



# **Scattered Dreams, Broken Promises**

An Assessment of the Links between Girls' Empowerment and Gender-based Violence in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Uganda



**WOMEN'S  
REFUGEE  
COMMISSION**

## Research. Rethink. Resolve.

The Women's Refugee Commission identifies needs, researches solutions and advocates for global change to improve the lives of crisis-affected women and children. The Women's Refugee Commission is legally part of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, but does not receive direct financial support from the IRC.

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## Acronyms & Abbreviations

AGDM	Age, gender and diversity mainstreaming
AHA	Africa Humanitarian Action
CBO	Community-based organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GBV	Gender-based violence
IGA	Income generating activities
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
RWC	Refugee welfare committee
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VCT	Voluntary counseling and testing
WTU	Windle Trust Uganda
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission



## Executive Summary

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) conducted research in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement in southwestern Uganda in October 2012 to explore the relationship between the empowerment of adolescent refugee girls and the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). This was the final research mission in a three-country series of assessments; the first two were completed in Ethiopia and Tanzania.

The objective of the assessment in Uganda was to understand more about the protection and empowerment needs of, and opportunities for, refugee adolescent girls in Kyaka II as identified by girls themselves; to learn from existing programs that support refugee girls' protection and empowerment; and to identify organizations that may be interested in piloting a program at Kyaka II focused on enhancing girls' safety.

Through this work, the WRC hopes to bridge persistent gaps in programming for adolescent girls in crisis and displacement situations amid a growing recognition of the importance of working with girls in early adolescence to ensure their healthy development and the achievement of their full potential.<sup>1</sup>

A guidance paper on the learning from the pilot programs as well as aggregate findings from the three research missions, will be produced in 2014. It will be aimed at humanitarian actors working with adolescent girls in emergencies in order to inform, support and guide their work with this vulnerable and often marginalized group.

### Key Findings

Adolescent girls in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement are concerned about a range of issues affecting their lives, including various forms of physical insecurity, barriers to education, limited peer and social support, poverty and overwork, and inability to meet their basic needs. This wide range of social and economic factors, together with poor program funding for services at the settlement, contributes to widespread experiences of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) (the misuse of

power for sexual favors, such as teachers demanding sex in return for grades) among girls in Kyaka II. Despite the challenges they face, girls envision a better future for themselves and ask for support and guidance from stakeholders responsible for refugee protection and services to improve their well-being.

Refugee settlements in Uganda are different from a refugee "camp"; they are open rural areas where refugees live among the host population in villages. The Government of Uganda supports refugee self-reliance and freedom of movement, unlike neighboring Kenya and Tanzania, where refugees face strong restrictions. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in partnership with relevant implementing partners and government authorities, designs and delivers assistance programs at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, taking into consideration the needs of the host population and with the goal of strengthening refugee integration and promoting positive co-existence with host populations.

### Key Recommendations

While the WRC's research focused on speaking to refugee girls, it is important to note that in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement context, our recommendations are targeted to improving access to programs that protect and empower all adolescent girls they serve, including host community girls.

#### Girls' own recommendations for themselves

When asked to think of ways to improve their lives, achieve their goals and protect themselves from exploitation and abuse at Kyaka II, girls came up with several action plans for themselves:

- **Take safety precautions:** Get home early and avoid being out at night. Travel in groups of other girls and parents so boys and men will not harass you. Be more self-aware and do not be duped by men offering money for sex. Run away from boys who look suspicious, or are acting in a funny way like they want to touch you.
- **Make education a priority:** Stay focused on studying. Listen to teachers. Work hard and read a lot of

books. Be driven to achieving your goals and gaining knowledge about how to achieve them. Work with others to talk to parents, teachers, partners, girls and others about respecting children's rights to education and not to impose early marriage on girls.

- **Build strong life skills:** Develop healthy relationships with those around you, including with parents, teachers, and other girls to win their support and friendships so that they can become your ally and resource when you need help. Build strong character by working hard whether at school or at home, respect those in authority and listen to the advice of others. Take care of your health and stay healthy; boil water for drinking, bathe and clean your environment.

For details on girls' recommendations, see page 14.

### Recommendations for others

In light of the findings and the above recommendations made by the girls themselves, the following recommendations have been developed from this study:

#### Donors

- **Prioritize funding allocations to programs that incorporate outcomes that are specific to adolescent girls:** Take the lead in guiding program implementation to address the critical needs of this traditionally neglected population. New sources of funding are critical in order to address some of the program gaps as identified by girls and their community, such as improving the quality of education, strengthening life skills, increasing opportunities to build social assets (i.e., networks and support groups), and preparing girls for safe livelihood options. While some girl-specific indicators may currently be tracked within program budgets, some ideas brought forward by girls themselves require systemic changes in how implementers approach program design and monitoring, as well as increased training and personnel to strengthen sensitization efforts around girls' issues.

