OVERVIEW

- This edition of the Bulletin brings you stories from key events and activities of the UN System in Uganda and partners. Most of them demonstrate how the UN is transforming lives of people especially women and also highlight new opportunities for partnerships.

- UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Rosa Malango, and EU Head of Delegation, Ambassador Attilio Pacifici, launched preparations for the Spotlight Initiative country submission for Uganda on 10 April 2018. This initiative is a global partnership between the UN and the EU aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

- The UN and the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs (MoDVA) signed a new joint programme on 27 March 2018 to promote gender equality, facilitate sustainable and inclusive economic growth as well as strengthen efforts to combat gender-based violence among military spouses, veterans and combatants.

- Report from the field: A young girl is rescued from marriage through UNICEF help line.

- Report from the field: UNFPA dignity kits putting a smile on refugee new mothers in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.

- UN Resident Coordinator was a guest speaker at a European Parliamentarians Social & Democrats TOGETHER event on “Managing Migration & Supporting Refugees in a Globalised World” in Hamburg, Germany, 12 April 2018. She called on Europe to embrace Obuntubulamu in managing refugees and migrants.

- Uganda is slowly moving toward achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) which is the cornerstone for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 3.

- UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Rosa Malango calls for protection of the environment and wildlife to create job opportunities for the youth and spur sustainable development. Ms. Malango was speaking at the World Wildlife Day celebrations, 3 March 2018 in Kasese Town.

- Profile of new UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Representative to Uganda, Mr. Joël Boutroue.
UN-EU LAUNCH SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UGANDA

By Peter Ekayu UN Resident Coordinator’s Office RCO

Ms. Rosa Malango, UN Resident Coordinator shaking hands with the EU Head of Delegation Mr. Attilio Pacifici after the launch of the collaboration between the UN and the EU on the Spotlight Initiative for Uganda

UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Rosa Malango met with the EU Head of Delegation, Ambassador Attilio Pacifici, on 10 April 2018 to launch preparations for the Spotlight Initiative for Uganda. The initiative is a global partnership between the UN and EU aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. Uganda is among the eight countries selected in Africa to benefit from the UN-EU Spotlight Initiative and preparations will be jointly coordinated by the two organizations.
The Initiative worth 500 million euros, will be rolled-out in eight countries in Africa including; Uganda, Nigeria, Liberia, Niger, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Mali.

Uganda is the only country that qualified from East and Central Africa from the original 26 that showed interest, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Chad.

“The initiative is timely given that one in every five Ugandan women have experienced sexual violence according to Uganda Demographic Health Survey 2016. The initiative will go a long way towards contributing to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in Uganda,” said Ms. Malango.

The Spotlight Initiative addresses a key development challenge in Uganda. Gender based violence in all its different manifestations remains a major human rights, health and economic concern. 56% of women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical violence at least once since age 15 (Uganda Demographic Health Survey, 2011). Incidents of violence against women cost the Ugandan economy approximately UGX 77 billion (US$20million) annually (CEDOVIP, 2012); Ending Child Marriage could generate US$2.7 billion by 2030 (World Bank 2016).

For the UN in Uganda, a Joint Programme will be designed in an inclusive and consultative manner, involving all UN agencies with UN WOMEN, UNFPA, UNHCR, WHO, UNDP and UNICEF as the lead agencies, using the existing UNDAF Coordination architecture. These will be supported by IOM, OHCHR, WFP and FAO. The UN Resident coordinator’s office will support the development and management of the Joint programme in Uganda.

The proposed intervention is linked to the National Development Plan II and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will promote Delivering as One, ensure a multi-stakeholder approach and Civil Society engagement.
By Doreen Kansiime United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Kampala - The UN in Uganda and the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs (MoDVA) signed a new joint programme on 27 March 2018 to promote women and gender equality, livelihoods and social cohesion for military families, women combatants, veterans and those who serve as UN peacekeepers.


