



STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE THROUGH ENHANCED LOCAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES



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2020 - 2023

DISCLAIMER:

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Stephen Olupot and Jimmy Asiku, as well as Oxfam’s Global Humanitarian Team. Oxfam acknowledges the role of the local and district leadership towards the success of this project.

We appreciate our funding partner, the European Union Trust Fund (EUTF). Thanks to their financial support, the project has impacted the lives of over 563,950 refugees and host communities in Isingiro and Kyegegwa districts.

CONTEXT

Uganda is at risk of natural and man-made disasters. The country experiences extreme weather events which lead to disasters such as droughts, floods, and landslides. Uganda's vulnerability is exacerbated partly due to its high dependence on climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture and forestry. Additional pressure on land and environment has also increased with the increasing human settlement especially in the refugee hosting districts. In Southwestern Uganda, refugee hosting districts such as Kyegegwa and Isingiro, both hosting over 290,000

refugees have experienced negative impacts of environmental degradation including general loss of environmental cover and deforestation, water pollution, depletion of ground water resource and soil exhaustion. All this has resulted from the increased competition over natural resource between the refugees and host communities. In response, the government of Uganda and implementing agencies have taken steps to advance disaster risk management and climate resilience.

THE PROJECT

With funding from EUTF, Oxfam implemented this project in partnership with Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE) and Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), in Isingiro and Kyegegwa districts. **‘The strengthening resilience through enhanced local disaster risk management capacities project’** aimed at ensuring stability and addressing the effects of migration and displaced persons in Uganda with major emphasis on the Southwestern part of Uganda. The project strengthened local preparedness and resilience of refugees and host communities through improved natural resources management, disaster risk mitigation and early warning systems in the two refugee hosting districts of Kyegegwa and Isingiro.

This was achieved by reducing forest exploitation, restoration, and natural resource management activities. The action also improved environmental governance through advocacy, environmental education and influencing. The

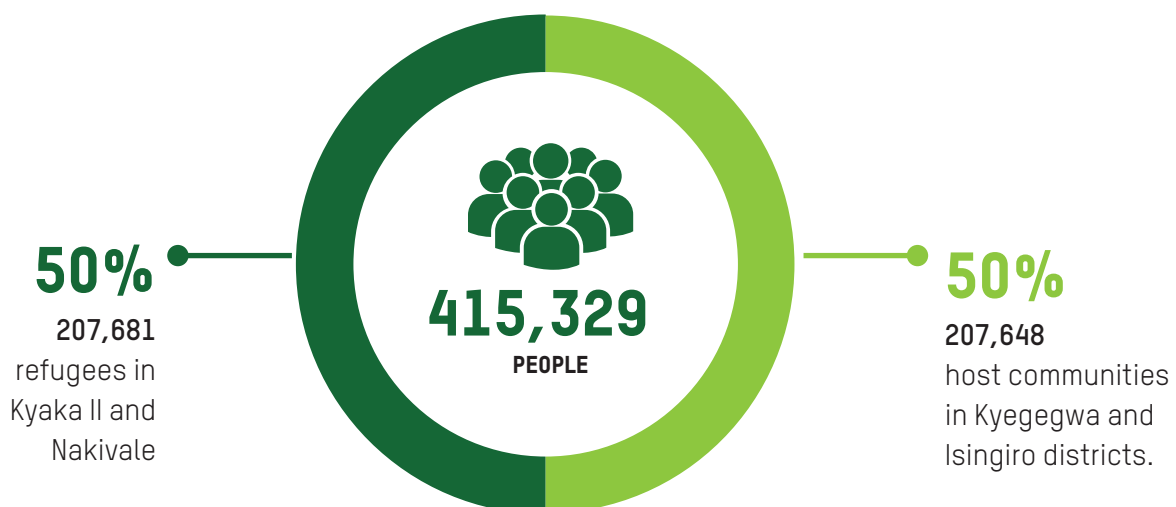
Project built on waste to value innovations projects providing sustainable and environmentally friendly energy sources from human faeces to make fuel briquettes and biogas generation. Capacity building of local actors and district staff was conducted leading to improved planning, awareness, and adjusted plans incorporating disaster risk mechanisms.

€ 1,475,000

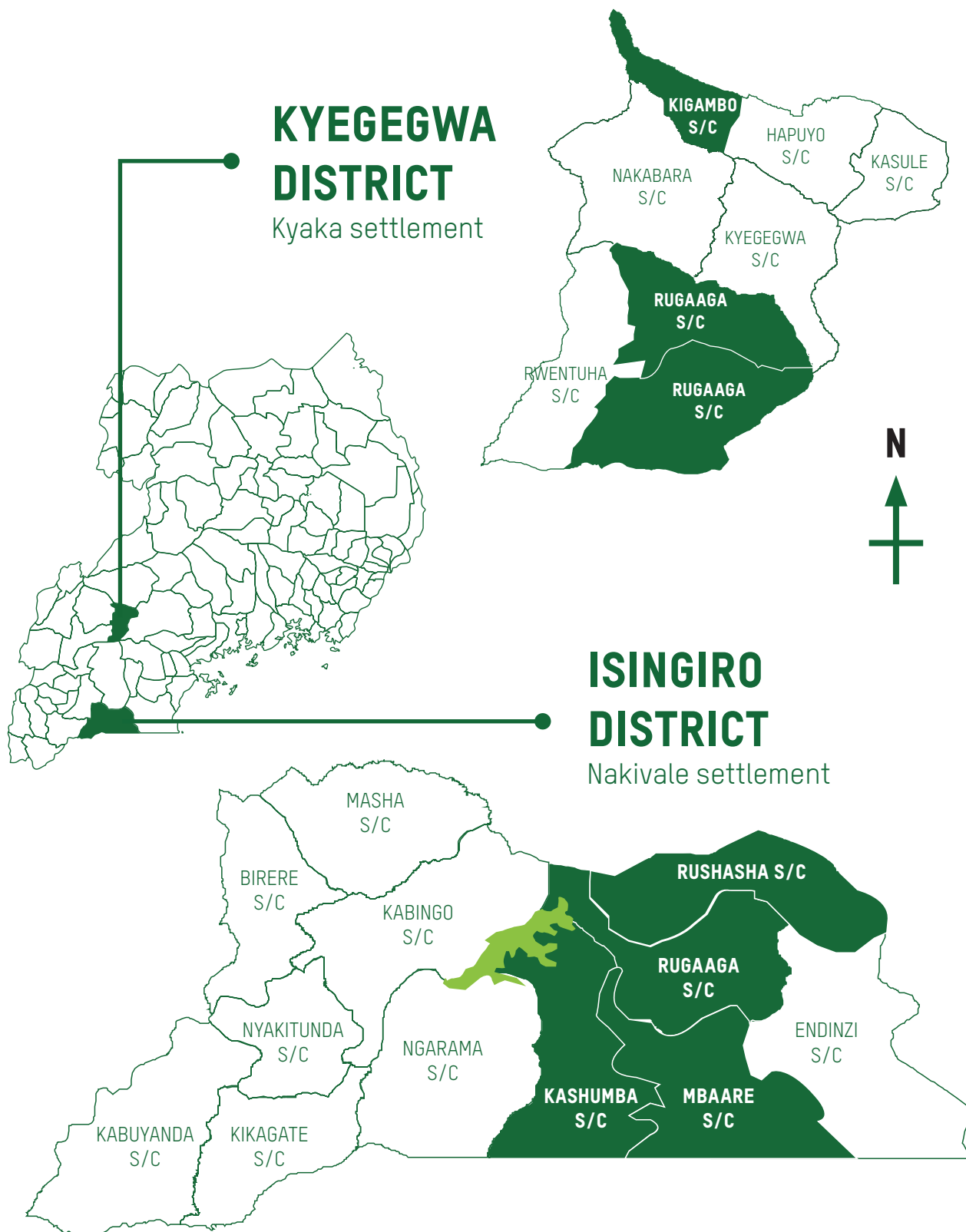
PROJECT WAS IMPLEMENTED FOR 30 MONTHS FROM NOVEMBER 2020 - APRIL 2023.

The project was implemented in eight sub counties, three of which are in Kyegegwa and five in Isingiro districts in the refugee settlements of Kyaka II and Nakivale respectively, targeting a population of 415,329 people, (207,681, 50%) refugees in Kyaka II and Nakivale and 207,648 (50%) host communities in Kyegegwa and Isingiro districts.

TARGET POPULATION



MAP OF TARGET AREAS



KEY

- Target areas
- Neighbouring areas
- Water bodies

TOTAL REACH



563,950

total direct project reach of refugees and host community



56 HA

of woodlots established in both Isingiro and Kyegegwa districts.

AGRONOMIC TRAININGS



400

households trained



Over
10

hectares of degraded land restored

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEES



26

Natural resources/Environment committees established and trained in local governments and areas where woodlots have been established.



05

Motorized hand pumps

03

in Isingiro

02

IN Kyegegwa

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL CLUBS



07

school clubs with 64 members

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT



563,950

individuals reached.



112,790

Households reached.



04

Solid Waste Management
groups formed



125

members trained in solid
waste management



78

47



ENERGY SAVING STOVES

9

Institutions supported and fully adopted the use of institutional energy saving stoves benefiting over 4000 individuals



1,750

household capacity strengthened with knowledge and skills in the household energy cooking stoves serving a total population of 12,250 people reducing fuelwood by 30%

BIOGAS



14

biogas production
facilities



50

households connected

PEACE BUILDING



06

Peace building
committees
formed & trained



52

cases handled by the
committee



PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Water is a vital resource in the environment ecosystem. However, due to the general loss of vegetation cover and deforestation, water pollution and depletion of ground water resources, water became a scarce commodity within the refugee and host communities. With the growing population, there was increased competition over natural resources between refugees and the Ugandan host community. This scarcity increased tensions over access to, and management of water resources. The pressure on natural resources according to the project baseline also had an impact on protection issues of women and children as they had to walk longer distances each day to fetch water exposing them to protection risks including gender-based violence (GBV).

Social cohesion according to studies plays a key role in processes of peacebuilding and sustainable development. Oxfam and partners therefore

ensured that natural resources and environment are sustainably and inclusively managed thus promoting social cohesion between the host population and refugees. In turn, refugees and the host community worked closely together to ensure that the Environment is protected.

To ensure this, Oxfam and partners in both districts rehabilitated water resources through upgrades of handpumps to solar powered water systems and trained community members, sensitized the community on environmental protection as well as established a vermi composting site, Sweswe Dam Rehabilitation and Catchment Restoration, developed sustainable land use management plans, and embarked on the promotion of afforestation and environmentally friendly energy conservation techniques.

An aerial view of the Sweswe Dam catchment area in Kyegegwa district. ~ Photo by Allan Mutebi/Oxfam



SWESWE DAM REHABILITATION AND CATCHMENT RESTORATION

Sweswe Dam catchment area was mapped among the major natural resources in Kyegegwa/Kyaka II with an aim of addressing the issues affecting it as a key water resource. The impacts of environmental degradation were drying up Sweswe dam in Kyaka II yet it is a main water source for 2 hybrid water supply systems. A hydrographic survey for Sweswe dam in Kyaka II was conducted and recommendations on water resources catchment protection developed. A number of activities were undertaken which enhanced storage of water in the dam and increased water production. They include:

- Desilting and removal of water weeds from the dam
- Demarcation of Sweswe catchment area with concrete pillars
- Fencing off of 360M of Sweswe dam with a chain link
- Fencing off of 2700M of the catchment area with live markers to prevent encroachment by the neighboring communities.
- Establishment and capacity building of community WASH structures to enhance water management. Following this, a dam management committee was set up comprising

of eight males and three females to carry out community sensitization around the dam but to also offer protection.

- For the purpose of proper maintenance around the catchment area, seedlings comprising of 1100 bamboo, 500 croton, 300 terminalia, 200 Machamia and 200 Musizi tree were planted, and an Environmental Impact assessment (EIA) carried out where findings indicated positive impact like minimized soil erosion, water pollution among others.

An aerial view of the Sweswe water filters producing clean water ready for distribution ~ Photo by Allan Mutebi/ Etroca



A view of the sweswe catchment area ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam





MOTORIZED WATER PUMPS

To ensure enough safe water for refugees and the host community, alternative water resources options were considered. Consultative meetings were held with the District Water Officers and joint assessments by Oxfam, Kyegegwa district water and natural resource officers together with community leaders and these resulted into motorization of five (05) hand pumps of which (three) 03 were situated in Isingiro while (two) 02 were in Kyegegwa district giving both refugees and host communities access to clean water.

For enforcement and management, three (03) main water user committees and nine (09) sub committees per tap stand were established at each of the 3 motorized water systems in Isingiro district. Land agreements between landowners and the community for both Kyegegwa and Isingiro districts were signed for motorization works to be done on the agreed size of the land and ten water user committees were formed and trained

for proper management of the water sources and as sustainability strategies.

7 Water boards comprising of 63 members from Nakivale/Isingiro, and Kyegegwa/Kyaka II refugee settlement/district were constituted and trained while sensitization meetings with communities in the various locations were conducted. Oxfam and partners conducted refresher training for 484 water user committees (219 female and 265 male) in Kyaka II refugee settlement. These facilities have improved the livelihoods of a number of households through tremendous reduction in diseases resulting from water pollution, reduced time spent on fetching water for home use among other.

All the above efforts translated to changes in the community as shared by some of the project participants.

REDUCED CASES OF WATER BORNE DISEASES

Selemani Kadi has been a widow since 2009 and was left with the responsibility of taking care of her four children. Due to the insecurity in DR Congo, in 2015 she escaped to Uganda to find a better and safer life for her family and was resettled in Kyaka II refugee settlement. Hosting over 118,000 refugees, primarily from the DRC, with the majority being women and children. Just like other refugees, life in the settlement was not easy for Selemani and her family as access to basic needs like clean water continues to be a challenge in a number of the settlements.

Before the rehabilitation of the Sweswe water catchment area to generate safe water for drinking, Selemani mentioned that the communities were sharing water with livestock which was not suitable for human consumption. Despite the efforts to keep her children safe and healthy, her children consuming contaminated water exposed them to water borne diseases such as typhoid.

In 2021, Selemani grabbed an opportunity when Oxfam and JESE were mobilizing communities for sensitization to protect the water source, since she had been a regular victim of poor and contaminated water and walking long distance in search of water.

"I am very happy I don't have to share a water source with livestock because sometimes they would pollute it with dung, making it even hard to use to prepare a meal at home."



SELEMANI KADI

Sweswe dam committee member





A RELIEF FROM MEDICAL COSTS

Paluku Katsuva is a 48-year-old Congolese refugee, who lost two of his four children during the war is one of the thousands of refugees who flocked in 2018 Uganda in search of peace and security for his remaining family. In the refugee settlement, Paluku found the opposite of what he anticipated, upon learning that even access to clean water was a big challenge, on top of accessing other basic needs of food, shelter and medical care.

At the time Oxfam and JESE launched rehabilitation of Sweswe Dam, this according to Paluku, was an answered and a timely prayer. This is because Paluku's family frequently suffered water borne diseases especially typhoid which pushed him to the wall since he had no income to take them for treatment.

Oxfam and JESE rehabilitated Sweswe dam and taps were installed across communities to extend water closer to both refugees and host communities to provide clean, safe, and accessible water.

He volunteered to join the tap stand water committee as this was a big relief. The water committees were created to supervise and ensure that the established taps are well managed by the community members.

As a member of water tap committee, he together with other members mobilised people to create awareness on sustainable use and protection of taps, stipulating fetching time from 6:00pm to 11:00am as a means of having order and allowing the machines to rest before pumping more water they are to use the following day.

"I work at the farms of nationals, ploughing, pruning, and weeding to earn a living, however sometimes I am paid in kind (given food for the day) or paid 5000 five thousand shillings per day which is not sufficient for all my family needs, but I am glad the health of my children has improved due to access to clean water. I no longer spend on hospital bills and also share water sources with animals like it was before."



PALUKU KATSUVA

Congolese refugee

REDUCED THE BURDEN OF CARE WORK ON WOMEN

In most African communities, domestic care work is entirely a responsibility of women. Taking care of children, the home, and preparing food is entirely dependent on them. This is exacerbated by other difficulties such as accessing sustainable water resources, resulting to health challenges.

For Eves Tushemereirwe, her experience was not different. She needed/required 2-3 hours to fetch water to use for the domestic work.

The story has since changed – clean water is five minutes from her home, which has eased on the burden of walking long distances for water. This has not only reduced water search burden, but her health has also improved.

“I no longer get backaches and headaches from carrying heavy jerricans over a long distance and I have more time to attend to my children and prepare meals in time,”

Eves no longer worries about her children missing school because of consuming contaminated water nor walking three hours, searching for water.



I treated cough and flue at least three times a month, spending about UGX 100,000 on hospital bills alone. This heavy workload coupled with such huge expenditure crippled development in our other aspects of life. My son missed a whole school term in 2021 due to typhoid that was recurring from the dirty water consumed.



EVES TUSHEMERIRWE

CREATED EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



homes to fetch water from springs and swamps like mile 7, Kakibani open well, Nyakafunzo swamp among others. Now, the area was given one water source attached to six tap stands that supply over eight hundred people. All the six tap stands have committees of three members each, established to control challenges like theft of tap valves, spoilage of the pipes among others. The communities are recommended to fetch four jerrycans per household to be able to have enough for all the over 800 people. Kyegegwa is a district prone to drought, but it is evident that the constant water supply has greatly changed the lives of people. The EUTF project also gave employment opportunities right from the onset of the project. We had locals to install tap stands, pipes and still have engineers who operate the water sources. There were business opportunities extended to shop operators and restaurants. All this has been great addition to the lives and livelihoods of the people of Kisambya.

It has been a journey for the community, from walking long distances to fetch dirty water out of swamps to having tap stands a few metres from their houses with clean and enough water for households. Before the establishment of these taps, we used to move over 2km from our

A water reservoir powered by solar to distribute water to areas of kisambya ward, mpara town council, kyegegwa district. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



BAGUMA PATRICK

Chairman LC1 Kisambya Ward, Mpara Town Council Kyegegwa District

Community members fetching water at one of the constructed tap stands in nakivale settlement. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



THE ROLE OF WATER TAP COMMITTEES



KAHWA MARGRET
Water Tap committee
Mpara subcounty



KUNIHIRA ANNA
Water Tap committee
Mpara subcounty

Our role as a committee is to guide people on how to use the established taps. We encourage them to clean their jerrycans, handle the taps carefully and be responsible users who should not spoil the taps or steal or vandalize the valves or pipes



Water Tap committee Mpara subcounty

EVEN WHEN WATER WAS AVAILABLE, IT WAS HARD TO USE IT BECAUSE SOMETIMES IT SMELT LIKE COW DUNG.



