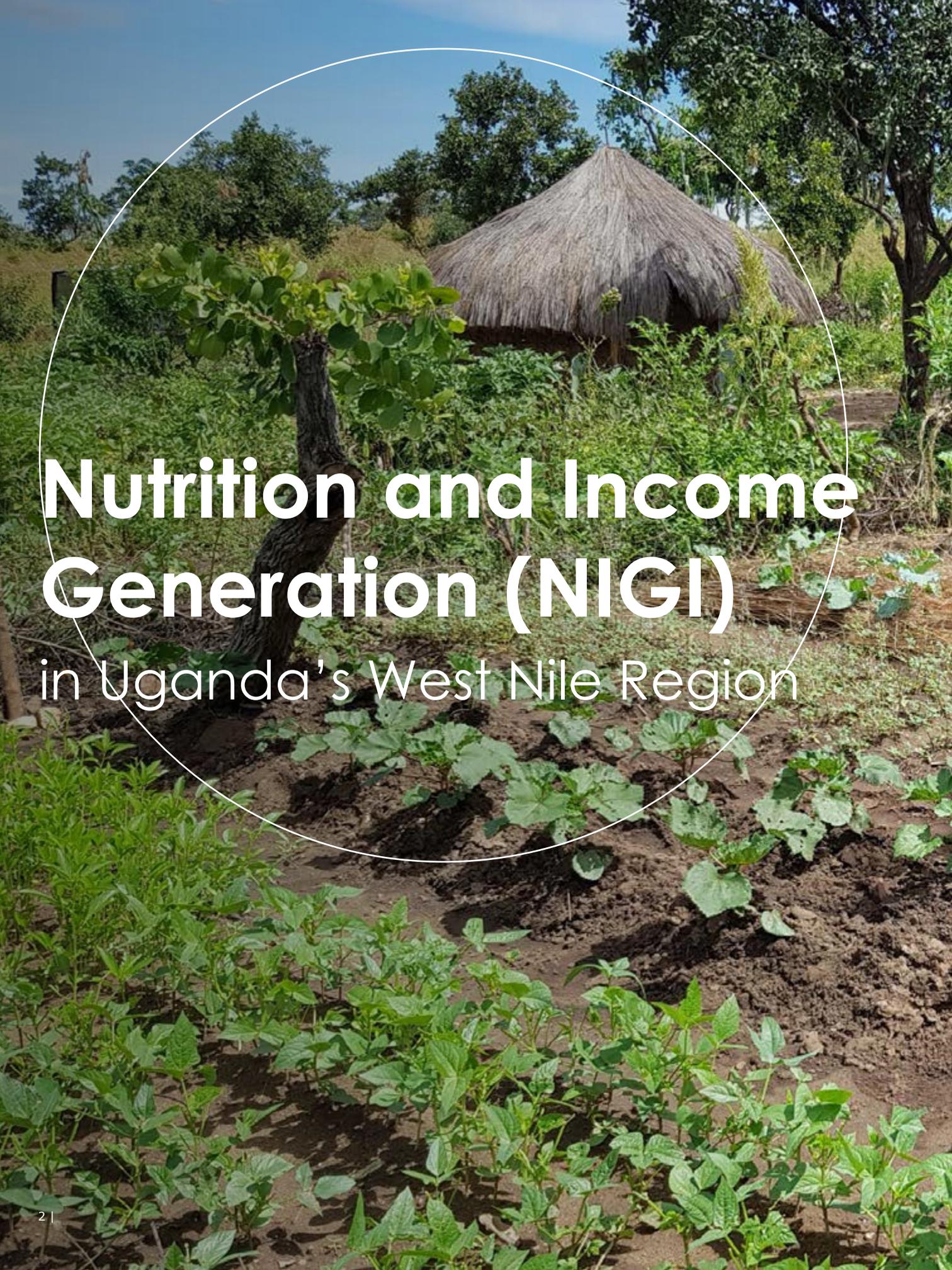




Nutrition and Income Generation (NIGI) in Uganda's West Nile Region



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In Uganda's West Nile region, refugees from South Sudan and DRC that have been affected by forced displacement live in several refugee settlement. Their presence places a huge strain on existing communities and local resources. That's why Wageningen University & Research and partner East West Seed Knowledge Transfer started the NIGI (Nutrition and Income Generation) Intervention here. The project seeks to support refugees and the host community to grow fresh vegetables, which are often completely absent in their diets.

