

# INTERAGENCY CHILD PROTECTION RAPID ASSESMENT

BIDIBIDI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT



## Participating agencies

Office of the Prime Minister  
(OPM)

District Local Government-  
UNHCR

UNICEF

World Vision International

TPO

Plan International

IRC

Uganda Red Cross

Medical Teams international

ARC

War Child Holland

Concern World Wide

Uganda January 2017

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## Background

The total population of South Sudanese refugees in Bidibidi refugee settlement stands at 272,206 people with children making 68% of the total population (Source OPM RIMs). This settlement is subdivided into 5 zones of 1,2,3,4 & 5 with Majority of the refugees originating from the central equatorial region of South Sudan and belong to a variety of ethnic groups including kakwa, kuku, madi, Didinga, Acholi, Zande and Bari. This rapid assessment was conducted to identify the main protection risks and concerns affecting children in this refugee settlement.

## Objectives of the assessment

- To identify the child protection risks and concerns across the 5 zones in Bidibidi refugee settlement
- To identify strategies to address how to prevent and respond to the refugee risks

## Summary of key findings

### Violence against Children

- 65% of the respondents from all the 5 zones reported existence of violence against children in the community with **physical violence** being the most common which included beating and slapping of children by their parents.
- 15% reported **emotional violence** as a result of abusive words from parents and guardians, refusal of children to go and play and denying children food. KIs conducted confirmed there is emotional abuse from parents as a result of stress.
- During FGDs adolescent reported physical (beating) and emotional abuse at home as a driving factor for **early marriages** and school drop outs among girls.
- During FGDs, adolescent boys reported observing pregnant teenage girls and child mothers within their communities.
- 57% of the respondents self-reported having knowledge on incidences of child abuse in their communities where as 43% self-reported otherwise.

- Mentioned cases include defilement and rape, early marriages, physical injuries as a result of punishment, denial of resources, and emotional abuse.
- Of the incidences mentioned to be occurring in their community, 23% were reportedly occurring in homes, 5% in remote places, 3% in the neighborhoods at home, 22% in public places like markets and 13% in other places.

## Access to education

- From the assessment it was found that there were children not attending school in the different zones both from the key informants and the focus group discussions, the reasons included; some of the UAMs had to miss school to take care of their siblings at home, not access to vocational training schools, lack of money to get school materials and domestic work (**FGD**).
- 100% of the respondents both children and adults reported knowing children not attending school in their communities. 10% attributed it to domestic work especially baby-sitting, 20% attributed it to distance between their homes and schools, 25% attributed it to culture where girls have to stay home and learn how to do house work as the boys go school, and 15% attributed it to lack of support especially school fees and scholastic materials, while 30% attributed it to separation from family. KIs noted separation from Families especially primary caregivers.
- During FGDs, adolescent boys reported observing pregnant teenage girls and child mothers not attending school.
- During FGDs with boys and girls, children reported having no information on available secondary schools, technical schools/ technical skill training and adult educations.
- During FGDs, participants in zones 2,3,4&5 self-reported not being aware of Early Childhood Development centres in their community
- Key challenges raised at schools include; sitting on the floor at school, no desks, difficult to write when sitting on the floor, school materials, no materials for the young the children not below the age of primary level.
- During the FGD participants reported that some children were not attending school because of lack of food at school. One child was quoted saying: “For us we Love School but we cannot walk long way and remain hungry”

- All girls and boys during FGDs reported feeling safe at school and also mentioned that teachers treat them well, no beating among others also they mentioned the disabled children that attend the school are treated well.

## Psychosocial distress

- 96% of the respondents both children and adults self-reported existence of distress among children. (35%) attributed it to lack of food, 23% to separation from families, (38%) staying in a bushy environment and restriction to play in one area and lack of play items. Both key informants and focus group discussions had the same sources.
- 96% of the respondents both children and adults who self-reported existence of distress mentioned going for prayers, sharing with friends, playing, getting and staying with friends, and spending more hours in the trading centre.
- Abusing drugs and alcohol were mentioned by children and adults during the KI as a negative form of coping mechanism for psychosocial distress.
- During FGDs, adolescent girls reported existence of early marriages as a coping mechanism for distress, bad living conditions at home, and lack of money as desired.

