

# Economic Empowerment in Refugee Settlements

info@hangoutfoundation.org  
[www.hangoutfoundation.org](http://www.hangoutfoundation.org)  
Tel: +(256) 787 692564  
Jinja, Uganda

## Summary

Refugees and local host communities grapple with education and skills gap making it difficult for them to have a source of income and transition from unemployment or vulnerable employment into decent jobs. Our aim is to link the young people that will have undergone our capacity building with decent employment from our partnerships with job sourcing and recruitment companies supported by local economic development. We also aim to support young people who are interested in entrepreneurship with networking opportunities and marketing platform. The intervention is a response to the need of multiple learning pathways for secondary age education (not just formal secondary, also certified vocational skills training adapted to specific labor market demands) and local sustainable jobs creation (including green jobs) in refugee settlements.

## Challenge

Over one million refugees have fled to Uganda in the last two and a half years, making the Pearl of Africa the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world after Turkey and Pakistan, with 1.36 million refugees by June 2018. Children, adolescents and youth make up the highest population bracket among the displaced populations in Uganda. Some 57 per cent of school-aged refugee children are out of school, the majority of whom are girls. Adolescents and youth account for a third of the refugee population, with the majority suffering from the lack of appropriate learning and employment opportunities. Many refugees in Uganda have limited income-generating opportunities, and both refugees and host communities are challenged by the lack of access to capital/ formal financial services; lack of access to cultivable land and water; poor market connectivity; limited skills and the few formal employment opportunities as reported by UNHCR. The North and West Nile regions, where most refugees live, are among the poorest and most underdeveloped areas in the country.<sup>1</sup>

## Solution

Our trained volunteers will be engaging the refugee youths to equip them with Entrepreneurship, employability, Leadership and personal development skills. Our intension is to support refugees to thrive economically and socially. Through this project we will work to transition refugee camps and communities from more than just temporary populations where people languish waiting for wars to end but as centers of excellence where they triumph over their trauma and train them for the day they can go back to their homes as agents of positive change and social transformation and economically empowered. These victims of war hold the keys to lasting peace and are the right people to end the cycle of violence. Successful trainees will be given technical tools and assistance in starting up their businesses, finding employment (formal and informal), being leaders in their communities as well as being the face of change in these communities.

Our focus is to provide training and career guidance in the area of entrepreneurship and employability skills specifically Interpersonal and other basic job skills that employers identify as constraints to hiring less educated youth.

## Long-Term Impact

After successful entrepreneurship, employability, leadership and personal development training, the graduate refugees are able to set up small businesses, be the leaders in their communities, catalysts of change in their communities, get formal or informal employment that will enable them to earn income for sustainability. The graduates will attain knowledge on how to create sustainable business models and also become empowered young leaders who can lead choice-filled lives.

## Resources

<sup>1</sup> <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/5129?y=2019#year>

