

OXFAM IN UGANDA

MAY – JUNE 2023 NEWSLETTER



MAY HIGHLIGHTS

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF DISTRICT DISASTER COMMITTEES IN THE MT. ELGON REGION



With funding from the European Union, Oxfam and partners are empowering and building the capacity of local governments and District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) in the Elgon region to identify, prepare for and respond to risks relating to multiple hazards.

As part of this effort, Oxfam conducted a two-day training in Mbale to equip the target stakeholders with adequate knowledge and tools to analyse and interrogate district and national budgets.

District Disaster Management committees exist in each of the districts in the Mt. Elgon region, however, they have limited technical capacity and resources to effectively implement their plans.

Focused on Disaster Risk Management financing, the participants were trained on conducting meaningful and evidence-based advocacy to influence budget decisions and allocations in the subsequent financial years.

The training attracted 47 participants from consortium partners, the Office of the Prime Minister, and District Disaster Management Committees from Bududda, Namisindwa, Sironko, Butaleja, and Mbale.

They included the Chief Administrative Officer, the District Planner, District Natural Resource Officers, Chief Finance Officer, Chairperson LC5s, District Community Development Officers (DCDO) and District Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) chairpersons, Uganda Red Cross, Caritas Tororo and Catholic Relief Society (CRS).

The training was part of the European Union funded project on Strengthening community-led actions on disaster preparedness and in the Mt. Elgon region. The project is implemented by Oxfam, in consortium with Catholic Relief Services, Uganda Red Cross and Caritas Tororo.

The objective is for disaster-prone communities in the Mt. Elgon sub-region to have increased resilience to hazards.

FOCUSED ON DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FINANCING, THE PARTICIPANTS WERE TRAINED ON CONDUCTING MEANINGFUL AND EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY TO INFLUENCE BUDGET DECISIONS AND ALLOCATIONS IN THE SUBSEQUENT FINANCIAL YEARS



The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) undertook the process of amending some provisions within the Land Act Cap. 227, with contributions from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) directly involved in land-related matters.

With mobilization from CSOs, a consultative meeting was conducted at Essella Country Hotel, attracting various stakeholders including Civil Society Organisations, Religious Leaders, and Traditional Leaders.

This consultative meeting was organized under the auspices of the National Land Coalition with financial support from OXFAM, PELUM Uganda and Food Rights Alliance.

Some of the proposed reform areas are;

- **Strengthening the rights and obligations of lawful and bona fide occupants on registered land to curb illegal land evictions by amending the Act.**
- **Amending the Land Act to streamline the functionality of Land Management institutions, notably the District Land Boards, City Land Boards, Areas Land Committees, District Land offices and traditional land management**

a) inspection, allocation, and management of land in districts and cities, b) Reviewing membership and qualifications for members of Land Management Institutions taking into account the new administrative boundaries of cities and districts and include two slots of women for equity and fairness.

- Amending the Act to provide for the establishment of a Customary land register and create the proposed Customary Certificate of Title in the National Land Policy 2013 as a form of registration for land held under Customary Tenure.
- Providing for the management, allocation, renewal, surrender and variation of leases under the Management of the Uganda Land Commission, District Land Boards and City Land Boards.
- Providing for land use planning in Land Administration.
- Providing the role of traditional leaders in land dispute resolution.
- Reviewing membership, powers, and regulations on Communal Land Associations.

INGO'S AND DONORS COMMIT TO SUPPORTING THE LOCALISATION AGENDA IN UGANDA



International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO's), including Oxfam, recommitted to support the Charter for Change operationalization in Uganda. This was during the Charter for Change breakfast meeting at Sheraton Hotel convened by CARE in May. The meeting attracted INGOs, the Charter for Change working group, Donors, the Office of the Prime Minister, and other key stakeholders.

While delivering his opening remarks, Care Country Director, Mr. Gabazira, said, "We want to make localisation practical. Localisation is now the centerpiece of the development and humanitarian programs for almost all the major donors."

Donor agencies and aid industry were asked to create systems to transfer power to local and national humanitarian actors, to fully achieve the localisation of humanitarian and development aid.

"As we talk about the future of localization in Uganda, we need to talk about decolonization. That is a conversation that we would like to hear in the room," Mr. Francis Shanty Odokorach, Oxfam's Country Director, noted.

Donors emphasized the importance of ensuring that principles of accountability and transparency guide localisation.

According to OPM, Localisation is not new globally, but in the refugee forum, it is just gaining momentum.