#### UNHCR

- **In collaboration with the Ugandan government, strengthen security in Kyaka II:** Improve lighting around passageways to and from wells and clear bushes around boreholes. Explore placement of security personnel on roads, in and near markets, schools, water points and firewood collection areas.
- **Increase advocacy with the Ugandan government, and work closely with implementing partners to remove barriers to girls' education:** English should be the primary teaching language at all levels, and teachers should be qualified and equipped to teach in English. Strengthen the provision of ongoing training for teachers to maintain standards and as incentives to retain good teachers. Explore ways to increase scholarships for secondary education to expand girls' learning opportunities beyond primary school.
- **Support coordination among implementing partners serving Kyaka II to address issues of adolescent girls within existing programs:** Consider ways to respond to girls' suggestions for action outlined above through existing programs and possible new ones. Facilitate increased cross-sector coordination to ensure a comprehensive, integrated approach to programs that support girls. Request from partners an analysis of how existing programs address adolescent girls and how program access, quality and outcomes can be improved for girls within existing budgets.

#### Service Providers and Refugee Organizations

- **Increase protection in schools:** Sensitize teachers to stop unfair punishment of children at school and encourage a supportive environment for girls to report GBV. Create an accountability structure in the schools so that teachers, administrators and students all have clear boundaries, and roles and responsibilities are delineated with an appropriate feedback loop in place.

- **Increase participation of adolescent girls in non-formal education:** Offer flexible access to training in life skills, decision-making, critical thinking, communication and negotiation skills. Programs should be designed in cooperation with a diverse group of girls, to help programmers work around the various constraints on their participation.
- **Support girls' protection and empowerment through increasing their access to social assets:** Respond to girls' requests for opportunities to increase socializing, networking and organizing among themselves in order to build their social assets. Ensure girls get space and time to build friendships and find mutual support among peers and adults in their communities. Create ways for boys and men to support activities that target girls as primary beneficiaries.
- **Increase girls' access to economic assets:** Support skills training programs for older adolescent girls, including income generating activities (IGAs) that are alternatives to farming and, if feasible, empower older girls to pursue trades that are not traditional for women, as these tend to pay more than the traditionally female trades. Beyond the vocational component, focus on employment readiness approaches that emphasize employability skills, how to look for jobs, and customer service and communication skills. Provide all girls with basic financial literacy skills.

For a full list of recommendations, see page 14.

## Background on Kyaka II Refugee Settlement

The Kyaka II Refugee Settlement is located in Kyegegwa District in southwestern Uganda (see map, page 4). It was opened in 1983 to accommodate refugees as an extension of the Kyaka I Refugee Settlement, which had reached capacity. A major influx of refugees arrived

