OVERVIEW

• This edition of the UN Uganda Bulletin brings you stories from the field showing how joint UN support is transforming communities in the different regions of Uganda. However more support is needed to find long-term solutions to some of the challenges faced by these communities.

• Refugees in Kyaka II Settlement, Kyegegwa District, are missing out on the rights to clean water and sanitation. Help is needed to find a lasting solution to the water scarcity in the area.

• UN support to the police has served as a deterrent against crime, sexual and gender-based abuses. It has also led to enhancement of security along the porous borders and created stability at border posts.

• More schools needed for the refugees and host community in Arua District.

• Funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and UKaid have supported the procurement of life-saving vaccines and a cold chain system for effective vaccine management.

• UN and Government launch the Songhai model, an integrated approach that empowers youth, women and communities to sustainably harness natural resources for improved livelihoods through agriculture.

• Access to legal aid and justice is key to tackling serious and pervasive crimes of violence against women and girls.
WAITING FOR WATER IN KYAKA II: WATER CRISIS DEEPENS IN THE EMERGENCY SETTLEMENT

By UN Area Coordination (UNAC) team

**Kyaka II Refugee Settlement** - Access to safe water and adequate sanitation are essential for life, health, dignity, and prosperity of every individual.

However, refugees in Kyaka II Settlement, Kyegegwa District, Western Uganda, are missing out on the rights to clean water and sanitation.

*A refugee boy with an empty five litre jerrican waiting for water in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement © Monicah Aturinda Kyeyune, 2018*

With a population of over 65,000 refugees and 40,000 host community, the settlement has only 25 water tanks spread across its nine zones. The water tanks are complemented by a few hand pumps and protected springs which are unable to meet the increasing demand to clean drinking water.
At Ruchinga village, Itambabiniga zone, refugees and the host community queue with jerrycans for water. “We need more water supplied to our community,” said Kansiime, a 10-year-old girl who had been at the point long before we arrived. “As you can see, everyone is waiting for water, we are waiting for the truck to refill,” she said.

“The other alternative is to fetch water from a nearby spring, the water is unreliable, and the flow is erratic,” said Aleshe, a 40-year-old woman holding an empty five litre jerrycan.

Most of the available water sources are unsustainable, a more permanent solution needs to be provided to increase individual access to water which currently stands below the 20 litres per day by sphere standards.

“We need support to provide safe water for the refugees and the host community,” said Okello, the water treatment plant manager from Danish Refugee Council. “The response to the DR Congo emergency has also stretched the resources required to provide clean water.”

The plant uses a rapid treatment process to supply water. “This is better than the conventional method used in the past,” he said.
“We have only five tanks to store treated water at the plant which were provided by UNHCR and OXFAM. UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM have designed a plan to turn the plant into a high-end water source that will provide piped water to the communities, increase water accessibility and mitigate the costs of trucking water to the settlement,” said Michael, UNHCR’s WASH specialist in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement. “Urgent funding is required for this project.”

While UNICEF is improving hygiene and sanitation by sensitizing the community to avoid open defecation and providing each household with hand washing facilities and soap, UNHCR provides the construction materials for household latrines as temporary communal latrine structures are put in the villages.

“The sensitization to stop open defecation is conducted by the Red Cross. The NGO traverses the villages talking to refugees about the dangers of open defecation and poor sanitation,” said Suzan Nyakoojo, UNICEF’s programme Officer in the South Western Region.

“Kyaka II residents live on a hill and the water bodies are in the valley. Given the poor hygiene and waste management the likelihood of water contamination and disease outbreaks is high,” she said.
UN AND PARTNERS WORK TO ENSURE PROTECTION THROUGH COMMUNITY POLICING AND TRAINING

By UN Area Coordination (UNAC) team

"Most complaints in our communities are security related, missing children, wives battered by their husbands, burgled shops or homes, street fights that result in deaths or injuries - these are just a few of hundreds of scenarios that make us demand for protection to improve our lives. We often take these security issues for granted until a major incident occurs and makes us see the need for protection". Said Nyapeyok.

