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5 GENDER EQUALITY



GOVERNMENT AND UN RECOMMIT TO END FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

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

OVERVIEW

- Stakeholders call for increased investment in Education
- UNFPA boosts Uganda's first digitalized National Census 2023
- After Ebola, Kagadi District ready to respond to emergencies
- Caring for Uganda's Ebola survivors
- IOM launches campaign on Ethical Recruitment
- UN Country Team meets Judiciary Management Team
- FAO, Uganda and China, Launch \$12.6m South-South Cooperation Project
- WFP cash assistance enabling self-reliance
- Sweden-Funded Climate-Smart Agriculture Project Transforms Lives of Women Farmers
- Makerere University launches course to improve public infrastructure management
- Development Minerals Programme Transforms Lives of Karamoja Women Miners



The Minister of State (Gender and Culture), Hon. Peace Regis Mutuuzo (far right), digitally launches the 4th phase of the UN Joint Programme on FGM at Sheraton Kampala Hotel on February 8, 2023. Looking on (2nd from right) is UNFPA Representative, Ms. Mary Otieno; Director for Foreign Commonwealth Development Office at the British High Commission, Mr. Philip Smith (3rd from right); UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Susan Namondo (3rd from left); and Commissioner, Gender and Women Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ms Angella Nakafeeo (far left)
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“With eight years remaining in this decade of action, there is potential to eliminate this harmful practice through sustainable partnerships with men and boys” said Ms. Susan Namondo, UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda at the commemoration of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation 2023 in Kampala.

Ms. Namondo added that men and boys’ voices and actions can positively change the deeply rooted social and gender norms, to create a safe space for girls and women to realize their rights and potential regarding health, education, income, and equality.”

Although the prevalence of female genital mutilation in Uganda is already declining (from 1.4 per cent in 2011 to 0.3 per cent, according to UDHS 2016), progress needs to increase tenfold to meet the global target of elimination by 2030.



“We must act quickly, decisively and on many fronts simultaneously,” said Ms. Namondo.

Hon. Peace Mutuuzo, Minister of State for Gender and Culture at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development in Uganda, the chief guest at the event reechoed Ms. Namondo’s message, asking men to partner with the government to end such harmful practices that have negatively impacted our women and girls.

“The effects of FGM affect even those that have not been mutilated. Ending FGM is a job we must not delegate to others,” said Hon. Mutuuzo.

She urged all stakeholders to support the government to establish local radio stations in the most affected communities in the eastern part of Uganda so that focused messages on FGM broadcast to the communities.

In Uganda, the commemoration of the International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation has been held since 2003 and this year (2023) marks the 10th year of commemorating the International Day following the UN Resolution.



The UN continues to be a trusted partner in efforts geared towards eliminating female genital mutilation and is committed to work with the government to eliminate this harmful practice,” said Ms. Namondo.

Since 2008, UNFPA, jointly with UNICEF, have led the largest global programme to accelerate the abandonment of female genital mutilation in 17 countries globally. In Uganda, UNFPA and UNICEF have leveraged funding from the Spotlight Initiative and UN Trust Fund for COVID-19 response to expand the services to women and girls affected by female genital mutilation.

Speaking to some of the achievements, Ms. Namondo said: “The UN family together with the Government of Uganda have expanded services for FGM prevention, protection and care for women and girls in the most affected communities in Karamoja region.”

She added that over 35,000 community members have actively participated in making public declarations on FGM abandonment which represents a positive shift in deeply rooted social norms driving the practice of FGM.

The Spotlight Initiative and UN Trust Fund for COVID-19 response are Joint UN initiatives that bring together different UN agencies and are both managed by the Resident Coordinator’s Office. These have registered tremendous success in the different parts of Uganda, a testament that the UN family can achieve a lot through joint programmes and funds.

The Spotlight Initiative, is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. In Africa, the Spotlight Initiative aims to eliminate sexual and gender-based violence, including harmful practices, and it is currently scaling up existing initiatives on FGM and child marriage across the region. In Uganda, the Initiative is a multi-stakeholder programme implemented by eight



UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Susan Namondo delivering her remarks during the commemoration of International Day for Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation on 8th February 2022 ©UNFPA Uganda



“Stop FGM !” gesture participants during the commemoration of International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation ©UNFPA Uganda

UN agencies (UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM and Pulse Lab) and entities, more than 20 government ministries, departments and agencies, six district local governments, and over 30 civil society organizations, the private sector, religious and cultural institutions, and academia in Uganda. It is being implemented in 7 districts of Uganda including Amudat, Arua, Kampala, Kasese, Kitgum, Kyegewa and Tororo.

Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation is a critical step towards realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDGs 3 on Good Health and Well-being, 4 on Quality Education, 5 on Gender Equality and 10 on Reduced Inequalities. 🌍



STAKEHOLDERS CALL FOR INCREASED GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

By Vincent Ogal, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)



A panel group discussion during the commemoration of the International Day of Education Celebration at Makerere University on 24th January 2023 ©UNESCO Uganda



A student makes a contribution during the panel discussion session at the commemoration of the International Day of Education Celebration at Makerere University on 24th January 2023 ©UNESCO Uganda

“Education is the best investment a country can give its people.” This was the key message delivered in a joint statement made by Dr. Munir Safieldin - Chairperson Education Development Partners Group (EDPG) during the commemoration of the Fifth International Day of Education (IDE) in Uganda celebrated under the theme: ‘To invest in people, prioritize education’.

This revelation comes against the backdrop of the country grappling with a significantly high dropout rates among learner in Uganda before they are able to complete a full cycle of education.

Building on the global momentum generated by the UN Transforming Education Summit in September 2022, UN Organizations in Uganda led by UNESCO in partnership with the Read to Learn Foundation and Ministry of Education and Sports convened at Makerere University’s, Yusuf Lule Auditorium to celebrate the IDE, on 24th January 2023 with further calls for maintaining strong political mobilization around education and charting the way to translate commitments and global initiatives into action. In attendance at the commemoration were young people across all levels of education, Academia, Civil Society Organizations, Development partners, among others.

