

**Rapid Needs Assessment for the BPRM Proposal development
Bidi Bidi and Palorinya Refugee Settlements**



Yoyo Central Primary School, Bidibidi Zone 3

March 2019

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District had a population of 224,095 registered refugees¹ by the end of February 2019 –. Children aged 5-17 count 48.8% of the total refugee population. The Palorinya settlement in Moyo District had 119,201 registered refugees by the end of February 2019, with children aged 5-17 accounting for 43.2% of the total refugee population. It is against this background that various CSOs including FCA have intensified operations in the two settlements to address the ever increasing education needs.

1.2 FCA operations in Bidibidi and Palorinya

FCA works with UNHCR as an implementing partner in a partnership that has been growing since 2016. In 2018, FCA took over as the primary education lead in Bidibidi refugee settlement, along funding for vocational education in Kyaka II and Palorinya refugee settlements, as well as secondary education in Palorinya, with an annual funding budget of USD 3 Million. FCA is a co-lead for the Education in Emergencies (EiE) and hosts the coordinator as well as working closely on EiE operations, together with UNHCR. FCA works under a running renewable MoU with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). OPM is the Uganda government ministry that is responsible for all matters of refugees in the country, and it recently renewed the three-year MoU with FCA on September 21, 2018. This, together with close collaboration with districts, has enabled FCA expand and play a key role in refugee support operations.

1.3 Background to the Rapid Needs Assessment

In response to the call for proposals issued by Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM), FCA embarked on a rapid needs assessment in Bidi Bidi and Palorinya refugee settlements. The exercise was meant to generate data on the existing gaps with regard to infrastructure (classrooms, latrines and desks), teachers and teaching materials. The data generated through this needs assessment will enable FCA to address the most areas that are most need of support and direct interventions to the existing most critical needs. In addition to school-based needs, this exercise collected and summarised data on gender related aspects and psychosocial challenges that affect children's access to education. The following sections present the gaps and other dynamics that affect access and quality of education in the target areas.

¹ UNHCR Uganda Refugee Response Monitoring, Settlement Fact Sheet: Bidi Bidi, June 2018

2.0 SCHOOL RELATED GAPS IN BIDI BIDI AND PALORINYA REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS

This section presents the current enrolment of learners in the schools supported by FCA i.e primary schools in zones 1,2 and 5 of Bidi Bidi and secondary schools in Palorinya refugee settlement.

2.1 Summary of school enrolments

The Figures below present the enrolments for Bidi Bidi (all schools across the 5 zones) and secondary schools in Bidi Bidi and Palorinya refugee settlements.