Nyapeyok is a thirty-two-year-old mother of four children and one of the beneficiaries of community policing in Karamoja. When she was neglected and denied resources by her
husband to care for their children, Nyapeyok received support from the elders and the police. “I reported our issues to the elders and the police and, they mediated and ensured that my husband returned the money he had stolen from me. Afterwards, the elders reconciled us,” she said, with a smiling appreciation for the help she received through community policing.

For Irima, help came from the community volunteers who advised her to report domestic violence to the police. “The community volunteers frequently hold focused group discussions with women in my village,” says Irima. “I didn’t know I have the right to report the abuse I suffered in my marriage to the police, then I did, and everything changed.”

Life was tough and difficult for Irima, her husband left home, leaving her without any help to cater for their two children but after she reported to the police, her condition improved, and he took up his responsibilities of caring for their children.

“In Karamoja, the police are working with cultural leaders of different communities to provide security and improve access to justice for women and children at risk of domestic violence,” said Jackson Anayla, one of the members of the Elders Association of Karamoja.

The Karamoja elder’s forum is an organized structure supported by the Government to take part in the mediation, reconciliation and conflict resolutions in the region.

“We have cultural norms that guide our people, we are always reviewing these norms to make sure that the rights of the people are respected and protected,” said Odong Martin, an elder from Nudunget Sub County.

“We were taken by UN Women to Gulu for an exchange visit, where we participated in training on gender-based violence,” said Anayla. “The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights also sensitized and made us outlaw some of our cultural practices that are not in line with the rights of individuals.”

The Regional Police Commander of Moroto, Aruk Richard Maruk, commended the work of the UN in training. “UNDP supported the enhancement of security at the porous borders, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided specialized training on the investigation and management of sexual gender-based violence and juveniles, while UNFPA trained the police child and family protection unit,” Aruk said.

Additionally, he said, the UN supported the police to train members of the community policing, which has led to increased community awareness, reduced crimes and early detection of suspicious persons in the community.

“OHCHR, UNDP and UN Women supported the police in Karamoja with motor bikes, furniture, computers, laptops, digital cameras, photocopiers, printers and law books. “The Office of the High Commissioner Human Rights has been in the forefront of training of trainers on human rights and we have seen increased reporting of cases of violation of women rights,” he said.

“The Police are trained to be humane, ethical, and possess high qualities of human relations;
they have a special responsibility for the protection of human rights,” said Emmanuel Momoh, OHCHR head of field office Moroto.

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Through these joint interventions at the community level, the UN and partners demonstrate the immense benefits that can come when resources are pooled together to address critical issues bringing lasting impacts, turning vulnerabilities into opportunities.
JOINT UN EDUCATION INTERVENTION BENEFIT REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES: A UN SUPPORTED SCHOOL PROVIDES REFUGEES AND LOCALS WITH BETTER EDUCATION

By UN Area Coordination (UNAC) Team

Arua, Uganda – Vurra Biliafe Primary School is admitting children from the local community and refugees’ settlement.

The facilities of the school, which hosts a population of over 2,500 children, are stretched because of the South Sudanese influx that expanded the enrolment rate.

“We lack almost everything: trained teachers, teachers’ accommodation, classrooms, staff room, dining hall, library and kitchen,” explained Mark Anaku, the head teacher of the school.

Before the primary school was established for the community, children walked more than 17 miles to school. For this reason, UNICEF established the school in 1998 as a Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE).

“The school began to expand in 2006 when the community began to host refugees from the South Sudanese,” he said. “The three classrooms constructed by UNICEF were not enough, children took their classes under trees and a nearby church was converted to a classroom.”

“These interventions by UN agencies, the Local District Government, international and local NGOs are critical to supporting the government to provide adequate education for refugees and their host community,” said Anaku.