The Chief Guest at the event was the Minister for Security represented by Mr. Jonathan Kamwana. He highlighted the Government of Uganda’s readiness to repurpose the education sector to support the country’s development visions noting that.



By 2030, every teacher should be a graduate. Education is the engine for development, and the teacher is the engine for education.” He continued to highlight that if the country is to turn around the current challenges affecting the sector, then massive efforts must be put in place to attract the best grades to join the teacher profession.



A young learner shares her experience during one of the sessions at the commemoration of the International Day of Education Celebration at Makerere University on 24th January 2023 @UNESCO Uganda

Ms. Rebecca Abeja, a Senior 3 student and a panelist at the event implored the government of Uganda to initiate education interventions right from the communities and grassroots levels before rolling them out into mainstream classrooms in school.



Particular emphasis should be placed on establishing community libraries that focuses on literacy, skilling and economics spearheaded by young people such that they (young people) are equipped with the basic knowledge of literacy and skills to dispense out to other fellow youths."

Ms. Rosie Agoi, Secretary General National Commission for UNESCO, presented the Future of Education Report. In her address she emphasized the need to reflect on the kind of education the country currently has vis-à-vis what the country aspires to have. "We need a new social contract for education that can repair past injustices while transforming the future." She added that there was an urgent need to rebalance our relationships with one another, with the planet, and with technology so as to realize better education outcomes.

Mr. Charles Draecabo – UNESCO National Projects Coordinator and lead convener of the event while officiating at the commemoration reiterated the global call of the need to reflect on education as a public good, a human right and a public responsibility, noting that without inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, countries like Uganda will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children behind.



A section of participants of the commemoration of International Day of Education at Makerere University @UNESCO Uganda

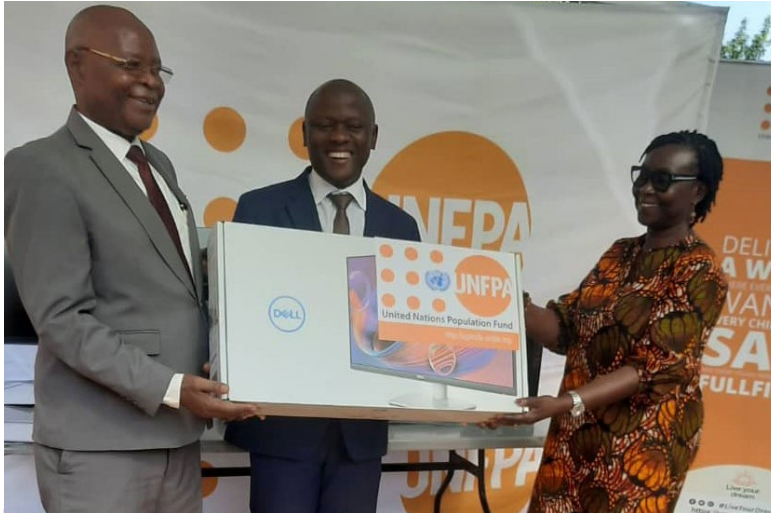
The proceedings of the event were live on national television with the programming of the half-day event including key note addresses, panel discussions sessions targeting the representatives of the learners from primary and tertiary learning institution, with the discussion revolving around "Prioritizing Education for a Brighter Future" with particular emphasis on education in emergency situations, innovations in education, the role and impact of artificial intelligence; among others.

Looking ahead, stakeholders appealed to the policy makers in Uganda to increase the country's domestic spending on Education as a way of streamlining service delivery within the sector. 🌍



UNFPA BOOSTS THE UGANDA BUREAU OF STATISTICS AHEAD OF UGANDA'S FIRST DIGITALIZED NATIONAL POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 2023

By Evelyn Kiapi, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



UNFPA Uganda Representative Dr. Mary Otieno (right) handing over the equipment to UBOS Executive Director Dr. Chris Mukiza (left) at the UNFPA Uganda head offices in Kololo on 20th February 2023 ©UNFPA Uganda

On 20th February 2023, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Uganda donated over twenty computers and accessories worth USD43,000 (UGX 157 million) to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) ahead of the National Housing and Population Census 2023.

The equipment, which includes 10 desktop computers for large dataset processing and 10 desktop computers for GIS Mapping, is appropriate in supporting georeferenced data and analysis of large data sets.

Census night has been gazette for the night of August 24/25 and the exercise will take 10 days up to 3rd September 2023. This will be the 6th post-independence Census and the first digital Census conducted in Uganda.

While handing over the equipment to UBOS Executive Director Mr. Chris Mukiza, UNFPA Uganda Representative Dr. Mary Otieno underscored the importance of quality data in guiding policy decisions, service delivery and achieving commitments like attaining the middle income status.

She said UNFPA has always provided and will continue to provide support, and assist government address the financial and technical barriers to the successful implementation of the Census exercise.

"UNFPA's mandate on data and evidence generation is to strengthen national capacities to ensure that population and housing censuses are of high quality in terms of generation, analysis, dissemination and utilization of the data and undertaken in a timely manner, relevant, and disaggregated according to international principles and standards. In collaboration with the office of the UN Country Team, UNFPA will continue to support UBOS to ensure a successful and credible census in Uganda," Dr. Otieno said.

The Representative pointed out that the Census will provide required data on Uganda's population structure to measure the progress made and to influence

subsequent planning and decision making geared at social economic transformation.

"More important now than ever, accurate and timely information is also critical for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Parish Development Model and guide preparations for the National Development Plan IV as well as achieving the SDGs," Dr Otieno said.

Bearing in mind that Uganda is in the third year of implementing the Third National Development Plan aligned to the Uganda Vision 2040, with the aspiration of achieving a middle income status, it is therefore important to establish the current population size, its distribution, composition to address any existing inequalities to achieve this Vision, the Representative said.

"Uganda has also developed a demographic dividend roadmap to ensure investments in the young people are consolidated in a multi sectoral manner to reap from the young population. Harnessing of Uganda's demographic dividend is a key strategy in achieving the Uganda Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan III," Dr Otieno added.