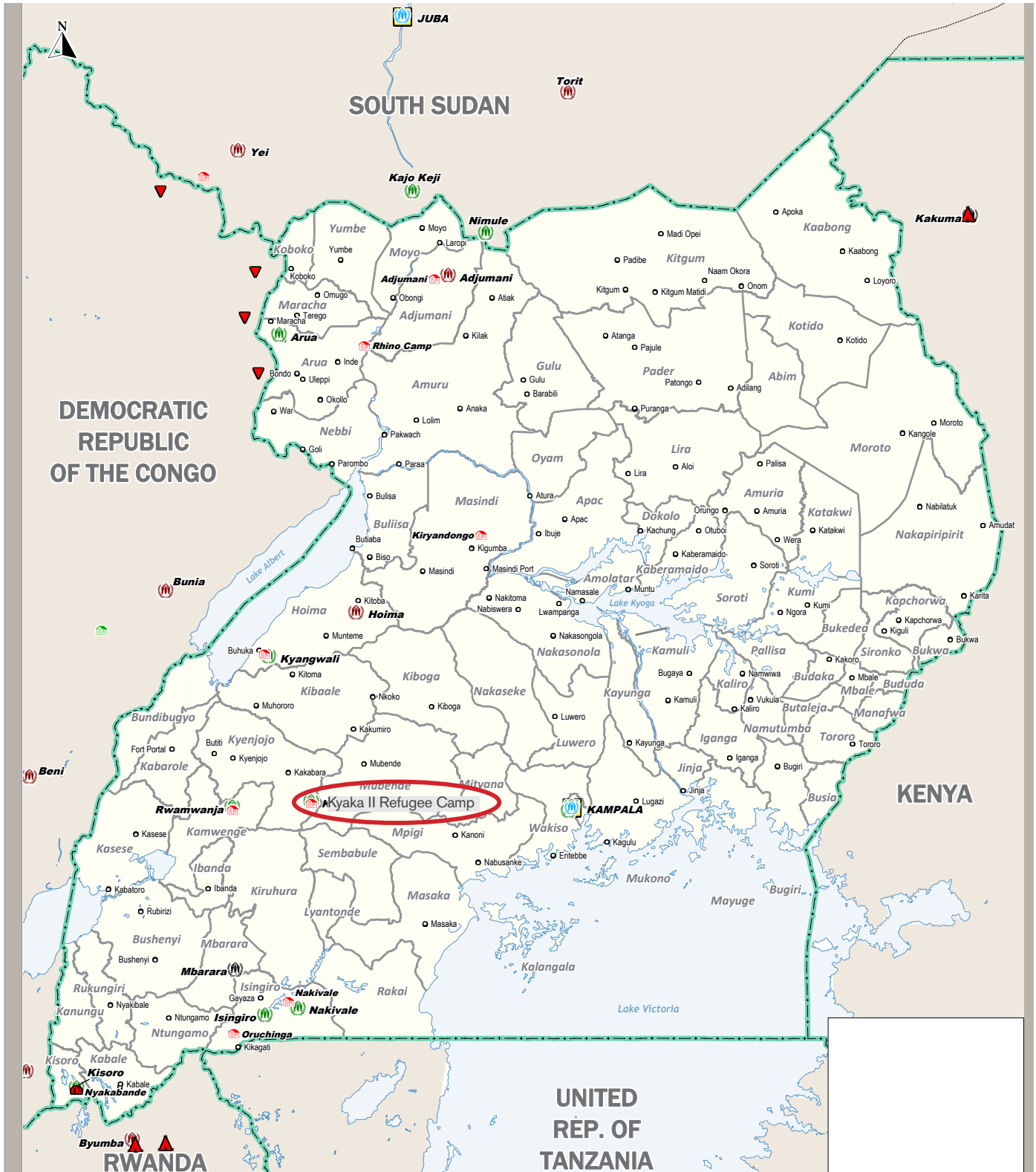
in Kyaka II in 2005 and 2006 from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), increasing Kyaka II's population from about 5,000 to over 17,000. At the time of this assessment, the total refugee population of Kyaka II was 16,428 (8,384 females and 8,044 males), of which 1,506 were female refugee children between the ages of 10 and 16. DRC nationals are the vast majority of the population (89 percent), with the remaining refugees from Rwanda and Burundi, as well as smaller numbers from Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Somalia, South Sudan and Tanzania.

Kyaka II is referred to as a "settlement" rather than a "camp" because the Government of Uganda supports refugee self-reliance and freedom of movement. Refugees in Kyaka II are allotted plots of land, where they can build homes and cultivate the land. Allocation of food rations is systematically reduced over time, except among those considered most vulnerable. Refugees can engage in trade and exchange services within and outside the settlement. There is no physical perimeter around the settlement, and refugees live among the host population. Both refugee and Ugandan national students attend schools in the settlement.

UNHCR, along with various implementing partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Government of Uganda's Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Refugee Welfare Committee (RWC), provides for basic needs and essential services such as health, education, livelihoods and protection in the settlement. The World Food Program provides food rations to refugees. Aside from food rations, all assistance programs provided in the settlement are designed with consideration of the needs of the host population and with the goal of strengthening refugee integration and promoting positive co-existence.

Kyaka II is located about 18 kilometers outside Kyegegwa Town. It covers an area of 81.5 m<sup>2</sup>, divided into nine zones, consisting of 26 villages. Offices of operational partners are located in a base camp known as Bujubuli, as are the main centers for health and nutrition and a recently established youth center. There are six

Map showing the location of Kyaka II Refugee Settlement in southwest Uganda



Source: UNHCR <http://www.unhcr.org/500eaa209.html>.



primary schools,<sup>2</sup> one vocational secondary school<sup>3</sup> and two health centers. Secondary academic classes run from Senior 1 to Senior 4, and the vocational track teaches bricklaying, tailoring and carpentry to in-school and out-of-school youth. There are 52 water sources in the settlement, distances to which vary from 500 to 1,500 meters.

Uganda is signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and has acceded to its 1967 Protocol.

## Research Design and Methods

The research mission investigated what kind of programs could both empower refugee adolescent girls and help to prevent GBV within the context of the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement by asking the following questions:

- How do refugee adolescent girls, as well as female and male community leaders and members, define, respond to and prevent GBV?
- What types of exploitation and abuse, including and beyond sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), of refugee adolescent girls currently prevail in the refugee settlement?
- What are the links between the incidence of GBV and the socioeconomic, traditional and cultural situations of the households in which the refugee girls live?
- Is GBV under-reported and, if so, why? What are refugee girls' perceptions of current institutional responses?
- How can the humanitarian community address issues that refugee girls face and support girls to grow into healthy, educated, empowered young women, including through community-led action?

