



About Us

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

Re:BUiLD uses a multifaceted approach to support urban refugees to build sustainable livelihoods in East Africa and to inspire evidence-based systemic change globally.

Background

In 2021, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) with funding from the IKEA Foundation launched Re:BUiLD.

The Re:BUiLD program provides solutions and generates 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 **20,738 clients** in Kampala and Nairobi comprising of **12,168 refugees** and **8,570 nationals**. Of these **12,393 were female** and **8,345 male** as of May 2025.

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

To learn more about Re:BUiLD, please contact:

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Re:BUiLD Pillars



Service Provision

Supporting over 20000 refugees and other residents to find employment by attaining the skills most sought out by employers, or by starting/growing their own small businesses.

Pillar Achievements in June 2025:

- Met target of registration of 500 clients for training by Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) on mushroom production, briquette making and keeping back soldier fly rearing pathways that were been found to offer more promise for clients in Kampala.
- Concluded a Loan Guarantee Fund (LGF) pilot with Equity Bank, our financial inclusion partner which proved refugee bankability, 69% of clients paid back principal and interest on loans borrowed from the financial service provider.



Evidence & Learning

Gathering evidence and learning through testing with randomized controlled trials, pilots, monitoring data, etc to illustrate what or doesn't work to improve urban livelihoods.

- IPA launched the midline survey for the wave 2 RCT, targeting 8,000 participants in Kampala and Nairobi.
- Data collection began for the wave 1 qualitative follow-up study, aiming to unpack mentorship effects for hosts and refugees in Kampala and Nairobi



Influence & Adoption

Influencing policies, practices and investments at the local, national, regional and global levels

- Re:BUiLD supported NCCG in developing and launching the refugee integration and community-building strategy to foster peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities through social cohesion, economic growth, improved services, and long-term stability.
- Re:BUiLD partnered with KCCA to enhance refugee inclusion in city services by training staff on refugee legal frameworks. This improved institutional understanding led to refugees being integrated into KCCA's upcoming strategic plan, supporting Uganda's Global Refugee Forum commitments.

Business Grants

In 2022, Moses Ngabo registered and qualified for a business grant. With KES 56,000 (530 Euros) from the grant, combined with his personal savings, he opened a dreadlocks salon in the Alsops area of Nairobi, a place he had previously worked and built a small base of loyal clients. The business grew steadily, regardless of the challenges, allowing Moses to create jobs for five Kenyan employees.

“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 **3,939 clients** participating, while **4,045 clients** are enrolled in Nairobi.



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. So far, 20,738 clients have been served in both cities, surpassing the target.

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

- Supporting Urban Savings and Loans (USLAs) groups by providing clients with a gateway to financial inclusion. 4,438 clients have so far accessed services through USLAs.
- Offering Loan Guarantee Fund to cushion financial service providers, unlocking the challenge hindering lending for refugees with 127 clients having accessed loans in Nairobi and 198 clients in Kampala.
- 12, 462 clients have been reached with micro-enterprise support under RCTs.
- 628 clients have been trained on green energy, preparing them for green energy livelihood opportunities



In partnership with:

