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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

GOVERNMENT AND UN COUNTRY TEAM HOLD ANNUAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK REVIEW MEETING

By Michael Wangusa, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)



The Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja (centre) with UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Susan Namondo, Ministers, UN Heads of Agencies and other stakeholders after the Cooperation Framework Annual Review Joint Steering Committee meeting on 23 March 2023 ©Office of the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister, Right Honourable Robinah Nabbanja chaired the Annual Joint Steering Committee meeting to review progress of the implementation of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021- 2025.

The meeting was attended by Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Development Cooperation, Members of Parliament, representatives from Civil Society and the Private Sector; and members of the United Nations Country Team led by UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Susan Namondo.

The Cooperation Framework was launched by President Yoweri Museveni on 9th September 2020. The Cooperation Framework is jointly implemented by Government and the UN system in Uganda and contributes to the attainment of the national development objectives outlined in the third National Development Plan (NDP III), Africa Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Prime Minister observed that the Joint Steering Committee remains a vital platform for engagement to influence the delivery of services to Ugandans, especially through joint planning and tackling implementation obstacles jointly. She thanked the UN family for the support in the response to COVID-19, Ebola, the refugee influx, food insecurity especially in

OVERVIEW

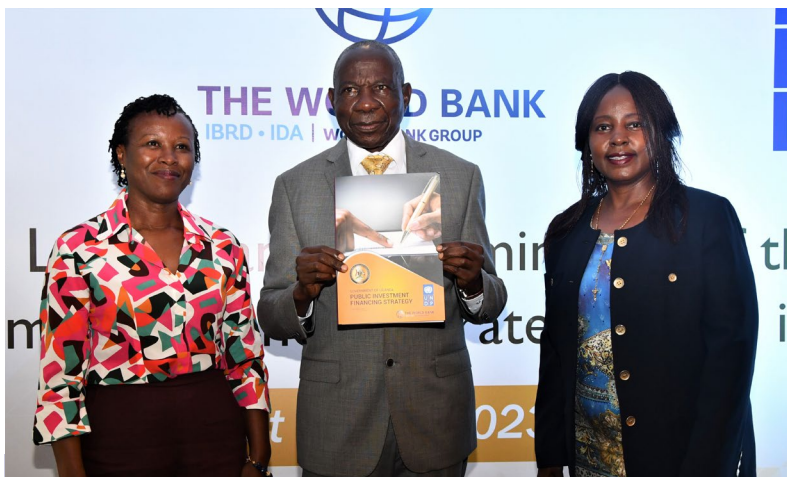
- Government, UNDP and Partners Discuss Options for Financing Uganda's Development
- RSCE supports evacuation of UN staff from Sudan
- Celebrating International Women's Day
- "My Body, My Life, My World!"
- Disabling the Culture of Silence to end Sexual Exploitation
- Kabaka Run focuses on Ending AIDS by 2030
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- Village Health Teams lead the fight against Malaria
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- Prosecution-Guided Investigation Guidelines Launched



GOVERNMENT, UNDP AND PARTNERS DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR FINANCING UGANDA'S DEVELOPMENT

As Uganda Launches the Public Investment Financing Strategy

By Michael Mubangizi, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



Hon. Matia Kasaija, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Centre), the UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo (Left) and UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Ms. Sheila Ngatia during the launch of the Public Investment Financing Strategy, 21 March 2023 ©UNDP Uganda

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank have launched the Public Investment Financing Strategy (PIFS). The launch was presided over by Hon. Matia Kasaija, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

The PIFS, which comes at a time when development is being de-funded, explores additional financing from domestic, external, emerging and innovative financing options to meet the increasing development aspirations embedded in the National Development Plans and the Sustainable Development Goals. It also provides a framework for collaboration with the private sector in the implementation and financing of public investments.

Racing towards the 2030 deadline for achieving SDGs

Speaking during the launch, Hon. Kasaija noted that Government has for the past 20 years mobilized resources from a narrow base of financing options comprising domestic tax revenues, concessional loans and borrowing from the domestic market in form of Treasury bills and bonds. The report warns that these options, are incapable of meeting the growing development aspirations and have led to, "increased borrowing at non-concessional terms, raising the risk of unaffordability because of the high interest rates."

Hon. Kasaija also decried Uganda's widening annual financing gap currently standing at Shs 33 trillion shillings out of the projected Shs 49 trillion annual budget.

Government and UN Country Team hold Annual Cooperation Framework review meeting

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Karamoja, and response to various disasters. She called for support to coordination of the NDPIII implementation. She emphasized the importance of the Parish Development Model (PDM) through which the needs of Ugandans can be addressed and to contribute to the attainment of SDGs. She reiterated Government would continue strengthening financial management and accountability mechanisms to ensure zero tolerance to corruption and efficiency in the use of resources.