To answer the above questions, desk research was conducted on the settlement and its populations, current programs being implemented and the extent to which

those programs serve girls and address their empowerment and protection needs. The WRC then interviewed staff of service providers at Kyaka II and in Kampala to learn about the settlement's history, administrative, protection and service arrangements; demographic, household, health, education, protection and other information; the range of issues facing girls, including GBV, and the resources girls have to keep themselves safe; and current programs and adolescent girls' access to them. Group discussions were held with adolescent boys and refugee community members, including mothers and fathers of adolescent girls and boys, and key informant interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and RWC members on issues they identified as affecting girls in Kyaka II and their ideas for programs to address them. Finally, the WRC spoke to adolescent girls in groups and undertook surveys with them on their relationships, experiences of GBV and related reporting processes, feelings of safety, engagement in activities in Kyaka II and ideas for future activities and programs that can equip them with skills and resources to help them grow into healthy, productive young women.

Refugee girls aged 10 to 16 in Kyaka II were randomly selected and surveyed in groups or as individuals, during which several research methods were used, including group brainstorming and discussion activities; a structured survey questionnaire using a "buddy method,"<sup>4</sup> where individual girls were asked both about themselves and close girl friends who are also adolescents aged 10 to 16; and a safety mapping exercise undertaken individually, with follow-up group discussion. Topics of discussion and questions posed were designed to learn about the girls' lives and interests, their experiences of GBV, what resources, including access to social support and programs to empower and protect them, and their ideas for action to address girls' interests and concerns.<sup>5</sup>

The structured survey involved asking adolescent girls about themselves and their female friends; information was collected on 212 adolescent girls aged 10 to 16, including 93 randomly selected self-respondents and 119 of their adolescent friends. Refugee adolescent boys in secondary school were interviewed in two groups,



Girls participate in a safety mapping exercise, drawing maps to show where they feel safe and where in danger.

and 10 boys aged 11-16 were interviewed individually. Twenty mothers and 25 fathers of adolescents participated in three focus group discussions. Finally, over two dozen practitioners working in and/or for the settlement were also interviewed. These included staff from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM); the chief of police; a female police officer; UNHCR protection and community services staff; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) staff in Kampala and Kyaka II (responsible for community services, GBV, field management); Windle Trust Uganda (WTU) staff (responsible for education sector); Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) staff (responsible for health sector); members of the RWC; Kyaka II youth center coordinator, youth committee chairperson and members; women's committee members; an international child participation expert; and secondary and primary school teachers.

Please see appendices (p. 20) for more details on the

research design and limitations; activities and questions posed during girls' discussion groups, including the structured survey questionnaire; data analysis on the survey; and characteristics of the final sample of adolescent girls.

## Findings

### Girls Dream Big

Despite the hardships refugees face daily, adolescent girls at Kyaka II have many dreams and aspirations beyond their immediate circumstances. Girls name a wide variety of things they would like to be when they grow up. Unlike many of their parents, who hang onto hopes for their future principally on the possibility of being resettled permanently in another country, the girls' ideas for their lives often seem limitless. Although some girls have difficulty envisioning a better life, most express diverse professional and personal goals ranging from wanting to be nurses, designers, information technology specialists, businesswomen, doctors, lawyers, tailors, drivers, football players, humanitarian workers, the Resident District Commissioner and even the Kyaka II Settlement Commander. Some have specific business objectives, including to "expand my crops for trade" while others say that in the future, they would like to be "eating chicken and rice," "healthy," "able to get a job and pay school fees for my siblings," "be able to teach and pay school fees for orphans" and "be a mother who is able to provide all that my children need." In all cases, girls' responses indicate strong desires for more control over their own lives and an increased ability to care for themselves and others. Their visions also likely reflect role models they know and/or wish they had in their lives right now.

Beyond vocations that signal a better and more fulfilling life, many of the girls focused on the quality of life they would like to lead, with strong desires to be able to meet basic needs and help others.

