance through a "whole of society" approach as a pre-requisite to fully realize a refugee response that is comprehensive and sustainable. "Everyone has a role to play," says Bornwell Kantande, UNHCR's Representative in Uganda. "Once we tap into outside expertise and innovative partnerships, we can make a difference and help refugees become more like entrepreneurs, consumers and business partners and less like beneficiaries."

For her part, Janine is working hard to build on her achievements, and is already dreaming of the future. "I want to turn my house into a crop store for local farmers," she says. "If I make enough money, I will buy myself a car so I can drive like everyone else."



# Refugees Surviving to Thriving

Part of Uganda's support for refugees is the allocation of land so they can support themselves through the growing and selling of crops. But many refugees have never worked in the farming sector and are in need of alternative income generating opportunities. There is a particular need to provide livelihood options for women and young people, due to the number of female headed households in the settlements.

In an effort to promote self-reliance, refugees are provided with land, vegetable seeds, and planting training. In the area of business, refugees also receive training in record keeping and business management so they can start and develop micro-enterprises. Refugees and the host community also have access to vocational training in the areas of tailoring, carpentry, bicycle mechanics and liquid soap making. UNHCR and its partners also promote access to monetized revenue and micro credit.

## Key Challenges

- Allocated land plots aren't large enough to provide households with adequate food supplies
- There are limited options for non-farm livelihoods
- Most of the refugee and host community farmers are using basic farming techniques
- Limited support for post-harvest handling leading to low quality produce and low yields
- Limited access to capital for investment

## CRRF - the Way Forward

- Formation and support of community training centres to promote skills training
- Train refugees and host community population in the science and technology of producing and using plants for food, and fuel
- Invest in water harvest technology for crop production
- Engage with development agencies to attract sustainable solutions

In an effort to promote self-reliance, refugees are provided with land, vegetable seeds, and planting training.



© UNHCR/Rocco Nuri. South Sudanese Madelina tends to her garden in Bidibidi refugee settlement, Uganda





## Transforming Refugees into Entrepreneurs

By: Eunice Ohanusi/UNHCR

**RWAMWANJA, Uganda** – At home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, police reservist, 39-year old Kwizera Gasigwa, farmed cassava and maize for his family to eat and to sell, to help his meagre income stretch a little further each month. But when war forced them to flee to neighbouring Uganda, it was difficult for Gasigwa to see his family depend on food rations from humanitarian agencies.

He dreamed of being independent again and was determined to change the circumstances for his wife, Nyiranzabi, 36, and their three children aged between 8 and 20.

That opportunity came with a project from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which aims to boost refugees' self-sufficiency by training them on how to farm rice more efficiently, and connecting them to markets for their harvests. Gasigwa was among 50 refugees in the Rwamwanja settlement who benefited from the program. Now he has earned enough money to start a series of other small businesses.

“Growing rice has enabled my family to purchase a motorcycle that I use to carry passengers,” he says. “My wife has opened a grocery shop and things are looking good for my family.” They have also started rearing pigs and ducks.

“UNHCR is supporting refugees to live with greater dignity by providing training in modern ways of farming crops, allowing them to earn money, helping them adjust to their new environment and enabling them to peacefully co-exist with their Ugandan neighbours,” says Albert Akandonda, UNHCR's livelihoods specialist who focuses on agriculture in Rwamwanja.

The Lutheran World Federation, which partners with UNHCR, taught another group of refugee farmers how to grow chilli peppers and linked them directly to exporters to give them a ready market without falling victim to unscrupulous brokers.

“Cultivating crops that can earn you a lot of money is rewarding,” says John Bosco Kalaginla, one of the Congolese refugees farming chilli pepper. Like Gasigwa, he is grateful for the money the cash crops bring his family for difficult times. “We want to plant crops that will enable us to survive hardships,” he adds.



# Uganda Private Sector Engagement Initiative

The surge in refugee numbers over the past year, combined with the protracted stay of refugees spanning decades is straining state and host community resources. Humanitarian appeals are chronically and severely underfunded. While this further compounds the vulnerable situation refugees are in, it also places excessive pressure on an already overstretched state, and host community resources.

The private sector, (including national and international corporations), foundations and individuals, play an important role in the health and wealth of any economy. This is particularly the case in Uganda where opportunities exist for the private sector to be an integral part of the aid to trade journey that refugees, and the communities that host them, embark on to improve their lives.