Fig. 1.1: Primary enrolment in Bidi Bidi

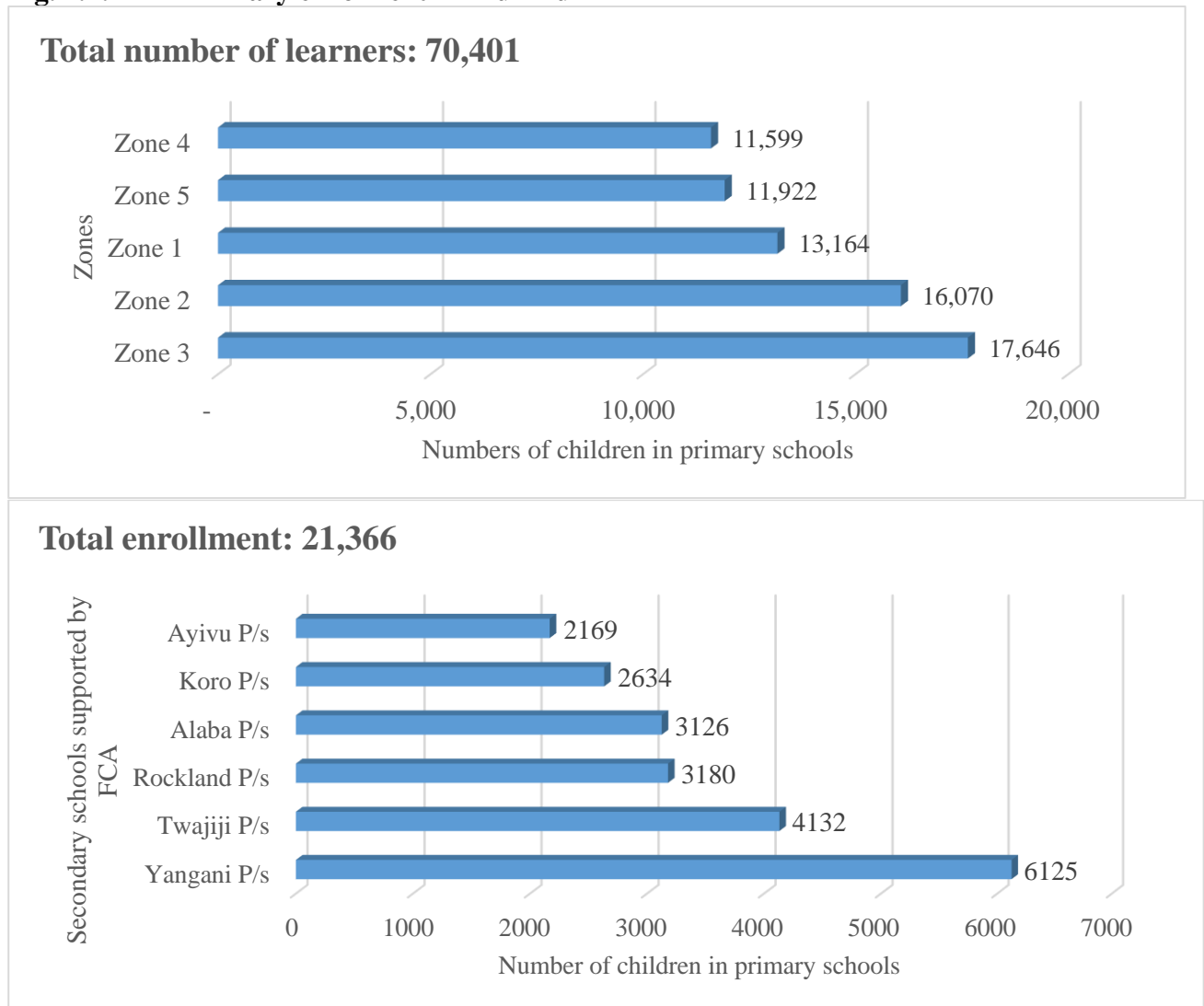


Fig 1.2: Secondary enrolment in Bidi Bidi

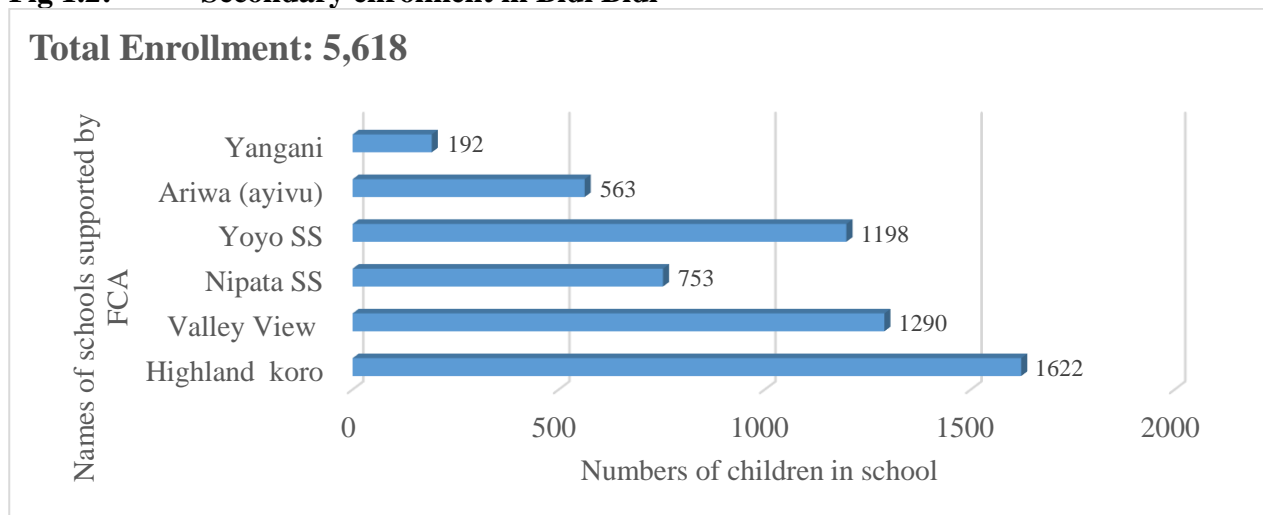
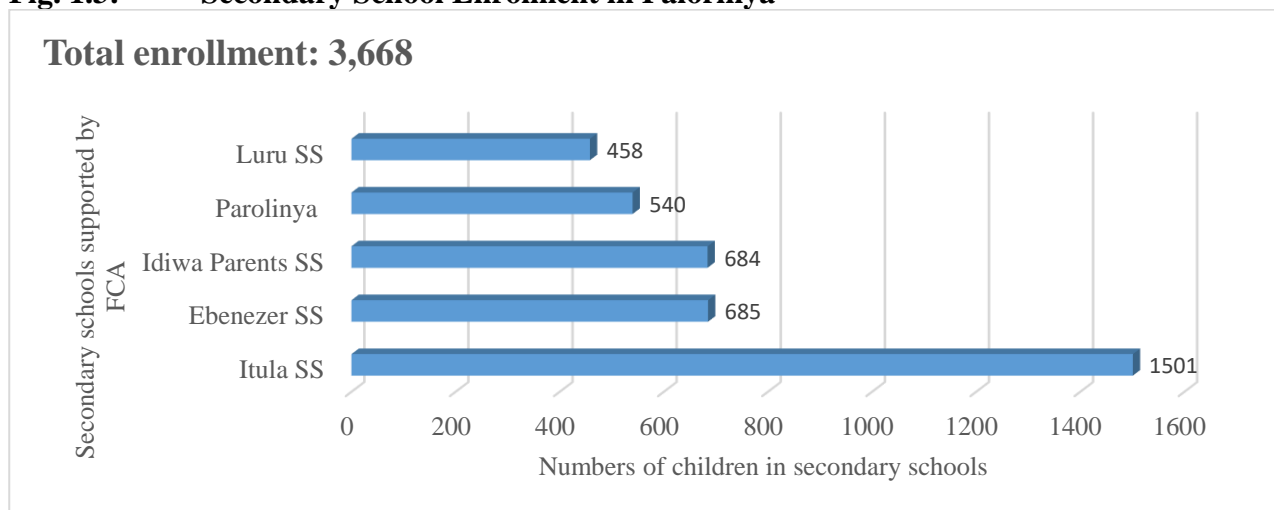


