

OXFAM IN UGANDA

NEWSLETTER

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€2.9 MILLION (OVER UGX 12.5BN) IN EU SUPPORT FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN SOUTH WESTERN UGANDA



Caroline Adriaensen, Head of Development Cooperation at the European Union in Uganda, speaking at the project launch/ Oxfam 2021.

On March 11 2021, Oxfam in Uganda and Care International Uganda launched two Disaster Risk Management Projects, funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa. Over 839,750 people will be benefitting from these projects that will be implemented separately by Care and Oxfam in Isingiro, Kyegegwa, Kamwenge and Kikuube districts.

The two projects aim to improve the resilience of the Ugandan community members in the four districts to the ever-changing climatic conditions and their adverse effects on the food and social economic structures.

“Under this project, Oxfam looks forward to a reduction in forest exploitation and restoration of natural resource management activities. These actions will improve environmental governance through advocacy, environmental education and influencing.” Francis Odokorach, Oxfam in Uganda Country Director, said. “We shall achieve this through building on the currently running waste to value innovations projects like turning fecal waste into energy briquettes, building the capacity

of local actors and district staff, and most importantly, through interagency coordination.”

“Indeed, the development and humanitarian services at the EU Delegation in Uganda have joined forces and identified disaster preparedness (and response) and natural resource management as relevant areas for collaboration. This will operationalize the Humanitarian – Development Nexus in Uganda, through concrete interventions on the ground”, said Ms. Caroline Adriaensen, Head of Development Cooperation at European Union Delegation to Uganda.

“This project will enable CARE Uganda to make strides towards fulfilling the target of building the resilience (to Climate Change) of 500,000 poor and vulnerable people (60% of them women), by 2025,” said Apollo Gabazira, the Country Director of CARE International in Uganda.

The Country Directors for Oxfam and Care International appreciated the European Union for their continued support towards building the resilience of both refugees and their hosting communities.

WOMEN LEADERS ASK GOVERNMENT TO REIGNITE ITS COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS



Maggie Kigozi (R), a medical doctor, business consultant, educator, and sportswoman, and Rita Aciro (L), Executive Director of the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), speaking during the Women Leaders' Colloquium/ Oxfam 2021.



Oxfam in Uganda and the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) hosted the Women Leaders' Colloquium. The meeting brought together female government technocrats, elected leaders, Women's Rights Organisations, female professionals, artists, innovators, women entrepreneurs, female cultural and religious leaders, young student leaders, and others. The event was to celebrate women and girls in recognition of the dignity with which they faced the past year characterized by the COVID 19 pandemic.

The colloquium was also intended to provide space for national, institutional and individual introspection to fulfil our obligations to women empowerment and the inclusion of women's concerns in the country's development goals.

While delivering the Country Director's remarks, Oxfam's Women's Rights Advisor, Jane Ocaya- Irama said that as with most crises, women and girls have shouldered additional demands during this pandemic. Oxfam papers like "[Care in the time of Corona Virus](#)," revealed the consequences of the pandemic on the health, economic security and wellbeing of women and their families, with women reporting feeling more anxious, depressed, overworked or ill because of their increased unpaid care work.

She added that amidst this, women have kept the world running during the Covid-19 response, picking up the care workload in hospitals, homes, and workplaces. Therefore, it is crucial that we have a women-centred development agenda with diverse government and civil society leaders drawing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rita Aciro, the Executive Director at UWONET said that there is a need to reduce the care burden that lies largely on women and support them to live more comfortable lives. She called for gender inclusiveness in the post-COVID 19 planning process.

Women leaders asked the government to draw lessons from the COVID 19 pandemic and reignite its commitment to its obligations towards the promotion of women's rights under various regional and international treaties, such as the Maputo Protocol, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW.)

They also asked the government to popularise the [National Women's Manifesto 2021-2026](#) as a tool to demand for transformative action and accountability on gender equality.



Jane Ocaya- Irama, Women Rights Advisor at Oxfam, delivering the Country Director's remarks/ Oxfam 2021.

CHALLENGING OPPRESSIVE SYSTEMS THAT DISADVANTAGE WOMEN AND GIRLS

The path to gender equality is not a straight line; it is a long, unpaved road full of twists and turns. For example, women and girls in Uganda have taken a backseat in many aspects because of gender stereotypes and harmful social norms. Heavy and unequal unpaid care and domestic work continue to trap them in cycles of poverty, stopping them from being part of solutions.

This year's International Women's Day, Oxfam joined the rest of the world to challenge the notion that women are just carers. They can be who they want to be in an inclusive society. We asked our supporters and partners to deepen the conversation on protecting carers from social inequalities and [#ChooseToChallenge](#) oppressive systems that disadvantage women and girls. When carers are empowered to speak, we create a world that listens and acts. The injustice women and girls face day in day out must stop.



YOUTH ACTIVISTS DEMAND FOR CLIMATE ACTION FROM WORLD LEADERS

As a result of massive deforestation, Uganda has been left with only 8% of its forests cover. With an estimated 92,000 hectares of forest cover lost annually, researchers project that it could all vanish by 2040 if the current deforestation rate is not curbed.