The presentation by the UN system, led Ms. Namondo, highlighted the 2022 UN Country Results including progress, challenges, lessons and priorities for 2023 for the three Strategic Priorities of the Cooperation Framework (CF): 1. Transformative and Inclusive Governance; 2. Shared Prosperity in a Healthy Environment; and 3. Humana Well-being and Resilience. While the total resource envelope for CF 2021-2025 was US\$1.1 Billion and expenditure (delivery) to date (2021 to 2022) was US\$ 602.6 Million. Whereas, the total required resource for 2022 was US\$ 204.1 Million with US\$ 332.6 Million spent; and US\$ 128.5 Million being supplementary funding for 2022, most of which was spent on humanitarian response to COVID-19, Ebola, the refugee influx, food insecurity especially in Karamoja, and response to various disasters.

The internal challenges to the implementation of the CF were noted as irregular interface among the coordination structures at strategic level; data ecosystem is not functioning optimally; funding constraints and its impact on long term development planning; and maintaining sustainability in delivering results. While external challenges to the implementation of the CF were noted as constrained fiscal space; additional obligations due to emergencies; unpredictable funding and funding not sustainable for additional obligations; and slow transition from sector to programme-based approach.

The meeting resolved to: 1. Strengthen co-ordination between Government and the UN system on implementation of the Cooperation Framework in support of NDP III and the PDM through quarterly technical level meeting; 2. Improve Disaster Preparedness and Response given that Uganda is prone to disasters such as floods and landslides; and likelihood of earthquakes; and 3. Enhance support to Government's innovative approaches for sustainable solutions for livelihoods and food security in Karamoja. 🌍



Officials from Government, United Nations, World Bank, European Union, the private sector and other partners during the launch of the Public Investment Financing Strategy, 21 March 2023 ©UNDP Uganda

New financing options

Citing the COVID-19 resource mobilization efforts that saw many organizations and individuals make financial contributions towards the country’s COVID-19 response, the minister noted that the PIFS offers new financing options and affords all people an opportunity to contribute to the country’s development agenda.



I, therefore, urge every Ugandan, development partner, private sector player, ministry, department and agency to peruse the strategy to find your strategic fit so that you can tap into the opportunities that the Strategy provides,” he said.

More financing options

The strategy notes a remarkable increase in the number of financing options including pension funds, public-private partnerships, remittances and philanthropy. Others are climate finance,

international bonds (including Euro and infrastructure bonds), Islamic finance and crowd funding. For effective implementation, PIFS calls for the establishment of the Project Preparation Fund financed by Government resources; establishment of the Resource Allocation Committee to provide strategic leadership to ensure sustained adherence to the proposed alignment framework; and allocation of institutional responsibilities for each of the financing options.

A balance between tax holidays and exemptions

In her speech, the UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo called for a balance between tax holidays and exemptions to create an enabling business climate, “If the tax incentives must be maintained, they must be kept at the lowest levels and restructured to ensure transparency and fairness in their implementation.”

Faced with a changing global funding landscape, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Ms. Sheila Ngatia noted that, “In this context, it is even more crucial to develop strategies like PIFS to identify innovative financing solutions, co-investment platforms like public-private partnership, enhance business environments, advance financial deepening, and increase the efficiency of public spending.”



A panel discussion on financing NDP III and the SDGs during the PIFS launch ©UNDP Uganda

RSCE SUPPORTS EVACUATION OF UN STAFF FROM SUDAN

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



UNITAMS staff and dependants land safely at the Entebbe International Airport on a flight chartered by Department of Operational Support and Strategic Air Operation Center (SAOC) ©RSCE

Ten intense days after fighting erupted in the troubled Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the two parties finally heeded to the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres and other world leader's pleas for a ceasefire to enable civilians to evacuate the conflict area and to facilitate humanitarian efforts.

The warring factions agreed to a 72 hours ceasefire starting midnight on Tuesday 25 April. UN's first priority in times of crisis is the health and safety of all affected staff and their dependants.

The efforts to support the evacuation of the UN civilian staff attached to the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) intensified in earnest. The Department of Operational Support (DOS) coordinated with the World Food Programme (WFP) in Sudan to implement an evacuation plan for all UN staff to Port Sudan from Khartoum and El Fasher.

With military escort, a long convoy of 68 UN vehicles and 25 buses left Khartoum heading 850km east to Port Sudan on the Red Sea by road. The convoy carrying over 723 UN staff, dependants, International NGOs and other foreigners living in Sudan took on the perilous 35-hour journey to safety.