## Market Development Opportunity

Private sector players, such as service providers, developers, distributors and manufacturers, are uniquely positioned to strengthen the national refugee response due to the Government of Uganda's (GOU) progressive refugee policy which allows families who have been forced to flee their homes access to land, the right to work and integrate into the country. This allows private sector stakeholders to extend their reach, while meeting

the needs of integrated communities who are at the heart of Uganda's economic and social development.

The opportunity is two-fold: develop markets and support broader development plans in response to the realities that the country faces:

- Uganda cannot handle the present massive refugee crisis alone and maintain the progressive policies and the asylum space that safeguard refugee protection without urgent support and a more equitable responsibility sharing between Uganda and the international community.
- The situation in Uganda underlines the need to support a comprehensive approach which is being applied to provide protection and seek durable solutions for refugees in Uganda and support to their hosts, in line with the New York Declaration.
- There is an urgent need for enhanced regional and international support and commitment to address the root causes of the refugee crises, and concerted efforts aimed at the peaceful settlement of disputes, the prevention of conflict and the achievement of long-term peaceful solutions, in order to create the conditions that are conducive to voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity.

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Humanitarian appeals are chronically and severely underfunded. While this further compounds the vulnerable situation refugees are in, it also places excessive pressure on an already overstretched state, and host community resources.

South Sudanese refugee Jacob Yuot, puts money in a box after serving a client in his mini-supermarket in Nyumanzi settlement, Uganda



© UNHCR/Michele Sibiloni

# Resettlement

A key component of UNHCR's comprehensive solutions strategy is the resettlement of refugees in Uganda to third countries. Resettlement is used as a protection tool for the most vulnerable refugees, and as a durable solution for some of those among long staying populations.

Due to the long term displacement of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and continued high numbers of new arrivals from South Sudan, UNHCR estimates there are 16,500 refugees in Uganda who are in need of resettlement as a durable solution in 2017, and 87,700 who will be in need of resettlement in 2018.

## Key Responses

- UNHCR identifies refugees in need of resettlement based on protection needs and vulnerabilities (including women at risk, survivors of violence and torture and medical needs) and/or on the basis of the protracted nature of displacement of certain refugee communities.
- UNHCR's resettlement staff conducts multiple interviews and prepares individual cases for submission to third countries.
- During the course of 2017, UNHCR aims to submit 2000 refugees from Uganda for resettlement.

- Uganda is one of four countries participating in the Initiative for Enhanced Resettlement of Congolese Refugees, a sub-regional project benefitting Congolese refugees who arrived in their country of asylum between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 2008 and who originate from Eastern DRC. The multi-year program has as its main objective the submission of at least 50,000 Congolese refugees from the region between 2012 and 2017, with 15,000 refugees being submitted from Uganda.
- Resettlement is a tangible demonstration of solidarity between Uganda and the international community.
- UNHCR uses resettlement to support efforts to increase refugee self-reliance and to support the achievement of alternative legal status for certain refugee populations in Uganda.

## CRRF – the Way Forward

- The expansion and diversification of resettlement programs in Uganda is a key priority for UNHCR as a CRRF pilot country.
- Advocating for an increased number of resettlement countries to consider larger numbers of refugees from Uganda for resettlement.

## Burundian nurse hopes to be resettled to receive medical care

**By: Rocco Nuri/UNHCR**

NAKIVALE, Uganda - 35-year-old Bosco works as a nurse in a health centre in Nakivale settlement, 300 kilometres west of Uganda's capital Kampala.

"Uganda gave me so much, but I have to look after my health now. My family needs me, and I need them," he says. Bosco has been recently diagnosed with cancer and had to travel to neighbouring Kenya to undergo surgery.

But he still needs further treatment and hopes to be resettled to another country with more advanced medical care.

@UNHCR/Rocco Nuri.



# Funding And Needs

In 2017, the Government of Uganda’s Office of the Prime Minister, UNHCR and humanitarian partners continue to respond to emergency refugee influxes and provide protection, care and assistance for more than 1.3 million refugees registered in Uganda.

The chronic and severe underfunding of the inter-agency humanitarian response plans, developed to respond to the needs of refugees in Uganda, threatens the capabilities of humanitarian organisations to continue delivering life-saving and critical assistance.

