Kenya Government and UN strengthen coordination to finance development during lean times

Innovative resource mobilization and increased coordination are expected to drive future partnerships between the Government of Kenya and the United Nations Country Team in the face of reduced development financing.

The partnership, developed under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is bracing for considerable financial slump following President Trump’s assumption of office in 2016 and his intentions of slashing funding to the UN.

UNDAF is the vehicle by which the UN partners with the Kenyan people.

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Members of the UNCT undertake team building and UNDAF visioning exercises during the UNDAF Prioritization Workshop.

in their self-articulated development aspirations. It was developed according to the principles of UN Delivering as One (DaO), which aim at ensuring Government ownership and is aligned to Government priorities and planning cycles.

In April this year, the US withdrew $32.5m worth of funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), affecting family planning programs in more than 150 countries, Kenya included.

Kenya’s ascension from low income country (LIC) to lower middle income country (LMIC) status in 2015 has also meant that the country does not qualify for cheap loans and getting grants is more difficult, thus presenting an even more formidable challenge in resource mobilization.

According to the UNDAF Annual Report 2016-2017, the partnership has spent some Ksh 57 Billion in financing development in the country in the last three years. This is out of the Ksh 128 Billion needed to fully and successfully implement the programs envisioned in the current partnership framework.

In view of the above, the Government and the UN are forging better coordination mechanism, more innovative resource mobilization, new strategic partnerships and more rational investments as the two partners head toward the next phase of UNDAF (2018-2022).

The upcoming UNDAF is expected to be a significant improvement on the current phase (2014-2018) as it will emphasize the coherence in the implementation of development programs and activities as a way of creating efficiency, promoting optimum use of resources and creating donor interest.

The development of UNDAF 2018-2022 coincides with the transition from the Medium-Term Plan Two (MTP2) to the Medium-Term Plan Three (MTP 3) of Kenya’s Vision 2030 and the SDGs.

At a workshop where senior Government and UN staff held consultations on the new framework, the UN Resident Coordinator to Kenya, Siddharth Chatterjee advocated for convergence to promote efficiency and to attract financial partners.

“The Government and the UN Country Team already have converged around national priorities. Now we need harmonised resource mobilisation and to bring in our respective strengths and comparative advantages,” said Mr. Chatterjee. “Some of our programmes in support of the Government to Deliver As One United Nations family is already generating donor interest. These are the SDG platform to leapfrog universal health care, the cross border programme with Ethiopia to advance peace, development and security in some of Kenya’s remote border areas and the push for area based programmes like Turkana county.”

Treasury Deputy Chief Economist, Monica Asuna called for reduction of transaction costs and collective reporting and accountability in implementation of programs.

“If we agree within the key result areas to jointly mobilize resources and have one main UN agency manage the resources for the various activities under that result area then we could reduce the time that could be spent by each agency on such areas as procurement, human resource and each agency trying to implement programs on their own,” she said.

Commenting about the UN’s role in a Kenya-Ethiopia Cross border programme, Norway’s Ambassador to Kenya, Victor Ronneberg says. “this programme is a testimony of the UN’s convening role, to spur dialogue & engagement & reiterates the primacy of multilateralism even more in this day and age”

Robust relations between the Government and the United Nations
Refugee education scholarship fund celebrates 25 years of assistance in Kenya

John Jok Chuol (left) is a 24 year old refugee from South Sudan follows proceedings at the student’s conference. He is a beneficiary of the DAFI scholarship and studying medicine and surgery at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. Having fled to Kenya in 2003, his talent as a basketball player also earned him a scholarship while in secondary school. (Photo by UNHCR)

Celebrations to mark 25 years since refugees in Kenya started getting funding from the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, known as DAFI took place in Nairobi, Kenya on 12 October, 2017.

More than 200 refugees, past refugee students, staff of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Kenya, government officials, and the partner organization, the Windle Trust, attended the celebrations held at the Catholic University of East Africa in the capital.

Over 530 refugee students have benefited from the scholarship since and it is already posting promising health benefits for the disadvantaged,” she wrote in an opinion article in the Huffington Post published as the Assembly progressed.

As we see UN reforms happening under the stewardship of the UN Secretary General, Mr Antonio Guterres, the UN in Kenya is getting “fit for purpose”.

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it started in 1992. Many have obtained undergraduate degrees from some of Kenya’s best educational institutions such as University of Nairobi, and United States International University.

24 year old John Jok Chuol took part in the celebrations. He’s one of 287 current refugee students benefiting from the DAFI scholarship programme. He arrived in Kenya when he was just 10 years old, after losing in father during war in South Sudan, and then becoming separated from his mother.