In Port Sudan, the journey shifted from terra firma to the sea. Boats took the evacuees across the Red Sea to Jeddah where an aircraft chartered by the UN Department of Operational Support (DOS) and Strategic Air Operation Center (SAOC) awaited to airlift



Dr. Munir Safiedin, Acting UN Resident Coordinator and UNICEF Representative in Uganda welcomes the evacuated UN staff and their dependants and reassures them of the UN's full support ©RSCE

them to Entebbe in Uganda and Nairobi in Kenya.

The Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE) welcomed the first group of UN staff and their dependants from UNITAMS at the Entebbe International Airport on the night of 25 April.

Cognizant of the fact that the staff had little or no time to put their personal belongings together or to even plan their travel, the RSCE set up a command centre at the United Nations Base in Entebbe as part of the support they provide UNITAMS on administrative and financial services.



Mr. Paulin Djomo, Director RSCE welcomes and briefs a group of UNITAMS staff and their dependents on what to expect from the Centre while they are in the country ©RSCE

The centre processed all travel arrangements and attendant matters for the evacuees. The support also includes payment of security evacuation allowances upon arrival in Entebbe.

Following the Secretary-General's assurance that the UN has no plans of leaving Sudan and will continue to support the Sudanese people to restore peace and civilian rule through the transition to democracy, RSCE has also set up a business centre with laptops and IT equipment for staff to continue with their work in achieving this. The Regional Field Technology Service will also provide temporary SIM cards to the staff for purposes of business continuity.



We assure you that you are now safe here in Entebbe and we will ensure you have everything you need to continue with your work while in the country even while we continue our efforts to evacuate those still in Port Sudan El Fasher," said Paulin Djomo, Director RSCE

Prior to the arrival of this group, the RSCE had also welcomed 19 UNITAMS staff who came from Darfur and its region via Ndjamena in Chad. This group included one staff member who had lost her travel document while running and looking for safety. The UN is grateful to the Government of Uganda that has welcomed all the evacuees with and without travel document, thus providing a safe haven to UN colleagues.

Dr. Munir Safieldin, UNICEF Representative in Uganda, welcomed the group on behalf of the Resident Coordinator and assured them that the RC's office was available to them for any assistance they may require while in country.

RSCE and the MONUSCO Support Office in Entebbe will provide medical services including counselling for staff and their dependents. The UNDSS has also provided them with security badges granting them access to ESB and all existing facilities. 🌍



CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023

By Martin Ninsiima, UN Women



Ms. Sylvia Mulinge the CEO of MTN Uganda is joined by Dr. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Country Representative Mr. Paul Bwiiso, USE CEO and Ms. Renita Nabisubi, USE Board member to Ring Bell at Hotel Africana Kampala ©UN Women Uganda

On March 10, 2023 UN Women and Uganda Securities Exchange conducted a “Ring the Bell for Gender Equality event as one of the activities to commemorate International Women’s Day.

The annual event is held under the global sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative to promote Women Economic Empowerment Principles and strengthen the role of the private sector to advance gender equality.

This year’s event was conducted focusing on International Women’s Day theme **“DigitAll: Innovation for a Gender Equal Future”**. The theme emphasizes the need for inclusive and transformative technology and innovations where women themselves have the opportunity to create and harness new solutions that offer fresh perspectives to difficult problems.

In her remarks, UN Women Country Representative, Dr. Paulina Chiwangu said, “there is need to bridge the digital gender gap and improve safer and affordable access to technology to increase the development and increased resilience of economies, communities and individual women.” Dr. Chiwangu also told representatives of listed companies that UN Women prioritized and expanded access to technology across programmes including Climate Resilient Agriculture. She said the African Girls can Code Initiative will be

rolled out soon to strengthen the digital skills of young women in Uganda.

Speaking at the event, the CEO of Uganda Securities Exchange, Mr. Paul Bwiiso, expressed commitment to influence the private sector to implement Women Empowerment Principles and making deliberate efforts to involve women to participate in stock markets. He said that Uganda Securities Exchange (USE) is working on products through which it will use crowdfunding to raise capital to fund women-founded and led businesses. “It is a new concept we are looking into and trying to find a solution at the level of the stock exchange,” he said.

Mr. Bwiiso also noted that through stock markets, USE is building products to promote women-led investment and saving initiative, among which include recently launched ‘Edaala’ product, which is a USE specialist market.

