OVERVIEW

- The Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees convened and jointly hosted by President Yoweri Museveni and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in Kampala on 23rd June 2017 raised USD 433 million (as at 29th June) for refugees and communities hosting them in Uganda. To keep up to date with the pledges visit http://pulselabkampala.ug/pulselabkampala/pledge_sys/pledge_maker/

- Members of the Private Sector have been asked to match the public sector’s efforts towards supporting refugees. The call was made by Mr. Patrick Bitature, Chairperson of the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) during the Uganda Solidarity Summit’s Private Sector Side Event on: “Enabling the Private Sector to support Refugees and Refugee hosting communities.”

- Stronger Local District Governments Support Refugees Better. This was the key message from the side event on Local Governments at the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees organised by Japan’s International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister focusing on “Enhancing Development Approaches for Resilience and Self – Reliance of Refugees and Host Communities: Strengthening the Capacity of Local Governments in Uganda.”

- According to the UNHCR Uganda Flash Update on the South Sudan Emergency Response of 30th June 2017, the total number of refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda was 1,277,476 and those from South Sudan in Uganda were 950,562.

- Voices of Young People at The Solidarity Summit on Refugees in Uganda.

- Building Resilience of Conflict Affected Communities through Women and Girls’ Empowerment.

- Partners call for more support for Refugee Education

- UN Secretary-General addresses Town Hall meeting of UN Staff in Uganda
UGANDA SOLIDARITY SUMMIT ON REFUGEES RAISES $358 MILLION

By Michael Wangusa, UN Resident Coordinators Office (RCO)

The Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees convened and jointly hosted by President Yoweri Museveni and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in Kampala on 23rd June 2017 raised USD 433 million (as at 29th June) for refugees and Ugandan communities hosting them.

The main purpose of the summit was to support and strengthen Uganda’s progressive and transformative approach to refugee protection through showcasing the Uganda model in relation to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and mobilising international support to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of refugees as well as address the longer-term needs of refugees and the communities that host them.
In particular the summit aimed at rallying political support for and resolve to sustain the application of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in Uganda; obtaining significant new funding towards the refugee response plans as well as ongoing resilience initiatives, notably the Government’s Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA) and the UN-World Bank Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) Strategy; and creating new partnerships, investments and innovation for the benefit of refugees and host communities.

The summit was unique because it was the first summit of its kind to be held in the global south in the same country for which support was mobilised in solidarity. The Summit was attended by representatives from 46 countries and international organisations including several Heads of States and Governments. The countries that participated in the summit from Africa included Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia; from Europe, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom; from Asia, China, India, Japan and South Korea; from the Middle East, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia; from North America, Canada and United States; and Australia. Organisations that participated included European Union, African Union, World Bank, African Development Bank. International NGOs included Plan International and Save the Children. Private corporations also participated including MTN.

Addressing the Summit President Yoweri Museveni said, ‘Given our Pan-Africanist ideological orientation and the history of our people, it is not such a difficult problem to absorb or co-exist with refugees from within Africa. Nevertheless, the sudden large numbers of refugees present the following problems: feeding them; sheltering them; providing energy for them for cooking and lighting so that they do not destroy the environment by cutting trees; water for household use and production; allowances for clothing and other household needs; education for knowledge and skills especially for the children and the youth, immunization and treatment.’

President Museveni called on international partners to assist Uganda to cope with these challenges. He highlighted the importance of rewarding refugee hosting districts in Uganda especially in the area of road infrastructure.

For his part, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, ‘I have seen Uganda’s borders open, I have seen the doors of Uganda’s people open, I have seen the hearts of the Ugandan people open.’
But not all doors are open in the world. Not all refugees are accepted, some are rejected, and sometimes in countries much richer than Uganda. So it’s also necessary to look into this example and to say clearly that the international community must come together and re-establish the integrity of the refugee protection regime everywhere in the world.

And, at the same time, the international community needs to step up and needs to give to the Ugandan people and to the refugees hosted by the Ugandan people the kind of support that is absolutely needed because the circumstances in which these sacrifices are being made are extremely challenging.

