



OCTOBER
2018

POST-HARVEST ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY REPORT

WHITE NILE STATE

Acronyms

CMCs	Community Management Committees
COR	Commissioner of Refugees
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
ID	Identification Document
IDP	Internally Displaced persons
PoCs	Persons of Concern
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SGD	Sudanese Pounds
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

*South Sudanese refugees standing with tools, White Nile State.
El Ruhama*

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Executive Summary

In October 2018, a livelihoods assessment was undertaken in White Nile state to assess the living conditions and livelihoods situation among the South Sudanese refugees as a means to identify measures required for strengthening self-reliance. A total of 205 individual questionnaires and 10 focus group discussions (FGD) were undertaken in Umsangor, Dabat bosin, Alredis1, Alredis2, Jory and Khor-alwaral through semi structured questionnaire. The sample was from a total of 29,581 refugee participants. The selected sites represented the different ethnic groups (Nuer and Shuluk) of the refugee population altogether a reasonable sample of the refugees that participated in the harvesting activity. The data collected was analysed through SPSS and excel.

From the sample, it was noted that more than fifty percent (54%) of the refugees went to Sennar State during the harvesting season, forty five percent (46%) remained in White Nile State leaving one percent going elsewhere.

Key Findings

Refugee Income (from harvest)

➔ Sixty percent (60%) of the participants of this assessment were paid according to the market price. From these eighty-four percent (84%) were satisfied with the agreement made between them and the farm owners.

➔ The data also revealed that forty-one percent (41%) of the participants received more than 3,000 SDGs as total income per harvest season. Over seventy percent (70%) of these respondents were females.

➔ Another interesting observation was that forty three percent (43%) of the respondents who participated in the harvesting season as groups received more than 3,000 SDGs (most being females). While only thirty-four percent of the individual recruits (34%) received an amount more than 3,000 SDGs (most being males).

Refugee Living Conditions (during the harvest)

➔ The results showed that thirty percent (30%) of the respondents were provided with food and water. However, according to the FGDs most of the participants reported that the contract farmers provided the beneficiaries with a food basket however important requirements such as onions, spices, vegetables, dried fish, etc were not provided.

Refugee Expenditure (Post-harvest)

- ➔ According to the livelihoods assessment conducted in October 2016, households' expenditure on food is the highest component followed by energy. However, according to our recent post-harvest assessment sixty-three (63%) of the income made from the harvest was spent on purchase of clothes, followed by bedroom/mattresses (33%), income generating activities (IGAs) (23%), health services (12%) and finally on education (9%).
- ➔ Based on FDGs, it was observed the main reason behind the high expenditure on clothes was due to the approaching festive season (Christmas). Thus the women tend to spend most of their income on their children as they prepare to celebrate the festivities.
- ➔ It was seen that the harvest period was the best paying source of income during the year and in aside from small businesses, the only other lucrative income sources during the off season are casual labor and firewood collection.

Protection Issues

- ➔ Thirty nine percent (39%) of the refugees respondents, reported some sort of harassment (in terms physical harassment and/or violence). Fifty four percent (54%) were male victims.
- ➔ These results can be attributed to the fact that men tend to participate in the harvest exercise alone unlike women, thus ending up vulnerable to abuse. In addition, men unlike women demand higher wages and this sometimes ends in violence.
- ➔ In spite all of the harassment cases about ninety four percent (94%) of the refugees are still willing to get involved in the next harvest season. This is mainly due to the limited livelihood opportunities otherwise available.
- ➔ Out of respondent that had been exposed to this harassment, seventy six (76%) had tripartite contracts signed between the refugee, COR and the land owner.

Key Recommendations

- ➔ Advocacy to maintain and enhance the rights of refugee movement with the state (including by NISS, COR and HAC) thus facilitating movement during the harvesting season, to increase their income and reduce dependency on external assistance.
- ➔ Strengthen the monitoring mechanism of the local authorities over the farmer and/or land owners to ensure proper working environments.
- ➔ Establish clear complaint mechanisms and links with the authorities. Improve the awareness of refugee about these complaint mechanism channels.
- ➔ Encourage refugees to participate in the harvesting season as groups rather than individuals.
- ➔ COR should register the list of beneficiaries/ refugees who have an interest in working the farms by gender. (Currently no gender segregated data available.)