The new Joint Programme was signed by Ms. Rosa Malango, the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative and Hon. Lt. Col Bright Rwamirama, the State Minister for Veteran Affairs in Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs.

Speaking during the partnership round table meeting at the inception of the programme, Ms. Malango described the programme as an example of an innovative approach that builds on indigenous capacities for ensuring an inclusive sustainable approach to peace and development. She commended the collective effort made by MoDVA, Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) and the UN, to develop the joint programme.
“Developing this programme comprised of an extensive multi-stakeholder consultative process involving a number of critical stakeholders in and outside the country. The consultations identified and consolidated the challenges faced by UPDF and proposed solutions – which we shall implement together,” she added.

She further said that through the programme, the UN would leverage its collective strength and comparative advantage in support of military spouses, veterans and combatants. It will do so by engaging key structures to promote gender equality, facilitate sustainable and inclusive economic growth, address sexual and reproductive health of women and girls as well as strengthen efforts to combat gender-based violence.

In his remarks, the Minister of State for Defence in Charge of Veterans, Hon. Lt. Col. Bright Rwamirama said that the increasing number of unemployed veterans was a big threat to the country, hence the need to mobilise and provide them with life skills. This would ease their integration back into their communities and civilian life. Ms. Edith Buturo the Ministry’s Under Secretary in charge of Finance and Administration, who represented the Permanent Secretary appealed for mobilisation and support of the programme’s target groups. More here

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD: A YOUNG GIRL RESCUED FROM MARRIAGE THROUGH UNICEF NATIONAL CHILD HELPLINE

By Proscovia Nakibuuka Mbonye, Communication Officer UNICEF Uganda (UNICEF)

For only 150,000 Uganda shillings (US$ 41) a young girl was married off at 12 years in Buyanga village, Iganga District, Eastern Uganda. Alisaati Namagembe, now 14 years and a mother of a one-year old son had always been an ardent student, good at mathematics and very focused. She aspired to be a Mathematics teacher and strongly believed and still does, that she would achieve her dream through education. Unfortunately, in 2016, her journey was interrupted when she was forcefully married off by her mother. She was a child and only 12 years old.

“My mother broke the news one evening. I tried very hard to talk to her out of the proposal but I was unsuccessful.” “All the arrangements had already been made and the man was waiting for me,” Alisaati says with a sad look. By the time her mother told her of the sad news,
the family had already deposited 100,000 UGX Shillings (US$28). She was robbed of her childhood. Her smile is rare and she is always in deep thoughts.

The marriage that lasted four months was characterized with verbal, physical and sexual abuse by her husband. When asked how life was in the marriage, all she echoes is “I was suffering. I was suffering,” with teary eyes. Many times, when girls like Alisaati marry young, chances of experiencing abuse are very high In addition to all the anguish, Alisaati had to cultivate crops to raise the remaining amount of money that was not paid for her bride price. This was a condition her husband had given to her family. “I did a lot of digging and yet I also had to do all the other house chores.”

In Uganda, nearly 50 per cent (3 million women) of 20-49 year old women were married by the age of 18 while 15 per cent (900,000 women) by the age of 15 years.

Alisaati is rescued from a gruesome marriage. On realizing that one of his students was absent from school for months, Alisaati’s former Head Teacher made inquiries about his student, only to confirm she had been married off in a nearby village. The Head Teacher who had heard about a toll free National Child Helpline, through a recent media campaign, instantly reported the case by dialing 116. In a few days, Alisaati was rescued from what she calls hell. “I just saw police raiding my home one day and we were both taken to the Police station,” she said.

In 2014, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development with support from UNICEF launched the toll free National Child Helpline 116 also known as SAUTI to encourage children and adults to report cases of child abuse and all forms of child rights violations. The Child Helpline service is one of the mechanisms utilized to strengthen child protection systems to address violence against children in communities.
Furthermore, with UNICEF’s support, the district has also trained various duty bearers like para-social workers, community leaders, police, civil society organisations, parents and teachers, among others to identify, report and refer cases related to violation of children’s rights to the different child protection structures. Community dialogues to create awareness about the dangers of child marriages have also been carried out in the communities.