## Unaccompanied and or separated children and alternative care arrangements

- All respondents self-reported existence of unaccompanied and separated children. Some of which were living under foster care arrangement while others were living alone with their siblings.
- 13% of the respondents reported that the living conditions of unaccompanied children were good as per their judgement. This was because they have observed these unaccompanied children having access to food and other none food items
- 72% of the respondents reported that the living conditions of unaccompanied children were good as per their judgement. This was because they have observed these unaccompanied children having access to food and other none food items.
- During FGDs participants both children and adults reported challenges if failure to attend school especially for the CHH as they have to take care of their siblings, lack of cash to

grind the sorghum they are given, Lack of clothes, tribalism, temporary shelters, fear for enough food, adolescents girls complain about lack of money to buy sanitary pads.

### Access to services in the community.

- 95% of the respondents were aware of the organizations providing services in their community and could at least one
- 80% of the interviewed children reported having access to the services. They further reported limited services from the very young ones () who have to be guided by their parents.
- Boys and girls during FGDs reported shortage of water in the community and in the schools. Getting water is a struggle as people are many in the ques.

### Children with special needs

- FGDs with adults both men and women reported presence of children with special needs in their communities. It was reported that these disabled children are being excluded from activities and needed support such as for wheel chairs so that they can go to school and child friendly spaces.
- During FGDs, with adolescent girls, it was reported that children with special needs (mental and physical disability) are taken to health facilities, they felt no adequate support services were provided to help them become better and also to school. They end up being left alone at home.
- The issue of teenage pregnancy in the community was also raised.

### Child labor and exploitation.

- 62% of the respondents both children and adults reported existence labor within their communities. Children have been observed engaging in construction of shelters, stone quarrying for sale and carrying load for other people especially during food distribution, both boys and girls are affected.
- During FGDs with children, they mentioned Lack of basic needs particularly among unaccompanied and separated children, the need for a better shelter, need for food during delayed food distribution as the driving factors for engaging in child labor.

## Livelihoods and youth viability

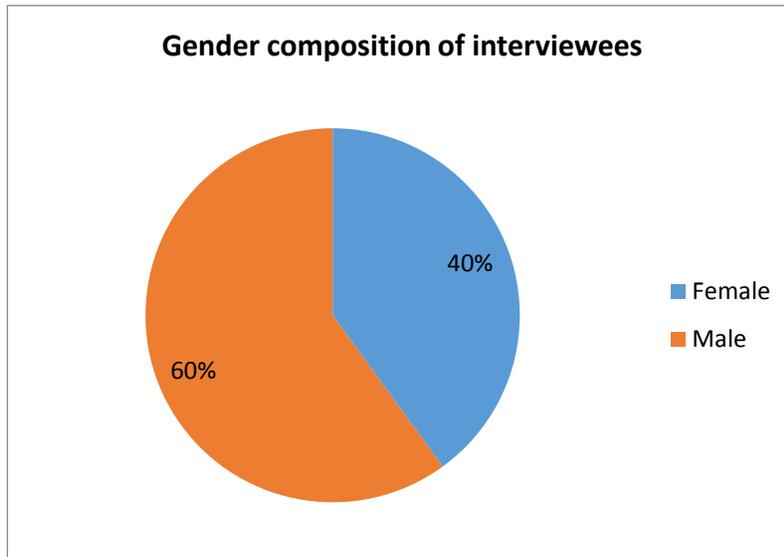
- FGDs with adolescent girls highlighted Lack livelihood options especially for child mothers and, CHHs.
- Adolescents during FGDs expressed interest in youth viability programs that equip them with skills such as catering to open up small restaurants in their communities and tailoring among others.
- During FGDs, adults both men and women expressed farming in most places within the settlement not being feasible due to dry rocky soils and also. They said growing crops will be a source of tension between refugees and host community given that the host community is a cattle rearing community. Cattle will always easily get into the gardens and destroy crops.
- During the FGDs, adults reported foster parents feeling desperate given the extra load of children to care for without any form of livelihood

