

### A CALL TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO RAMP UP CLIMATE

#### ADAPTATION FINANCE

Fifty six year old Bwambale Sokwere is a married father of five whose life was turned upside down in an instant when one night he was awoken by loud noises of people evacuating their homes and running to safety. As soon as he heard this, he notified his family who left their house with nothing but the clothes on their backs. On their way, they were met with a violent rush of water flowing from the hills washing down everything in its way.

In May 2020, Kasese district was hit by a wave of flash floods that caused a lot of destruction along their way. Due to heavy rains, rivers like Nyamwamba, Mobuku and Lhubiriha which originate from the surrounding mountains, were filled beyond capacity leading to their banks bursting and causing floods.

These floods not only claimed lives but also displaced over 10,000 people, including Sokwere and his family who lost their home when the banks of River Mobuku in Kasese district burst and caused flash floods.

“I lost a lot; my home, my garden, and my animals, I am glad that my family survived this flood although I know we have a long way to recover from this,” said Sokwere.

On 25-26 January 2021, Oxfam and partners held the UN Climate Adaptation Summit urging developed countries to strengthen and deliver on their commitment to provide the much needed assistance to developing countries to adapt to an already changing climate. Given the devastating impact of extreme weather events, adaptation support is critically important to vulnerable communities and to people like Sokwere living in poor countries.

Over a decade ago, developed countries committed to ramp up climate finance to \$100bn per year by 2020, to assist developing countries in climate adaptation and to support them reduce their emissions. However, the finance mobilized is not enough to address the climate emergency, reduce emissions, or support communities to adapt hence failing to achieve the most important goal of the [Paris Agreement](#).

According to the reported [Public Climate Finance Shadow Report](#), only an estimated 25% of finance was allocated towards adaptation while 66% to mitigation. Adaptation finance is very critical and much needed to support vulnerable communities, save lives and support sustainable livelihoods.

Ahead of the Climate Adaptation Summit, Oxfam held a webinar on 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2021. Speaking at the webinar, Cecile Dufflot, Executive Director Oxfam Finance, said, “For developing countries, climate finance is a life line. However, developed countries are failing to provide the much needed support in adaptation.”

In addition, climate finance of about 80% comes in form of loans which means that the world’s poorest countries are forced to go into debt to protect themselves from emissions made by wealthy countries.



A major road in Kilembe Mines, Kasese district was destroyed by the devastation floods that burst the banks of river Nyamwamba.

Without adaptation assistance, the lives and livelihoods of communities especially those whose existence is intertwined with nature, are at risk and their food security is compromised. Zida Lwanakadia, a farmer from the Elgon Region in Eastern Uganda said, “The coffee season has completely changed and the yields are going down.”

Warmer weather has increased coffee plant diseases and pests, forcing farmers to look for land on higher ground that will still have the weather conditions that produce the healthiest plants and highest coffee bean yields. This brings fierce competition for access to this land. For developed countries whose sensational wealth is founded on burning fossil fuels and whose economies continue to fuel climate crisis, there is a moral and ethical responsibility to assist vulnerable countries to adapt to a changing climate and to improve the lives and livelihoods of communities at risk.

Oxfam urged governments accepting adaptation finance to take it in form of grants rather than loans. In a [media advisory](#), Oxfam warned that the world's poorest countries should not be forced to take out loans to protect themselves from the impact of rich countries' excess carbon emissions. Oxfam also recommended a 50/50 split for mitigation and adaptation climate finance because adaptation is a survival matter for developing countries.

There is also a need to increase understanding of how to ensure that climate adaptation finance really reaches local communities and supports them to better address the gender specific needs of women and men.

In order to strengthen the adaptive capacity of communities, locally-appropriate, gender-sensitive adaptation plans and funds are needed, to reduce vulnerability to climate impacts and to strengthen resilience.



A deserted house in Kilembe mines that was destroyed by flash floods as a result of climate change.

## **"INEQUALITY VIRUS" LEAVES MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES HELPLESS**

On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021, Oxfam joined over 55 countries in the World Economic Forum week. Oxfam launched the ['Inequality Virus report'](#) that recommends the need to bring together a world torn apart by Corona virus by using a fair, just and sustainable economy.

The Corona Virus has fed off and increased existing inequalities hitting people living in poverty harder than the rich. The virus has made the rich wealthier and the poor needier. This has greatly impacted on people's lives in health, education, their work and livelihoods.

Hundreds of millions of jobs have been lost due to the pandemic. Oxfam and [Development Finance International's Commitment to Reducing Inequality \(CRI\) Index](#) shows that 103 countries went into the pandemic with at least one in three of their workforce lacking labour rights and protections such as sick pay.

Informal workers are also experiencing significant distress as a result of the pandemic. Globally, 61% of workers are in informal sectors and in African countries, between 30% and 90% of workers outside the agriculture sector are in informal work, making the impacts more severe.

