

**Reducing Environmental
Degradation (RED)
in the Refugee Context
in Uganda**

Brief Series No. 3

Gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) in refugee settings

Local leaders' perspectives on enhancing gender integration

November 2024



Summary

Sustainable natural resources management requires the active participation of multiple stakeholders. Considering the different but critical roles that men and women play in the sustainable management of natural resources, there is a need to directly involve both in the design and implementation of natural resource management plans. However, men still largely dominate the arena of planning and decision making regarding the use, access and management of natural resources. Women's views are often under-represented, and their practical and strategic needs often not addressed. Gender-responsive environmental action planning (GREAP) ensures that all users of natural resources, including different categories of people, particularly vulnerable groups, are brought on board through participatory methodologies. This includes refugee and host communities, to ensure the sustainable use and management of natural resources in refugee settings. This brief presents gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) for five different refugee hosting districts of Uganda.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background information: Refugee status in Uganda

Africa hosts over 30% of the world's displaced people. Uganda has the largest number of refugees in Africa, hosting a total of 1,741,331 refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries, with 55% from South Sudan and 31% from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (UNHCR 2024). Uganda's open-door refugee policy offers unique opportunities for refugees, like allocation of land parcels for settlement and agriculture, and the right to work and start businesses. One objective in the Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan (UCRRP) is harmonious co-existence between the refugee and host communities (UNHCR 2023). Adjumani settlement currently hosts the highest number of refugees at 225,096, followed by Bidibidi settlement with 201,683, and Nakivale settlement with 197,443. Of the total refugee population, 51.3% are females and 48.6% are males, and 79% are women and children. Since the start of 2024, more than 129,857 new arrivals, including 25,134 new births, have been registered in Uganda (UNHCR 2024).

1.2 About the Reducing Environmental Degradation (RED) project

The goal of the Reducing Environmental Degradation (RED) project is to enhance environmental protection, forest restoration and sustainable energy for displaced

populations and host communities in the districts of Adjumani, Madi-Okollo, Terego, Kiryandongo and Yumbe. Project outputs are monitored by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Five district-based gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) were developed under the Response to Increased Environmental Degradation and Promotion of Alternative Energy Sources in Refugee Hosting Districts project, implemented 2021 to 2024 with support from the European Union Trust Fund. Technical support for gender integration was provided by Ag Sciences Global at Pennsylvania State University's College of Agricultural Sciences, which is collaborating with ICRAF, with funding from the United States Department of Agriculture - National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA), and the Hatch Appropriations of the United States Government. The project is implemented in a consortium made up of the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), also known as World Agroforestry, which has now merged with Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); the NGO Joint Energy and Environment Projects (JEEP); and Enabel under the leadership of Save the Children International (SCI). At CIFOR-ICRAF, the RED project is part of the [Refugee-Hosting Engagement Landscape Programme](#).

The development of gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) in the Ugandan refugee settings contributed to the RED project's outputs on: (i) improved capacity for gender-responsive environmental programming; and (ii) increased women's participation in decision making. They also directly benefitted: (i) 100 staff members of the local government; and (ii) 100 staff members of civil society organizations involved in environment and energy focused organizations in the refugee context (Table 1). The GREAPs align with the RED project's aim to promote environmental protection and sustainable energy access for displaced populations in Uganda's West Nile and Mid-Western regions.

1.3 Background information on the gender-responsive environmental action plans for refugee settings

Gendered social roles shape experiences of natural resource management, from access to energy to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Forced displacement can exacerbate resource competition, leading to adverse impacts like increased risk of food insecurity, competition for natural resources including cooking energy, malnutrition, conflict, and increased gender-based violence. Studies within the RED project – namely the baseline study, literature review, gender analysis, and capacity needs assessment for gender integration in natural resource and environmental

Table 1. RED project outcomes, outputs and beneficiaries

Expected outcomes	Expected outputs	Direct beneficiaries	Indirect beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to sustainable energy sources Increased capacity to develop and maintain a diversity of energy sources. Reduced dependence on unsustainable energy Decreased conflicts between refugees and host communities Strengthened local energy, environment, and climate programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of inclusive market systems for alternative energy Development of a social behaviour change strategy for awareness and training Creation of green livelihood opportunities for young people and women Distribution of energy-efficient stoves and heat-retaining bags Enhanced conflict resolution mechanisms Improved capacity for gender-responsive environmental programming Development of policy guidelines for resource management Operational mechanisms for coordinated local action Increased women's participation in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 234,800 refugees and host populations Adolescents, young people, and women: 3,000 individuals accessing green income generating activities Female-headed households: 44,000 households (60%), including young mothers and persons with disabilities Energy efficient technology recipients: 231,000 individuals Local government employees: 100 staff members Civil society personnel: 100 from environmental and energy-focused organizations Private sector involvement: 30 companies contributing to technology awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,128,500 individuals, including: Local and national government members Participants in water catchment management zones Children and young people in schools and trading centres