## Methodology

Purposive sampling was used and the target age groups were 10-14 and 15-19 years of age. Focus group discussions and 2-3 key informant interviews were taken to represent the sample location. A total of 16 partner staff divided into teams conducted the assessment. The total number of 70 focus group discussions were interviewed and 40 key informant interviews were conducted. The assessment team comprised the participation of Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) Yumbe district Local government, UNHCR, UNICEF, World Vision International (WVI), TPO, Plan International, IRC, Window trust Uganda, Uganda Red Cross, War Child Holland, Medical Team international and CONCERN. An interagency y Emergency child protection Assessment Toolkit was used to guide the focus group discussions. Since, there are 5 zones in Bidibidi settlement, the assessment was conducted for 2 weeks. A one days training was conducted by UNICEF/UNHCR on how to collect information to have uniformity and consistency in the data collection. WVI conducted the data cleaning and compiled the report.

## BIO DATA

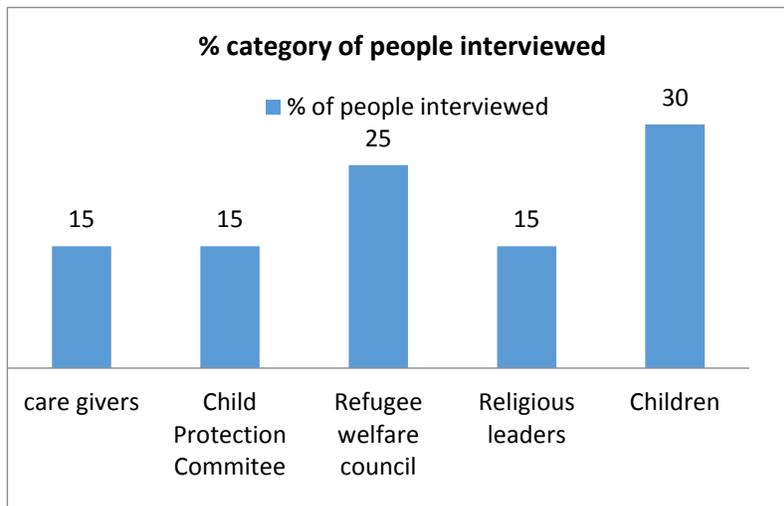
Fig: 1. Sex composition of the key informants



40 participants were targeted for the key informant interviews, six members were interviewed per zone, the interview was conducted in all the 5 zones of Bidibidi

40% of the interviewed population comprised of women and 60% men, this was because most men were readily available compared to the women as they were engaged in different domestic work

Fig: 2. Categories of people interviewed from the different zones.



From the findings, children aged 10 to 19 were the majority of the population that was interviewed, followed by the refugee welfare council leaders as shown in the opposite bar graph, Children/adolescents were majority because the survey was intended to find out the child protection risks or challenges faced.

## GENERAL RISKS

From the assessment 87% of the respondents self-reported occurrence of violence against children where 65% reported having witnessed physical violence which included, beating of the child and slapping among others from both the females and males, in addition 15% reported emotional violence which included abusive words, refusal of children to go and play especially from the females, 5% reported sexual violence which mainly included rape and defilement, some attempted furthermore 2% reported harm full tradition especially against the girl child. The other forms of violence included denial of resources especially the men selling off the foot to buy alcohol hence denying the family food.

32% of the interviewed persons reported that these occur during day time in the community by both men and women, 13% during night, 10% during evening, 5% at home, 8% at the water points where people fight to get water first and finally 20% at the distribution points when they are distributing food by many men, women and refugee welfare council leaders (RWCs).

