

Water Supply and Sanitation for Refugee Settlements and Host Communities (WatSSUP)

Initiating measures to ensure water and sanitation in selected refugee settlements and host communities in Northern Uganda

The Context

Currently hosting more than 1.5 million refugees (with the majority coming from South Sudan, and over 80% being women and children under the age of 18), Uganda is one of the pilot countries to implement the **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)**. The transition from a mainly humanitarian approach to a development approach in Uganda is driven by sectoral action plans under the CRRF. The Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) through its **Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan (WESRRP)** of 2019 promotes the inclusion of refugees to ensure effective management of water and environmental resources for socio-economic development. As part of the implementation of the CRRF, WatSSUP is supporting the transition from humanitarian-led water supply to water supply by national service providers (utilities). In line with this, the water supply in the refugee settlements has been gazetted to the Northern Umbrella of Water and Sanitation (NUWS). To support an efficient and sustainable water supply after the transition to NUWS, WatSSUP not only aims to upgrade of the Water Supply Schemes (WSS) in the settlements but also supports the capacity development of NUWS in the operation and management of these schemes. The upgrade of WSS is also supported by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), who are supporting the upgrades with an additional 1,5 Mio EUR.



Project name	Water Supply and Sanitation for Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing agencies	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and GFA Consulting Group
Programme region	Uganda, with a focus on Arua, Madi Okollo, Terego and Yumbe Districts, West Nile Region
Duration	October 2018 – April 2025
Volume	€ 21.75 Mio (19.8 Mio BMZ, 1.95 Mio Austrian Development Cooperation)

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), which is a key part of the Global Compact on Refugees, envisions a more comprehensive response to forced displacement – in which humanitarian aid, development cooperation, and peacebuilding are closely coordinated, and greater responsibility sharing and inclusion of a variety of stakeholders, including refugees themselves, is facilitated. The CRRF aims to ease pressure on host countries, enhance refugees’ self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions, and foster conditions that enable refugees to voluntarily return to their countries of origin in safety and dignity.



Photo left: Refugee representatives participate in a workshop facilitated by NUWS during the 15th UNHCR Uganda Refugee Engagement Forum.

Photo middle: Yumbe Health Assistant during a digital data collection training.

Photo right: Playing the WASH Quartet Game, which the WatSSUP programme developed with MetaMeta – a social enterprise engaged in sensitization of vulnerable groups within the sectors of water and natural resources, management.



Photo left: Hand Pump Mechanics (HPMs) during an Operation & Maintenance (O&M) training at Arua Technical Institute Ragem(ATIR).

Photo right: Cash for Work tree planting beneficiaries pose for a group photo in Imvepi Refugee Settlement.

In line with Germany's commitment to international burden and responsibility sharing under the **UN Global Compact on Refugees**, easing the burden on hosting countries and supporting the implementation of the **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)** are a key priority in Germany's development policy and its Special Initiative "Tackling the root causes of displacement – (re-)integrating refugees". The **WatSSUP Programme** is part of the **BMZ Special Initiative "Displaced Persons and Host Countries"**.

Results

WatSSUP uses a multi-level approach, National, Regional, District and Local, to work towards the achievement of sustainable water and sanitation services for refugees and host communities in Northern Uganda. This Programme has achieved the following results, across the four aforementioned levels, thus far:

Strengthening of Institutions

- A Refugee Subgroup and Secretariat has been set up at MWE.
- NUWS now has improved Operation & Maintenance (O&M) capabilities, through the provision of technical support and equipment.
- District Local Governments have been supported with the planning and coordination of WASH related activities through the rehabilitation of Arua and Yumbe District Water Offices and the provision of technical equipment.
- Refugee needs have been integrated into the Yumbe, Madi Okollo, Terego and Arua District Development Plans III.
- 60 WASHaLOT group handwashing facilities have been installed at 7 Health Centers and 10 Schools.

Capacity Development

- DLGs and refugee hosting sub counties now have improved capacities to collect and store WASH related needs for both refugee and host communities. This has been achieved through KoBoToolBox trainings and the handover of solar systems and computers to enhance data management.
- 48 Hand Pump Mechanics and 23 NUWS technicians have been trained at Arua Technical Institute Ragem (ATIR). The trainees completed modules in O&M of solar powered piped water systems.
- ATIR has received support to become the first regional training institution for O&M of solar powered water systems. This included the construction of a practical training demonstration facility.
- ATIR, Yumbe District Hand Pump Mechanic Association (YDHPMA) and Arua District Water and Sanitation Association (ADWASA) now have improved working conditions through the provision of O&M technical equipment.

Social Impact and Benefits

- 32 WASH sensitization have been held in Rhino, Imvepi and Bidibidi Refugee Settlements. Over 950,000 beneficiaries have been reached, 51% of the participants were women.
- An educational handwashing and hygiene game, WASH Quartet, and Training of Trainers User Manual has been developed to sensitise refugees and hosts on handwashing. 500 copies of the game have been disseminated so far, with 400 households reached. 93% of the participants were women.
- A Cash for Work (CfW) activity has been implemented. Up to 7,500 tree seedlings have been planted as a water source protection measure. 185 of the direct CfW beneficiaries have reported an improved income.
- Up to 150,000 refugees and hosts have improved access to hygiene through the installation of 60 WASHaLOT group handwashing facilities.