

Call for Expression of Interest

Provision of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene services among refugee and hosting populations.

HCR/UGA/2025/005

1 Timeline

Posted	Aug 7, 2025
Clarification Request Deadline	Aug 20, 2025
Application Deadline	Sep 6, 2025
Notification of Results	Sep 27, 2025
Start Date	Jan 1, 2026
End Date	Dec 31, 2030

2 Locations

- A Uganda
 - a Northern
 - b Northern
 - c Western

3 Sector(s) and area(s) of specialization

- A WASH and Environment
 - a Basic sanitation
 - b Hygiene
 - c WASH in emergencies
 - d Water

4 Issuing Agency

UNHCR

5 Project Background

The refugee Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) response is guided by the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV), Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan for Refugees & Host Communities (WESRRP II), and Uganda WASH Country strategy 2024-2026 Further the water transition roadmap developed will be used to support water integration. The WESRRP is designed to inform comprehensive planning for both refugees and host communities within the context of the Water and Environment Sector Development Plan. The WESRRP is aligned with the National Development Plan IV (NDPIV) for the period 2025/26-2030/31. The plan is guided by several Government policies, Plans, and Frameworks with linkages to several international and regional commitments. The Government of Uganda has aligned the sector plan with Sustainable Development Goal 6, Safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.

The Water and Environment Sector Development Plan (WESDP) provides the strategic direction and guides the operations in the Water and Environment sector in the medium term, highlighting how it will contribute to NDP IV. UNHCR works in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) at both the Central and sub-national levels through the respective District Water Offices (DWOs). The MWE coordinates all WASH responses with UNHCR as co-chair of the monthly refugee WASH coordination meetings at Kampala and in the respective districts. Some specific WASH projects are coordinated directly by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), especially where a Project Implementation Team (PIT) is required for joint supervision. The overall vision of the programme is a world where refugees and hosts have access to safe and reliable WASH services to lead healthy and productive lives. The WASH sector is focusing on the inclusion of WASH service delivery into government-mandate institutions such as the Ministry of Water and Environment and utilities, Catchment Management Committees, and District Local Governments (DLGs). Three settlements in the West Nile region have been gazetted to the Northern Umbrella for Water and Sanitation (NUWS) for the management of water supply services. An MoU has been recently signed with OPM, MWE, and UNHCR in the presence of NUWS, and zone-wise handover processes have commenced on a pilot basis in Bidibidi. A similar arrangement is expected to roll out to other refugee settlements. Currently, water is being supplied to the refugees and hosting population at an average rate of 18 litres per person per day (lppd). With settlements receiving new arrivals having water access as low as 10 liters per person per day (lppd). Water is delivered throughout the operation and maintenance of over 223 motorized water systems (98% hybrid powered, 42 megawatts of solar power in use) and 1157 boreholes fitted with handpumps. Similarly, sanitation coverage at the household level stands at 69% against the 85% standard. WASH Country Strategy (2024-2026) The WASH strategy conceptual framework is structured around addressing WASH challenges through a three-step approach, which includes coordination, systems strengthening, and continuous service provision to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to water, sanitation, and hygiene services for both protracted caseloads and new arrivals. Under coordination, the strategy emphasizes enhancing national ownership and leadership, fostering inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships, and repositioning UNHCR as a catalytic actor and facilitator to drive collaborative efforts aimed at improving institutional reforms within UNHCR, MWE, and District local government. The strategy aims to increase coordination and leadership capacities within implementing partners and DLG. Participate and support multi-stakeholder involvement by influencing development partners and private sector activities. The Systems Strengthening pillar focuses on building local capacity, promoting sustainability, leveraging digital transformation, and developing robust financial and payment models to support long-term service delivery, with gazettelement of refugee settlements to the national utility as a first step to integration through the Gazette-Develop-Transfer (GDT model, with continuous stakeholder engagement and robust coordination. Continued support to umbrella authorities and community-based structures to take over management of WASH service provision is emphasized. Lastly, Service Provision aims to ensure rapid and effective responses in emergencies and protracted situations, while promoting inclusion and self-reliance. It also encompasses the operation and maintenance of WASH systems and the development of essential infrastructure to meet the needs of affected populations. PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED CALL FOR THE FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