The perpetrator and her mother were taken to jail. “I have not seen my mother since,” Alisaati says.

Unfortunately, Alisaati was already three months pregnant at the time of rescue. She was ill and malnourished too. With support from the District Probation Office, Alisaati was enrolled with Faith Babies Home and Children’s village, a home for abandoned and vulnerable children. This is now her home. It is also through her new guardians that she acquired an education scholarship which will enable her to continue her studies to achieve her dream. She feels safe here and is ready to move on with her life.

Like many other young girls who marry young, Alisaati had a very difficult pregnancy. With preeclampsia at six months, a sexually transmitted disease and a rash all over her body, the young girl endured a lot and was uncertain about her life and that of the baby. Fortunately, with enormous support from the health workers, Alisaati gave birth to a baby boy who she named Peter Muwanguzi – Muwanguzi meaning ‘he overcame.’ “If I had stayed in my marriage I think I would have died, she says softly.

More here

REPORT FROM THE FIELD: TRIPLETS, TWINS AND SINGLES; HEARTWARMING SAFE BIRTHS FROM KYANGWALI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

By Jimmy Dombo, UN Population Fund Uganda

Pregnancy and childbirth are supposed to be journeys of joy, with a safe birth a dream of every mother. But during emergencies, women and girls may give birth without access to skilled care, making complications even more dangerous during childbirth. Yet, in such times, the survival of women depends on whether they have access to basic sexual and reproductive health services.
As the emergency in the Democratic Republic of Congo persists, thousands – one in five of whom is a pregnant woman - have fled ethnic clashes in the past months. In response, UNFPA is delivering an increasing share of its services to ensure protection of the rights and health of expectant mothers, and the results are visible as attested by the refugee women in Kyangwali refugee settlement who show their bundles of joy with pride.

Among them is 20-year old Ruth Neema who safely delivered triplets at Rwenyawaawa Health Centre III on arrival to Uganda. This was after fleeing tribal clashes while nine months pregnant. She lost contact with her husband during flight and has not heard from him again:

“Being pregnant, it was very challenging on the way but with God’s grace, I was able to make it to Kagoma Refugee Reception Centre where I am currently staying waiting to be settled. “It was here that I went into labour and was rushed by ambulance to Rwenyawaawa Health Centre III where I delivered triplets. I am grateful to UNFPA for the three dignity kits. The shawls to keep my babies warm on this cold floor,” she says.

Buma Estella, aged 28 also tells the story of how she safely delivered twin girls; Ishara Nyangoma and Ruta Nyakato. “I was pregnant when the fighting broke out in Congo, people were being killed and houses burnt. We fled to the landing site and crossed into Uganda by boat on Lake Albert. We stayed four days at Sebagoro Refugee Transit centre, then to Kagoma reception centre for another three days before being settled here at Maratatu III Village,” she narrates.

On the night of 19 February at 11 pm, Buma developed labor pains and delivered with the help of neighbours. The next morning, while on a house-to-house visit UNFPA supported volunteers identified Buma who was now experiencing severe abdominal pains and was rushed by ambulance to the nearest health post. “I am now back home and recovering well. I thank UNFPA for the support,” says Buma, now settled in Maratatu III Village Kyangwali settlement.
Another refugee Harriet Ndroyi also safely delivered twins on 2 February after being rushed in an ambulance to Hoima Regional Referral Hospital due to a complication. “Now everyone calls me “Nyabade” (Mother of Twins),” she says.

EUROPE INVITED TO EMBRACE OBUNTUMULAMU IN MANAGING REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

By Monica Aturinda, UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO)

“I believe Uganda’s story is an African experience that Europe can learn from in managing refugee and migration issues,” said Ms. Rosa Malango, UN Resident Coordinator, at the Social & Democrats TOGETHER event on “Managing Migration & Supporting Refugees in a Globalised World” in Hamburg, Germany, 12 April 2018.