This year’s event included a ceremony where MTN Uganda signed to implement Women Empowerment Principles in all its operations. Speaking after the signing ceremony, Ms. Sylvia Mulinge the CEO MTN Uganda said that the company is committed to bridging the digital divide in communities. Ms. Mulinge also noted that women are still trailing men in benefiting from transformational power of digital technologies. She said her company is working with government to ensure that every woman has access to a phone. “There has to be proactive work by all of us stakeholders to make this happen,” she said. 🌍

“MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD!” EYE Universal SRHR Project launched to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescents and youth in Busoga region

By Emmanet Nabwire United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



The King of Busoga (The Kyabazinga), His Royal Highness William Wilberforce Gabula Nadiop (centre) stands with UNFPA Deputy Representative Mr. Daniel Alemu (right of the King) and The Deputy Ambassador at the Embassy of Norway Mr. Ole Reidar Bergum (Left of the King) together with other partner's and district leaders at the launch of the EYE Universal SRHR Project launch in Kamuli district, 16 March 2023 ©UNFPA Uganda

A three-year project aimed at advancing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and youth in the Eastern Uganda districts of Kamuli and Mayuge in the Busoga region has been launched by the Kyabazinga of Busoga His Royal Highness William Wilberforce Gabula Nadiop on 16th March 2023 in Kamuli District.

The EYE Universal SRHR Project envisions ensuring every adolescent and youth in the two districts of Kamuli and Mayuge, especially those furthest behind, have access to sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services and exercise reproductive rights, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.

Funded through the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Uganda, the project worth US\$ 4.5 million will be implemented by UNFPA together with Marie Stopes Uganda, CARE International and Naguru Teenage Information and Health Centre under the tagline “My Body, My Life, My World.”

In his remarks, UNFPA Deputy Representative Mr. Daniel Alemu said, “in Uganda, today’s adolescents and youth who are over 78 percent of the population, are key in shaping the social and economic development, challenging social norms and values, and building the foundation of the world’s future.”

“While notable progress has been made, many young people – especially adolescent girls – are denied the investments and opportunities that they require to realize their full potential. In Uganda, sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents and young women have remained largely unmet,” he noted.

He said the project will contribute to ensuring that every adolescent and youth everywhere, especially those furthest behind, have access to integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights information and services and exercise reproductive rights, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence. This, he added, will positively impact on reducing maternal deaths and unintended teenage pregnancies. Mr Alemu said at the launch.

“It is hoped that the project will positively impact on reducing unintended pregnancies, teenage pregnancies, and maternal deaths. It will also empower adolescents and young people, including those in hard-to-reach communities and those most at risk, to decide over their own bodies, make informed choices, and utilize high quality, integrated SRHR information and services,” Alemu added.

He noted that Uganda is still faced with many challenges and inequalities where one in four adolescent women aged 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child; 34 percent of women 20-24 years were married or in union before the age of 18 and one in three female adolescents aged 15–19 years in need of modern contraceptive methods have no access. Almost half of the unsafe abortions every year occur among the young women aged 15-24 years.

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DISABLING THE CULTURE OF SILENCE TO END SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, AND HARASSMENT IN UGANDA

By Allen Ssempe, World Health Organization (WHO)



Participants at the policy development workshop to review the United Nations' achievement in the fight against PSEA and plan for the upcoming year ©WHO Uganda

Sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) are still a reality in our society. Many victims remain silent despite the presence of support systems and measures to punish offenders adequately.

In Uganda, the United Nations System is taking actions to strengthen the reporting system and encourage victims to speak up for appropriate support.

As part of the UN Inter-Agency Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Network (PSEA Network), WHO recently took part in a policy development workshop to review the United Nations' achievement in the fight against PSEA and plan for the upcoming year.

Since its inception in 2019, PSEA Network has empowered the capacities of over 20,000 UN staff and partners to recognize, prevent and speak up against SEAH.

"The UN system has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse. We provide platforms where members can speak up and receive the needed support," said Ms. Kathryn Wilkes, PSEA Coordinator at the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO).

At WHO for example, every country office has an Ombudsman appointed by the Country Representative responsible for listening to and reporting SEAH-related concerns and staff grievances. The ombudsman facilitates and nurtures a smooth and respectful relationship among staff and proactively assists to address matters that may lead to conflict which contributes greatly to a conducive working environment.

"People have the right to be treated with dignity and respect no matter their origin, culture, belief, social status, and gender. WHO, as any other UN agency has to ensure the full respect of this right wherever we are deployed," noted Pamela Tumwebaze, the Compliance Officer at WHO Uganda.

She further explained that all personnel have the right to an empowering, respectful environment free of sexual harassment, and are free to report any misconduct to the investigation unit.

The Investigations Unit receives grievances and offers timely and confidential assistance while investigations are taking place. "We ensure that the services needed for this purpose are available, creating a conducive environment for the right of expression," Pamela adds.

The PRSEAH team has been very active during the recent Ebola Outbreak, briefing all responders on the good code of conduct and case reporting during their duties, as per the three-year strategy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment 2023-2025. 🌍

"My Body, My Life, My World!"

