Increasing access to decent employment and economic opportunities for refugees and host communities.

Uganda is one of the largest refugee hosting countries with close to 1.4 million refugees currently residing in the country. The vast majority are victims of war and violence in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. A significant proportion of refugees and host communities lack the necessary income to meet their basic household needs or the safety nets to withstand economic shocks. Although the causes are multi-faceted, the core problem remains lack of livelihood opportunities, a situation that is exacerbated by the challenging and unpredictable agricultural environment, lack of access to land, markets (for inputs and outputs), low vocational and entrepreneurial skill levels and limited to no access to credit.

SNV Uganda is part of a consortium with World Vision, ZOA, RICE-West Nile, implementing Security, Protection and Economic Empowerment (SUPREME) project. The four-year project funded by the European Union seeks to increase access to decent employment and economic opportunities for refugees and host communities in four districts (Moyo, Obongi, Terego and Madi Okollo) in West Nile sub-region. The project aims to directly benefit 25,000 members of refugee and host communities and indirectly impact the lives of 112,500 household members in the targeted refugee and host communities. The refugees and host community members will be targeted through community structures known as Savings and Development Clusters (SDCs). SDCs are community groups formed with the objective of implementing joint activities such as savings and lending, farming, among others.

Project design

The project has a complimentary approach that will work across several thematic areas including but not limited to: Sustainable Markets, Gender & Youth, and Climate Smart Agriculture.

The project goal rests on the premise that financial inclusion and social cohesion are necessary preconditions for economic self-reliance of vulnerable populations.

Financial inclusion is essential because it facilitates effective and efficient engagement in markets and enhances access to key financial services and inputs, including savings, credit, and financial safety nets.

Social cohesion is necessary to ensure inclusion of least resilient households, to create mutually beneficial connections between host and refugee populations and facilitate group-based economic activities.

In addition to the above, the project will also address the aspect of decent work and income, which are central to
individual and societal well-being and contribute to improved living conditions and poverty reduction. ‘Decent work’ is defined by the International Labor Organization as ‘productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Using a market development approach, the project will invest in sustainable agriculture value chain of cassava, soybean, sunflower, sesame, sorghum, vegetables, and poultry value chains.

This is aimed at diversifying production systems, generating increase in productivity and foster job creation. Youth will be equipped with enterprise development and employable skills to build their capacity to either start their own businesses or get employed by the existing private sector firms operating within the project target districts. The creation of decent jobs, particularly for women and youth, is an essential element for inclusive and sustainable growth.

**Project outputs**

The project is anchored on three output areas:
- **Output 1**: Financial inclusion and social cohesion among Savings and Development Clusters (SDCs) increased.
- **Output 2**: Sustainable agricultural value chains and non-agricultural enterprises developed.
- **Output 3**: Young women and men (aged 18-30 years) from SDC member households skilled and linked to private sector employment opportunities.

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**SNV Uganda’s implementation approach**

SNV is technically responsible for delivering on:
- **Output 3**: 2,000 young men and women from SDC member households linked to private sector employment. The indicators against this output include young men and women receiving training (85%); young men and women completing internship and apprenticeship (75%); young men and women getting absorbed into formal employment (50%).
- **Part of output 2**: Facilitating increased input/output market linkages between private sector actors and SDCs through business development services and challenge grant co-investment.

SNV will contribute to access to decent employment and economic opportunities for young people through Opportunities for Youth Employment (OYE) model, developed by SNV and implemented across many African countries including Ethiopia, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Ghana.

SNV’s Opportunities for Youth Employment contributes to improved livelihoods and socio-economic prospects for young women and men, through the self-realisation of employment and enterprise development.

Another approach that will be used alongside the OYE model is Private sector enterprise development. This will combine a mix of inclusive business development and co-investment into inclusive market systems improvement through challenge funding.

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