Informal workers lack the luxury of working from home or being able to socially distance, and so are forced to put themselves and others at greater risk due to the nature of person-to-person work and cash-based exchange. This highlights the divide experienced by such workers, who cannot survive without daily trade and who generally lack bank accounts, bank savings, credit/debit cards and the capacity for online transactions. They also usually have no unemployment assistance to fall back on during difficult times.

Women are frequently the principal caregivers when household members fall sick, which puts them at greater risk of being exposed to the virus themselves. Greater unpaid care responsibilities and the resulting gender-differentiated exposure to work and household stressors contribute to poor mental health in women, including depression, and exposure to the risk of violence.

In 2020, Uganda joined more than 180 countries in the temporary closure of their schools, leaving close to 1.7 billion children and youth out of school when closures were at their peak. The pandemic deprived children in the poorest countries of more than four months of schooling, compared to six weeks for children in high-income countries where digital learning systems and platforms thrive.

In Palabek county, Lamwo district in Northern Uganda, a refugee settlement suffers the impact of the pandemic greatly taking its toll on children and their right to access Education. Jennifer Cynthia Akongo, a teacher at Ogili Hill Primary School in Palabek Refugee Settlement, says that the Corona Virus lockdown affected her pupils in many ways.

She says that some of the girls are facing early pregnancy while others have been forced to get married because of the school shut down. On the other end, the boys have been introduced to drug and alcohol abuse while others have returned to and joined the South Sudan wars. It has been estimated that the pandemic will reverse the gains of the last 20 years of global progress made on girls' education, resulting in increased poverty and inequality.

Patriarchy and sexist norms also play a strong role in increasing women's exposure to COVID-19. Women have kept the world running during the response, picking up the care workload in clinics, in homes and at the workplace. Globally, women make up 70% of the health and social care workforce. While these jobs are essential for the pandemic response, they have long been undervalued and poorly paid. These roles have also put women at particular risk, especially where access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been limited.

We are at a pivotal point in human history. We cannot return to the brutal, unequal and unsustainable world that the coronavirus found us in. Humanity has incredible talent, huge wealth and infinite imagination. Therefore, we must put these assets to work to create a more equal and sustainable economy that benefits all, not just the privileged few.

This will help build a future that is not led by billionaires, but by diverse and multiple voices, collectively, and founded in the principles of democracy and human rights.

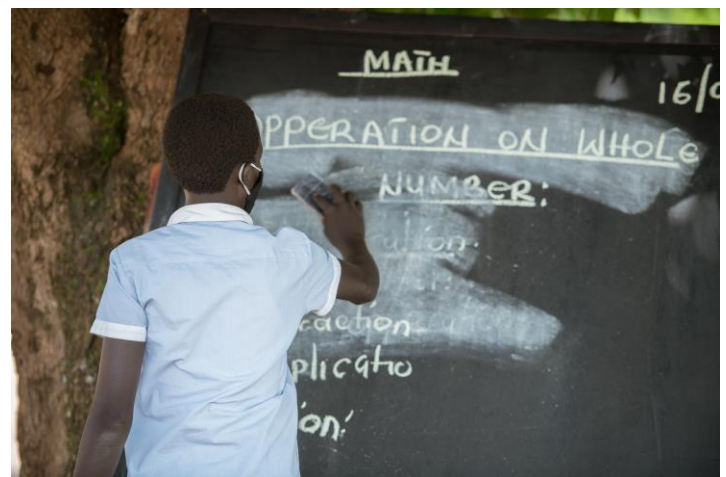
### Oxfam's Recommendations

A radical and sustained reduction in inequality is the indispensable foundation of our new world. Governments must set concrete, time-bound targets to reduce inequality, and not simply back to pre-crisis levels: they must go further to create a more equal world as a matter of urgency. They must move beyond a focus on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and start to value what really matters such as equal priority of the access to the COVID-19 vaccination for all. Fighting inequality must be at the heart of economic rescue and recovery efforts. This must include gender and racial equality.

The World Bank has calculated that if countries act now to reduce global inequality, poverty levels will return to their pre-coronavirus levels in three years instead of over a decade from now.



Jennifer Akongo Sunthia conducting a learning session in one of her learners' compound during the COVID-19 lockdown.



A learner in Palabek Refugee Settlement dusting a blackboard after a study session in one of her classmates' compound.

# MARKET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES TACKLE COVID-19 IN NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Oxfam trained market management committees on Sanitation and Hygiene practices in line with COVID-19 prevention and control in 3 main markets in the zones of Nakivale refugee settlement. The training was focused on providing information about COVID-19 and empowering committees to ensure adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and preventive measures during open market hours. Simon Anyuka, a member of Kabazana Market management committee shared his experience following the training he obtained.

“My name is Anyuka Simon Chaplain, I stay in Kabazana in Nakivale Refugee settlement, I originate from South Sudan and I am part of the market committee for the newly opened Kabazana market, where I work as Information’s Person or Messenger.

At the time of the coronavirus outbreak, we received a temperature gun which I did not know how to use until our committee was invited to a COVID-19 prevention training in the market. At first, I did not believe that COVID-19 is a serious disease because people would not wash their hands, put on masks, or socially distance in the market.

