

Uganda

1 – 31 July 2020

3,054 new arrivals entered Uganda from the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 1-3 July, following Uganda's decision to temporarily re-open the border on humanitarian grounds. Border controls were reintroduced on 3 July, once the humanitarian operation was complete.

The humanitarian situation remains unpredictable in South Sudan and the DRC.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Uganda received its first COVID-19 case on 21 March 2020. There were **1,176 confirmed cases** of COVID-19 as of 31 July 2020, with **1,029 recoveries**.

Of these, **52 are refugees**, **47 of whom have recovered** and been discharged from hospital. So far, **four deaths** have been reported among Ugandan nationals.

3,054

Number of **new arrivals** during July 2020 (Zombo).

1,403,641*

Total **refugees** in Uganda as of 31 July 2020.

25,262

Total **asylum-seekers** in Uganda as of 31 July 2020.

*Increase in number is due to registration backlog and new-borns

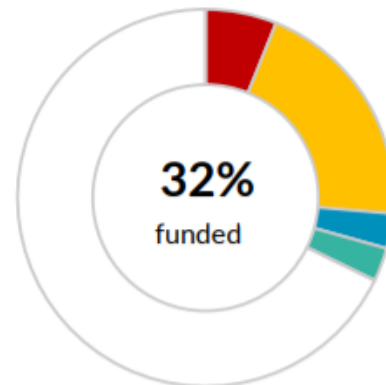


Soap distribution in Bidibidi Refugee Settlement, Yumbe district. Photo ©Orkhan Nasibov/UNHCR

UNHCR'S FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS 2020:

USD 357.1M

UNHCR Funding (as of 31 July 2020)