In November 2019, inspired by the work of the global Charter for Change network, Oxfam through the support of the Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors project-initiated dialogues between Local and National Humanitarian actors, and likeminded International NGOs aimed at bringing about change in the humanitarian system in Uganda. These dialogues gave birth to what came to be known as the Charter for Change Working Group in Uganda.

The C4C working group is comprised of Local and National NGOs in Uganda and supported by several INGO's.

Although the aid industry and INGOs have generated different policies to streamline the localisation agenda, most of them primarily address the transfer of physical and tangible resources through sub-granting arrangements. However, entrusting the fully much-needed soft assets such as power and agency has not been realised. This idea of keeping power, according to C4C, continues to undermine the agency of the National and Local humanitarian actors.

The actors called for a shift in power dynamics, the will and commitment of all stakeholders to oversee institutional change. Charter for Change signatories, including INGOs and donors, ended the meeting by signing a recommitment to operationalise and actualise the localisation Agenda.

IMPACT AND ACCOUNTABILITY BASED PARTNERSHIP



In May, Oxfam in Uganda conducted the annual partnership forum with partners to reflect on the relationship and hold each other accountable to the various commitments.

According to partners, Oxfam's transformative partnerships is reflected in the shared creation and leadership of projects, mutual respect, capacity strengthening, and the space partners have to take the lead in implementation and influencing.

During the forum, Oxfam and partners assessed each other on areas like contracting processes, communication, feedback mechanisms, quality, and timeliness of reporting and accountability.

They further reflected on Oxfam's five principles of partnership, including shared vision and values, the complementarity of purpose and value-added, Autonomy and independence, Transparency and mutual accountability, clarity on roles and responsibilities and the commitment to joint learning.

To strengthen accountability, Mr. Ronald Mukisa, Senior Compliance Officer, NGO Bureau, took Oxfam and partners through the existing statutory regulatory framework and policies. He appealed to all organisations to comply with the NGO Act to avoid regulatory risks.

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OXFAM IN UGANDA HOSTS THE OXFAM IRELAND CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND BOARD MEMBERS



Oxfam in Uganda was pleased to host a delegation from Oxfam Ireland, including the Chief Executive Jim Clarken, the Director of International Programs, and the board members.

The mission was to get first-hand program experience from the community. The delegation engaged staff, partners, leaders, and communities in the West Nile.

They visited Oxfam-supported technical students at St. Jude Omugo Technical School in Terego District, had interactions with refugees and the host community in Mvepi refugee settlement, and visited peacebuilding, farmer, and youth groups in Nebbi and Zombo districts.

During the visit, Jim Clarken appreciated the great work and the stories of resilience. He also recognised the prevailing challenges that needed to be addressed.

‘Met with farmers Grace, Alice and Betyord, part of a group of refugees and host community members in Arua, Uganda, supported by Oxfam in Uganda.

There are serious concerns that these groups will be driven into deeper poverty if current UN food supports are cut,’ Jim noted.

“Sendai presents the vision for Culamak village coffee producing group in West Nile in this transformational Irish Aid project. Beats PowerPoint any day, Irish Aid Works!” Jim Clarken tweeted

The delegation ended their visit with a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Ireland in Uganda, where they met with His Excellency Ambassador Colgan and his team. They appreciated the Irish Aid support towards promoting the resilience of communities and the great partnership with Oxfam in Uganda.

With funding from Irish Aid, Oxfam and partners implemented a 6-year (2017-2022) women and youth economic empowerment for gender equality project in 8 districts. These include Packwach, Nebbi, Zombo, Arua, Gulu, Lamwo, Kotido and Kaabong. The project reached over 17,000 people with 60% females and 40% males



OXFAM STRENGTHENS THE CAPACITY OF REFUGEE-LED NETWORKS ON ADVOCACY



Oxfam team supported the Africa Refugee-Led Network (ARN) as they developed their advocacy strategy. The strategy will guide advocacy for refugee self-representation and inclusion at local, national, and international levels.

The African Refugee Network is an organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for the rights and welfare of refugees across the African continent.

In attendance were Refugee-Led Organisation Networks (RELONs) from Malawi, Nigeria, Angola, Uganda, and South Africa.

The RELONs lauded Oxfam for standing tall in supporting and strengthening the capacity of refugee-led Organisations aimed at advancing the safety, resilience, and livelihood of refugees.

“RELON got the pleasure to host @OxfaminUganda advocacy team to discuss areas of collaboration on advocacy with RLOs.

@relonuganda thanks @OxfaminUganda for the continuous support & being an exceptional partner in supporting & strengthening the capacity of RLOs,” retweeted.