management – highlighted the differing roles, needs and opportunities of diverse categories of people (Save the Children 2021, 2022). These studies showed that sociocultural values significantly hindered gender equity, particularly in women's participation in natural resources management. Access to resources is predominantly dominated by men, with women facing limited ownership and decision-making rights due to entrenched gender norms (Kyomuhendo et al. 2024). While women can use resources like land and fuelwood, their role in decision making remains marginalized. One lesson from the studies was that capacity building on gender-responsive programming was essential, along with the creation of a supportive environmental regulatory framework for sustainable energy technologies. Lessons also informed the development of the gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs), which align with Uganda's constitutional and policy frameworks, to promote gender equity in natural resource governance and the integrated involvement of both refugee and host communities.

1.4 Aim and objectives of GREAPs in the refugee context

Development of the GREAPs aimed at enhancing inclusivity by ensuring the participation of women, young people, refugee and host communities in decision making around sustainable natural resources use and management.

Objectives of the GREAPs include:

- Enhancing gender equity and inclusivity through the active participation of women, young people,

people living with disabilities, refugee and host communities in natural resource management and governance.

- Developing a framework for planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of gender-responsive livelihood and environmental outcomes in natural resource and environmental management.

1.5 Methodology

A total of 22 consultative meetings were held to facilitate systematic discussions with stakeholders on opportunities for integrating gender perspectives into environmental legislation in the five refugee hosting districts. To facilitate in-depth discussions for envisioning and action planning, participants were divided into groups comprised of political and technical staff from sub-county and district local government bodies, representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Refugee Welfare Council representatives, private sector representatives, school teachers running environment clubs and student representatives. These meetings specifically focused on proposing objectives and activities for the gender-responsive environment action plans, setting targets and indicators, means of verification, resources required and responsible implementers. A total of 265 (176 males and 89 females) stakeholders, both nationals (240) and refugees (25), participated in development of the GREAPs.

Table 2. Stakeholders that participated in the development of the GREAPs in each district

District	Nationality	Age category						Total		People with disabilities	
		<25 years		25-59 years		>60 years					
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Madi-Okollo	Refugees	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0
	Nationals	2	0	25	6	3	0	30	6	1	2
Yumbe	Refugees	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0
	Nationals	2	2	30	10	2	3	34	15	4	3
Terego	Refugees	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0
	Nationals	1	1	20	11	5	2	26	14	3	2
Adjumani	Refugees	1	0	3	3	0	0	4	3	0	0
	Nationals	1	0	41	20	1	6	43	26	6	5
Kiryandongo	Refugees	1	0	3	3	0	0	4	3	0	0
	Nationals	0	1	25	14	5	1	30	16	4	2
TOTAL		8	4	152	73	16	12	176	89	18	14

1.6 Process of developing the GREAPs

- **Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT):** An audit was conducted to ascertain prevailing conditions within the district in terms of strengths, weaknesses borne by the individual district's local government, opportunities from outside the district, and threats that could influence the implementation of the action plans.
- **Vision setting:** An insight into what participants would like to see their districts look like in 5 to 10 years, assuming that natural resources were sustainably managed, and gender was integrated in energy, environment and climate change structures. This led to the development of the vision for a fully adopted gender action plan (envisioning).
- **Development of action plans:** This final part of the process involved the statement of objectives, activities, targets, indicators, means of verification, resources required and responsible implementers. Compiled together, this constituted the consolidated GREAP (see Tables 3 to 7).



2 Gender responsive environmental action plans in the refugee context

This section presents a summary of the gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) developed by local leaders for each of the five districts.

Table 3. Gender-responsive environmental action plan (GREAP) for Adjumani District