Fig. 1.3: Secondary School Enrolment in Palorinya



As indicated in the figures above, in Bidi Bidi, there are 70,401 learners in primary schools and 5,618 learners in secondary schools. Palorinya on the other hand has 3,668 learners in secondary schools.

2.2 School staffing

Tables 1.1-1.3 summarise the numbers of teachers in the schools in the respective schools and settlements.

Table 1.1: Primary teachers Bidi Bidi

| Zone | Grade III teachers (Classroom teachers) | | | Teaching Assistants | | | Government | | | Grand Total |
|--------------------|---|------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Totals | |
| Zone 1 | 39 | 95 | 134 | 9 | 23 | 32 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 170 |
| Zone 2 | 42 | 99 | 141 | 5 | 23 | 28 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 173 |
| Zone 3 | 43 | 108 | 151 | 14 | 46 | 60 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 215 |
| Zone 4 | 16 | 36 | 52 | 8 | 28 | 36 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 92 |
| Zone 5 | 33 | 64 | 97 | 2 | 11 | 13 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 114 |
| Grand Total | 173 | 402 | 575 | 38 | 131 | 169 | 0 | 20 | 20 | 764 |

Table 1.2: Secondary Teachers Bidi Bidi

| Zone | Classroom teachers | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Female | Male | Total |
| Zone 1 | 9 | 11 | 20 |
| Zone 2 | 10 | 11 | 21 |
| Zone 3 | 5 | 10 | 15 |
| Zone 4 | 6 | 8 | 14 |
| Zone 5 | 7 | 10 | 17 |
| Grand Total | 37 | 50 | 87 |

Table 1.3: Secondary Teachers Palorinya

| Nationality | Female | Male | Totals |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| South Sudanese | 3 | 54 | 57 |
| Ugandan(Host community) | 14 | 52 | 66 |
| Grand Total | 17 | 106 | 123 |

Table 1.4: Comparison of enrolment and staffing

| Primary | Bidi Bidi |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Total enrolment | 70,401 |
| Total number of teachers | 764 |
| Teacher : learner ratio | 92 |

| Secondary | Bidi Bidi | Palorinya |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Total enrolment | 5,618 | 3,668 |
| Total number of teachers | 87 | 123 |
| Teacher : learner ratio | 65 | 30 |

As presented in the tables above, teacher: learner ration is very high for in Bidi Bidi at 92 for primary. Findings of the needs assessment reveal a lower ratio for secondary at 65 and 30 for Bidi Bidi and Palorinya respectively.

2.3 Classrooms

The table presents an analysis of the current enrolment vis a vis the available classrooms, hence generating the current classroom: learner ratio.

Table 1.5: Enrolment, classrooms and classroom: learner ratio Bidi Bidi and Palorinya

| School | Current Enrolment | Classrooms | Current Ratio |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------|
| Primary Schools-Bidi Bidi | | | |
| Zone 1 | | | |
| Twajiji P/s | 4132 | 36 | 1:144 |
| Rockland P/s | 3180 | 47 | 1:204 |
| ZONE 2 | | | |
| Alaba P/s | 3126 | 48 | 1:284 |
| Koro P/s | 2634 | 41 | 1:293 |
| ZONE 5 | | | |
| Yangani P/s | 6125 | 86 | 1:204 |
| Ayivu P/s | 2169 | 32 | 1:241 |
| Secondary Schools-Bidi Bidi | | | |
| Highland koro | 1622 | 10 | 1:62 |
| Valley View | 1290 | 10 | 1:129 |

| School | Current Enrolment | Classrooms | Current Ratio |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------|
| Nipata SS | 753 | 9 | 1:84 |
| Yoyo SS | 1198 | 12 | 1:100 |
| Ariwa (ayivu) | 563 | 6 | 1:94 |
| Yangani | 192 | 0 | |
| Secondary Schools-Palorinya | | | |
| Itula SS | 1501 | 16 | 1:94 |
| Idiwa Parents SS | 684 | 4 | 1:171 |
| Parolinya | 540 | 8 | 1:68 |
| Luru SS | 458 | 0 | |
| Ebenezer SS | 685 | 0 | |