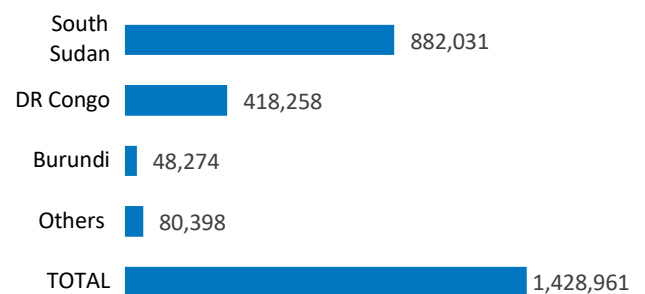
Unfunded 68% - **242.1 M**

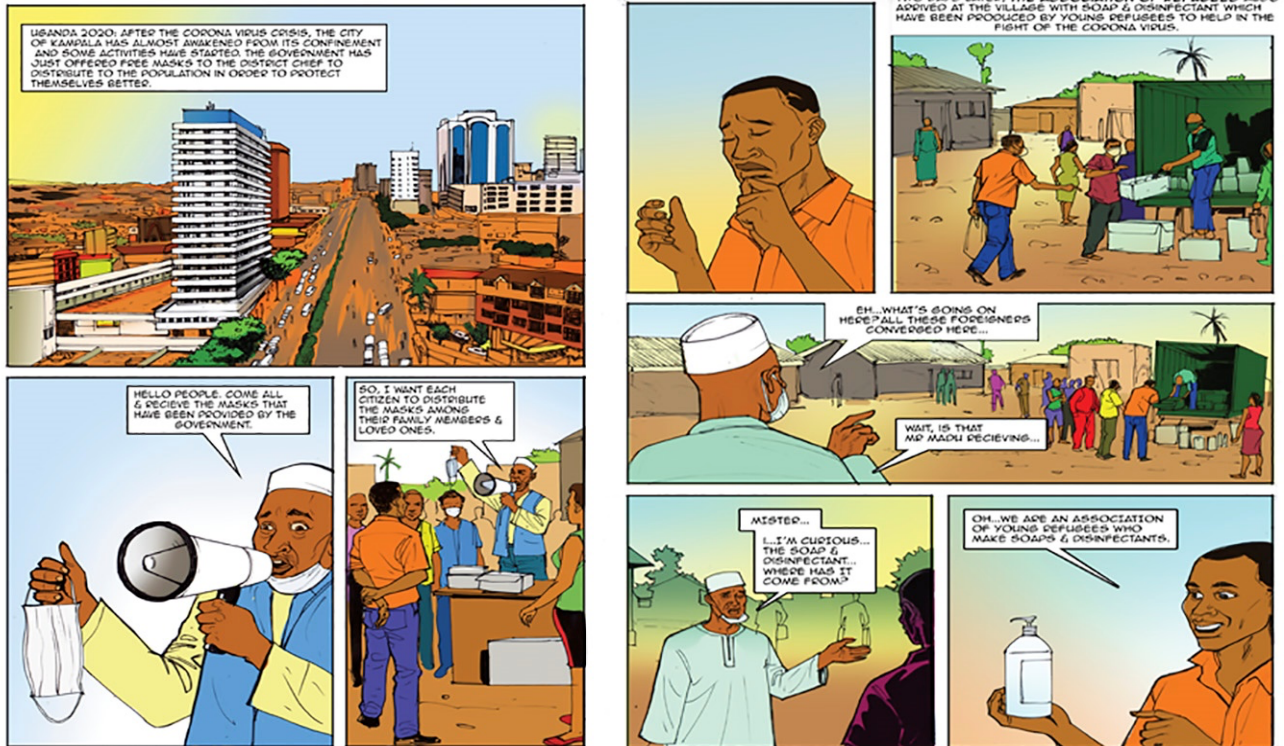
Funded 32% - **115 M**

■ Tightly earmarked
■ Earmarked
■ Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
■ Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
□ Funding gap (indicative)

POPULATIONS OF CONCERN

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers by Nationality





@Fridane Oscar

Photo ©Oscar Fridane, 20-year-old Congolese refugee in Uganda, and one of the winners in the cartoon category of the *UNHCR 2020 Youth with Refugees Art Contest*.

Operational Highlights

Uganda provides a safe haven to DRC refugees amid COVID-19 lockdown - More than 3,000 asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) arrived in Uganda between 1 – 3 July during a temporary opening of two border crossing points at Golajo and Mount Zeu, north-western Uganda.

The new arrivals were previously part of a larger group of approximately 45,000 people, according to local DRC authorities, who had attempted to flee towards the Ugandan border with the DRC shortly after deadly clashes erupted between armed militia groups in Ituri province on 17 and 18 May. While some have been able to return to their areas of origin, others had remained close to the border, unable to cross for more than a month due to closure of borders on the Uganda side to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The group was taken to the Zeu Farm Institute, an old training centre for farmers in Zombo district, which UNHCR turned into a quarantine facility. The Ugandan Health Ministry (MoH) conducted COVID-19 testing, with all samples returning negative. Following the mandatory quarantine period of 14 days, in line with national guidelines and protocols, they will be transported to existing refugee settlements.

The decision by the Government of Uganda demonstrates how, through quarantines, health screenings and other measures, States can uphold their obligations under international law during the pandemic while at the same time limiting potential transmission of the virus. The border was officially opened by Hon. Hilary Onek, Minister for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, in the presence of Hon. Grace Kwiycwiny, Minister of State for Northern Uganda, Gerald Menhya, Commissioner for Refugees, and Joel Boutroue, UNHCR Country Representative. Read more [here](#).

Hundreds of refugees relocated to safety after deadly violence in Palorinya settlement - UNHCR moved hundreds of refugees to safety between 16-17 July after deadly violence forced South Sudanese communities out of their homes in Uganda's Palorinya settlement in the week of 6 July. According to reports, violence began on 13 July

in Dama village and rapidly escalated, continuing for several days. Three young South Sudanese died – aged 16, 17 and 18. Six people were injured. Over 280 shelters were set ablaze. Fearing retaliation, hundreds of families preemptively fled their homes and sought refuge at Luru, Itula and Orinya Primary Schools, Itula sub county headquarters and Morobi police station. The Palorinya reception centre, designated as temporary safe area, is currently sheltering 753 refugees displaced by the violence. UNHCR is in discussion with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to find a solution for this group of refugees.

Uganda completes revision of refugee response plan - OPM and UNHCR together with partners concluded the revision and extension of 2020-2021 Uganda Refugee Response Plan (RRP) on 30 July. The financial requirements of the revised RRP amounts to US \$863.3 million for 2020, including US \$797.9 million for the regular programme and US \$65.4 million for the COVID-19 response. The financial requirements for 2021 are US \$802.7 million. A total of 69 organizations submitted financial requirements and targets against the RRP results framework.

Refugee Engagement Forum - The Seventh Refugee Engagement Forum (REF) took place on 14 and 16 July 2020. To respect the social distancing and President's directives on COVID-19, the REF meeting was held virtually for the first time. Thirty-seven REF members from 12 different locations attended the meeting. They prepared key messages for the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) Steering Group meeting that took place on 15 July 2020; discussed progress on the three Global Refugee Forum (GRF) pledges that the REF had made; and brainstormed on ideas on how to improve the effectiveness of the CRRF and REF meetings.

