

GOVERNMENT APPEALS FOR MORE REFUGEE FUNDING

By Eddie Ssejjooba

The Government has appealed to the international community to support the 1,400,000 refugees currently living in Uganda as the world waits for peace to return to their countries of origin.

According to Jenipher Namuyangu, the state minister for local government, Uganda will continue with its open door policy towards refugees and that they hope the international community will support the Government to provide for them.

"I appeal to the international community to support us and play their role to ensure that they provide for the refugees and host communities. The peace in their countries of origin is not yet achieved, we still have to live with them for some time," she said.

Namuyangu made the appeal yesterday at Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe district in northern Uganda, where she accompanied Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on an inspection visit.

Isaac Enikeyata, one of the refugee women from South Sudan shows Filippo Grandi and Minister Jenipher Namuyangu, some of the mandaazi she makes for a living and appealed for support for her business



The settlement hosts over 230,000 refugees. At the camp, Government, working with development partners, has set up a number of projects, including a solar-powered water source, health facilities, electricity, schools, among others.

Namuyangu said Uganda appreciates funding from the donor community, but more is needed to run the various projects. She said schools need more teachers, classrooms, teachers' houses, as well as food for children. She added that the

Government had started integrating some of the refugee programmes into the national programmes, such as the nine health facilities in Yumbe, which she said had been coded and would soon move to the education sector. She, however, said there were

PHOTO BY EDDIE SEJJOPA

FACT FILE

Uganda hosts a total of 1.45 million refugees, one of the largest refugee populations hosted by a single country.

Nearly 90% of the refugees or 1.26 million live in a total of 13 rural settlements, having arrived in Uganda with little or no assets, which leaves them heavily dependent on WFP's continued assistance.

Uganda provides the refugees with land and also allows them to work and move freely as part of its own commitment under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

refugees, not only since 2016, when there was a big influx, but also decades before.

He said after listening to the local leaders, it was clear that the international community needed to step up their investments in education, energy, environment, water and other urgent areas. He appealed to Uganda to continue with its open door policy.

"I know there have been some frustrations, such as lack of enough funding, but I came here for that reason," he said.

FOOD BOOST

Early this month, donors boosted the refugee food stocks with a sh108.8b injection into the World Food Programme (WFP).

WFP Uganda country director El-Khidir Daloum explained that the extra assistance would forestall the organisation's move for deeper cuts in food assistance, as a remedy.

The additional funding boosted the donors' initial funding pledges for 1.26 million refugees last year, in contrast with 2019 and 2018.

A4HU EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TO FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL



As we commemorate 2021 International Women's Day, Action 4 Health Uganda (A4HU) joins the rest of the world in celebrating the tremendous efforts by women and girls, especially the young peer educators, youth champions and health workers who have borne the brunt of COVID-19, and are shaping a more equal and just society as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and look toward a brighter tomorrow.

A4HU is at the forefront of addressing the multiple challenges facing young people, especially women and girls; including limited access to youth friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, high rates of teenage pregnancies (at 25% as per UDHS 2016), child marriages, risky sexual practices, poverty and unemployment.

A4HU believes that only an integrated approach that includes health, hygiene, and financial independence will bring lasting improvements to the lives of young people especially for young women and girls. We promote implementation of quality Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) interventions for young people. We foster Socio-Economic empowerment of young people. We uphold the involvement of young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives. And we empower young people to be strong, courageous, and confident.

As we celebrate women in leadership, and seek to achieve an equal future in a COVID-19 world, we call upon Government to prioritize the health of women and girls in service delivery, and to create safe and youth friendly spaces at all health facilities. We implore the young women and girls to claim their rights and utilise the available services. We urge

all development partners to adopt an integrated, holistic, and inclusive approach to improving the quality of lives of young people, especially the women and girls of Uganda.



Through our youth led model, A4HU has empowered young people especially women and girls. Among the beneficiaries is Scovia Nakata, a member of Foundation for Christ Ministry (FCM), Busia, Uganda. The club makes and sells sanitary pads. *"I got this knowledge of making sanitary towels when I joined the club which is supported by A4HU/DSW. They trained us as peer educators on SRHR and also took us through some entrepreneurship lessons to improve our skills. It was here that I learnt how to make the pads. We also go to schools and community outreaches and teach the girls how to make them."* – Scovia Nakata.

Another of the beneficiaries is Imanet Fatumah 26, a Youth

Champion and Youth Empowerment Centre (YEC) leader for Malangala Sub County, Mityana District. She was trained by A4HU under TeamUp program on key topics including leadership and governance, advocacy, family planning, HIV prevention and monitoring and reporting. She volunteers at a local health centre where she encourages young people to take advantage of the available health services such as family planning and other Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services. Fatumah has also been given a platform to speak before sub-county and district leaders about the need to increase funding for youth friendly services.



As we continue to celebrate the enormous roles, and leadership of women in Uganda, it is critical and urgent that we scale up SRHR, hygiene, and economic initiatives for the good of all people; but especially for the good of girls and young women.

For More Information, Contact us:



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