Objectives	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Vision: Inclusive natural resource management for sustainable development in the refugee context by 2030				
Awareness creation on gender-responsive natural resource and environmental management (NR & EM)	Conduct radio talk shows on the need for equal access and control of natural resources.	Quarterly radio talk shows with gender-responsive messages in 5 years (2025–2030) Local communities and political leaders	# of radio talk shows conducted # of gender-responsive messages	• Recordings
	Conduct community dialogue around gender integration in environmental management and establishing energy hubs	Quarterly dialogue meetings at subcounty level: 200 people per parish (including men, women, young people, adolescents, people with disabilities and leaders)	# of community dialogues conducted # of gender integration actions agreed upon	• Attendance records • Minutes
Promote the adoption of efficient energy technologies that address people's needs	Organize workshops specifically for women and marginalized groups to build skills in using and maintaining efficient energy technologies (e.g. improved cooking stoves, heat retaining baskets)	30,000 households (60% female headed, including young mothers) with both refugee and host community households involved	# of households and institutions using energy saving technologies. Perceptions documented on how the energy saving technologies meet people's needs	• Database of households and institutions • Report
	Create targeted awareness campaigns highlighting the benefits of efficient energy technologies, focusing on how they can empower women and improve household livelihoods	50 institutions (including schools, places of worship and hospitals)	# institutions highlighting how efficient energy use can empower women Women empowerment messages	• Report
Formulation of bylaws that enhance gender integration in NR & EM and dissemination of existing policies	Organize workshops that bring together diverse stakeholders, including women, young people and marginalized communities, to co-create bylaws and policies that reflect their needs and perspectives	Two gender-responsive bylaws at sub-county level formulated	# bylaws formulated	• Council resolution/ minutes
	Launch awareness campaigns to educate people about existing policies and their rights related to NR & EM, ensuring information is accessible and inclusive	10 (bi-annual) awareness campaigns launched	# of campaigns # of gender-responsive messages	• Report
Enhance restoration and conservation of natural resources and environment with approaches that are gender-responsive	Engage women and marginalized groups in participatory mapping to identify local natural resources, their usage, and priority restoration interventions (e.g. agroforestry -woodlots, avenue tree growing)	10,000 households (men, women, young people, adolescents, people with disabilities and the elderly at 50 institutions)	# of different categories of people and institutions involved	• List of households growing trees • # of trees and species grown for various uses per household
	Develop community-led restoration projects that prioritize women's involvement and integration of traditional knowledge and practices			

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Table 3. Continued

Objectives	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Strengthen capacity of different categories of people in sustainable in NR & EM	Training in gender-responsive programming	600 leaders technical and political leaders including men, women, people with disabilities, elderly and young people trained	# of leaders trained Success stories on gender-responsive programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance and training reports Success stories
	Integration of gender in existing NR & EM structures through affirmative action and sensitizing members on their roles and responsibilities from district to village level	All different categories of people represented in the existing NR & EM structures	Composition of the structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender disaggregated data Reports
Promote sustainable waste management that integrates circular bioeconomy and gender	Organize workshops focused on waste segregation, resource recovery, reuse and recycling, specifically targeting women and young people to build skills, enterprises and encourage community involvement	40 youth groups, 40 women's groups and 4 groups for people with disabilities and the elderly	# of groups and categories of people trained # of waste recovery enterprises participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance records Gender disaggregated data

Table 4. Gender-responsive environmental action plan (GREAP) for Kiryandongo District

Objectives	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Vision: Natural resource management that integrates the needs and potential of women, girls and young people for sustainable development in the refugee context by 2030				
Awareness creation on gender-responsive NR & EM	Sensitize women and community members so they can share knowledge and best practices on sustainable resource management and restoration techniques	120 sensitization sessions (60 in the 43 parishes and 17 clusters within the refugee settlement) 15 acres of trees grown per parish targeting: men 20%, women 30%, young people 40%, people with disabilities 5% and elderly 5% 150 public institutions	# of sensitization meetings held at parish level and clusters in the refugee hosting settlements # of acres of grown trees Gender of people trained and growing trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance list List of households growing trees Area of woodland planted
	Conduct dialogue meetings on land restoration with all the district and local leadership focusing on the importance of gender equality in conservation	300 (60 dialogue meetings conducted higher and LLG and Refugee Welfare Council leadership) per year	# of meetings held % of different categories of people involved # gender-responsive messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance records Minutes of meetings
	Conduct radio talk shows on importance of gender equality in conservation, highlighting successful women-led initiatives in natural resource management	20 radio talk shows on landscape restoration targeting all categories of people	# of talk shows broadcast # of gender-responsive messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded radio talk shows
	<i>Barazas</i> (community dialogues) to discuss policies that recognize and support women's roles in NR & EM and integration of their interest into the broader environmental strategies	70 community <i>barazas</i> (dialogues) held in the 13 lower local governments and refugee settlements (with a target of 50% female and 50% male attendees)	# of <i>barazas</i> conducted % of different categories of people # of gender-responsive messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance records Reports Action plans Presentations
Promote sustainable waste management techniques that integrate a circular bioeconomy and gender	Develop targeted campaigns that sensitize and educate different categories of people on sustainable waste management (including resource recovery, reuse and recycling), using local languages and culturally relevant messages	50 sensitization meetings conducted Enterprise development on resource recovery, reuse and recycling	# of sensitization meetings conducted # of enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of attendance Enterprises and Minutes with resolutions