“Most refugees live side-by-side with Ugandans in the district which are already the poorest and most fragile because of the environmental challenges.”  “They are sharing the available resources including basic social services,”

“Though variation in syllabus affects the performance of refugee children, their performance has improved overtime. These children are forced to flee their homes without any school documents and yet they are required to take entry examinations as a prerequisite to enroll in school”, Anaku explained.
One of the pupils, Talib, a 17 year old unaccompanied minor South Sudanese refugee, who had the opportunity to reenroll in primary school, talked about the opportunities of education in Uganda: “I can get scholarship to complete my education,” “In the past I didn’t know how to read and write, when I failed the entrance examination to continue with my secondary education, I had no choice than to enroll from primary six.”

Despite walking for one hour to school and back to Ofua village in Rhino Camp because there are no primary school in the village Talib talks about his future plans: “I want to be a teacher”

“With my teacher’s training certificate, I can work here in Uganda or in my country when peace is restored.”

For Rizoyo, 14 years old, primary seven pupil from the host community “I was attending the school before the refugees joined us.” “Since the refugees started attending our school, I feel happy to go to school because we are given books, pens and menstrual hygiene materials.”

More primary schools are particularly needed for the refugee and host communities in Arua District, which has played a key role in welcoming refugees from South Sudan. Remarkably, at the height of the South Sudanese influx in Uganda, the arrival of humanitarian workers in the
district offered the host communities like Vurra and Ofua instant supports despite the fact that the emergency is underfunded as the needs outweigh financial resources.

Through ReHoPE, “UN coming to help here has been a blessing because children no longer study under the trees but in classrooms,” said the head teacher. “Teachers no longer send them home when it is raining, the support of UNICEF and UNHCR have attracted more supports, ZOA International is supporting with school feeding programme.”

“Low staffing and staff accommodation is still a challenge,” he says. “Although, UNHCR is supporting us through Windle International Uganda, we call on Government to deploy more trained teachers and to find a quick modality to verify documents of refugees who are trained teachers.”

There are 17 primary schools and two secondary schools in Rhino camp, teaching assistants are brought on board to bridge the gap between curriculum and cultures of children forced to flee to Uganda. “UNHCR is investing a lot in recruiting refugee and trained teachers,” said David Kasiba, Project Officer Windle International Uganda.

“We also need Early Childhood Development Centre for children in Vurra community, many children between 3 and 5 years old are not fully engaged to prepare their minds for school,” said Mark Anaku with compassion to help the children of the community.

SDG 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

CERF AND UNICEF SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE VACCINE MANAGEMENT TO REACH EVERY CHILD

By Proscovia Nakibuuka, UNICEF

It is an early start for Yakobo Kahesi, Emergency Health Coordinator, Africa Humanitarian Action, at Bujubulu Health Centre III, Kyaka II refugee settlement in Kyegegwa District, Western Uganda. Mothers with their children, fathers, adolescents, pregnant women, enter the health facility, majority refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Many of these are children who constitute 40 per cent of the total population in the refugee settlement.

It is immunization day, a service offered daily, to protect children from highly contagious and deadly diseases. On a single day, about 110 children – both refugees and those from host communities – are immunized against polio, measles, diphtheria, pneumonia, whooping
cough, among other diseases. Women are also receiving tetanus shots at the immunization shelter. It is a busy corner.

UNICEF with financial assistance from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) - the UN’s global emergency response fund - and UKaid have supported the procurement of life-saving vaccines and the cold chain system for effective vaccine management.

According to Kahesi, stocking vaccines alone is not enough. If they are not kept at the right temperature, in the right places, they will not be able to save children’s’ lives. “The cold chain support package means we will not only have vaccines, but also be able to store them very well. This means that our vaccines are kept at the right temperatures – between 2 and 8 degrees cellcius or else they get spoil.”

The cold chain support package included a solar powered refrigerator complete with solar panels, vaccine carriers, ice packs and motorcycles. Unlike the old refrigerators, the new UNICEF-provided refrigerator has an innovative and special feature known as a fridge tag which measures and displays the minimum and maximum temperatures at once and is easy to read and interpret. In addition, it also records and stores temperatures for several months in case comparisons in vaccine temperatures need to be made. The Health centre now has a
complete cold chain room where the materials are stored and monitoring of temperatures done.