In 2017 alone, Uganda is shouldering a new influx of more than 357,000 individuals (330,000 from South

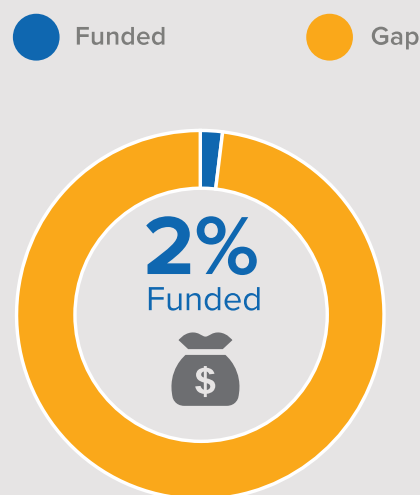
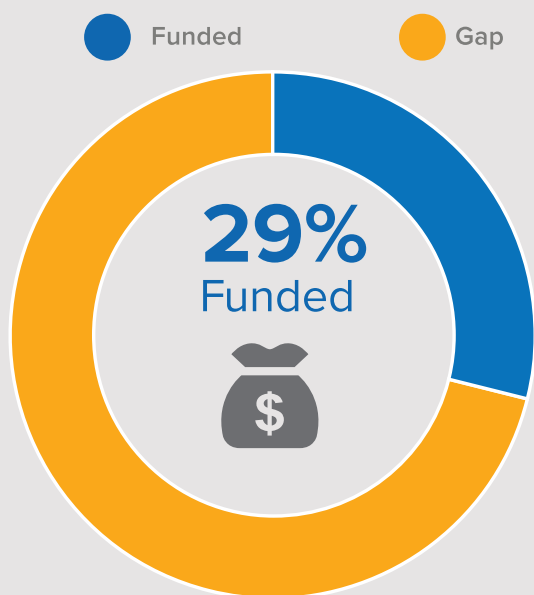
Sudan, 24,000 from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 3,100 from Burundi ( as of August 2017). By the end of 2016, UNHCR Uganda’s refugee operations only received 37% of the funding requirement for the year, and as of July 31, 2017, UNHCR Uganda’s operations were only **34% funded (USD \$1,675,000** out of a required **USD \$568,700,000).**

The total inter-agency resources needed to ensure an effective multi-sectoral response to refugees (in the emergency, stabilising and protracted contexts) in Uganda in 2017 is **USD \$961,000,000.**

## Uganda Refugee Response - Funding Update

**South Sudan**  
Refugee Response Plan  
Total Requested **674.25 million**

**Burundi**  
Refugee Response Plan  
Total Requested **71.64 million**





## Statements of Support at the Solidarity Summit – June 2017

### **WORLD BANK- Diariétou Gaye, World Bank Country Director**

“The World Bank is currently contributing financially to ReHoPE through a US\$50 million credit aimed at improving access to basic social services, expanding economic opportunities, and enhancing environmental management for host communities. But clearly, much more is needed. The World Bank has been empowered by the deputies of the International Development Association to provide significant additional support on very favourable terms—grants in combination with interest rate free loans to finance medium- to long-term investments that will benefit both refugees and host communities. We are working with the Government to prepare a program that will help to ensure that Uganda’s progressive policies and practices can continue to be applied in refugee hosting areas. The program will aim to mitigate the “shocks” caused by the influx of refugees, create social and economic opportunities for refugees and hosts; facilitate sustainable solutions to refugee situations; and strengthen preparedness for potential new refugee flows.”

### **EUROPEAN UNION- Kristian Schmidt, Former European Union Ambassador**

“The EU stands firmly behind the goals set in New York last September. We are actively supporting the development of the new Comprehensive Framework for Refugees for Uganda and pledges to support its implementation. The European Union is one of Uganda’s most generous

development partners, with current combined commitments over the 2014 – 2020 period standing at over 800 million euros. So far, in 2017, the European Union and its Member States have covered about half of the overall humanitarian efforts in Uganda. On behalf of the European Union, I am pleased to announce that the European Union is stepping up its support to the refugee response in Uganda with an amount of 85 million euros. With the additional announcements from the European Member States which have a presence in Uganda today, the overall assistance from the European Union amount to almost 210 million euros. “

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – Deborah Malac, U.S. Ambassador to Uganda**

“The United States has played a lead role in response to the region’s refugee crises. We are the one of the largest donors in the affected areas of Uganda, and as conditions have worsened, we have increased our contributions significantly. Since October 2016, we have provided nearly \$154 million for humanitarian assistance, including \$57.4 million announced by the United States Government on May 24th, 2017. Our funding supports urgent lifesaving activities, including child protection, food, shelter, health care, access to clean water, and support for survivors of gender-based violence. This assistance complements our many years of robust development work throughout Uganda that is improving the resilience and livelihoods of local populations.”