As presented in the above Table the assessment revealed a severe shortage of classrooms, with three schools (Yangani, Lulu and Ebenezer secondary schools) that currently have no permanent or semi-permanent classrooms at all. Whereas Yangani SS in Yumbe is operating in structures borrowed from a primary school, the schools the one of Moyo are operating in temporary structures.



Primary 4 classroom at Ayivu Primary School, Bidi Bidi



One of the classrooms at Alaba Primary School, Bidi Bidi

2.2.1 Desks, latrines and teacher accommodation (Bidi Bidi –Primary)

| Resource areas/categories | Desks | Latrines | Teacher accommodation |
|--|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Required to meet the government standard | 21,042 | 1,403 | 769 |
| Current level available | 10,924 | 465 | 206 |
| Existing gap | 10,118 | 938 | 563 |

It is of great concern that the settlement currently has a gap of 938 latrine stances, as it has only 465 stances against the need of 1,403. There is a very wide gap (10,118) with regard to desks, against the a need of 21,042. This implies that the available desks are less than half of the required total number of desks for every child to sit comfortably in primary schools. More important to note is that with the current gap in classrooms, the gaps with regard to desks is even much higher, as newly constructed classrooms will also need to be equipped with desks.



Learners' latrines at Koro Highland Secondary School



Teachers' accommodation at Valley View Secondary School, Bidi Bidi

2.2.3 Text books' gaps in secondary schools for Bidi bidi refugee settlement

| Essential/ relevant text books | | | | | Text Books (1:1) | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|-----|------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| English | Maths | SST | Science | CRE | Total | Average | Current No. of students per text book | Textbooks needed | Gap |
| 1,203 | 1,119 | 1,009 | 1,011 | 805 | 3,674 | 834 | 866 | 36,800 | 35,966 |

2.3 Text books' gaps in secondary schools Palorinya refugee settlement

| Resource areas/categories | Teachers | Classrooms | Desks | Latrines | Teacher accommodation |
|--------------------------------|----------|------------|--------|----------|-----------------------|
| Required for optimum operation | 585 | 585 | 10,332 | 689 | 560 |
| Current level available | 560 | 173 | 4,889 | 304 | 88 |
| Existing gap | 25 | 412 | 5,443 | 385 | 472 |

2.4 Other gaps for secondary schools in Palorinya

| | | Gap |
|------------------------|--|-----|
| Classrooms | Idiwa SS | 9 |
| | Palorinya SS | 6 |
| | Kali SS | 6 |
| | Luru SS | 6 |
| Laboratories | One classroom in standalone block including equipment | 4 |
| Latrines | Teachers' latrine stances | 12 |
| | Latrine stances for learners | 54 |
| Teacher Accommodation. | Teachers' housing units (5 blocks of 4 units each) accommodating 20 teachers | 20 |
| Office Space | Across 4 schools | 4 |
| Libraries | Across 4 schools | 4 |

The above secondary schools have been found to have the highest gaps across the functionality areas (classrooms, laboratories, latrines, teacher accommodation, office space and libraries) as presented in the above table.

3.0 GENDER ANALYSIS

This section analyses the gender related challenges and dynamics that affect access to education. The assessment aimed at establish the possible differences in access for boys and girls and what the specific reasons could be. It starts with a presentation of the distribution of girls across the different levels, followed by qualitative responses on challenges that affect girls's access to education.

3.1 Enrollment of girls

Table 3.1 Primary girls (as a proportion of all learners)- Yumbe

| Class | Girls as a proportion of all learners |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| P.1 | 47.9 |
| P.2 | 47.9 |
| P.3 | 48.3 |
| P.4 | 45.1 |
| P.5 | 45.3 |
| P.6 | 43.2 |
| P.7 | 40 |
| Overall (from totals) | 46.5 |

Table 3.2 Secondary girls (proportion)- Yumbe & Moyo

| Class | Girls as a proportion of all learners (Yumbe) | Girls as a proportion of all learners (Moyo) |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| S.1 | 29.3 | 45.3 |
| S.2 | 31.4 | 39.9 |
| S.3 | 28.1 | 23.6 |
| S.4 | 22.2 | 45.2 |
| S.5 | 8.0 | 39 |
| S.6 | 8.7 | 24 |
| | | |
| Overall (from totals) | 27.7 | 40.3 |

