



UNITED NATIONS
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NATIONAL POLICY WORKSHOP

Promoting Migrant and Refugee
Entrepreneurship in Uganda

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Kampala | Uganda



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Session IV: Facilitating Technology Exchange and Innovation

National Capacity-Building Workshop on Promoting Migrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship in Uganda

Contributing to innovation exchange and innovation

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Setting the Context

- **Migrant and refugee entrepreneurs are often excluded from local and national innovation ecosystems, due to weak linkages between them and innovation ecosystems.**
- **Greater embeddedness of migrant and refugee entrepreneur with the entrepreneurial community and more inclusive innovative ecosystem is needed.**

The following policy options are generally recommended

1. Develop private sector linkages and include refugees and migrants in entrepreneurship ecosystem
2. Create working spaces and access to infrastructure (e.g. internet, phone, electricity) that support migrant and refugee entrepreneurship
3. Support greater diffusion of and training in ICT and new technology for refugee and migrant communities
4. Promote social innovation and social enterprises for refugees and migrants and by refugees and migrants

Initiatives and Good Practices in Uganda

At macro level, evidence shows that although Uganda faces huge deficits in transport, energy, water and information technology sectors, **the country has made progress in infrastructure development**

Government **has committed budget allocations** to see that Uganda's infrastructure stock improves particularly in areas of transport, communication, power and energy sectors.

At the institutional level, Uganda has got a **number of institutions** set up to help SMEs/firms grow technologically.

- **Governmental institutions**
- **Private sector**
- **NGO**

Uganda's industrialization process is largely **spontaneous and private sector-led**.

Organizations have **programmes that facilitate and promote exports, productive linkages and industrial clusters of entrepreneurs**. The industrial clusters are not new to Uganda.

Situation in Uganda

Innovation is constrained by:

- Low internet penetration and high cost of data
- Low levels of digital literacy
- Weak intellectual property rights support to innovators
- Weak support from the state as a buyer of locally developed ICT product
- Weak interaction between universities and potentially innovative firms as well as incubators and accelerators

The demand and diffusion of technology among SMEs has increased because of the disruptions and changes of Covid-19, many entrepreneurs have been forced to change to adapt to the current new normal.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered the need and desire to increase use of digital platforms or E-commerce among entrepreneurs.

Results from Stakeholder Interviews

- Government of Uganda is also committed to reform and upgrade the manufacturing sectors through research and technologies as described in National Industries Policies of 2008. The research and technological reforms have been earmarked for value addition at various stages of supply chain of manufacturing firms.
- Most respondents reported that the current state of the general infrastructure within their cities is favourable for entrepreneurial innovations particularly start-ups
- The interviews revealed that institutions particularly universities offer innovation or incubation programmes aimed at promoting entrepreneurship.
- The interviews revealed that universities do not have specific digital literacy trainings for migrants and refugees in new technologies such as encryption, computers, digital production and media
- Ex. of a Programme, which has faced challenges mainly because migrants/refugees come from different backgrounds, speak different languages, and the way they approach business is different.

Results from Stakeholder Interviews

Conclusions

- Many initiatives related to facilitating innovation and technology exchange are implemented, but are add-ons and not mainstreamed in the « traditional » programme/curricula/project.
- Many institutions and good practices are implemented or being implemented but without necessarily integrating vulnerable parts of the population, which comprises migrants and refugee entrepreneurs.
- Entrepreneurship for all – which implies innovation for all – requires a mind-shift.

Recommendations on Innovation and Technology Exchange

Policy Objectives	Recommendations
Develop linkages between universities, incubators and accelerators and migrants and refugees in the entrepreneurship ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop initiatives and platforms that link migrant and refugee entrepreneurs with innovators in the entrepreneurship ecosystem• Promote partnerships between universities and incubation centers with entrepreneurs
Create working spaces and access to infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish innovation and incubation centers where migrant and refugee entrepreneurs can access work space and infrastructure to boost the diffusion of technology and innovation development• Establish training programme for incubator to better integrate migrant and refugee entrepreneurs
Support greater diffusion of and training in ICT and new technology for refugee and migrant as well as host communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote digital literacy by training in ICT and new technologies required by an entrepreneur to meet the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic
Promote social innovations and social enterprises for refugees and migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage the creation of social enterprises that address the needs of migrants and refugee

Thank you

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