

**URBAN  
REFUGEES.ORG**  
RAISING THE VOICE OF THE INVISIBLE

**U**

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019 AT A GLANCE

### **PARTNERING**

with 2 urban refugee communities  
in Kampala, Uganda, benefiting nearly  
*2,000 refugee beneficiaries.*

### **STRENGTHENING**

the capacities of over 20 *refugee  
leaders* to provide durable skills for  
the self-reliance of over 2,000 *refugees  
and local-community beneficiaries.*

### **REACHING**

nearly 50,000 refugees in Kampala  
and 1.3 million refugees in Uganda



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*According to a recent UNHCR report, over 60% of today's refugees live in urban areas. Most are in dire living conditions and risky places which increases their vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, or disease. In cities around the world, refugees are already helping each other find solutions to the challenges they face : starting with basic needs, then education, and employment.*

## OUR MISSION

To develop the tools and provide the means that enable refugees to rebuild their lives in an independent and dignified manner.

## OUR VISION

Refugee-led organizations must become key stakeholders of the urban refugee response.





# I. WHO WE ARE

We believe in refugees.

We work directly with refugee leaders co-creating solutions for their communities in urban settings, enhancing their capacities and talents to achieve long-term sustainability.

Refugees are best positioned to understand their own challenges and to design the best suited solutions for

their communities living in cities. As a result, we believe in supporting Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) that address the unmet need for localized refugee self-ownership in humanitarian response.



***“WE BELIEVE  
IN REFUGEES.”***



## II. OUR APPROACH

### Strengthening Local Refugee-led Response

The UR team identifies RLOs and supports their leaders as partners, relying on their own experience as refugees, their knowledge of their needs and potential solutions.

### We developed our 3 PILLARS OF ACTION approach:

**1**  
*We support*  
URIP program

**2**  
*We connect*  
Like-Minded  
Network

**3**  
*We advocate*  
Lobbying for  
refugee leadership  
in urban response

Shima Bahre Abdallah



“The knowledge gained is something we will use for a lifetime.”

*Shima Abdalla of Sudanese Women for Peace and Development Association (SWPDA), a female-led RLO.*





# III. OUR WORK

## WE SUPPORT

### Urban Refugees Incubation Program (URIP)

URIP is a 12 month training and mentorship program designed to support RLOs in strengthening key technical and knowledge areas that address the most pressing organizational and community challenges.

#### URIP at a Glance

##### ► Training

We offer mentorship to RLO leaders to identify, develop, and sustain their solutions. Central themes include : ad hoc training, financial support, networking, communication, sharing of best practices, and project monitoring.

Each UR collaboration lasts approximately two years and impacts several thousand refugees.

##### ► Grant

Every RLO is provided with financial support up to \$5000 to support capacity development. Financial support may be in the form of a stipend for staff/leaders to support the professionalization of the RLO much needed-leadership.

Alternatively, the grant may be put towards more general support such as office rent or basic operations and logistics.



### RLO Selection Process for the Urban Refugees Incubation Program

*RLOs are selected according to three selection criteria:*

- 1•RLOs need to demonstrate how their activities impact their refugee community.
- 2•RLOs gender parity in the board. (at least 50% women)
- 3•More than 50% of the leadership is refugee-led.

# WE CONNECT

## The Like-Minded Network

UR has gradually created a network of Like-Minded NGOs, all dedicated to supporting RLOs to become key stakeholders in responses.

This Like-Minded Network is today composed of:

### URBAN REFUGEES

*(Uganda - Kampala)*



### Same Skies

*(Malaysia - Kuala Lumpur  
& Indonesia - Jakarta)*



### StARS

*(Egypt - Cairo)*



### Alps Resilience

*(South Africa - Johannesburg)*



### Xavier Project

*(Kenya - Nairobi)*



The Like-Minded Network seeks to reshape humanitarian governance towards locally-owned refugee response, benefitting from mutual experiences and exploring innovative approaches looking to:

- ▶ *Share best practices and program challenges.*
- ▶ *Advocate for donors and humanitarian workers to support capacity-building opportunities for RLOs in urban areas.*
- ▶ *Strategize creative and pragmatic avenues to better support RLOs in refugee-hosting cities.*