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According to UNFPA statistics, over 25,000 teenage pregnancies were recorded in the two districts of Kamuli and Mayuge with over 5,000 abortions registered in the two districts in 2020 and 2021.

In his remarks, the Deputy Ambassador at the Embassy of Norway Mr. Ole Reidar Bergum said sexual and reproductive health and rights is a global priority for Norway.

"We are happy to support the Government of Uganda through our partners to achieve its goals of reducing child marriage, gender-based violence and teenage pregnancies through increasing access to SRHR services in Kamuli and Mayuge districts," he said.

The Deputy Ambassador added that promoting and protecting sexual and reproductive health is essential to achieve gender equality and prevent unnecessary deaths and suffering.

"Modern contraceptives allow women, girls and their partners to decide the number, spacing and timing of children, and some also prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections. Having access to these contraceptives is both a public health and a human rights issue," the Deputy Ambassador said.

The three-year project will be implemented in alignment with the Human Capital Development Programme Implementation Action Plan with its implementation guided and overseen by the line Ministries of Health, Education and Sports, and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and will reach a total of 278,061 young people aged 10-24 years which will represent almost 70 percent of Uganda's population aged 10-24 years. 🌍



KABAKA BIRTHDAY RUN ONCE AGAIN FOCUSES ON ENDING AIDS BY 2030

By Caroline Magambo, The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)



The Kabaka flagging off the run ©UNAIDS Uganda

On 16th April 2023, over 100,000 participants turned up for the 10th Annual Kabaka Birthday Run in celebration of the Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II's 68th birthday under the theme, Engaging Men to End AIDS by 2030 for the Betterment of the Girl Child.

The UN in Uganda team led by the UNAIDS Country Director Ms. Jackie Makokha participated in big numbers with colleagues from UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, RCO, UNDSS and RSCE.

"I literally felt goosebumps seeing people come together from all walks of life for a common cause. The vibe, the ambience, the sweating, cheering, food and music fed my soul. I'm glad I witnessed such a connection! I believe that unity is the strength and if we aim to address the scourge of HIV, unity is the way to go," said Pontso Gloria Tsoeunyane of the United Nations Regional Service Centre Entebbe (RSCE).

The annual run is one of the activities organised as part of the Kabaka's birthday activities that has over the years been celebrated with particular corporate social responsibility causes attached. Previous runs have supported the fight against fistula and sickle cell anemia. Just like the past three years, this year's run once again focused on engaging men to End AIDS by 2030, a theme that will run for the next three years.


"We renew our commitment to supporting the wellbeing of those with HIV, as well as those at risk for infection. Everyone should get tested for HIV and know their status," said the Kabaka before flagging off the race.



UN staff participants after participating in the Kabaka Birthday Run ©UNAIDS Uganda

The Kabaka's campaign on engaging men to end AIDS contributed significantly to the reduction in HIV infections. Data from UNAIDS, indicates that advocacy for the Kabaka run for the previous three years contributed to positive results in the region by increased knowledge of HIV status from 89% to 94% and HIV treatment coverage from 64% to 92%. By 2021, 38.4 million people globally were living with HIV. The report also indicated that although 1.5 million people became newly infected with HIV, there was a reduction in new HIV infections reflecting a 54% drop since the peak in 1996.

Since 2019, Airtel Uganda together with Buganda Kingdom and UNAIDS have continued to drive awareness about the danger of HIV/AIDS in our society through the Kabaka Birthday Run.

In March 2017, UNAIDS appointed the King of Buganda as a UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador on Ending AIDS among men in East and Southern Africa so that he could use his influence on norms, beliefs and customs to impact on men's access to HIV services. He was further recognized at the last Kabaka run by the UNAIDS Executive Director as UNAIDS Africa Goodwill Ambassador. 

MEET JADO NSENGIYUVA: THE TRICYCLE AMBULANCE RIDER SAVING LIVES WITH SELFLESS DEDICATION

By Frank Walusimbi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)



Jado posing in front of a tricycle ambulance in Rubondo on 25 April 2023 ©UNHCR Uganda

Jado Nsengiyuva, a 23-year-old Burundian refugee is a true hero at Nakivale Refugee Settlement in southwestern Uganda. He is a Burundian refugee who arrived in Nakivale, Uganda, in 2012.

With over 160,000 refugees in the settlement, healthcare is in high demand, and Jado, is a tricycle ambulance rider who is working tirelessly to save lives in Nakivale.

Jado's designated area of operation is Rubondo Zone, where he rides between eight to ten patients to Rubondo Health Center III every day. It is a demanding job that requires him to be stationed at the health centre, 24 hours a day. In fact, Medical Teams International (MTI), the UNHCR health implementing partner, offered him a house at the health centre where he lives, in addition to his monthly salary.