With realisation of the high numbers of children out of school, the assessment sought to explore the reasons as to why children are not enrolling into school as well as why some children still drop out. The table presents the findings:

Table 3.3: reasons for school dropouts among boys and girls

| Reasons for failure to enroll/dropout out school | Categories most affected |
|--|--------------------------|
| Psychosocial challenges: some children experience serious emotional challenges and after spending so much without receiving support, they either lose interest in school or families deny them support as they believe that such children are indisciplined | Girls and boys |
| Inadequate infrastructure force children to drop out of school. Congestion and inadequate desks and other important infrastructural facilities make children lose interest in studies, hence, they eventually drop out of school | Girls and boys |
| Inadequate food forces children out of school as children fail to walk to schools after hungry nights and or no food to pack to school | Girls and boys |
| Limited livelihood options are a challenge for children. Children in most cases go with their mothers to work for money or do petty businesses to earn money for their families' survival | Girls |
| Community based physical and sexual violence against children scare away many children from going to school. Many of them are not assured of their safety on their way to school, after hearing so many cases of children that have been beaten or raped on their way to schools. | Girls |
| Inadequate sanitary facilities cause dropouts for girls. When girls fail to access adequate sanitary facilities especially changing rooms and toilet facilities, many of them resort to skipping school during their menstruation. After missing so many days of schools, their performance goes down and they lose morale and interest, hence eventually dropping out of school | Girls |
| Many children face domestic violence in their homes due to drunkard parents, men that have abandoned their families or even family members (children and adults) that experience psychosocial challenges. Some of the aforementioned categories of people especially drunkard parents and those that have psychosocial issues stop their children from going to school and commit them to child labour or they live under very hostile circumstances, get frustrated and give up on school. | Girls and boys |

3.1 Current gender differences that are likely to affect access to education

Findings reveal that women and girls are most burdened with household chores like cooking, fetching firewood and involvement in long term and short-term food security strategies. Deeper engagement of women and girls as compared to their male counterparts has been attributed to negative cultural beliefs on girl child education. It is commonly believed that girls can remain home and support with household chores and other activities as boys go to school. There is also inadequate or lack of financial resources for alternative household livelihoods as majority of the refugees can hardly pursue even the basic income generating activities.

Girls attested to these findings during FGDs as one of them in Bidi bidi responded:

‘‘At my home cooking, washing plates, birthing children is for girls. Boys fetch water, cut poles and building houses. Boys usually cook and wash plates when their sisters are not at home. Girls also have to do these activities before they come to school. If my mother is not at home, I have to remain there and keep looking after the younger children.....’’

The above voice is a vivid elaboration of the challenges that girls face within their households, inhibiting them from accessing education like their male counterparts.

Key informant interviews with the Director of Studies at Idwa Secondary school in Parolinya refugee settlement and a Refugee Welfare officer did not contradict the above findings as they gave the following responses respectively:

Director of Studies at Idwa Secondary school

‘During last year’s candidates meeting, students reported of missing lessons and late reporting because, they are involved in all household chores, Income generating activities to generate income to support the family and buy scholastic materials’.

Refugee Welfare Council (RWC) member in Palorinya refugee settlement:

‘Men and boys at the camp do not involve into long term Income Generating Activities rather do involve in betting, gambling and selling of food ration and Non Food Items provided by World food program (WFP). He further said that, Women and girls are involved in various Income Generating Activities like selling of firewood, fetching water and brewing alcohol for sale’.

The study also revealed lack of fairness in engagement in collecting food allocations distributed by the UN World Food program. It was noted that women and girls’ fully involve in food distribution on school days’, hence contributing to girls absenteeism from school.

A teacher in one of the Focus group discussion said,

‘During food distribution on school days’, children mostly girls irregularly attend classes and boys of upper classes. He added that, men have left the responsibilities of receiving household food ration to hands of women and girls’.

The above findings are all evidence that negative and deeply engrained negative attitudes against girls’ education have emerged as key constraints to girls’ access to education in Bidi bidi and Palorinya refugee settlements. Unfortunately, girls’ engagement in the aforementioned activities have been linked to other challenges of early marriages, high prevalence of rape. These findings therefore do not only present the challenges that hinder girls’ access to education, but also project the possible long-term impact of girls’ limited access to education.

3.2 Recent changes in the settlements regarding access to secondary and primary education

The study revealed that recent efforts to establish permanent classrooms for primary schools has significantly increased school enrolment and attendance in areas with good structures compared schools with temporary structures, at times constructed with tarpaulin. Construction of classroom was reported to have increased enrolment in schools as noted by the head teacher of highland primary school:

‘School enrolment significantly increased with the construction of permanent class rooms compared when they were built with tarpaulin’.