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Table 4. Continued

Objectives	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
	Host dialogue meetings where community members discuss sustainable waste management challenges and solutions, ensuring that women's voices and ideas are prioritized and heard	20 (quarterly) community dialogues conducted	% of different categories of people involved in the consultation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes Photos from meetings
	Develop excavation and remediation strategies that address the specific needs and roles of different genders within communities	Four dumping sites established	# of established and operational dumping sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos Reports
Increase access and ownership rights of land especially among women and young people	Mobilize and sensitize community on land ownership rights to enable women and vulnerable groups to own and develop their personal registered land	70 community mobilization and sensitization meetings held at lower local governments and refugee settlement 300 (60 dialogue meetings conducted at District Local governments, Lower local government and Refugee Welfare Council leadership) per year	# of dialogue meetings conducted per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance records
Enhance adoption of energy efficient technologies	Involve women and other marginalized groups in the planning and decision-making processes for energy projects to ensure their perspectives and needs are addressed	500 women involved in planning and decision making	# of women involved in planning and decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training reports
	Organize trainings specifically for women and other marginalized groups to build skills in using and maintaining energy efficient technologies	1,000 people trained in the construction, utilization and maintenance of energy saving technologies	# of cooking stoves constructed % of cooking stoves being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance lists Data on usage
	Increase coverage of rural electrification programme targeting different categories of people	340 villages connected to the national grid 60% of female-headed households connected to the national grid	# and categories of people trained # of female-headed households connected to national grid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of households connected
Formulation of bylaws and ordinances enhancing gender integration and dissemination of existing NR & EM policies	Facilitate community consultations that specifically engage women and marginalized groups to gather their insights and recommendations on NR & EM bylaws	20 (quarterly) meetings organized at subcounty level	# of meetings organized at subcounty level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes signed with resolutions
	Formulation of gender-responsive ordinances and bylaws for the sustainable harvesting of tree resources and management of degraded land	At least four gender-responsive policy documents developed	# of gender-responsive bylaws formulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed and enacted bylaws
Strengthen existing environment coordination structures and enhance women's participation	Reactivation of existing structures (e.g., environment committees) with enhanced participation of women and other marginalized groups	Train 100 community, subcounty and district-level trainers on approaches for effective women's participation in energy, environmental and climate actions	# of active committees with different categories of people at all levels % of women in coordination structures and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training reports Attendance lists
Capacity building of leaders on gender-responsive NR & EM	Train leaders at different levels on gender-responsive programming in NR & EM targeting all categories of people	Train 50 district, subcounty and community leaders in gender-responsive programming targeting all categories of people	# of leaders trained in gender-responsive programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports Attendance records

Table 5. Gender-responsive environmental action plan (GREAP) for Madi-Okollo District

Objective	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Vision: Equal participation, accessibility and benefits from sustainably managed natural resources in the refugee context by 2030				
Awareness creation on gender-responsive NR & EM	Sensitization of all categories of people (men, women, young people, people with disabilities and the elderly) on sustainable NR & EM through meetings and radio talk shows	46 sensitization meetings (1 meeting per parish) involving 10,000 women and 10,000 men, including young people, people with disabilities and the elderly	# of different categories of people sensitized # of sensitization meetings held	• Attendance records
		20 radio talks	# of radio talk shows # of gender-responsive messages	• Recordings
	Capacity building of district, refugee settlement and subcounty leaders, institutional and religious leaders on gender-responsive programming for sustainable NR & EM	246 leaders trained Quarterly workshops held targeting political, technical, religious, cultural and Refugee Welfare Council leaders	# of gender programming training workshops held # leaders trained	• Reports • Attendance records
	Develop gender-responsive communication materials	1000 brochures, fliers on gender-responsive NR & EM Monthly spot radio messages	# of communication materials # of radio messages aired # of gender-responsive messages	• Spot on radio messages • Communication materials
Strengthen women's participation and other marginalized groups in coordination structures related to NR & EM	Conduct dialogue meetings about the need for gender integration in NR & EM coordination structures	20 (quarterly) dialogue meetings	# dialogue meetings held	• Attendance records • Minutes
	Training on gender-responsive environment programming	Five training sessions on approaches to increase participation of women and other categories of people in NR & EM	# of trainings conducted # of people involved and how	• Reports • Pre and post training results • Gender disaggregated data
Enhance restoration of degraded areas through gender-responsive interventions	Tree growing and involvement of women and other vulnerable groups in of raise seedlings	Grow trees on 46 acres – at least one acre per parish	# of acres planted # of women, young people and other marginalized groups involved and how	• Woodlots • Seedlings planted • Report on benefits
		Raising and growing of 50,000 tree seedlings by women, young people, men and other categories of people	# of tree seedlings produced # of trees grown	
		Institutional planting involving different categories of people	# of trees grown in institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals, places of worship and public places)	
	Implementation of gender-responsive farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR), targeting women, young people, men and other categories of marginalized group of people	46 sites (one per parish) working on farmer-managed natural regeneration	# of sites working on farmer-managed natural regeneration % of women, young people and other vulnerable groups involved in and benefitting from farmer-managed natural regeneration	• Farmer-managed natural regeneration sites • Report with gender disaggregated data on benefits
	Establishment of gender-responsive soil conservation and land management demonstration sites	46 demonstration sites established for soil and land management targeting women, young people, men and other categories of people	# of soil and land management sites % of different categories of people involved	• Reports on benefits • Established demonstration sites