She added that Uganda has a long tradition of hospitality towards refugees because of her rich cultural heritage which grounds her approaches to development including refugees hosting which is enshrined in empathy, solidarity and brotherhood like most African states.

Ms. Malango made these remarks at the event organised by the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament, who invited her as a guest speaker. “African kingdoms and chiefdoms have retained dignified approaches to migration which are informing modern efforts to strengthen regional integration and continental free trade. Shared values such as Ubuntu known as Obuntumulamu in Uganda have existed for hundreds of years informing the ability of communities to welcome migrants and refugees, take care of the destitute and ensure the safety of inhabitants,” Ms. Malango told the Members of the European Parliament.

“Only an ambitious policy, developed and implemented together with African partners, will meet the immense, shared challenges ahead,” said Ms. Malango.

Despite, dealing with its own development challenges and increasing vulnerabilities, including drought and food insecurity that affects many parts of the country from time to time, Uganda continues to maintain an open-door policy in face on the increasing refugee influx. Refugees
in Uganda live in settlements similar to villages other Ugandans live in but not in refugee camps.

Ms. Rosa Malango UN Resident Coordinator (with a microphone) speaking at the Social & Democrats TOGETHER event in Hamburg, Germany, 12 April 2018

In addition, refugees are given land to build their own houses and grow their own food. They are permitted to seek gainful employment outside the settlement in any part of the country, where they are allowed to freely move after registration and being provided with a refugee identity cards.

African states have a long tradition of hospitality towards refugees and have developed legal frameworks governing aspects of refugee protection specific to the continent. Africa remains the only region with a comprehensive legal framework known as the Kampala Declaration on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. Adopted by AU Heads of State & Government in 2009, member states committed among other things to do everything possible to address the plight as well as to find durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons who are in protracted situations in the territories of our respective states. They also agreed to create an enabling environment for refugees and
internally displaced persons particularly women and vulnerable groups as well as youth to help them become self-reliant through socio-economic integration which will enable them to contribute to the local economies of countries of origin upon return. It’s important to note that according to IOM, 80% of migration in Africa is within the continent and only 20% of the migration from Africa is outside the continent including to Europe.

“I appeal to the EU to invest in initiatives that promote social cohesion and peacebuilding, and positive effects of migration such as the Obuntubulamu project that the United Nations System in Uganda with cultural/traditional leaders,” said Ms. Malango. She added that through supporting indigenous systems that promote social cohesion such as Obuntubulamu in Uganda and formal institutions that promote good governance and a robust state, the EU will go a long way in contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 10 Reduced Inequality between Europe and Africa. In Uganda the United Nations System is doing this through the UN Development Assistance Framework 2016 -2020 in support the implementation of the National Vision 2040 and National Development plan aimed at transforming Uganda into a middle-income country through inclusive growth.

UGANDA ON THE RIGHT PATH TO ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

By Edmond Mwebembezi, World Health Organization Uganda

Uganda is slowly moving toward achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) which is the cornerstone for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 3 on the global development agenda. This was the consensus from participants at a high-level meeting hosted by the World Health Organization Country Office in commemoration of World Health Day 2018 which also marked the 70th anniversary of the organisation.

The country has a robust health sector development plan that seeks to, among other goals “accelerate movement towards Universal Health Coverage with Essential health and related services needed for promotion of a healthy and productive life”. This is also encapsulated in the overall targets of the country’s Vision 2040.

In addition, Uganda has a health sector monitoring and supervision framework, and an elaborate and well spread health infrastructure at all levels of national and local government administration. The country also has an impressive tracking system for health supplies, it holds
regular sector reviews and has strong partnerships extending even to the private sector. “These are strong foundations for Universal Health Coverage,” said Dr. Prosper Tumusiime, from the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa who gave a keynote address at the breakfast under the theme: “Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere”.

