

# REBUILD

Boosting Livelihoods



In partnership with:



IKEA Foundation



## Re:BUiLD in Action

Year 3, Quarter 2, 2023 Newsletter

[www.rebuild.rescue.org](http://www.rebuild.rescue.org)





## MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

*Priscilla Dembetembe*

Welcome to this edition of the **Re:BUILD in Action** Newsletter. As the year progresses, please join me in reflecting on the accomplishments we have registered together in the second quarter of our year 3 of implementation of the Program : "Refugees In East Africa: Boosting Urban Innovations for Livelihoods Development".

Commendation from the IKEA Foundation and the visit by the CEO, Per Heggnes brought renewed inspiration and motivation to all of us. We observed outstanding accomplishments by clients who completed their vocational courses and apprenticeships. We are all encouraged to see more women breaking through barriers and pursuing jobs in traditionally male-dominated fields. Agnes Ulasi, a female refugee, is on her way to become one of Nairobi's best car mechanics.

Our ground-breaking pilots and research, the entrepreneurial ventures, our clients' tenacity and the dedication of our partners and personnel continue to inspire us with their resolve to effect long-term change. These proven successes demonstrate the almost endless potential of urban refugees and vulnerable hosts.

We at Re:BUILD are great believers in the potential of local partnerships and collaborations. We increased our links with local organizations, communities, vocational institutions, the private sector, and experienced professionals in the second quarter. All these efforts were aligned to our commitment to ensuring people are employed.

Based on the evaluation of the the investments we made in skilling people through vocational training and apprenticeships, we saw the need to design and introduced Bridging Services in June 2023. These will be a combination of focused assistance for a fraction of our clients who had not secured

employment or other livelihood opportunities after having gone through vocational trainings and on-the-job training. We expect that the outcomes of these various interventions will provide learnings for our teams and partners as we plan for year 4 interventions.

We will highlight some of our program learnings in this quarter's newsletter. During this period, we disseminated financial service providers' lessons on financial inclusion of vulnerable groups and ideas for facilitating formal financing to refugees. Our collaboration with the Center for Global Development resulted in the publication of the Adaptive Management paper, in which we share what we've learnt from using adaptive management concepts in refugee programming. Additionally, the program's learnings and insights from the skills certification pilots were released.

This edition carries some of our client's voices illustrating their perseverance as well as the overall transforming impact of the Re:BUILD Program. We hope that these tales and testimonials inspire and encourage you as much as they inspire and motivate us.

In the next months, we have great events and seminars scheduled. All of this is available on our program's website. You may sign up to join in the thought-provoking conversations about decent jobs for refugees.

Let us continue to embrace the spirit of cooperation, collaboration, inclusivity, and resilience that distinguishes the Re:BUILD Program as we enter the second half of the year. I am grateful for your consistent commitment to our goals.

I wish you a fruitful and inspirational quarter ahead.

04	Eye-opening: Re:BUiLD, NCCG forge pathways for enhanced inclusion of refugee
05	SHOFCO CEO Dr. Odede’s Reflection: Why INGOs & Local Organizations Need Each Other
06	Bridging services: Why the shift in delivery of services
07	Client Testimonials
08	FAQ on Refugee Employability
10	Re:BUiLD Online



### Our Results as of July 2023

<b>7,774 clients</b> Clients accessing services	<b>4,452 clients</b> Female clients offered services
<b>1,602 clients</b> Reached with vocational training	<b>141 clients</b> Reached with green energy training
<b>4,235 clients</b> Mentees reached with microenterprise Support	<b>411 clients</b> Reached with digital skills training
<b>605 clients</b> Reached with apprenticeship	<b>184 clients</b> Engaged in clothing and textile value chain addition
<b>230 clients</b> Prior skills certified	<b>58</b> USLA groups formed & trained

The Nairobi City County Government (NCCG) law enforcement officers are gearing up to a renewed approach to managing urban refugees in their day-to-day interactions under the city's inspectorate.

There are close to 100,000 refugees living in Nairobi, Kenya. Over the years, urban refugees have encountered challenges when striving for self-reliance within the city. The partnership between the Re:BUiLD Program and the NCCG is stemming out the notable exclusion of refugee voices in policy development and access to public services.

