

NRC's operations in Uganda

Humanitarian overview

Uganda is a world leader in hosting refugees and asylum seekers with over 1.7 million, mainly from Sudan, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The country's progressive refugee policy gives refugees the right to work, move freely and access basic services such as education and healthcare, making Uganda a key player in regional humanitarian efforts. However, the challenges of supporting such a large population are immense and financial resources are scarce. Key challenges include:

Overburdened infrastructure: Settlements in West Nile and western Uganda especially are stretched to the limit. Schools are overcrowded, health services inadequate, and water supplies dwindling.

Food insecurity: With ration cuts, erratic weather, limited land, and a rising refugee population, shortages are severe.

Climate change: The country is struggling with the negative effects of climate change, with erratic rainfall, landslides and droughts leading to crop failures, food shortages and further displacement.

Education: Many refugee children have missed out on years of education. Schools are overcrowded and resources are scarce, threatening the future of thousands of displaced students.

Protection: Refugees face threats of violence, exploitation and abuse. Women, children and marginalised groups are particularly vulnerable, and land disputes between refugees and host communities further fuel tension.

Health and sanitation: Overcrowded settlements, poor sanitation, and limited healthcare exacerbate health issues, including malnutrition, waterborne and communicable diseases.



Photo: Sarah Casteran/NRC

Our core activities



Education



Information, counselling
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Livelihoods
and food security



Protection
from violence



Shelter
and settlements



Water, sanitation
and hygiene (WASH)

NRC in Uganda

Established	1997, re-registered 2014
International staff	6
National staff	145

Our areas of operation

- West Nile districts of Yumbe (Bidibidi settlement)
- Terego/Madi-okolo (Rhino Camp & Imvepi)
- Arua Urban
- Lamwo
- Adjumani (Ayilo, Nyumanzi, Magi)
- Kampala and Southwestern districts of Isingiro (Nakivale/Oruchinga)
- Kisoro, Bundibugyo and Kikube (Kyanggwali)



Our activities in detail

NRC's Uganda programme is delivered through two approaches:

1. A multi-sectoral approach that includes education, protection from violence, livelihoods and food security (LFS), water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH), shelter, and information, counselling, and legal assistance (ICLA) which are delivered in line with safe and inclusive programming (SIP) standards and digital.
2. A community-based approach which aids in the assessment and determination of the level of vulnerability for the participants. NRC in Uganda complements its programme with existing referral pathways established with other humanitarian actors to respond to the needs of the affected population in all the major refugee hosting districts including the urban areas.



118,659 people reached in 2023 ▼

Education

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is dedicated to providing education for the most vulnerable children and youth affected by displacement, with a particular emphasis on girls and children with disabilities. We aim to enhance their transition to and retention in formal education systems, working closely with national authorities and collaborating with both national and international partners. Additionally, our education programmes address the challenges posed by climate change. Our initiatives include:

- providing language bridging programmes for new arrivals
- organising return-to-learning activities
- offering cash for education through the Accelerated Education Programme, covering access and scholastic materials conducting remedial and catch-up classes to support primary education for children and young adults
- providing vocational training for young adults to promote self-employment and diverse livelihood opportunities
- offering professional development support for teachers
- assisting with the construction and renovation of educational facilities
- enhancing the welfare of teachers in remote areas
- supplying school materials and multipurpose cash to overcome financial barriers to education
- delivering protection and psychosocial support services through the Better Learning Programme
- strengthening the capacity of local education authorities (such as School Management Committees and Parent-Teacher Associations) to lead the planning and prioritization of school activities



103,589 people reached in 2023 ▼

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

Our ICLA services help refugees and vulnerable host communities to know, claim and exercise their rights. Our ICLA teams:

- provide counselling and legal assistance to refugees and host communities to obtain legal identity documentation (e.g. birth registration)
- support newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees obtain the required documentation
- help resolve housing, land and property disputes
- secure access to land for livelihood programming (e.g. block farming)
- provide cash for rent for vulnerable families at risk of eviction
- support individuals and groups register business and obtain required licenses
- provide legal assistance on employment matters
- lead on durable solutions in relation to local integration of refugees into their host communities and family reunification (complementary pathways)



23,458 people reached in 2023 ▼

Livelihoods and food security

The lack of post-primary school opportunities is a major challenge for refugees in Uganda. To help them earn a living, our livelihood and food security teams:

- implement a graduation model to graduate people from food insecurity and poverty to promote self-reliance
- facilitate communities to access agricultural inputs through a market-based approach
- offer vocational skills development for refugees and nationals to gain self-employment, as well as agriculture and entrepreneurship and/or enterprise development
- provide business support and cash grants to vulnerable youths and adults to increase

their access to income-generating livelihood opportunities

- provide cash grants to refugees with specific needs, especially those with disabilities, single-headed households, and elderly people, to enable them to cover their basic needs upon arrival



