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UGANDA



# UN UGANDA BULLETIN

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## LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: UNITED NATIONS IN UGANDA MARKS HER 77TH ANNIVERSARY IN MBARARA CITY

By Monicah Aturinda, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)

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UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo (second from left), receiving Minister for General Duties and Focal Point Minister for SDGs, Rt. Hon. Justin Kasule Lumumba (second from right) at the National Commemoration of United Nations Day held at Mbarara High School Grounds in Mbarara City on 26 October 2022 ©UNICEF Uganda

**Every year, UN Day is observed around the world on 24th October. The day offers the opportunity to amplify our common agenda and reaffirm the purposes and principles of the UN Charter that have guided the organisation since its founding.**

In the spirit of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ and popularising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the grassroots, the UN Family in Uganda selected Mbarara City to be the host for the UN Day 2022 commemoration event held on 26th October 2022 at Mbarara High School grounds.

The commemoration brought together all partners of the UN including representatives from the central government and district local governments, development partners, civil society organisations, private sector, youth, students from secondary schools and universities, UN staff and members of the community to recognize and appreciate each other’s role in promoting peace and development as well as the progress on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.





UN staff and partners marching during Mbarara City during the National Commemoration of United Nations Day on 26 October 2022 ©UNDP Uganda



UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo (front row fourth from left), UN Heads of Agencies, UN Area Heads with Isingiro Districts leaders led by Deputy Resident District Commissioner, Mr. Christopher Aine (front row fifth from left) during the UN field mission on 25 October 2022 ©FAO Uganda

In his welcome remarks, Mr. Robert Kakyebi Mugabe, City Mayor thanked the UN family in Uganda for bringing the UN Day celebrations to Mbarara, adding that it is a sign of commitment that the UN is inclusive and cares for everyone.

Mbarara City is located in south-western Uganda, and it is one of the United Nations Area Coordination (UNAC) regions with strong UN presence on the ground. In this region, the UN works with the government and partners on humanitarian, peace and development issues in 15 districts.

The Resident City Commissioner, Mr. James Mwesigye, congratulated the United Nations family in Uganda, on the 77th Anniversary and re-echoed the city leadership's commitment to continue working with the UN and partners for peace and development for all Ugandans.

Presently made up of 193 member states, including Uganda, the UN has evolved throughout the years to keep up with the ever-changing world, but its work is still guided by the principles held within its founding charter.



In countries like Uganda, the face of the UN is the projects and programmes we work on with the government and the people, but the UN is greater than its projects and programmes. The UN is fundamentally a meeting place for all humanity to discuss multilateral issues," said Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo, UN Resident Coordinator in her speech.

Uganda was admitted to United Nations on 25 October 1962, the same year the country attained independence. Since its

establishment, the UN has remained the one place where all the world's nations including Uganda can congregate to discuss common problems and find shared solutions that benefit all of humanity.


"Uganda values her membership of the United Nations particularly because of the organisation's role in fostering peace in the world and contributing to development," said Rt. Hon. Justine Kasule Lumumba, Minister of General Duties and Focal Point Minister for SDGs.

Rt. Hon. Lumumba called upon all Ugandans and stakeholders to re-commit to contribute to achievement of the SDGs and national development goals outlined in NDP III and Vision 2040.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have caused some reversals in global progress to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, overall, action to meet the Goals is not yet advancing at the speed or scale required.

"On this UN Day event, I call upon every individual to reflect on what can be done differently to achieve the SDGs especially in Uganda because each one of us has a role to play." Ms. Namondo urged everyone to do something and not to leave the responsibilities to only the government and development partners.

Rt. Hon. Lumumba said that a corruption-free systems is the only way forward if we hope to achieve the SDGs. Adding that every act of corruption there is a child, a woman or a Person with Disability who does not prosper as they should have.

As part of UN Day Commemorations, the UN family led by the UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo visited Isingiro District on 25th October 2022 to interact with Local Government, refugees and Host community. The visit started with a courtesy call to Isingiro District Local Government before heading to the Joint UN World Food Day celebration at Rubondo; Prospect Partnership 2019-2023 in Uganda at Rubondo Primary School and Kabazana Reception Center in Nakivale Refugee Settlement. 



## CONTACT TRACERS AND VILLAGE HEALTH TEAMS TAKE ON EBOLA IN UGANDA

By Elise Tcheutchoua Yonkeu, World Health Organization (WHO)



A team of contact tracers from Madudu Sub-county supported by WHO holding their morning meeting before deployment on the ground ©WHO Uganda

### Madudu - Since an Ebola outbreak was declared in Uganda on 20 September, health assistant Nyangoma Kिररुंगी has been on the frontline of the country's response day in and day out, working as a contact tracer in Madudu sub-county, one of the areas affected by the outbreak.

With support from World Health Organization (WHO) and partners, the Ugandan Ministry of Health has trained and deployed around 300 contact tracers like Kिररुंगी, who play a critical role as the country looks to curb the spread of the disease.

As part of surveillance team, Kिररुंगी follows up an average of 40 contacts a day. "I work closely with the investigation unit," she explains. "Once they record a confirmed case of Ebola, my team and I go to the field to follow up with the patient's contacts to ensure that they are symptom-free and then we remain on alert to identify and report symptoms should they develop."

According to Dr Bernard Logouomo, the Ministry of Health Surveillance Team Lead in Mubende District, another Ebola-hit area in the country, contact tracing is key to ending the outbreak. "When the community cooperates in the response and contacts are identified, it becomes easier to contain the disease," he says.

Contact tracers follow a questionnaire designed to assess if a contact has Ebola symptoms. Every contact tracer works with a maximum of 10 village health workers, who are volunteers trained in diseases surveillance. Recruited by communities, village health teams help build trust and overcome fears among responders.

In addition to the deployment of contact tracers, two hotlines were created for communities to report suspected cases. Investigators follow a list of questions designed to assess the need to dispatch an ambulance or a clinical officer. Once a case is confirmed, a case investigation team establishes a list of contacts, depending on where the patient was likely to have been infected and who they may have met afterwards.

After contacts have been located and screened, village health teams take over to monitor them for any symptoms for 21 days - the Ebola incubation period. Beyond this important supporting role, these teams also provide invaluable assistance in raising awareness of the disease within their communities. Since the start of the epidemic, the Ministry of Health has trained over 1200 village health team members, also with support from WHO and partners.

