

PODCAST: Uganda's 'open door' policy tested amid crush of desperate South Sudanese refugees

25 August 2017 – South Sudan, Africa's newest nation, has known no respite since fighting broke out last July, following the collapse of a peace deal between Government and opposition forces, sparking what United Nations agencies report as incidents of 'barbaric violence' carried out by armed groups, and a massive spike in the number of desperate people fleeing for safety.

Amid the ongoing violence, wide-scale sexual assault of women and girls, and the kidnapping of boys for forced conscription, South Sudan, while generally off the media radar, has become Africa's largest refugee crisis and the world's third largest, after Syria and Afghanistan.

The UN estimates that close to 2,000 people a day are crossing the South Sudan border into northern Uganda's Arua district and the number of South Sudanese refugees in the country has now passed the one million mark.

The majority are women and children who arrive exhausted and hungry, with little more than the clothes on their backs. Some of them even have their first meal at the Imvepi reception centre, after walking for days to reach safety.

Struggling to cope with the growing influx, Uganda, which has an open-door policy with respect to refugees, has finally reached 'breaking point,' according to the UN refugee agency.

For [this edition](#) of the *UN News* podcast series, 'The Lid Is On,' Jocelyne Sambira is on the ground in northern Uganda to meet some of the refugees, and listen to their stories of survival. She also looks into Uganda's innovative approach to integrating refugees into society and how this is impacting local communities.

AUDIO: THE LID IS ON – Mass influx of South Sudanese refugees threatening Uganda's open door policy. Credit: UN News