In regard to CWDs, it was found that in the face of inadequate incomes and psychosocial support, there have been some efforts to increase CWD’s access to education through provision of scholarships.

The Districts Education Officer of Yumbe district noted:

“Scholarships have provided to Children with special needs and Orphan vulnerable Children, have improved their access to primary and secondary education. We consequently have bigger numbers of CWDs as compared to the previous years. Children with special needs and OVC’s access to education has improved because of NGO’s support, for example Finn Church Aid, Windle International and AAR Japan who provided scholarships. However, many of them still lack the necessary equipment such as wheel chairs, brail machines, etc.

When the issue of CWDs was probed further, it emerged that not so many partners are addressing the challenge of assistive devices. The DEO Yumbe district noted that there are bigger numbers of children that could not access school because they did not have the requisite assistive devices. It is therefore important that future interventions consider providing assistive devices to enable CWDs enrol into school and attend regularly.

Current gains notwithstanding, there are still challenges of discrimination against CWDs across both refugees and host communities. In Key Informant Interview in Parolinya refugee settlement, the chairperson of the Board of Governors at Itula Secondary school noted:

“.....the refugees and the host communities discriminate children with disabilities because they are taken as a curse and have no value to the family. He further said primary and secondary schools do not have Special needs teachers and learning materials’.

There is therefore need for more mobilisation to implore the communities to stop segregation and embrace the CWDS by enrolling them into schools and offering all the other necessary forms of support.

3.3 Community mobilisation

The needs assessment revealed that establishment of village education task force committees and other groups has played a key role in sensitising and mobilising parents to enrol and keep children in schools, including girls and children with disabilities.

One member of a Refugee welfare committee notes:

“One of our task as refugee welfare is to mobilise refugee families to enrol their children in schools existing within the settlement’ he added that, we also conduct education community meetings and door-to-door mobilisation of children to go to school”.

It emerged that provision of scholastic materials (books, pencil, sets and pens) has motivated parents and learners to attend school. There were also reports of children being sent out of school whenever they don't have scholastic materials.

One of the female adult participant in an FGD said:

‘Our children are sent back from school when they do not have books and pens. However, with the organisations such as Finn Church Aid, children are able to have books , pens and sets’. With these items, they can remain in school”

The above voice is testimony that without requisite scholastic materials, children cannot remain in school. When teachers were asked about the issue of scholastic materials, they unanimously noted that during the distribution of scholastic materials, enrolment is high and learners' attendance is equally high. This is evidence that procurement and distribution of such materials should be a major priority for refugees support organisations.

3.4 Risks that girls, Women, CWD's and UAMs face that affect access to education.

As highlighted earlier in this report, the assessment revealed various risks that are faced by the special interest groups (girls, CWD's and unaccompanied minors) that affect their access to education. Respondents mentioned defilement, rape, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, domestic Violence, Discrimination of Orphans and UAMs, child labour, long distance to school. The District Education Officer of Yumbe district noted:

‘In the last 2 years, many girls in the host and refugee communities were reported to have drop out of school due to pregnancy, early marriages and defilement. Unaccompanied Minors face child labour and discrimination. There is also a problem of distances (5 to 6 kms) to schools, which mostly affects girls and CWDs.

It is important that more infrastructural facilities are provided to the existing schools. This will not only make them attractive to the children, but the schools will also be able to accommodate more children within the localities where they operate. This evident as studies have found that schools receive more children whenever they obtain more and better infrastructure.

3.5 Menstrual management-an impediment to girls' education

A Study on Menstrual Management in Uganda (2016) by The Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) and Water Sanitation Centre found that in Uganda, the stigma of menstruation, a low level of awareness among girls, boys and the wider community, lack of sanitation facilities, affordability of menstrual supplies and access to accurate information can lead to an adolescent girl missing school. Yet, four to five school days each month equates to as much as 20% of the academic year intentionally lost due to menstruation. School absenteeism can lead to poor academic performance and learning achievement and heightens the risk of drop out. This, in turn, can increase an adolescent girl's risk to the likelihood of early initiation to sex with associated risks of HIV, early pregnancy, teenage

pregnancy with its associated maternal health complications. Limited menstrual management supplies and knowledge therefore have far-reaching implications.

Like any other necessities, limited sanitary supplies have been linked to poverty and failure to prioritise some necessities in communities. One of the girls in the FGD explained:

‘Poverty and lack of financial support to buy clothes and sanitary pads forced my friend to marry. However, the husband went back to Sudan and left her alone suffering with the baby’.

The above testimony is evidence that lack of sanitary supplies can easily force girls out of schools. The need for support with regard to these items there cannot be over-emphasised.

