



**FROM HUMANITARIAN
RESPONSE TO RESILIENCE**

Background

Uganda is one of the top ten countries in the world that hosts the largest number of refugees. As of May 2019, the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda had reached 1,276,208, more than at any time in the country's history. Eighty-six percent of the refugees are women and children below 18 years. UNFPA plays a leading role in ensuring access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services; preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV); and empowering women, adolescent girls and young people in refugee hosting districts.



Why life-saving sexual and reproductive health and rights promotion and GBV/HIV prevention services are critical

Humanitarian crises heighten women and girls' vulnerability to gender-based violence, unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection, maternal death and disability especially because of delivering without the help of a doctor or midwife. Women and young girls also become vulnerable to gender based violence including early and forced marriage, rape, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse. Humanitarian response must therefore never neglect the special needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls. Young people living in humanitarian/development nexus situations may also face many challenges related to their sexual and reproductive health (SRH) caused by high rates of child marriages and teenage pregnancies, and high maternal mortality and gender-based violence.

Since 2013 UNFPA has been working closely with the Government of Uganda, sister United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and other partners to ensure that sexual and reproductive health is integrated into emergency programming. UNFPA's programme interventions are based on an integrated approach to gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, as well as socio-economic empowerment.

Our mission in the humanitarian response:

- To ensure that women of reproductive age affected by the conflict and other emergencies have access to quality reproductive and sexual health services, including essential and emergency obstetric and neonatal care as well as HIV prevention information and services.
- To ensure that systems are established to protect women and girls affected by the conflict from gender based violence and provide care for survivors.
- To ensure that young people access age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and services to empower them make healthy life choices and achieve their full potential.

The situation in numbers



507 women and adolescent girls die every day from pregnancy and child birth related causes in conflict/disaster affected countries around the world



1,276,208

refugees in Uganda (as of May 2019)



82% of Uganda's refugee population are women and children under 18 years.



61% of population are under 18 years.



In every emergency situation, 1 in 5 women are likely to be pregnant (UNFPA, SWOP, 2019).



Maternal health

Pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and illness among women of childbearing age. When a crisis strikes, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care often become unavailable, exacerbating the vulnerability of pregnant women².

Basic needs for family planning and reproductive health care and safe childbirth are also rarely met. To ensure that every pregnancy is wanted and every childbirth is safe, UNFPA:

- Supports health facilities in humanitarian settings to provide high quality sexual and reproductive health and gender based violence services including family planning, antenatal, delivery and postpartum care, sexually transmitted infections/HIV prevention and clinical management of rape that are responsive to the needs of refugees and host communities.
- Supports community pregnancy mapping and referral to care to ensure increased attendance of antenatal care and skilled care.
- Supports the recruitment of midwives to boost human resource for health in health facilities serving refugees and host communities.
- Procures and distributes dignity kits to new mothers to increase facility-based and clean deliveries. These kits contain menstrual pads, soap, underwear, slippers, a baby shawl and other supplies required based on particular circumstances or cultural context.
- Provision of medical tents to support maternal health services like antenatal and post-natal care.
- Strengthening of the referral/ambulance system to increase access to emergency obstetric and new-born care at referral health facilities in a timely manner.

²UNFPA (2016) Humanitarian Action Overview



Adolescents and Young people

Young girls and boys are particularly vulnerable as conflict breaks down protective social and cultural norms. UNFPA ensures that young people are empowered to demand their sexual reproductive health and rights, gender rights, and to increase their access to socioeconomic building opportunities by:

- Establishing and equipping of youth spaces in settlements and among host communities to ensure that young people have access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health information and services.
- Supporting youth champions work on accountability of SRHR and GBV service delivery, identifying and skilling peer educators and community volunteers to carry out community outreaches and mobilisation for sexual and reproductive health services.
- Supporting health and sanitation clubs in primary and secondary schools in refugee settings and among host communities through games, drama and sports as a way of engaging them productively while disseminating sexual and reproductive health information and services.
- Supporting the development of innovative solutions in skills building, business training, mentorship, and health services and information, incubation, financing and resourcing to respond to development challenges among most vulnerable youth (in and out of school) from refugee and host communities.
- Enhancing youth participation, leadership and innovation in sexual and reproductive health and rights' and gender based violence by supporting young people develop and implement social change ideas through partnerships with regional centres of social change entrepreneurship.



Prevention and response to GBV

Women and girls in conflict areas find themselves more at risk of gender-based violence triggered by loss or displacement of the family heads and the economic challenges in the settlements. To prevent and manage sexual and gender based violence in humanitarian settings:

- UNFPA has established safe spaces to provide adolescent girls and women in humanitarian settings through integration of gender, sexual and reproductive health and rights/gender based violence and livelihood interventions through Northern Uganda Resilience Initiative (NURI) agricultural programmes and Youth Savings and Loan Association (YSLA) clubs/savings groups.
- Establishment of safe spaces for psychosocial counselling for gender based violence, access to sexual reproductive health and rights information and referral to services. Establishment of such spaces is increasingly recognized as a good practice for emergency response and recovery, and a key strategy for the protection and empowerment of women and girls .
- Supports the identification of survivors of gender based violence and ensures they access psychosocial and medical services including referrals to legal aid.
- Uses the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) guidelines to support the training of health workers in clinical management of rape.
- Provides post-rape kits to health centres serving refugees and host communities.
- Supports social and behavior change communication (SBCC) programming for community-wide social norms change across the humanitarian-development nexus through Male Action Groups, women mentors, SASA! Activists and integrated clubs for highly vulnerable out-of-school adolescent girls under the Women, Adolescents and Youth Rights and Empowerment (WAY) programme.
- Integrating UNFPA's Live Your Dream campaign into humanitarian programming to inspire action towards a better life for young people and women and promote their well-being through community dialogues.

³UNFPA (2016) Adolescent Girls in Disaster & Conflict: Interventions for improving Access to sexual and reproductive health services



Coordination

To ensure a coherent response to emergencies, UNFPA seeks to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response by ensuring greater predictability, accountability and partnerships:

- UNFPA is co-leading with UNHCR, the Gender Based Violence (GBV) working group under refugee response.
- Health sector: UNFPA is lead agency in sexual and reproductive health and rights sub sector
- Protection cluster: UNFPA participates in meetings as co-lead of the GBV Working Group.

Refugee hosting districts with UNFPA presence:

- Adjumani
 - Arua
 - Lamwo
 - Kampala
 - Kamwenge
 - Kiryadongo
 - Kikuube
 - Kyegegwa
 - Moyo
 - Rwamwanja; and
 - Yumbe districts.
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Our implementing partners and districts:

- Office of the Prime Minister
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
- UNHCR
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
- CARE International
- Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD)
- Reach a Hand Uganda (RAHU)
- OutBox
- Refugee Hosting District Local Governments (Kampala, Rwamwanja, Moyo, Adjumani, Yumbe, Arua, Kiryadongo, Kikuube, Kyegegwa, Kamwenge and Lamwo)

Support to our humanitarian response provided by:

- UN Central Emergency Fund
- UN Core Resources
- DANIDA Women, Adolescents and Youth Rights and Empowerment (WAY) programme



#LiveYourDreamUG

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