With only 25% of contacts followed up every day in the first days of the outbreak, contact tracing quickly improved. By mid-October, nearly 94% of 552 contacts were seen and monitored daily for 21 days.

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## REAL OR HOAX? THE CASE OF THE EBOLA OUTBREAK IN MADUDU, MUBENDE IN UGANDA

*By Abel Asiimwe and John Bosco Matata, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)*



Ebola Treatment Unit at Madudu Health Centre III in Mubende District ©UNICEF Uganda

**A poster and a banner with messages on Ebola welcomed us as we approached the gate at Madudu HCIII, where an Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) has been set up to receive and treat suspected and confirmed cases.**

Time check is 11:10 a.m. Two health facility staff are on duty at the gate, dressed in protective gear. They are busy taking temperatures and noting the details of patients before they are guided to a foot-powered hand-washing facility supplied by UNICEF and then allowed to proceed into the facility. Uncertainty is written all over the faces of those entering the facility, a reflection, perhaps, of their fear of contracting the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) while there or being referred to the ETU.

On 20 September 2022, Uganda's Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of Sudan Ebolavirus (SDV) after the confirmation of a case managed at Mubende Regional Referral Hospital (MRRH) in Mubende District. This is the first time in more than a decade that Uganda has reported an outbreak of Sudan Ebolavirus.

As of 24th October 2022, Uganda had 90 confirmed cases of the disease, 28 confirmed deaths (CFR 28/90 representing 31 per cent case fatality rate), 26 recoveries and 1820 contacts listed in districts of Mubende, Kyegegwa, Kassanda, Kagadi and Bunyangabu, greater Kampala and Wakiso (MOH, 2022: Ebola Sitrep #33). On 15 October, the President of Uganda announced a 21-day lockdown for Mubende and Kassanda, the epicentre of the outbreak, and various control measures were put in place to contain the deadly virus.

We visited the Madudu health facility on 20 October 2022 exactly one month after the first case was confirmed in Mubende. While we were there, the ETU was quiet and looked empty. We later learnt that the facility had only three suspected cases that had turned out to be negative and were awaiting to be discharged.

### Meeting Ebola survivors Alex Ssebayingga and his wife

Edward Habiyaemye, the Local Council (LC) III Chairperson of Madudu sub-county, guided us as we headed to the home of Alex Ssebayingga in Lulongo village, where we found Ssebayingga's wife attending to her gardens. Unfortunately, her husband, Alex Ssebayingga, was not at home as he was in Mubende town, about 24 kilometres away, when the lockdown was announced. With public transport banned, he had no way of getting back home. We would later meet him in Mubende town.

### CONTACT TRACERS AND VILLAGE HEALTH TEAMS TAKE ON EBOLA IN UGANDA

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Lydia Nasamba, a market trader and a resident of Madudu, has been a member of a local village health team for more than eight years. "Every day at 3pm, I go to the sub-county community radio station, where I raise awareness about Ebola - its symptoms, preventive measures and how to report cases," she says. "After that, I visit the identified contacts in my community to check their health status."

While the contribution of people like Kिररुंगी and Nasamba is a crucial component of Uganda's Ebola response, they face numerous daily challenges, including a lack of personal protective equipment and reliable transport. Contact tracers are often faced with community members' fear of being stigmatized or isolated in a health facility, which puts people's livelihood at risk. Contacts may also not be home when contact tracers visit them, which makes it difficult to monitor them on daily basis.

With support from the United States Agency for International Development and the Norwegian government, WHO has provided four Ebola kits to Mubende Regional Hospital and redeployed 108 technical staff to assist with case management, risk communication, community engagement and laboratory testing.

Back on the ground in Madudu, nothing will deter Kिररुंगी from the task at hand.

“Since I have been involved in the Ebola response, I feel like I am saving lives. I have learned that if all contacts are identified and treated, the disease will disappear,” she says. “That's what motivates me every day.” 🌍

### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Alex Ssebayingga, who is 25 years old, is married to Rose Nakaggwa, 23, and the couple have two children. The family lives in Madudu parish in Madudu sub-county, where they practice subsistence farming. Alex is a survivor of Ebola Virus Disease.

Alex had participated in the care of an eight-year-old child with signs and symptoms of Ebola, including bleeding from the mouth and nose. He had been involved in transporting the child to a private clinic in Madudu, then to the parents of the child in Kyegegwa district and later to Mubende Regional Referral Hospital, where the child died. He also participated in the burial of the child in Kyegegwa.

After seven days, four family members that had participated in the care and burial of the child started feeling unwell and presenting with signs and symptoms like headache, pain and heaviness in the chest, in addition to diarrhea. On learning from a relative who had heard that the signs and symptoms they were presenting were similar to those of Ebola, Alex mobilised his wife, child and two family members that had participated in the care and burial of the child and they reported to Mubende Regional Referral Hospital. There, Alex and two others tested positive for Ebola. His wife and child tested negative and were taken to a different isolation area and later discharged, though he would not know this till he eventually returned home.

At the ETU, Alex said, the patients were treated well and ate good food, although the effects of Ebola caused him to lose his appetite. After 14 days, he tested negative for Ebola virus and was confirmed to have recovered. He was discharged from the ETU and taken home.

“Joy and fear engulfed me at the time of discharge from hospital... yes, I was to go home, but I feared leaving my wife and child in hospital and other family members I came with because I wasn't sure whether they were still admitted or not.”



Alex Ssebayingga (left) narrating his story about surviving Ebola ©UNICEF Uganda

Seven days after testing negative for Ebola, Rose and her child were discharged and returned home. There, some community members came over to confirm that indeed Rose did not have Ebola. “You are back, and you have brought Ebola here!” One community member boldly threw these words in my face. Later,



Rose Nakaggwa at her home with one of her children ©UNICEF Uganda

at a nearby shop, the owner was afraid to touch my money in case it had the Ebola virus on it. I felt bad, isolated and stigmatized at the beginning, but now people are supportive after continued education on Ebola,” said Rose.

Alex, too, experienced stigma when he returned home. “One shop owner refused my money but gave me the items I wanted. He told me to pay later since I was well known to him,” Alex said.

