

# REBUILD

Boosting Livelihoods



## Re:BUiLD in Action

Year 4, Quarter 2, 2024 Newsletter



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

**REBUILD**  
Boosting Livelihoods



In partnership with the IKEA Foundation

## MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Priscilla Dembetembe



### Dear Re:BUiLD Family,

Welcome to this edition of the Re:BUiLD in Action newsletter, our platform for sharing insights, learnings, and progress each quarter. As we advance further into the fourth year of the program, we are excited to share key milestones and moments from the second quarter of 2024.

We began this quarter by hosting a team from the IKEA Foundation, led by their new Chief Executive Officer, Jessica Anderen, in Nairobi. The team interacted with clients supported by the program through various service tracks. Following her visit, 30 IKEA Ambassadors also visited the Re:BUiLD program. These visits inspire strength and momentum as we approach the end of our fourth year.

In this quarter, Re:BUiLD trained and linked 2108 clients to financial service providers, bringing the total number of clients receiving services to 11,622. A total of 406 clients opened bank accounts, and 117 accessed credit worth €41,512 through the Loan Guarantee Fund service track. The program successfully concluded the Randomized Control Trials (RCT) Wave 1 with the disbursement of cash grants for business start-ups and growth to 496 Wave 1 control group clients. Re:BUiLD also tested new content for the second wave of the RCT, where 40 participants received business grants. In the second wave of the RCT, the program aims to study the effects of social networks on microenterprise development among urban refugees and vulnerable hosts.

Re:BUiLD continues to engage different stakeholders to ensure refugees have access to decent work and services in Kampala City. We participated in the 2nd Annual National Labour Convention in Kampala and donated printing equipment to the Kampala City Council Authority. In this edition, you will read about how the program joined other partners in Nairobi and Kampala to commemorate this year's World Refugee Day.

Planning for [The Research and Policy Symposium](#) in October 2024 will headline our quarter-three activities. Stay tuned for various publications and initiatives that will highlight the voices and experiences of our clients, partners, staff, and researchers as we strive to make a significant impact at the community, national, regional, and global levels.

In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to each member of the Re:BUiLD Program, our research partners, IRC colleagues, and our colleagues at the IKEA Foundation. Your unwavering dedication and hard work are making a difference in the lives of those we serve. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.




June 20, 2024, Nairobi. Re:BUiLD Partners, refugees and the host community march to Dandora Stadium, Nairobi to kick off this year's World Refugee Day celebrations. (PHOTO: Edgar Otieno/TheIRC)



June 25, 2024, Kampala. Re:BUiLD staff, Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) and other partners take part in a cleaning exercise at Owino Market, the largest market in downtown Kampala. (PHOTO: David Hangi/TheIRC)

04	<b>IKEA Foundation CEO Jessica Anderen and 30 ambassadors visit Re:BUILD clients in Nairobi</b>
05	<b>The 2nd Annual National Labour Convention. More calls to include refugees in Uganda's labor market</b>
06	<b>Eight Dollars in Ten Minutes</b>
07	<b>Re:BUILD in Action Voices</b>
08	<b>Re:BUILD Online</b>



**Our Results as of July 2024**

<b>11,622 clients</b> accessing services	<b>7,514 female clients</b> offered services
<b>7,154 refugees</b> offered services	<b>1,992 clients</b> accessing vocational training
<b>4,354 mentees</b> reached with microenterprise Support	<b>615 clients</b> accessing climate resilience and livelihood services
<b>624 clients</b> reached with apprenticeship	<b>382 clients</b> offered catalytic fund
<b>110 clients</b> prior skills certified	<b>3,800 clients</b> accessing USLA services



May 3, 2024, Nairobi Kenya. The IKEA Foundation's CEO Jessica Anderen interacts with Josephine Nakabugu at her shop in Kawangware. (PHOTO: Sinnah Lamin/TheIRC)

The IKEA Foundation's CEO, Jessica Anderen, on Friday, May 3, 2024, visited several refugees and Kenyans supported under the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Re:BUiLD program in Nairobi.

Anderen, on her first visit to the East African region since taking over the leadership of the Foundation in January 2024, cited close relationships with clients and partners as a critical component in the effective and sustainable delivery of livelihood interventions. Through one-on-one interactions with clients, Anderen says, actors in the humanitarian and development sector must listen to refugees' needs to identify and address challenges to achieving sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families.

"We all have a common view that people need a healthy and sustainable way of living. It is all about putting people at heart of everything that we do. We need to stay very close to projects and partners for us to tackle the biggest challenges we face in the world; poverty and climate change," she stated.

The IRC's Re:BUiLD clients in the neighborhoods of Kawangware and Kayole interacted with Anderen sharing how the [program's micro-enterprise and mentorship support](#) had impacted their entrepreneurial skills and livelihoods. Shop owners, small-business mentors, members of urban savings and loans associations (USLAs), and community networks formed through Re:BUiLD's partner, Pamoja Trust, were among those visited during the CEO's field trip.

"You can read, listen, and be in different meetings but this is nothing like standing in someone's home or their shop with them telling their story about how they have had life-changing experiences because of the support they have been given.