1. Introduction and Background:

In October 2016, an initial livelihoods assessment was undertaken in White Nile state by the UNHCR Livelihoods team to assess the living conditions and situation among the South Sudanese refugees. The assessment revealed that over 90% of the refugee households remain poor and do not have regular income. Their monthly income ranges between SDG 400-1500 with variations according to the seasonality of the labour market. The middle-income earners represent only about 4% of all refugee households in the camps and with average monthly earnings of SDG 1000-2000, a figure which has gone up only slightly to 3000 in 2018.

UNHCR continues efforts against negative coping strategies using evidence based planning and robust implementation to increase impact for 40,000 households in need of livelihoods assistance and as part of this initiative, commissioned an agricultural post-harvest assessment in the White Nile State in late September, early October 2018. The study aimed at assessing the extent and impact of the livelihood opportunities being created for South Sudanese refugees in While Nile State as well as assessing their living conditions prior to, during and after the harvesting season which lasts about 3 to 6 months.

The assessment applied different participatory approaches including focus group discussions and In-depth interviews to collect information from the various refugee populations whom participated in the harvesting season in 2017.

The assessment was conducted into two phases the first between 23 -24 Sep and the second from 1-3 October 2018. The key purpose of the assessment was to provide an overview of refugees who sought livelihood from seeking employment in local farm during the harvest season. The key crops harvested were sesame, sorghum and the aim was to explore the relevance and sustainability of the employment opportunity for the South Sudanese refugees.

The assessment team interviewed 205 respondents South Sudan Refugees (SSR), with the survey covering five refugee camps. Selection of camps was mainly based on the population and those selected included Dabat Bosin, Alredis1, Alredis2, Jory and Khor-alwaral. The survey team also conducted 10 Focus Group Discussion (FGD). All refugee respondents confirmed that they have been participating in harvesting of Sesame and Sorghum crops both inside and outside the White Nile State (WNS).

2. Objective:

The overall objective of the assessment is to assess the impact, economic value and sustainability of employment in agricultural harvesting season on their livelihood and well-being.

Specific objectives:

- I. Assess the economic and social benefits from working in the farms during harvesting season and by so doing determine the relationship between the PoCs and host community.
- II. To understand and examine the procedures and policy guidance developed by COR in organizing the process of working and its impact on the PoCs livelihoods.
- III. To examine to what extent the agreements that have been signed by COR on behalf of refugees are sustainable
- IV. Identify and provide suggestions and recommendations on how the working condition of refugees in agricultural harvesting season can be improved.

3. Methodology

Assessment Design:

The assessment adopted a cross-sectoral approach; using data collection techniques that comprised both quantitative and qualitative participatory approaches to provide information on the impact of working during the harvest season on their livelihood. Both primary and secondary data were collected from identified respondents. Qualitative data

was collected from identified Focus Group Discussions (FGD), key informants, document reviews of secondary sources and from observation. Quantitative data was collected through bilateral interviews among targeted refugees who participated in the 2017 harvesting season.

Data collection Methods:

Quantitative Data Collection Methods

Quantitative data was collected through semi structured questionnaire, and the total number of people interviewed was 205 South Sudan Refugees out of 29,581 from five selected camps namely (Dabat bosin, Alredis1, Alredis2, Jory and Khor-alwaral).

Locality	Sites/Camps	Sample Size	Respondents from SSR participated in 2017 harvest season
Al Jabalain	Dabat Bosin	19	821
Al Salam	Al Redis 1	42	6,558
Al Salam	Al Redis 2	38	4,722
Al Salam	Jourie	51	7,000
Al Salam	Khor Al Waral	55	10,480
Total		205	29,581

Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Qualitative data was collected through FGDs with key informants from refugee's leaders, and COR staff. In addition, data was collected through observation and a desk top review of secondary sources. The assessment team proposed two focus group discussion per camp one for females and another for males, this was the key tool used to collect qualitative data.

Data Registration, Processing, and Analysis

Quantitative data was then recorded with observations and comments made in a separate notebook with the collected data analysed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data was also analysed to provide substantive understanding of the quantitative data. Information was then displayed by:

- Tables
- Graphs and charts and percentages.