Refugees are often dependent on a monotonous diet of cereals, pulses and oil with little or no access to fresh fruit or vegetables. The acute malnutrition rate for children in the Arua district of North Uganda is high, at 10 percent (UNHCR Sept 2018). Additionally, even though refugees receive land on which to farm, they often lack the capacity or face challenges in accessing high quality agricultural inputs, including seed.

“The rations of food given to us are very limited and always the same. We receive only maize, beans, oil and, sometimes, salt. Sometimes we do not even get beans. You can choose to get cash, but the amount is small, so I always encourage my community to take the food rations,”.

Member of the Refugee Welfare Council from Village Two, Omugo settlement.



Why is the NIGI project so important?

To be able to fight hunger and malnutrition in the West Nile Region, it is important to provide people with innovative, sustainable and scalable solutions to improve their nutrition and food security. It is particularly important to address the urgent need for available and locally produced nutritious foods such as vegetables and fruit.

Increasing income and providing job opportunities are also critical challenges for developing sustainable solutions to help refugees and the communities that host them. Drawing on previous experience, the project also seeks to support local seed businesses to further develop, and to ensure access to high quality seeds.

"Home gardens provide an opportunity to add much needed fresh vegetables and fruit to the local diet. We've studied the local soils and farmer practices and, based on our expertise, selected which crops can be grown year-round to provide people with more and more nutritious foods. We're positively surprised with the first results: quite a lot of nutritious crops can be grown productively and local people are eager to join our trainings and train others in growing practices."

Herman de Putter, senior researcher and trainer at Wageningen University & Research

The Nutrition and Income Generation (NIGI) approach

The NIGI project aims to contribute to achieving healthier lives and more resilient livelihoods for refugees and host communities in selected refugee hosting areas. The project aims to achieve this by improving access to, and consumption of, nutritious crops as well as by increasing incomes for refugees and host communities.

This will be achieved through the following four activity areas:

1 Household nutrition

Refugees and host communities will be supported with capacity building on best agricultural practices for vegetable and fruit production and awareness raising about the importance of good nutrition. This should lead to increased access and consumption of nutrient rich foods, leading to improved food security and dietary diversity at the household level.

2 Commercial vegetable production

Farmers with larger plots of land will be supported to produce, market and sell vegetables and fruit for commercial purposes, thereby increasing their incomes. Capacities will be built in terms of applying best agronomic practices.

3 Quality seeds

Existing local seed businesses, set up by the Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD) project will be supported technically to produce and market quality seed to both refugee and host communities. Additional activities will be undertaken to promote the importance of quality seed.

4 System innovation

The project will seek to enhance human, organizational and institutional capacities to use improved agricultural and horticultural cultural practices. The project will also seek to provide training on improved agricultural practices to other organizations working in the areas.

"Based on the different settlement patterns and land ownership systems, different strategies are devised and employed both in the settlement and in the host community," says Annet Kizza, knowledge transfer manager Uganda at East West Seed Knowledge Transfer. "The strategy that we employ in the settlement aims mostly at addressing household nutrition through home gardening. The other strategy employed, mostly in the host community but also by some refugee farmers who have access to more land, aims at increasing household income, productivity and employment. We do this through setting up commercial demos."

Annet Kizza, knowledge transfer manager Uganda at East West Seed Knowledge Transfer



What has been achieved so far?

The inception phase of the NIGI project (1 November 2018 to 30 June 2019) was aimed at setting up two new offices in the refugee settlement community and a zonal agricultural research centre (ABIZARDI). Inception studies were carried out to understand the context and shape and to guide project implementation and development of a monitoring and evaluation plan.

The set-up of the two offices allows the team space in both the settlement and host areas, and stronger connections to the West Nile Local Seed Business Association, government training institutions and the Office of the Prime Minister, which coordinates all activities in the refugee settlement area.

Over the same time period, regional partnerships were strengthened and the office began implementation, setting up a learning plot to train staff and experiment with a variety of agronomic techniques, identifying lead farmers and establishing demonstration plots and activities with local seed businesses.

"In 2019, we supported 32 farmers to set up home gardens in the settlement and 61 commercial farmers to establish demonstration gardens in the host community. These demonstration gardens serve as learning places for the whole community to learn more about how to farm vegetables, both for home consumption and commercial purposes. After the first year, we can say that everyone is surprised by how much is possible in the settlement. One key change made to the project was to expand the number of crops grown in the home gardens; originally, only 3–4 crops were grown but now all gardens have 6–8 crops, including a range of indigenous and foreign vegetables as well as iron-rich beans – some of which are produced by the local seed businesses. Additionally, the project supports the West Nile Local Seed Business Association to build the capacity of 43 local seed businesses, small-scale cooperatives that produce quality seed locally. Much of this seed is sold to the refugee settlements."