# WE ADVOCATE

## Lobbying for refugee leadership in urban response

*We actively lobby for RLOs to become active partakers and key stakeholders in urban, humanitarian, and development responses.*

### Advocacy Efforts in 2019

#### Resilience Training delivered to Allianz.

- ▶ Represented UR's first foray into establishing private sector partnership featuring Allianz, a European multinational financial services company headquartered in Munich, Germany.
- ▶ Showcased the need to include refugee-membership in refugee-related decision-making, and training was delivered in partnership with refugee leader.



#### Engaging in dialogue and partnership with refugee relief agencies.

*(UNHCR offices and INGOs such as the International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, and the Norwegian Refugee Council.)*

- ▶ UR established a partnership and led training sessions for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to highlight the key role of RLOs and how to meaningfully engage with them.
- ▶ Podcast feature on “Une sacrée paire d'ovaires” (a running podcast to tell the lives of women and gender minorities forgotten in history) highlighting the unique potential of RLOs once they are adequately supported by global aid mechanisms and through capacity development.





# IV. YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION

## *URIP in Kampala*

### **Kampala Context**

**1.3 million:** Represents the estimated number of refugees living in Uganda today. An estimated **46,000 refugees** currently live in Kampala, mostly from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

### **UR's Response**

In August 2019, UR launched the URIP program in Uganda and partnered with two trusted and active RLOs in Kampala.







## ***RLO Partner Spotlight: SWPDA***

*Sudanese Women for Peace and Development Association (SWPDA)*

In August, the UR team began Uganda's first URIP with SWPDA. SWPDA is an organization of women refugee leaders based in Kampala. They are committed to empowering Sudanese refugee women by supporting the social and material needs of women in their community.

*SWPDA supports over  
250 Sudanese refugee women,  
600 children and 200 men  
in Kampala.*



# Why it Matters

## Why it Matters: Responding to Women's Needs

SWPDA in Kampala addresses the following issues :

### ► Sexual and gender-based violence:

Sudanese women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) need safe shelter and psychological support.

### ► Social adaptation: English and Luganda are Uganda's main spoken languages.

However, only a minority of Sudanese refugees have a basic command of English, and even fewer have any familiarity with Luganda.

### ► Job support: While Sudanese culture typically discourages women's employment, most Sudanese women rely on themselves to financially support themselves and their households following displacement to Kampala.

## ► SWPDA Responds

*Employing a community-based approach, SWPDA responds to these needs through the following means:*

### ► Women's Protection and Empowerment:

SWPDA provides a shelter for Sudanese women fleeing SGBV, expecting mothers, and women seeking cultural normalcy in exile.

- **Referrals:** SWPDA facilitates access to a network of NGOs to over 100 women every year, on issues of health, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and language classes

### ► Income Generation: SWPDA creates opportunities for over 250 refugee women and local entrepreneurs, by hosting trainings and workshops, including organizational development and household supply crafting

### ► Food and household item distribution:

Ramadan bags (sugar, rice, porridge, cooking oil and soap) are distributed every year to vulnerable families, totaling between 350 and 500 bags. "Mama kits" for pregnant women. (diapers, baby carriers, soap, and other necessities for expecting women.)

“ You find women going through domestic violence and there is no one to help them. ”

*Shima Abdalla, Deputy Chairperson and Project Manager, SWPDA.*

“ Refugee-Led Organizations work to improve coexistence between the refugee community and host community.

*At SWPDA, we actively incorporate host community members in direct aid, communal events, and facilitating job opportunities. ”*

*Shima Abdalla, Deputy Chairperson and Project Manager, SWPDA.*

# RLO Partner Spotlight: USSURC

*United South Sudanese Urban Refugees Community (USSURC)*

Through a partnership network of local NGOs in Kampala, USSURC became the second RLO to partner with UR and be a part of the URIP capacity development program. USSURC was founded in 2017 with the vision of gathering the South Sudanese community beyond tribalism and political differences and aiming to improve their living standards and welfare.