Focus Group Discussions

The assessment team proposed two focus group discussions per camp comprising 13- 17 participants. The FGD discussion was heterogeneous and included different ages of men, women and youth.

- ➔ Though the group was slightly bigger than the average focus group, the remunerators were able to facilitate an open discussion by the participants.
- ➔ The discussion was open and interactive which encouraged the participants to freely contribute ideas and opinions.
- ➔ The facilitators allocated 2 hours per group for the discussion.

Bilateral interview

After finishing the focus group discussion, the assessment team conducted in-depth bilateral interviews for South Sudanese Refugees who participated in the 2017 harvest season, all respondents were active and spoke openly:

- ➔ The harvest assessment objectives and intended plan was presented by UNHCR livelihood assessment team to COR at camp level.
- ➔ At the end of each assessment day the assessment team reviewed each questionnaire and data.

Limitations of the Assessment

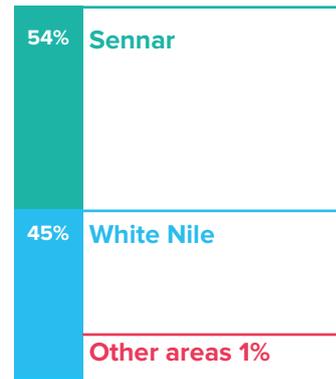
Several challenges were faced during the assessment, thus hampering the outcomes;

- ➔ Logistical constraints such as shortage of fuel and vehicles made it impossible for the assessment teams to reach the proposed respondents thus the sample size had to be reduced from the originally planned size.
- ➔ The agricultural farms were far away from the camps with some located outside the state, further hindering the assessment team.
- ➔ Issues of flooding during the rainy season made it difficult to access the farms, and interfered with the ferry schedule causing delays.
- ➔ As a result of the above, the sample size ended up being quite insignificant (205) compared to total population of refugees (29581) that participated in agricultural harvesting season in 2017.
- ➔ There was little or no gender segregated data available from secondary sources.

4. Key Assessment Findings and Conclusions

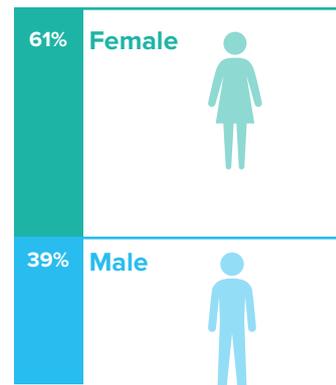
I) Locations of Agricultural Farms

The majority of South Sudan Refugees (54%) who were engaged in 2017 harvesting season worked in Sennar State, which is located outside of the UNHCR White State operation area, this will require more efforts from UNHCR protection unit to monitor and oversee the refugees during the harvest season in order to understand protective measures that need to be put in place by farm owners in Sennar. This is because the UN and NGOs do not have sufficient presence in Sennar State.