Abbas Kigozi, Oxfam rights in crisis advocacy advisor, HECA and one of the workshop facilitators, said, “An advocacy and communications strategy is essential for organizations like the African Refugee Network to articulate their messages, engage stakeholders, raise awareness, advocate for change, and build a strong and positive reputation.

It will enable ARN to effectively communicate their mission, connect with their target audiences, and achieve their goals in supporting and advocating for refugees.”

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INSPIRED BY URBAN FARMING



In May, Oxfam staff visited the established climate smart demonstration sites belonging to Kampala Capital City (KCCA) in Kyanja. This was part of the urban food initiative.

Under the urban food hives initiative, Oxfam promotes urban food production using various technologies to enhance safe food accessibility and affordability to address food insecurity concerns.

Staff participated in the exchange learning visit to acquire skills, knowledge, and inspiration on urban farming. These staff would be champions that will extend their skills back home, grow food in their spaces and inspire others.



Staff left inspired to start urban farming utilizing plastic containers, sacks, or whatever little space they have. They further committed to champion the establishment of a vegetable garden at the office premises.

CONGRATULATIONS!

We congratulate our partner – PELUM Uganda for winning the National Organic Agriculture Award 2022 during the 2nd National Agricultural Awards in June 2023. This is in recognition for their work in supporting farmers transform their lives through adding value to agriculture.



JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

BULLISA AND TORORO – DISTRICT LEADERS PLEDGE TO SUPPORT THE TAX FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



District leaders from the districts of Buliisa and Tororo committed to supporting Oxfam and partners to implement the Tax for Development.

The 3 year – Tax for Development project was launched in the honourable presence of both the technical and political representation of the local government leaders of Tororo and Buliisa districts.

The project aims at influencing the government towards natural resource revenue management and accountable service delivery.

“If we want to widen the tax base, we must make sure that people have the purchasing power & have money to pay tax,” the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Buliisa, Mr Stephen Byaruhanga, said.

Funded by NORAD, the project will be implemented in oil, gas, and mineral-rich districts in partnership with district local governments, national civil society organisations,

including SEATINI Uganda, Centre for Budget and Tax Policy (CBTP), KAWIDA, Osukuru United Women’s Network to strengthen domestic revenue mobilisation.

“Inequality doesn’t happen by chance. It is a result of choices; political, social & economic. Tax policy is one tool of redistributing resources,” Joseph Olwenyi, The Programs Manager of Governance & Accountability at Oxfam, noted.

The project will also strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and investigative journalists to advocate for fiscal justice to enhance financing of priority social sectors that are critical to achieving the sustainable development goal (SDGs).

Despite the government’s efforts to increase domestic revenue, resource mobilisation is still a challenge, largely attributed to less governance and accountability, with limited transparency especially in oil, gas, and mineral-rich districts such as Buliisa and Tororo.

RESTORING HOPE! 360 LANDSLIDE AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVE RELIEF CASH GRANTS IN THE ELGON REGION



360 households in Bulambuli District of persons affected by disasters received multipurpose cash grants to address basic water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and shelter needs.

The grants, among others was used to purchase water treatment chemicals for treating drinking water, jerrycans and other household items.

In late May, landslides hit sixteen villages of Lugo, Tagulu, Namolo, Namango, Maduwa, Suguta among others at Buluganya parish, Buluganya sub county in Bulambuli district, leaving five people dead, destroyed properties such as houses, clean water sources, crops among others.

In response, Oxfam and partners, utilising funds under the European Union funded project 'The Strengthening Community-led Actions on Disaster Preparedness and Response' responded supporting 340 families.

The victims during the distribution process received a grant of UGX 36,000 on their mobile phones, implying that a household

with 11 people received UGX 396,000.

Lovico Lushid, a victim from Maduwa village lauded Oxfam's timely response, indicating that all the clean water sources, such as taps, boreholes, and spring water, were buried by the landslide. As a result, the affected residents now have to travel a long distance - about one kilometre to access water from the contaminated River Sipi and other neighbouring sources for drinking and other domestic purposes.

Additionally, the Resident District Commissioner of Bulambuli District, Stanley Bayole appreciated Oxfam for complementing the government's efforts in providing the needed relief items to the affected communities.

He also asked the beneficiaries to use funds appropriately and responsibly and also used the same platform to caution actors in the emergence responses from exploiting the victims of landslides and floods.

With Funding from the European Union, Oxfam in consortium with Catholic Relief Services, Uganda Red Cross and Caritas Tororo are implementing the Strengthening community-led actions on disaster preparedness and Response project in the

Mt. Elgon region. The objective is for disaster-prone communities in the Mt. Elgon sub-region to have increased resilience to hazards.