Despite the strong foundation, the country still has a long way to go to achieve UHC as Dr. Tumusiime pointed out in reference to critical health indicators. Presently, about 72% of the Ugandan population live within 5 km of a health facility; only 13.4% of health facilities carry out scheduled maintenance of medical equipment; health workforce density is at 1.55 per 1000 population; health facilities reporting availability of over 95% of a basket of commodities are only 55%.

More here

SDG 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAN CREATE JOBS FOR YOUTH, PROMOTE TOURISM SAYS UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR ON WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

By Henry Nsubuga, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Rosa Malango has said that protecting the environment and wildlife can create job opportunities for the youth and spur sustainable development. Speaking at the World Wildlife Day celebrations, held on 3 March 2018 in Kasese Town near the ice-capped Rwenzori Mountain and Queen Elizabeth National Park, Ms. Malango also said that tourism should benefit local communities. “Protecting the environment and protecting wildlife are opportunities for job creation and responsible tourism,” Ms Malango, who is also the UNDP Resident Representative, said.

“So, let us train more guides, more rangers, and more story tellers. Let us establish more eco-friendly transportation and support entrepreneurs in arts and culture,” she added.

*UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Rosa Malango endorsing the pledge to play a part in keeping the big cats safe during the Wildlife Day in Kasese District*

Ms. Malango called for substantial investment in road safety to ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and motorists move around safely “as we promote tourism.” This year’s World Wildlife Day focused on; ‘Big Cats: Predators under threat while the local theme was; “Creating a Safe Environment for Survival of Big Cats in Uganda.” Big cats include; the Cheetah, Clouded leopard, Jaguar, Leopard, Lion, Puma, Snow Leopard, and Tiger. Uganda is home to three of these; the lion, the leopard and the cheetah and there is a rapid reduction in the numbers due to; poaching, illegal wildlife trade, climate change and loss of habitat.

“We may wonder, why it is important to celebrate and protect these big cats – after all they are predators. We must remember that they remain important species whose protection also
safeguards the vast landscapes they live in. Protecting them is a key part of keeping our entire ecosystems,” Ms. Malango said. Big cats are one of the biggest attractions for tourists visiting Uganda’s game parks. Statistics from Uganda Tourism Board show that tourists coming to Uganda have increased from 540,000 in 2006 to 1.32 million today.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, in his remarks delivered by the Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, promised that the Government would protect all animals and their habitat. “The Government prioritises tourism and conservation. Uganda almost lost her wildlife to poaching and lawlessness. With the restoration of peace, this has been reversed,” Mr. Museveni said. “We have been able to reverse extinction of some species,” the President added.

In 1983, Rhinos became extinct. However, in 1997 conservationists formed Rhino Fund Uganda (RFU) which, with support from the Government and UNDP, has now multiplied the number to 21 Rhinos, now roaming the Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary in Nakasongola District.

More here

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**SDG 17 – PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**

**New UNHCR Representative to Uganda Mr. Joël Boutroue**

Joël Boutroue is the UNHCR Representative to Uganda. He took up his position on 1 April 2018. Until May 2016 he was the Special Advisor of the Norwegian Government for Haiti. From early 2010 to late 2011, he was Special Advisor to the former Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive after the Haiti earthquake.

Mr. Boutroue has had a long career with the United Nations spanning from 1984 to 2010. He served as Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General/UN Resident Coordinator /Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Representative in Haiti from end 2006 to 2009; as Deputy Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Armenia; and Head of the Consolidated
Appeals Process with OCHA. Mr. Boutroue also served as the Head of UNHCR in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo following the Rwandan genocide; in Malawi (1987 to 1991) and Sudan (1984 to 1987) in addition to UNHCR Headquarters.

Mr. Boutroue holds a Master’s degree in Social Sciences from the University of Grenoble, France.

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