6 Expected Results

Outcome Statement: Refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda have equitable access to reliable, safe, dignified, and sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services, with services integrated into national systems to ensure sustainability and resilience. Output Statement 1: Water supply systems are established, extended, maintained, or upgraded, and institutional capacity is strengthened for effective and sustainable management of WASH services. Output Statement 2: Latrine coverage is increased, and environmental health campaigns and programs are implemented to promote positive hygiene practices and behavioural change. Related Activities • O&M; of 223 motorized water systems • Mobilize community to maintain over 1157-point water systems (hand pumps and springs) • Emergency response to epidemic and refugee influx • Support to Utility migration through social marketing and sensitisation • Expand/Construct water systems where required and approved • Water Resources management activities, including tree planting around water sources/systems • Real-time water monitoring • 100% transition to National/local systems (social mobilization, categorization, etc) • Reduced carbon footprint —<5% of water supplied using diesel systems and Zero Water trucking • Environmental sanitation and personal hygiene sensitization using the VHTs (Village Health Teams) approach • Solid, faecal, and liquid waste management • Emergency and family latrine constructions • KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice) survey and sustainability checks Intended Population for Forcibly Displaced Persons As of 30 June 2025, the population of refugees and asylum seekers in each of the settlements: Adjumani 231,808; Bidibidi 208,180; Imvepi 73,893; Kiryandongo 158,224 Kyaka II 135,681; Kyangwali 151,806; Lobule 6,363; Nakivale 266,228; Oruchinga 8,113; Palabek 92,940; Palorinya 141,256; Rhino 190,671 Rwamwanja 103,412; Kampala Urban 159,018; To ensure the adequate protection of forcibly displaced and stateless persons, UNHCR requires partners to adhere to applicable sector standards outlined within UNHCR's areas of specialization.

7 Indicative Budget

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8 Other Information

Applicant organizations to this call will be invited to participate in a question-and-answer information session on Wednesday, 20 August 2025, to clarify pertinent information regarding this Call for Expression of Interest. UNHCR enters into an Agreement with a Partner that shares common humanitarian principles to achieve common objectives in line with UNHCR's protection and solutions strategy in a particular operation. Such a relationship is guided by the Principles of Partnership, Partners in this context include International and National Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), civil society organizations (CSO), community-based organizations (CBO), governmental institutions, United Nations systems organizations (UN), intergovernmental, and other not-for-profit organizations (NPO) as well as the not-for-profit academic institutions that provide different types of assistance and services to forcibly displaced people. The partnership duration is contingent on partner reviews (performance and financial, including project audits), pending open receivables, changes in context, compliance with partnership framework agreements and project workplan terms, willingness and capacity to work within the scope, availability of funding, and feedback from affected communities that is in line with UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender, and Diversity. The prospective partners must be fully registered in Uganda according to Ugandan National law with the National Government NGO Board. For prospective partners to be considered, they must be registered (online) on the UN partner portal (if not already done). The address for the UN partner portal is <https://www.unpartnerportal.org>. The user will be guided through simple steps for registration. To access attachments in the call, please sign into the UN Partner portal. If your application has multiple attachments, please upload a zip file (up to 25MB) of your application. Please ensure that the concept note template (Annex A), attached to this call, is utilized for your applications. Concept notes submitted after the deadline will not be considered. All organizations, including those currently partnering with UNHCR (with partnership agreements in 2025), are required to present the three previous consecutive years' financial audit reports along with the concept note. Organizations that do not submit the financial audit reports will not be considered for the evaluation. Organizations are also required to fill out and submit with their applications the Internal Control Assessment and Questionnaire (ICA/Q) – Annex C attached to the call, if they have no valid ICA/Q from UNHCR. For Organisations with a valid ICA/Q from another UN Agency, submit a verified copy of the ICA/Q for UNHCR's review. For partners who have been working in the refugee operation, their past performance evaluation will be considered as a reference point in addition to the listed selection criteria in this call. Prospective partners should include and identify relevant efforts to mainstream environment, energy, and climate-resilience measures along with age, gender, and diversity considerations in all activities and interventions. Budget Submission: Prospective partners are requested to complete the Annex B – Budget template attached to this CfEol, clearly indicating both "foreseen" and "confirmed" additional funding contributions for the proposed project. Any confirmed contributions must be supported by official evidence, which should be attached to the submission. Please note that only confirmed contributions supported by documentation will be counted to evaluate the partner's cost-sharing capacity. Partner's capacity to mitigate, respond, and prevent Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): All potential partners are reminded to complete (via the UN Partner Portal) their PSEA self-assessment, ahead of a concept note submission, unless already assessed by a UN entity. A prospective partner who has not completed the self-assessment on the UN portal by the closing date of this CfEol will be disqualified from the competitive selection process. For further information and clarification about this call, please send an email to IPMCuganda@unhcr.org. All questions will be consolidated and feedback provided during the information session on 20th August 2025. PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED CALL FOR THE FULL DESCRIPTION.