After sacrificing three miles to fetch water from the nearby swamp, it was so distressing for Agnes and her fellow community to find cows taking water from the same source. This means

that they had to wait for more hours for water to clear. Despite the water clearing, it would still be contaminated.

“Even when the water was available, it was hard to use it because we fetched water from Kigaaga river but shared it with cattle keepers who used the same to feed their cows, so sometimes water smelt like cow dung and was unbearable to use,”

With the establishment of the water taps, Agnes says the burden has since been lifted. Her family is now able to use water without fear of using the water up or walking long distances to fetch contaminated water.

Now that we have clean water, very accessible to us, the children can fetch and enjoy bathing every day.

We are a family of 9, with such a number of people, I had to have 6 six jerrycans in the house to be able to have at least enough water for us all. The 3 miles distance was too long and exhausting which meant I could not afford enough water at home. Many times, my children skipped days without bathing.



AGNES NAKYANZI



This water source has three tap stands attached to them supplying about 500 people and 144 households. Ever since this source was established, the community here in Kyarugamba has had constant water supply, diseases like typhoid have gone down and our women do not have to walk 3miles to fetch water for home consumption.



MUTUNGI JANUARIO

Caretaker of the water source system
Kyarugamba Cell, Rwemigango Trading
Centre, Isingiro district



NEED FOR MORE!

The solar water pump that was established by Oxfam has given us access to safe water that flows through the borehole which is pumped to the tank to flow through the water taps for people to fetch. This has given us all round access to clean water, reduced diseases due to water contamination and also reduced the amount of time we used to spend in queues waiting to fetch water. Our request is that the taps need to be extended to further parts of the village because some people still have to walk long distances to access clean water.



BAGUMA PATRICK

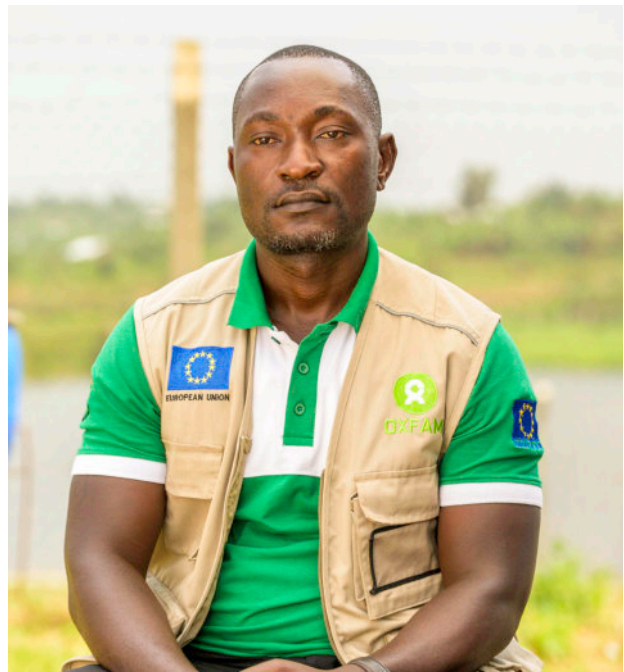
Chairman LC1 Kisambya Ward, Mpara town
council Kyegegwa District

IMPROVED COHESION

The refugee and host communities now take part in the various environmental restoration activities and interventions around Sweswe dam and Lake Nakivale. They have been sensitized about existing regulations, policies, and laws on the importance of these eco-systems and have appreciated it.

SAM NYAKOJO

Coordinator, Forest Governance at JESE.



An Oxfam official briefing the Sweswe catchment area environment committee before heading out to clear the grass around the water to prevent pollution and silting. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



A photograph showing three workers in a vermi-composting facility. They are working in large concrete bins filled with dark composting material. One worker in the foreground is wearing a blue uniform and red gloves, reaching into the bin. Another worker in the background is also in a blue uniform and red gloves, holding a tool. A third worker on the left is wearing a yellow high-visibility vest with 'SOLID WASTE (Kasairo)' and a European Union logo, and a patterned headscarf. The facility has a corrugated metal wall and wooden support beams.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AND MANAGEMENT PROMOTED
THROUGH COMMUNITY
SENSITIZATION AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A VERMI -
COMPOSTING SITE**



Among the actions, Oxfam promoted environmental protection and management initiatives which included a number of activities that impacted the lives of refugees and the host community.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT



563,950
individuals reached.



112,790
Households reached.



4 Solid Waste Management
groups formed



125
members trained in solid
waste management



78

47



- Usafi group - Nakivale Refugee settlement
- Isingiro town council solid group - Isingiro district
- Mpara solid waste management group - Kyegegwa District
- Bukere solid waste management group - Kyegegwa District.

In partnership with JESE, Oxfam trained the refugees and host communities in solid waste management in Isingiro, Nakivale, and Kyegegwa districts. After the training, four solid waste management groups comprised of 125 members were formed. The groups were equipped with Personal Protective Gears (PPEs) and tools/equipment such as gumboots, hoes, wheelbarrows, and rakes. This support was provided following a massive sensitization and training of groups in the 3R approach to harness the practice of reduction, reuse, and recycling of solid waste.

Two of the groups are now engaged in solid waste collection at Bukere and Bujubuli base camp transporting waste to agreed dumping sites including the vermin composite site for recycling. The same groups have been linked to vermin composite operationalization to complete the entire value chain of waste to value.

Among the observed changes are; improved behaviour changes among the community on the separation of plastic waste from the general waste. As a result, two groups of Usafi and Isingiro Town Council waste management groups actively participate in collection, reuse, and recycling, e.g., collection and turning solid wastes (plastics) into usable products such as plastic bottles, dustbins and brooms for sweeping. The groups have gone further to promote awareness of the waste-to-value approach amongst the host and refugee community populations, including waste groups, ministries, and agency departments at local and central government. Through this, they are promoting sustainable environmental management and protection for further learning and marketing opportunities.





USAFI GROUP, TURNING WASTE INTO VALUE

The Usafi Nakivale group in Nakivale Refugee Settlement comprises of refugees from Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, and members from the host community. It was formed in 2017 by Mirindi Murhega, a 46-year-old Congolese refugee of Nakivale Settlement.

Mirindi mobilized over 800 youth and conducted a community meeting to discuss the rising health concerns within the settlement, which had become unbearable and visibly disturbing.