The outbreak of Ebola in Madudu has been a turning point in people's lives. People have suffered in many ways as Madudu continues to be the epicentre of the Ebola outbreak. “People are living in fear. People's livelihoods have been greatly affected as those with businesses or who work in trading centres fear getting infected while at work. People's gardens are far from where they stay, and they are not able to easily access food due to the lockdown. School attendance has suffered too as some parents have stopped their children from attending school for fear of them getting infected,” said Habiaryemye.

Unfortunately, however, some people have still not come to terms with the reality that Ebola exists.

Some religious leaders and traditional healer/herbalists are still receiving their followers and attending to them in secret, “said Habiaryemye.

#### Message

Alex believes that accepting that Ebola is real helped him to survive. Now he feels that it is his duty to share his experience with his community, encouraging them to accept the reality of the disease, but also to welcome and integrate survivors back into the community. He is also working with health workers to promote hope.

“Ebola is here. Ebola kills but is preventable. I survived Ebola because I reported early.” Alex Ssebayingga, Ebola survivor.

Habiaryemye continues to transverse his community, engaging local leaders and community members to report all alerts, while emphasizing that good health is wealth, in a bid to ensure that Ebola comes to an end. “I am confirming to our people that we have Ebola in our community. I know my people who have contracted Ebola and while some have died the ones reporting signs and symptoms early continue to survive. I call upon fellow leaders to continue educating people on Ebola. It is possible to stop Ebola!” he said. 🌍

## UNFPA- SUPPORTED BLOOD COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRE IMPROVES OBSTETRIC CARE IN NEBBI

By Samuel Okiror, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



A midwife helping Ayorwoth with her baby at Nebbi Hospital ©UNFPA Uganda

**Fosca Ayorwoth gave birth to a bouncing baby girl by cesarean section at St. Luke Hospital, Angal in her local district of Nebbi in northwestern Uganda. Ten days after giving birth, the 25-year-old mother of six nearly died from postpartum haemorrhage (PPH), severe bleeding that can occur within 24 hours to 12 weeks after delivery.**

“I was discharged from hospital and went home. After three days at home, heavy bleeding started and I was rushed back to the hospital. The doctors referred me here (Nebbi General Hospital) for blood transfusion,” says Ayorwoth who delivered on June 29 2022.

Ayorwoth was transfused with two units of blood initially; the bleeding stopped briefly but later continued. She was rushed to the theatre for an emergency operation. The doctors removed her uterus in order to stop the bleeding and save her life. Ayorwoth was transfused with a total of seven units of blood, something that could not have happened one year ago at Nebbi General Hospital due to a shortage of blood products, caused by lack of equipment to collect and store blood.

Post-partum haemorrhage is the leading cause of maternal deaths in Uganda. According to hospital statistics, eight out of 13 maternal

deaths that occurred in Nebbi Hospital between July 2020 and June 2021, were due to postpartum hemorrhage and lack of blood for transfusion.

However, ensuring full availability of these supplies is still a challenge, due to several factors including long distances to collection centres, frequent stock outs of blood screening reagents and lack of appropriate equipment to collect and store blood and blood products. Nebbi Hospital was no different.

Health workers from the hospital previously had to make the long journey to Arua (70 kilometres) and Gulu regional referral hospitals (248 kilometres) to access blood products. Given that the two regional hospitals serve several health facilities, stock-out of blood products was frequent, according to Dr. Jackline Akello, Nebbi Hospital medical superintendent.

With funding from The Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, UNFPA, under the Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ANSWER) Programme, procured a refrigerator, a freezer and cold boxes to strengthen the capacity of Nebbi Hospital to collect, process and distribute blood as one of the strategies to save mothers’ lives. The availability of blood and other products at the hospital has helped improve capacity to provide maternal health services including provision of safe blood transfusion services.

“I am so grateful the doctors managed to save my life. I thank God that the blood for transfusion was readily available. Otherwise, I would have died,” said Ayorwoth from her High Dependency Unit bed.



A laboratory technician labeling blood at Nebbi Hospital Blood Centre ©UNFPA Uganda

“The availability of this equipment has improved blood collection, storage and transportation in the greater Nebbi area,” says Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune Byabazaire, director of Uganda Blood Transfusion Service.

Meanwhile Dr. Akello notes, the blood bank has had tremendous impact on the community; improving service delivery and reducing cases of maternal deaths due to severe anemia and postpartum hemorrhage.

“

We have ably managed our cases of PPH. In terms of maternal child health, we haven’t lost a mother due to lack of blood or shortage of blood products since December 2021 when our blood bank was revamped,” says Akello.

“We used to refer patients to Arua Regional Hospital and when we did that, some opted to go home and die. Very few would accept the referral. Now we don’t refer patients in need of blood transfusion. We offer all services here,” she says.

Nebbi Hospital now supplies blood to three health Center IVs of Warr, Pakwach and Madi-Okollo, as well as Nyapea and Angal Hospitals. The Hospital also serves as a referral point for the districts of Zombo, Madi-Okollo, Pakwach and Buliisa that have no blood collection and distribution centres or blood banks.

Supporting availability of blood and blood products is only one of several ongoing interventions that UNFPA – through the Government of Uganda – is undertaking to ensure provision of quality maternal health services to save women’s lives.

“Women in Uganda still die during pregnancy and childbirth due to preventable causes,” said Dr. Mary Otieno, UNFPA Uganda Representative.

“We will continue to support high-impact interventions to ensure the provision of quality maternal and new-born health care, from pre-pregnancy, antenatal, labour and delivery, as well as postpartum and neonatal periods,” she said. 🌍

## IOM RENOVATED BIBIA HEALTH CENTRE III

By Innocent Vuga, International Organization for Migration (IOM)



IOM Uganda Chief of Mission, Mr Sanusi Tejan Savage (Left), performs a symbolic handover of the facility to the Amuru district leadership as other dignitaries witness. Centre is Dr Okware and Right is IGAD Head of Mission Lucy Daxbacher ©IOM Uganda

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has handed over Bibia Health Centre III in Amuru District in Northern Uganda, after reconstruction and expansion worth more than UGX 920 million (nearly USD 238,000).

The works were funded by the European Union, under the EU-IGAD COVID-19 Response programme. Managed by UNOPS and coordinated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the programme is mitigating the health and socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in seven IGAD member states.