Prior to the summit, on 22nd June 2017 the UN Secretary-General António Guterres and WFP Executive Director David Beasley accompanied by Uganda’s Prime Minister Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda visited Imvepi Refugee Settlement in Arua District to get a first-hand experience of the refugee and host community situation in field. UN High Commissioner for Refugees,
Filippo Grandi and European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides also visited Imvepi settlement. While other High Level delegates to the Summit visited settlements in Adjumani District and Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Isingiro District to learn about Uganda’s settlement transformational approach.

The main High Level Summit held on Day 2 was preceded by six side events held on Day 1 that discussed various dimensions of refugee and host community issues as follows: Private Sector, Women Girls, Youth, Non-Governmental Organisations, Education and Local Governments. There was also an exhibition of both days of the summit showcasing Uganda’s Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA). The Outcome Document of the Summit known as the Kampala Declaration on Refugees notes that Uganda cannot handle the present massive refugee crisis alone and maintain the progressive policies and the asylum space; and calls upon the international community to fulfill the commitments contained in the New York Declaration and the needs articulated in the Government’s STA by providing additional resources to support the Government and host communities.

Ahead of the summit UN Secretary-General António Guterres paid a courtesy call on President Yoweri Museveni at State House and held Bilateral talks. Mr. Guterres was accompanied by UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Rosa Malango.
President Yoweri Museveni (centre), UN Secretary-General António Guterres (left) and UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Rosa Malango (right) at State House Entebbe on 22nd June 2017

Refugees (seated) who gave testimonies at the summit with President Yoweri Museveni (standing third from left) and UN Secretary-General António Guterres (standing second from left)
PRIVATE SECTOR CALLED UPON TO SUPPORT REFUGEES DURING THE UGANDA SOLIDARITY SUMMIT

By Doreen Kansiime, UN Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr. Patrick Bitature the Chairperson of Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) addressing the Private Sector Side event during the Uganda Solidarity Summit held in Kampala from the 22-23 June 2017(Photo Credit: UNDP Uganda)

Mr. Patrick Bitature, the Chairperson of Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) called on fellow members of the private sector to match public sector financing for refugees and host communities. This statement was made during the Uganda Solidarity Summit’s Private Sector Side Event focusing on the theme: “Enabling the Private Sector to support Refugees and Refugee hosting communities.”
The Solidarity Summit was convened by H.E President Yoweri K. Museveni and the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, from the 22-23 June 2017 to rally the international community. “Refugees are looking for financial inclusion and participation in the economy because it gives them hope and dignity. This is what they are asking for and as Private sector, we can try to provide that,” Mr. Bitature said.

He added that refugees should be seen as opportunities since they come with skills that can be used to grow Uganda's economy. Echoing him, other participants’ agreed that it was important to provide refugees with business and employment opportunities instead of handouts.

“I have worked with refugees in Kyangwali refugee settlement where I built a produce store. The refugees would grow maize and sell it to me. What I discourage is giving them handouts because it discourages work,” Ms. Julian Omalla (left), the Managing Director of Delight Uganda Limited who is also one of Uganda’s top female entrepreneurs said. Ms. Amiina Hersi, another entrepreneur called for the identification of highly skilled refugees who could be employed to benefit Uganda’s development.

Ms. Jolly Kaguhangire (left), Uganda Investment Authority (UIA)’s Executive Director called on the Private Sector to invest in refugee hosting districts. “Northern Uganda as a whole has huge investment potential. Arua, for example, one of the refugee hosting districts and is also very rich in natural resources, it’s a border town as well which implies a large cross border market,” Ms. Kaguhangire said.

The United Nations Development Programme led side event showcased the contribution of the private sector to refugees and host communities and presented successful business models that provided a compelling business case for investing in refugee hosting communities.
“This side event was intended to start the conversation on how the Private Sector can invest in refugee-hosting communities, not just as a gesture of philanthropy, but because it makes good business case,” Ms. Almaz Gebru (left), the UNDP Uganda Country Director said.

She pledged UNDP’s continued support to working with the Private Sector to engage in issues related to socio-economic transformation of refugees and their hosts.

Members of the Private Sector pledged to provide skills training and employment to refugees while PSFU pledged to set up a desk to provide financial literacy to refugees and refugee-hosting communities.