3.5 Power imbalances and needs that arise based on gender inequality

- There are inadequate classroom blocks causing congestions due to high enrolment especially in primary schools. For examples, pupil classroom ratio for Bidi bidi is 1: 120 for primary and 1: 80 for secondary.
- Inadequate access to sanitary supplies
- Girls are more involved in domestic workloads and child nurturing as their male counterparts are more involved in big income generating activities,
- Low school attendance during food distribution and during rainy season.
- Limited laboratories and equipment to aid practical lessons, hence impeding learning.
- There are inadequate WASH facilities, hence affecting attendance especially for girls.
- Inadequate distribution of scholastic materials and late distribution of such materials even when some organisations purchase and distribute them.

3.6 Strategies proposed by respondents and stakeholders to address existing challenges.

- Providing awareness raising to the parents and communities about equal education opportunities for all children, regardless of their sex, disability status or age among other characteristics.
- Provision of scholarships for children that are ascertained to be unable to afford school fees.
- Need to distribute sanitary supplies and establish girl friendly spaces for counselling them in school.
- Provision of assistive devices to CWDs to ease their access to school
- Girls and women involvement in school meetings was suggested to close the gap in females’ involvement in affairs that affect access to education

Assignment pictures:



FGD at IDWA Secondary School, Parolinya refugee settlement, Moyo District.



FGD at the RWC Office in Village 8, zone 3. Bidibidi Refugee Settlement.

4.0 PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

According to the journal of Conflict and Health 2016 (10:18), the types of mental health and psychosocial support problems among South Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda were diverse and the burden appeared to be considerable, yet there were currently few available services. The journal indicated the need for a range of services addressing social concerns as well as varied types of mental conditions. Mental health and psychosocial support remains a key concern for refugee support operation, though there seems to be less support from intervening organisations. It is against this background that FCA included this area in the rapid needs assessment.

4.2 Causes of psychosocial challenges

When asked the challenges that they or their colleagues had faced that could expose them to psychosocial challenges, children highlighted stressful situation, hallucinations or bad dreams, depression, mental illness and isolation as the commonest ones they had faced. These challenges were generally attributed to a wide range of factors including inadequate financial resources (for instance for paying school fees), previous experiences as they escaped from war zones, segregation, domestic violence and disabilities among others. *In an FGD in Palorinya refugee settlement*, one of the secondary school students explained:

‘We are living in a difficult situation, our parents are poor they are unable to pay our schools fees and buy us clothes, soap and food -we eat posh and beans throughout the months. For instance, my parents have been selling food ration provided to us by UNHCR and WFP to raise some money to buy clothes and soap. This makes life so difficult for us to survive as we don’t feel at peace’.

Findings suggest that psychosocial challenges are exacerbated by circumstances at home. There is also seems to be a linkage between engagement in domestic work and the psychosocial challenges that children face as well as access to schooling opportunities. A girl at Itula boarding secondary school explained:

‘I am always happy when am at school than home because; when am at school, I can concentrate on my studies without feeling stressed. When am at home I get stressed every time because of heavy work load, doing all household chores, walking long distance to fetch firewood for home use and sale. The other thing that stresses me so much is people always calling me a refugee.’

Relatedly, a female adult respondent explained:

“We the refugees are being discriminated against by the host community. They do not want us to fetch firewood and poles for building in their bushes our women and girls have been beaten and raped by the host community boys and men. They are always telling us to leave their land in peace and go back south Sudan to suffer”

The above and other responses do not show the contribution of domestic workload and psychosocial challenges, but also discrimination that seems to be rampant. There is therefore need for a multi-dimensional approach to handling these challenges, by approaching them from the school and community levels.

Children' experience both in their home country and in the refugee settlements cannot be underestimated in exacerbating psychosocial challenges. Many adults narrated difficult experiences that children have gone through, that are likely to cause severe psychosocial challenges. A member of a Refugee Welfare Committee in Palorinya noted:

“Children who lost their parents during the civil war in South Sudan while they were seeing are traumatised and are not happy in their lives. Many people are committing suicide in this camp because they recall how the people they lost were brutally murdered. In addition, lack of money caused by lack of income generating activities among the refugees has worsened the situation”.

More still, there seem to be serious psychosocial challenges among the adults in the community, yet these are either parents of children or they are the people these children stay within their respective communities. In a key informant interview, a community protection staff noted:

“Adults and children are suffering from mental illness, all the time we receive information of people turning wild. Because of this, people have committed suicide and damaged people's properties. For example, mad people have burnt many houses in this community. People are suffering from depression because of continuous suffering and over-thinking about means of survival. People are so poor that some of them cannot even raise 500 UGX to buy soap”.

An adult female FGD participant noted:

‘Most of the families lost those dear ones during the civil war back home in south Sudan. People have died due to both sickness and hunger. My sister lost her husband, who left her with 6 children; and she now facing serious difficulties of providing for them. She actually cant look after them, they will most likely end up so affected’.

