



Re:BUiLD - Refugees in East Africa: Boosting Urban Innovations for Livelihoods Development

A multifaceted approach to support urban refugees to build sustainable livelihoods in East Africa and to inspire evidence-based systemic change globally.



Challenge

Nearly 100 million people are displaced worldwide, the majority of whom are making their way to cities, which are beacons of economic opportunity. Yet these opportunities are frequently out of reach for refugees and other vulnerable residents. As a result, urban refugees struggle to build sustainable livelihoods and achieve long-term self-reliance. At the same time, programs to support them lack investment and evidence to show “what works.”

In 2021, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) with funding from the IKEA Foundation launched Re:BUiLD. The Re:BUiLD program is providing solutions and generating evidence and learnings through piloting innovations & responding to urban refugees’ needs. At €30 million over five years, this is one of the single largest investments in this space. Since its inception, Re:BUiLD has offered livelihood services to **7,870 clients** in Kampala and Nairobi comprising of **4,241 refugees and 3,629 nationals**. Of these **4,531 were female and 3,325 male** as of September 2023.

Initially focusing on Kampala (Uganda) and Nairobi (Kenya), Re:BUiLD is working to expand the evidence base on innovative and sustainable livelihoods solutions that can support refugees and host communities in East Africa and beyond.

Re:BUiLD approach

Re:BUiLD Pillars

1

Livelihoods Services

Supporting 20,000 refugees and other residents to find employment by attaining the skills most sought out by employers, or by starting/growing their own small businesses.

2

Evidence & Learning

Gathering evidence and learning through testing with randomized controlled trials, pilots, monitoring data, etc to illustrate what works to improve urban livelihoods.

3

Influence & Adoption

Establishing a bold influencing agenda aimed at challenging policies, practices and investments at national, regional and global levels.

Core Principals: Flexible & Adaptive | Continuous Experimentation | Client-Centered | Local Partnerships

Business Grants

A business grant from the Re:BUiLD program has enabled Francis Mubuyi, a Congolese refugee in Kampala, to set up an urban garden where he keeps rabbits and plants vegetables. The sale of these vegetables help him to take care of his wife and 1 child.

“The business grants are meant to support clients to start their own business or improve on existing ones to provide lessons on what works or doesn’t work for micro-enterprises targeting urban refugees and hosts,” said David Musiime, the Re:BUiLD Research Coordinator.

The business grant is part of the ongoing RCT approach. In Kampala, there are **2132 mentees** participating while there are **2,103 mentees** enrolled in Nairobi.



Re:BUiLD grant revives Mubuyi's farming dream, feels at home

"Back at home, my father was a great farmer. I always wanted to be like him. This is the only opportunity I have because working on my garden makes me feel at home."

- Francis Mubuyi - 36, a congolese refugee practicing urban farming in Kampala

Re:BUiLD Services

Re:BUiLD is flexible and adaptive by design, informed by continuous experimentation and learning. Its implementation is tied to a commitment to delivering livelihood services and community-driven market-based improvements targeting **20,000 refugees** and host residents in low-income neighborhoods in Kampala and Nairobi.

Through experimentation, Re:BUiLD has gathered valuable knowledge supporting clients get jobs or start/grow their own businesses, while managing financial risks by offering:

- Apprenticeship opportunities secured for refugees and vulnerable hosts that have undergone skills development and vocational training.
- Skills certification through recognition of prior learning
- Supporting Urban Savings and Loans (USLAs) groups by providing clients with a gateway to financial inclusion
- Loan Guarantee Fund to cushion financial service providers, unlocking the challenge hindering lending for refugees
- Mentees reached with micro-enterprise support under RCTs
- Clients trained on green energy, preparing them for green energy livelihood opportunities



Our Results as of September 2023

7,870 Clients accessing services	4,531 Female clients offered services
1,612 Reached with vocational training	141 Reached with green energy training
4,235 Mentees reached with microenterprise Support	411 Reached with digital skills training
615 Reached with apprenticeship	150 Engaged in clothing and textile value chain addition
112 Prior skills certified	58 USLA groups formed & trained

To learn more about Re:BUiLD, please contact

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