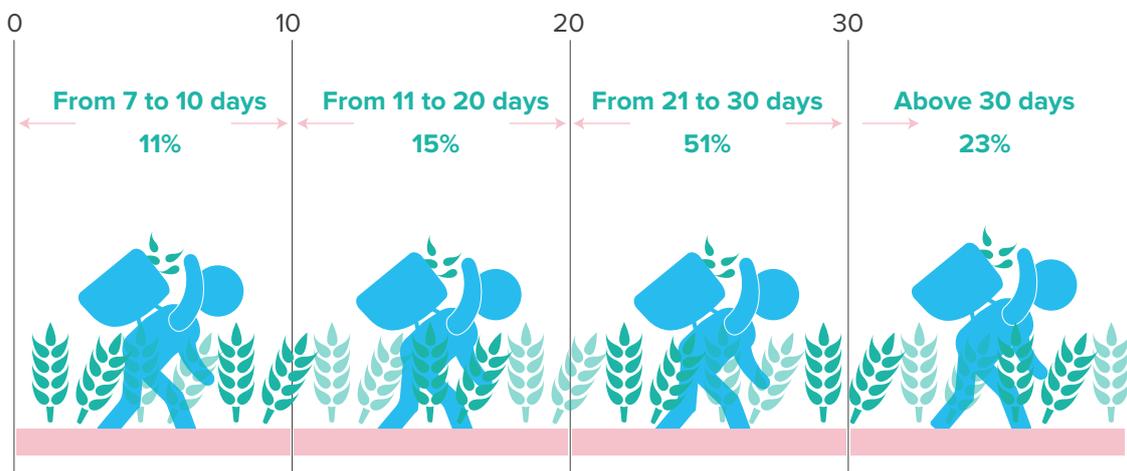
II) Participation according to gender

The result revealed that 61% from SSR respondents were females, who also happened to be head of household. They played active roles and participated in harvest season more than their male counterparts, this shows that the women are indeed more committed as they have key roles and commitments towards their families.



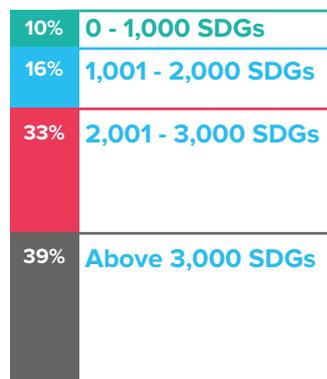
III) Harvest period.

Fifty one percent of South Sudanese's Refugees spent between 20 to 30 days to complete the agricultural harvest season for both Sesame and Sorghum crops and that was during October and or November period. This gives an overall guide of the period of harvesting vs income gained



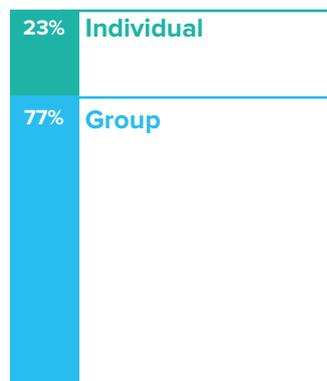
IV) Remuneration in SDG

The above chart summarized the detailed income the result shows that the majority of respondents (41%) earned an income of 3000 SDG and above. As per the direct interviews they confirmed that the income gained is true and profitable and they are willing to work in upcoming harvest season



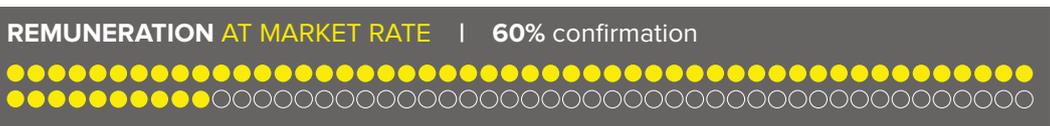
V) The model of working in harvest season (group or individual).

The result of this study confirmed that 77% of SSR respondents preferred to work in groups jointly with their family members, the evidence from the FGD shows the families working in groups have better income compared to those working individually. The teachers were asked by the assessment team to clarify if participation of the children affected the school dropout rate, and results revealed the dropout rate was so high that the schools were closed officially during harvest and that the teachers themselves participated in harvest season to improve their own livelihood.



VI) Remuneration

The result of analysis showed that 60% of the respondents confirmed that the payments made were competitive to the market rates. They also said the profits although minimal were acceptable under the circumstances of limited opportunities.



VII) Agreement and partnership with farm owners:

72% of the respondents mentioned that they had verbal agreements with farm owners with nothing in writing and no witness. This also revealed that the agreements took place after the refugees visited the farms sites that were already ready for harvest and discussions were made based on seeing and confirming the crops density. Respondents said that COR had signed a separate agreement (obligation paper) with farm owners on behalf of

the respondents, and the contents of the contracts were not immediately clear to the PoCs, while only 28% worked with formal agreements.

AGREEMENT WITH FARM OWNERS | 72% confirmed they have verbal agreements



VIII) The Legitimacy of the agreement signed

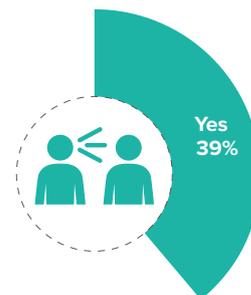
75% of the respondents said that there was only limited legitimacy of agreement and it was not guaranteed that what had been signed between COR and farm owners would be honoured by the farmers. They further mentioned that many of the farmers violated the conditions of the agreement, such as paying lower rates than what was agreed, or sending different agents who maintained they would not give agreed rates upon completion of harvesting. Another example observed from the study showed that some farm owners who signed the agreement with COR don't actually have farms and work as middlemen/brokers, taking the refugees from the camps and deciding where they would work, sometimes taking them to alternate farms where no financial agreements had been made.