Working in partnership, Oxfam in Uganda, the French Embassy, and Fridays for Future organized a Youth Climate Change Dialogue aimed at strengthening efforts to save Bugoma and other endangered forests in Uganda.

The dialogue was organized as part of the global climate activities to demand serious climate action from world leaders. It preceded the global climate strike that was organized by Fridays for Future on the 19 March 2021.

"We the youth are united, ambitious and focused. We believe we can change anything to pave a safe future for coming generations. We believe that this starts with taking concrete and decisive steps to protect, restore and preserve our natural resources. We call upon everyone to join this fight," said Hilda Flavia Nakabuye, Founder and Organizer, Fridays For Future.

Ambassador. Jean Francois Hasperue, the Deputy Head of Mission- French Embassy, said it is important to support young people as they seek engagement on critical issues such as climate change and empower them with space and the keys to articulate their ideas.

Under its GROW campaign, Oxfam continues to work with young people to influence key stakeholders to ensure that development planning addresses the causes of vulnerability and the climate crisis. Oxfam has been working with others over the years to raise awareness of the human impact of climate change and how climate change, inequality and poverty are linked and reinforce each other.

"Oxfam will continue to work with various climate change organizations and individuals to engage the government to implement environmental conservation policies. We will also continue to advocate for the reduction of tariffs on gas and electricity so that we can combat deforestation," said Jackson Muhindo, Oxfam in Uganda's Resilience and Climate Change Coordinator.



A section of participants posing for a group photo at the Youth Climate Dialogue/Oxfam 2021.

SUPPORTING REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOODS



The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to refugee communities across Uganda. However, the country has remained steady fast in supporting refugees even amidst the pandemic. The government, UN, donors, and humanitarian agencies have continued to support refugees and their hosts to meet their needs and protect their rights.

Even with this commendable effort, glaring challenges remain in meeting the needs of refugees and their host communities, including challenges around their protection. For example, the right to adequate food for refugees has been immensely negatively affected. In 2020, the refugee food and cash rations were cut by 30%, amid the COVID 19 pandemic that drastically reduced the livelihood opportunities for both refugees and the hosts.

To protect and promote refugee rights during and after the pandemic, Oxfam, with funding from the Belgian Government (DGD), distributed start up kits to refugees and host community members in Kyaka II settlement. The refugees who received these kits were trained in vocational skills such as tailoring, motorcycle repairs, and salon work.

"I encourage the people receiving these items to make use of them. Start up your business establishments and earn a living to improve your livelihoods," said Alex Twogeirwe, the Assistant Commandant Kyaka II Refugee Settlement- Office of the Prime Minister.

SPEAK OUT AND CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO!



A section of the participants cutting cake to celebrate 5 years of the VOICE project/ Voice 2021.

Voice turned five in April 2021! To celebrate its journey, the team held celebrations to look back at the five years of *Voice* existence, reflect, share stories, listen, look forward, and dream.

In Uganda, *Voice* held a hybrid event, combining online with offline, intended to connect all grantees and strategic partners, show case transformed rightsholders with agency to drive their own change, and share learnings and best practices for replicating in *Voice* Phase II.

Speaking at the event, Oxfam's Country Director, Francis Shanty Odokorach said that Oxfam is supporting activism on a diversity of issues, including for less visible groups like persons living with albinism and intellectual disabilities.

The Dutch Ambassador to Uganda, H.E Karin Boven, reiterated the Dutch people's commitment to continue their cooperation with *Voice* and partners to speak out and challenge the status quo.

CUSTOMARY OWNERSHIP CERTIFICATES REDUCE LAND CONFLICTS, STUDY SAYS

Oxfam launched a report on the effectiveness and impact of certificates of customary ownership of land in securing women's land rights in Uganda. Carried out in Kasese, Soroti, Butaleja and Pader districts, the research highlighted that the numerous challenges in acquiring a Certificate of Customary Ownership (CCO) limit women's ability to successfully defend their interests in land hence driving inequality.

While launching the report, Hon. Persis Namuganza, the State Minister for Lands, Housing and Urban Development, said that bringing land services closer to women must be prioritized. She added that the CCO registration was designed to take place at the district level at a lower cost to help bring the service closer and encourage women to register.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Oxfam in Uganda Country Director Francis Shanty Odokorach said that women's land rights are a matter of deeply rooted inequality. "The women are the main agricultural producers in Uganda; they are the ones that grow the food. However, with undocumented land, land conflicts arising from increased demand for land are very high, and women are the most affected. Not addressing the issue of land rights threatens their ability to feed their families and further perpetuates inequality."

Francis also said that Oxfam hopes that the recommendations provided in the report, such as the need to establish of a registry of CCO at the national level to coordinate and support the activities of the District Land Boards, can inform policymakers and government processes.



Hon. Persis Namuganza(2nd Left), State Minister for Lands, Housing and Urban Development, launching Oxfam's report on the effectiveness and impact of certificates of customary ownership of land in securing women's land rights in Uganda/ Oxfam 2021.