9 Selection Criteria

Name	Description	Weight
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Sector expertise and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The required specific skills, sector specialists, and ability to coordinate and lead the sector at the settlement level. • Engagement with local government, community groups, and utilities, performance, knowledge, material, and human resources. • Knowledge of relevant protection, humanitarian principles, and the approach to Age, Gender, Diversity mainstreaming (AGD). • Approach to the participation of refugees and hosts in the Programme Cycle. • Ability to coordinate effectively with other partners, the local government, and the ministry. • Environmental Sustainability: Mainstreaming measures to integrate environmental sustainability within proposed activities. Environmental considerations are aligned to the objectives of UNHCR's Strategic Framework for Climate Action. 	30
Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to effectively deliver project objectives with robust management systems/processes, and meet the expectations of all stakeholders, as well as provide accountability mechanisms and sound financial management. • taking into account the audit results of the previous UNHCR-funded projects. • past performance and the external audit of partners' financial statements and pending open audit recommendations (accounts receivable and internal control related recommendations) where applicable. • Demonstrated speed of implementation, water and environment conservation experience. • Social mobilization to ensure community ownership and participation. • Clear segregation of duties policy, as well as the integration of risk management; adequate control over assets and inventory (if applicable). • Access/ Security Considerations: ability to operate in security conditions of the Project site(s) or country as well as existence and functionality of partner's organizational policies, procedures and practices related to security risk management. 	34
Local experience and presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently legally registered to operate within the country. • Local National NGO/CBO/CSO or International NGO, knowledge of the Ugandan WASH management system. • Local expertise being a local actor or working/with (e.g. twinning) local partners and others • Demonstrated experience of working in coordination with government authorities (e.g. Ministries, DLGs, MDAs) in health service provision. • Experience working with vulnerable communities or groups in Uganda. Number of years in provision of social services within Uganda. • Good understanding of the dynamics in the provision of services within refugee hosting districts (RHDs). Knowledge of the UNHCR AAP (Accountability to Affected Populations) framework/guideline. • Participation in inter-agency coordination, previous engagement with forcibly displaced persons and other persons of concern in the programme/project cycle. • Partner policy on community relations feedback and complaint mechanisms. Understanding sector coordination mechanism for refugee WASH services. 	10
Cost effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a methodology for allocation of shared costs to project activities. • Evidence of procedures/systems that ensure maximum resources are directed to project outcomes while also ensuring that resources are also directed to activities that ensure project risks are being appropriately managed to achieve good Value for money. • Staffing structure proposed that are fit for purpose and effective. • Evidenced and documented contribution of resources to the Project in cash or in-kind (e.g. human resources, supplies and/or equipment) by the partner that are presently available (or potentially mobilized by the partner) to supplement UNHCR resources. • Value of partner contribution concretely demonstrated and evidenced (e.g., donor grant /award letter with specifics, etc.). 	20
Experience working with UN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global and/or local partnerships including knowledge of working with UN or Multinational or Bilateral organizations, their practices, and programmes. • Understanding of and ability to work within limited funding and associated inherent risks. • Partners that have three consecutive modified audit opinions (qualified, adverse or disclaimer) for any UN or Multinational or Bilateral funded projects may not be considered. 	6

10 **Attachments**

Description	URL
MEETING SCHEDULE AND MS TEAMS LOGIN DETAILS. Please write to ipmcuganda@unh	Download the document here
MEETING SCHEDULE AND MS TEAMS LOGIN DETAILS. Please write to ipmcuganda@unh	Download the document here
MEETING SCHEDULE AND MS TEAMS LOGIN DETAILS. Please write to ipmcuganda@unh	Download the document here
This folder includes four templates (the concept note template, Budget temp	Download the document here
CONCEPT NOTE TEMPLATE	Download the document here
This is the full detailed call for expression of interest, which every appl	Download the document here

11 **Concept Note Template**

[Download the document here](#)

12 **For more information on this partnership opportunity, and to apply, please visit**

[UN Partner Portal](#)