SDG 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE SOLIDARITY SUMMIT ON REFUGEES IN UGANDA

By Martha Songa and Raquel Polomino Gonzalez, UN Population Fund (UNFPA)

Willent Mugisha fled the war in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo as a little girl 17 years ago. Since then, she has lived with her family in Kyangwali refugee settlement in Hoima, Western Uganda. Pregnant at age 18, Willent was determined not to let life get her down. Five years ago, together with a group of girls in Kyangwali, she managed to set up a small catering business that helps meet hers and her daughter’s basic needs.

“Life in a refugee settlement is very hard. I wanted so much to go to university after I completed my Senior Four but could not afford to. It is during the time I was away from school that I got pregnant,” Willent explained.

A scholarship from Windle Trust with support from UNHCR is what changed her life. After completing a two- year course in Catering and Hotel Management she mobilised ten other girls to start a business.
Willent is one of the young refugees that shared her story with fellow young people, the United Nations, government and civil society officials at a side event on youth held on the sidelines of the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees from June 22 to 23.

*Young people sharing testimonies of resilience. Photo by Henry Nsubuga, UNDP*

Under the theme **Young people are an asset for inclusive sustainable development of refugee and host communities,** the side event was co-hosted by UNFPA and the Royal Danish Embassy in partnership with IOM, Plan International, Reach A Hand Uganda, UNCDF, UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF. The event brought together over 100 participants, including 25 young people from refugee and host communities in Uganda.

The side event was preceded by a pre-summit workshop that brought together 35 young refugee and host community representatives at UNFPA Uganda’s Innovation Café. It was also attended by the Danish Ambassador H.E. Mogens Pedersen, UNFPA Representative Mr. Alain Sibenaler, UNDP Country Director Ms. Almaz Gebru and the Acting Commissioner for Youth in the Ministry of Gender, Mr. Mondo Kyateeka.

The aim of the two events was to provide a platform for dialogue on how Uganda’s youthful refugee and host population can be turned into an asset for resilience and sustainable development. Uganda is home to 1.2 million refugees from South Sudan, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo; and other countries. About 6 in 10 of the refugees are young people below the age of 18.
Linking health and development

One of the issues discussed at length at the side event was the need to build young people’s entrepreneurship skills to enable them become economically independent. Participants were in agreement that for young people to achieve economic independence, there must be deliberate efforts to address their health concerns including sexual and reproductive health.

For UNFPA Representative, Alain Sibenaler, making the connection between young people’s health and their prospects for wealth was extremely important. “There is no wealth without health. It’s as simple as that,” he said.

At a panel discussion, Dr. Alfred Yayi the District Health officer of Yumbe district, host to the largest refugee settlement of BidiBidi, emphasized the importance of reproductive health interventions. He explained that when young people are not gainfully employed, it puts them at greater risk of ill health including teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV.

“With support from UNFPA we provide youth friendly health services to young people in the settlement. But we need to do more because the youth population is big. When left on their own without much to do; they are vulnerable. They may abuse drugs and alcohol and end up with unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections,” he said.

As for Willent, having a source of livelihood and being economically independent has inspired her to reach out to her peers. She talks to girls in the refugee camp, advising them on the dangers of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. She believes that as long as young people are given a chance they can pull themselves out of whatever situation they find themselves in and contribute to the development of their communities.
Moving forward

Mr. Sibenaler acknowledged that the UN and its partners could do even more to open up spaces for young people’s participation, and to create an enabling environment for that to happen. He noted that UNFPA is working on creating an initiative —social change entrepreneurs — where young people lead on developing models of social business and emphasised that this initiative would also be open to young refugees.

H.E. Mogens Pedersen, the Ambassador of Denmark encouraged young people to not only focus on what donors can do for them but to also think critically about their role in development.

“It is important for us to hear the ideas you have for your own future and how you can be constructive in creating this future,” Mr. Pedersen said.

In addition to highlighting issues affecting refugees and host communities, the youth side event paved the way for supplementary pledges of support towards programming for young people.

The Royal Danish Embassy, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the European Union Delegation in Kampala all made commitments of support.

