Bristol-based charity launches project supporting refugee farmers in Uganda to act on climate change

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Action on Poverty, a small charity based Bristol, and its Ugandan partner charity VEDCO have launched a transformative project in Palabek Refugee Settlement, Northern Uganda.

The project will provide refugee and host communities with the means to take care of their lived environments and grow enough food for themselves despite an unpredictable climate and environmental degeneration.

Palabek Refugee Settlement currently shelters over 69,000 refugees, the majority of whom have fled conflict in Sudan. Life in the settlement is heavily tied to the quality of the soil and the regularity of the rains, with depression diagnoses going up during dry seasons when food is scarce.

Malnutrition and unemployment are common, with only 21.8% of refugees in the camp employed (UNHCR, 2022) and, despite their resilience, many remain dependent on humanitarian aid to meet their basic needs.

Climate-Smart Agriculture

Climate-smart agriculture means viewing food insecurity, poverty alleviation, and climate change as interconnected challenges, requiring grassroots transformation.

This transformation will be achieved through locally-managed access to drought-tolerant seeds which will fortify farmers' incomes and yields against climate shocks.

Solar-drying facilities and energy-efficient stoves will keep both emissions and energy costs low, while organic fertilisers and improved conservation methods will protect the natural environment that farmers depend on.

These practices will increase the availability of sustainable, nutritious vegetables, benefiting over 30,00 people at risk of malnutrition.

‘The refugees in Palabek have seen so much, gone through so much and now they are having to deal with man-made climate change wiping out their food supplies and destroying livelihoods,’ said Alex Daniels, Action on Poverty’s CEO. ‘We cannot leave these people behind. That’s why we’ve designed a project which addresses the food crisis in the settlement and at the same time gives refugees and hosts alike the means and resources to look after their shared environment.’

Action on Poverty remains steadfast in its commitment to creating healthier, happier, and more prosperous futures for all in Palabek Refugee Settlement through sustainable agricultural practices and community empowerment.

Since 1986, Action on Poverty has supported over a million people to escape poverty by creating opportunities for people to gain skills and livelihoods in East and West Africa.

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