When Oxfam trained me and the entire committee in September 2020, I got enough information about the disease and what my responsibility is in ensuring the safety of the people around me. Among the things I learnt that seemed obvious but was important is proper hand washing using soap or ash, with water. Previously, we thought washing hands without soap was enough. However, with the training from Oxfam, my children and I now know how to properly wash our hands and I believe that we are safe. As the information’s focal person for the market, I also ensure that everyone who gains access to the market washes their hands properly, wears a mask and socially distances themselves as a health safety measure. I have also learnt how to use a temperature gun and interpret the results.

Thursday is the busiest market day in Kabazana because there are many people who come and have to be monitored. We (the market committee) write key precautionary messages on the walls in three languages; Kinyabwisha, Kiswahili, and English to

remind people to abide by the COVID-19 SOPs and measures while in the market.

We also learnt the importance of separating solid waste and ensuring proper sanitation in the market and neighborhood. We have excavated refuse pits and monitored waste disposal by vendors by ensuring waste is sorted and properly disposed. The households surrounding the market have also dug pits to construct their own latrines which shows that people understand what I tell them.

My wish and that of the committee members is to ensure that our market and customers are safe from COVID-19 through following the SOPs. I look forward to seeing our market become a model of proper hygiene and sanitation in the whole of Nakivale settlement.

I appreciate Oxfam and World Food Program (WFP) for the training I received that has enabled me to teach others by sharing the key messages on how to prevent transmission of COVID-19.”

To help communities curb the spread of the Corona virus, Oxfam is implementing an APPEAL funded project that includes community sensitizations on the protective measures put in place to prevent the spread of Corona virus.



Anyuka Simon posing for a photo in front of a wall inscribed with COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures.

## BRINGING WATER CLOSER TO KIRIADOKU REFUGEE

### SETTLEMENT

Simon is a 31 year old Ugandan living in Kiriadoku settlement, located in Yelulu. He has seen the challenges that the community has faced especially with access to clean and safe water for drinking. Simon's wife used to walk over 3km to the nearest borehole every morning to fetch four jerrycans of water daily which their family would use sparingly because of its scarcity.

Yelulu village is occupied by of over 10,000 people. In the past, the village had only 2 boreholes as the main water supply sources. These boreholes would sometimes break down causing a serious challenge of water scarcity. Simon says that when Oxfam went and informed them of the construction of a water system and accessible water taps, they were ecstatic and welcomed the idea.

"During these community meetings and sensitizations, we were taught about practicing proper hygiene at the water source. We also elected water user committees for which I am a member, to ensure that the hygiene practices were implemented," says Simon.

Simon is now in charge of 5 tap stands and ensures that the water points are always clean and that there is proper drainage at the water collection point. He also ensures that the people who use them have clean water storage containers.

The tap stands have really changed the lives of the people of Kiriadoku. The water consumption rate in the community is very high because it is closer to them. "We had to spare the water we fetched but now that it is accessible, we no longer have to worry," Simon added.

Before, there were many cases of water borne diseases especially typhoid due to the consumption of the dirty water from the boreholes and springs. However, the prevalence of these diseases have greatly declined in the community because they now have access to clean water and have also been sensitized on boiling drinking water and proper hand washing with soap as new health practices.

Oxfam and partners have also supported communities to manage the spread of COVID-19 through this initiative. The once over crowded boreholes have been supplemented with various water taps in the settlement.

Moving forward, Oxfam and partners plan to set up more tap stands in Kiriadoku to cater for areas such as Ajusiabudri with a population of over 700 people who still fetch water from swamps and river Enyau which is of a health risk.



Simon posing for a photo before visiting some of the water supply points in Kiriadoku refugee settlement.



Simon (right) observes as a community member fetches water from one of the tippy taps.

## OXFAM IN THE NEWS

- [Oxfam calls for wealthy countries to step up climate adaptation finance commitments at virtual meeting ahead of January's Climate Adaptation Summit – Kiss Media Ug-](#)
- Oxfam calls for wealthy countries to step up climate adaptation finance commitments at virtual meeting ahead of January's Climate Adaptation Summit : Oxfam Press release 21st January 2021  
<https://uganda.oxfam.org/latest/press-release/oxfam-calls-wealthy-countries-step-climate-adaptation-finance-commitments>
- Mega-rich recoup COVID-losses in record-time yet billions will live in poverty for at least a decade: Oxfam Press release 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 <https://uganda.oxfam.org/latest/press-release/mega-rich-recoup-covid-losses-record-time-yet-billions-will-live-poverty-least>
- [Stakeholders decry government secrecy in Oil dealings](#) (New Vision 04<sup>th</sup> February 2021))
- [Illicit financial flows risk factors in Uganda's oil and gas sector: A call to action](#) (New Vision 04<sup>th</sup> February 2021)
- [Will the mining and mineral Bill, 2019 address transparency and accountability gaps of the mining subsector in Uganda?](#) (08<sup>th</sup> February 2021 )



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