UNHCR donates equipment to Ministry of Education - The UNHCR Representative handed over to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) items to support data collection, information management and monitoring and evaluation of the Education Response Plan (ERP) at district level. Each of the 12 refugee-hosting districts will receive motorbikes, desktops, printers, tablets, UPS, office furniture, and internet modems. The Permanent Secretary for Education, Alex Kakooza welcomed the contribution and underlined that the support would improve education service delivery, whilst enhancing the capacity of Kampala and the 12 district local governments on ERP implementation.



PROTECTION

Achievements and impact

Refugee Status Determination - The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) resumed its sessions on 6 July for the first time since the COVID-19 lockdown, holding two sessions. A total of 3,537 applications were handled, with 3,384 cases granted refugee status, 122 rejected and 31 deferred. UNHCR attended the sessions and provided technical guidance on complex RSD issues in its capacity as an observe

Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV): The National SGBV Sub Working Group, co-led by UNHCR and UNFPA, reviewed the mid-year statistics and trends, with a total of 1,860 incidents recorded since January 2020. Among them are 1,725 female survivors and another 135 male survivors, with 729 incidents during January-March and another 1,131 during April-June. This represents an increase of about 55 percent, compared to the pre COVID-19 lockdown period (January-March 2020). Twelve out of 14 sites hosting refugees (13 settlements and urban Kampala) showed an increase in the number of SGBV incidents, with Kyangwali and Bidibidi reporting the highest rates. The top three reported incidents were physical assaults (566), rape (486) and emotional abuse (396) by the end of June. The main factors contributing to increased SGBV incidence during the COVID-19 crisis were economic hardship and inability to earn money; increased alcoholism and reduced food rations, triggering domestic violence; failure by the heads of households to provide for their family, leading to intimate partner violence; and limited access to financial support. All of the identified SGBV survivors were supported with psychosocial support, medical and legal assistance.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) - UNHCR concluded an analysis of attempted and completed suicides in the refugee response from January to June 2020, showing a 73 per cent increase in the second quarter of 2020 compared to January-March 2020. The most affected settlement is Bidibidi in Yumbe district, with 6 attempted and 2 completed suicides in January-March and 32 attempted and 2 completed suicides in April-June. Overall, the majority of attempted suicides involve females aged 15-24 years, while the majority of completed suicides concern males aged 35-49. The analysis also shows a significant link between domestic violence and cases of suicide amongst women. With UNHCR's psychosocial support programmes currently funded at only 30 per cent, it is anticipated that the additional needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic will further stretch already limited resources and lead to additional psychosocial harm being unaddressed within refugee communities, with long term consequences for health, economic well-being and peaceful coexistence. UNHCR and MHPSS partners are discussing solutions.

Child Protection: A site visit was undertaken to the urban access center managed by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and CAFOMI, where among other cases, children at risk are counseled and receive services. It was observed that additional materials such as play items, a library and outdoor play areas were required to ease waiting times for children and to ensure standards of child-friendly interviewing during case management. Notwithstanding, cases of children at risk with disability who had been abandoned by their parents were identified. It has also been observed that, during the past weeks, single-parent households, disabled parents and parents with a disabled child, were seen to face challenges in supporting their children as well as ensuring a protective care environment. An increase in cases of teenage pregnancies in Kampala was also reported by CAFOMI, and those identified are receiving individual support. CAFOMI is planning close engagement with the community leaders and awareness sessions for adolescents in the community.

Community-based protection: A pilot survey was conducted in Kampala and several settlements to test the inter-agency gender analysis questionnaires as part of an inter-agency gender analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on refugees – a joint initiative between UNHCR, UN Women, International Rescue Committee (IRC), CARE and ALIGHT. Data collection is due to start in August in Kampala and eight refugee settlements.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways: Since the resumption of resettlement activities through remote interviewing in May 2020, UNHCR undertook a total of 138 interviews for resettlement consideration to Sweden, Norway, Canada and Australia. To date, a total of 890 refugees have been submitted for resettlement consideration to Norway (418), Sweden (265), Canada (186), Australia (16) and France (5), against an overall resettlement quota for Uganda of 2,250 for 2020. So far this year, 409 refugees have departed for resettlement to Sweden (335), USA (54), and Norway (20). Another 118 refugees have benefited from solutions under the Complementary Pathways programme. Of these, 87 refugees have been selected for the World University Service of Canada international scholarships, one accepted in a Spanish university, and 30 received support for family reunification to third countries (Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland).



