

Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS)

Improving the sustainable energy supply for refugees and host communities in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia

Context

By the end of 2020, 82.4 million people had fled their homes worldwide. While the numbers of forcibly displaced are at an all-time high, the number of complex, protracted crises is also increasing. The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) represents the political will and ambition of the international community for strengthened cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected host countries. It is a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing between governments, international organisations and other stakeholders. It constitutes a unique opportunity to transform the way the world responds to refugee situations, benefiting both refugees and host communities. In 2019, at the first Global Refugee Forum, 280 policy pledges were made by host countries to enhance refugee's inclusion in their national systems. These commendable pledges need the close collaboration of humanitarian and development actors to ensure their sustainable implementation, in line with the principles enshrined in the GCR.

The SUN Global Programme

The GCR calls on UNHCR to facilitate “a coherent humanitarian and development response”. This can succeed when humanitarian and development actors make use of their capacities and complementary advantages to ensure the most effective and beneficial response. To contribute to this end, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned the Global Programme “Support to UNHCR in facilitating the operationalisation of the Global Compact on Refugees in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” in 2018. The programme is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in cooperation with UNHCR and aims to support the UN refugee agency in facilitating the operationalisation of the GCR in the HDP Nexus.

The programme is part of the German Special Initiative “Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, (Re-) integrating Refugees”. It currently implements projects with UNHCR in specific displacement settings (Ethiopia, Iran, Kenya, Mauritania, Mexico, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda), provides advisory services to UNHCR and supports UNHCR in consolidating and analysing lessons learned on the operationalisation of the GCR in the HDP Nexus.

Project overview

Programme name	Support to UNHCR in facilitating the operationalisation of the Global Refugee Compact in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
Project name	Energy Solutions for Displacement Settings (ESDS)
Commissioner	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementation area	Project sites in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia; advisory services at a global level and for UNHCR HQ
Partner	UNHCR
Duration	11/2018 – 12/2022

The challenge

Electricity in refugee camps and settlements is usually generated through expensive and environmentally harmful fossil fuels. Camp households often rely on firewood to cook with, which puts immense pressure on natural resources surrounding the displacement settings and leads to conflicts over scarce firewood between refugee and host communities. Access to energy for lighting is also insufficient, which poses a security risk, increasing exposure of persons of concern to gender-based violence incidents as well as limits

households' ability to pursue activities in the evenings. Given the fact that refugee camps exist for decades, more environmentally friendly and cost-effective solutions should be harnessed. Building up local markets for safe, sustainable, reliable, and affordable cooking and lighting solutions has immense potential to strengthen local economies and create income-generating opportunities.



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Project objectives

With this project, Germany contributes to UNHCR's Clean Energy Challenge with the aim to advise UNHCR technically and strategically on the implementation of its energy strategy 2019-2025. The strategy aims to enable refugees, host communities and people of concern to meet their energy needs in a safe and sustainable way. The project is piloting innovative energy approaches in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia and disseminates lessons learnt from measures implemented in these three pilot countries. GIZ leverages its technical expertise, its close ties with local energy ministries and connections with other GIZ energy programmes.

Project activities

Improving the policy framework: SUN ESDS supports the development of strategic energy plans in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia at the national and regional levels. The focus is on creating framework conditions that encourage the self-re-

liance of the communities' energy supply by facilitating local market structures. Its main approach is to enable national and regional government stakeholders and UNHCR to share knowledge, lessons learnt and examples of good practice.

Greening UNHCR infrastructure: The project supports UNHCR in its transition to renewable energy for its infrastructure. Its focus is on reducing UNHCR's premises diesel consumption by developing solarisation solutions and improving energy efficiency. Energy-as-a-service models are being developed, in which private companies offer various energy-related services.

Increasing market-based access to energy: The project improves households' and social institutions' energy access via market-based and sustainable solutions, such as biomass fuels used with improved cookstoves. Pilot projects are used to overcome market failures and the collection, disposal and reduction of e-waste is promoted.

Examples of project activities

Energy-related livelihoods: ESDS explores the potential to improve livelihoods through the participatory design of energy solutions and seeks to promote productive use of energy and job creation in energy value chains among refugees and host communities.

Humanitarian infrastructure: The project analyses the regulatory conditions for entering service contracts with private renewable energy suppliers in displacement contexts in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The results are fed directly into UNHCR procurement processes.

Biomass cooking fuel production: ESDS assesses biomass fuels, considering their local value chains, with the goal of minimizing the exploitation of natural forest and other resources around refugee camps. In addition, business case scenarios and financing schemes for profitable biomass cooking fuel production are being developed.

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Improving the sustainable energy supply for refugees and host communities in Kenya and Uganda

Today, 90% of refugees living in camps have no access to modern, reliable and clean energy. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) finances a project seeking to address this challenge. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH implements the project contributing to UNHCR's Clean Energy Challenge with the aim to advise UNHCR technically and strategically on the implementation of its energy strategy 2019-2025. The strategy aims to enable refugees, host communities and people of concern to meet their energy needs in a safe and sustainable way. The project is piloting innovative energy approaches in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia and disseminates lessons learnt from measures implemented in these three pilot countries.

In Uganda, 6 out of 10 health facilities have no access to reliable and clean electricity. In Kenya, the situation is similar. However, electricity is an important precondition for effective health service delivery. It is required to power lights for the examination of patients, procedures, and monitoring, to operate life-saving medical devices and diagnostic equipment, to refrigerate medicines and biological samples for diagnostic testing, to facilitate communication between health care providers for emergency medical transport, consultations, coordination, etc.

To provide the health centres with sufficient, sustainable, and modern electricity, GIZ solarised and electrified 3 health centres in Imvepi and Rhino Camp Refugee Settlements in Uganda. Support to a catchment population of estimated 60,000 refugees and over 10,000 host community members has greatly improved the quality of basic services beyond supporting the Covid-19 response. Many

services like maternal and child health, delivery, nutrition screening, mental health and psychological support, HIV prevention, etc, can now be provided effectively.

"In 2018, a mother was brought for delivery and in the process of disconnecting the placenta, the midwife got hurt with the razor blade that she was using, and this was caused due to lack of enough light. The absence of light in the health facility scares most of the health personnel to come and attend the patients. Today, we are proud to work and help our patients without fear." – Member of the Refugee Welfare Council, Ofua Health Centre III, Uganda.



Child delivery on maternity ward without adequate lighting.

In addition, GIZ solarised and electrified 3 health centres, 4 schools and 2 accommodation facilities in Kenya to facilitate the provision of required health services during the Covid-19 pandemic. The schools are used as short-term isolation facilities in case there is increased infection within the refugee and host communities. 40,000 refugees and 2,000 members of the host communities benefit from the electrification in the Kalobeyei Settlement. Even after the pandemic, the electrified schools will continue to allow students to

learn longer and use information and communication technologies.

“We were excited about the electrification by GIZ [...] as a response to Covid-19. We were very happy because for the first time our schools were going to get electricity. [...] Teachers can use devices like power point to teach their classrooms and other electronic devices that are powered by electricity.”

- Richard Tsalwa, Project Coordinator at Finn Church Aid, supporting education in the Kalobeyi Settlement, Kenya.



“Generally, this project of electricity has not only helped in making our working easier but has also helped us to be able to have quality and better outcome for the patients whom we are serving who are actually our main priority.”

- Evans Ouma, Clinical Officer at AIC Clinic, Kalobeyi Settlement, Kenya.



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