Office of the Prime Minister
Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP)
P. O. Box 341 Kampala Uganda - 2nd Floor Ruth Towers Kampala

DRDIP's interventions in Refugee Host Districts

For more than five decades, developing and least developed countries including Uganda, have been primary beneficiaries of donor-funded projects targeting many sectors, including agriculture, health, education, environment, social and economic infrastructure development. Uganda’s rural landscape, like some other countries in Africa, witnessed a series of project interventions which emphasized sustainability.

In the run up to independence, most African countries, including Uganda, have depended on technical, financial, material and institutional support from the Western World to plan their route towards development. The rising interest to support the rural development process of developing and least developed countries, led to the inflows of International Development Agencies (IDAs), and numerous donor-funded project interventions. To that effect, a range of IDAs supported rural development initiatives within the African countries.

A research study on: "Challenges and Prospects of Sustaining Donor-Funded Projects in Rural Cameroon" notes that research efforts have been directed towards understanding the planning, implementation and impacts of donor-funded projects.

In Uganda, Such projects have been useful to sectors such as health, education, agriculture, social and community development and infrastructure. Generally, donor-funded projects are the backbone of substantial recorded strides in uplifting many developing countries out of dire social and development stagnation. Like Uganda, developing and least developing countries have been beneficiaries of donor-funded projects for more than half a century.

Donors like the World Bank In their continued effort to provide more effective aid, have committed themselves to making greater use of country systems and harmonising the way aid is delivered.

In 2017 Uganda received donor funding for the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP). DRDIP is a regional project focusing on addressing the impacts of the protracted presence of refugees on the hosting communities in the four countries; Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

In Uganda, DRDIP is a flagship of Government of Uganda project funded by the World bank and being implemented under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). OPM is mandated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of Government policies, programmes and priorities across Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services to the people of Uganda.

The Prime Minister, as the political head of OPM, is also mandated to lead Government business in Parliament through coordination of the legislative agenda by presenting relevant Bills for approval by Parliament.

OPM-DRDIP Project is financed through Investment Project Financing with total International Development Association (IDA) funds of US$ 50 million disbursed as credit to Uganda and a grant of US$150 million.

IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world’s 79 poorest countries and the largest single source of donor funds for basic social services in these countries.

The development objective of DRDIP is to improve access to basic social services (health, education, water and sanitation), expand economic opportunities and enhance environmental management for refugee host district communities and settlements.

The project addresses the social, economic, and environmental impacts of protracted refugee presence in the host communities and refugee settlements through interlinked and investment components.

DRDIP is currently being implemented in 15 Refugee hosting districts of Arua, Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani, Obongi, Madi-Okoilo and Terigo in the West Nile sub region), Lamwo, in Acholi sub region; Hoima, Kikyusa, Kyarinyondo in the Bunyoro sub region; Isingiro, Kyegowa and Kamwenge in the South-Western sub-region.

Statistics from DRDIP’s implementation status reports indicate that 1,786 sub projects have been funded to-date out of the US$50 million credit.

The sub projects are in Education, Health, Roads and Water Infrastructure.

They include 199 sub projects under the Social Economic Services and Infrastructure (SES), 717 under Sustainable Environment Management and 870 under Livelihood Support. The reports also show that 77 projects have been completed and commissioned, while 54 have been completed and awaiting commissioning. Most of the completed subprojects have been commissioned for use by the beneficiaries and continue to generate impacts on service delivery.

The project has four components as outlined here below;

Component 1: Social and Economic Services and Infrastructure (SES) through community Investment Fund. Capacity Support for Local Planning and Decentralized Service Delivery and support to Displacement Crisis Response Mechanism (DCRM)

Component 2: Sustainable Environmental Management (SEM) Through Integrated Natural Resources Management and access to Energy

Component 3: Livelihoods Program (LP) Through Support to Traditional and Non-Traditional Livelihoods and Capacity Support

The Uganda Solidarity Fund on Refugees

From June 22-23, 2017, the Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees took place in Kampala in an effort to mobilize support from the international community.

The summit convened by the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and the United Nations Secretary - General, Antonio Guterres, raised over US$350M in pledges.

Uganda hosts the highest numbers of refugees in Africa, and the third largest globally. The total refugee population currently stands at over 1.4 million refugees (1,429,268 million as of August 2020), higher than at any time in its history. This has created a compounded refugee crisis in addition to a recent refugee influx notably from South Sudan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in addition to a protracted refugee situation.

Through Ugandans open door policy, refugees in Uganda have access to healthcare, education, and a piece of land on which to settle, build a home and grow crops.

The solidarity summit on refugees was not the end of the international community’s collective efforts to resolve Uganda’s refugee crisis. Rather, it was the beginning of a renewed commitment by the international community to bring peace, establish security, and enable the revival of hope for more the millions of refugees seeking a life free of persecution.

