

## Assessment Technical Working Group (ATWG)

### Minutes for the Meeting held on 26/10/2023

#### Introduction:

The Assessment Technical Working Group (ATWG) convened on October 26th, 2023, with World Food Programme (WFP) presiding over the meeting. Participating organizations comprised UNHCR, WFP, IOM, UN-WOMEN, ECHO, REACH, AVSI, War-Child, IPA, Population Council, OXFAM, Save the Children, Child Fund, LWF, and the Refugee Council.

#### Agenda

No	Agenda Item	Facilitator
1.	Opening and introduction remarks	ATWG Co-chairs
2.	Update on the ATWG Technical Steering Committee	Wendy
3.	Assessment Registry update	Bekir
4.	Standardization of indicators	Melle
5.	Situation Analysis presentation	REACH/Ted
6.	REACH's presentation on ongoing and planned assessments	REACH/Ted
7.	IOM's presentation on upcoming assessment plans	IOM/Andrew
8.	U-LEARN's presentation on Uganda Response Innovation Lab (U-RIL)	U-Learn/Marjike
9.	Population Council presentation	Population Council/Chi-Chi
10.	AoB	ATWG Co-chairs

#### Participants

No.	Name	Organization	No.	Name	Organization
1.	Bekir Yildiz	UNHCR	19.	Marijke Deleu	U-Learn
2.	LUWANDAGGA Andrew	IOM	20.	Joseph Irumba	AVSI
3.	Nathan LOWANYANG	WFP	21.	Daisy Among	Refugee Council
4.	Faith Kirungi	UNHCR	22.	ROTIVAL Bruno	ECHO
5.	Melle van Hilten	REACH	23.	Belinda Asio	Refugee Council
6.	Melle van Hilten	REACH	24.	Basque, Julie	Save the Children
7.	Simon Nissling	UN Women	25.	Paul Atikoro	WVI
8.	Festo Muriisa	UNHCR	26.	Alia Mohamed	IPA
9.	Francis Onyango	Popn Council	27.	Winnie Munduru	OXFAM
10.	Alia Mohamed	IPA	28.	Daniel Olabo	Child Fund
11.	Godfrey Twesigye	War-Child	29.	Anthony Odumuna	LWF
12.	WABWIRE Vincent	IOM	30.	George Odwe	Popn Council
13.	WABWIRE Vincent	IOM	31.	Ankunda, Kullein	Save the Children
14.	Chi-Chi Undie	Popn Council	32.	Dr. Obed Kambasu	
15.	Theodore JASPERS	REACH	33.	Nazneen Jahan Mithun	
16.	AKANKWASA Robert	IOM	34.	Efprem Okello	
17.	Peter Kisaakye	Popn Council	35.	Gillian Atuheire	
18.	Wendy ALVARADO	WFP	36.	Justine Nekesa	

## Presenters

No.	Name	Topic	Organization
1	Wendy Alvarado	Update on ATWG Technical Steering Committee	WFP Uganda
2	Bekir Yildiz	Assessment Registry Updates	UNHCR
3	Melle van Hilten	Standardization of Indicators	REACH Uganda
4	Theodore Jaspers	Situation Analysis	REACH Uganda
5	Theodore Jaspers	Ongoing and Planned Assessments	REACH Uganda
6	Andrew Luwandagga	Plans for Upcoming Assessments	IOM
7	Marjike Deleu	Uganda Innovation Lab (U-RIL)	U-Learn
8	Chi-Chi Undie	Population Council Presentation	Population Council

## Remarks from the co-chairs

Wendy in her remarks highlighted the need for strengthening methodologies through effective collaborations.

## Updates on the ATWG Technical Steering Committee

WFP: Provided an update regarding the expression of interest to participate in the Technical Steering Committee, with three organizations—LWF, OXFAM, and UN-Women—expressing their interest.

Next steps:

- Sending out an email containing details on the establishment or expansion of the steering committee.
- Inviting additional interested organizations to submit their requests to join the ATWG Technical Steering Committee.

## Updates on the Assessment Registry

UNHCR: Emphasized the importance of the Assessment Registry for Uganda's Refugee response, serving as a repository for assessments conducted in the country and a platform providing evidence-based information. Encouraged partners to submit reports on their planned, ongoing, and completed assessments and urged them to consult the Registry Tool to identify similar assessments, thereby preventing duplication of efforts.

As of October 26th, 2023, a total of 122 assessments have been reported, with a notable concentration in 2021 and approximately 15 assessments conducted in 2023 alone. Of these assessments, around 66 percent target both Refugee and Host Populations, 33 percent exclusively focus on Refugees, and only 1 percent target Host Community. Most assessments cover multiple sectors, particularly Livelihoods and Resilience, Environment and Energy, Health, and Nutrition.

Next steps include:

1. Encouraging partners to persist in reporting their planned, ongoing, and completed assessments.
2. Incorporating [the URL link to the dashboard](#) in the meeting minutes.

3. Exploring the possibility of including links to assessment reports and datasets in the Assessment Registry Dashboard.

#### Updates on Standardization of Indicators

RAECH: The assessment of the presently collected indicators has been finalized, leading to the formulation of recommendations intended to serve as standards across various assessments. Subsequent steps involve engaging in discussions and consultative meetings with UNHCR and all sectors to obtain feedback and validate this standardized set of indicators.

Next steps for REACH:

- Holding consultations with each sector individually regarding the proposed set of indicators.
- Crafting question modules.
- Seeking sectoral and coordination validation for the selected indicators.

#### Updates on the Situation Analysis

Regarding the Situation Analysis, this compendium of key indicators and findings was collected and reviewed by IMPACT and sector leads, with each analysis spanning 40 to 80 pages. In 2021, three situational analyses focused on Socio-economic Vulnerability, Access to Basic Services (WASH/Education/Health), and Protection. These analyses, approximately 40-80 pages each, were discussed during the sector review workshop, where interpretations and conclusions were drawn by sector leads and field staff.

In 2023, in support of the CRRF and GRF, an update of sources (RIMA 2021, RMS/PA 2022, IPE 2021-2, FSNA 2022, etc.) was conducted, specifically addressing access to basic services and protection situational analysis. From this analysis, sectors developed their own concise summaries, culminating in a Comprehensive Summary of only 13 pages to inform the Uganda UCRRP and GRF.

Key highlights from the Situation Analysis include:

##### 1. **Livelihood and Socio-Economic Vulnerability:**

- A 21% increase in food prices between Jan-Jun 2022/23.
- Heavy reliance on agriculture for subsistence, both independently and as casual labor.
- Key barriers to self-reliance include access to formal financial services, markets, and land. The Livelihoods and Self-Reliance Working Group (LSRWG) identifies the need for off-farm opportunities.
- Debt is prevalent, with 41% of households incurring new debt 12 months before data collection, intending to pay it off with assistance. GFA phase 3 and rising prices may impact repayment ability.

##### 2. **Food Security:**

- 45% of refugee households exhibit poor or borderline food consumption.
- 55% of households are moderately or severely food insecure.
- 76% of households are reducing meal portions and quantities.

- A 50% increase in referrals from Jan-Jul 2023 compared to 2022, many related to food security.

### 3. Education:

- General improvement in Primary-level attendance in recent years, with disparities in specific settlements, particularly among girls.
- Ancillary education costs, especially fees/transport, pose a barrier to access.
- 61% of refugee households reported 30+ minutes to primary school, and 43% reported 60+ minutes for secondary school.
- Classroom infrastructure is a practical barrier to accessing education.

### 4. WASH:

- 51% of refugee households face barriers to accessing safe drinking water.
- Efforts to improve latrine coverage are hindered by increasing numbers of Persons of Concern (PoC) and settlement sizes, tightened funding, and limited availability of land and construction materials.

### 5. Health:

- Inadequate space for service delivery, limited equipment, low medicine stock, lack of stable structures, and inadequate staff pose challenges.
- On the demand side, concerns include long travel times, lack or unaffordable medications, high costs, and long waiting times.