Bibia Health Centre III is the designated referral facility for Elegu Point of Entry (PoE), at the Uganda border with South Sudan. Elegu PoE is characterised by high levels of trade. It averages more than 1,000 travellers per day, including traders and truckers, hence the decision to make Bibia Health Centre more functional, as part of Uganda’s COVID-19 response.

The improvements at Bibia have included refurbishment, expansion and equipping of the out-patient department, including a laboratory and a store, construction of a two-unit staff residence block, construction and equipping of an isolation unit, construction of a

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## UNCDF LAUNCHES AGORA – A PLATFORM TO CONNECT UGANDAN-BASED ENTREPRENEURS TO THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE

By Rachael Kentenyngi, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

### Agora - a global public good will open new investment opportunities and foster opportunities for growth through facilitating connections between entrepreneurs and investors

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in partnership with a network of public and private sector actors in Uganda have launched a pilot of an ambitious platform known as Agora. Agora is a digital pathway that seeks to serve as a global public good by scaling up the sourcing of new investment lead opportunities in frontier, emerging and developing economies, such as Uganda.

This initiative builds on the Survey of Ugandan SMEs conducted by UNCDF with support from the European Union in 2020 in partnership with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Uganda Revenue Authority, and Makerere University. That research highlighted, among other things, the importance of access to affordable finance for sustainable economic development, especially for SMEs in value addition, agroindustry and manufacturing. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda (PSFU), and the Federation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (FSME) will support the pilot in Uganda.



**“We have put out an open call for Ugandan-based entrepreneurs and business owners in need of financing to seize this opportunity and register on the platform,”** said Dmitry Pozhidaev, the Country Head of Office, UNCDF. **“Through putting entrepreneurs in position to connect with investors and other actors in the capital markets, we believe that Agora will provide a much-needed and long overdue opportunity for local businesses to partake in the global financing arena,”** he added.

“There are many entrepreneurs and businesses that are ready to acquire the necessary financing to grow their businesses. For many of them, the only obstacle in the way is the market they



Honey Pride Arua Processing Factory ©UNCDF Uganda

happen to be operating in,” said Xavier Michon, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNCDF. “Agora will bridge the information gap that prevents investment finance from reaching promising projects in the world’s frontier, emerging, and developing markets. By bridging this gap, Agora will help deliver critical lifelines of capital to the businesses, entrepreneurs and communities that have been underserved by the global financial architecture.”

Agora intends to provide investment managers with innovative lead sourcing, screening flexibility, direct connection to principals and a possible collaboration with co-investors. Likewise, capital seekers will have access to similar functionalities to connect with capital providers and will be able to make themselves known to investors, companies in their ecosystem and other partners. This will give entrepreneurs in the targeted economies visibility to investors all over the world, making access to local, regional, and global non-traditional financing easier.

As a global public good, Agora will also facilitate connections between entrepreneurs from frontier, emerging and developing economies with prospective partners, including investors, who can provide critical knowledge, technical support, and capital to foster opportunities for growth. Agora also relies on a newly established network with a wide range of like-minded public and private entities interested in supporting and expanding impactful investments in the said economies. The Agora network includes Ernst & Young, the International Chamber of Commerce, Quantcube, FirstRand, IdealPrediction and Business Africa among other institutions. 🌍

To sign up on Agora, visit: [www.agora-sme.org](http://www.agora-sme.org)





## UGANDA RECEIVES BEST PERFORMANCE AWARD FOR ITS SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME

By Luta Shaba and Davinah Nabirye, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)



Ms. Luta Shaba, the Spotlight Initiative Programme Coordination; Ms. Beatrice Mugambe, Gender Advisor, UNDP and Ms. Evelyn Letiyo, Programme Specialist Ending Violence against Women, UN Women after receiving the award on behalf of Uganda Spotlight Initiative in Cancun Mexico on 18 September 2022 ©UN Uganda

The Uganda Spotlight Initiative programme won a global award during the Global Learning Symposium that took place during the 16th to the 18th of September in Cancún, Mexico. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat awarded the Uganda programme with the Office Performance Award for being the best performing programme among the 27 country programmes globally. This was based on receiving the highest possible score in the Mid-Term Assessment, delivery efficiencies in programming, administrative and financial management and reporting, and recognition for demonstrating the ability to mobilise in-country financial resources for the next generation of the Spotlight Initiative programme.

The award was received by Ms. Luta Shaba, the Spotlight Initiative Programme Coordination; Ms. Evelyn Letiyo, Programme Specialist Ending Violence against Women, UN Women and Ms. Beatrice Mugambe, Gender Advisor, UNDP.

Both Ms. Luta Shaba, and Ms. Evelyn Letiyo, were also nominated for the Achievement and the Leadership Awards respectively. While neither won the individual award, having two individuals from the Uganda programme nominated is worth celebrating.

The Resident Coordinator's Office which is charged with the overall oversight and responsibility for the efficient and effective delivery of the Spotlight Initiative, is proud of the country team for this achievement especially the leadership of the five UN implementing agencies; UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNICEF.

This award would not have been attained without the collective leadership of all the Heads of Agencies of the Responsible United Nations Organisations, their Deputies, Spotlight Focal Persons, and all the dedicated staff seconded to support the programme. 🌍

### IOM renovated Bibia Health Centre III

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larger in-patient ward and improvements in the maternity ward, construction of three drainable latrine blocks with a total of 10 stances and an incinerator and ash pit.

According to Milton Okello, the clinical officer in charge of the facility, the in-patient ward was but one small room, with steel windows and inadequate lighting. The new block will have separate rooms for women, men and children, with eight well-spaced beds. Okello envisages that with the improved facility, patient numbers will significantly increase from 550 a month just before the reconstruction works started.

At the handover ceremony on 7 September 2022, the Health Minister was represented by Dr Joseph Okware, Director of Health Services in charge of Governance and Regulation. Okware thanked the partners, describing border posts like Elegu, Malaba and Busia as key spots for Uganda.

Representing the European Union Delegation to Uganda, Accountability Advisor Enora Marenne said the project had reached more than 8.9 million people with interventions in health; water, sanitation and hygiene; gender-based violence, risk communication and community engagement.

In a statement, the UNOPS Senior Project Manager in charge of the EU-IGAD programme, Rossella Monti, said: "The EU-IGAD COVID-19 Response programme is committed to enhancing the coordinated response to health emergencies. The unique integrated approach implemented in this programme is key to responding to the multidimensional effects of COVID-19 across the IGAD sub-region."

