



OXFAM



*A water point installed by Oxfam at Yelulu Primary School for teachers and learners to access safe clean water*

# RENEWED HOPE

## Water points installed at schools ease learning for pupils in refugee and host communities

Since 2014, Oxfam has worked across refugee settlements in the greater North, South and Western regions of Uganda, implementing integrated WASH programs with Gender and Protection (including peace-building activities) and livelihood programmes.

Oxfam has served as the UNHCR WASH implementing partner in Adjumani (Ayilo I, Mirieyi, Alere, and Baratuku) and Rhino, as well as in Yumbe (Bidibidi), Arua (Imvepi), Lamwo (Palabek), and Kyaka II, Rwamwanja and Kyangwali. Oxfam has significantly contributed to the WASH sector, introducing new technologies and approaches that have improved the lives of 694,334 of refugees in these settlements as well as the host community. Among the key approaches is the WASH in schools.

### IMPACT AND TESTIMONIES

Pupils in some selected refugee schools have benefited from skills training in making reusable pads, an initiative that has enabled more girls to stay in school.

Thanks to support from Oxfam, water points have also

been installed near the school premises for the learners and teachers as well as the host communities.

Under the programme, 3 improved drainable institutional latrines and 12 water points have been constructed in five schools, while the host community and refugee settlement got three water points.

*Last year, Oxfam supported girls at Ofua 6 Community Primary School in Rhino Camp with soap, buckets, sanitary pads and towels, says Ruth Tumalu, a P.6 refugee pupil.*

The learners were also clustered in groups where they and teachers are taught how to make reusable pads to manage their menstrual cycles better. This helps the girls to remain in class and study while they are comfortable.

Tumalu has also managed to teach other girls how to make reusable pads.

*"I also teach the girls menstrual health management and smartness. I now know how to make my own pads and sale some to make money," she says.*



# Impact

*Last year, Oxfam supported girls at Ofua 6 Community Primary School in Rhino Camp with soap, buckets, sanitary pads and towels, says Ruth Tumalu, a P.6 refugee pupil.*

Tumalu, however, notes that the common challenge forcing girls out of school is teasing from fellow pupils who refer to some of their girls as mothers and this causes stigma in schools.

She encourages girls to avoid making friends with boys when they are handling menstruation. When pads are not there, girls use a piece of cloth to pad themselves. Our school has provided sanitary facilities like a bathing shelter for the girls to change pads during menstruation.

Ronald Munguci is a host community pupil in Rhino Camp. He says Oxfam has provided water points for the learners, which makes their stay in school easy.

“We also got pit-latrines with support from Oxfam and this has made learners access better toilet facilities. Last year, each learner got a bar of soap, which made life easy,” he says.

*Munguci adds that the girls were trained in making pads to help them during menstruation.*

“We also got buckets, toothpaste and manila covers, among other items.

“We used to get water from the valley and we would cross the road. This came with a risk of accidents, but now we have water points



*A water point for the community constructed by Oxfam*



*A pupil drinking water from a water point installed by Oxfam*



*Children fetching water from a community water point established by Oxfam in Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement*





*A five stance toilet constructed at Ofua 6 Community Primary School*

**1,300**

*Following the support from Oxfam, the school enrolment has increased from 500 in 2023 to 1,300 learners in 2024.*

## Oxfam boosts WASH services in Rhino Camp

within the school premises,” he adds.

The learners mostly utilise the break times to look for water as the water point is close to the school.

Munguci appeals to the Government to deploy more teachers in the school to ease learning.

The Parents Teachers Association PTA chairperson of Yelulu Primary School, Jojo Justo, commends Oxfam for providing tap water for the school.

“This helps girls especially in managing menstrual period. It also helps in cleaning the toilets.

“Oxfam has assisted those in health clubs with buckets, menstrual kits, soap, gumboots and brushes for washing latrines. The parents are impressed with the activities and support from Oxfam,” Justo says.

He says with the facilities, girls who would drop out are now returning to school.

“However, to have effective teaching and learning, we need more teachers. We only have seven teachers supported by government, those working under partners are few. This affects learning negatively. We request the partners to construct permanent teachers’ houses to accommodate teachers within the school,” Justo says.

*The payment for the water in the community is still challenging, but in the school, each child pays Shillings 500 per term for the maintenance.*

“As the PTA, we formed a water user committee, which makes maintenance easy. The school is also fenced, and this protects the water point. The teacher on duty monitors with the school guard.” Jojo Justo says.

The PTA water user committee approach has been introduced in 5 schools with 56 PTA members across the

project implementation areas.

Scovia Yanduru, who is the senior woman teacher and matron of the health club a teacher in Ofua 6 Primary Community School, said when she joined the school, no partner was supporting the school.

*But later, Oxfam came in to support with forming the school health club and trained the learners in groups. Toilets for the girls were put up and the toilets for the boys were repaired.*

Oxfam installed tap water for the school which has eased access to clean water for, both consumption and bathing.

Besides, girls got menstrual kits to help them manage menstrual periods.

Following the support from Oxfam, the school enrollment has increased from 500 in 2023 to 1,300 learners in 2024. Both girls and boys who dropped out of school have been able to return to school with intervention from Oxfam.

However, the high enrollment has mounted pressure on the school because of congestion due to inadequate classrooms, desks, few teachers and insufficient infrastructure.

The 1,326 learners are only taught by three trained teachers with the help of four untrained teachers. This affects learning in the school. The community school gets support from the parents who employed volunteer teachers who are not trained and are paid by the parents.

The parents also constructed a temporary classroom to accommodate learners.

Yanduru appeals to the Government to consider coding the school. The school has four acres of land, but it is not fenced.



Arnold Moses Okello, the Oxfam Area Manager, West Nile, explained that the WASH in Schools for Refugee and Host Communities in Uganda programme was funded by Oxfam Hong Kong to a tune of USD\$150,000. It was a nine-month pilot WASH project in schools that was launched in July 2023 and closed in March 2024. It was initially targeted to be implemented in 10 schools, but later zeroed in on five, in collaboration with Windle Trust International.

“Our major focus was improving access to WASH points, community participation and engagement. Such cooperation helped to improve the learning environment in schools as well as achieving the SDGs. Since schools are important learning places, the promotion of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation within schools helped children to adopt good habits during formative childhood,” he says.

Okello says the project also aimed at how to increase school enrolment, but specifically how to retain the girl child in school.

“We envisaged that this can only be achieved through provision of safe water and sanitation as well as hygiene facilities in schools and the community at large,” he says.

For sustainability, Okello says, the project will run as a collaborative initiative between the Local Government District of Terego and Office of the Prime Minister.

“The school management structures and the line authorities committed to ensure that some money is dedicated to the sustainable running of the facilities in place,” he says.



*The latrine facilities have a special section where girls in the menstrual periods can clean up*