*USSURC  
serves over  
**700 direct  
beneficiaries.***

▼ *Liquid soap making, one of USSURC's community income generating activities.*





# Why it Matters

## Responding to Needs of Urban Refugees

*USSURC's mission to support refugees in Kampala seeks to address:*

► **Livelihood Vulnerability:** South Sudanese refugees face limited access to public facilities, e.g. Hospitals, Universal Primary Education, and education programmes. Refugees in Kampala face difficulties to receive public services such as public healthcare and public schooling.

► **Income Security:** Many refugees in Kampala, especially women, struggle to meet the economic demands to provide their families with access to education, healthcare, and daily living costs.

► **Social and Legal Acclimation:** As refugee communities settle in Kampala, they face a series of new challenges such as: adherence to registration processes, accessing information on public and private services, and risks of exploitative mistreatments from landlords and host population due to a limited understanding of their legal rights.

## ► USSURC Responds

*USSURC supports nearly 700 refugees in Kampala through:*

► **Network Development:** Such as referrals to partners, to ensure access to key public services, such as healthcare and education. These partners include the International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Jesuit Refugee Service, Norwegian Refugee Council.

► **Income Generating Activities:** Such as tailoring, soap or candle making, English and Luganda training classes, and training in Information and Communication Technologies.

► **Ad Hoc Assistance and Material Support:** That includes legal assistance in landlord and tenant relations, and in case of illegal arrest of refugees and community members. USSURC also provides financial support to cover school fees for families and children.

Keyidri Idri Ezbon



“*Refugee-Led Organizations act on behalf of the community to reach to stakeholders and seek available opportunities for refugees. As refugee leaders, we lobby and establish partnerships with local and national NGOs to enable the movement of services to our people in areas of health, education, livelihoods.*”

*Keyidri Idri Ezbon, Board Member, USSURC.*

# URIP MILESTONES

- ▶ SWPDA successfully completed the Fundraising and the Financial Management modules.

UR worked alongside SWPDA to manage \$5,000 grant funding for the training of refugee leaders in financial management.

- ▶ USSURC carried out the training module on Fundraising, for the potential benefit of over 600 people.

*Through UR programming,  
we supported two RLOs that  
serve nearly **2000** refugees:*

***950 as direct beneficiaries  
(at least 250 were Sudanese  
refugee women) and over  
600 children in Kampala.***







# TESTIMONIES:

## Shima Bahre Abdallah

*Deputy Chairperson and Project Manager, SWPDA*

“ This first experience was difficult, but I learned a lot. I feel very confident in writing proposals now and I am determined to write many more in the future. ”

“ We feel like many doors can be opened to us now ! ”



## Keyidri Idri Ezbon

*Board Member, USSURC*

“ The incubation program represents a concrete step to address barriers to refugee participation: Training and capacity building of Refugee-Led Organizations to ensure they have the tools from project management to communications to their partners referring their members for immediate support to get food assistance, health issues, insecurities and Sexual Gender Based Violence. ”

# V. MEANS OF ACTION

## ***PARTNERSHIP AND FINANCING***

UR delivers its program within the framework of the consortium of NGOs in Kampala, which is funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (US Department of State) and composed of:

- International Rescue Committee
- Mercy Corps
- YARID (Young African Refugees For Integral Development)

### ***UR financial partners:***

- Inkerman Foundation
- RAJA Foundation
- Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (US Department of State)

- Global Giving
- American Jewish World Service (AJWS)
- Agir Sa Vie
- Global Development Group
- Ashoka





# THANK YOU

To our partners and supporters, we thank you for enabling us to do the work we do. As we celebrate our achievements in 2019, we also realize there is still a lot of work to be done to achieve effective refugee participation in the humanitarian response system. The call for action has never been more clear.

By supporting UR, you help us expand and refine our RLO partnering efforts in new contexts. On a larger scale, you ensure the advancement of a global movement seeking to empower refugees through their access to replicable skill-development models.

**Support us today:** [www.urban-refugees.org/donate](http://www.urban-refugees.org/donate)





# CONNECT WITH US



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