### 6. Energy and Environment:

- Barriers to traditional fuels include time and distance to fetching areas, with 46% of refugee households reporting 60+ minutes.
- Low adoption of energy-efficient ovens (18%).
- 20% of refugee households reported not having a household lighting source.
- Uganda experiences the world's highest rate of forest loss, estimated at 4% per annum.

### 7. Child Protection:

- Child labor is the predominant child protection concern.
- As of 2023, one case worker manages an average of 128 children, contrasting with the 1:84 ratio recorded at the end of 2022.

## Updates on REACH's ongoing and planned assessments

REACH provided an overview of various assessments, outlined below:

### 1. Urban Migration Monitoring:

- Objective: To determine if there is an increase in refugees moving from settlements to urban centers due to changes in the GFA.

- Methods: Key Informant Interviews, Remote (Phone data collection), and Semi-structured.
- Rounds: Round 1 (27th July to 4th August), Round 2 (21st August to 1st September), and Round 3 (19th September to 2nd October).
- Key Findings: Initial increase in movement after Phase 3 prioritization, but a slowdown since July. Push factors include employment opportunities and GFA changes. Concerns about disparities between urban and settlement-based refugees, with continued migration straining local services.

## 2. **Energy, Climate, and Environment KAP:**

- Objective: Identify baseline knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to energy, environment degradation, and climate change.
- Methods: 2,382 quantitative in-depth interviews and 52 qualitative individual interviews across 13 settlements.
- Data Collection: 6th September to 24th October.
- Next Steps: Data cleaning and analysis, followed by a joint analysis workshop in early December.

## 3. **Land Assessment:**

- Objective: Assess land utilization, acquisition, and its impact on social cohesion between refugees and host communities.
- Coverage: All settlements and immediate host areas.
- Methods: Quantitative household interviews, in-depth interviews with refugees accessing land.
- Timeline: Data collection complete; analysis and preliminary findings until December, with outputs in January/February.

## 4. **Land Cover and Use:**

- Objective: Analyze historical changes in land cover and use using satellite imagery.
- Focus: Land conversion, deforestation, and projections based on settlement population data.
- Coverage: All settlements and immediate hosting areas.
- Timeline: Ongoing analysis, preliminary findings presented in Nov/Dec. Outputs include a publicly available dashboard with analysis, maps, and projections.

## 5. **Update to the MEB:**

- Objective: Update the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) based on inflation in food and non-food items.
- Methods: Use existing data sources like WFP price monitoring data, IPE, RIMA, and Sector feedback.

- Next Steps: Draft updated MEB to be presented to CWG in late November or early December.

#### 6. Coordination of HINGO data collection:

- Objective: Understand the impacts of Phase III prioritization of GFA on refugee communities.
- Methods: Mixed methods (quantitative HH survey and qualitative data collection) covering all 13 refugee settlements.
- Data Collection: Started on October 26th, with analysis and reporting completed by November 15th.
- Next Steps: Ted to share the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the KAP survey.

#### Updates on IOM's upcoming assessment plans

IOM: The European Union is supporting Uganda's efforts in addressing forced displacement and migration Multi-Sectoral Assessments. The primary goal of the project is to strengthen the capacity of Uganda's national and sub-national institutions and systems to tackle the complexities associated with forced displacement and migration.

Key points of the multi-sectoral assessments include:

- Aims to address information gaps related to refugee human mobility and its impact on service delivery in secondary cities.
- Incorporating Refugee Mobility Tracking and Area-Based assessments.
- Refugee Mobility Tracking will monitor the movement of refugees from settlements to host communities, between settlements, and to secondary cities over a 6-month period.
- Area-Based Assessment will evaluate the needs of both refugees and host communities, their ability to access services, and the impact of urban refugee populations on public social service provision in Mbarara City.
- The assessment is scheduled to span six months, from December 2023 to May 2024, covering refugee settlements, towns, and cities in southwestern Uganda.