Speaking at Bibia, IOM Uganda Chief of Mission Sanusi Tejan Savage said: "This project was unique in the sense that it was supposed to respond to the pandemic, but it also fell victim of the restrictions meant to contain the pandemic. But we are grateful that the European Union was flexible enough to enable us get to this point of handing over a transformed facility." 🌍

## UN WOMEN UGANDA COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE FIRST FIELD MISSION IN UGANDA

By Eva Sibanda, UN Women



UN Women Uganda Country Representative Ms. Paulina Chiwangu being adorned with traditional dressing while visiting FGM survivors and former cutters in Amudat ©UN Women Uganda

From 25 September to 28 September 2022, UN Women Representative, Ms. Paulina Chiwangu embarked on a maiden field mission as part of her orientation in the sub-regions. She visited the districts of Moroto, Kotido and Amudat in Karamoja Sub-region before heading to Eastern Uganda to Mbale, Tororo and Bugiri districts respectively.

During the mission, Ms. Chiwangu paid courtesy visits to the respective district local government, held meetings with women leaders and peace mediators as well as UN implementing partners, elders, women's movement groups and the youth.

In Karamoja Sub-region, the Kotido District Local Government informed Ms. Chiwangu that the district was among the worst hit in terms of drought leading to food shortage and eminent hunger that resulted in a few deaths. Ms. Chiwangu highlighted the role of the entire UN system in the coordinated response to the drought crisis in Karamoja.

In remarks given while meeting the Moroto District Local Government (DLG), Ms. Chiwangu praised the Parish Development Model (PDM) and encouraged the DLG to promote the PDM launched by government. Emphasizing: "UN Women will work towards ensuring that the district is supported in generating awareness in the functionalization of the PDM, UN Women is willing to work together with government to improve the PDM."

Ms. Chiwangu paid a courtesy call to the Chief Magistrates Court Circuit Moroto and had interactions with the judicial officers including the newly appointed Resident Judge of Moroto District, Her Lordship Mary Ikit, and Chief Magistrate of Moroto, His Worship Emmy Sayekwo on the work they are doing around SGBV

in relation to the equipment that was procured for the court circuit to facilitate their work in the dispensation of access to justice for SGBV victims with support from Austria Development Cooperation (ADC) Uganda. She paid a courtesy call at Moroto Central Police Station (CPS) and interacted with police personnel regarding the use of equipment in response of GBV work that was procured by UN Women with support from ADC. She visited Natumukasikou Hand Craft Making Women's Group who were economically empowered under Uganda Women's Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP).

In Amudat District she engaged with the Natukuman CDFU Social Behavior Change and NAWOU women movement group, which is comprised of FGM survivors and former surgeons, supported by the Spotlight Initiative.

While in Mbale City she visited four community women groups and four institutions including Mbale City Public Primary School, where UN Women's effort to fight climate change was demonstrated through a woodlot planting session. She also visited UN Women implementing partner FIDA Uganda legal aid clinic and interacted with FIDA-Uganda field staff and paralegals.

While in Tororo she met with Tororo District Local Government Heads of Department and implementing partners. She paid a courtesy call on JCU legal aid clinic where she interacted with beneficiaries of the program and paid a courtesy call visit to Tororo Court Circuit and child friendly victim's room where SGBV survivors are put during court hearings. She held a fieldwork meeting with Merikit Women Network in Merikit Sub County, Tororo District. In Bugiri she visited a project economically empowering women through fish farming. 🌍



## GIVING PEACEKEEPERS PEACE OF MIND

By Mark Kaheru, United Nations Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE)



UN Peacekeepers on their way for Field Deployment Pose with Robert Kayitare From RSCE Uniform Personnel Service Line ©RSCE



UN Peacekeepers Undergo Field Medicine Training at the Regional Service Centre Entebbe ©RSCE

**Working with the United Nations is a dream for many people on the globe. Some look at it as working to save the planet, while others are looking at the opportunity to work in any part of the world. Some, are really in it for the paycheck.**

Whichever way you look at it, the work we do is life changing. Be it for the people we serve or the people that rely on us to serve.

You can only imagine what it feels like posted in remote areas with civil strife, mortar shells flying over your head, dressed in full military gear and trying to keep the people you serve safe and also having to worry about your own children and their school fees, if your home leave travel has been booked, if your medical insurance is up to date or if the telephone service will be disconnected due to an unpaid bill.

This is where the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE) comes in. The RSCE provides a full range of administrative, logistics and information and communications technology services to 77% of the UN peacekeeping and special political missions worldwide.

Mr. Yohannes Tecklegiorghis, Movement Control Assistant with the Forward Support & Deployment Hub (FSDH) at the RSCE and formerly with the Joint Movement Coordination Center at the United Nations – African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), believes the RSCE vast capabilities helps support the staff in the field to get their work done.

“For closing missions like UNAMID, where I worked for years, RSCE offers a certain degree of relief in some areas. For example, we had to repatriate hundreds of uniformed personnel at the end of their assignment. The tricky part was, UNAMID had to move them from Darfur to Khartoum on mission aircraft,” he said.

“RSCE had to issue tickets for flights to their respective countries. If the tickets were not issued on a timely manner for the 30 to 40 people travelling together, then it meant the officers would get stranded in Khartoum meaning the mission would have arrange accommodation, food, transportation as well as ensuring their safety and security as well,” he added.

Mr. Tecklegiorghis pointed out that “When you are on a full-scale drawdown and you have very tight deadlines to meet, having to worry about personnel getting stranded in transit is stressful. But, through close coordination with RSCE and endless follow-ups even outside working hours and weekends, it was possible to organize these repatriations smoothly, with commercial tickets for the troops issued on time.”

It is not only movement of troops and personnel during complicated times that defines service at the RSCE. With the introduction of a specialized Client Service Section, the RSCE rolled out a Client Service Delivery Model that ensures an improved and efficient service through a closely tracked and monitored tiered approach. A dedicated team in a single unit resolves escalated client queries and this has led to higher client satisfaction ratings.

Dr Patrick Girukwayo from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO) sent an appreciatory message to the RSCE during the recently concluded Client Appreciation Week in October.

