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ARUA

*Strengthening Mechanisms for Receiving, Managing
and Integrating Involuntary Migrants Within the
Municipal Council*

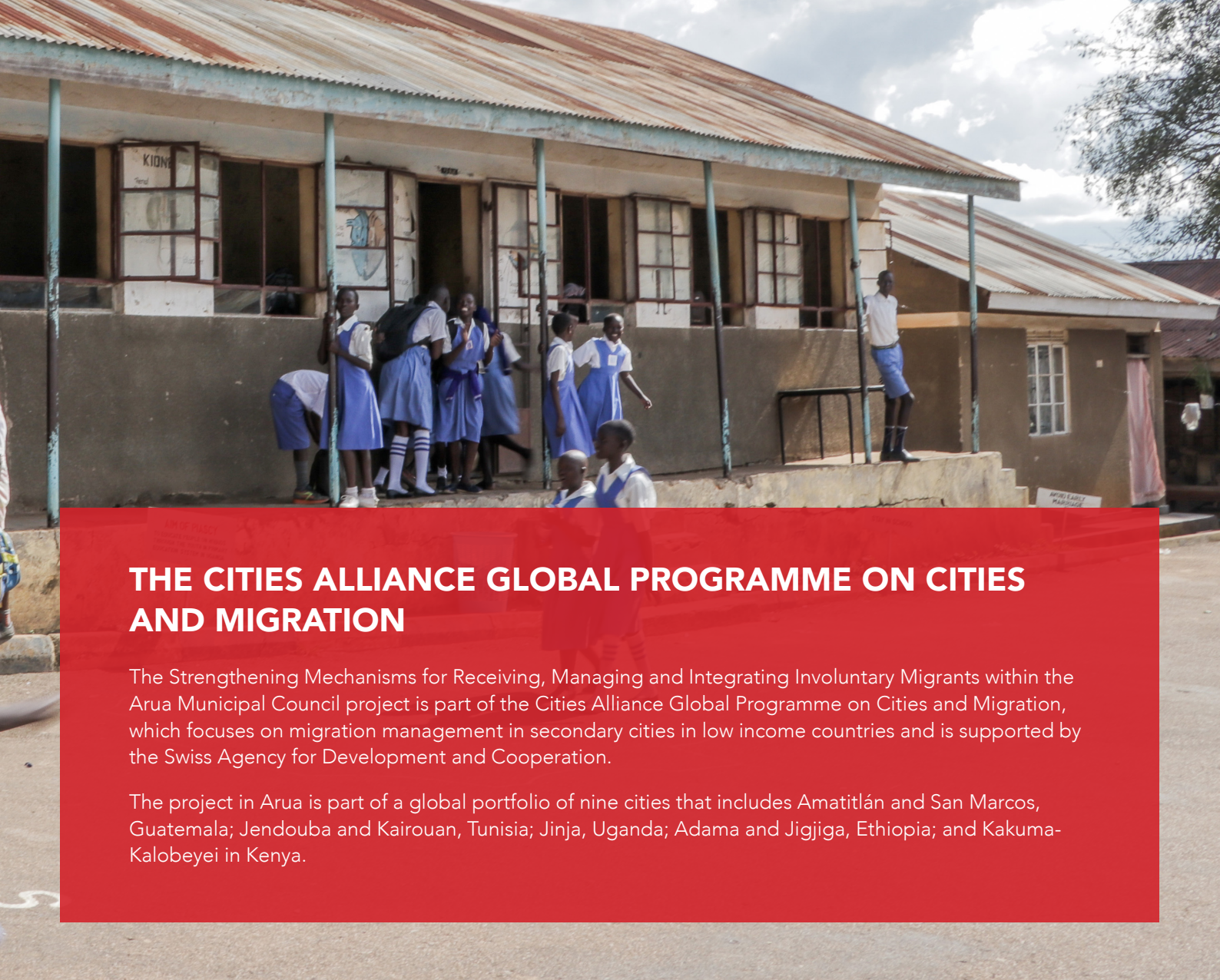
Implementing Partner: AVSI Foundation in partnership with Arua Municipal Council (AMC) and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS)

Location: Arua, Uganda

Duration: December 2019 – November 2021

SUMMARY

The project aims to strengthen the structural and institutional mechanisms for reception, management and integration of involuntary migrants in Arua Municipal Council. It includes collecting accurate data on Arua Municipality's population to inform planning; using mechanisms such as municipal and division development forums to promote dialogue and build capacity among all stakeholders; and partnering with financial institutions to help migrants and host communities become more self-reliant and improve their livelihoods.