Katherine Pittore, NIGI project leader at Wageningen University & Research

Securing nutritious foods in the area

NIGI works in the Omugo extension of the Rhino refugee settlement. In the first year, the focus was on villages three and four in the settlement and Owai parish, Yidu parish and Obi parish in the host community. In the second year, the project will expand into additional villages in the Omugo settlement.

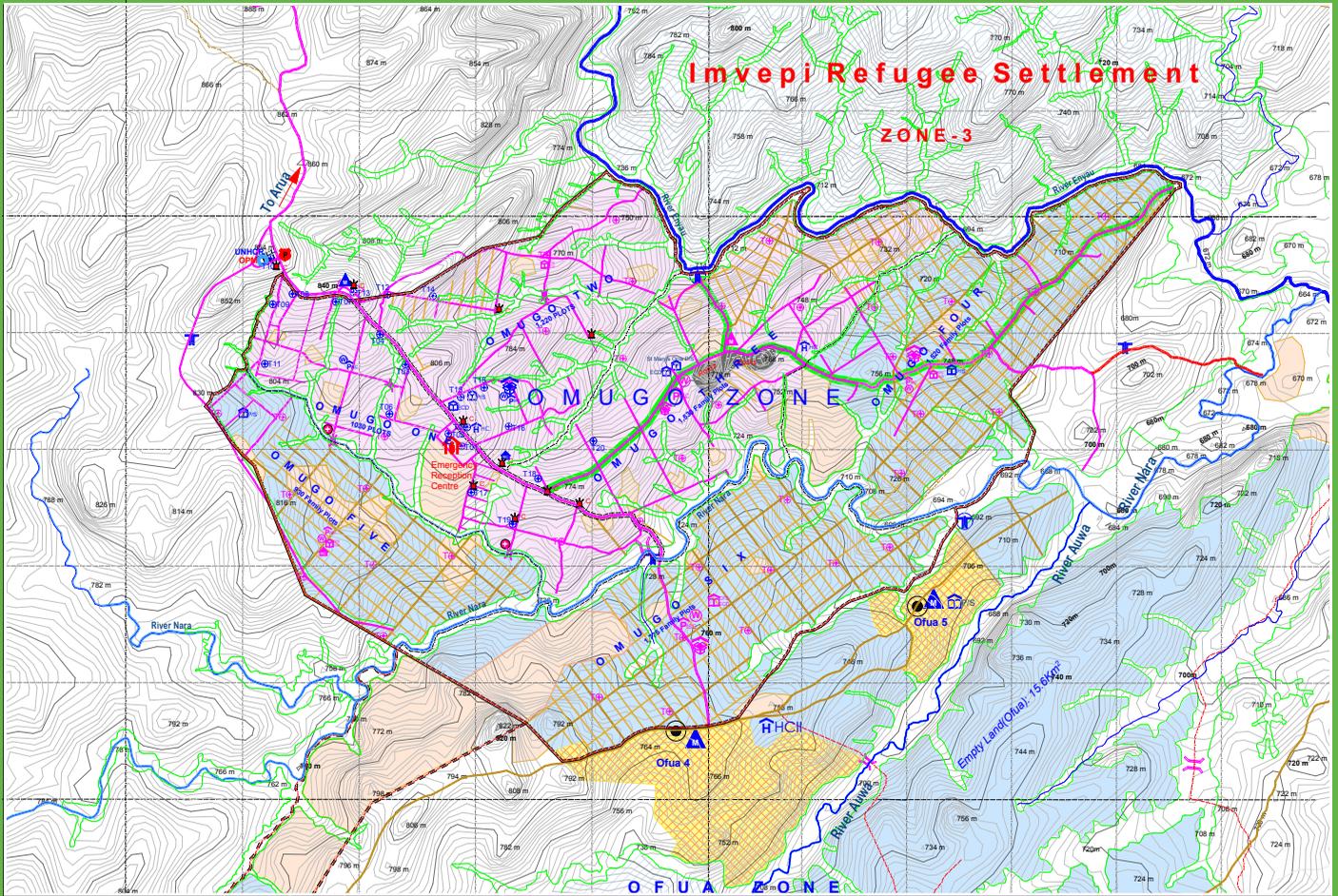
“We currently see hope in the Omugo refugee settlement as a result of NIGI activities, because of the vegetables that are growing in all of the home gardens,” says Molly Adokorach, project manager of the NIGI project.