Our health center was always filled to capacity, and some people would wait hours in long lines to get treatment.



MIRINDI MURHEGA

Congolese refugee in Nakivale Settlement.

We also realized that people contaminated their water due to their vicinity and exposure to waste hence getting sick,



JULLES MIRINDI

a group member.

During the meeting, they decided to start picking rubbish and waste from the streets and households to try and instill some semblance of hygiene within their communities. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) provided the group with a dumping site to aid in their quest to manage waste within the settlement. In 2019, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) supported the group with equipment, including wheelbarrows, spades, pangas, slashers, gumboots, and gloves. This boosted them to continue collecting waste from 4 zones in the refugee settlement. Despite their efforts, the situation did not change, the communities did not stop littering the waste.

We noticed that the more we collected rubbish, the more the refugees continued to openly dispose off rubbish on the roadsides, including plastics.



CHRISTIAN LENGE

A member of the Usafi Nakivale group.

In February 2022, Oxfam proposed that the group reuses the plastics they collect instead of dumping to protect the environment. The group welcomed the idea and were trained on managing

waste. The training covered separating plastic from other wastes and re-using the plastic to make other materials, including dustbins, in order to save and conserve the environment..

After the training, Oxfam provided the group with the equipment needed to make the plastic dustbins, including wires, cardboard, and holding tools (Magaro). The group began collecting plastics from designated places like shops, events, offices, and other places within the refugee settlement to make plastic dustbins. They have so far made 10 dustbins and freely distributed them in strategic places within the settlement for refugees to throw in their rubbish.

Currently, the Usafi Nakivale group has 107 members who gather on Mondays and Fridays to collect rubbish from the settlement, separate plastics and use it to make dustbins. They also provide cleaning services to restaurants, shops, and events to enable them to earn income as a group. They equally formed a savings group where they save some money and support each other when members are faced with financial challenges.

The group plans to plant trees to protect the environment and reuse non-plastic waste for biogas production. However, they are still constrained by limited finances.

Members of the Usafi waste management group loading the collected garbage on a truck for disposal ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



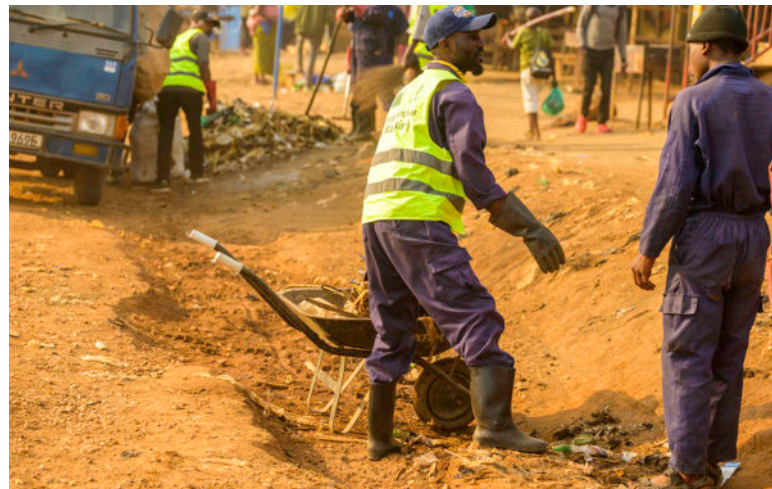


ROAD CLEANLINESS

We clean the roads and the villages and sensitize communities on how to dispose all kinds of garbage. This has enabled us keep our environment clean thus controlling diseases and in turn protecting the environment.



PAUL CHERUBALA



We collect all the waste and separate the degradable from non-degradable. One of the things we get is manure, sell some and use the rest for our farms, distribute to our village mates who use it too. This helps us keep our town clean.



KITUMAINI BAZAIZA



Waste in the fast-growing centers like Bukele trading center, where Oxfam has a committee, has reduced. A solid waste management committee has been established, and they collect garbage to try to see how to recycle or dispose it off.



ALEX TWONGYEIRWE

Environment focal person - OPM Kyaka 11 settlement.



I look after a family of thirteen people, my wife and eleven kids. With such a big family, the monthly hospital bills were above the income I get from excavation jobs. My wife (Ortance Furaha) equally goes to work on the farms of nationals but earns like 5,000 a day, which was not enough to cater for the bills of our big family. It has been over two years and we have not treated diseases like typhoid, malaria, cholera due to proper waste management. I thank the solid waste management committee that has trained us on proper disposal of waste in ways that promote cleanliness and protect our environment.



BAGALWA ANTOINE MALUME





We used to pack garbage in polythenes and sacks, throw it on the roadsides. Bukerere town was known to have a bad stench, littered everywhere and our community members suffered from diseases like cholera, typhoid, and malaria. We sensitized members of the community on how to keep their household garbage without littering. We move around four times in a week to avoid prolonged days of garbage in people's homes as a means of also controlling diseases. Currently we are being trained by Oxfam on how to use the plastics collected as we gather garbage from different households to make big plastic buckets that will be placed in different parts of the community to serve as collection points for dumping the waste. This will improve on convenience and enable members incorporate more ways of proper waste disposal in their ways of living.



OLIVIER AGANZE

Secretary of the solid waste management committee, Bukere Kyegegwa





**PROMOTING
ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY
ENERGY CONSERVATION
TECHNIQUES**

Energy poverty remains one of the key issues in Uganda where increasingly, both urban and rural communities are finding it hard to access the traditional energy sources such as charcoal and firewood. The growing population in refugee hosting districts such as Nakivale and Kyegegwa put more pressure and competition on accessing the already limited energy sources. According to the baseline report carried out in two refugee hosting districts, most people are using dry grass, maize stalks, saw dust, bean husks and

plastic bottles. People also have to walk long distances in the host community to look for firewood and in some cases, the refugees exchange relief items (cash) for firewood.

In a bid to address the above challenges, the project promoted innovative energy saving measures such as energy saving stoves and briquettes which are made from various waste material.