Dr. Mukiza said a Census exercise is among the most complex and massive undertakings that no country can undertake without support. He said the Census exercise is estimated to cost the government USD 102.6 million.

"This exercise involves mapping the entire country, mobilizing and training a large number of enumerators, conducting public advocacy campaign, canvassing all households, compiling vast amounts of data, electronic form, and analyzing and disseminating data. Partnering with other stakeholders including development partners, private sector is therefore critical," Dr Mukiza said.

A population and housing census is an enumeration of the total population of a country, which provides data on numbers of people, their spatial distribution, age and sex structure, their living conditions and other key socioeconomic characteristics.

Such data are critical to national and sub-national development planning, tracking progress for the countries' development based on indicators that can be tracked to the lowest level. The last NPHC was undertaken in August /September 2014. Then, the total population of Uganda recorded was 34.6 million persons, representing an increase of 10.4 million persons from the 2002 census. 🌍



AFTER SURVIVING AN EBOLA SCARE, KAGADI DISTRICT IS MORE THAN READY TO RESPOND TO ANY FORM OF EMERGENCY

By Alex Taremwa, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Kagadi District Deputy Chief Accounting Officer (D/CAO) Edward Bisangabasija (LEFT) acts as he chairs a District Disaster Management Committee at the District offices on 14 February 2023. Left is member George Guiyetonda and right is Dogracius Tibenda, the District Planner ©UNICEF Uganda

On 12 August 2022, Kagadi District in western Uganda started the journey to develop a district contingency plan to boost their emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation.

The journey supported by the Office of the Prime Minister, World Vision Uganda and UNICEF with funding from the Government of Sweden, the Kingdom of Netherlands and the Spanish Committee for UNICEF went on smoothly until October 2022, when the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) was confirmed in the district.

According to the District Planner, Deogratious Tibende, the contingency plan had passed the first two hurdles save for the simulation exercise when the virus struck. These included the validation exercise and ensuring stakeholder involvement.

"I think the Ebola outbreak was our first major simulation exercise because it tested several aspects of the contingency plan and caused us to reflect on our approach," he said.

Due to its proximity to Lake Albert, Kagadi often experiences floods which cause hygiene-related diseases such as cholera. In 2020, the district also registered a rare case of a zoonotic tick-borne illness, the Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever.

With this background and the most recent Ebola scare, it was no surprise that the simulation exercise designed to test the appreciation roles in the district contingency plan focused on preventing and managing a disease outbreak.

Guided by scenarios curated by the World Vision Uganda team, the simulation exercise took place on 14 February 2023 at the Kagadi District Headquarters.

With the sun overhead and temperatures at 31°C, the select leaders mimicked the steps they would take in the event of a disease outbreak in one of the 35 sub-counties in the district.

An Oscar-award contender

The actors' roles did not have to coincide with their official positions, so Raymond Kirungi, a Disaster Preparedness Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister, grouped

the senior district, town council and sub-county leaders by their roles in the simulation.

Then the movie director, Gabriel Oriokot, the Project Officer with World Vision Uganda, signalled his cast to action under the guidance of Susan Birungi Nyakoojo, Programme Officer Emergencies, UNICEF Mbarara Field Office.

The simulation started in a particular village in Ndaiga Sub-County where the local council one (LC.1) chairperson, a role played by Samuel Tumwesigire, the Town Clerk of Kagadi Town Council, alerted the Village Health Team (VHT) to a suspect who presented with signs of cholera.

The suspect had been to a traditional healer, a common practice in the district. Despite asking for an arm and a leg, his 'ancestral powers' did not bring any relief, prompting the suspect to try a local pastor instead. By this time, however, he needed much more than prayer.

Armed with information from VHT, the health surveillance team swung into action and moved the patient to a nearby health centre, from where he was further referred to the main district hospital. Upon examination, the doctor confirmed the suspect as a cholera case and quickly moved him into the isolation centre – a makeshift outpost under a jackfruit tree.

While that went on, the health in-charge and the LC.1 chairperson gathered more facts from the affected village. They alerted the Sub-County Disaster Management Committee (SDMC) of a possible cholera outbreak. The message was cascaded to the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) for administrative and technical support to boost contact tracing and referrals.

With an outstretched budget, the District Health Officer (DHO) reported to the Ministry of Health the potential cholera outbreak in the district while the other committee members engaged partners such as UNICEF, Uganda Red Cross, World Vision Uganda and the OPM for assistance.

Lessons learned

Despite the exercise being a resounding success, some participants noted a communication breakdown at different levels, while other key stakeholders were not engaged.

"I noticed that after the patient was brought to the hospital, there was no follow-up to see if he made it or if the hospital or health workers

CARING FOR UGANDA'S EBOLA SURVIVORS

By Jonathan Sekitondo, World Health Organization (WHO)



Alex Ssebayinga in a psychosocial session at the survivors' clinic in Mubende.
©WHO Uganda

Uganda declared the end of Ebola disease outbreak caused by Sudan ebolavirus on 11 January 2023. The health authorities worked intensely, ramping up outbreak control measures that helped to halt the virus in less than four months after it was confirmed. Improved testing, surveillance, contact tracing, supportive clinical care and boosting community participation in the response were critical in ending the outbreak.

While the outbreak has been declared over, the country is maintaining disease surveillance to respond promptly to any flare-up. It is also stepping up support to people who recovered from the virus by providing comprehensive medical and psychosocial support. A total of 87 people recovered from Ebola. At the heart of the support is the national Ebola survivors programme, which the Ministry of Health, with support from World Health Organization (WHO) and partners, has established in the three most affected districts – Entebbe, Kasanda and Mubende.

Alex Ssebayinga, 26, is a motorbike taxi rider and farmer from Lulongo village in Uganda's central Mubende district where the just-ended Sudan ebolavirus outbreak was first detected. Ssebayinga was one of the first people to be admitted at an Ebola Treatment Centre in Mubende Hospital four months ago. He contracted the virus after transporting his sick eight-year-old nephew to a nearby clinic. Ssebayinga is among the 87 Ebola survivors in Uganda. His nephew was not so lucky.