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Table 5. Continued

Objective	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
	Capacity building on gender-responsive sustainable waste management involving different categories of marginalized group of people	2,300 households trained on gender-responsive sustainable waste management, including circular bioeconomy, waste recovery, reuse and recycling, involving all categories of people	# of households practising sustainable waste management % of women, young people and other vulnerable groups leading interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on participation and benefits • Attendance records
	Sensitization on wetland and fire management targeting women, young people, men and other categories of marginalized group of people	12 (bi-annual) sensitization meetings on wetlands and fire management	# of sensitization meetings conducted % of different categories of people involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Attendance records • Recordings
Implementation of policy, regulations and interventions enabling sustainable charcoal production, business and utilization	Capacity development on energy saving technologies, including sustainable charcoal production practices targeting women, young people, men and marginalized group of people	46 trainings organized (a training per parish per year) targeting women, young people, men and marginalized groups of people 1,599 people (including traders and charcoal producers, local council leaders, Refugee Welfare Councils, religious and cultural leaders)	# of training sessions on energy saving technologies organized # of different categories of people trained and benefitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on participation and benefits • Attendance records
	Dissemination and enforcement of the charcoal regulation ordinance targeting producers and enforcement staff	Enacted ordinance to regulate charcoal production and business for enhanced socioeconomic sustainability 1,200 traders and charcoal producers and 283 law enforcement staff	# of cases and offences reported to the police % charcoal produced sustainably Amount budgeted for enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance • Database on charcoal production, marketing and use.