"I work with Village Health Teams who call me when there is a patient that has to be rushed to the health centre," Jado said. "It can be during the day or night, so I have to be on standby."

Jado's commitment to his work is truly admirable, and he goes above and beyond to ensure his patients' safety and well-being.

"I remember a mother I assisted from Kalitima A Village. She was almost forced to deliver alone in her compound, which was distant from other homes in the community." Jado recounts experience. "I was told later that a passerby noticed her in labour and rushed to inform the village chairman. The chairman called me and fortunately, I was stationed at Rubondo Health Centre III. With a midwife on board, I rushed to the woman's home and she

was helped to deliver almost immediately upon arrival at the health centre."

Despite facing many challenges, Jado remains determined to provide the best care possible. He ensures that his tricycle is in good mechanical and hygienic condition and doesn't hesitate to brave difficult conditions like bad roads, especially during the rainy season.

Jado's work is made possible thanks to the tricycle ambulance, which is famous for its mobility in mountainous and low-land terrain. In 2021, UNHCR procured 30 tricycle ambulances through European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) funding for the COVID-19 response. Nakivale and Oruchinga got 3, Palabek 2, Adjumani 3, Ivempi and Rhino 5, Bidibidi 4, Parolinya 3, Kiryandongo 1, Kyangwali 3, Rwamwanja 3, and Kyaka 3.

In 2019, UNHCR procured 23 tricycle ambulances through funding from the United Kingdom, which benefited 10 settlements. Since then, refugees living in settlements have provided positive feedback on the tricycles.

The majority of new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who entered Uganda in 2022 and 2023 have settled in Rubondo Zone, in Nakivale Settlement, where Jado works tirelessly to provide healthcare service.

Uganda is currently home to 1.5 million refugees, with the majority coming from South Sudan. The figure highlights the enormous and urgent need for healthcare in all the refugee settlements.

From a humble taxi driver to a selfless tricycle ambulance rider who saves lives every day, Jado's unwavering dedication to his patients is truly inspiring.

Jado's story is one of selflessness and dedication. From being a humble taxi driver, he has become a heroic tricycle ambulance rider who saves lives every day. His unwavering commitment to his patients is truly inspiring and embodies the humanitarian spirit of helping those in need. 🌍

VILLAGE HEALTH TEAMS IN NTUNGAMO DISTRICT LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA

By Edmond Mwebembezi, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Phenehasi Bazimbana a Village Health Team member trained by UNICEF to handle malaria among children under five years, takes the temperature of a one-year Abigail Namakula as her mother Justine Nakachwa carries her, during a routine check on a home in Kabingo Village, Ntungamo District ©UNICEF Uganda

In the fight against malaria in Uganda's Ntungamo district, Village Health Teams (VHTs) are playing a vital role. Phenehasi Banzimbana, a VHT based in Kabingo Village, Nyamunuuka Town Council, is one such individual.

He carries out his activities, as expected of a VHT, with the mandate to support health workers in providing health services, including health education, patient referral, malaria Rapid Diagnostic Testing (RDT), treatment and more.

Phenehasi is among the over 1000 VHTs that were trained by the Ministry of Health with support from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other partners with funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in Integrated Community Case Management (iCCM) equipping them with skills to support the community in managing various preventable and treatable diseases.

"I was trained by Ministry of Health and UNICEF, and I have a better understanding of my work now. My work is cut out for children below five years and pregnant women and I am tasked to deal with fever, pneumonia, diarrhoea, and malaria," says Phenehasi.

In Kabingo Village, Phenehasi is responsible for about 45 households, and he has been doing this for the last three years.

On a sunny Thursday afternoon, upon being notified of a sick child in his village in the home of Esther Nakachwa, which comprises four children, three of whom are under the age of 5, Phenehasi made his way to ascertain the problem.

"My son has had a fever for about seven days, and I think he might be down with malaria," says Nakachwa, upon an inquiry from Phenehasi.

Using malaria RDTs, Phenehasi tested Esther's son who presented with fever, however, fortunately the results were negative for malaria, and thus he referred them to Bwongyera Health Center III to which he is attached. He also educated the family about malaria prevention and control at the household level.

"Most of my villagemates are not sure of how malaria presents, and due to the high number of mosquitoes in this area, I have to run a RDT to ascertain if malaria is affecting them. When I find them positive, I prescribe Coartem according to their age," Phenehasi reports.

Coartem is an anti-malarial medicine used to treat certain types of malaria infections. It destroys the malaria parasites (tiny organisms consisting of a single cell that are found inside the red blood cells).