Continued from page 6

After surviving an Ebola scare, Kagadi District is more than ready to respond to any form of emergency



Amiiru Kyomuhendo, acting the part of a Sub-county Chief for Ndeiga, reporting a suspected case of cholera during a public health emergency simulation exercise by the District Disaster Management Committee, at the District Headquarters on 14, February, 2023
©UNICEF Uganda

needed some critical supplies," noted Kefa Madira, the Senior Medical Clinical Officer at Kagadi Hospital.

Additionally, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Edward Bisangabasaija, admitted that it was an oversight not to involve the media, who he said were critical partners in disseminating key health messages to local communities.

"During the Ebola outbreak, the media played a critical role in informing their listeners on the best prevention and reporting mechanisms. We must find room for the media to be involved in our planning activities, especially during emergencies," Bisangabasaija added.

Kagadi now turns to the political leadership of the district to swiftly pass and adopt the district contingency plan as a working document – a step the Chairman LC.5, Peter Mugisa Sebugwawo, promised to see through.

"I pledge that when the district contingency plan is presented in the district council, it will quickly be passed so it can begin to work for our people," Sebugwawo said at the climax of the simulation. 🌍

He is grateful for the care he received that helped him to recover. “The health workers who attended to us were very supportive and gave us hope that full recovery was possible,” he says.

After a month at the centre, Ssebayigga was discharged. He then realized that he had just commenced a long journey back to the life he had before Ebola.

Ssebayigga still suffers from physical ailments after he recovered from Ebola. He has a rash on his skin, and the hair on his body turned brown while undergoing treatment and has remained that way. He also has temporary hearing loss when it’s cold or if he waits too long between meals.

Ssebayigga’s symptoms are common among Ebola survivors, who face a host of physical and mental health challenges after recovery. The most predominant complaint is muscular and skeletal pain; and half of the male survivors have experienced scrotal pain. Visual and hearing impairments are also very common.

To respond to the unique needs of Ebola survivors in Uganda, the Ministry of Health, with support from WHO and other partners, has established a national Ebola survivor’s programme.

The programme aims to improve access to quality health care for survivors and has established two survivor’s clinics - one in Mubende district and the other in Entebbe, just outside Kampala, and will soon open a third in Kasanda district.

These clinics are staffed with medical professionals such as internal medicine specialists, ophthalmologists, Ear, Nose and Throat specialists, psychologists as well as anthropologists to support survivors for a range of conditions.

All but one of the 87 survivors have had their first consultation at one of these clinics and will be seen every month for the next

year and then quarterly for another six months to a year after that.

Dr Ronald Kisembo a laboratory technician at the survivor’s clinic at Mubende Hospital, says the clinic has also benefitted from specialist equipment crucial for treating survivors.

“

Thanks to support in the form of medical supplies and human resources from WHO, we can offer medical support to the survivors who come for review with services like complete blood count, urinalysis, semen and liver tests to assess possible effects the virus could have had on the body system,” he says.

Ssebayigga is grateful for the assistance he is receiving at the clinic. “I had red eyes after I was discharged, but this was treated, and I am fine now,” he says. “I believe the rash and hearing problems will also be treated,” he says.

The survivor’s programme does not only address the physical health needs of Ebola survivors, but also the enormous mental health challenges that accompany recovery.

“Our observations indicate that a month after discharge, more than half of the survivors followed up show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. Some also suffer from memory loss and recurrent nightmares,” says Dr Jerome Ntege, a WHO anthropologist supporting the response in Mubende. The clinic has so far provided more than 100 outpatient consultations. 🌍



Doreen Nabawanuka, a WHO IPC specialist, being prepared by a Hygienist before joining the team that enters the Ebola treatment centre of Mubende Regional Referral Hospital on 29th September 2022 ©WHO Uganda



IOM UGANDA LAUNCHES NATIONWIDE OUTREACH CAMPAIGN ON ETHICAL RECRUITMENT

By Innocent Vuga, International Organization for Migration (IOM)



Residents participate in the community sensitization in Koboko District ©IOM Uganda

On 30 January 2023, IOM, Government of Uganda and the Private Sector started a campaign to propagate information on ethical recruitment and safe labour migration.

Funded by the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), the campaign targets Central, Eastern, Northern and Western Uganda. The districts covered in this exercise include: Jinja, Namutumba, Amuria, Napak, Koboko, Luweero, Masaka, Ibanda, Kabale, Kibaale.

It is being co-implemented with the Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies. The activity aims at providing communities with right information on the policy and regulation put in place by the government to promote safe, regularly, and orderly labour migration, understanding recruitment process as recommended by IOM's International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) and

the Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment: A Road Map towards Better Regulation.

According to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, at least 24,086 Ugandans leave Uganda annually in search of employment, especially to the Middle East. However, there are frequent media reports of exploitation and migrant workers' rights violations. The campaign aims to sensitize key stakeholders, especially the migrant workers and potential migrant workers, to understand the principles and pathways of labour migration that is safe and humane.

The campaign includes media programmes on ethical recruitment targeting both the public but also media personnel as agenda setters.

This is the second major outreach on labour migration conducted by IOM within one year. Last October, the organization ended a mass sensitization campaign in 31 districts, using public meetings as well as radio and television talk shows and messaging. 🌍

UN COUNTRY TEAM MEETS JUDICIARY TOP MANAGEMENT

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



Members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) led by UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo (seated left) after their meeting with the top management of the Judiciary led by the Chief Justice, His Lordship Hon. Alphonse Owiny Dollo (seated centre) ©UNODC Uganda

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) met with the top management of the judiciary led by the Chief Justice, His Lordship Hon. Alphonse Owiny Dollo, and agreed to collaborate for equitable access to justice for all in Uganda.

The Chief Justice told the UN team led by the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo, that the judiciary has embarked on a journey of transformation, with the goal of ensuring that justice is delivered fast and is easily accessible to all.

“The new judiciary must espouse to the new demands: We live in a world which is in the fourth industrial revolution. The judiciary must rise to the occasion,” Chief Justice Dollo said.