John and his brother were able to find safety in Dadaab refugee camp in 2003. They were eventually able to move to Nairobi, where John attended school.

He says it was his talent for basketball that got him a scholarship for secondary, and excellent school grades helped him get a DAFI scholarship and admission at University of Nairobi. Currently, he is a second year student studying Bachelor of Science in Medicine and Surgery.

“DAFI has helped me to achieve my dream of studying medicine. When I graduate, I would like to go back to South Sudan and serve my community and country. I want to be a neurosurgeon and work for a humanitarian agency where I can serve people equally,” John says.

UNHCR’s Deputy Representative for UNHCR Kenya, Wella Kouyou also praised DAFI’s commitment to helping to educate refugees during the event.

“For millions of young people, these are the years they should be spending in school, learning not just how to read, write and count but also how to inquire, assess, debate and calculate. The DAFI scholarship programme is enabling that.”

However, according to a recent report published by UNHCR in September, ‘Left Behind, Refugee Education in crisis’, the initiative in Kenya is a drop in the ocean of what’s needed for refugees.

Over 195,000 of nearly 490,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya who should have access to education, don’t. And globally, over 3.9 million of the world’s 6.5 million refugees, don’t have access to education globally.

Validation workshop in five Eastern African countries for the Better Education for Africa's Rise (BEAR II) project

The Better Education for Africa’s Rise (BEAR II) project is a five-year joint initiative supported by UNESCO and the Republic of Korea, through which UNESCO provides technical support to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems and stimulate ownership in partner countries. TVET is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work.

From 21 to 29 September 2017, five validation workshops took place...
Regional Study reveals urgent need for cultural indicators in Eastern Africa region

In the framework of the UNESCO 2005 Convention for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, UNESCO commissioned a study to gain an understanding of the current status of cultural indicators and statistics in the thirteen countries covered by UNESCO Regional office for Eastern Africa: Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Sudan, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The results of the study have provided the basis for a regional project created an opportunity to discuss ongoing interventions in the country, and identifying potential synergies that the BEAR II project could help create, in order to complement existing interventions and contribute towards building a comprehensive national TVET system.
proposal developed in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and aimed at building capacity for obtaining regular indicators that can guide effective cultural policy in the region. The 2017 study focuses on economic indicators in the cultural sector, but not exclusively since the culture sector is multidimensional. While cultural policy in some countries focuses on cultural industries promotion; in others, policy focuses more on heritage preservation and promotion, promoting national identity and social cohesion or ensuring cultural and/or linguistic diversity. The regional study revealed that indicators on the more social dimensions of culture, such as participation in culture activities, consumption of cultural services/goods, and the domestic content in mass media are also a priority for some countries.

A key concern for UNESCO is ensuring effective integration of the cultural sector in national development plans and strategies. The regional study showed that policymakers today tend to be most responsive to indicators on the economic dimension of culture; in particular, the sector’s contribution to employment (and in some cases, specifically youth employment given the significant youth bulge in several Eastern African countries) and to GDP. Excitement on a global scale generated in the past decade about the growth and growth potential of the cultural or creative industries, has also served to pique interest for economic indicators on the cultural sector.
UN Kenya partners with Postal Corporation of Kenya to launch SDGs commemorative stamps

In marking World Post Day 2017, UNIC Nairobi and the Postal Corporation of Kenya launched the first phase of SDGs stamps at an event held in Nairobi. Stamps with four SDGs signature images will now be made available to the public for purchase at 35 Kenya shillings for local mails, 90 shillings for continental mails and 135 shillings for overseas mails.

The event was also attended by Kenya’s ICT Cabinet Secretary accompanied by other top officials from government. Also in attendance were UN officials and students from various schools across Kenya that had participated in a letter writing competition and emerged winners.
One primary school student - Joyline Chepng’eno from Rift Valley Kenya read her letter in which she addressed the UN Secretary General on insecurity and unemployment as the greatest impediments to development in Kenya. In this first phase, the stamps will bear four sustainable development goals including affordable and clean energy, climate action, life below water and life on land. The next phase is scheduled early next year.

The joint commemoration of World Post Day by UNIC Nairobi and the Poster Corporation of Kenya is as a result of the continuing partnership that UN has established with the Government of Kenya.

UNESCO supports Coding Programs for Kenyan schools

Moringa School launched a practical, introduction to coding program at secondary schools in Kenya with the assistance of UNESCO. Secondary school Practical Open-source Curriculum (SPOC) has kicked off in Lang’ata Boys, Starche Girls and Sunshine Secondary School. To date, Practical Open-source Curriculum has trained over 100 students. Powered by Moringa School and in partnership with UNESCO and Repl.it, the students in these schools are undergoing SPOC’s term 1 curriculum, where they are learning the basics of HTML and CSS, the languages used to write web pages and websites. The vision of the SPOC program is to be able to power secondary school computer clubs across Kenya with world-class coding content, curated and created by Moringa School.