EDUCATION

Achievements and impact

UNHCR teamed with UNICEF to ensure that home learning materials reach more children in the settlements, with materials for over 380,000 children printed and distributed to date in the settlements. Coordination and support from field colleagues and District Local Government ensured timely 'last mile' distribution.

UNHCR participated in a brainstorming with the UN Country Team, convened by UNICEF under the auspices of the UN Resident Coordinator, to promote coherent and common messaging on education and re-opening of school in the COVID-19 context. It was resolved that the UN will work with academic institutions to develop a position paper highlighting the risks of keeping children at home as opposed to the risks associated with the re-opening of schools.

Such a document will help to provide evidence and inform decisions. The United Nations would also explore resource mobilization efforts to prepare the education institutions in the event of schools re-opening.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Some settlement locations are not receiving the radio frequency for the MoES radio learning programmes. As a response to this challenge, many local radio stations gave free airtime for the content to be transmitted on their frequency. Coupled with this, many households do not have radios. The distribution of radios by education stakeholders was prioritized to households with children in candidate classes.

Significant gaps in the provision of home learning materials to children remain, as well as action around the inclusion of children with disabilities in the home learning approach. Initial feedback from post-distribution monitoring in refugee settlements reveals that children face difficulty using available self-study materials and require teaching support. Most parents lack adequate literacy skills to support learners at home. Primary One to Primary Three packages were developed in English, while these grades are ideally taught in local languages. Children are spending more time doing house or garden chores, leaving insufficient time for studies.



ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS TO ENERGY

Achievements and impact

In Obongi district's Palorinya settlement, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) distributed 12,600 assorted tree seedlings to host community members to be used for woodlot planting. Environment Protection Committee (EPC) members were also provided with seedlings for boundary planting in Zone I, Basecamp Zone and host community villages.

In Kamwenge district's Rwamwanja settlement, 1,211 individuals in Basecamp, Mahani, Waijagabe, Kaihora, Buguta, Ntenungi and Kikurura zones were sensitized on wetland protection and management. Approximately 52 kilometers of wetland boundary were demarcated, and evictions effected through a joint exercise involving, Nsamizi, OPM, Police, the Ugandan army, Refugee Welfare Council leadership, UNHCR, AVSI Foundation and affected communities. In addition, 278.5 acres of suitable land for tree growing was identified in partnership with OPM in Nkoma, Mahani, Kyempango, Ntenungi, Buguta A, Mikole, and Mahega. Discussions are underway to have OPM formally designate this area a forest reserve.

In Kikuube district's Kyangwali settlement, gap filling was done in a eucalyptus woodlot at Maratatu B, using 250 seedlings. Additionally, forest guards mobilized farmers to carry out spot-weeding of the 5 hectares of eucalyptus woodlots established in Maratatu village.

In Kyegegwa district's Kyaka II settlement, 6,404 trees were marked for protection by local communities in Sweswe, Bukere, Buliti, Kakoni and Byabakora in the month of July. Local communities were engaged in maintaining the 60.2 hectares of woodlots (50.2 ha planted in 2020 and 10 in previous years) through slashing, spot-weeding and pruning in Kakoni, Mukondo and Byabakora. Participating communities benefited through the cash for work programme.



HEALTH

Achievements and impact

UNICEF delivered anti-malarial drugs to respond to an upsurge of malaria, notwithstanding that this is the second malaria peak season in Uganda. MoH continued to include refugees as part of its national mosquito nets distribution campaign, with first round of distribution benefiting refugee settlements in Isingiro district – to be followed distributions in other settlements. There is a low supply of malaria diagnostic kits in the operation.

COVID-19: Cumulatively, there are 52 refugees with COVID-19, out of the 1,176 cases in the country as at 31 July 2020. UNHCR and partners helped MoH investigate 3,380 COVID-19 alerts and test 4,022 refugees for COVID-19, including by covering the costs of transporting samples to the Uganda Virus Research Institute. Since March, Kyangwali settlement registered the highest number of alerts (793), followed by Adjumani (558), Bidibidi (537) and Nakivale (453).

UNHCR and partners continued to support at least 19 quarantine facilities within the settlements and at transit centres across the country, including by covering the costs of medical supplies and personal protective equipment, site management, food and logistics. As at end of July 2020, 3,266 individuals were quarantined in these facilities, including 2,910 asylum seekers and refugees and 356 Ugandans and foreigners

Nutrition and food security: UNHCR participated in the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) in the refugee settlements, led by FAO. This is the first time this exercise takes place in the refugee response in Uganda, with the aim to classify settlements based on their vulnerability to food insecurity and acute malnutrition.