Re:BUiLD Program Protection Officer Dorcas Mwangi says vulnerable refugees in Nairobi face multiple challenges and require targeted support to ensure their safety and well-being. One of the key risks they face is limited access to essential services.

“Our collaboration with the NCCG is pivotal in creating actionable plans to support vulnerable refugees in Nairobi. By working together, we can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment that empowers refugees to rebuild their lives with dignity and resilience. This collaboration focuses on addressing key aspects such as enhancing access to services, promoting refugee inclusion in governance systems, and enhancing understanding of refugee rights and documentation” stated Mwangi.



Jamin Kusuania, the IRC's Senior Advocacy Manager sharing refugee documentation and inclusion during the induction of NCCG Inspectorate staff in Nairobi on June 13th 2023. (PHOTO: NCCG)

In a 2-day induction held on June 13th and 14th 2023, Re:BUiLD engaged 56 NCCG inspectorate officers in a bid to create awareness on the rights of urban refugees. The county inspectorate plays a critical role in enforcing

county policies and bylaws. The inspectorate department had been a point of concern, with refugees reporting that officers often fail to comprehend their documentation during encounters.

The Re:BUiLD induction saw the officers enlightened on International and National Refugee Frameworks, refugee documentation, challenges faced by urban refugees, opportunities in accessing city services, and potential areas of collaboration between the city government and the Re:BUiLD Program.



Nairobi City County Government inspectorate staff participate in a Re:BUiLD induction held in Nairobi on June 13th 2023. (PHOTO: NCCG)

NCCG Inspectorate Director Eva Wairiuko told Re:BUiLD in Action the inducted officers are now well-versed with all components of the Re:BUiLD Program and have a better understanding of refugee rights and documentation. Wairiuko says a vast majority of the officers under her docket still require capacity building on refugee documentation and rights.

“We are now in a better position to interact with refugees. By familiarizing ourselves with these crucial aspects, we can better incorporate refugees in our activities and improve our interactions. We are looking forward to more of these sessions given the ongoing conversations on the integration of refugees in our urban areas,” stated Wairiuko.

Re:BUiLD, in partnership with Pamoja Trust will continue to work with the NCCG inspectorate and boost sensitization efforts and educate refugees on city bylaws. Through these initiatives, refugees will gain a better understanding of their rights and obligations within the city.



SHOFCO CEO Dr. Kennedy Odede and the IRC President and CEO David Miliband pose for a photo on the sidelines of the #IRCLeadershipWeek on May 25, 2023 in Nairobi. (PHOTO: Courtesy)

Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have joined forces under the International Rescue Committee's Re:BUiLD Program, a transformative initiative that empowers individuals by delivering livelihood interventions including on-the-job training, vocational and digital skills, and sustainable job placements.

At the helm of this movement is Dr. Kennedy Odede, the visionary CEO of SHOFCO, who in May 2023 shared insights about the program at the IRC's leadership week in Nairobi. Dr. Odede in a discussion with IRC President David Miliband delved into his emphatic appeal for localization of aid and the significance of local partnerships in driving change at the grassroots level.

### Below are some key highlights from Miliband's discussion with Dr. Odede.

**Miliband:** *Why do local organizations need INGOs and vice versa?*

**Dr. Odede:** *Many people think that local organizations and INGOs don't need each other. IRC is good at what they do. They have expertise on many matters including policy. We, as local organizations, know the community the best. We live with them. They are part of us. We can work together. This is why we need each other. I wish more organizations would start thinking that way. We are good at grassroots work. That is why we are*

*there. It is like a marriage where each partner has something to put on the table.*

**Miliband:** *Where do you see SHOFCO in 5 years' time?*

**Dr. Odede:** *We want to work on policies that affect the urban poor for the next five years. Right now, we are only in 30 counties. We must grow and cover the 47 counties in Kenya. We are going national.*

While applauding the IRC's efforts, Kennedy Odede



urged the organization to increase its allocation of resources to grassroots organizations like SHOFCO. By channeling a minimum of 10 per cent resources to local initiatives, the IRC has already demonstrated a commitment to localization. However, Odede advocates for further investment, suggesting increased allocation would empower local organizations to expand their impact and transform more lives.