CSOS ANALYZE TAX BILLS FOR FY2021/22

By SEATINI

Every Financial Year, the government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, comes up with new strategies to improve tax collection and plug loopholes within the existing tax system.

On 1st April 2021, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaija tabled before Parliament 12 Tax related Bills under which the government proposed several tax measures for the FY 2021/22. The Tax Amendment Bills tabled before Parliament for First Reading included; The Traffic and Road Safety Act (Amendment) Bill, 2021, The Fish (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Mining (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Tax Appeals Tribunal (Amendment) Bill, 2021, The Excise Duty (Amendment) Bill, 2021, External Trade (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2021, Stamp Duty (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Tobacco Control (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill,

Tax Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill 2021 and Appropriation (Amendment) Bill 2021.

On 8th April 2021, SEATINI Uganda and other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) under the auspices of the Tax Justice Alliance Uganda (TJAU) presented Tax Proposals on the new Tax Amendment Bills for FY 2021/22 to the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Prior to this, TJAU members held a retreat during which CSOs analysed the 12 proposed Bills and provided recommendations.

While presenting the CSO Position on the Tax Bills to the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, Regina Navuga, the Program Coordinator, Financing for Development at SEATINI Uganda who represented TJAU members commended the government for proposing the various tax measures in an attempt to widen tax base. However, she sighted out some of the proposed tax measures that might not be practical and also reiterated that based on the analyses undertaken by TJAU members, some of the tax measures might have negative implications on the

economy and the livelihoods of the people especially with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Notably, the proposal to scrap off the Over the Top (OTT) excise duty was welcomed by CSOs. However, TJAU members rejected the 12% excise duty on internet data on the premise that it will not favour embracing digitalization by all citizens and further hinders e-commerce. In the same spirit, TJAU members called on the Committee and Parliament to re-examine the proposed Motor Vehicle license and assess its efficacy because there is a precedence that this tax was already integrated in the price of fuel and its implementation is questionable.

Hon. Henry Musasizi, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Finance thanked the Tax Justice Alliance for the constructive engagement with the Finance Committee. He promised that the Committee and Parliament at large will further review the CSO proposals.

TJAU members will continue to raise citizens' awareness on tax related matters and also engage Policy Makers to develop and adopt tax policies that promote fairness and equity in the country.

USING THE GALS METHODOLOGY TO PROMOTE AN EQUAL FUTURE

In May 2021, Oxfam staff underwent phase one of training on the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) Methodology, which empowers women and men to plan for their future together. The training aimed to strengthen Oxfam staff's capacities in using the GALS methodology to promote gender justice within Oxfam's different programme areas.

Participants were introduced to the basic GALS change planning process, which include visioning and catalyzing change, analysing opportunities and constraints, committing to take actions, and tracking progress over time.

Participants were encouraged to scale up the GALS methodology by incorporating it in their projects, households, and communities. They developed their personal vision road journeys and multi-lane highways to show how they will scale up GALS at the individual, household, community, and programmatic levels.



Members of the Tax Justice Alliance Uganda (TJAU) analyzing the tax bills for FY 2021/22/ SEATINI 2021.



Oxfam staff participating in a 5- day training on the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology/ Oxfam 2021.

OPM COMMISSIONS SCHOOLS, WATER AND SANITATION FACILITIES UNDER THE RRF PROJECT



Community members fetching water from a water booth at Pawor trading center/ Oxfam 2021.

In his opening remarks at the commissioning, Oxfam's Country Director, Francis Shanty Odokorach, noted that Oxfam has constructed four functional water supply schemes, 37 institutional latrines, and procured a cesspool emptier in addition to health promotion and community engagement initiatives.

He added that these have collectively enabled increased access to safe water supply and sanitation to over 11,692 refugees in Rhino camp and 12,202 host community members.

On 6 and 7 May 2021, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) commissioned 63 completed classrooms in Yumbe District, and four completed water systems in Madi Okollo District. These facilities were financed by the German Government, which, in 2016, initiated the Refugee Response Fund (RRF) through the German Development Bank (KfW) to support refugees and host communities in Northern Uganda.

The German Ambassador, H.E. Mathias Schauer, highlighted that "the German Government remains committed to assisting both refugees and their hosting communities in the future."

The Minister for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Eng. Hilary Onok stressed that Uganda would continue hosting refugees, and called upon the International Community to share Uganda's burden associated with hosting refugees.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH STAFF – PARTNERS' FORUM

Oxfam held its annual partners' forum, programme review, and annual planning meeting for both staff and partners. The sessions were a reflection into programmes implemented over the past year (FY2020-2021), assessing the health of the relationship between Oxfam and its partners, and an opportunity to finalise the annual planning process FY2021-2022.

The meetings focused on both outcomes, including milestones achieved, and processes, enabling and constraining factors during the review period. The review generated mutual learning to inform programme implementation improvement and uphold the organisation programme quality standards.



Oxfam staff and partners reflecting on their working relationship/ Oxfam 2021.

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