Saying that the judiciary needs what he termed as, “software and hardware”, to deliver justice in an efficient manner, Chief Justice Dollo listed some of the innovations that are being implemented: They include; building more courts in the countryside so that litigants travel shorter distances and recruiting more judicial officers to the reduce cases backlog.

Others are, decentralization of the inspectorate of courts to ensure integrity of judicial officers, promotion of ICT innovations, training to make the judicial function robust and resource mobilization to enable the envisaged, “revolutionary transformation.”

The Chief Justice commended UN agencies in Uganda for supporting several programmes of the judiciary. “We value your partnership and look forward to the unrelenting relationship so that the people of Uganda harvest (justice) the purpose for which we occupy these offices,” Chief Justice Dollo noted.

The UN support to the judiciary is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, geared towards the promotion of peace, justice and strong institutions; NDP III with a goal of improving adherence to the rule of law and Uganda’s Vision 2040 which recognizes tenets of good governance like constitutional democracy, protection of human rights and rule of law.

On her part, the RC Ms. Namondo commended the top management of the judiciary for granting the UN Country Team audience as a foundation for regular future interactions. “The UN

supports nations achieve sustainable development. It therefore very important to understand the local context,” Ms. Namondo observed.

The Permanent Secretary of the Judiciary, Dr. Pius Bigirimana, informed the meeting that under the third National Development Plan (NDP III), programmatic planning replaced sectoral plans. The development, he said, means that Administration of Justice Programme headed by the Chief Justice, replaced the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS).

“Sectors are no more,” Dr. Bigirimana stated. “And all those who used to belong to JLOS should be here (under judiciary). Access to justice is the purview of the judiciary,” he added.

He listed the actors under the Administration of Justice Programme as; Judiciary, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Attorney General, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (Policy issues), Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (Industrial Court and remand homes), Judicial Service Commission, Law Development Centre, Tax Appeals Tribunal, Uganda Police Force (CID/Investigations) and Uganda Prisons Service (custody of suspects).

The Permanent explained that structures have been established to make the Administration of Justice function well. A steering committee chaired by the Chief Justice with political heads of the members institutions will meet every 6 months, as a clearing house for plans to be supported.

Below it, a Working Group composed of all Permanent Secretaries of the member institutions and chaired by the PS to the Judiciary will meet quarterly to set priorities and resource allocation

The Programme had three sub-programmes; Civil and Criminal, Training and Research and Institutional Coordination. The Secretariat will be headed by the Judiciary Policy, Planning Unit.

The meeting was attended by Heads of Agencies or representatives from; UNODC, UNAIDS, UN Women, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNEP, ILO, UNDP, FAO, UNFPA, UNDSS and UNEP 🌍



FAO, UGANDA AND CHINA, LAUNCH USD 12.6 MILLION SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION PROJECT TO SCALE-UP AGRICULTURE PRODUCTIVITY

By Anita Tibasaaga, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



Vice President of Uganda, H.E. Jessica Alupo (centre); Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Uganda, H.E. Zhang Lizhong (third from right); UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo (far right) and FAO Deputy Representative, Ms. Priya Gujadhur (second from right); hand over vehicles to officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, to facilitate project implementation ©FAO Uganda

The Food Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Government of the People's Republic of China launched the third phase of the FAO-China-Uganda South-South Cooperation (SSC) project.

It will benefit from funding worth USD 12.6 million to support the development of the agriculture sector in Uganda. Almost USD 10 million was committed by Uganda and USD 3 million by China, which are held in Trust Funds in FAO. Uganda's contribution is one of the most significant contributions by a Least Developed Country as a beneficiary nation, for a SSC project.

Speaking at the project launch on 20 January 2023 at the Kajjansi Aquaculture Research and Development Center, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda, Her Excellency Jessica Alupo thanked FAO and the Chinese Government for promoting the development and commercialization of the agriculture sector in Uganda.

"The Government of Uganda through the Parish Development Model (PDM) has laid out interventions to transform Uganda into a modern and prosperous country by 2030," she said. "This aspiration has been pre-determined to be actualized through seven pillars, including Financial Inclusion, Production, Storage, Processing and Marketing as well as Infrastructure and Economic Services. As the implementation of the Project Phase III commences, I wish to propose that project implementation is aligned to the PDM aspirations," she added.

The SSC is a mutual sharing mechanism that allows for the exchange of development solutions – knowledge, experiences and good practices, policies, technology and resources – between and among countries in the global South. The event was attended by representatives from the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). Other representatives were from FAO headquarters in Rome and its Office in Uganda, the Embassy of China in Uganda and farmers' representatives.

"This is the longest running and most successful national project implemented under the FAO-China South-South Cooperation Programme" said FAO Deputy Director-General Beth Bechdol via video. "The key factors contributing to the project's success are the strong political will, ownership and leadership of the government of Uganda. I believe this project has the potential to further catalyze additional private sector financing and investment to ensure large-scale and long-lasting impact on the ground" she added.

FAO, Uganda and China have been implementing SSC since 2009 to address priority constraints affecting key agricultural sub-sectors — crop, fisheries and livestock and the commodities within those sub-sectors. The previous two phases yielded impressive results, including the quadrupling of rice production per hectare and increased milk production in the project areas. In this new phase, the project will reach over 9 600 beneficiaries across 20 districts, including about 7 000 small-scale crop farmers of mainly rice and foxtail millet, 1 000 livestock farmers and hundreds of fish farmers in eastern, western and northern Uganda. Through the project, inputs, technical assistance, training and knowledge exchange will be provided to help create decent, inclusive jobs and to improve food and nutrition security.

“The technical assistance projects under the South-South Cooperation project benefited over 11 000 participants and supported our agricultural sector strategic direction of transforming subsistence farming to commercial agriculture”, said Honourable Bright Rwami-rama, Minister of State for Animal Industry. “I believe that with the support of the Chinese Cooperants and FAO’s coordination, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and its local counterparts will upscale and commercialize Chinese hybrid rice production, foxtail millet production, livestock and aquaculture production, promote trade and investment in order to contribute to transformation of the agricultural sector and national economy of Uganda”, he added.