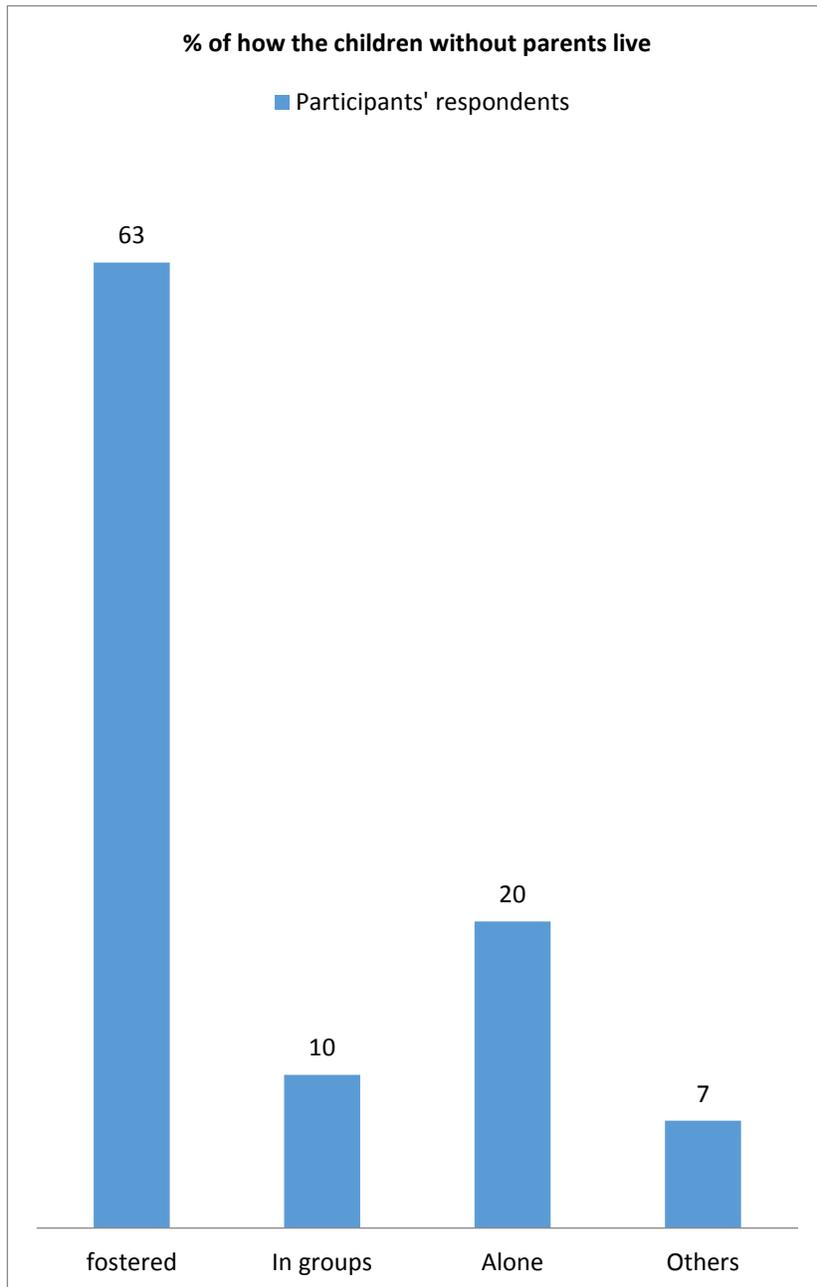
100% of the responded self-reported that there were boys and girls not attending not attending school in their community, a number of reasons were for not attending which included; 10% reported domestic work especially baby-sitting, 20% reported distance i.e. the long distances the children have to move hinder them from going to school, in addition 25% reported culture i.e. according to the culture the girls have to stay home and learn how to do house work as the boys go school. 15% reported lack of support especially school fees and enough scholastic materials, the remaining self-reported caused like separation from family, 5% previous experience and lack of parental support.

35% of the respondents responded that lack of food was the main source of stress for the children in the community followed by separation from family (23%), 38% reported Staying in busy environments, restricted to play in one area and lack of play materials were the major sources of stress. The remaining mentioned reasons like lack of school among others. Furthermore the respondents shared some of the mechanism that the children use of cope with stress and these included;

Cultural dances organized in the community (IRC), early marriage, and play with other children, play songs, peer support, playing together football made locally, sharing food with close neighbors and praying in church through songs.