“As you know, the whole MONUSCO team of Goma is still working from home due to the demonstrations against the MONUSCO presence which occurred since 25 July 2022. While working in such conditions, the National Staff who I represent have experienced several issues which required quick actions from RSCE. I have been following the issues of several National Staff who were assisted by you, RSCE Team with a high satisfaction.” He said

The RSCE was established in 2010 with one Peace Keeping Mission (PKM) to serve. Today, after only 11 years, the Centre serves 17 missions and supports over 17,000 UN personnel on the African continent to serve their mandates with continued peace of mind and comfort that somebody has their back too. 🌍

## YOUTH IN NORTHERN UGANDA USING SPORTS, ART AND CULTURE TO PREVENT CRIME AND PROMOTE PEACE IN COMMUNITIES

By Henry Nsubuga Mukasa, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)



Arua Boxing Club President, Mr. Rasheed Oshino, takes two of the youth through the basic boxing skills ©UNODC Uganda



Ms. Arafay Ayike, pursuing a career in boxing ©UNODC Uganda

### Arua – Youth in Northern Uganda are using the power of sports, art and culture as a launchpad for skills training, crime prevention and the promotion of peace in communities. .

In Arua, a group of 60 youth (23 Female 37 Male), have formed a boxing club, and periodically meet at the Arua Youth Centre in the central division of Arua City, where coaches offer them with skills in the game, fitness exercises, counseling and career guidance.

Arua Boxing Club, is one of 26 youth groups in seven districts of Uganda, namely; Gulu, Arua, Lira, Kumi, Kampala, Wakiso and Jinja, which received support through small grants and financial literacy training that enabled them start or strengthen existing Income Generating Activities (IGAs). This was a strategy to facilitate them to create their own employment and not to engage in criminal activities.

In implementing this initiative, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) partnered with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) and Equity Bank, showcasing how public-private partnerships can be leveraged to support the achievement of SDGs. Equity Bank provided financial literacy to the youth groups to ensure that they can use the funds appropriately and continues to monitor how they the groups are progressive with their IGAs.

As a result, several youths have joined vocational training to gain skills in tailoring, beauty salon services, baking, commercial farming, creatives and entertainment while others like the Arua

Boxing Club chose sports as the lead activity

Ayike Arafay, who joined Arua Boxing Club after dropping out of school because her parents could no longer raise school fees for her, has progressed from being a trainee to the semi-final stage of the national boxing trials.

“I chose boxing because it’s a game of discipline and keeps me fit and healthy,” Ms. Ayike said, sweat beads dropping off her face after a rigorous work-out session at the youth centre in Arua City. “I am training hard because I hope one day to become a professional boxer and a role model for other young people,” she added.



People come to me saying that boxing is a game for men. However, I would like to encourage girls to break these barriers that are put before us and pursue their dreams,” she explained.

The President of Arua Boxing Club, Mr. Rasheed Oshino, says that the club has not only imparted skills on the youth but also helped reduce crime in Arua city. “Some of our members were in conflict with the law before the support from UNODC and UYDEL enabled us to start this club to engage these youth,” Mr. Oshino revealed.

“We have rehabilitated them and they are now gaining skills while helping to keep Arua city safe, and both the local government leaders and the community are happy with our initiative,” Mr. Oshino explained. 🌍

## PUT THE NELSON MANDELA RULES INTO PRACTICE

By Yusuke Hara, UN Human Rights



Members of the Human Rights committees of Uganda Prison Service in Karamoja after the training ©OHCHR Uganda

### **In September 2022, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), conducted training on human rights standards for 32 officers (seven women and 25 men) working for Uganda Prison Service (UPS) across Karamoja sub-region.**

In the region, multiple challenges remain in prison facilities such as overcrowding, insufficient infrastructure to meet basic needs, security and safety of detainees, lack of adequate separation of categories of detainees as well as limited access to legal service, all of which has serious implications on enjoyment of human rights of prisoners.

The initiative, which was for the first time since the COVID-19 outbreak, was designed to address human rights issues and concerns observed during regular inspections and enhance the capacity of Human Rights Committee established as per the 2010 Guidelines by Commissioner General of Prisons.

The joint team made several presentations throughout the training, introducing a range of human rights concepts, principles, and standards. The duties and responsibilities borne by prison officers were discussed with reference to Prisons Act 2006 and Prison Regulations 2012, and the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials 1979. The international and national standards for human rights applicable to the prison setting was outlined including the international instruments such as International Covenant on Civil Political Rights, Convention against Torture, and UN Standards Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), as well as Human Rights

(Enforcement) Act 2019, Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act 2012, and Chapter Four of the 1995 Constitution.

The prison officers were invited to share experiences of human rights related challenges in their work. Several aspects were brought up with examples including hostile inmates who did not respect the authority of prison officers, sometimes leading to incidents of violence. Other examples included labour related accidents and maintenance of health and safety of both detainees and staff. It was also noted that some situations required rapid decision-making and high emotional intelligence to mitigate risks and de-escalate hostility such as in the case of escape, whilst at the same time ensuring that the rights of the inmates were upheld.

To concretize the understanding of human rights-based approach to prison management, participants were given a scenario-based case study to identify human rights issues and examine how normative principles and standards can be applied. The participants brought up aspects related to proper file management, use of restrictions, discipline and sanctions, the right to contact with family, friends, and lawyers, access to information and notification, and shared ideas on good practices for holding safeguards for human treatment in prison facilities.

As part of the initiative, participants produced a work plan for the remainder of the year to improve the work of Human Rights Committee including how to disseminate and realise the insights gathered at their respective prisons. The prison officers stated that they would engage in sensitisation activities of both staff and inmates and follow up on human rights concerns identified, whereas Regional Prison Commander expressed his commitment to extend necessary support to improve the prison conditions and strengthen coordination with stakeholders including via Karamoja Regional Protection Meeting which has been facilitated by OHCHR since 2010. 🌍



## “THE PLACE WITH THE PICTURE OF MAIZE WILL FEED YOU”

While fleeing war in South Sudan to Uganda, Agnes Tabu was separated from her children. But she had taught them to identify the UN symbols and stay alive

By Patience Akumu, World Food Programme (WFP)



Agnes Tabu counts some of the money she got from selling silver fish. She invested some of the money from WFP food assistance into her business  
©WFP Uganda

**Agnes Tabu adopted five children because she could not stand to see them suffer after they lost their parents during the South Sudanese war. She gave them a home and protected them. But when fresh fighting broke out in 2016, her life and that of her children were in too much danger. When she told them that they had to leave, they asked:**

“But mom, where are we going?”