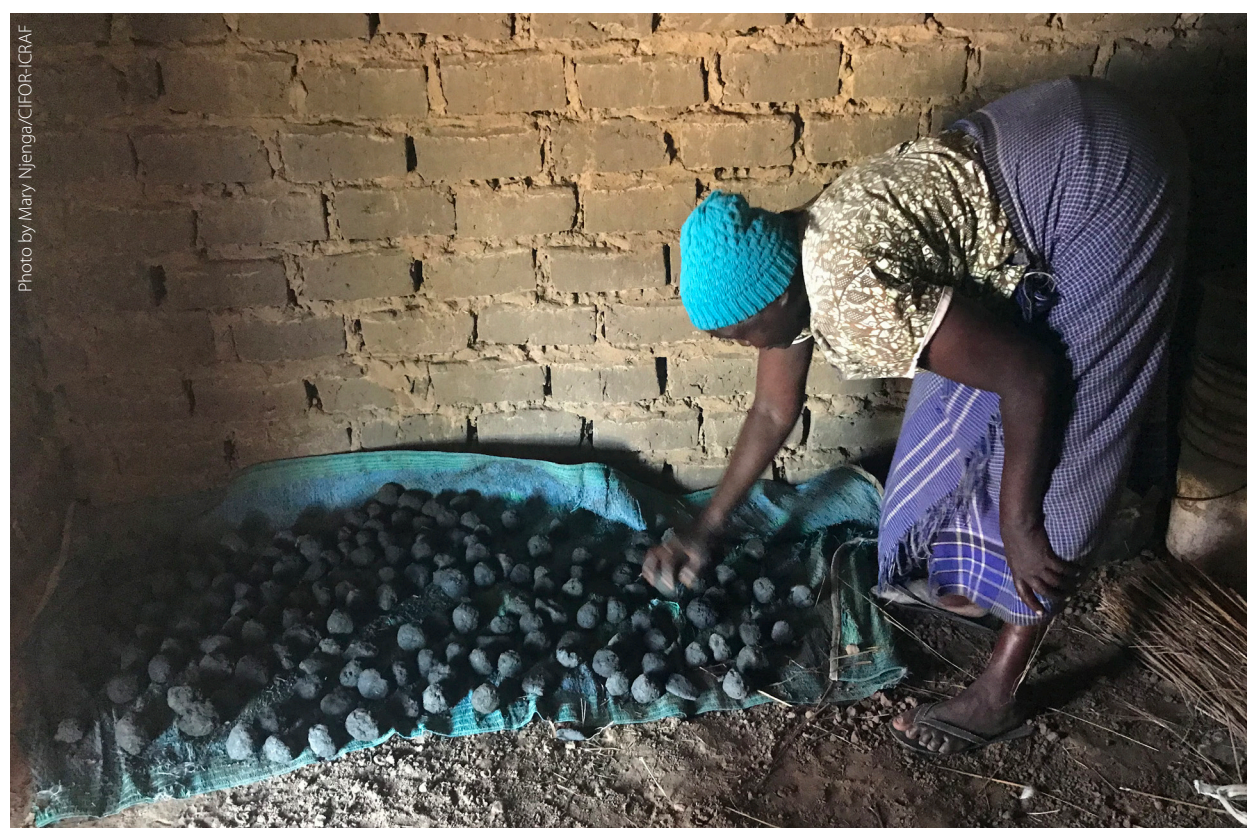


Photo by Mary Njenga/CIFOR/CRAF

Table 6. Gender-responsive environmental action plan (GREAP) for Terego District

Objectives	Activities	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Vision: Gender integration in natural resource management for sustainable development in refugee context by 2030				
Increase participation of women and other marginalized groups in energy, environment and climate change interventions	Affirmative action for employment of women and other marginalized groups in energy, environment and climate actions	At least 50% of the employment opportunities and contracts at district local government (DLG) and subcounty levels awarded to women and marginalized groups	% of employment opportunities and contracts offered to the target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of awarded contracts Minutes for award committees and district service commission
	Conduct advocacy/dialogue meetings, energy hubs on the benefits of men and women's collaboration in addressing negative gender norms and practices	20 (quarterly) advocacy meetings for men and women's collaboration in addressing negative gender norms and practices	# of advocacy meetings held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes Attendance records
	Conduct radio talk shows to increase understanding of gender integration in natural resource management	20 radio talk shows focusing on gender integration in natural resource management	# of radio talk shows conducted # of gender-responsive messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recordings
	Translate gender, energy, environment and climate change guidelines into local languages (Lugbara, Arabic and Kakwa)	Three guidelines translated At least 50% of the lower local government leaders able to access translated materials	# of translated materials # of people (gender disaggregated data) with access to translated materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translated materials Report on access to translated materials
	Develop a framework for collection of disaggregated data on gender and other vulnerable groups	All energy, environment and climate change projects/programmes have gender disaggregated data for all vulnerable group categories	Sufficient disaggregated data collected on gender and other vulnerable groups to facilitate data analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaggregated data collection protocol for gender and other vulnerable group categories
Incorporate gender considerations in energy, environment and climate change interventions to ensure inclusivity and sustainability	Advocate for technologies appropriate for all categories of people	At least 70% of women and marginalized groups accessing appropriate technologies	# of technologies adopted by women and vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of beneficiaries Technologies on the ground
	Conduct local community dialogues to develop and incorporate gender in their traditional/customary guidelines on land tenure	20 (quarterly) dialogue meetings held for developing, popularizing and enforcing traditional/customary guidelines on land tenure to enable women to own land	# of dialogue meetings held # of guidelines developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes Attendance records Copies of developed guidelines
	Promote and support girls' empowerment and education (human capital development)	90% of the girls within the district enrolled in different institutions of learning	# of girls completing different levels of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration records
Increase women's access to and ownership of land for effective implementation of energy, environment and climate change interventions	Mobilize and sensitize community on land ownership rights to enable women and vulnerable groups to use, own and develop land	20 dialogue meetings held for developing, popularizing, and enforcing traditional/customary guidelines on land tenure to improve land ownership by all	# of dialogue meetings conducted per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes with resolutions Attendance records