## Girls Feel Unsafe

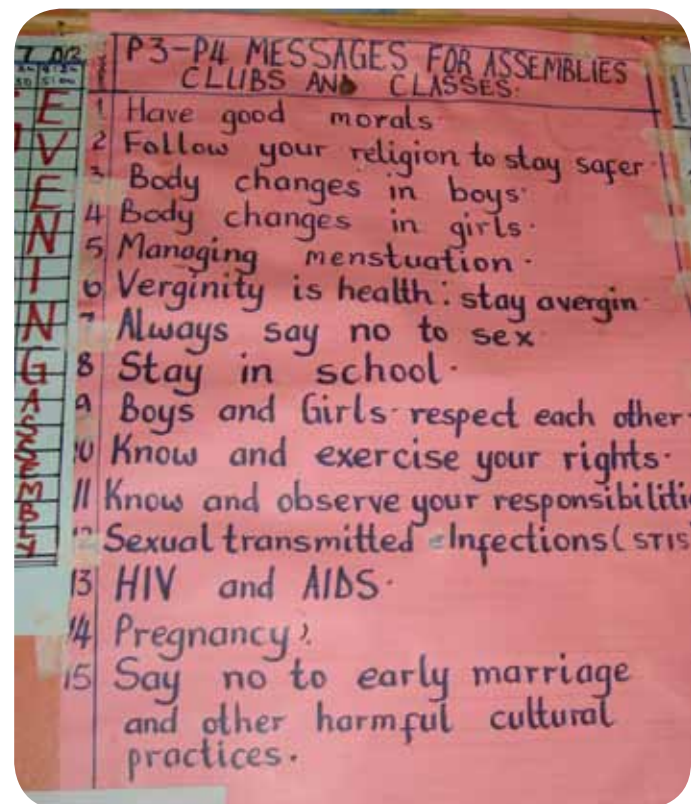
Girls encounter physical insecurity in many areas of the settlement due to social and natural conditions. They experience physical abuse and fear beatings by peers, teachers, parents, men and boys. Fights break out between students in school, including due to overcrowding where desk and chair space is limited, and frustrations run high. Some teachers use corporal punishment, including for “minor offences” and, at times, for refusing sexual advances. Both girls and boys describe fighting and beatings taking place at water points among adolescents as the result of long lines and waits for water and a lack of security. Girls and boys also fear traffic accidents on the often narrow and muddy roads, flanked by foliage. They also face threats of dangerous snakebites as they walk through the settlement and venture outside for firewood with poor footwear and clothing.

## Barriers to Girls' Education

UNHCR notes that, over time, girls' enrolment in formal education in the settlement has increased dramatically, thanks in large part to sensitization and affirmative action programs that have successfully challenged traditional attitudes limiting girls' education held by many refugees. While education standards and qualified teachers have also been increasing, there are still many barriers to education for girls at Kyaka II. One of the biggest issues raised repeatedly by girls, boys and teachers is the failure to teach early primary classes in English rather than Kitoro, the local Ugandan language. In April 2012, the district education officer agreed that Primary 1 – 3 could be taught in English. As of October 2012, this had not yet been instituted. Classes are taught in English in Kyaka II after Primary 3. Lack of English skills is a protection issue for girls, who are often uncomfortable seeking services and support from English-speaking service providers. Most, for example, cannot read the signs posted throughout the settlement in Kiswahili and English on the sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) referral pathway, which provides information on the procedures involved in seeking response services

in the settlement. Moreover, as English is the medium of education in upper primary, secondary and higher education in Uganda, and the language for most employment in Uganda, English is essential for girls and boys to continue their education and seek jobs in the future.

Although primary education is technically free, and about 86 percent of girls surveyed are enrolled, many girls and their caregivers still cannot afford the basic materials required to attend. For secondary education, students are charged tuition and boarding fees and are required to purchase books, uniforms and other school materials. There are scholarships available to assist students in meeting some of these needs; however, scholarships are far too few (28% of students attending secondary school actually get scholarships) and girls say that their chances of qualifying for scholarships based on merit and vulnerability are limited.<sup>6</sup>



English signage in primary school on how to protect oneself.



Classrooms are overcrowded, creating frustration, and at times conflict, among students. However, UNHCR and the district government recently provided

Girls say that lack of proper clothing, including having no uniform and shoes or simply shabby clothes that often leave them open to ridicule and humiliation, deter their attendance.<sup>9</sup>



A young girl with her sibling walked barefoot to attend a meeting in Bukere, Kyaka II.

additional support to construct more classroom blocks to accommodate increased enrolment within some schools. Moreover, children with special needs are increasingly being supported through recent initiatives such as identification of children to attend special needs programs in one primary school and construction of disabled-friendly latrines and classrooms in some settlement schools. Although education sector partners at Kyaka II annually assess the conditions of children with disabilities,<sup>7</sup> girls say not all children with disabilities are identified or able to attend school at all due to long distances, poor roads and lack of wheelchairs. Distances are long for many students, as much as 7 km each way for hundreds of primary students in Bwiriza zone, for instance, where there is no primary school. The rural terrain is tough, particularly during the rainy season, and the journey is exhausting and dangerous for many. Many girls and boys drop out of primary school for these reasons and because of pregnancy and early marriage for some girls. Although girls' enrolment in secondary education is somewhat higher than boys', actual attendance for girls is consistently lower than for boys across all secondary schools.<sup>8</sup>

While access to school has improved, less than a quarter of surveyed girls access skills training opportunities in the settlement. These opportunities are offered to in-school and out-of-school young people through the vocational secondary school; however, girls say such training programs are far too few, and as the school primarily relies on trainees' fees for its operation, refugees lack the resource base to afford such training in the settlement.