She told them that they were going on a long journey that would lead them to a place of safety.

“No matter what happens on this journey, know that you can always go to a place with the picture of hands. Those hands are a sign of protection. If you do not see the hands, go to a place where there is a picture of maize and they will feed you. Those pictures are for the UN. They will always give you what you need even though I am not with you,” she told them, referring to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the United Nations World Food Programme emblems.

With over 1.5 million refugees, Uganda is one of the largest refugee hosting countries in the world. WFP gives food assistance to 1.3 million refugees based in rural areas.

Tabu and her children joined their neighbours on a five-day journey to Uganda, where they had to hide in bushes to avoid being seen. Then she realized her five children had disappeared.

“Somewhere along the road they separated from me. It was like a dislocation. Like when a part of you breaks and disappears.”

But Tabu was certain her children were alive because she had trained them well – exactly for this kind of situation where they might have to survive without her. So, when she arrived in Bidi Bidi she combed the 250 square kilometres that make up the settlement and found out that her children could have settled in Rhino Camp, 100 kilometres away. Tabu scraped together money for her second journey and, six months later, she was in Rhino.

It was August, a rainy month, and, as was now their routine, her five children were waiting at the reception centre for new arrivals.



“They told me that every day they would wake up and come straight to the centre to wait for me. This was their life every day of the six months we were apart,” Tabu says.

With every arrival that was not their mother, hope dimmed. She could have disappeared like many others. Maybe someone would bring the news about how she was slaughtered on the way... This August afternoon was threatening to be yet another day of listless waiting and uncertainty when they heard the voice of their mother – not from the new arrivals as they had anticipated but from among the people already in the settlement.

The world stopped. They ran to her. Tears mixed with the rain as they hugged and tried to cover themselves with a small piece of UNHCR blue tarpaulin.

“They told me, ‘Mother, we followed the UN signs. The UN saved us.” 



## BRIDGING THE INDUSTRIAL SKILLS GAP IN UGANDA BY INVESTING IN PEOPLE

By Stefan Windberger, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)



Hon. Edward Katumba Wamala, Minister of Works and Transport (third from right); H.E. Hidemoto Fukuzawa, Ambassador of Japan to Uganda (fourth from left) and Bruno Otto Tokwiny, UNIDO Country Representative (second from right) during launch of the Mechanical Engineering Training and Advisory Centre (METRAC) in Luwero on 22 September 2022 ©UNIDO Uganda

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and its partners, including the Government of Japan, the Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT), and Komatsu Ltd., have jointly launched the Mechanical Engineering Training and Advisory Centre (METRAC) in Luwero, Uganda, which is the first dedicated training centre for road construction equipment operators.

In recent years, the Government of Uganda has been investing in road construction and maintenance equipment, such as motor graders, wheel loaders, excavators, bulldozers and backhoes, distributed across district local governments in the country. The establishment of METRAC will enable the Government to invest in people to match its development effort. METRAC is aiming to train over 500 Ugandan road construction equipment trainers and operators, including youth to meet the skills gap in its transport-related sector.

Together with the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT), the project partners developed Uganda's first accredited curriculum on road construction equipment and trained its pioneering group of construction equipment instructors.

The instructors were provided with a comprehensive eight-week training resulting in a cadre of trainers that will help scale-up the Government's capacity building efforts.


"Uganda faces a major industrial skills gap, largely as a result of inappropriate skills and the slow absorption of human resources in the economy," said Hon. Edward Katumba Wamala, Minister of Works and Transport. "METRAC provides a unique opportunity to address a systematic issue of youth unemployment in Uganda.

The Government of Uganda welcomes the development of an operator training centre whose primary objective is to address the youth unemployment problem."



This project was launched with the clear aim of bridging the industrial skills gap for road equipment operators in Uganda by building the first dedicated vocational training centre, by developing a curriculum and by training trainers, operators and youth," said H.E. Hidemoto Fukuzawa, Ambassador of Japan to Uganda.

"Japan appreciates Africa's potential as a driving force for global growth and is aware of the importance of human resource development and, with Komatsu as a partner, the project will involve expertise from Japan to establish a new training curriculum and capacity for road construction management and methods."

"UNIDO is proud to provide its expertise in the implementation of the project," said Bruno Otto Tokwiny, UNIDO Country Representative in Uganda. "UNIDO has significant experience in the operation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes with a particular focus on heavy duty/construction equipment." 



## FAO, SWEDEN SIGN NEW AGREEMENT TO PROMOTE CLIMATE CHANGE AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS

By Agatha Ayebazibwe, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



The Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, H.E. Maria Håkansson and FAO Representative, Dr. Antonio Querido signing an agreement to promote climate change awareness in schools ©FAO Uganda

**The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) signed an agreement with the Embassy of Sweden to undertake the Green Schools Initiative (GSI), to raise awareness and understanding of climate change and environmental degradation in schools in Uganda. GSI will also empower academic institutions and school-going children to take an active role in solutions to environmental challenges.**

Lack of knowledge, due to limited awareness and sensitization in communities is among the major factors limiting the adoption of climate change adaptation and mitigation practices. The need for capacity development is among the identified priority areas if Uganda is to attain the set targets in the National Climate Change Strategy and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Although school-going children form the bulk of Uganda's population, they are less exposed to aspects related to climate change and this affects their abilities to make informed choices regarding consumption patterns, lifestyle and influencing production trends which are environmentally sustainable in the communities where they live.

The Government of Sweden has allocated an additional 2.3 billion Uganda Shillings to FAO as part of their Climate Resilience Livelihood Opportunities for Women Empowerment programme in order to implement the Green Schools Initiative. The fund will support FAO, the Government of Uganda and the Vision Group of Companies to create avenues for schools and students to learn and implement green actions in their schools and the communities in which they live.

"The Green Schools Initiative is an exciting programme as it works with young people who are the most vulnerable and yet also the most impactful for sustainability. About 77 per cent of Uganda's population is under the age of 30, the majority of them being

school-going children. While a number of policies and plans have been developed on environment and climate, there is still a need for engagement of this section of the population, without whom our effort for the sustainability of the planet will be difficult," said Maria Håkansson, Sweden's Ambassador to Uganda.