The IRC's Re:BUiLD Program, driven by the partnership between SHOFCO and other local organizations in Nairobi and Kampala, stands as a powerful testament to the potential of local partnerships in empowering refugees and vulnerable hosts.

By advancing advocacy for systemic change, providing on-the-job training, vocational and technical skills, and job placements, and business support the program offers a lifeline to individuals who have experienced displacement and marginalization. Kennedy Odede's call for increased support for grassroots organizations and the localization of aid resources resonates deeply, emphasizing the importance of trust and collaboration in driving meaningful change.

At Re:BUiLD, the way we deliver services and interventions is bound to change from time to time. In 2023, we made a significant modification to the program leading to the launch of bridging services in June. At the time, approximately 2500 clients had completed services that were meant to better equip them to secure wage employment.

We paused, looked back to assess the status of clients who had benefited from the popular vocational training services. We made a strategic shift, informed by findings and feedback from our clients.

## Turning point

Findings from an evaluation of clients who received skilling services for wage employment; both from vocational training and apprenticeships showed many still needed support. In Nairobi, 46 percent were not engaged in an income generating activity. These was higher in Kampala where about 88% stated they were not attached to any economic activity.

“In 2022, the program focused on promoting wage employment among the urban refugees and vulnerable hosts. When we assessed 891 clients, majority of them said they were not engaged in an economic activity at the time. They reported that they were looking for jobs,” says Vitaline Ajambo, Re:BUiLD’s Senior Livelihoods Officer in Kampala.

The bridging services launched in both cities in June 2023 will focus on strengthening the employability of skilled clients. The program designed add-on services to ensure transition of more clients into wage employment and ultimately to self-reliance.



Clients enrolled under the program’s bridging services will be offered soft skills training, job readiness and job linkages through private sector engagements. The self-employment training will encompass business skills training coupled with life skills training. These will be supplemented by financial literacy training and linkages to financial service providers.

Findings from the evaluation showed most clients in wage employment were in the beauty and cosmetics industry (22.8%) followed by the food and beverage sector (11.4%). Other sectors offering livelihood opportunities for clients were the textile, footwear (10.2%) and information technology (ICT) (9.0%). Some clients (7.7%) had secured opportunities in the engineering field.

## Wage employment pathway huddles

Clients that were keen on wage employment opportunities cited lack of networks (45%), documentation (40%), lack of finances (32%), and limited opportunities in their field of interest (29%) as major obstacles. These are part of the challenges that the clients are expected to find a way around through bridging services.

Christine Ndumi, 26, on enrolling for bridging services told Re:BUiLD in Action they were excited to see the program changing its focus to address the challenges raised during the assessment.

“I am happy that Re:BUiLD is considering what most of us really needed. I completed my internship and even volunteered for 3 months. For most of us, if we learn how to prepare CVs well, know how to find job opportunities, apply and do the interviews well, we can get employment,” affirmed Ndumi.

Re:BUiLD placed Ndumi on an internship at Lea Toto, a local organization that supports vulnerable children in Nairobi. Ndumi is a health records and information technologist trained at the Kenya Medical Training College in Msambweni.

*Clients taking part in the bridging services which offered soft skills training, job readiness and job linkages in Nairobi. (PHOTO: Joseph Sosi/TheIRC)*



**Christine Ndumi, 26 – Kenyan**

*"I am happy to see the issues we raised have been put into consideration. We needed to learn how to package ourselves and showcase our skills to potential employers. The bridging services will help most of us after completing training and the apprenticeship program."*

---

**Kennedy Swara, 47 – Kenyan**

*"I was enrolled to trained on computer hardware maintenance at the CFSK Institute. This opportunity has transformed my life. After completing the training, I was retained the institution on a contract. I support electronic waste management work. While at CFSK, I expressed interest in learning to operate their fork-list. They offered me training and this has also added to my income stream from the institution. It is now my full-time job."*



**Nadia Katula Uwimana, 34 -Rwandese**

*"I Learned how to plan for a business, keep records and grow the business. I used to fear starting a business but now I know before starting a business I have to make a plan and do a thorough consultation with people who have been in the same business. I will these skills to grow my business both in short term and long term."*

---

**Jean-Mark Goodson, 33- Congolese**

*"I learned that it is very important to scout for a location for a business. Your business might not prosper in a place where the people have no interest in your products. So today my expectations have been met by the business skills training."*





## Hiring refugees in Kenya? Here are common questions employers ask

As an employer considering to offer a refugee a job in Kenya, you may ask yourself several questions to inform your decision making. It is important that you make an informed decision. Here are some common questions and what you may need to know when hiring a refugee in Kenya.