THE CITIES ALLIANCE GLOBAL PROGRAMME ON CITIES AND MIGRATION

The Strengthening Mechanisms for Receiving, Managing and Integrating Involuntary Migrants within the Arua Municipal Council project is part of the Cities Alliance Global Programme on Cities and Migration, which focuses on migration management in secondary cities in low income countries and is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The project in Arua is part of a global portfolio of nine cities that includes Amatitlán and San Marcos, Guatemala; Jendouba and Kairouan, Tunisia; Jinja, Uganda; Adama and Jigjiga, Ethiopia; and Kakuma-Kalobeyei in Kenya.

CONTEXT

Arua Municipality is situated in Uganda's West Nile region, approximately 12 km from the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and 50 km from the boundary with South Sudan. Arua has an estimated total population of 61,962. Due to its location, Arua has become a hub for trade and commerce within the West Nile region as well as with both the DRC and South Sudan.

This proximity to international borders has also brought Arua an influx of involuntary migrants seeking access to social services, livelihoods, and support. Arua Municipality estimates that self-settled refugees make up 24% of its total population. These migrants are not accurately documented by municipal authorities, and they are not included in the census.

Urbanisation is real and migration is real. People flock from villages to towns, people will come intentionally and unintentionally. But governments know little about how many people are coming. The issue of data is very key in planning for these people.

– Ms. Sarah Nandudu, National Coordinator, Slum Dwellers Federation of Uganda

This situation makes it very difficult for the city to adequately plan for all its residents at the municipal level and is straining Arua's ability to provide services to its host communities. With accurate data, Arua can approach the central government for additional fiscal transfers to provide more adequate social services and opportunities for both migrants and host communities.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

As the refugee influx increases, so does the need to support host communities who live under similar or worse conditions and already struggle for resources. The project will pilot strategies and approaches that can support Arua Municipal Council, as well as institutional and community stakeholders, to better structure and manage the reception and integration of involuntary migrants by engaging all stakeholders in a coordinated and effective way.


The pilot will further build municipal authorities' capacity to plan for, and effectively respond to, the challenges of migration and help them adopt sustainable approaches to integrating migrants and enhancing livelihoods. It will adapt and pilot livelihood models aimed at building self-reliance among migrants and host communities, including modelling a financial inclusion package.

Result 1: Accurate data and documentation on Arua's population to inform planning

This component will be delivered in partnership with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, a government agency that coordinates, monitors and supervises the official National Statistics System. The project will collaborate with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics to conduct a municipal-wide census of migrant households that will also document the situation and experiences of migrants and host communities.

The data gathered will be used to inform municipal planning, budgeting, advocacy and community engagement efforts. Documented experiences and best practices from these learnings will be shared across different stakeholders and partner forums at the national, regional and international levels as a mean of building the literature and data on global urban migration and its management.

All analytical work will include a gender perspective to better meet the needs of the many women who make up the city's poor migrant population.



We need to have planned migration, not unplanned migration. Planned migration will make us organise ourselves and make sure host and migrant communities benefit from it. We are talking about refugees because normally they are not captured in our budgets, which limits the services we can provide to the refugees and the host communities ... A lot is being done for refugees in districts but not for those in cities. We need a deliberate effort to ensure that urban refugees are captured in our programmes.



– Mr. Isa Kato, Mayor of Arua

Result 2: Municipal and division forums that engage and strengthen the capacity of the Arua Municipal Council and stakeholders

The project team will engage, support and further build the capacity of the Arua Municipal Council to improve the coordination and responsiveness of community structures and stakeholders. This will be done by reorganising and enhancing the functionality of Arua's Municipal Development Forum (MDF) and cascading its activities down to separate forums in each of Arua Municipality's two sub-divisions, Arua Hill and Oli River. The Division Development Forums (DDFs) and the MDF will be representative and inclusive to ensure the engagement of both migrants and host communities. The forums are expected to provide a platform for dialogue, identifying community needs, and social accountability through which the concerns of the most vulnerable migrants and host community members can be consultatively identified, planned for and addressed.

Result 3: Develop and model sustainable livelihoods approaches

This part of the project aims to expand economic opportunities and sustainable livelihoods by helping migrant households and host communities become more self-reliant and self-sustainable. The approach involves building their capacity to anticipate, mitigate and adapt to their situation while taking advantage of available opportunities. In partnership with selected banks, the project team will pilot a formal financial inclusion approach that enables vulnerable migrants and members of the host community to be financially included within formal financial institutions. The project will also support and engage participants in business training and coaching to help them increase sustainable livelihoods, reducing participants' dependence on external funding and enhancing peaceful coexistence between migrants and host communities.



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