#### Updates on the Uganda Response Innovation Lab (U-RIL)

U-RIL:

- U-RIL is an organization dedicated to fostering humanitarian innovations in the refugee response and beyond. Functioning as an innovation hub, it emphasizes cross-sectoral learning. While U-Learn prioritizes accountability to affected populations, Impact Initiatives focuses on research and subsequent response efforts.
- As a global initiative, U-RIL comprises multiple NGOs, including OXAM, World Vision DRC, and Save the Children. Each lab, situated in various countries, operates within one of these partner organizations.

- Serving as a platform, U-RIL facilitates connections among individuals and creates spaces for reflection.
- U-RIL's objective is to enhance the adoption of evidence and insights for evidence-based decision-making and policy change by consolidating evidence from various studies within the refugee response.
- U-RIL strives to support the dissemination of ongoing research by partners as long as it contributes to the broader refugee response.

#### U-Learn's Learning and Research Initiatives:

- U-Learn has conducted studies on topics such as the realities of self-reliance within the refugee context in 2022, financial inclusion from the user's perspective, and a study on good practices in the Refugee Engagement Forum—all implemented by IMPACT Initiatives/REACH
- Additionally, U-Learn has undertaken desk reviews, including assessments on value chains, refugee entrepreneurship, private sector engagement, labor markets, and digital savings groups.
- U-Learn has supported sector working groups in developing a strategic positioning paper on value chains.
- Various mapping and visualization exercises have been carried out, including mapping agricultural private sectors, Agri-Tech and FinTech actors, and local actors (NGOs, Community-Based Services, and refugee-led organizations) within the refugee response.
- Learning reviews or events have been conducted on financial literacy trainings and digital savings groups, leading to the development of minimum standards adopted by the Bank of Uganda.
- U-Learn has organized a matchmaker for linking skilled refugees to jobs and is developing a digital platform to compile information on ongoing skilling and training initiatives within the refugee response.
- The organization has documented challenges faced by formal refugee-owned businesses and mobile T-vet approaches and programming.
- Settlement-level infographics have been designed to extract information from various sources, and U-Learn has supported the Charter for Change with a case study on localizing humanitarian aid.

#### Next Steps for U-Learn:

- Share ongoing initiatives and projects.
- Finalize a desk review on energy use, expected to be published in early December or late January.
- Map energy products available in refugee response areas.
- Conduct a nearly finalized Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) actor mapping.
- Undertake a learning review on entrepreneurship and skilling.

## Presentation of the highlights from the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey

### Survey Objectives:

- Assess the burden of violence against children and youth and its contextual factors within refugee settings.
- Identify risk and protective factors, assess service utilization, and examine health consequences.
- Help guide violence prevention and response programs and policies.

### Methodology:

- Adopted the standard HVACS guidance.
- Conducted a representative household survey across all refugee settlements, covering 1,338 females and 927 males aged between 13-24 years.

### Key Highlights:

- 43% of females and 50% of males aged 18-24 reported experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional violence before the age of 18.
- 49% of females and 65% of males aged 13-17 had encountered physical, sexual, or emotional violence.
- Among female survivors of sexual violence (age 18-24), mental health conditions were observed.
- Male victims of sexual violence exhibited higher rates of suicidal thoughts and symptoms of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) compared to non-victims.
- Male victims of physical violence were more likely to experience suicidal thoughts than non-victims.
- The prevalence of violence against children is pronounced in humanitarian settings.
- Notable risk factors linked to childhood violence include disability, orphanhood, and early marriages.
- Health conditions associated with childhood violence include mental distress, suicidal thoughts, and reported STI symptoms.

### General Action Points

- Communication regarding the release date of the Situation Analysis Report.
- Distribution of the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) survey.
- Ongoing sharing of links to the Assessment Registry or dashboard with partners to acquaint them with its features.
- Exploration of the possibility of including direct links to assessment reports within the Assessment Registry.



- U-Learn to widely disseminate the presentations they delivered at the Assessment Technical Working Group (ATWG).
- The summary report for the Violence against Children and Youth Survey will be shared by the end of November, with the detailed report expected in early next year.
- Completion of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) update is anticipated by early December.
- The majority of REACH's current assessment reports are scheduled for release between December 2023 and February 2024.