### 1. What legal obligations and regulations should we consider when hiring a refugee?

When employing refugees, employers must adhere to Kenyan labor laws, which apply to refugees as they do to Kenyan citizens. These laws cover aspects such as minimum wage, working hours, workplace safety, and employment contracts. It is crucial to ensure that they have the necessary work authorization, which may be in the form of a work permit or an endorsement on their refugee status document. Refugees, like other employees, may be entitled to certain social security benefits, such as health insurance and pension contributions.

### 2. What are the potential benefits of hiring a refugee?

Adding refugees into the workforce can promote social cohesion and reduce tensions between host communities and refugees, as it creates opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding. Additionally, employing refugees can lead to a more inclusive society, improved livelihoods, and a more stable region as a whole as they equally contribute to growth of the local economy.

### 3. Are there any language barriers that might affect communication or job performance?

Language proficiency of refugees looking for jobs in Kenya can vary widely based on their education, background, and exposure to different languages. Many refugees in Kenya learn Swahili to communicate with the local population. Those who have had access to education, may have some proficiency in English. Some refugees from French-speaking countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda, may speak French.

### 4. What skills and qualifications does the refugee possess that align with the Kenyan job market needs?

Most refugees pursue different skills depending on their backgrounds and circumstances they are living in. Through Vocational Training Institutions, programs such as Re:BUiLD have supported refugees in Nairobi to acquire skills that enable them contribute to local economies. Refugees can fit in the construction industry as carpenters, masons, electricians, or plumbers and plant operators. Besides that, in this digital wake, refugees are increasingly acquiring skills in information technology and computer literacy. They might have knowledge of computer applications, basic programming, or online communication platforms where they can work as managers or creatives.

### 5. How can we ensure a smooth integration process for the refugee within our workplace?

By thinking about this, you are in a better place. By increasing the level of awareness on refugee issues and rights at the workplace, we create an enabling environment for their integration. Allowing room for their involvement and participation in decision making will also go a long way.

### 6. Are there any cultural considerations that we need to be aware of when working with a refugee?

At your workplace, refugee, just like other workers come from various cultural backgrounds. Always be wary of cultural norms and how they may affect the experiences and needs of male, female, and gender non-conforming refugees. Strive to create an environment that Respect cultural sensitivities related to gender segregation, appropriate dress codes, and interactions between genders.



7. Are there any specific challenges or vulnerabilities that refugees may face, and how can we support them?

Refugees face various challenges in Kenya. In most cases, they require support to access proper documentation such as refugee IDs, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) PIN, Driving Licenses and work permits. Those who lack these documents are usually vulnerable to law enforcement agencies and extortionists.

8. What resources or support systems are available to help us hire and integrate refugees into the Kenyan job market?

In Kenya, the Refugee Act of 2021, has offered an opportunity for refugees to access to livelihood opportunities for economic and social integration. Refugees in Kenya have a right to engage in employment or start businesses or practice or trade in sectors where they hold a qualification that is recognized by competent authorities. Re:BUiLD has supported refugees through skills certification under the recognition of prior learning and skills initiative in Kenya.

9. Are there any potential biases or stereotypes that we need to overcome when evaluating refugee candidates for employment?

Some people tend to think that refugees are a burden, not qualified for formal employment, a source of cheap labour or that they come to take away jobs from hosts. It is important to challenge these stereotypes. Refugees, like any other individuals, have diverse skills, talents, and potential that can benefit society when given the opportunity and support.