A sample of an energy saving cooking stove made by the umoja kwa maendeleo briquette committee in Kiborogota zone, Kyaka 11. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



INSTITUTIONAL AND HOUSEHOLD ENERGY COOKING STOVES

INSTITUTIONAL

JESE in collaboration with key stakeholders including the environment and energy sector working groups at settlement level, identified the institutional energy cooking stoves beneficiaries. Assessments were conducted guided by key parameters of populations served by the institution, established cooking points, and commitment from institution's administrations to offer maintenance and repairs. Seven institutions were identified with four in Kyegegwa, notably; Bujubuli Secondary School (SS), Sweswe school of the deaf Primary School, Mpara SS and Ruyonza Primary School), three in Isingiro (St, Raphael Vocational SS Birunduma, Kabazana PS and Rwenkubo Health Centre). These were supported and have fully adopted the use of institutional energy saving stoves.

An inbuilt institutional cooking stone constructed at mpara secondary school kitchen~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



HOUSEHOLD

The project equipped four groups (3 in Isingiro and 1 in Kyegegwa) with a total of 82 individuals (54 females and 28 males) in the community with knowledge and skills in the household level energy cooking stoves construction.





SAVED FROM GBV

Baseme Jannette, a 45-year-old refugee and widow, is a mother of six children. She appreciates JESE for introducing and training them on the use of the cooking stoves for various reasons. Baseme recounts how her 13-year-old daughter survived sexual abuse when she had gone to collect firewood. This has always brought in her unpleasant emotion at the thought of that act. When JESE came in to support the community, Baseme grabbed the opportunity, attended the training, and later installed one at her home.

Baseme no longer worries that her daughters have to walk long distances looking for firewood.

REDUCED COSTS

Currently, the school buys only 3 trucks of wood per term, this reduces the total termly cost to UGX 900,000 from UGX 3,000,000. Before the project, the school could buy 10 trucks of wood, each at UGX 300,000 per term (three months). This trend has since changed tremendously following the construction and subsequent use of the cooking stoves. We have also seen reduced smoke emissions, longer heat retention and faster cooking speed as compared to the traditional three stone cooking system previously used by the school to serve the 300 students and 30 members of staff



HEAD TEACHER

St. Raphael Voc. SS, Birunduma in Rugaga sub county – Isingiro district.



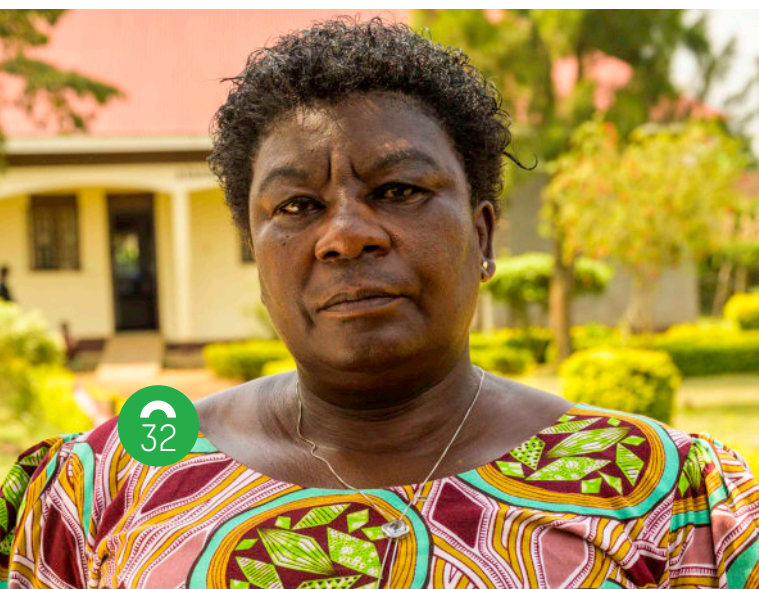
MEALS ON TIME

Our expenditure on firewood has gone down by three quarters (¾), the food is cleaner and gets ready on time. We are grateful to JESE for these energy saving stoves.



ATUHAIRE WINNIE

The Head Teacher, Mpara SS Kyegegwa district.



BIOGAS INSTALLATION



A biogas cooker connected to Albert's kitchen. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



14

biogas production facilities



50

Households were connected to the 14 biogas facilities at an average of 3 households per biogas.

families for cooking purposes. 50 households were also connected to the 14 biogas facilities at an average of 3 households per biogas. The components of the biogas include; 2 anaerobic digester tanks (3000l and 500l) and faecal sludge collector, Galvanized Iron pipes to transport the biogas to the stove in the kitchens, an ordinary flash toilet, pressure release control valve, gas burner, gas transportation pipes among other components. Biogas uses both human and animal faeces to generate its gas and its waste is used as manure in farms.

In 2022, the project embarked on the construction of biogas in 14 pilot households and the

BIOGAS TECHNICIAN

Albert Maniragarura builds and installs biogas in his community. He is one of the people that were trained by a team from OXFAM and JESE. He also received equipment and installed his own biogas at his home. Albert always had food at home but was challenged with accessing materials to use. Albert no longer uses firewood at home.

"I save the money we used to spend on firewood, our children go to school instead of going to fetch firewood, my wife does not have to deal with damaged saucepans because biogas is smoke free, and we also generate manure for my garden."

Albert is now training other people in the community to do the same. He has also so far trained two people. He has installed two systems in Kashujwa B, serving three households which have also reported fast cooking of meals with zero smoke.

Using biogas also protects the environment because one bag of charcoal translates to 5-6 poles that would have been cut down.



Albert mixing cow dung, one of the materials used in the process of producing biogas. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam



BIOGAS CHANGED MY LIFE

Georgette Nibigira, 31 is a resident of Kisura Zone in Nakivale Settlement. She fled to Uganda for safety in 2018 with her family – her spouse and three children from Burundi.

Due to much population pressure, “it was difficult for us to cook food. Sometimes, due to lack of firewood, we slept hungry even though we had the food to cook,” she said. Also living with disability was challenging for her to fetch firewood from the nearby forests while the other alternative was buying charcoal, with the basin costing UGX 50,000, which was also costly.

Oxfam began running a pilot on biogas production facilities in 2019, aiming to provide an alternative source of fuel to refugees targeting mainly people with special needs, child headed families, single mothers, and the elderly. Georgette’s family was selected.

The family received dome shaped slabs, pipelines, stoves, and other material required for the building of the biogas production facility in their home. Upon completion of the facility, two other households were connected to it as well to enable them cook using biogas. Each household collects human waste which is a raw material used to produce the biogas.

This according to her, has promoted peaceful co-existence and protection within the community because women and girls used to walk long distances in search of firewood which would expose them to risks, because three households are sharing one unit of biogas. There has also been a reduction in cutting down trees for firewood, hence saving the environment.

