

## Why the European Union is Supporting Kampala's Slums

*Thursday 20 October 2016 witnessed the official launch in Bwaise, Kampala, of the SSCoS project, funded by the European Union Trust Fund. **AMBASSADOR KRISTIAN SCHMIDT**, who was then the Head of the EU Delegation to Uganda, delivered a speech in which he explained the EU support to Kampala slums. Below we reproduce Ambassador Schmidt's speech.*

Last year, the European Union created the European Union Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. It is benefiting a wide range of countries across Africa with a budget of EUR 1.8 billion (6.8 trillion UGX), seeking to address the root causes of violent extremism and to strengthen social cohesion. Uganda, and the SSCoS project, were the first to qualify and it was the very first project launched under this new Trust Fund in all of Africa. We allocated 4.3 million EUR (16.4 billion UGX) from the Trust Fund to improve the situation of the youth in urban slums of Kampala including Bwaise, Kisenyi, Kabalagala and Katwe.

Uganda is rapidly urbanizing, faster than any other African country. In fact, whereas Ugandan cities host 6 million residents today, that figure is expected to increase to more than 30 million in the next two decades. For those coming to Kampala to escape

poverty, forecasts tell us that 85 per cent will settle in so-called “slums”, more than any other East African capital and they will be young people full of dreams and aspirations.

We all know that Uganda has one of the youngest population in the world. Three out of four Ugandans are under 30 years old. In the slums of Kampala, 65 per cent of the residents are youth between 15 and 25 years.

That’s why coming to Bwaise, Kisenyi, Kabalagala or Katwe is a good way to see what the future will look like through empowering the young people to enhance their potential and resilience in the community. Bwaise’s Got Talent, as does Kabalagala, Kisenyi and Katwe. They will not become hotbeds of unemployment, radicalization and crime. They will become hotbeds of innovation, business opportunities, and creativity! Through our implementing partners like IOM and AFFCAD stepping up and taking responsibility for this initiative which will support to advocate mobilization, create opportunities for training and employment for the youth in the slum populations.

We appreciate the efforts of the local government, the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and the State through the ministry of internal Affairs that are working hand in hand with the slum communities to build trust,

to listen to their needs through participatory planning, and deliver the services they are entitled to as Ugandans. There will be no terrorist cells in slums of Kampala, because communities are working with the Uganda police to implement conflict-sensitive community-policing. There will be no radicalizing and distortion of religious faith, because communities will work with religious leaders to convey their messages of tolerance, conciliation and peace.

IOM and AFFCAD's support to hands-on practical, vocational training will give all the young people an opportunity to start-up a business or get a job to create a fundamental change in the slum populations.

We have seen the future. To the youth in Bwaise, Kabalagala, Katwe and Kisenyi, you are the future of Uganda. You have decided to be the masters of your destiny. You have chosen peace, hope, prosperity, and striving for a better life. It gives my immense pride to say that the European Union is by your side, walking through this path with you.

*\* Ambassador Schmidt has since left Uganda after completing his tour duty.*