### Basic Needs Not Met

Girls' prospects for full participation in community life are hindered by the inability to meet basic needs. Lack of personal hygiene products affects their ability to attend school and feel comfortable and healthy. They say they do not have enough sanitary pads and underwear, and often use cotton cloth during their menstrual cycles, which they don't like. They lack basins and soap and say sharing exposes them to disease. WTU does provide in-school girls with





underwear, soap, emergency materials and health kits, but girls complain that these are not enough to meet the need. Girls say their houses are poorly constructed, exposing them to rain and making it difficult to avoid and recover from illness. Despite having permission to till the land and trade, many girls say that the amount of land their families are allotted is not enough to offset decreased food rations. This contributes to hunger and even compels some to steal food from others' gardens, at times in collaboration with boys. Some girls say they need better tools to make the most of the land, while others feel little affinity for farming, having come from communities that were not involved in agriculture.

### Limited Opportunities for Social Interaction

WRC asked girls about what programs they access in the settlement in order to identify opportunities that support their empowerment and protection as well as strengthen their social capital (e.g., peer and mentor networks, relations of trust that girls can access for material and emotional support). Girls are interested in a range of activities, most attend religious services, sing and play sports, but few are accessing youth-targeted programming within the settlement or school-based clubs, as seen in Figure 2b in Appendix D (p. 27). While 88 percent of surveyed girls could name a close girl friend, only 37 percent of them could name a second close girl friend. These findings speak to limited opportunities for girls to get to know one another and form social networks. Many are exhausted and too preoccupied with household chores and trying to get to school to connect personally with other girls or to participate in youth programs within the settlement. Married girls appear to be particularly isolated from social relationships with peers. Few married girls were permitted or agreed to participate in the study. Similarly, those involved in exchanging sex for money have difficulties forming relationships with peers, and one involved in a discussion group said simply, "I have no friends."

### Limited Parental Support

Mothers, when present, are key sources of support for adolescent girls, with 52 percent of girls saying they turn to their mother first with their problems (Figure 1, p. 26). Girls also stated, however, that too often, their parents and caregivers are not able or willing to care for them. Some parents are simply absent, due to armed conflict or disease. "The one thing I really need to help me reach my goals is my mother, but I will never have her. She is gone," said one girl. Girls describe lack of understanding and trust from caregivers, as well as emotional and verbal abuse. "When I go to fetch water, the lines are long, and I am back late. My mother gets angry and accuses me of running off with boys," one girl said, frustrated and fatigued. Girls cite alcohol abuse among some parents, which undermines their ability to provide for them or support them emotionally. Some boys agreed with one of their peers who said that "Parents don't want to listen. There is hatred in the home, and when there is no peace, it leads to young people sleeping outside and getting into trouble."

For their part, many parents who have been in the settlement for many years are experiencing dependency and feel helpless to change their situation and that of their children. Few readily acknowledge any useful services being provided in the settlement and express mistrust of settlement service providers. Some see schools as sources of information on sex that compels girls to have sex and become emboldened, disobedient and disrespectful towards parents. When pressed further, however, parents express feelings of failure in caring for their children brought on by their conditions in the settlement and the armed conflicts they fled. Some women explain that they were raped in the conflict in the DRC and that this experience has affected their ability to parent well. These findings indicate that programs that seek to engage parents in efforts to improve the well-being of girls must recognize that parents themselves may need significant support with their own empowerment and trust issues.

Describing parental expectations, one girl said, “Some girls are out of school because parents would rather have them farm, collect firewood and sometimes to get them married off.”<sup>10</sup>

### Girls Engaged in Child Labor

The survey results (Figure 2a, p. 26) show that girls are heavily involved in domestic responsibilities. Many expressed being physically exhausted from overwork in general. “We are exploited with housework, fetching water, digging land, tending cows and goats; it’s too much,” one said. Their exhaustion makes it difficult to maintain good health and concentrate on education, which are high among their priorities. At the same time, girls express much interest in training and developing skills to eventually engage in income-generating activities (IGA) to help them reach other goals. They engage in “digging” (farming activities) but it produces little income for them, and they see few other opportunities for developing livelihood skills and completing their education. In addition to farming their



Refugee woman working in the MakaPad Project in Bukere Zone, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.

own plots of land and those of other refugees and host community plots, refugee adolescent girls generate livelihood support in markets and through other casual labor. For example, some are vendors of small merchandise or wash clothes for others.