Finding firewood was very difficult, we started borrowing money to buy either firewood or charcoal. But with biogas now, it’s a different life where we are now able to cook using clean energy. I have gradually managed to pay off our debts using income I get from doing casual jobs around the refugee settlement.



DANIEL KARORERO

Georgette’s husband.



I am able to cook food at any time of the day without any delays or challenges of smoke from using firewood. My children are also happy to always help in the kitchen since we started using biogas.



GEORGETTE NIBIGIRA

A resident Kisura Zone in Nakivale Settlement

The family also received a water tank to reduce on the long distances travelled to fetch water. Daniel participates in the production of the biogas by looking for cow dung which has eased cooking for Georgette.

Oxfam has so far installed 14 biogas production facilities connected to 50 households.



USING CLEAN ENERGY TO REDUCE WOMEN'S WORKLOAD



Albert Maniragalula is a 35-year-old Burundian National who migrated to Uganda in 2016 after his parents and most of his relatives were killed.

After loosing my parents, I knew I wasn't going to survive either so I ran away together with my family of eleven members.

Albert and his family met several hurdles in the bush and had to walk long distances before crossing the boarder.

Upon their arrival in Uganda, they settled in Nakivale Refugee Settlement where they started their new life. Albert began doing casual jobs in the settlement in order to sustain his family, he later picked interest in molding energy saving stoves after observing that fuel was a big challenge among the refugees.

I realized that women and girls were spending a lot of time walking long distances to find firewood but would sometimes return with nothing to use to cook their food. I decided to start molding stoves which I sell to these women at a small fee so that they can save firewood.

Albert showcased his stoves during an exhibition in Nakivale refugee Settlement. He was identified by UNHCR staff who also interested him in making and using briquettes in the energy saving stoves. While making briquettes, he also ventured into producing biogas locally using polythene bags, buckets, and human fecal waste. However, this new venture was quite challenging for Albert.

It is at this level that he was identified by Oxfam during a pilot of the Biogas System facility. Albert underwent a training in fixing pipelines for the facility. After training, he took up the role of digging pitholes for the production of the biogas which helped to supplement his income.

Albert learnt fixing the biogas pipelines and he was provided with a water tank and other equipment that has enabled him to produce biogas safely and increase its production for both cooking and lighting his house.

Albert's family uses biogas for both cooking and lighting. The biogas serves as a cleaner, easier, and faster source of energy. He is also contracted to fix and repair pipelines for biogas systems around the refugee settlement. The waste matter from the production of biogas is used as manure for Albert's vegetable garden. From his savings, he was able to buy a cow and also pays school fees for all his dependants.

MAKING BRIQUETTES

*Some of the members of the Umoja kwa Maendeleo
briquette committee in the process of making briquettes.
~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam*



The briquettes are cheap and easily accessible, long lasting and one does not require to use too much. Compared to charcoal, briquettes for UGX 1000 can help to cook a whole meal which is not possible with charcoal.



FELIX KALALA



Whenever it rained, it was so hard to collect firewood but ever since my husband started making briquettes, life has improved. Meals get ready faster, and the cooking process is easier.



MATERANIRO BIZIMANA

briquette user, kyaka 11 zone.



A happy family of mr. and mrs. Bizimana enjoying quality time together.

Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam

We produce briquettes, stoves and also help others especially those who use them at home. We have earned skills and training other people to be self-reliant. We have women in the group who help to teach their fellows in the neighborhoods.

We appreciate Oxfam and the government of Uganda for providing the machines we use in the production that ease our work; as refugees we appreciate the inclusion of refugees in the activities and programs of the host communities.



SEBAHINYUZA OLIVIER

Chairperson, Briquette Production Group in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.



A man in a green polo shirt and dark trousers stands in a field of young, green pine trees. The trees are planted in rows, and the ground is dry and sandy. The man is looking towards the right side of the frame. The background shows more trees and a clear sky.

RESTORATION OF SUSTAINABLE LAND USE MANAGEMENT AND AFFORESTATION

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE NAKIVALE ISINGIRO

Interventions like tree planting, establishment, and maintenance of wood lots in sub counties of Kyigambo, Mpara and Ruyonza were implemented.

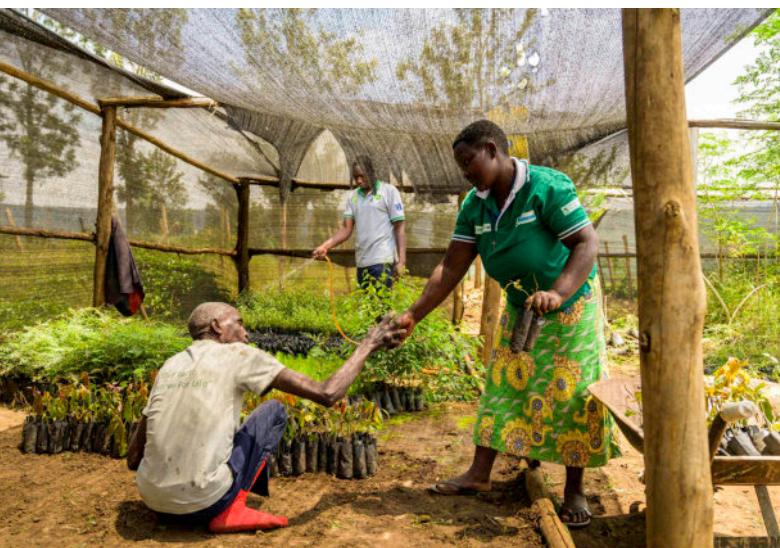
Fruit and wood tree species were also distributed to households for planting, and this registered tremendous changes to the environment.

A growing woodlot of pine trees planted by members of Nakivale environment committee. ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam





Seedlings of various trees provided by Oxfam through JESÉ for environment committees to plant and distribute to communities.
 ~ Photo by Derrick Kaweesi/ Oxfam





PLANTING TREES HAS SAVED US FROM LAND GRABBERS

We started planting trees in 2021 after receiving 4,107 seedlings from JESE. Our team comprises of 34 members whereby each received two trees in the options of avocado, jackfruit, oranges or mangoes to plant around their homes. We have also planted more trees around Lake Nakivale like bamboo and this has greatly reduced on soil erosion. Planting trees has so far increased on the amounts of rainfall received which has translated into better cultivation seasons, fresh air flow in the atmosphere even during dry seasons and all that has improved our lives. Planting trees has also saved us from organisations that come to grab our land, they find difficulty in taking land that has woodlots.