Phenehasi Bazimbana, a Village Health Team member trained by UNICEF to handle malaria among children under five years in Kabingo Village, Ntungamo District. He routinely moves door to door to deliver health services among which is health education on how to prevent malaria and malaria testing using RDTs ©UNICEF Uganda

Phenehasi further highlights that upon arrival at the homes, in addition to running the tests and prescribing medication, he educates household members on malaria prevention methods which include clearing bushes, closing windows and doors early enough, and the proper use of mosquito nets.

Mosquito nets play a significant role in preventing malaria as they protect children and pregnant mothers from mosquito bites, which are known to spread malaria.

"Most of these homes have mosquito nets provided by the government, and during antenatal care, pregnant mothers are given nets to sleep under to prevent mosquito bites," he adds.

To ease their work, UNICEF availed VHTs with smart phones installed with a mobile phone application called the 'VHT APP'. "We use this application to register and track households, register their health statuses, and follow up when time is right," notes Phenehasi.

He further points out that he has noted a reduction in malaria cases as of April 2023. "Out of every ten children I test, I find only two to three children positive with malaria."

Gerald Twesiga, the Ntungamo District Malaria Focal Person, agrees with Phenehasi, noting a significant decline in malaria cases.

"For instance, we have noted decline in the trend compared to the last quarter of 2022. Currently, according to Ntungamo District Monthly Malaria Report, we recorded 3995 malaria cases by the end March 2023 compared to 8297 cases malaria in December 2022," Gerald reports.

This, he attributes to the interventions by the government and partners, including building capacity of VHTs, provision of RDTs, provision of nets, and improved case management at health facilities.

Mr. Twesiga also adds that, while all the interventions played a significant role, the training of VHTs in iCCM played a vital role in averting the number of cases in the district.

According to the Annual Health Sector Performance Report for the financial year 2021/2022, malaria was still the leading condition among all outpatient diagnoses (OPD) for all ages accounting for 32.1% of all OPD attendances. The number of malaria cases increased by 5% from 13,604,703 in 2020/21 to 14,904,773 in 2021/22.

The report further notes that although the malaria incidence increased from 302/1000 to 317/1000 population, with an increase in malaria admissions by 16.6%, the number of malaria deaths reported reduced by 15% from 5,017 to 4,245. This may be attributed to early detection and improved case management as well as Integrated Community Case Management (iCCM) for children under 5 years.

According to Sarah Achen, the Programme Officer for Malaria at the UNICEF Field office in Mbarara, the role of VHTs in supporting the district health teams and partners to tackle malaria cannot be overstated.

"They know the people and know all the corners of the district and through them we are able to reach households with not only the right messages, but the right interventions to prevent the spread of malaria and treatment of cases."



UNICEF is not only committed to eliminating malaria in Uganda but also to supporting other health initiatives such as nutrition and sanitation, including toilets, clean water sources, and boiled water," she adds.

For Esther, the reduction of malaria in her household is a breath of fresh air. "Managing a sick child is not easy, and for that reason, I use my nets diligently and ensure that I visit Bwongyera HC III in case of any health need," she says.

Mary's children look healthy and energetic!

This year's World Malaria Day was commemorated under the theme, **"Time to deliver zero malaria: invest, innovate, implement"** UNICEF calls for concerted efforts towards a malaria-free world. The slogan "our collective responsibility" reminds us that it is not just the responsibility of governments and organizations, but of every individual to contribute to the fight against malaria. 🌍

IOM AND PARTNERS SHARE LESSONS FROM PILOT ELECTRONIC WASTE PROJECT

By Richard Kavuma, International Organization for Migration (IOM)



Uganda Chief of Mission Sanusi Tejan Savage opening the workshop ©IOM Uganda

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its partners in Uganda recently held a two-day workshop to discuss the electronic waste management landscape in displacement settings.

The 27-28 March event in the capital Kampala was aimed at sharing lessons from IOM's pilot E-waste project in Bidibidi settlement, with key partners with a view scaling up the successes of the initiative. It was attended by key stakeholders from the Government, humanitarian agencies, academia and private sector

The workshop marked the end of the pilot project **"Greening Humanitarian Responses Through Recovery, Repair, And Recycling of Solar Products in Displacement Settings"**, funded by Innovation Norway in northwestern Uganda. The overall objective of the project was to identify solutions that reduce and manage e-waste, while prolonging energy access, creating employment opportunities, supporting alternative forms of livelihoods, increasing knowledge transfer, and promoting environmental sustainability.

Partnering with BRIGHT Products, Total Energies Offgrid Solar Solutions (TEOSS), and Solvoz, IOM set up systems for product

collection and repair, as well as creating awareness on electronic waste disposal. The initiative employed 10 community mobilizers across Bidibidi's five zones and the host community. The collected lanterns were serviced by newly trained repair technicians, in some cases by picking viable parts from spoilt lanterns to extend the life of others.