9,532 people reached in 2023 ▼

Protection from violence

NRC supports people affected by displacement to enjoy their right to freedom from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation across all phases of displacement. Our protection team:

- work on community engagement and awareness to change community attitudes and behaviours
- provide cash-based interventions (CBIs) to meet domestic needs for registered populations
- build the capacity of community-based structures to effectively deliver protection assistance and increase refugee participation
- strengthen the mobile protection desks in communities to enhance ease of access for services
- identify and review the existing referral pathways to ensure people with specific needs are supported with all relevant services



752 people reached in 2023 ▼

Shelter and settlements

We provide in-kind or cash support solutions to facilitate temporary, transitional or permanent shelter. Our shelter teams:

- provide cash for rent, cash for emergency shelter solutions, and emergency shelter materials for new arrivals
- construct emergency and semi-permanent shelters and latrines, especially for refugees with specific needs, like people with disabilities and the elderly

- provide, build and rehabilitate educational learning spaces and provide furniture
- construct emergency shelters for endemic response

Shelter latest

By the end of August we had handed over 03 new permanent classrooms, rehabilitated 03 new classrooms, constructed 10 new gender segregated latrines (5 stances for boys and 5 stances for girls) and constructed 1 baby care shelter in 3 different schools in Isingiro.

Additionally, we supplied 172 school desks to 05 different schools to support the schools and reduce pupil desk rations and improve learning environment for the learners.

We trained and sensitised the SMC and the community on the operation and maintenance of the completed facilities.



39,382 people reached in 2023 ▼

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Our WASH teams are responsible for providing access to clean water and improved hygiene and sanitation to displaced and host communities. Our WASH experts:

- enhance access to clean drinking water, sanitation and hygiene to people in settlements, for urban areas and in learning and health institutions
- together with communities, establish and upscale WASH facilities for displaced individuals with a particular focus on renewable energy options
- provide permanent water solutions to refugees
- work with the government and local actors (e.g. KCCA) to extend WASH services to unserved areas with vulnerable and low-income communities
- actively engage and participate in advocacy on high-risk practices including on cholera, hepatitis and Covid-19 prevention

WASH latest

Under SIDA funding we have supported 3,505 schoolgirls in Isingiro and 290 schoolgirls in Kyangwali with cash support for buying Menstrual Hygiene Management Materials (MHM). This is to ensure the girls/parents address the barriers/challenges that exist to prevent access to quality menstrual health management in schools both mainstream primary and AEP and to ensure girls are retained in schools until they complete a given school level they are in.

Trained school staff including the teachers, SMCs, Senior Woman and Senior Man teachers, district officials, OPM and partner staff on Menstrual management targeting 15 schools (9 schools in Isingiro, 3 schools in Kampala and 3 schools in Kikuube).

Formation and reactivation of school health clubs in 15 schools. These clubs spear head school hygiene and sanitation activities and this forms part of WASH sustainability. Each school health comprising of 25 members plus 2 staff (patrons and matrons).

Conducted 3 trainings for the school health club patrons in the locations of Kampala, Isingiro and Kyangwali.

Provided access to clean water to the slum communities in Kisenyi by repairing and rehabilitation 01 spring well. This well supports over 500 households in the slum areas of Kisenyi in Yowana Maria Village, Central Division. The greatest number of the users of the well is refugees.

Provided access to clean water at Maratatu VST centre in Kyangwali by providing clean piped water that supports about 300 students and staff at the centre and supports the surrounding community members.

Provided cash support to 4 schools in Isingiro for rehabilitating water storage facilities. These schools each have over 2,500 learners and majorly rely on rainwater harvesting and repairing the water storage facilities will greatly improve hygiene and sanitation at the schools starting next term/III.

NMFA - KLA

Under NMFA we have engaged in severe community sensitisations, awareness and community trainings on hygiene and sanitation. This is done by the hygiene promoters who are recruited to undertake daily household visits, joint sessions and trainings. Of the 1,200 target set, 300 has been reached as of end of August.

Strengthening of schools and institutions through awareness sessions and trainings on Hygiene and Sanitation. 20 schools have been selected and sessions ongoing in the schools.

Cash support to Sudanese refugee girls and women for buying MHM materials. Verification of 1890 girls/women has been done to support them and age target is 10-30 years intentionally to capture school age girls/women.

Our donors

We are grateful for the generous support from our donors:

- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA)
- European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)
- Hilton Foundation

Contact NRC in Uganda



Country director: Laura Marshall



laura.marshall@nrc.no



+256 783 382 384



www.nrc.no/uganda



P.O. Box 24978, Princess Anne Drive, plot 7, Kampala, Uganda