SDG 5 – GENDER EQUALITY

SIDE-EVENT ON BUILDING RESILIENCE OF CONFLICT AFFECTED COMMUNITIES THROUGH WOMEN AND GIRLS’ EMPOWERMENT

By Martin Ninsiima, UN Women

Delegates from more than ten countries numbering one hundred twenty-five (125) attended the Side event on building resilience of conflict affected communities through women and girls’ empowerment. The side event was held at Speke Resort Munyonyo on June 22, 2017. The side event was convened by UN Women Uganda Country Office in partnership with other
UN agencies and civil society organizations. The proceedings were chaired by Uganda Minister of Gender Labour and Social Development Hon. Janat Mukwaya. Among the participants were representatives from UN agencies, Civil society, Uganda Government, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada and the European Union.

The main theme of the side event was “Building resilience of conflict affected communities through women and girls’ empowerment”. The key activities during the side event included a key note address from UN Women Country Representative, Panel discussions, screening of a video documentary on experiences of women and girl refugees in Uganda. The event was also featured guest speakers from embassies of Sweden and Norway in Uganda.

The half-day side event recommended that the international community should support humanitarian communities, host populations and government on bridging the gap between humanitarian action and development interventions. Delegates emphasised the creation of a conducive operating environment for promoting and supporting empowerment of women and girls from the refugee and host communities.

Participants also agreed that access to leadership and decision making roles for women and girls, as well as those from host communities must be ensured at all levels. They recommend that the provision of training and capacity building for women and girls.
NGO/HUMANITARIAN ACTOR’S SIDE-EVENT

Theme: The role of Humanitarian, Development NGOS and the Civil Society in addressing the humanitarian development nexus in supporting refugees and host communities

By Evelyn B Mwasa, Uganda Red Cross, NGO/Humanitarian Actors’ Side Event Coordinator

The side event under the theme; The role of Humanitarian, Development NGOS and the Civil Society in addressing the humanitarian development nexus in supporting refugees and host communities, was coordinated by Uganda Red Cross Society.

To deliver a compelling side event, the Red Cross joined hands with Oxfam International and Save the Children who supported the mobilization and collation of local and International NGO’s, Civil Society organizations, government and host community voices that were covered under the session sub-themes. Sub-theme discussions were around the Grand bargain- a May 2016 World Humanitarian Summit commitment to address the humanitarian gaps, and the localization agenda focusing on the engagement of local actors.
The Side event which attracted over 90 delegates from donor agencies, NGO and humanitarian actors constituencies focused on the growing support for reform of the humanitarian system to include predictable, multiyear financing and capacity to cope with any surge in population movement.

**Key Observations and recommendations**

- Planning for solutions must be done from the onset of an emergency. Many decisions that are taken at the start have long term implications for programming and funding. There is a need to recognise that displacement is not a short-term situation and the durable solutions are limited.

- Recognition that local hosting communities and government carry the main burden in sharing resources – adding pressure to already limited services.

- There is need to streamline funding modality disparities between local and international organisations.

- The Private sector is an untapped resource base that can be utilised by all actors to deliver social services, jobs, and investment opportunities

**Commitments/Pledges**

- INGO’s committed to improve coordination and will endeavor to build more and stronger partnerships with government and local actors.

- Local and national actors committed to transparency and accountability – with focus on more joint and standardized reporting.

- All actors commit to improving programming and planning for women, children, youth and people living with disabilities.

**EDUCATION SIDE EVENT**

**Partners call for more support for Refugee Education**

By Kutloano Leshomo, UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

The First lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs. Janet Museveni noted that education of refugees would put a stop to the vicious cycle of conflict in their countries. She informed the meeting that education of refugees is mainstreamed into development plans, however
the education system has challenges in keeping up with the influx. She noted that the constraints on the national capacity to provide education for all refugees at the moment and that overcrowding cannot be reduced overnight.

The Executive Director of Save the Children International, Ms. Helle Thorning Schmidt commended Uganda for not putting up walls against refugees at a time when some countries are not willing to take refugees. She noted that Uganda had taken an important step towards operationalizing the global compact for refugees.