Kahesi confirms that before the investments in the cold chain, the health centre relied on refrigerators powered by electricity and gas which was very unreliable. “With the frequent power cuts, we often used ice packs to store the vaccines, which sometimes compromised the temperatures when the packs melted. We sometimes transferred the vaccines to other health centres with electricity which was very cumbersome. Many vaccines would change in colour, hence losing their effectiveness which caused losses and shortages. This greatly affected the immunization services and campaigns.”

**What is cold chain management**

According to UNICEF, the system used for keeping and distributing vaccines in potent condition is called the ‘cold chain’. High temperatures or fall in temperatures below zero for freeze sensitive vaccines can cause vaccines to lose their potency – that is, their ability to provide protection against diseases.

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**SDG 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**THE PRESIDENT LAUNCHES UNDP LED SONGHAI INITIATIVE ON INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE**

By Doreen Kansiime, UNDP

President Yoweri Museveni launched the Songhai model, an integrated approach that empowers youth, women and communities to sustainably harness natural resources for improved livelihoods through agriculture.

He launched the model during celebrations to mark International Youth Day (IYD) 2018 whose theme this year focused on, “Safe Spaces for the Youth.”

The Songhai model which is being piloted and practiced in Kampiringisa, Mpiji District, was introduced in Uganda through UNDP and has been identified as one of the safe spaces the youth can exploit to learn about agriculture and value addition.

Ms. Rosa Malango, the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative said that the Songhai Model is a nexus connecting agriculture, science, industry, service provision and tourism.
“This model reminds us to go back to our indigenous knowledge to boost our agriculture. It improves yields by using a method that is healthier for the soil. I am therefore launching it as a new science for us to practice and I encourage the Youth to embrace it,” President Museveni said of the model.

The Songhai Model is primarily a regenerative agriculture which uses agro-ecological practices to boost soil fertility, increase yields while protecting the environment. https://bit.ly/2omoRRg

MPs PLEDGE TO SUPPORT THE LEGAL AID BILL

By Aidah Nanyonjo, UN Women

The Members of the Greater North Parliamentary Forum have pledged to support the passing of the Legal Aid Bill when its tabled in Parliament.
They made the pledge during a half-day workshop to induct members of Parliament as Ambassadors of the Legal Aid Bill. The meeting organized by the Greater North Parliamentary Forum took place at the Serena Hotel Kampala on 31 July 2018 with support from UN Women and Legal Aid Service Providers Network (LASPNET).

The Executive Director LASPNET, Ms. Sylvia Namubiru said that the bill provides easy access to free legal aid and referral services by the marginalized and vulnerable groups of people in the country and regulates the legal aid service providers in the country.

“Once the bill is passed into law, it will give the legal aid service providers an opportunity to complement the government’s efforts to make justice accessible to everyone in the country cost free,” Ms. Namubiru said.

Some 80% of Ugandans have no access to legal aid services due to the high cost and lawyers are urban based. Apart from Uganda, other East African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda have comprehensive laws with regard to provision of legal aid to the ordinary people.

UN Women Deputy Country Representative, Ms. Anna Mutavati noted that access to legal aid
and justice is a cornerstone to tackling the serious and pervasive crimes of violence against women and girls. She added that lack of a legal aid policy in Uganda creates inefficiency in the justice system and the courts since those in need of legal aid assistance do not have the funds and the information to adequately navigate the justice system.

Hon. Lyandro Komakech, the Chairperson of the Greater North Parliamentary Forum said the Bill is ready to be presented to the House and asked fellow legislators to be good will ambassadors of all Ugandans and support the legal aid bill.

“Our aim should be building synergies, mutual support and collaboration to ensure that the national Legal Aid Bill 2018 is passed. If this piece of legislation is assented to, then all Ugandans, the poor and the rich, will have access to equal representation in courts of law,” he said.

The Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Jacob Oulanyah, said in law, there is a presumption of innocence until found guilty but most times the poor end up in jail because of lack of representation.

**For more information, please contact:**

Michael Wangusa  
michael.wangusa@one.un.org  
+256 (0) 771 005 988

Monicah Aturinda  
monicah.aturinda@one.un.org  
+256 (0) 772 147 505

UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO)  
UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO)