

### CLIMATE RELATED DISASTERS A LEADING CAUSE OF DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE GLOBALLY

A recent Oxfam report dubbed, ***Forced from Home: Climate - Fuelled Displacement***, has warned that today, people are seven times more likely to be internally displaced by cyclones, floods and wildfires than by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, and three times more likely than by conflict. Climate related disasters were the number one driver of internal displacement over the last decade, forcing an estimated 20 million people a year from their homes, with mostly poor countries at risk.

#### The Climate, Conflict, and Displacement Triangle

While extreme weather is the biggest driver of internal displacement worldwide, the number of people being internally displaced by conflict each year is also rising, more than doubling between 2008 and 2018.

Many poor countries have large populations of people displaced by both conflict and extreme weather disasters, while also struggling with the impact of slow-onset extreme weather events. For example, countries where people are most at risk of displacement from conflict and sudden-onset weather disasters also regularly see large proportions of their populations impacted by drought.

The Oxfam report adds that in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan saw 3.8 million people displaced by conflict and just under 1 million people displaced by extreme weather disasters such as floods in 2018. These countries are also grappling with the ongoing impact of a series of intense droughts in 2011, 2017 and 2019 repeatedly wiping out people's crops and livestock, in a region where up to 80% of the population are subsistence farmers.

There is also increasing evidence that the climate crisis is exacerbating instability in many regions, worsening the conditions that lead to conflict, and increasing the risk of conflict in the future.



Some of the participants of COP25 in December 2019. Oxfam in Uganda was represented by Jackson Muhindo and Harriet Mbabazi.

#### Poor communities most vulnerable while women are at greater risk

Oxfam's report shows that poor communities tend to live in poorly built houses on marginal land that is more at risk from extreme weather such as storms or floods. They often live in areas with poor infrastructure, making it difficult to access essential services such as healthcare or education in the aftermath of an emergency and are unlikely to have insurance or savings to help them rebuild their lives after a disaster.

Additionally, these communities mostly depend on farming which is vulnerable to more extreme and erratic weather. With the frequency and intensity of climate-related hazards increasing, the ability of people living in poverty to withstand shocks is gradually being eroded. Each disaster is leading them in a downward spiral of deeper poverty and hunger, and eventually displacement- the report notes.

While women make up 43% of smallholder farmers worldwide, they do not have the same access to credit, insurance or government support as men, making it harder to adapt or rebuild their lives and

livelihoods after a disaster. Women are often among the last to leave home when more extreme or erratic weather makes it harder for families to put food on the table, staying behind to look after children and elderly or sick relatives, while male family members leave to search for an income elsewhere.

According to the report, this places a huge burden on women, who often become the main provider for the family as well as the primary caregiver.

### **Oxfam's Recommendations to COP25**

The 2019 UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> December in Madrid, Spain, under the Presidency of the Government of Chile. Over 25,000 people representing 200 countries converged to reach agreements and commitments between nations to fight against the effects of climate change.

Oxfam in Uganda was represented by Muhindo Jackson Rukara, the Resilience and Climate Change Coordinator and Harriet Mbabazi, the Resilient Livelihoods Manager.

**Ahead of COP25, Oxfam's report highlighted that the first responsibility of the international community, especially rich polluting countries, is to fight climate change and minimize its impact on people's lives by taking more ambitious action to cut pollution and limit global heating to 1.5°C.**

Oxfam also highlighted that the international community has a responsibility to support poor countries to recover from unavoidable loss and damage that results from the climate crisis, including support for communities that are forced to relocate.

This question took centre stage at COP25 with the first review into the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss on Damage, which was established by governments at the 2013 UN Climate Summit in Poland, with the aim of improving knowledge, action and support for countries suffering loss and damage as a result of the climate crisis. A critical issue for many developing countries was the lack of progress on funding to help poor countries and communities recover from loss and damage, including forced displacement which means that they have to cover much of the cost of extreme weather disasters from

their own budgets.

Oxfam called for more urgent and ambitious emissions reductions to minimize the impact of the climate crisis, and the establishment of a new Loss and Damage finance facility to help communities displaced or otherwise impacted by the climate crisis rebuild their lives and their livelihoods.

Last year, millions of people across the globe demanded for climate justice especially for women, men and children who have been forced to leave their homes and communities by a climate crisis they did little to create. These people asked governments to deliver deeper and more urgent emissions reductions in order to limit global heating, increase the funding available to help the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities adapt to the escalating impacts of the climate crisis, establish a new finance facility as a key outcome of the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage, and continue to advance work on promoting the rights, dignity and long-term solutions for people displaced by the climate crisis.

### **Oxfam in Uganda's plans for COP26**

The next UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) will be held in Glaslow in November 2020 under the Presidency of the UK government. According to Jackson Muhindo, the conference will be people centered involving frontline voices from the Global South. He added that Oxfam in Uganda is currently conducting a climate impacts study with frontline humanistic stories which will be presented at COP 26.

Muhindo also said that Uganda will be revising its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as their Commitments to the Paris Agreement, a process which will be facilitated by Oxfam and its allies.



Some of the participants of COP25 in December 2019. Oxfam in Uganda was represented by Jackson Muhindo and Harriet Mbabazi.

## MPS PLEDGE TO ENSURE SEXUAL OFFENCES BILL IS PASSED INTO LAW

Woman Member of Parliament for Pakwach district, Hon. Avur Jane Pacutho, said that this year, MPs will work tooth and nail to ensure that the Sexual Offences Bill, which aims at consolidating all laws relating to sexual offenses and combating sexual violence, is passed into law.

Hon. Avur made this pledge while giving her remarks at Oxfam's national stakeholders' event to popularize Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Hon. Avur, who was also the guest of honor at the event, added that the process of approving the Sexual Offences Bill has come a long way and is due for tabling on the floor of Parliament in early 2020.

While giving opening remarks at the event, Oxfam's Interim Country Director, Jane Ocaya Irama urged stakeholders to understand the GALS methodology and embrace it in the work they do.

Pakwach district LCV Chairperson, Hon. Robert Steen Omito reported that girls as young as 13 years are being married off by their parents, pushing the rate of teenage pregnancies in the district to more than 20%. He added that the district is using the GALS methodology to support young adults envision bright futures for themselves.

## #CHALLENGEGENDERBIASES

Government of Uganda has made efforts to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) by passing legislation and policies such as The Domestic Violence Act 2010, The National Policy on Elimination of Gender-Based Violence in Uganda, and The National Plan of Action on Elimination of Gender-Based Violence in Uganda (2016). Government has also ratified international human rights instruments, including The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, (Maputo Protocol).

However, the country remains challenged on what still needs to be done to effectively end GBV. Uganda's Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2016 for example estimated that 56 per cent of married women in Uganda have experienced physical,

Hon. Avur thanked Oxfam for encouraging girls and women to enjoy their rights and observed that the GALS methodology is strengthening social cohesion.



Woman Member of Parliament for Pakwach district, Hon. Avur Jane Pacutho giving her remarks at the event.



Pakwach district LCV Chairperson, Hon. Robert Steen Omito addressing journalists at the event

sexual, or emotional violence by their current or most recent spouse/partner. The existence of adverse cultural norms, practices and traditions, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes perpetuates violence against women even more, creating a barrier to the realisation of meaningful approaches to addressing the different forms of GBV.

The 2019 16 Days of Activism to end sexual and gender based violence presented an opportunity for the government of Uganda to evaluate its performance, including challenges that impact its implementation of the Beijing Declaration and other international and regional human rights instruments aimed at ending GBV, including in post- conflict and humanitarian settings.

On 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Oxfam's Women Rights Advisor, Charity Namara and Oxfam's Empower @ Scale Project Coordinator, Peace Immaculate Chandini were hosted on KFM to shed more light on how visual diagrams are used to address gender and power imbalances within households, communities, and other institutions. Chandini and Andrew Kawesa Ssebwalunnyo, Oxfam's Human Resources Officer, also called for an end to gender inequality on CBS FM on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Catch full radio talk shows [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

As part of Oxfam's global movement to eliminate violence against women and girls, the Enough Campaign team worked with poets and rappers around the world to produce poems and rap songs. The original pieces of art were aimed at transforming the social norms that fuel gender based violence and were shared on social media platforms via **#SayEnoughCypher**.