For the past few months, Moringa School has been testing the Practical Open-source Curriculum content with various schools and through a summer coding camp to ensure the content quality is high and the learning experience strong and motivating for students. With successful tests and mini-pilots, Moringa has begun to push out the term 1 content and aims to increase access to the term 1 content to 3 more schools in January. Before the end of 2017,
UNESCO organized a 3-day training workshop for community radio practitioners from 27 to 29 September 2017 on financial planning, resource mobilization and entrepreneurship in Busia County, Kenya. The workshop aimed at building the capacity of community radios in financial planning, resource mobilization and entrepreneurship. It specifically sought to ensure participants are able to read, understand, organize and analyze financial information and increase knowledge amongst participants on varied approaches and methods for raising revenue for marketing and overall running of community radio stations. It also aimed at introducing participants to the concept of entrepreneurship and lay a foundation for deeper understanding of the salient issues in running an enterprise in Kenya.

The workshop attracted participation of 14 radio practitioners comprising of 10 men and 4 women drawn from 4 community radios namely; Baliti FM (Isiolo county), Bulala FM (Busia county), SPOC will also launch in Upper Hill. For other secondary school students, there is also the opportunity to access SPOC through a free November boot camp. In the first term of 2018, SPOC will power 7 schools - the current schools will be in SPOC’s term two curriculum and the additional three schools will begin with SPOC’s term one curriculum.

The Secondary school Practical Open-source Curriculum can be accessed through this link: [http://moringaschool.com/spoc/](http://moringaschool.com/spoc/)
Koch FM (Nairobi county) and Kwale Ranet FM (Kwale county) in Kenya. They were each from different departments within their community radios ranging from news presenters, information and communication officers, editors, accountants, management committee members and programme managers.

This workshop is part of UNESCO’s continuing media development initiatives in the region under its ongoing SIDA funded project themed: “Empowering Local Radios with ICTs” in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

Why is gender inclusivity smart business?

In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, utilizing all social and economic assets is crucial for success. Despite progress, women continue to confront discrimination, marginalization and exclusion.

Ms Akinyi Odongo is a young Kenyan entrepreneur and the CEO of a start-up Textile company, in Kenya. She is passionate about empowering the youth has managed to cut a niche in the industry for herself and has employed five staff.

She and 120 other women were part of the third Women in manufacturing forum organized by UN Women Kenya and the Kenya Association of Manufactures (KIM) through the Women in manufacturing caucus held on the 26th September in Nairobi Kenya.

“Younger people have been the core of my agenda in my firm and I intend to empower more young people and especially girls to come out and conduct their business professionally and to empower the people around them; women and men equally.” Said Ms Odongo.

Led by her passion to empower the youth economically, Ms Odongo signed up for the Women Empowerment Principles (WEPS) with commitment to champion for the promotion of education training and professional development
for women and address implementation of enterprise development, supply chain and market practices that empower women through principle four and five respectively.

Unlike Ms Odongo, Ms Sarah Richson handles more than 800 employees; she is the Global HR Director at TECHNOBRAIN that deals with IT solutions. Through an impact sourcing model, Technobrain aims at empowering lives through technology through job creation that target women and youth.

The Kenya Association of Manufactures Chair Ms Florah Mutahi pointed out the need for women to scale up their businesses an initiative that the Women in manufacturing caucus has started through mapping out the sector to identify potential for more women to scale their businesses and ensure gender mainstreaming in the industry continues to be a key issue.

“Women own 48% of Medium and small Enterprises in Kenya but only contribute 20% to the Gross DP; there is need to scale up our businesses as women” Ms Mutahi pointed out.

The same sentiments were echoed by the Gulf Africa bank, through their Head of Women Banking, Ms Najma Jabrias a signatory to the WEPs and champions of principle 5 that calls for implementation of enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.

“We offer financial services tailored for women to upscale them into formal businesses through the Anisa programme that empowers, protect and educate women that are accompanied by financial inclusion programmes. Through the AGPO initiative, the bank also facilitate financing and offers tenders to women owned businesses in the country” she adds.

The forum, which is the third one of the series saw 14 businesses ranging from micro, small to medium sized companies through their representatives commit to championing the women empowerment principles.