The Head of DFID in Uganda, Ms. Jennie Barugh informed the meeting that during her visit to West Nile, she observed extensive overcrowding in schools; lack of sanitation facilities and poor hygiene. She noted that there was a need for vocational skills for young people from South Sudan to enable them rebuild their country. She called for stronger coordination between development and humanitarian partners. She disclosed that DFID would like to provide multiyear funding for the response but emphasized that it was important to demonstrate results to make the case for the multi-year funding.
SDG 16 – PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

STRONGER DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SUPPORT REFUGEES BETTER

By Henry Mukasa, UN Development Programme (UNDP)

During the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Local Government, organised a side event on theme “Enhancing Development Approaches for Resilience and Self –Reliance of Refugees and Host Communities: Strengthening the Capacity of Local Governments in Uganda.”

State Minister Musa Ecweru (Left) and JICA Vice President, Hiroshi Kato(right)

The purpose of the event was to provide for an opportunity to identify and discuss the good practices, challenges and opportunities in strengthening the capacity of local governments to deliver on development –oriented approaches so as to support the co-existence of refugees and host communities hence ensure that the protection of refugees is maintained.
At the side event local governments from the refugee hosting districts presented their cases followed by a panel discussions among the members and the floor. Development Partner’s perspectives were presented by JICA and UNDP. State Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees Hon. Musa Ecweru, said Uganda’s refugee management model is built on her hospitable people. He said Government’s policy is never to criminalise groups but isolate wrong individuals. “I am proud to stand in front of you and declare we rejected xenophobia in all its manifestations. That’s why we are welcoming refugees,” Mr. Ecweru said.

JICA Senior Vice President Hiroshi Kato said there was need to address the needs of refugees and the host communities simultaneously.

“We must respond simultaneously to the needs of newly arriving refugees as well as of those in protracted refugee situations, living in local communities. And these communities, in turn, must be supported by local governments,” Mr. Kato noted. The UNDP Country Director, Ms. Almaz Gebru called for strengthening the capacity of district local governments as key to the sustainability of Uganda’s progressive refugee hosting model.

Ms. Gebru observed that districts are at the forefront of hosting refugees, including maintaining peaceful co-existence of refugees and host communities.

“Recognising the need for greater investment in the capacity of district local governments to deliver services to all those living in the district, UNDP established the ‘Emergency Response and Resilience Strategy for Refugees and Host Communities,’ to provide a vehicle to address the unique development challenges facing districts hosting refugees,” Ms. Gebru said.

Ms. Gebru noted that Uganda’s inclusion of refugees in its second National Development Plan through the Settlement Transformation Agenda demonstrates its commitment to support the over seven million Ugandans that live side-by-side the over 1.2 million refugees they host.

“Refugee hosting is a development issue, and therefore requires development solutions,” Ms. Gebru said adding that through the multi-stakeholder Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE), UNDP supports the Settlement Transformation Agenda.

The Ministry of Local Government Under Secretary, Ms. Grace Adong Choda said that there shall be no solution to the refugee problem without addressing the root causes.
SDG 17 – PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS

SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSES TOWN HALL MEETING OF UN STAFF IN UGANDA

By Michael Wangusa, UN Resident Coordinators Office (RCO)

UN Secretary-General António Guterres held a Town Hall meeting with UN Staff in Uganda at Speke Resort on 23rd June 2017 immediately after the Uganda Solidarity Summit in Refugees.

The Secretary-General addressed about 2000 UN staff members including about 1000 via Video Teleconference at the UN Regional Service Centre in Entebbe. The Secretary-General was joined at the podium by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley and the UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda, Ms. Rosa Malango.
Responding to a question about how the UN should cope given that political developments in the US and Europe indicated that multilateralism was under threat and the recent cutting of funding by the US to UNFPA; the Secretary - General pointed out that the onus was on UN staff to work hard so that the value of the United Nations would be recognized by all.

Responding to a question about what the UN was doing to address the root causes of the conflict in South Sudan, the Secretary – General outlined the diplomatic efforts that had been made to address the conflict. He pointed out that he fully supported the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which he believed would be key in addressing the conflict in South Sudan.

The Secretary – General cautioned that it would not be possible to have a successful Solidarity Summit like the one on refugees for every issue, in response to a question on whether it would be possible to hold solidarity summit on health issues. The SG pointed out that the Solidarity Summit on Refugees had been successful because the South – Sudanese refugee crisis in Uganda was the fastest growing in the world and there was a lot of sympathy all over the world for the refugees.

The Secretary - General expressed his support for UN Common Offices for all the UN agencies in Uganda.

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