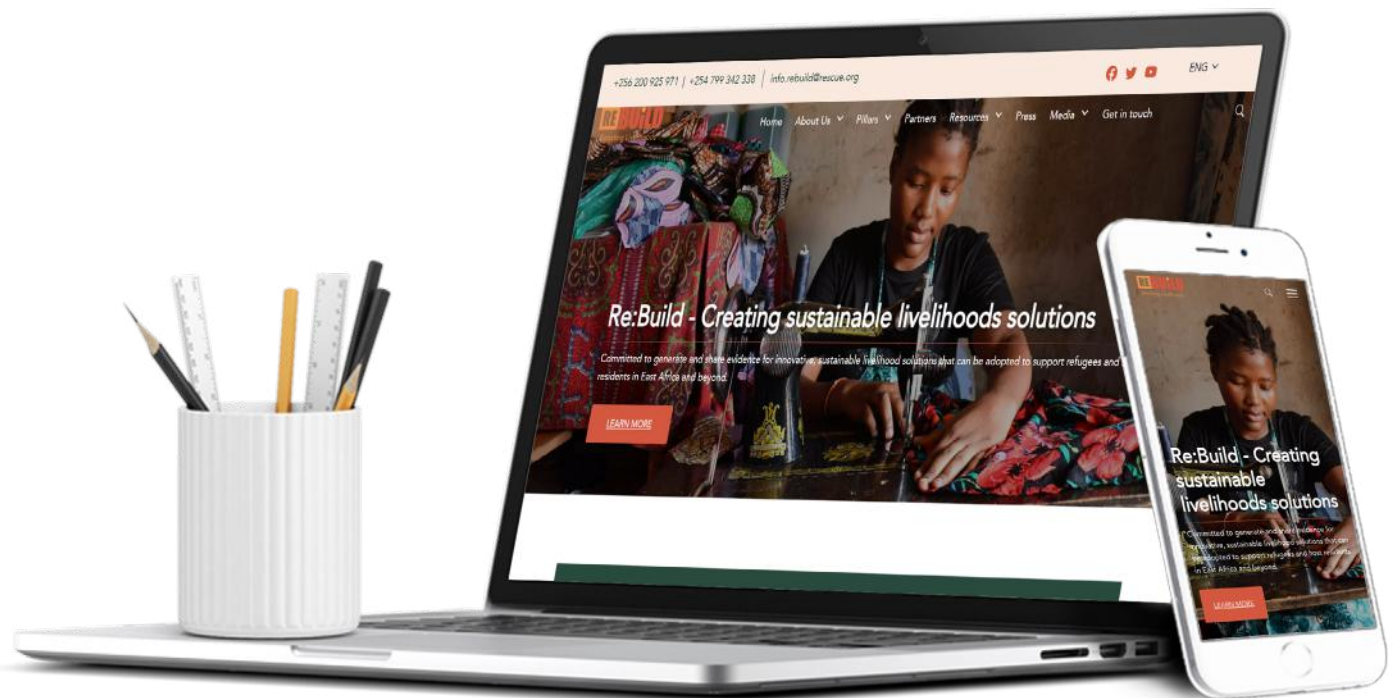
10. How can we promote diversity and inclusion within our organization by hiring refugees?

It's important for employers to approach these questions with an open mind and consider the unique circumstances and skills that refugees bring to the table. Organizations that embrace diversity and create inclusive environments can benefit from the varied perspectives, experiences, and talents that refugees offer.

*Have you had an opportunity that you'd like to offer refugees at your place of work or business?*

*Talk to us on Email: [ke.rebuild@rescue.org](mailto:ke.rebuild@rescue.org) or call Tel: +254 799 342 338.*





We are excited to share the latest updates, news, and resources from our program with you.

To stay connected and informed, we encourage you to follow our social media accounts and visit our website regularly.

By doing this, you will receive engaging content and valuable insights about the program. We share key program visibility materials, change stories and events that we get to be involved in.

Connect with us on:

Website: <https://rebuild.rescue.org>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@ReBuildEastAfrica>

Rescue.org: <https://www.rescue.org/topic/irc-partners-ikea-foundation-build-opportunities>



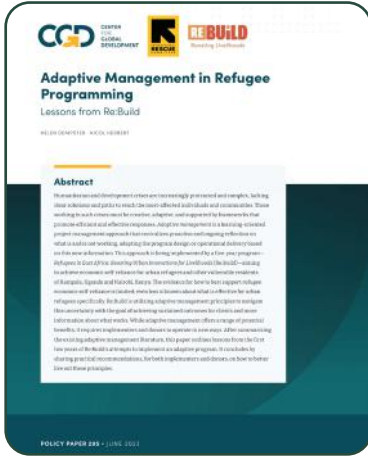
Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to engaging with you on our platforms.