The GIZ- and UNHCR-supported MakaPad Project involves refugee women and men in making sanitary pads out of local materials and is credited with supporting girls’ attendance in school. It generates a limited number of very physically demanding jobs, however, that are not necessarily the most desirable to girls as a future livelihood option.

### Girls Concerned about Health Issues

Girls worry about a range of health issues, including early pregnancy, which they fear may lead to death in childbirth. They also feel that young mothers are ill-supported and unprepared to care for babies. “The babies of these young mothers just go naked,” one girl said. Girls are concerned about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, and its transmission through sex. They also describe hunger, including at school: “There is no lunch at school, so we are very hungry in the afternoon, and it is difficult to concentrate,” one said. While some girls seek treatment from the medical center within the settlement when they are ill, they often feel the treatment is inappropriate. “They just give us Panadol, and the illness festers,” said one. The head nurse at AHA, which provides health services at the settlement, explains that the most common conditions treated in the health center are upper and lower respiratory infections and malaria, and adolescent girls are among those presenting with these illnesses. Indeed, many of the girls interviewed were coughing heavily. Although some girls seek reproductive health services, many do not. “If it’s an STI, they don’t want to tell about it. If it is malaria, they go for care,” the head nurse said. “Some girls want abortions, but they are illegal in Uganda, and this is a real challenge for them,” he continued. “Delivery is tough for them, and

they cannot handle a baby or a boyfriend.” Antenatal, delivery and postnatal care are available, as are mental health services, HIV-related treatment and voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) services. However, services are often not adolescent-friendly, and program implementers are unable to say to what extent girls access them since the girls tend to under-report due to fear of public scrutiny.

### Promising Practice

The Know Your Status Campaign at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement provides VCT outreach to in-school and out-of-school adolescents. “Adolescents want complete privacy,” the head nurse at AHA said, “so we do community outreach with transportation and work closely with community health workers to reach young people discreetly.”

## Widespread Experiences of GBV

GBV, particularly SEA, is an enormous part of girls’ lives. Surveys and discussions reveal that the main forms of GBV girls experience are early marriage, transactional sexual activity, rape, and sexual harassment and assault. Over a quarter of surveyed girls have had sexual intercourse while living in Kyaka II (Figure 3, p. 27).<sup>11</sup> About 64 percent of them have experienced some form of sexual harassment, ranging from unwanted sexual advances to sexual assault that does not include intercourse. About a fifth of girls have exchanged sexual favors (non-intercourse) for some form of help. A smaller but significant number of adolescent girls are involved in exchanging sex for money, and at least 3 percent are married.

While many young girls are experiencing and fear GBV, they explained that the sexual intercourse they have experienced was both by force and consensual. As Figure 4 (p. 28) shows, about a third of girls who have had sex were raped, and nearly double that number chose to have sex. Overall, about 41 percent

of girls’ experiences of sexual intercourse have been forced, at least some of the time. The prevalence of adolescent girls engaging in sex by choice flags the need to understand the complexity of their sexuality beyond abuse and exploitation, including its role in girls’ empowerment, as well as the risks it poses. As shown in Figure 5 (p. 28), most of the males with whom adolescent girls have experienced sexual intercourse are friends or people that they know, including family members. Others are strangers. Girls report forced sex as more often involving strangers as perpetrators, while consensual encounters more often involve people known to the girl, although many girls might be reluctant to state that rapists are people they know, including family members.

Girls describe many factors that put them at risk of GBV, including the physical environment; lack of adequate policing; being outdoors or at home alone and at night; poverty and lack of education and livelihoods; lack of parental care; lack of assertiveness, negotiation and communication skills; abuses by teachers and others in authority; and failure of justice systems to protect them. Girls say that sexual violence often occurs as they travel back and forth to school and to the market and as they collect water and firewood and grind millet. They explain that boys and men hide in the bush surrounding boreholes and in the thick of the forest and attack them. Girls feel particularly vulnerable when they are alone at night along poorly lit paths and even in their own homes and gardens. Parents may also play a role, when they push girls to do chores outside after dark.

“Boys grope parts of our bodies as we move back and forth to school and home,” one girl said. “This makes us fear going to school.”<sup>12</sup>

Girls say they at times trade sexual favors for school fees, food and small luxuries such as lotions mainly due to poverty. “Men and boys deceive girls with offers of money to help them pay for school fees or [medical] treatment,” one girl said. “They offer girls money for sex when they go to collect firewood,” another said.

One RWC leader also explained that “When you have gone for so long without sugar in your tea, when a man comes along for your girl, both the child and the mother will not refuse.”