Meanwhile, the old batteries from spoilt lanterns were tested in TEOSS's state-of-the-art battery laboratory (Batlab), with viable ones repurposed into second-life battery packs capable of running small businesses, powering schools and hospitals.

IOM's partner Solvoz hosted workshops with the humanitarian sector to create technical guidelines for the sustainable procurement of lanterns and batteries, as well as complementary e-waste services such as repair and recycling centres available on their open access platform. The project was supported by IOM's implementing partner in the field, Mercy Corps.

Speaking at the closing workshop, IOM Uganda Chief of Mission Sanusi Tejan Savage noted that the workshop was important because it sought to share lessons aimed at addressing environmental degradation and climate change which are two serious drivers of forced migration. He added that when people are displaced, in a place like Bidibidi, solar lanterns are one of the few clean sources of light, but there is no specific safe way to dispose if them once they get spoilt. 🌍



WITH UNODC SUPPORT, ODPP LAUNCHES PROSECUTION-GUIDED INVESTIGATION GUIDELINES

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



UNODC Head of Office in Uganda, Ms. Sharon Nyambe launches Prosecution-Guided Investigations (PGI) Guidelines during the Second Annual Prosecutors' Symposium ©UNODC Uganda

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), with support from UNODC, has launched a set of prosecution guidelines, that will enhance oversight of investigations to ensure due process of law.

The Prosecution-Guided Investigations (PGI) Guidelines were launched by the UNODC Head of Office in Uganda, Ms. Sharon Lesa Nyambe, at the start of the Second Annual Prosecutors' Symposium held in Kampala from 25th -27th April 2023.



In order to meet the rule of law standards and strengthen public confidence in the authority of the police to conduct investigations in a manner that balances rights of individuals, the investigative work of law enforcement must be monitored," Ms. Nyambe noted.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) and the Criminal Investigation Directorate of the Uganda Police Force held consultations and jointly reviewed and validated the guidelines before they were published into a handy booklet, that was distributed to all prosecutors who attended the symposium.

Ms. Nyambe emphasized that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions plays an important role in upholding the rule of law and maintenance of national security. She acknowledged and appreciated the warm collaboration that UNODC has had with ODPP over the years.

In concurring with Ms. Nyambe, Uganda's Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Lady Justice Jane Frances Abodo, said that the Prosecution-Guided Investigations Guidelines are intended to streamline and standardize how the Directorate of Public Prosecutions deals with investigative agencies during the criminal investigation process.

Strengthening Crime Prevention

UNODC in Uganda is implementing the "Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Uganda Programme" - a home-grown initiative, developed through a consultative process with key stakeholders of the justice institutions and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is one of the key partners for the 5-year programme, which has received funding from the Embassy of the Government of the Netherlands in Uganda.



Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Lady Justice Jane Frances Abodo addresses the Second Annual Prosecutors' Symposium @UNODC Uganda

UNODC assists Member States in reforming their criminal justice systems and implementing United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice. The standards and norms include; the United Nations Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors, as well as the International Association of Prosecutors Standards of Professional Responsibility and Statement of the Essential Duties and Rights of Prosecutors.

Commenting on the theme for the symposium, “Effective Prosecution of Organized Crimes to Foster Sustainable Economic Development”, Ms. Nyambe noted that as countries in Eastern Africa continue to experience significant economic growth and social change, organised crime will similarly morph and adapt, exploiting both new business opportunities and the region’s vast natural resources.

Furthermore, she elaborated, for marginalized and economically isolated communities and demographic groups (including unemployed youths), organised crime becomes a source of income (in the absence of alternative sources of livelihood) as well as an opportunity for social mobility. “Unfortunately, such social ecosystems have provided fertile breeding and recruitment grounds for organised criminal groups,” she said.

Justifying the UNODC – ODPP partnership to host the Symposium,

Ms. Nyambe noted that “the fight against organized crime requires not only well-trained and well-organized prosecutors but also prosecutors who are supported and protected by their governments.”



Successful prosecution of organised crimes can lead to increased investor confidence and improved business environment for the country,” Ms. Nyambe said.

The DPP equally pointed out that prosecutors contribute directly to national security and sustainable economic development. “No investor can have confidence in a country where the crime rates are high. The public relies on prosecutors for an environment free from crime. No impunity,” Justice Abodo stated.

She commended UNODC for the partnership which has enabled her office to plug some of the gaps created by inadequate resources. “We equally thank the Government of the Netherlands for provision of resources to support our programmes,” the DPP said. 🌍