Table 7. Gender-responsive environmental action plan (GREAP) for Yumbe District

Objective	Activity	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
Vision: Equitable opportunities to access, participate in and benefit from natural resource management initiatives for sustainable development by 2030				
Capacity building on environment, energy and climate actions and gender integration	Skills development for women, young people and other vulnerable groups in energy and environment related interventions	30 youth groups, 10 women's groups, 5 groups for people with disabilities and 5 groups for the elderly trained in energy and environment related interventions	# of groups of different categories of people trained # of interventions adopted	• Attendance records • Evaluation reports
	Forming and training of environmental clubs in schools (primary and secondary) around energy, environment and climate related interventions	140 environmental clubs in schools formed and trained, including both boys and girls	# of school environment clubs formed # of students trained and gender disaggregated data	• Attendance records • Evaluation reports
	Energy hubs – exhibitions targeting different categories of people	20 exhibitions	# of exhibitions held involving different categories of people # of people and gender disaggregated data	• Reports
	Training of artisans in energy saving technologies, targeting young people	1000 artisans (young people and women) to be trained on different energy saving technologies	# of artisans trained and gender disaggregated data # of energy saving stoves constructed household and gender disaggregated data on use of energy saving technologies Performance of energy saving technologies	• Attendance records • Evaluation reports
	Training leaders of different categories (people with disabilities, elderly, young people, women and men) in gender-responsive programming	60 leaders trained in gender-responsive programming	# of gender-responsive action plans developed # of people trained	• Attendance records • Evaluation reports
Enhance restoration of degraded landscapes with gender-responsive interventions	Involve different categories of people in environmental restoration interventions (e.g., establishment of woodlots, agroforestry, re-afforestation, FMNR)	100,000 households (with different categories of people) practising different environmental restoration practices that answer people's needs and use their potential	# of people involved in environmental restoration interventions Data on gender and other vulnerable group categories for those involved	• Existing woodlots
	Promote and support green enterprises (natural resource based) among women's groups and other marginalized groups	Training groups on green enterprises and how to manage them	# of green enterprises established # of people involved in green enterprises established Data on gender and other vulnerable group categories for those involved	• Groups practising green enterprises
Awareness creation and capacity development on integration of gender in energy, environment and climate actions	Conduct dialogue meetings on effective participation of different categories of people in energy, environment and climate action	100 dialogue meetings targeting different categories of people	# of representatives from different categories of people participating in dialogue meetings	• Meeting minutes • Attendance records

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Table 7. Continued

Objective	Activity	Target and audience	Indicators	Means of verification
	Radio talk shows on gender integration in NR & EM	12 radio talk shows focusing on integration of gender in energy, environment and climate change	# of radio talk shows conducted # of gender-responsive messages	• Recordings
	Formulation and enactment of gender integration ordinances, action plans and bylaws	Three gender integration ordinances, bylaws or action plans formulated	# of operationalized gender integration policies, action plans or bylaws	• Existing action plans and bylaws for gender integration
Increase accessibility and ownership of natural resources like land by women and other vulnerable groups	Sensitization through community dialogues targeting all categories of people	12 dialogue meetings	# of meetings on gender-responsive natural resource ownership conducted # of different categories of people owning land and evidence of ownership	• Meeting minutes • Attendance records

2.1 Summary of the gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs)

The GREAPs initiative focuses on a range of objectives and activities to promote gender-responsive natural resources and environmental management (NR & EM) in the five districts of Madi-Okollo, Yumbe, Terego, Adjumani and Kiryandongo. While at the district level there is some variation in the specific GREAPs objectives and the corresponding activities to meet those objects, a strategic pattern relevant to refugee hosting landscapes has emerged that can be summarized in four broader, but closely related, technical strands:

1. Creation of enabling policy and regulatory frameworks that promote gender-responsive change in NR & EM
2. Promotion of gender-responsive bio-circular economies using nature-based solutions and resource recovery and reuse
3. Capacity building, awareness raising and communication around gender-responsive NR & EM
4. Building an evidence base through innovative research, both to measure impact and inform upscaling, as well as to support donor awareness and secure funding, including from private sector sources.

Creation of enabling policy and regulatory frameworks that promote gender-responsive change in NR & EM

The ultimate objective of the GREAPs is to reduce the burden on women and vulnerable groups

through improved NR & EM. Fundamental to this is creating an enabling environment that makes gender-responsive change a cross-cutting theme across RED project objectives and activities. This requires enabling policy and regulatory frameworks that promote gender-responsive change in NR & EM and applies to all levels of intervention, from practical design and technology to capacity building among all stakeholder groups, from local government to community-based organizations. This also includes increasing women's access to land by sensitizing the community about land ownership rights. Only when gender-responsive change has been mainstreamed across all sectors and projects will a sustainable and demand-driven enabling environment be created for effective NR & EM. Introducing the necessary policy and regulatory frameworks is critical in creating an enabling environment for gender-responsive NR & EM.