The Project, with special focus on women and youth, will establish four hubs in Butaleja, Kajjansi, Luwero and Mbarara for integrated technology transfer base for livestock, cereals and aquaculture.

“China welcomes more high value-added products from Uganda and will support Uganda in making good use of the latest zero-tariff policy to expand its export to China”, said Zhang Lizhong, Ambassador of China to Uganda. “China will provide Africa with new opportunities through Chinese modernization, and support African countries in pursuing development paths suited to their national conditions”, he added.

Phase 3 will focus on: establishing an integrated technology transfer base; developing high-yielding plans for rice and foxtail millet; supporting livestock improvement programmes; and developing aquaculture value chains.

“We believe that South-South Cooperation can unlock the required finances to support the transformation of economies like Uganda and strengthen environment protection and sustainable development at the same time”, said Susan Ngongi Namondo, United Nations Resident Coordinator.



In this new phase, we will work closely with the private sector to ensure outcomes that encourage value addition, facilitate domestic, regional and international trade and contribute to Uganda’s agro-industrialization agenda, leaving no one behind”, said Priya Gujadhur, FAO Uganda Deputy Representative.

Impressive results from previous phases

SSC implementation in Uganda started in 2009 and has so far yielded remarkable results. Rice production increased fourfold, from 2.5 tonnes to 10 tonnes per hectare and milk production rose from 2 to 7 liters per cow per day in some of the project areas. The project increased aquaculture production through low-cost fish-feeding techniques and helped to increase the incomes of rice-fish culture farmers, foxtail millet and mushroom farmers, through better production. China provided financial resources and technical support, such as hands-on trainings and on-site demonstrations that enabled farmers in Uganda to improve the technologies used to produce rice, foxtail millet, maize, grapes, apples and cherry tomatoes as well as for animal reproduction in goats, pigs, sheep and fish. Uganda provided in-kind contributions, including lodging, transportation, medical services and health insurance for the visiting experts, while FAO provided technical support and backstopping, as well as project supervision and monitoring. The previous phases contributed to increasing access to biogas energy, agricultural mechanization and enhancing value-addition. SSC contributed to the establishment of Uganda-China agro-industrial Park for better animal and crop production and processing. 🌍



Vice President of Uganda, H.E. Jessica Alupo (front row 2nd left); UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo (front row centre) with officials from the United Nations, Embassy of China in Uganda, the Chinese Cooperants and Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries ©FAO Uganda

YES, WE CAN BE SELF-RELIANT: WFP cash assistance has enabled one child household head start a money-lending business

By Maureen Atim, World Food Programme (WFP)



Clovice feeding his ducks in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement ©WFP Uganda

In the evening, Clovice, a 17-year-old refugee living in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, likes to join other young boys in the neighborhood to play football. As you watch him scream, laugh and chase after the ball made of banana fiber, you could never guess that at just 15, following the death of his mother, he was left to head the household and look after his four siblings.

“It was not easy at all. It felt like our lives suddenly stopped. I imagined life had come to an end. As the eldest child, I knew I had to look after my siblings. But how was I going to do this?”

It was in 2019 that Clovice’s mother gathered her children and decided that they had to flee for their lives following conflict in their country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Clovice says he does not remember much. Only that, “It was a long journey and we were living in fear. All we wanted to do was reach Uganda and be safe.”

In Uganda, Clovice and his family, like other new arrivals, received energy biscuits, hot meals, emergency malnutrition screening and treatment from the United Nations World Food Programme. They were then settled in Kyaka II, Southwestern Uganda, where they were placed on cash assistance. But in 2021, his mother caught a strange illness and died.

“Even after mother died, we were confused and did not know where to start. The only consolation was that my siblings and I continued to get cash assistance and that is how we survived,” Clovice says.

In 2022, WFP Uganda gave USD 42 million in cash assistance to refugees like Clovice. Clovice, however realized that, unlike his late mother, he did not know much about how to plan for the money. He approached his aunt, who also lives in Kyaka, and asked her for advice. She had been through WFP Financial Literacy Training and advised Clovice to enroll too. To date, WFP Uganda has trained over 2000 youth in financial literacy.


“I joined the Financial Literacy Training on how to save and better utilize my money in November 2022 and eagerly attended all the sessions to understand better,” Clovice recalls. Under the mentorship of his aunt, he was able to save 50,000 shillings which he lent to a businessman at an interest rate of 20 percent.

“

I realized a lot of people needed money and I continued to lend and grow the money,” he says proudly. Within a year, he bought three ducks that multiplied and now they are 12. He also rears pigs and rabbits for sale and home consumption. “We eat better, we are healthier, and we see a better future.”

WFP needs USD 322 million to meet the needs of refugees at 100 percent ration. Even with the generous support of donors such as the European Union, Germany, Norway, Sweden, UK and USAID, the response, which reaches 1.36 million refugees, only has 60 percent of the needed funding. Limited funding has forced WFP to reduce rations. Yet, uniformly reducing rations disproportionately affects the most vulnerable refugees such as those with disability, the chronically ill, new arrivals or even child-headed households such as Clovice’s.

Therefore, starting this year, WFP Uganda will implement the third phase of needs-based prioritisation. The most vulnerable households, including child-headed households, will receive the highest possible ration. The moderately vulnerable will receive a medium ration and be supported to join livelihood programmes to reduce their vulnerability, and the least vulnerable who are able to meet their food needs will no longer receive monthly cash or food assistance from WFP.

According to Mr. Abdirahman Meygag, WFP Uganda Country representative, “WFP must work with government to support refugees to not only survive but thrive. And an important part of thriving is supporting the less vulnerable refugees to become self-reliant.” 



SWEDEN-FUNDED CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE PROJECT TRANSFORMS LIVES OF WOMEN FARMERS IN NWOYA DISTRICT

By Edmond Mwebembezi, UN Women



Christine Apio spraying her mangoes at her farm. From this project she has been able to buy cows, educate her children and feed her family better together with her husband ©UN Women Uganda

In Nwoya District, Uganda, a climate-smart agriculture project funded by the Government of Sweden to UN Women has been transforming the lives of smallholder women farmers through integrated climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices.