The project is implemented in six districts of Bududa, Namisindwa, Sironko, Butaleja, Bulambuli and Mbale in the Elgon region. By the end of 2024, the project will have reached 141,256 people (71,251 females and 70,005 males) and will have built effective linkages between early warning and early action and support gender-sensitive district contingency planning in the targeted districts.

www.monitor.co.ug

World Refugee Day

All hope not lost for Bulambuli landslide victims

Displaced. The Elgon region in eastern Uganda continues to face recurrent floods and mudslides that lead to the displacement of people, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of lives.

BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA
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Ms Joy Nambafu has been miserable for quite some time. At 67, Nambafu a resident of Lukungiri village, Buluganya parish, Buluganya Sub-county, says life is not worth living anymore after mudslides swept through her village, leaving destruction in its wake.

On the veranda of her mud and wattle house that seems like it could flatten anytime, she ponders what to do next.

She says on a fateful day, she went about doing her normal chores before it started to rain at around 3pm. Although she is used to rain, she did not expect what would befall her entire village.

"Within minutes of the rain, land-slides struck the village leaving most families affected and lives lost. I only survived because, at the time, I was not at home. When I eventually got back to where I lived, the house had collapsed and buried one of my family members. Many people lost their lives and here

"We need God's intervention to provide us with what to eat, drink, as well as clothing," she said.

In Masugu village, the mudslides buried Micheal Wabweny (83), Allen Nasio (39), Stephen Wewosa (15), Mary Wabuyaga (12) and Velonika Nambozo (5) all from the same family.

Others affected by the disaster included Charles Waniala, Stephen Madyemu, Patrick Wetaka, David Kisa, Paul Wagudoso, Simon Nakato, Rona Wetaka.

Hope not lost

Recently, a consortium of partners led by Oxfam Uganda and funded by the European Union visited some of the survivors and disbursed multipurpose cash grants to 340 households across the 16 villages.

The cash is meant to support the vulnerable persons affected by the disaster in addressing basic WASH and shelter needs, according to Oxfam Uganda Mbale field manager, Mr Stephen Olupot.

"I'm happy that Oxfam and other partners have come together to make our lives better by supporting us financially. We have been at God's mercy," Ms Nambafu said after receiving Shs180,000.

Another beneficiary, Thomas Madaba, a father of 11 children, was one of



Bulambuli Resident District Commissioner, Mr Stanley Bayole [centre-black suit] with some of the beneficiaries. PHOTO BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA

The project is meant to address extreme events leading to disasters in Uganda and the implications on people's lives and livelihood. Others are Red Cross, Catholic Relief

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DISTRICTS WILL
BE COVERED IN
THE ELGON REGION

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

A consortium of partners led by Oxfam

WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL DAY: CELEBRATING USAFI, A GROUP OF REFUGEES RECYCLING PLASTICS IN THE NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

According to [United Nations](#), globally, we produce about 400 million tons of plastic waste yearly. It is estimated that each person on the planet consumes more than 50,000 plastic particles per year – and many more if inhalation is considered.

This year's World Environmental Day focused on beating plastic pollution, spotlighting solutions to plastic pollution, both on land and in water.

One of the solutions is recycling and turning the already produced plastics to more useful products that allow for prolonged use of plastics instead of a single use.

One of the Oxfam supported refugee group – USAFI in Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Southwestern Uganda is supporting the refugee communities to take initiatives in conserving resources and protecting the environment from plastic pollution

and generation of greenhouse gas emissions. One of their initiatives is collecting plastic bottles disposed in the refugee settlement and turning them into plastic waste bins.



In this way, this has reduced plastic pollution on the land and water, driven innovation and strengthened resilience.

OXFAM, PARLIAMENT SENSITIZE COMMUNITIES ON LAND RIGHTS IN BUSIA DISTRICT

In the wake of land disputes and issues in gold mining areas in Busia district, Oxfam together with Uganda Parliamentary Alliance on Food and Nutrition Security organised outreaches to sensitize communities on land rights and responsible land acquisition.

Headed by the Chairperson of the Alliance, Hon Milton Muwuma, the team wanted to generate credible information to awaken the debate on the need to pass the land acquisition bill into law, interact with gold mines investors to assess how their existence has enhanced the livelihoods of people living in those communities.

The team noted that currently, the locals are selling land without following appropriate procedures, leading to accumulated land complaints.

Busia district constitutes 90% of mining area which has attracted a number of investors to acquire land in large quantities for gold mining.

