KIRYANDONGO

EU injects €11m to transform 7,000 refugee households

By Yosam Gucwaki

A euro 11m project has been launched to improve water supply and promote self-reliance among refugees and host communities in the Kiryandongo and Yumbe districts.

Funded by the European Union, the three-year initiative will target 7,000 households, focusing on building resilience and supporting sustainable livelihoods for people living in extreme poverty.

AVSI Foundation is implementing the project as the lead partner, working alongside World Vision, Community Technology Empowerment Network (CTEN) and Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment (RICE).

Dr Rita Larok the Consortium manager/Global Graduation Approach Thematic advisor at AVSI Foundation, explained that the project adopts a sequenced and time-bound strategy to help participants transition from extreme poverty to participation in a money-based economy.

"The project uses the graduation approach, which spans 12 to 24 months," Larok said.

Under this model, each selected household will be assigned both a coach and a trainer to guide them in building skills, accumulating productive assets and engaging in sustainable income-generating activities.



Dr Rita Larok

"Each participant household is assigned a coach and a trainer to guide them in acquiring skills, building assets and engaging in sustainable livelihoods," she added.

Larok noted that the graduation approach has already been successfully piloted in other parts of Uganda, offering a proven model that can be scaled up in refugee-hosting districts.

Anselm Kyaligonza the Kiryandongo chief administrative officer, welcomed the partnership and pledged the district's full support for this intervention.



Kyaligonza addressing district officials during the launch of the project

He revealed that before approving the project, district leaders undertook a benchmarking visit to Kyegegwa district, where a similar initiative has delivered promising outcomes.

"When we visited Kyegegwa, we saw first-hand how the graduation approach works, with compelling testimonies from participants. This gave us confidence to recommend the programme to Kiryandongo," Kyaligonza said.

He added that the initiative complements government's Parish Development Model (PDM) and holds strong potential to lift targeted households out of extreme poverty through savings mobilisation and financial inclusion.

Dan Muganga, the resident district commissioner (RDC) of Kiryandongo, emphasised the need for measurable impact.

"This project specifically targets the extremely poor. By its conclusion, we should see participants achieving improved livelihoods and living better lives," Muganga stated.

He further observed that because the graduation approach aligns closely with the PDM, it is attracting considerable interest from district leaders and stakeholders keen on benchmarking and comparing results.

Beyond expanding access to clean water, the project seeks to empower refugee-hosting communities to establish sustainable sources of income by promoting economic independence.

The initiative aims to reduce long-term reliance on humanitarian aid.

Lakor said they are planning to roll out the interventions in a structured and time-bound manner to ensure participants successfully transition from extreme poverty to self-reliant and economically active