The project is implemented under a Private Public Partnership (PPP) arrangement with Delight Uganda Limited (DUL) and Nwoya District Local Government.

The UN Women Representative in Uganda, Paulina Chiwangu (PhD), made her maiden visit to tour the project and spoke about the significance of the project in extending UN Women's advocacy for women's economic empowerment in Nwoya.

Before the project, the women farmers practiced subsistence farming based on traditional methods. However, with the training and support from Delight Uganda and UN Women, the women have been transformed into a force of change in their community. They have gained skills in commercial farming best practices, gender mainstreaming, and male engagement and were committed to improved market access and profitability for their farm products by Delight Uganda.

While addressing the women farmers, Paulina drew attention to UN Women's mandate to ensure Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment (GEWE) and, "the critical role of initiatives like this in contributing to the achievement of that goal."

"This project aligns well with the government's Parish Development Model and it's the future, given that it guarantees access

to more accessible and affordable sources of capital finance for agricultural investments for the women at the grassroots," she remarked.

One member of the Ngom-Oloya Women Farmers' group, Apio Christine, spoke about the impact the project has had on her life and that of her family. She owns an acre of land filled with mango trees where she can harvest over 1000 mangoes per season.

"Before the project, my earnings were low and on top of that I was unable to effectively plan for it, but since this project came by," she says, "we have been trained on financial planning and I'm now able to plan, budget for my family and keep records."

She has also been able to buy three cows and an extra plot of land, increase her family's income, and pay for her children's education together with her husband.

Geoffrey Akena, the District Community Development Officer for Nwoya District, praised the Government of Sweden, UN Women, and Delight Uganda for the climate-smart agriculture project.

"Most of the challenges we faced, including gender-based violence, school dropouts, and malnutrition, were all due to the low standard of living caused by low incomes. Most of these are slowly being addressed because of this project and it can only get better."

Delight Uganda Limited has continued to provide crucial support, including fruit and sorghum seeds, training in farming, harvesting, and storage, and a market for the women's produce.

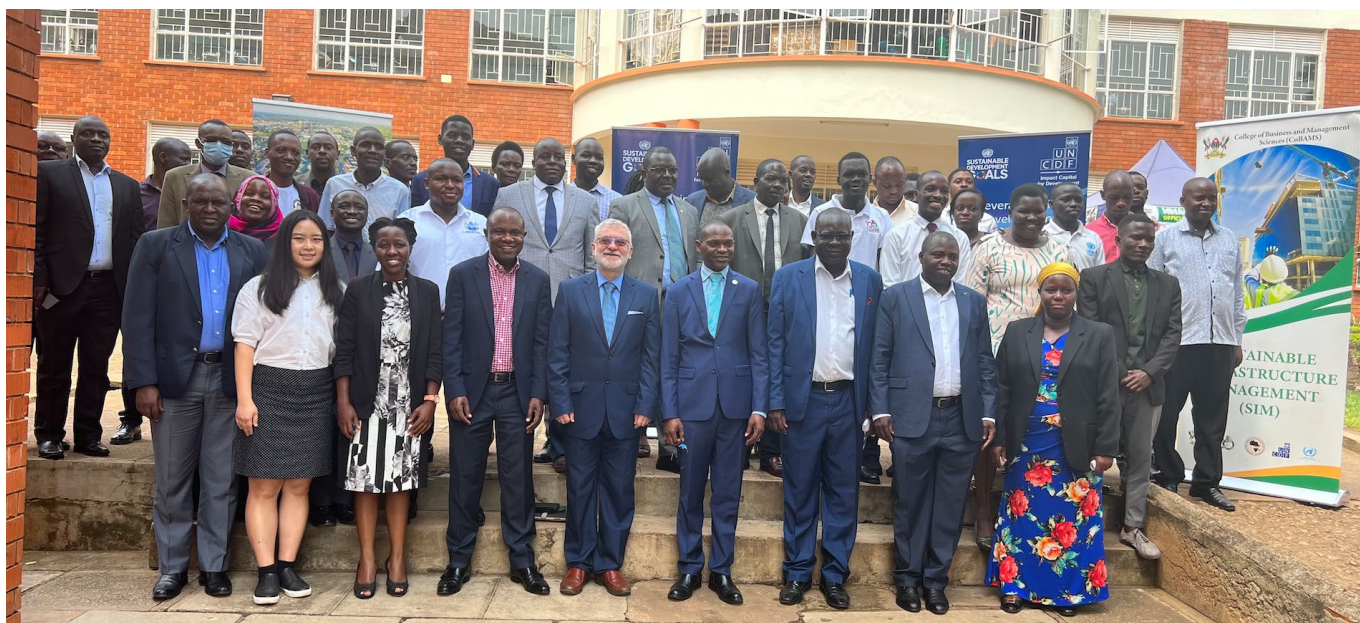
"Delight gives us free seeds to plant and manage, and after we sell the produce to Delight. In addition, we also sell the fruits to whoever is interested, like the fruit vendors from Gulu," explains Christine.

Continued on page 17



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES REVISED COURSE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

By Rachael Kentenyngi, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)



Stakeholders at the launch of the revised Master of Public Infrastructure Management course at Makerere University Kampala ©UNCDF Uganda

The modular course, Master of Public Infrastructure Management (MPIM), is delivered through lectures, exposure visits, mentorship, and coaching.

On 24th February 2023, Makerere University, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) have launched a revised Master of Public Infrastructure Management curriculum designed to respond to emerging public infrastructure management challenges in the East African region.

The course, targeting senior management in Ministries, Department and Agencies, Local Governments and Non-Government Organizations, was introduced in 2012 by Makerere University with support from the Development Financial Institution under the Pan African Capacity Building Programme (PACBP). Makerere University has trained over 300 Heads of Departments who directly engage in public infrastructure investments across East Africa.

The curriculum has been revised to strengthen the leadership capacity and enhance the requisite management skills in strategic management, monitoring and evaluation, and to reform public sector infrastructure performance in areas such as roads and transport management, water and sanitation, energy resources management, and waste management, among others.