## Message from the UNHCR Representative

Uganda has been widely and deservedly praised for its progressive approach to asylum. Refugees are provided with land on which to build new homes, and enjoy freedom of movement and the ability to work and start their own business. This model means refugees in Uganda have some of the best chances of generating their own income streams and making positive economic contributions to their local communities found anywhere in the world.

In 2016, countries around the world came together as part of the New York Declaration, agreeing to support the development of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) that brings together the full engagement of humanitarian and development actors.

Many of the principles of the New York Declaration have been implemented in Uganda for decades. At a time when record levels of global forced displacement has become the defining humanitarian/development challenge of the modern era, Uganda provides the potential to develop a blueprint for a holistic and sustainable approach to refugee movements.

In Uganda, refugees and host communities share access to public services including healthcare and education. In collaboration with Government ministries, infrastructure improvements are carried out in a way that not only meets the need of the refugees, but will continue to benefit host communities long after the refugees have returned home.

Across the refugee responses, transitions are being made to move beyond immediate humanitarian response and towards strengthening the resilience of refugees and host communities in the mid to long term.

But as refugee responses continue to operate in a context of chronic and severe underfunding, Uganda's forward-thinking refugee model is increasingly approaching the breaking point. Uganda is now host to more than 1.3 million refugees and asylum-seekers, with refugees outnumbering Ugandans in some districts, making the country home to the largest refugee population in Africa.

Uganda cannot tackle this refugee crisis alone. It is time for the international community to match the generosity shown by Ugandan communities by ensuring political and financial support is provided to the refugee responses, and by using their political influences to address the root causes of displacement.

With relatively few resources, Ugandan communities are leading the way in showing compassion to refugees. It is time the international community takes decisive action to match this generosity, and to allow refugees and their Ugandan hosts their chance to flourish.



**Bornwell Kantande**

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Uganda cannot tackle this refugee crisis alone. It is time for the international community to match the generosity shown by Ugandan communities

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# List of Partners

Action Africa Help (AAH)  
Action Against Hunger (ACF)  
Asociación Cordobesa de Agencias de Viaje (ACAV)  
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)  
Africa Development Corps (ADC)  
African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)  
Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)  
African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)  
Africa Ministry Revival (AMR)  
Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development  
Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI)  
American Refugee Committee (ARC)  
Catholic Relief Service (CRS)  
CARE International (CARE Int)  
Caritas (Caritas)  
Cesvi Onlus - Cooperazione e Sviluppo (CESVI)  
Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD)  
Concern World Wide (CWW)  
DanChurchAid (DCA)  
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)  
Finn Church Aid (FCA)  
Finnish Refugee Council (FRC)  
Food for the Hungry (FH)  
Government, Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)  
HelpAge International (HelpAge)  
Here is Life  
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS )  
Humanitarian Initiative Just Relief Aid (HIJRA/ CAFOMI)  
Interaid Uganda (IAU)  
International Aid Services (IAS)  
International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC)  
International organization for migration (IOM)  
International Rescue Committee (IRC)  
Lutheran World Federation (LWF)  
Malteser International (MI)  
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)  
Medical Teams International (MTI)  
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)  
NSAMIZI  
Obadiah Brothers Canada (OBK)  
Oxfam (OXFAM)  
Peace Winds Japan  
Peter C. Alderman Foundation (PCAF)  
Plan International Uganda (PLAN)  
Raising Voices (RV)  
Real Medicine Foundation (RMF)  
Refugee Law Project (RLP)  
Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU)  
Right to Play (RtP)  
Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment (RICE)  
Samaritan's Purse (SP)  
Save the Children (SCI)  
The Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI)  
Touch Africa (TAN)  
Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO)  
Tutapona (Trauma Rehabilitation)  
Ugandan Red Cross Society (URCS)  
Uganda Refugee and Disaster Management Council  
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)  
United Nation Food Assistant Organization (FAO)  
United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)  
UN WOMEN  
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)  
Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO)  
War Child Canda (WCC)  
War Child Holland (WCH)  
Water Mission International (WMI)  
Welthungerhilfe (WHH)  
Windle Trust Uganda (WTU)  
World Food Programme (WFP)  
World Health Organization (WHO)  
World Vision International (WVI)  
ZOA- Uganda (ZOA)







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