



Uganda

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Over 1.1 million refugees and asylum-seekers now reside in Uganda: (as of 15 March 2017)

South Sudan – 818,111 (as of 28 March 2017)

D R Congo – More than 222 000

Burundi – More than 42 000

86% of new arrivals from South Sudan are women and children

(Source: UNHCR)

Uganda has become the largest refugee hosting country in Africa

European Commission humanitarian funding:
2017: €44.7 million

European Commission humanitarian funding:
2016: €64 million

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South Sudanese children play at a refugee settlement in Uganda. ©EU/ECHO/Anouk Delafortrie

Key messages

- Since 1 July 2016, Uganda faces the world fastest growing refugee crisis with continuous and unprecedented influx of refugees from South Sudan. By March 2017, the total number of refugees from South Sudan alone was over 800 000. An overwhelming majority (more than 86%) of the new arrivals are women and children.
- While political perspectives in South Sudan remain bleak, famine has been declared in some parts of the country, further increasing the likelihood of more people fleeing into Uganda, adding pressure to an already worsening humanitarian crisis.
- The situation in other source countries; upcoming elections in Democratic Republic of Congo, instability in Burundi, Somalia and Eritrea may also induce further displacement into Uganda in 2017. Uganda has now become the largest host-country in Africa with over a million refugees.
- Although Uganda has progressive policies towards refugees, providing them with land to grow food, the right to work and freedom of movement, there is increasing pressure due to the scale of the crisis. These policies are therefore becoming harder to implement, as funding is still limited and available land becomes scarce.
- Existing and newly created settlements have become severely congested and stretched beyond normal capacity. The main challenges are in food, WASH, protection, health and education; these are becoming more pressing across the settlements receiving new refugees.
- In 2017, the European Commission has allocated a total of €44.7 million of humanitarian assistance to support the refugee crisis in Uganda. This allocation is complemented by €20 million from the EU Trust Fund to address the transition needs of the refugees over the next four years.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Since 2011, Uganda has been experiencing a number of refugee emergencies with influxes from the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Since December 2013, people have also been coming from South Sudan into Northern, Midwestern and Central Uganda. With renewed fighting in Juba in July 2016, which has spread into other parts of the country, a new refugee crisis has emerged with even more people crossing into Uganda. The daily average influx of refugees from South Sudan is still high, at 2 000 refugees, which is still considered as an emergency scenario. With drought having been declared in parts of South Sudan, and a resolution to the political turmoil still not in sight, it is feared that the influx of refugees into Uganda will continue to grow.

This sudden and continuous influx has created significant gaps in the provision of humanitarian assistance. The existing and newly created settlements have been severely congested and stretched beyond their normal capacity in trying to accommodate the new arrivals.

Women and children make up a disproportionate amount of the newly arrived refugees, presenting major protection challenges. While the nutrition status of the new arrivals was reported to be non-alarming based on a malnutrition screening conducted in mid-October 2016, surveillance should remain as the situation might deteriorate, should the WFP pipeline break materialise in June.

The situation in Uganda is exacerbated by other regional conflicts. New arrivals from DRC and Burundi are also entering Uganda through multiple entry points, exceeding 100 new arrivals per day with reported peaks of more than 500 people.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

The European Commission has been responding to the massive influx of refugees from South Sudan, many of whom have settled in northern Uganda, in addition to providing support to the Congolese, Burundian and other refugees in Uganda.

In 2017, the European Commission has allocated €38 million to the refugee crisis in Uganda, on top of a €6.7 million allocation earlier in the year, bringing the total allocation to Uganda to €44.7 million. This funding aims at addressing emergency and early recovery needs of the refugees.

In the second half of 2016, in response to influx of South Sudanese refugees from July, and to address the major gaps in the general humanitarian operation and response, the European Commission allocated €13 million to the refugee crisis in Uganda, on top of a €7 million allocation earlier in the year. This funding eased the financial gap, particularly in addressing the need for establishing provision of basic services in the new settlements and scaling up efforts to decongest the overly crowded reception centres.

The European Commission, through its partners, supports refugees in Uganda with food assistance, protection, provision of water and sanitation, resilience building and education.

Examples of EU funded humanitarian projects in Uganda



The European Commission supports WFP's cash transfers programme to refugees in Uganda. Over 70% of refugees in Uganda are supported by WFP. This percentage represents the refugees that reside in the transit centres and settlements.

The European Commission is committed to using the most effective and efficient system in the provision of humanitarian assistance. The cash transfer system was piloted in Uganda in June 2014. Initially the refugees were hesitant for various reasons, but now cash is gaining popularity. With cash in hand, refugees are able to buy their preferred food, which enhances their sense of dignity. Cash transfers also reduce the selling of food aid items at a throw away price so therefore stimulates local markets and economies.





Fatuma Achau is a refugee from South Sudan who arrived in Uganda at the end of 2014 with nine children to support: three of her own and six unaccompanied minors, whom she welcomed to her household. She arrived in Uganda with no money or valuables.

Like many other refugees who arrived with her, she was given a 30x30M plot of land to live on and cultivate. Through funding from the European Commission, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) provided her and other refugees with seeds and farming equipment to start them off. The seeds included eggplant, tomatoes, cabbage and okra. She did very well; not only did she cultivate enough to feed her family, but she also had food to spare and sell in the market.



With the average length of time that refugees remain displaced getting longer and longer, education in emergencies has become crucial to ensure the youth's continued positive engagement in their communities. The European Commission has partnered with the Norwegian Refugee Council (**NRC**) to provide vocational skills training and civic education to enhance the capacity of the youth to be self-reliant. This project also provides business and entrepreneurship trainings by creating and nurturing linkages with micro finance institutions to achieve lasting solutions for the trainees.

Young people are trained in different fields including baking, hairdressing, tailoring, and engineering. Some of the graduates of this programme have set up small businesses in the camps.