The GSI will provide training for teachers and students, in environmental conservation and climate change, and will organize regional and national climate change debates. The intervention will also include publishing of information and knowledge products on climate change and conducting radio shows and telecasts on climate change and environmental degradation.

"Schools can influence appropriate green actions that could save the environment, and increase adaptation and mitigation actions at school, community and national levels. Actions such as the use of improved biomass technologies, establishing woodlots for sustainable wood fuel supplies, switching to cleaner energy, waste recycling and re-use as well as engagement in the formulation of policies have the capacity to save on schools costs and make a huge difference towards a sustainable society," said Ambassador Håkansson.

The GSI is part of the broader five-year Climate Resilient Livelihood Opportunities for Women Economic Empowerment (CRWEE) being implemented in Karamoja and West Nile districts of Uganda, with funding from the Government of Sweden through the Embassy of Sweden in Uganda. This project aims to strengthen the gender-responsive and climate-smart resilience of rural women who depend on agricultural production systems in the Karamoja and West Nile Regions.

To date, the CRWEE project has established five community irrigation systems in the West Nile sub-region, supported farmers in the multiplication of over 500 tonnes of drought tolerant and high-yielding seed, established 15 tree nurseries and propagated over 500,000 seedlings for farmers. In addition, 64 female-headed households have received Flexi-biogas

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## UNDP, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PARTNER TO PROMOTE ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION IN SCHOOLS

By Justina Ntagoba, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni and UNDP Deputy Representative Ms. Sheila Ngatia demonstrate how tree planting is done during the launch of the Greening Schools project ©UNDP Uganda

**The Ministry of Education and Sports has partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to empower young people to actively promote environment conservation in schools and their immediate communities through the implementation of the Greening Schools project designed to address climate change and its associated impacts.**

The project was launched by the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports Janet Kataaha Museveni in October 2022 at Teryet Secondary School in Kapchorwa and will be rolled out in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment.

The project also seeks to influence positive behavioural change in young people on affirmative climate change actions and position them as ambassadors and active contributors in conserving natural resources and averting environmental degradation. The project will support the re-greening of bare school lands in 381 Seed Secondary Schools and other selected public schools across the country, promote environmental education and awareness in schools, improve energy efficiency in cooking and lighting, improve water harvesting and innovatively empower young people to understand and appreciate nature.

This will largely involve growing boundary hedges to secure schools' land- trees that will act as both boundary markers and shade trees, woodlots, ornamental trees, and fruit trees. In addition, tree nurseries will be established in selected model schools as well as climate smart school gardens.

**Greening schools**

The intervention is a strategic entry point for Uganda’s education sector to demonstrate what can and is being done with respect to: re-forestation, agroforestry, energy conservation, reducing greenhouse-gas emissions, reducing waste use, improving water quality, and empowering the young people in environmental conservation.

Speaking during the launch Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni said that the intervention will help mitigate the effects of climate change in schools, “This project will greatly contribute to ecosystem restoration while nurturing the younger generation and their communities to appreciate the need to champion stewardship of the environment and the general well-being of the planet, as entrusted to us by God.”

She thanked the athletes including world champion, Joshua Cheptegei who attended the launch for endorsing a strong message of environmental conservation.



God has used you to raise our flag globally and we’re very proud of you. As role models for our young people, we implore you to play an active role in championing this cause,” she said.

On her part, UNDP Deputy Representative Ms. Sheila Ngatia underscored the potential of the project, “If we can all make a pledge here today, to support the drive to promote ‘one child, one tree’ every year, then we will achieve our goal to restore Uganda’s forest and green cover by planting more than 20 million trees by 2026, targeting 3.5 million trees every year,” she said.

**Climate change effects in schools**

The project is in response to the effects of climate change which are wide-ranging affecting all segments of society. In the education sector the effects include damage and destruction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, boundary fences causing displacement and psychosocial stress.

Climate change is also altering Uganda’s weather patterns and is adversely affecting/ impacting agriculture, food production and food security. The lessons learned from the initiative will be replicated in all schools using the ‘School Environmental Clubs and patriotic clubs’ to drive this strong message of behaviour change for lasting restoration of our communities.

**Context**

Over 96% of schools in Uganda use wood fuel for cooking, followed by charcoal with 4% of the schools. The demand for wood is putting immense pressure on the forests in villages, towns and cities, given that these are expanding, the project is timely This rate at which biomass is being used in Uganda’s social institutions, especially schools, universities, hospitals, and prisons is not sustainable. It is estimated that the country continues to lose trees in an area approximately the size of a football pitch everyday hence moving from 4.9 million hectares in 1990 to 1.8 million hectares by 2018.

Current national deforestation rates stand at 2% annually with an average of 122,000 hectares lost every year. That means if nothing is done and things remain as business as usual, there will be irreparable damage to our environment and eventually our way of life. By implementing this initiative in schools, it will demonstrate that Uganda’s institutions, young people and communities can and must do things differently and in effect reverse the negative trend of climate change. 🌍

**FAO, Sweden sign new agreement to promote climate change awareness in schools**

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units, over 100 acres of woodlots have been established, more than 400 households received their customary certificates of land ownership and more than 300 women received climate resilient and labour-saving technologies such as mushrooms, apiary and cassava postharvest handling equipment. The project has also raised awareness of and trained 48 school youth clubs in climate-resilient approaches.

Speaking at the signing ceremony held at the Embassy of Sweden in Uganda, Mr. Antonio Querido, FAO Representative in Uganda, recognized the need to work with young people because children and youth represent the future and can play a crucial role in combating climate change and conserving the environment.



“In order to achieve the nationwide campaign for climate change and environmental management, under this Green Schools Initiative, FAO will work with the Vision Group of Companies to implement the project in 150 schools across the country,” Querido said.

“By the end of the campaign, we hope to have created a critical mass of informed and resilient people in society that respond to climate change and environmental degradation,” he added.

In partnership with Vision Group, FAO will train over 600 teachers and 90,000 school children about environmental conservation and climate change, develop and publish science-based climate change education materials, document and popularize success stories from schools on conservation of natural resources, climate change adaptation and mitigation practices, and recognize best schools through regional and national competitions. 🌍