Promotion of gender-responsive bio-circular economies using nature-based solutions and resource recovery and reuse

Adopting bio-circular economies with nature-based solutions and resource recovery and reuse can build strong and resilient NR & EM systems. NR & EM require effective gender-responsive nature-based solutions that can build resilience among both refugee and hosting communities at household, farm and landscape levels. Each of these levels offers opportunities for gender-responsive nature-based solutions. Examples include home gardens, agroforestry, woodlots, and incorporating traditional land and water conservation measures. Each nature-based solution should be designed around reducing the work burden particularly for female-headed households. For example, the

planting of woodlots for cooking energy reduces the distance women and girls must walk to collect wood for cooking, thus reducing the risk of gender-based violence. The safe application of resource recovery and reuse allows synergies to be built with nature-based solutions. One example is the use of greywater for irrigating home gardens, fruit trees and woodlots, while biowastes (e.g., charcoal dust and food peelings) can be used for energy briquets and compost fertilizers.

Capacity building, awareness raising and communication around gender-responsive NR & EM

Capacity building is required across diverse levels of stakeholder groups, from local government bodies that may play a regulatory role, to implementing agencies including NGOs and CBOs. Enhancing stakeholders' understanding of gender inclusivity through radio talk shows and community dialogue meetings has been identified in all five districts. This plays a clear role in changing traditional and often long-term negative perspectives that restrict effective gender-responsive NR & EM. These approaches should be embedded in a communications strategy to maximize their benefits and promote gender-responsive NR & EM as the new but innovative norm.

Building an evidence base through innovative research, both to measure impact and inform upscaling, as well as to support donor awareness and secure funding

Building an evidence base in gender-responsive NR & EM is a vital component of the GREAPs initiative. Measuring impact through innovative research provides the evidence required for informed future upscaling. Linked to upscaling is ensuring donor awareness so new funding opportunities can be secured. This may also entail engaging with the private sector, for example through innovation grants or innovative public-private-partnerships (PPP) designed around the implementation of gender-responsive NR & EM. Also relevant is supporting grassroots-based interventions and small and medium enterprises in the context of both refugee and host communities and even integrated interventions. Universities and research institutes can support this process. All these stakeholders have a role to play in implementing a comprehensive and inclusive gender-responsive NR & EM strategy, hence why the building of a solid evidence base remains crucial to the whole process.

3 Shared responsibilities for implementing gender-responsive environmental action plans across refugee hosting districts in Uganda

- Those responsible for activities under the gender-responsive environmental action plans include political and technical leaders at different levels, cultural leaders and development partners within that line of implementation.
- The natural resource department will provide leadership in the implementation of the GREAPs at district and local government level.
- Technical and political leaders will spearhead implementation of the GREAPs in all districts.
- Technical and political leaders, civil society, cultural leaders and other relevant stakeholders will apply GREAPs in partnership development and resource mobilization.
- District leaders will work closely with the relevant government agencies, including the Office for the Prime Minister, to ensure GREAPs is considered and applied when designing, implementing and monitoring related interventions.
- Key staff will include the district's gender focal point.
- The GREAPs will be periodically reviewed and updated in alignment with the District Development Plan (DDP).

4 Conclusion

Environmental degradation, energy poverty and climate change affect men and women differently due to societal gender roles. In Uganda, women and children are particularly vulnerable, especially in displacement situations where they comprise over 79% of the population. The influx of refugees exacerbates pressure on natural resources, leading to increased competition, environmental degradation and conflicts with host communities. To address these challenges, the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) conducted consultative meetings in 2022 and 2023 to develop gender-responsive environmental action plans (GREAPs) for five districts in refugee-hosting settings. These plans align with Uganda's constitutional and policy frameworks to promote gender equity in natural resource governance and enhance the participation of vulnerable groups, especially women and young people. The GREAPs emphasize the importance of gender integration in energy, environmental and climate actions, ensuring that interventions are contextually appropriate and responsive to the diverse needs and roles of all community members.

Stakeholders expressed concern that limited funding could hinder their efforts to integrate gender into their daily work. However, they were encouraged to start implementing changes with their existing resources. Participants acknowledged that cultural norms often constrain women's access to natural resources while favouring men. Changing attitudes toward women's roles will take time, but some local community leaders are already making incremental shifts in their practices. These shifts in roles and norms are fostering positive changes in perspectives about women's participation in natural resource management, decision making and land ownership.

Engaging stakeholders in discussions around women's roles in leadership and decision making is crucial. These dialogues should address differing priorities of men and women, facilitating exchanges of ideas and best practices. Additionally, advocating for shifts in perceptions that limit women's capabilities is vital for their full participation in natural resource management. In refugee hosting landscapes, such participation can also prevent resource-based conflicts, thus building social cohesion between refugee and hosting communities.

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GREAPs were launched on 26th November 2024



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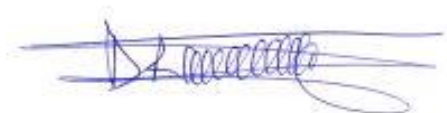
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