## Upcoming Events

- **Decent Work Summit, Nairobi** - 5th September, 2023
- **Decent Work Summit, Kampala** - 12th September, 2023
- **Program Learning Conference** - 19th September, 2023
- **Financial Inclusion Week** - 16-19th October 2023
- **ILO Decent Work Conference** - 17-19th October 2023

Reports

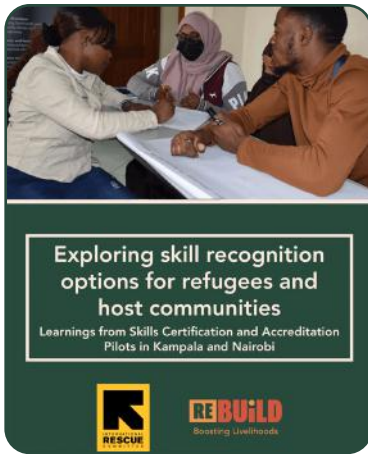
Re:BUiLD is generating evidence and learning by piloting innovative solutions, conducting rigorous, randomized control trial (RCT) evaluations, and using other tailored research methods. Program reports will provide insights into the learnings and demonstrate what works and inform improvements in the program design.



Adaptive Management in Refugee Programming: Lessons from Re:BUiLD - JUNE 2023

The Adaptive Management report delves into the practical implementation of adaptive management principles in the realm of refugee programming, drawing upon the invaluable experiences and wisdom gained from the Re:BUiLD project. It sheds light on the crucial significance of flexibility, iterative learning, and responsive decision-making in effectively meeting the dynamic and multifaceted needs of refugee populations.

DOWNLOAD HERE



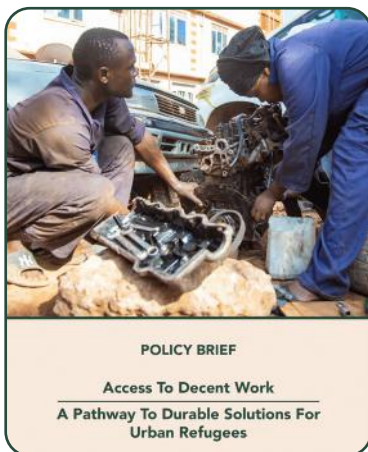
Re:BUiLD Skills Certification Brief - JULY 2023

Many refugees reside in refugee designated areas (refugee camps or settlements), an increasing number of refugees gravitate towards the capital cities of Kampala and Nairobi in search of better opportunities.

DOWNLOAD HERE

Policy Briefs

The Re:BUiLD's brief leverages our work on the ground and our expert knowledge informed by research and practice to ensure refugees and other displaced people have what they need not only to survive, but to rebuild and thrive in new communities. We mobilize to shift the agenda nationally, regionally and globally on behalf of people affected by crisis.



Decent Work Policy Brief - AUGUST 2023

This policy brief addresses the issue of access to decent work for urban refugees in Nairobi and Kampala and provides recommendations to overcome the challenges they face. Urban refugees, unlike those in camps, are expected to achieve economic self-reliance, but face challenges limiting access to employment opportunities, aggravated by barriers associated with their refugee status.

DOWNLOAD HERE

NAIROBI, KENYA  
International Rescue Committee  
Merchant Square, 4th Floor, Block C  
Riverside Drive, Nairobi

KAMPALA, UGANDA  
International Rescue Committee  
Plot 7 Lower, Naguru East Road, Kampala



[www.rebuild.rescue.org](http://www.rebuild.rescue.org)

Re:BUiLD brings together  
The International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Center for Global Development (CGD),  
Open Capital (OC), Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA)  
Nairobi City County Government (NCCG) and local partners. Re:BUiLD is committed to generate  
and share evidence for innovative, sustainable livelihoods solutions that can be adopted  
to support refugees and host residents in other cities in East Africa and beyond.