“Thirty percent of Africa’s public investment goes to waste due to inefficiencies,” said UNCDF Regional Technical Advisor and Head of Uganda Office, Dmitry Pozhidaev. “The revised course aims to address the persisting infrastructure management gaps in the public sector that continue to inadvertently affect service delivery and deter progress toward attaining global goals.



The biggest constraint to Africa’s development is no longer access to finance but rather, the lack of skilled professionals to successfully manage public infrastructure projects,” said Makerere University Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Umar Kakumba. “This course aims to address the professional management and leadership gap as it leads to a loss of huge resources earmarked for public sector programmes.”

The revised curriculum has new courses such as Public Procurement Management, Climate Change and Sustainability, Infrastructure Monitoring & Evaluation, Infrastructure Asset Management, and a study tour of a model infrastructure project/plant.

This project is facilitated from the Governance component of UNCDF’s Development Initiative for Northern Uganda (DINU) programme, a Government of Uganda programme financed by the European Union under the overall supervision of the Office of the Prime Minister. As part of this programme, UNCDF is working to strengthen the capacities of local governments, municipalities, and cities in public financial management. 



GOVT, EU AND UNDP'S DEVELOPMENT MINERALS PROGRAMME TRANSFORMS LIVES OF KARAMOJA WOMEN MINERS

By Joel Akena, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



Moroto-Loptuk mining site ©UNDP Uganda

Uganda is undergoing a construction boom thanks to infrastructural and other industrialization developments that have spurred new and increased demand for development minerals that are mined, processed, manufactured and applied domestically in sectors including manufacturing, building, construction and industry.

These include sand, clay, limestone, gypsum, salt, stone aggregate, kaolin and gravel, dimension stones like marble and granite, and semi-precious stones like garnet and tourmaline. The prevalence of development minerals in Uganda is high, and the industry generates an estimated US\$350 million annually, directly supporting 390,000 Ugandans, 44 percent of whom are women.

This attests to the potential of the development minerals' sector to create jobs, stimulate innovation, investment and infrastructure development. Yet if not properly managed, the sector activities such as mining can also lead to environmental degradation, displacements, inequality and conflict.

The Government of Uganda has put in place policy and legal provisions, and a strategy targeting the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector, to harness the opportunities that the sector presents.

To maximize the socioeconomic development of Uganda's mining industry, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has worked with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, and others to support the training of various artisanal small-scale mining enterprises (ASMEs) in 25 districts in business management and financial literacy.

Sweden-Funded Climate-Smart Agriculture Project Transforms Lives of Women Farmers in Nwoya District



UN Women Representative, Ms. Paulina Chiwangu (front row centre); Dr. Julian Omalla Adyeeri (front row far left) with the women of the Ngom-Oloya Women Farmer's Group during her tour of the climate-smart agriculture project. (Photo: UN Women/Edmond Mwebembezi) ©UN Women Uganda

With their newfound knowledge and skills, the women of Ngom-Oloya have big plans. They want to change to mechanized farming to improve their produce and output. This will also allow the older women to actively participate in farming, as the rudimentary methods take a physical toll on them. The women have even established a reward system in their group, where the best-performing child in school is rewarded with a scholarship by the group to pay for their education.

Paul Collins Okello, UN Women's Women Economic Empowerment Program Specialist, spoke about the partnership, "the partnership has really yielded a lot for us advocates of Women empowerment and the women of Nwoya district as well. We have witnessed significant changes in their lives because of the improved livelihoods from this project."

"Thanks to the Swedish and Uganda governments, the Ngom-Oloya Women's group serves as a shining example of the impact that can be achieved through partnerships and support. Their journey demonstrates the power of women to drive change and improve their communities," Paulina highlighted.

She further expressed her optimism that the collaboration between UN Women, the Nwoya District Local Government, and Delight Uganda Limited will significantly improve the lives of women farmers and advance the neighbourhood. 🌍

In Karamoja sub-region alone, UNDP has implemented the ACP-EU Development Minerals Programme and trained over 30 Karamoja women miners on business management. An initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, this programme is a collaboration of the European Union and UNDP and seeks to profile and improve the management of development minerals.

Voices of beneficiaries

Since its inception in 2018, the programme has supported ASMEs to enhance productivity, create jobs, increase income and establish environmental and social safeguards in and around mining areas.

Two women miners – Miriam Aisu and Lucy Nakiru, are among the people who have received training and support from the programme for improved skills and income from mining of development minerals. They are both from Loptuk sub-county in Moroto district and speak fondly of how much the programme has transformed their lives.



I am the Treasurer of the Mount Moroto Women Development Mineral Association," Miriam Aisu said. "I am delighted to report that this initiative gave me the skills and confidence to negotiate with customers. As a result, I now run a pastry shop across the street. While working at the mine, I also learned how to be healthier and safer," she added.

Similarly, a beaming Lucy Nakiru said, "I made the decision to start a mining operation since it was straightforward for me to get started and because I observed that many wealthy inhabitants of our area were seeking hardcore and aggregate stones to construct their houses." She added, "As a woman, I now at least have some money to spend on food, educational expenses and medical expenses for my four children. I am grateful to UNDP for their assistance which has given me the confidence to launch future businesses, utilizing this one as a launchpad."

Building forward better from COVID-19

ASMEs in the development minerals sector have intensified recovery efforts following disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic and other distractions. All parties involved are still making concerted efforts to support this economic recovery, by enhancing the livelihood security, resilience, and sustainability of mining operations.

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent the United Nations'



Miriam Aisu at Loptuk mining site ©UNDP Uganda



Lucy Nakiru at Loptuk mining site ©UNDP Uganda

plan of action for social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and economic development. Under this lens, Uganda's mining industry has an unprecedented opportunity to mobilize human, physical, technological and financial resources to advance the SDGs and to achieve Uganda's development aspirations.

To deliver on the sustainable development goals and 2030 agenda, UNDP will continue to ensure an inclusive mining sector which benefits Uganda's economic, social and environmental component of sustainable development, and one that encourages economic expansion, raises tax revenue, creates jobs and aids in the improvement of infrastructure. 🌍