LEGITIMACY OF AGREEMENT | 75% confirmed limited legitimacy



IX) Harassment and /or violence.

The result shows that 39% of the respondents confirmed that they have been subjected to harassment due to reduction of payment agreed upon, this being a violation of contractual terms and conditions. The respondents recommend UNHCR and COR to provide them with mobile phones to enable communication with COR and/or UNHCR in case of such situations. Some also confirmed isolated cases of violence particularly after disagreements arose on payments.



X) Willingness to work in upcoming harvest season

Finally 97% of South Sudan respondents showed their willingness and commitment to work in upcoming harvest season in order to improve their livelihood and well-being rather than having complete reliance on WFP food distribution. Key reason for this is the general lack of opportunities in other economic areas.



5. Summary

- I. The income gained by the PoCs had a positive impact and contributed towards improving their livelihood and well-being. 41% of the respondents confirmed their income was 3000 SDG and above.
- II. The income gained from the working in harvesting season was utilized in various ways such as purchasing of clothes for children, house hold furniture such as beds, tables, sheets, while some spends went towards health and education.
- III. The result of the study revealed that 77% preferred to work in groups jointly with family members rather than as individuals and this helped to increase income.
- IV. Of the majority of respondents who were engaged in 2017 harvesting season 54% worked in Sennar State, which is located outside of the UNHCRs operation area.
- V. The result of the study demonstrated high willingness and interest of the respondents to continue with the activity. A total of 97% agreed to work in upcoming agricultural harvesting season and consider it as a main sources of livelihood and income.
- VI. The result of the assessment showed that there was no clear written agreement or document between the farm owners and refugees, instead COR as a governmental body signed the agreements on behalf of the refugees.
- VII. The formal procedures and agreement on paper adopted by COR is only partially protecting the refugee's rights and more efforts are required such as having witnesses as party to the signing of agreements.
- VIII. There is high demand from the host communities and farm owners for South Sudanese's Refugees to assist in agricultural labour, due to their familiarity with the cultural and ease of communication combined with common understanding.
- IX. The farmers were generally committed and provided basic services like food medicine, water, salt and transportation to the refugees during the harvest season. This was a positive move that serves to attract refugees in future harvest seasons.
- X. As per focus group discussion, the majority of the respondent from SSR who participated in 2017 harvest season complained about being dropped from WFPs monthly food quota. WFP claimed they left the camps without formal due process.

6. Recommendations, Lessons Learnt and way forward

- I. The study clearly shows the state governments decision to approve free movement of the refugees has greatly assisted with their income generation and self-reliance.
- II. However due to the high incidents of abuse by the farmers, UNHCR and COR need to come together to discuss and develop clear strategy to protect the refugees in cases of violation of agreement between farm owner and refugees. Refugees recommended the labor office as a potential witness when signing the agreement between refugees and farm owner/ or brokers. The contract should also be inclusive of room board and medical considerations.
- III. The study also goes to support that WFP should continue the refugee's monthly food ration/ quota for those who left the camps using official channels and procedures and for those who have willingness to work in upcoming agricultural harvesting season as this will contribute to improving their food security and livelihood.
- IV. There should also be more awareness and coordination taking place between the police and security personnel along the check points to protect vulnerable female refugees while travelling to and from harvesting work.
- V. Refugees also recommended UNHCR and COR protection unit to provide them with mobile phone and assign one person as a team leader as this will enable them to contact COR and/or UNHCR promptly in case of any violation or harassment.
- VI. The survey results recommend COR to register the list of refugees who are interested to work in upcoming agricultural harvest season by gender. This would work as a credible reference point.
- VII. The overall process of the assessment was successful. The assessment team was able to comprehend the situation of refugees during the harvesting season, and make recommendations of possible future protective measures.