Urban health: UNHCR participated in the Kampala City Council COVID-19 response planning, which is aimed at ensuring intensive surveillance, case detection, contact tracing, capacity building of health care workers and Village Health Teams (VHTs). Refugees have been included in the urban plan.



LIVELIHOOD

UNHCR distributed 142,323 kg of assorted seeds to 254,990 refugee households in all settlements. They comprised of maize, beans, groundnuts, rice, sesame, sorghum, cow peas, cabbages, tomatoes, eggplants, okra, collards, sukuma-wiki, onions, spinach, green-pepper, ntula and dodo. The objective of this initiative was to provide support to refugees with materials for the second planting season, in order to avert potential food insecurity and malnutrition, as a result of COVID-19 and reduction in food aid.

Field offices are preparing to support refugees in the production of non-medical masks. The process included identification and organization of existing tailoring groups. The refugee mobilization was based on existing information on refugees that had received vocational training tailoring, as part of the livelihood support. An estimated 1,000 tailors have been organized to produce 884,987 masks in 11 settlements including Kampala (except Adjumani and Lamwo who have already completed this process). UNHCR is procuring the raw materials and paying the refugees for the labour costs using the Airtel and MTN Mobile payment platforms. The tailors have been sensitized on the MoH quality standards, with actual production likely to commence at the beginning of August 2020.



SHELTER, SETTLEMENTS AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

Achievements and impact

In relation to the COVID-19 response, installation and set up of eight rub halls for institutional quarantine centres was completed in Yumbe. In Adjumani, repairs and partitioning of Nyumanzi and Pagirinya quarantine centres have been also completed. Construction of an isolation ward at Palorinya Health Centre III, while the construction of an isolation ward at Itula Health Centre III has been completed.

In Arua, maintenance is ongoing on the following road segments: Otumbari Health Centre - Yoro base (20 km); Yoro - Odobu junction (7.2 km); Odobu I - Ocea Kamukamu (10.1 km); Yinga HC – Enyau bridge (12.8 km); and T29 – Bidibidi reception centre (0.9 km). In Adjumani, road maintenance and rehabilitation work in the refugee settlements is ongoing. UNHCR and partners began working to raise the level of selected sections of roads in Lobule settlement to reduce water logging.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Like in the previous month, there is inadequate lighting at Kyangwali settlement's Kasonga isolation facility, currently used to manage quarantine alerts. This may be particularly unsafe for vulnerable elderly and children.

Kasonga reception centre has reduced to a 600 capacity from 2,000, after demolition of nine dilapidated structures, while Sebagoro transit centre has a capacity of 160 individuals. In the event of border re-opening, these facilities may not be able to accommodate a large refugee influx.

Kerwa collection point in Yumbe has one overnight shelter with a leaking roof which needs repair, and installation of additional support to the wall. There is need to upgrade temporary shelters to semi-permanent ones at Kerwa, in addition to provide fencing and additional solar lighting. At Menzele collection point there is a need for new overnight shelters, kitchen, WASH facilities, solar power and fencing, should there be a need to re-activate this facility.

Most of the roads across settlements are in dire state and need rehabilitation due to the heavy rains.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

Water supplied to refugees in the settlements stood at an average of 17.5 litres per person per day (l/p/d) in the month of July. This was achieved by increasing pumping hours for the 174 water schemes and ensuring that 1,100 handpumps remained operational. The sector continued to utilize water attendants at water collections points to ensure compliance with social distancing. Handwashing stations and soap were provided at all communal meeting points, water collection points and health facilities. Hygiene promoters and VHT worked hand in hand to carry out door-to-door sensitization. Radio, *bodaboda* talks and billboards continued to be used in all settlements for hygiene promotion. Soap distribution was increased from 250g/person/month to 500g/person/month to support hand hygiene in response to COVID-19.

The Joint Technical Review of the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) was held on 29 July 2020. The chair of the Refugee Response Sub-Group, which UNHCR co-leads under the MWE coordination structure, presented an update on progress of 2019/2020 MWE undertaking number 5, "Upgrade of 13 water schemes in refugee-hosting districts and integration of existing water and sanitation supply into sustainable utility management structures." Ten of the water schemes are completed while six are at 50 percent completion. These are funded by various development partners through MWE and implemented by Deconcentrated units (Northern Water Development Facility and Northern Umbrella Authority). The projects are in West Nile districts and Kiryandongo.

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