Another respondent explained:

‘There is too much drinking and drug abuse among the refugees. Women and girls have been raped and beaten by men who are drunk. My neighbour is always beaten by her husband each time he comes home when drunk. There is so much unfair treatment of children by their step mothers which has caused child labour and children running away from home’.

The above quotes explains the extent of the problem in the community and reflects how deeply children are likely to be affected. Considering the documented limited access to requisite services in these settlements, it is evident that provision of psychosocial support services is so urgent to enable children attain social being and be able to access education services.

4.3 Summary of major causes of psychosocial challenges

Respondents were asked the major causes of the different psychosocial challenges (trauma, mood swings, mental illness, isolation, depression and stress among others), and in their own opinions, they following were mentioned:

- *Poverty*
- *Unemployment*

- *Unaccompanied minors staying alone*
- *Group influence*
- *Corporal punishments at school and at home*
- *Stigmatisation (constantly identifying them as refugees)*
- *War related trauma*
- *Bad Cultural practices*
- *Alcoholism and drug abuse*
- *Domestic Violence*
- *Bad and difficult living conditions*

4.4 Common Coping mechanism by those affected by psychosocial challenges

The participants were asked the common coping mechanism that are applied by those who suffer psychosocial challenges. The following mechanisms (positive and negative) were mentioned:

| Positive coping mechanisms | Negative coping mechanisms |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeking counselling and guidance from senior women teachers, church leaders and local refugee leadership</i> • <i>Accepting situation for example poverty and being a refugee</i> • <i>Reduce expectations e.g accepting not to have too much demands</i> • <i>Looking out for existing opportunities</i> • <i>Saying at school as a way of coping mechanism</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alcoholism and drug abuse</i> • <i>Forced marriages / early marriages</i> • <i>Dropping out of school</i> • <i>Absenteeism from school</i> • <i>Fighting among children</i> • <i>Isolation from the rest of the children and adults</i> |

In an interview with a partner in the refugee operations (LWF) the child protection community focal person in Parolinya noted:

“Girls and women have engaged into various income generating activities like fetching firewood for sale, selling of agricultural produce and retail soaps to raise income to supplement on what UNHCR and WFP provides”.

One of the teachers at Idwa secondary school responded:

“Community sensitisation by different organisation (Lutheran world federation and TPO) has strengthen and changed refugees bad mind set of alcoholism, fighting, and forced marriage”.

4.5 Psychosocial challenges and school dropouts.

Respondents were asked for children or youths they knew who had dropped out of school and if the said negative coping mechanism are more common among them. Most of the participants said they knew and or even stayed with those who dropped out school.

The mentioned common negative coping mechanisms including:

- *Alcoholism*
- *Drug abuse*
- *Fighting with others*
- *Theft*
- *Isolation*

4.6 Known/tested opportunities that are supporting children with psychosocial challenges.

When asked about efforts that have been taken to support children with psychosocial challenges, the following responses were given:

- *Secondary boarding school in Parolinya*
- *Small play grounds for football for only boys*
- *Counselling service offered by teachers in schools while teaching*
- *Counselling centres by World vision and IRC in Bidibidi and LWF and TPO in Parolinya*
- *Presence of medical centres*

4.7 Psychosocial support partner mapping

The respondents were asked to list organisation they are aware of which implement psychosocial support interventions in the target areas. This could provide a good opportunity for developing a referral pathways in efforts to provide adequate support to children with psychosocial challenges. Below is the list of the organisations:

| <u>Bidibidi</u> | <u>Parolinya</u> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>TPO –Uganda</i>• <i>America refugee Council (ARC)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>TPO –Uganda</i>• <i>Lutheran World federation (LWF)</i>• <i>Relief for HIV/AIDs</i>• <i>Save the children</i> |

4.8 Possible intervention to improve psychosocial interventions

When asked what interventions they think could help to improve psychosocial wellbeing of boys and girls in primary and secondary schools, respondents mentioned the following:

- *Training community councillors and extending counselling service to all villages*
- *Community sensitisation on themes that cause psychosocial challenges*
- *Creating more opportunities for income generating activities*
- *Creating employment opportunities to parents*
- *Creating VSLA programs and Loan schemes*
- *Training teachers on psychosocial to support and handle psychosocial challenges*
- *Supporting girls with dignity/sanitary kits*
- *Creating more scholarships for girls and disadvantage children*
- *Forming clubs in schools that promote psychosocial support and educating of both girls and boys*
- *Providing friendly learning environment in terms of facilities in the school*
- *Providing school meals for students*
- *Increasing support for refugees*
- *Providing land for agriculture*



An FCA staff facilitating FGD with community members in Palorinya refugee settlement



A KII with LWF's community psychosocial support facilitator in Palorinya refugee settlement