This is something that I will take with me, and I will constantly think about going forward," stated Anderen, commending the client's resilience in the wake of the recent floods that had caused displacement and disrupted livelihoods across Nairobi.

It is for this reason that the Foundation has invested in developing an ambassador programme – an initiative in which promising IKEA corporate employees are provided with exposure to Foundation-supported partners and training to spread the word about their work. A group of 30 new Ambassadors joined Anderen in Nairobi for a week-long interaction with a variety of IKEA Foundation's partners focused on tackling poverty and climate change. During the trip, the team also interacted with the IRC leadership in the region, as well as other local and international partners of the Foundation.



May 3, 2024, Nairobi Kenya. The IKEA Foundation CEO Jessica Anderen with Josephine Nakabugu and her mentor (left) at their tailoring shop in Kawangware. (PHOTO: Sinnah Lamin/TheIRC)

Since its inception in 2021, the IRC's Re:BUiLD program with support from the IKEA Foundation has provided business support to refugees and vulnerable Kenyans intending to start or grow their micro-enterprises in Nairobi and Kampala.

The Re:BUiLD program has enlisted over 8000 additional urban refugees and vulnerable hosts in Nairobi and Kampala for microenterprise support that will be delivered as part of the second wave of RCTs launched in 2024.



April 25, 2024, Kampala. Tina Kalitani Nasasira - the Re:BUiLD Advocacy Manager remarks on a panel discussion during the 2nd Annual National Labor Convention.

A panel discussion on access to labor justice and decent work for vulnerable groups, particularly refugees, during the 2nd Annual National Labour Convention, called for more action to effectively include refugees in Uganda's labour market.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development hosted the event, bringing together stakeholders advocating for labor justice to explore strategies for fostering a more equitable and inclusive work environment for all.

Tina Kalitani Nasasira, the Re:BUiLD Advocacy Manager, highlighted numerous challenges refugees face in accessing decent job opportunities even when legal and policy frameworks provide equal opportunities to refugees as their national counterparts.

"Refugees will require work permits, which they can acquire at no extra cost," Tina said, emphasizing, "But this permit has to be stamped into a professional travel document. Which is hard to get. It's costly and hard to acquire and it will take you about 9 months to 2 years."

The law in this sense is weaponized against refugees leading to huge pay reductions or no pay at all for their efforts.

"They [employers] know that if you have no work permit, you don't have grounds to approach labor the officers saying, I was cheated or I was not paid," Kalitani said.

Uganda hosts about 1.6 million refugees and is highly commended for its open-door policy on welcoming refugees. For instance, Uganda's constitution already prescribes the right for everyone in Uganda to practice their profession and carry out any lawful occupation.

Further, the Refugee Act 2006 provides for refugees to work in Uganda, and it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone as prescribed by the Employment Act of 2006.

On the policy side, the environment is conducive as seen in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), the Third National Development Plan 2020/21–2024/25, and the Jobs and Livelihoods Integrated Response Plan (JLIRP) for Refugees and Host Communities 2020/2021–2024/2025.

Tina also highlighted that besides minimal social capital, an employed refugee seeking dispute resolution would find it hard to access labor justices through trade unions. An employed refugee could alternatively turn to trade unions like a Ugandan employee, when seeking labor justice, however, this is not feasible for refugees since a refugee identity is not recognized to join unions.

"So, there is an aspect of social capital being minimal. And this is aggravated by the fact that some of the unions that would ideally support them in seeking some remedies do not admit them. Some unions have a requirement that you have a national ID to be a union member. A refugee does not have a national ID," Kalitani said.

What remains a challenge is how the implementation of these legal and policy frameworks.

Re:BUiLD continues to encourage discussions around refugee access to decent jobs. The program successfully collaborated with the Federation of Uganda Employees leading to the introduction of the best refugee employers' category in the 2023 Employer of the Year Awards. This effort aims to encourage companies to employ more refugees.



June 18, 2024, Kampala Uganda. Members of the Canan Women's Group weigh the mushrooms they harvested.

(PHOTO: Nathan Ijjo Tibaku/TheIRC)

That was the amount of money the Canan Women's Group made from their first-ever mushroom harvest. The women had harvested 3.5 kilograms of fresh mushrooms. The group, dubbed Canan by the members had planted fifty-six mushroom gardens using cotton husks.

The members are mostly women displaced by war in northern Uganda in the 90s and early 2000s. Most of them sought refuge in the highly crowded Kampala suburbs like Acholi Quarters; where open farmland does not exist, and buying fresh food from the market is a daily necessity.

In 2023, the Raising Gabdho Foundation (RGF), in partnership with the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Re:BUiLD program, registered and trained 55 Canan Women's Group members in urban farming. Mushroom farming was a key component of the training. Through this partnership with Re:BUiLD, RGF is improving livelihoods and building the resilience of urban refugees and vulnerable hosts through climate-smart initiatives.

"Being in an urban area, it is not easy to get land for growing crops." Everline Adero, the president of Canan said. "We were trained to utilize the small spaces we have to grow mushrooms; we can get food and sell some," she added.

The group rents a two-room house to grow their mushrooms. Nine members have been appointed to oversee the nurturing of the crops.