“Right now, a number of refugees are on cash instead of food, but cash is never equal to the food. Everyone needs food in the markets to survive. Given the current status of things, we foresee food rations reducing further in the near future and, with the limited number of NGOs (due to limited donor funding), there may be famine in the area if nothing is done to change the situation. That's why we're very happy with the NIGI project, that enables people to secure their own nutritious foods in the future.”

Molly Adokorach, project manager of the NIGI project



Rhino refugee settlement extension omugo zone masterplan



UNHCR Site Planning Unit

Total Gross area of Omugo Zone = 23.4 Km2
 Total receiving capacity for Omugo Zone
 (Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement Extension)

5% of 23.4 = 1.17 Km2 for Unusable
 85% of 23.4 = 20.02 Km2 for Residential and Agriculture
 10% of 23.4 = 2.34 Km2 for Roads and Facilities.

Residential = $20.592 / 0.0025 = 8,236$ Families
 = 8,236 Families x 5 Persons/Family
 = 40,025 Individuals

PLANNING FIGURES	Number of House Holds	Emergency Communal Latrins and Water Tanks		
Villages	Km ²	HH	Commutal Latrins	Water Tanks
Omugo One	3.01	1,030	103	08
Omugo Two	3.57	1,220	122	09
Omugo Three	4.42	1,520	152	12
Omugo Four	4.48	1,530	153	12
Omugo Five	2.73	930	93	07
Omugo Six	5.19	1,775	178	14
TOTAL	23.40	8,005	801	62

Total Remaining receiving capacity in Omugo Zone (Village 3, 4, 5, & 6)
 = 4,995 Families x 5 Persons/Family
 = 24,975 Individuals

Map Legend

Existing Infrastructure

Water, sanitation & hygiene

High yield Borehole

Proposed Infrastructure

Water Tank

- National Rd.
- Village Boundary
- Constructed 10m main Rd.
- Rivers
- Contours
- School/Play ground
- Health Centre
- Market
- Food Distribution Point Pamment
- Trading Centre
- Trucking Water Tank
- UNHCR Office
- Omugo Temporary Reception

- Land occupied by new arrivals
- Host Community Land
- Surface Rocks about 5% of site Area
- Police station
- Zonal Boundaries
- Recreational Facility
- Cemetery/Barial Site
- School/Play ground
- Proposed Culvert/Bridge
- Child Friendly Space
- Early Childhood Development
- Police station
- Food Distribution Point Pamment

- ISC Information Support Centre
- Women Centre
- Solar Security Light for - CARE
- 30m Buffer zone for road reserve/tree planting
- Reserve land
- Remaining possible Absorption Space



Home gardening demo plot

Improved varieties



NETS
WATER FIELD

Knowledge on vegetable production



FASTER GROWTH

About the NIGI consortium

The NIGI project is funded by the government of the Netherlands. The NIGI project brings together the expertise of four partners:

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (WC DI) works in support of sustainable and inclusive food systems in low- and middle-income countries worldwide. WC DI specifically seeks to facilitate stakeholder collaboration, strengthen strategic leadership, foster lifelong learning, guide sector transformation and manage for impact. WC DI is the lead implementer of this project.

WUR Uganda Project Office (WUU) coordinates the implementation of three projects in Uganda: The Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD) Plus project, the Nutrition and Income Generation Intervention (NIGI) project and the PROMO Research project. The ISSD and NIGI projects are funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kampala, and PROMO Research project is funded by NWO-WOTRO.

Wageningen Plant Research (WPR) unit of Applied Arable and Vegetable Research aims to contribute to innovation and knowledge development in arable farming and the field production of vegetables. It develops practical innovations for both the private and the public sectors and will provide practical and hands-on Trainer of Trainers (ToT) training, building on experience from the ISSD programme and targeting professional workers in government systems, sector specialists, agency staff and lead farmers.

East West Seed - Knowledge Transfer Foundation (EWS-KT Foundation) is involved in pre-commercial activities for the East West Seed company. By sharing knowledge on improved production practices, EWS-KT Foundation aims to increase the productivity and sustainability of smallholder farmers. This will result in more profitable and sustainable production practices as well as creating an opportunity to develop a competitive seed market.



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