Way forward should involve close collaboration between UNHCR and COR to strategize the provision of a process that protects both the refugees and the farmers, a process that will strengthen the economic resilience of the refugees in bringing them closer to self-reliance. The concept of close partnerships between private sector and refugee's self-reliance is a tried and tested path towards sustainable income for the refugees and reliable work force availability for the farmers. With a mutually beneficial situation, there is likely to be less issues between the refugees and host community in the long run.

8 References

- I. Assessment White Nile State Report 2017 - UNHCR
- II. FGDs results from White Nile State
- III. UJAM Assessment October 2017 – WFP/UNHCR

9 Annexes

Name and location of agricultural farms

Name of farm	Location/State
Aldali	Sennar State
Almazmoum	Sennar State
Alrehaid	Sennar State
Khor-altaital	White Nile State
Alseikh Almahi	White Nile State
Abudoloa	White Nile State
Albaashiem	White Nile State
Almeganis	White Nile State
Alrawat	White Nile State
Abuaraif	White Nile State
Ahmer Aain	Sennar State
Gala Albaid	Sennar State
Guli	Sennar State
Abunamil	Sennar State
Wad Naiel	Sennar State
Almagabi	White Nile State
Alhasaniah	White Nile State
Algraibeen	Sennar State
Wad-Alnaiel	Sennar State

10 Checklist

CHECKLIST FOR FOCUS DISCUSSION GROUPS			
Name of Camp			
# Of Beneficiaries attended			
Gender			
Name of Interviewer		Date	
Question			
Household size (Est. %):			
Marital status (Est. %):			
Education level (Est. %):			
Access to agricultural land (Est. %):			
Livelihood activities (Est. %):			
Income source during the off season(Est. %):			
How the cost for harvesting is calculated?			
How much the income you get from working in harvesting time in SDG?			
How much the period of harvesting time?			
Was the income paid during the harvesting time was enough?			
What was the income gained during the harvest season spent on?			
How much the expenditure per day?			

How the contract farmers paying to you the harvest money? Is it in advance or after the completing the harvest work?	
Is there any agreement signed between you and contract famers? And who grantee the contract?	
Is it the contract farmer paying to you the cost of harvest per day in the same of market rate or less?	
Where is the location of harvesting? Is it within or outside the state?	
What is the estimated area of the land harvested?	
During the harvesting time have you any shelter/ houses for sleeping during the rest time or sleeping in open area?	
During the harvesting is the contractor abide to provide you with basic requirements such as food and water?	
Have you been subjected to physical or sexual harassment from contract farmers or the relatives of the contract farmers?	-
Have any recommendation to improve and legalize this issue?	-
Was participating in this exercise optional?	
Concerns	-

United High Commissioner for Refugees
Livelihood and Self-reliance Unit
White Nile State.

Questionnaires for quantitative data collection for Agricultural Harvest Assessment

Name of Interviewer:.....

Date of interview:.....

Location/ camp:.....

1. Gender 1. Male () 2. Female ()
2. What is harvest location or area you worked? 1. White Nile State () 2. Sinnar State () 3. Other area ().
3. How much the period of harvesting time per day? 1. From 7-10 days () 2. From 10- 20 days () 3. From 20-30 days () 4. Above 30 days ().
4. How much the income you get from working in harvesting time in SDG? 1. From 0 – 1000 () 2. From 1000-2000 () 3. From 2000-3000 (). 4. above 3000 ()
5. What kind of working ways? Is it in group or individual? 1. Group () 2. Individual ().
6. Is the farm owner paying you with the same market rate or not? 1. Yes () 2. No ()
7. Are you satisfied with income paid through the agreement (Gowal)? 1. Yes (). 2 No ().
8. Is there any grantee in the agreement (Gowal) with farm owner? 1. Yes () 2. No ()
9. Do you have or received any kind of the services from the farm owner during the harvest time? 1. Yes () 2. No ().
10. What Kind of the services provided to you? 1. Water () 2. Flour () 3. Salt () 4. Medicines () 5. Shelter () 6. Others ().
11. Where the income gained has been utilized? 1. Health () 2. Education () 3. Clothes () 4. Running small business () 5. Bed room () 6. Matrices (). 7. Food ().
12. Have you been subjected to any physical harassment or problems during the working in harvest time? 1. Yes () 2. No ()
13. Do you have interest and willingness to work in coming harvest time? 1. Yes () 2. No ().

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