The WIM, targets women in Micro, Small and Medium businesses to provide them with networks, skills and knowledge to access bigger markets, expand their current businesses and venture into diverse sectors. Through this, WIM looks at bridging the gaps that make it impossible for the country to realize the industrialization vision and subsequently our economic goals and ultimately seeks to reinvigorate the local manufacturing sector that is currently weakened by a dire lack of skills.

The program also seeks to increase the presence of women in top leadership positions and significant roles in industry and undoubtedly impact the economy by ensuring equitable, broad-based and inclusive growth.

The WEPs are a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact. Launched in 2010, after a yearlong international consultation with multiple stakeholders; the Seven Principles are clear and straightforward, offering guidance to business on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. Since the launch of the Women’s Empowerment Principles in 2010, 1534 companies from around the world have signed into the WEPs in support for gender equality and the guidance provided by the Principles. They are based on real-life company examples and provide a holistic framework for business action to advance women’s empowerment, covering topics from women in leadership, to access to child and dependent care, to sexual harassment, to networking and mentoring opportunities, to support for women’s entrepreneurship and community initiatives focused on the empowerment of women and girls.

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For the past forty years, FAO’s field activities have provided support to both government and farmers, through a growing network which aims to improve productivity, increase access to inputs, finance and markets. FAO Kenya continues to emphasize on the importance of building a cooperation system among the government and its partners in order to implement agricultural initiatives.

The event was used to showcase of various initiatives by beneficiaries and partner organizations. Some key interventions include innovation in aquaculture, conservation agriculture, farmer field schools and other initiatives promoted by FAO in Kenya over the last 40 years.

World Habitat Day starts thirty days of promoting sustainable urban development

Thirty days of promoting issues, challenges and solutions around urbanization got underway yesterday with the celebration of World Habitat Day in UN-Habitat’s host city, Nairobi, and in global centres around the world.

Celebrating the theme “Housing Policies: Affordable Homes”, the day was marked with a series of events including Urban Breakfasts in Nairobi and Geneva exploring the importance of affordable housing.

In Nairobi, a distinguished panel made up of government, private sector and grass roots organization representation explored the theme in the national context with a packed room and generated a lively debate that highlighted some of the key issues.
In his official statement for the day, UN Under-secretary-general and UN-Habitat Executive Director, Dr Joan Clos, said: “Ensuring housing affordability is...a complex issue of strategic importance for development, social peace and equality.

Addressing the needs of the most vulnerable
“Addressing the housing needs of the poorest and most vulnerable, especially women, youth and those who live in slums must be a priority in the development agendas,” he said, adding that urbanization, and housing in particular, has impact far wider reaching than its own sphere. “Promoting sound housing policies is also crucial for climate change, resilience, mobility and energy consumption.”

The day also kick-starts a dedicated month of exploring and promoting urban challenges and solutions, coined “Urban October”. During this month, partners and stakeholders are invited to contribute ideas and messages to promoting inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities for all.

In addition, this year marks the one-year anniversary of the adoption of the New Urban Agenda – a road map for achieving sustainable urban development – and efforts are focused on the way in which actors at global, national and local levels are implementing it.
In a ceremony held at the UN office in Nairobi, Pan-African Masters Consortium in Interpretation and Translation (PAMCIT) has launched its public information website. PAMCIT is a major UN partner which brings together African universities offering recognised Master’s and PhD programmes. It then offers quality professional language training to gifted students at these universities and opens doors for them into high level international careers.

Formerly known as the “African Project”, PAMCIT was launched by the heads of the language services of several international organisations, including the UN and the EU in February 2009.

While launching the website, the Director General of the UN office in Nairobi- Sahle-Work Zewde underscored UN’s support and partnership with the network especially in promoting multilingualism, promoting peace and creating better working environments.
Yvonne Ndege, a renowned British television journalist narrates her story

Yvonne Ndege, a renowned British television journalist has recently joined the UNHCR team in Kenya as a communication specialist. She is determined to apply on her great deal of media experience to highlight refugees’ stories. In an interview with her, she explains her professional journey in the media and her passion to find solutions for refugees.

Tell us about your transition from mainstream journalism to doing communication work in UNHCR?

Joining UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Kenya as Head of Communications was a very natural transition from journalism. During my 18-year career at the BBC in the UK, and Al Jazeera across Africa and Europe, as a television Correspondent, Presenter and Host, I spent a lot of time covering refugees and internally displaced people in Kenya, the region, Nigeria, Africa, and Europe, around the Mediterranean Sea refugee crisis. Therefore, I felt very conversant with the work of UNHCR, and the issues facing refugees and displaced persons all over the world. It’s not been difficult.

She also praised the network’s efforts in responding to Africa’s professional needs in interpretation and translation of languages.