It is noted that large scale-based investments are always coupled with land grabbing and food insecurity. This is mainly because there's no concrete law to govern adequate compensation in large scale-based investments.

The team called upon the Ministry of Lands to intervene into the irregular sale of land to non-citizens in gold mining areas of Busia district, which has left many locals landless and exposed to several risks arising from the gold mining activities.



OXFAM CONTRIBUTES TO THE AFRICA EITI GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Oxfam's Extractive Industries Uganda team joined experts in Senegal for the first EITI Global Conference hosted in Africa.

The 5-day Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Conference in Dakar, Senegal convened different actors to discuss matters related to the implementation of EITI standards to improve transparency and governance in the management of natural resources.

The team discussed among others building collective action for responsible transition minerals in Africa, the implications of the fierce competition for these minerals, risks to communities, and ways to influence industry practices and government policy, identifying driving and constraining forces for a fair fossil fuel phase-out, how EITI company disclosures contribute to ESG performance.

The 2023 EITI Standard that was launched during the conference, was designed to promote good governance by enhancing transparency, strengthening accountability, and facilitating public debate about the management of natural resources.



Since it was first launched ten years ago, the EITI Standard, includes several new and refined provisions that enable countries to respond to the most pressing challenges that concern natural resource governance today.

The newly launched EITI Standard established a common set of rules that govern what governments and companies should disclose and when, on four thematic areas of anti-corruption, energy transition, gender, social and environmental issues, and revenue collection.

The newly launched EITI can be accessed [here](#):



Oxfam joined the rest of the world to commemorate World Refugee Day 2023, under the theme 'Hope away from home' in a world where refugees are included.

Through the partners, Oxfam called upon governments and donors to support national, and refugee led Organisations to be their own advocates to enable them to generate impactful solutions and rebuild their lives.

Under their umbrella, Refugee-Led Organisations Network in Uganda (RELON), the network calls for inclusion of refugees in meaningful decision making to generate decisions that is more relevant and more applicable in their areas.

'We know their problems, we have experienced and witnessed, and we are still leaving with them, someone who is not on that ground, cannot understand the real situation, therefore we want to be there on board and be among the decision makers so that we can come up with something which is useful for our communities', Ismail Muhamad, the leader of Somali Youth Action stressed.

"Most of the refugee programs are failing because refugees are not involved in designing, but they are only involved in implementation, no one can understand the affairs of the refugees than the refugees themselves", John Bolingo Ntahira, the founder of HOWC urged.

With funding from Hilton Foundation, Oxfam supports refugee led Organisations under RELON to advance the safety, resilience, and livelihood of refugees, through policy influencing and advocacy aimed at improving the rights, and inclusion of refugees and the responses.

"Most of the refugee programs are failing because refugees are not involved in designing, but they are only involved in implementation, no one can understand the affairs of the refugees than the refugees themselves", John Bolingo Ntahira, the founder of HOWC urged.

OXFAM IN THE NEWS

- New Vision: Tororo launches resource mobilization and accountability workshop: <https://www.newvision.co.ug/category/news/tororo-launches-resource-mobilisation-and-accountability-workshop-162074>
- Uganda Radio Network: Oxfam Launches Project to Improve Tax Collection in Tororo District: <https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/oxfam-launches-project-to-improve-tax-collection-in-tororo-district>
- The Independent: Oxfam launches project to improve tax collection in Tororo district: <https://www.independent.co.ug/oxfam-launches-project-to-improve-tax-collection-in-tororo-district/>
- NTV Uganda: Oxfam initiative supports capacity building in mineral-rich districts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNY7iTxXKWs>
- East News: BULAMBULI: Landslide Victims Receiving Aid through Mobile Money: <https://eastnews.co.ug/2023/06/07/bulambuli-landslide-victims-receiving-aid-through-mobile-money/>
- Uganda Radio Network : <https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/landslide-victims-struggle-for-clean-water-oxfam-and-partners-provide-support>
- NTV Uganda: 71 families to be relocated from landslide-prone areas: <https://youtu.be/g0E6mIJL8Rg>
- New Vision: Disaster responders are accused of exploiting landslide victims: <https://www.newvision.co.ug/category/politics/disaster-responders-accused-of-exploiting-landslide-victims-162388>

Documentation

Irish Aid Grant 2

- Booklet: <https://uganda.oxfam.org/latest/publications/impacted>
- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKJaejuF4o0>

Irish Aid Grant 1

- Booklet: <https://uganda.oxfam.org/latest/publications/my-voice-towards-women-and-youth-empowerment-gender-equality>
- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvftysfDQDI>



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