DIVOTA BARATUKA

Secretary environment committee.

POSITIVE CHANGE

As a community, we have established nursery beds that started with species like moringa which was used for study, we later received Pine trees, some edible fruits like jackfruit, avocado, some mangoes and we are currently planting mahogany. We feel very confident when it comes to taking care of the environment.



TAREMWA SAMUEL

Community member.



As a wood lot owner, I have witnessed positive changes due to the trees we have planted such as pine, eucalyptus, fruit trees among others. Initially, we planted in order to help us in building, collecting firewood and timber, but now we understand and appreciate the contribution of the trees to environmental conservation,

“

WILSON BANANUKA

Farmer and wood lot owner in Kashumba sub-county





PEACE BUILDING

Tensions between refugees and their hosts over natural resources, livelihoods and land remains one of the key challenges in refugee hosting districts in Isingiro and Kyegegwa. The tensions often will lead to some violent incidents or strained relations, and hence there is a need to always address them. The peace building work aimed to build peaceful coexistence with refugees and the host communities. To ensure that the process was community led, community members were mobilized to create committees that would serve as a bridge between the host and refugee communities.

In Kyegegwa, the peace building committee is made up of 30 members, (15 nationals and 15 refugees,) with a total of 13 women. The committee in Nakivale, Isingiro district comprises of 6 members (three nationals and three refugees) with two women, and four men.

According to Janet Karikunda, the secretary of the peace building committee in Isingiro, they have resolved 52 cases ever since its set up in June in 2022.



I have made the initiative to learn some of the languages spoken in host communities and this has not only qualified me to lead the peacebuilding committee but also improved my work and improved communication. I can now speak Rutoro and Runyankore (native languages) coupled with Swahili, Hema, and French (learned from Congo).



KISEMBO BAHEMUKA

Chairman - Peace co-existence Committee,
Kyegegwa.

For the host communities, the biggest challenge with refugees was theft, this resulted into mob justice. This made it hard to respect the refugees and welcome them in our community and this resulted to endless conflict. However, in 2022, we received a team from JESE that trained us on harmonious living, this includes finding peaceful ways of resolving conflicts. We have since been able to resolve hundreds of conflicts especially as a committee which has bred peaceful coexistence.



TUMURAMYE FRANKSON

Host community representative





PEACE WAS THE ONLY WAY OUT



Desirous to change her story and the wellbeing of her family, Neema Mbabazi 41years, a Congolese refugee bought land among the nationals to get out of the settlement and its associated challenges like congestion. With a hospitalized husband, family of eleven people inclusive of six orphans, she knew she had to provide better.

Neema saved up enough to afford her land, involved the RWCs or call them chairpersons to be able to concretize ownership.

One morning, while going to my garden, I got stopped by my seemingly angry neighbor Rubagumya Julius who wanted on extend his land boundary to encroach on mine. I was sure of the clearly marked boundary especially because I had involved my chairperson while purchasing the land. Unfortunately, my neighbor who did not care whether I involved authorities, pulled out a panga and asked me not to cross past where he was standing. He happened to be in part of my land. Although I was very angry, I knew I could not win this battle with a national who had been on the village for over thirty years. Since I had heard of a committee that had been put in place to help us refugees and nationals, I decided to go to them although I did not expect much in terms of solving my issue. They successfully intervened.

“

NEEMA MBABAZI

I did not want a Congolese refugee as a neighbor, so I had to frustrate her to leave. However, with the intervention of the committee, I learned that refugees have rights, and I cannot marginalize them simply because they are refugees. I learnt that we can live peacefully as neighbors and a community. I stopped my actions, and we are now living in harmony.



RUBAGUMYA JULIUS



As a cattle keeper, I employ herdsmen who sometimes are reckless, and this means the animals end up in people's farms. My first encounter with Hakizimana Barakagira was when my cows had fed on his maize garden in Ngarama A. He requested for a large compensation in millions that was seemingly unfair, and this did not settle well with me. I compensated him regardless but due to carelessness, my herdsmen still let cows into his garden again. This caused more conflicts and almost led to the death of my animals due to the anger and perceived disrespect by Hakizimana who thought it was because he was a refugee. The intervention of the peace building committee brought me understanding that Hakizimana was not a malicious and exploitative person. While in Sangano for a training organized by OXFAM, ALITE AND JESE, we were brought to the awareness of the value of people's farms especially to refugees so myself and other cattle keepers understood the importance of compensations. My cows have so far invaded his garden again four times, but we settle amicably without conflict, we are friends, forgave each other and live in harmony.



JAMES RWABUJANGARI

Cattle Keeper - 53, Ngarama B Region,
Ugandan National

James's herdsmen let his cows into my maize garden more than once and it almost seemed intentional because he was a national and I was a refugee. We had events in history of nationals discriminating and marginalizing us, this biased me towards him and prompted me to use this opportunity to make sure I don't let him walk free. However, after the second episode, we were introduced to this committee of both nationals and refugees who listened to our grievances without bias, I was not aware that I was doing wrong to ask for too much compensation and I was ignorant on how to calculate the damage for a fair amount, and neither was James aware that I perceived the trespass as intentional and disrespectful. With the intervention of the committee, we were taken to Sangano refugee settlement for a training on how to calculate the extent of the damage for us to avoid such conflict. I also understood that we cannot avoid the trespass entirely, but we can settle without having to damage or causing harm to the livestock.



HAKIZIMANA BARAKAGIRA

Maize Farmer - 50, Ngarama A Region,
Congolese Refugee





**SUPPORTED AUTHORITIES
AT DIFFERENT LEVELS FOR
INCLUSIVE DISTRICT/
SETTLEMENT PLANNING**



We mobilized and trained CSOs on budget analysis and advocacy. With support from CSBAG, Kyegegwa district local government has developed priority interventions that assist in tracking operationalization of interventions into the workplan. CSBAG has ensured media advocacy plans like radio shows have been implemented.



PHILLIP ALHIKA

Field Officer at CSBAG.

District budget allocation to disaster risk management has grown from 1.4% to 15.3%. This demonstrates the commitment and consistency of the district to the continuous inclusion of these interventions in district work plans but more so the impact of the trainings on the technocrats.



DENIS BUSOSBOZI

Kyegegwa District Planner





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