“Interpretation and translation services as not only useful for conference services but also key for community services and for advancing public information on UN’s agenda 2030,” she explained.

The website will be resourceful in spreading of more awareness of PAMCIT’s activities to potential students in the African market that is yet to be fully tapped.
What drives you?

Storytelling is my passion. I joined UNHCR as I saw it as an opportunity to focus on my passion and on an issue that I care about, refugees, displaced people, people forced to leave home due to war, violence and instability. In Kenya alone there are nearly half a million refugees. That’s half a million individual personal stories I saw as an opportunity to tell. I am driven by the opportunity to change things for individuals and groups of people, for the better through storytelling. In this case, and in this job, refugees. I am also driven by my daughter Safari. Most refugees are small children or under-age. At the back of my mind I always think about children caught up in displacement crisis. Having a child, myself I am driven to find solutions for them through my work and through storytelling.

How do you like to motivate young refugees hoping to make careers in journalism?

Wow. That’s a big question. It’s a good question. Well firstly, I know that there are lots of journalists who have ended up being refugees. They are still journalists. Absolutely they ought to be given the opportunity to still practice journalism. Hopefully they are in a position to motivate young refugees in their midst who want to pursue careers in media. I would encourage all budding refugee journalists and wanna-be refugee journalists to start! Get on platforms that allow storytelling – there are so many – I would say blogging and the use of social media platforms works. Refugees can also consider starting the practice of journalism where they are. Telling the stories of the people around them, through text messages, community radio and video. You don’t need an office; a phone is enough. Have some drive, self-belief and determination. That’s it.

How many refugees and asylum seekers are there in Kenya now? Are some of them voluntarily returning home?

There are currently nearly half a million refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya. The exact number is 488,698 as of the end of September 2017. There is a voluntary repatriation programme for refugees who want to return to Somalia. Since the programme began – in December 2014, 73,614 have voluntarily returned home, of which 32,189 have returned this year. We constantly update information about refugees on our website www.unhcr.org/ke and on our social media pages. I also share a lot information about the work of UNHCR Kenya and refugee issues globally on my personal Twitter feed - @YvonneNdege

How do you view the partnership between UNHCR and the Government of Kenya in finding solutions for refugees?

UNHCR works closely with the Government of Kenya to find long-term solutions for refugees living in Kenya. One of the key things we’re working on is how to integrate them locally. The
Government of Kenya supports what’s called the ‘Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework’. In a nutshell, it promotes the idea that refugees should be integrated as much as possible where they are – until they can return home – until solutions are found. That means giving them certain rights and freedoms, such as the ability to work or run a business. We are pleased that the Government of Kenya recognizes that refugees can be a positive contribution to the Kenyan economy and society, and has voiced its support for the framework. I believe several things will be put into action to show the government’s commitment to helping refugees and finding long-term solutions.

Share with us some key things that UNHCR Kenya is currently involved in, that are aimed at improving livelihoods for refugees.

There are several exciting projects at UNHCR Kenya. One of them is the Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement in Turkana County, where refugees and locals live side by side and get the same public services. Another one is “Artists for Refugees”, a refugees’ arts and music empowerment project that promotes music and arts talent among refugees.

In this project, talented refugees get trained on how to develop income out of their talents. One music album has already been produced involving young musicians from refugee camps for whom musical concerts are organized.

We are also working with athletics experts to nurture athletics talent among refugees. This project aims to create opportunities for talented refugee sportsmen and sportswomen. We aim to develop their ability to participate in sports activities and to be able to compete locally and internationally. Since the installation of the project in 2016, some refugee athletes have successfully been facilitated to participate in international sporting events including the 2016 Rio Olympics and the 2017 World Athletics Championships in London.

UNHCR is leading other UN agencies and partners in a project aimed at promoting development models around refugee settlements in Kenya. What is the progress with the project and what impact is it making to people living in and around refugee camps?

Yes. That’s the Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement project in Turkana County I mentioned above. It’s truly exciting. It’s basically formalizing what has already been happening in Kenya for years. People socializing, doing business together, intermarrying and living as a community. That is what has been happening between refugees and Kenyan citizens for decades.

There has however been a gap in having refugees and locals share social amenities and public services such as hospitals and schools. That is where this great partnership between the Government of Kenya and UNHCR together with its partners come in. The partners are drawn from local governments, other UN agencies and the private sector. Eventually, refugees and Kenyan locals commonly referred to as “host community” will get to share such services. They will interact and live as one community like it would be in any city across Kenya. This is great for creating social cohesion and a sense of community; it’s of great benefit to the local economy.
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