“We the indigenous people of the Great Lakes, have been dealing with refugees for millennia. Our concept of refugees was dynamic, not static like the concept we hear about today,” President Museveni, said then, while opening the 2nd day of the summit which was also the pledging day. He further said that Uganda’s Pan-Africanist
ideological orientation and the history of the people made it easy to absorb or co-exist with refugees from within Africa.

However, he added that the sudden large numbers present problems that include providing food and shelter, energy for cooking and light while preserving the environment, providing water, education, and addressing health needs among other needs. It was on this basis that he was calling on the international community to assist in coping with these challenges.

In 2018, Uganda received US$1.5 million solidarity fund from the Government of India and China. Government decided to give the money to the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP), to manage these funds to support investments in the refugee hosting districts. DRDIP is a flagship Government of Uganda project funded by the World Bank and being implemented under the Office of the Prime Minister. The development objective of DRDIP is to improve access to basic social services (health, education, water and sanitation), expand economic opportunities and enhance environmental management for communities hosting refugees in the refugee hosting districts (currently 15) and settlements.

In a progress report on DRDIP’s implementation, the Director Dr. Robert Limlim, said a total of 14 sub projects in the aforementioned districts, have been funded out of the UGshs5.3 billion disbursement. Of the 14 sub projects, nine have been completed; five are ongoing, while one is under procurement process.

“Considering that the US$1.5 million solidarity fund was given, it was not enough to implement the priority gaps. Due to variations, DRDIP has so far provided additional top up fund of UGshs134 million. In addition, the project met operations costs to a tune of UGsh 68 million to support Community Project Management Committees (CPMC) and Community Procurement Committees (CPC)” Dr Limlim said.

Dr Limlim said the project also, through its technical teams from the national and district levels, provided technical support and monitoring of projects implementation.

“To date, 62.23% of the projects have been completed and waiting commissioning, while 28.6% are between 80-100% completion rate and 7.14% are at procurement stage” Dr Limlim said.

Dr Limlim further stated that in spite of all these achievements, the projects faced implementation challenges including the COVID-19.

“As a result, the project implementation periods were extended by three months. All contractors are executing their work in compliance with the Ministry of Health Standard Operating Procedures “ DRDIP Director said. DRDIP invested in the above institutions as they are being shared by host communities and refugees. The facilities built continue to provide services for both refugees and host population.

The project shall equip all infrastructures to support functionality and sustainability. DRDIP refugee host districts are Arua, Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, Obongi, Adjumani, MadiOlollo, Terigo and Yumbe in the West Nile sub region.

Lamwo, in the northern Acholi sub region, Hoima, Kikujube and Kiyandongo, in the Bunyoro sub region, Isingiro, Kamwenge and Kyegewa in the south western region.

The Implementation

The solidarity fund is being applied through the DRDIP implementation arrangement with District Local Governments. During the implementation process, priority was given to gaps identified by districts and communities in Primary and Secondary schools in selected districts of Arua, MadiOlollo, Terigo, Moyo, Obongi, Adjumani and Lamwo- in the West Nile and Acholi, sub regions.

Inpatient numbers increased by 35% from 18,440 to 24,969 with more females at 56% being served.

Out Patient Department attendance increased by 59% from 395,574 to 629,017 with more females attending at 68% being served.

Enrolment has increased by 14% from 31,794 to 36,124 pupils (primary schools)

Enrolment has increased by 93.5% from 1,447 to 2,800 students (Secondary schools) in DRDIP supported schools.
Some of the over 54 DRDIP completed projects awaiting commissioning these include: Health centres, Bridges, Schools, Roads e.t.c

- **BEFORE:** The old Morta Bridge on River Kaya at the border of Uganda and South Sudan before completion.
- **AFTER:** The newly completed Morta Bridge on River Kaya at the Border of Uganda and South Sudan
- **Restoration of the environment by Grass planting at Morta Bridge under the environment component**

- **Before:** The initially impassable Nyakadot-Panyadoli-Kimogoro-Kawiti road before rehabilitation.
- **After:** A resident of Panyadoli village takes produce for sale on the newly rehabilitated Nyakadot-Panyadoli-Kimogoro-Kawiti road, Kiryandongo.

- Newly constructed classroom blocks at Abele Primary School in Koboko
- Newly built Lobule Health Centre 111 in Koboko
- Beehives keeping under livelihoods project in Yumbe
- Completed Bezza Al Hajji Senior Secondary, Adumani Town Council.
- New maternity ward at Apodorwa Health Centre III, in Kiryandongo
- Refugees from Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp busy in their gardens

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**Completed Bezza Al Hajji Senior Secondary, Adumani Town Council.**