

Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS) Uganda

Support to UNHCR in facilitating the operationalization of the Global Compact on Refugees in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

Background

Uganda is one of the largest refugee hosting countries worldwide, with approximately 1.5 million refugees, mainly from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Somalia.

Despite the substantial numbers that enter the country annually, Uganda provides refugees with land, freedom of movement, equal access to social services and the right to work and set up businesses.

The country applies an integrated approach, whereby refugees are included into national planning frameworks and national statistics. By doing so, Uganda closely follows the paradigm of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), focusing on:

- Easing the pressures on host countries
- Enhancing refugee self-reliance



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Influx of refugees has placed overwhelming demands on already strained capacities and resources of the government, host communities, and the environment.

One of the country's main challenges is lack of access to sustainable energy, in both host and refugee communities. Households, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and social institutions like schools and health centres often have very limited access to energy and are not able to afford essential needs.

Additionally, electricity infrastructure in refugee and host communities is minimal. Electricity is usually generated through expensive and environmentally harmful fossil fuels. Lack of sustainable energy results in heavy pressure on and degradation of natural resources, a situation that can result in social tension.

The SUN Global Programme

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned the global programme “Support to UNHCR in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” (SUN), which assists UNHCR and other stakeholders in operationalizing the GCR in selected displacement contexts. The programme is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in cooperation with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

It consists of four components that incorporate a range of activities in eleven countries. The

programme consolidates and analyses lessons learned from all four components for comprehensive approaches within the operationalisation of the GCR in the HDP Nexus. The Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS) is one of the four components, and is implemented in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia.

Project Information

Project Name	Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS)– Uganda
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Partners	Ugandan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) and UNHCR
Duration	August 2019 – December 2024

The ESDS Uganda project addresses the lack of sustainable energy supply in refugee hosting areas through advisory services and implementation of measures in three main areas.

1. Improving the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Access to Energy

Advisory services have been provided to MEMD and UNHCR in strategic energy planning and better inclusion of refugees into national service delivery systems. For example, GIZ supported the development of the Sustainable Energy Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (SERP) in line with the National Plan of Action to implement the GCR and its CRRF. This was achieved in collaboration with a task force led by MEMD and comprising key stakeholders such as UNHCR, the Office of the Prime Minister, the CRRF

Secretariat, the former Rural Electrification Agency, and the World Bank.

2. Greening UNHCR Infrastructure

Market-based approaches for the replacement of diesel generators to power UNHCR's infrastructure with cost-efficient renewable energy have been developed. ESDS conducted energy assessments and developed regulatory guidelines and project proposals for UNHCR to implement solar-hybrid systems based on private sector energy delivery models.

3. Sustainable Energy Access for Households, Social Institutions, and SMEs

Market-based solutions for access to sustainable cooking energy and electricity for households, social institutions, and small businesses, have been piloted and promoted, benefitting both refugees and host communities.

ESDS established solar-powered energy kiosks with local entrepreneurs selling improved cook stoves, quality solar products, and offering energy-dependent services. The project provided photovoltaic solar systems to social institutions like health centres and schools.

Support is further rendered to energy sector private sector companies to build solar powered mini grids for electricity and to market their cooking and solar goods for households and productive users of energy.

Results of a techno-economic feasibility study for solar e-waste management and one pilot on biomass will guide new interventions in the displacement context.

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