Oxfam in Uganda worked with its Procurement Assistant, Robert Tumwizere, to produce a song titled, "Bakimanye" which speaks to the need to

(R-L) Oxfam's Procurement Assistant Robert Tumwizere, Oxfam's Media and Communications Coordinator, Dorah Ntunga, Swangz Avenue's song writer, Dr. Brain and Oxfam's Women's Rights Advisor, Charity Namara after recording "Bakimanye" at Swangz Avenue in December 2019.

respect women's rights and challenge gender biases. The song was recorded by Swangz Avenue, a leading audio and film production house in Uganda and will be officially launched in early 2020.



Oxfam's Empower @ Scale Project Coordinator, Peace Immaculate Chandini (L) and Oxfam's Women Rights Advisor, Charity Namara (R) being part of a talk show on KFM on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019.



## CASH DISTRIBUTIONS TO RESTORE DIGNITY OF REFUGEES

In Imvepi, Omugo, and Kyaka II Refugee Settlements, Oxfam made unconditional and unrestricted cash distributions for WASH Non Food Items (NFIs) in December 2019 to enable refugees afford water, sanitation, and hygiene materials.

The WASH NFIs include soap, buckets, basins, jerrycans, and reusable sanitary pads among others, which have been identified as essential for day to day life.

Targeting a total of 3700 refugees in all the settlements, either UGX 115,000 or UGX 28,700 is distributed to each household annually and quarterly respectively. The cash disbursements are meant for refugees who arrived in 2019 and only persons with specific or special needs.

Oxfam hopes that the cash distribution among refugees will not only restore dignity of beneficiaries

by giving them purchasing power and a choice on what to buy but will also enable local traders earn income, will promote local markets, and also boost economic activity within refugee settlements.



A group of refugees lining up to receive cash to purchase WASH Non Food Items in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement in December 2019.

## HUMANITARIAN AID TO UGANDA DOUBLED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS

Oxfam's assessment on humanitarian funding flows to local and national actors in Uganda reveals that the amount of international humanitarian assistance flowing to Uganda more than doubled over the last two years from USD154m to USD348.6m.

These and more findings were disseminated by Oxfam's Humanitarian Policy Advisor, Anita Kattakuzhy during the launch of the **Money Talks II** report on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019, which assesses funding flows to local and national humanitarian actors and proposes recommendations so as to achieve the [Grand Bargain Commitments](#).

One of the key recommendations of the report to government of Uganda is to strengthen the Finance Ministry's capacity and commitment to the Public Finance Management Act and progressively use the contingency fund to support local actors to deliver humanitarian action. Oxfam hopes that the Money Talks II report becomes a working document for government of Uganda, donor governments, international agencies, local and national agencies in refugee response, and humanitarian actors to take action on the unfulfilled Grand Bargain commitments.



Oxfam's Humanitarian Policy Advisor, Anita Kattakuzhy presenting findings of the Money Talks II report on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019



Participants pose for a group photo after the launch of Money Talks II report on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019

## OXFAM CALLS FOR QUICK AND FAIR COMPENSATION FOR LAND

Article 26 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda allows compulsory acquisition of land if people are promptly compensated. Usually however, people are forced to leave their land before or even without compensation.

On 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Oxfam's Interim Country Director, Jane Ocaya Irama and Oxfam's Land Rights Coordinator, Jimmy Ochom were hosted on Radio One and KFM respectively to throw more light on Oxfam's Land and Inequality Report.

Jane noted that Uganda's land laws such as the Succession Amendment Bill and the Marriage Bill have not been enacted, making it hard to resolve land related cases. She also added that Uganda has slow land dispute resolution mechanisms especially due to the fact that the justice system is not adequately funded to handle such cases and disputes. Jimmy also noted that the land valuation process in Uganda only looks at the present

value of land yet international standards require that valuation is done for the present, past and future value of land. Oxfam emphasized that compensation after compulsory eviction should be done quickly and fairly and should go beyond the monetary value to the social, psychological and cultural impact because land is a unique resource that not only holds intrinsic wealth but also cultural value and determines one's societal status too. Find full talk show on Radio One [here](#) and on KFM [here](#).



Oxfam's Interim Country Director, Jane Ocaya Irama (R) and Oxfam's Land Rights Coordinator, Jimmy Ochom (C) participating in a talk show on Radio One FM90 on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019