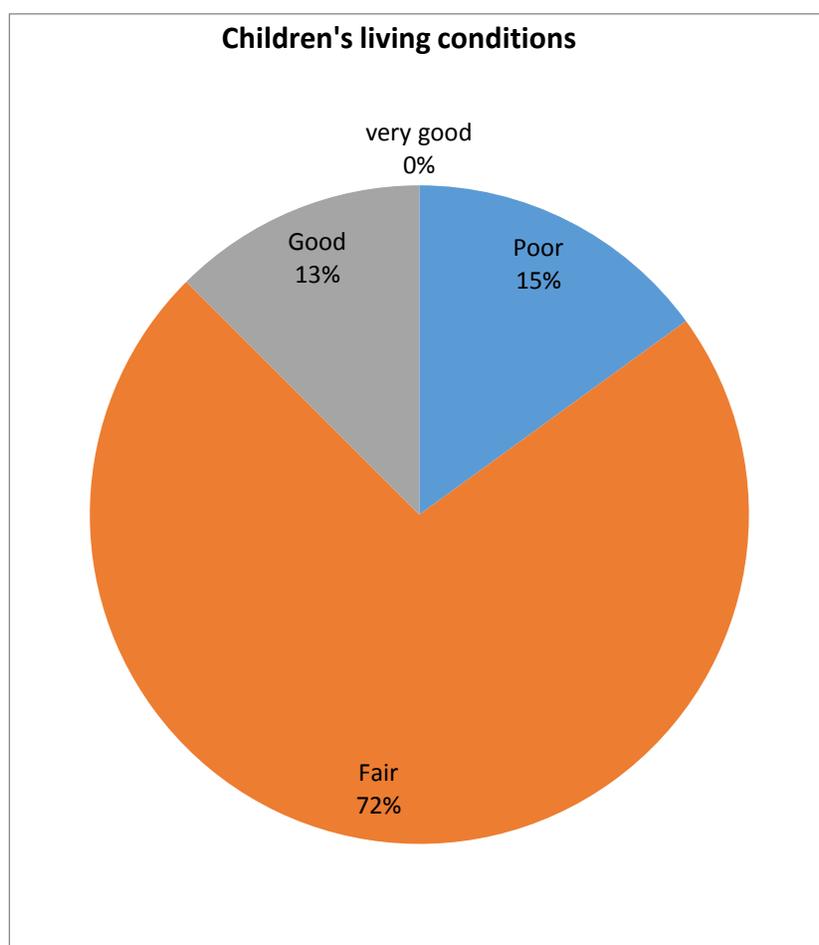
## UNACOMPANIED AND OR SEPARATED CHILDREN.

Fig: 3. How the children live



93% of the respondents reported that there were children in their communities living without parents of whom 63% reported that these were fostered to other families, 10% were living in groups whereas 20% were living alone and 7% others.

**Fig: 4. Children's living conditions**



The respondents further reported that 15% of these children were living in poor conditions, 72% in fair and 13% in good conditions, those living in fair and good conditions had shelter constructed, access to food and other NFI items, those reported living in poor conditions had rugged clothes, missing shelter and food which was either stolen or otherwise.

27% were reported facing a challenge of discrimination, 43% reported facing a challenge of inadequate basic needs like health, education, food and material needs, 30% reported being fearful whereas the rest mentioned challenges like abuses among other.

## CHILD LABOUR

62% of the responded reported children involvement in child labor, the type of work they involve in include; construction of shelter for the men, domestic work from morning to evening especially the women, stone quarrying for sale and carrying load for other people especially during food distribution, both boys and girls are affected, some of the reasons for getting involved in child labor included the lack of basic needs, being a child headed household and also living with a PSN including finances.

95% of the respondents were aware of the organizations providing child protection services in the community. A number of organizations were mentioned some of which included; Red cross (family tracing

and reunification), Windle Trust (education), World Vision (food, NFI and child protection), TPO (Health), IRC (shelter), ARC and MTI, they further reported that 80% of the children had access to the services apart from the very young ones who have to be guided by their parents.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

57% of the respondents self-reported having knowledge on incidences of threats or harm from the community whereas 43% self-reported otherwise. 5% reported cases of defilement and rape, 5% early marriages, 17% physical injuries, 5% denial of resources and 25% verbal abuses the remaining included incidences of assault and 2% reported assault. Of the incidences mentioned to be occurring in the community, 23% were occurring in homes, 5% in remote places, 3% in the neighboring, 22% in public places and 13% in other places.