"The nine people on the committee take turns managing the gardens, three people per day, and on the day of harvest, all members of the group come together to harvest the mushrooms," said Steward Okello, Canan's secretary.

Mushrooms are highly nutritious foods with a short maturity period and can yield a high profit if tended to well. It took Canan 18 days to realize their first harvest, and for the next three months, the group will be harvesting every week.

"Our babies will have nutritious food. We normally say, 'If you cannot buy liver, buy mushrooms and make your babies soup'," Everline commented.

The group hopes to obtain a bigger space to expand their mushroom gardens.

"We are monitoring our progress; should we succeed in increasing our yield, we shall get a bigger room. We are Canan; we are on a journey to our destiny," Steward said, in a biblical tone.



Francis Mbuyi - Kampala, Re:BUiLD Client

*"It is thanks to this business that my family lives."*

Francis Mbuyi Nyangwile is a Congolese refugee and entrepreneur who lives in Kampala, Uganda. With support from the Re:BUiLD program, he was able to develop his [urban farm](#), helping him afford a better life for his family.

Uwizaimana Hadija - Nairobi, Re:BUiLD Client

*"I joined the market group 14 months ago that has helped me alot through financial trainings. Every refugee in the market is a member."*

Re:BUiLD through one of the partners, Pamoja Trust, is facilitating refugee [access to the market](#) through host-refugee networks.

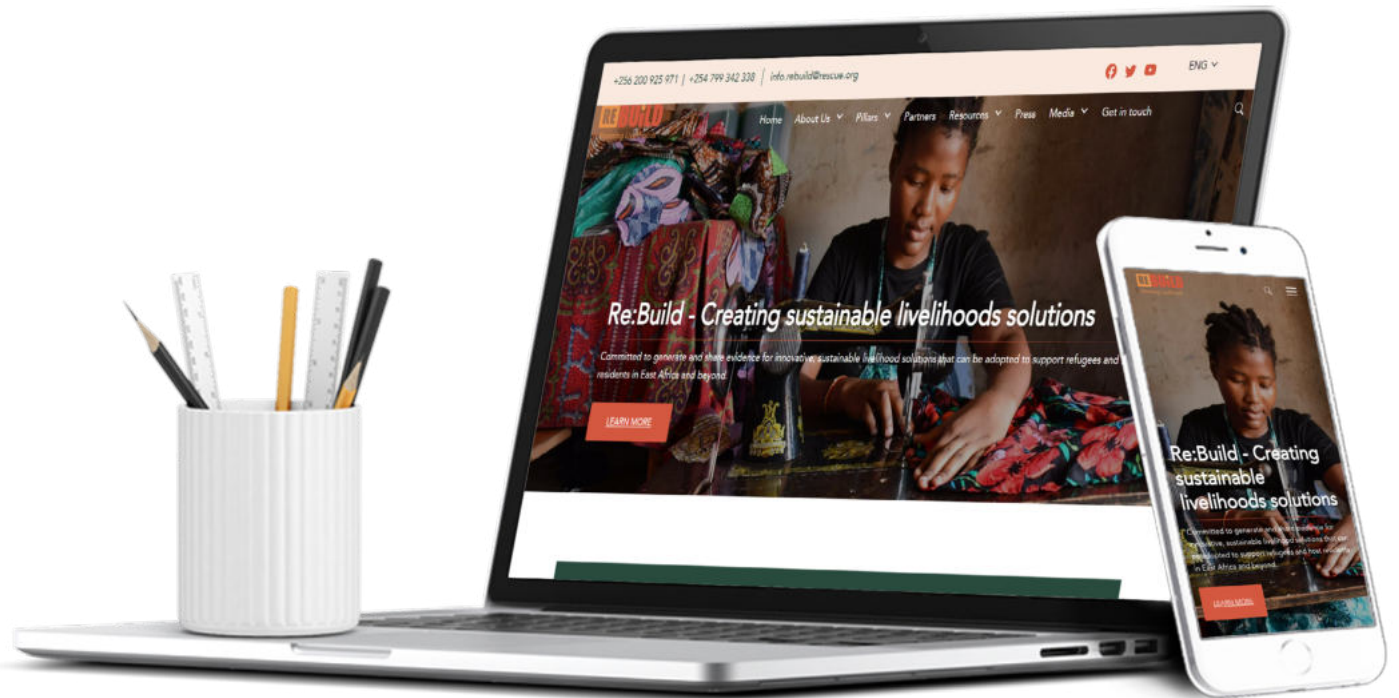


Josephine Nakabugu - Nairobi, Re:BUiLD Client

*"Now, I have a decent job that is helping me take care of my five children and two orphans."*

Nakabugu is among the refugees and hosts that were reached through the program's cash grant and mentorship support as part of the first wave of Re:BUiLD's randomized control trials (RCTs).





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.

## Key Moments/Days

- **Release of Re:BUiLD RCT Wave 1 Results - August/September 2024**
- **World Youth Day - 12th August**
- **World Entrepreneurs' Day - 21st August**
- **Urban Refugee's Symposium - 15 - 16th October 2024**