Girls spoke about engaging in sexual intercourse and other sexual acts, as a regular means of making a living, as distinct from more occasional transactional sexual encounters. Encounters occur in girls’ homes and within the forest, and place girls at risk of STIs, including HIV, and early pregnancy and motherhood. Girls who engage in these behaviors also face substantial social stigma and may have particular difficulty forming friendships and enjoying support networks. Girls end up exchanging sex for money due to poverty, parental neglect and as a result of school dropout. Mothers note that adult women are also involved, including single parents and married women whose husbands do not have enough work and when harvests are bad.

Early marriage is occurring in Kyaka II due to poverty and social and cultural norms that limit girls’ rights to make their own choices. Parents may remove a girl from school if they are unable or unwilling to pay fees and then keep her at home “to take care of siblings, dig or wait for marriage,” one girl explained. “Parents also often favor boys’ education.” Parents can collect a bride price on the marriage of their daughter, alleviating financial burdens, as the girl moves to her husband’s household. Some tribes within the settlement tend to marry daughters early more often than others, in some cases removing some of the girls’ teeth to publicly signal their readiness.<sup>13</sup>

When one group of girls in Kaborogota was asked whether they were interested in marriage, they resoundingly replied in unison, “No! We want to study!”<sup>14</sup>

In addition to these factors driving various forms of GBV, girls, boys and parents all spoke of young people’s inappropriate exposure to sexual situations as

a problem driven by poor accommodations. They say adults openly have sex in the settlement’s reception center, which is one large room with no partitions for privacy for the dozens of inhabitants, who are awaiting status determination and placement within the settlement. Houses are also small, often with only one room,<sup>15</sup> exposing children to sexual activity of parents and caregivers within. Some girls also “fear coming upon people having sex in the woods,” including sex involving adolescents. Many young people feel that such exposure is a factor in early sexual debut.

Men and boys say that some among them are sexually harassing girls because of idleness and boredom, as well as a lack of security generally within the settlement. Some have entered puberty and are navigating feelings of newfound sexual desire. A group of fathers agreed with one who said, “Boys and men disturb girls because they are idle. Technical education would help them and would decrease the problem for girls. To help girls, it is important to help both girls and boys.”

Girls also emphasize that lack of personal, individual empowerment plays a role in their exposure to GBV. Although they are not using the word empowerment, many girls say they lack life skills that they feel would help them better protect themselves. Many feel they need to be bolder and more assertive about saying no to unwanted advances.

## Structural and Systems Challenges Influence GBV

As described above, poverty is understood to be a root cause of many forms of exploitation and abuse and neglect, as girls are drawn out of school, forced to marry, are overworked and physically and emotionally abused, in part as a result of individual and household financial pressures and limited options for livelihoods. Like many protracted refugee operations around the world, Kyaka II is chronically underfunded, which limits provision of community services, protection and development programming, all of which impact GBV prevention and



response for girls. Some service providers and refugees believe there was less GBV in Kyaka II in the past when there was funding to undertake much more direct outreach to individuals and households to talk about violence and how to prevent it.<sup>16</sup> Community outreach workers<sup>17</sup> feel strong pressures to fill gaps with limited support and often feel vulnerable themselves as they attempt to be advocates for GBV survivors. At the same time, the attitudes and behaviors of the refugees, especially parents, also influence their economic outlook. As noted, many feel demoralized, and they have few points of comparison to other refugee settings. Many are not taking full advantage of opportunities to farm and trade, individually and collectively, or simply to help one another. This may be linked to tribal and related cultural and linguistic diversity and politics within the settlement; the girls surveyed belong to nearly 40 tribes collectively.

Although existing programs stand to benefit adolescent girls, coordinated action to strengthen cooperation between programs and evaluate impact for this subgroup of the population is limited. UNHCR does lead an age, gender, diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) assessment to better identify and address issues facing those of different ages, genders and backgrounds across all sectors and stakeholders. With limited resources for operationalization, however, AGDM may raise expectations without hope of adequate action. Some practitioners also note that AGDM assessment work is carried out too late in the year to practically influence program budgets.

Refugees and others noted that policing, in particular, is inadequate in Kyaka II. There are five police officers in Kyaka II, including one woman, for 16,428 refugees. Police in Kyaka II work closely with UNHCR and GIZ on GBV, but note that “very few cases of GBV are reported.” On average, they address one case of underage rape per month,<sup>18</sup> usually when parents bring the case to them, and they refer the girl for medical care.

The low rate of reporting may be in part due to the

evident lack of trust of police among some refugees. One refugee leader said that many refugees “don’t even bother going to police, as they take bribes.” Others, among a group of men, said that “when you get such a situation and you report to the chairperson, they and others don’t do anything, and when nothing is done, it causes us to disregard the process.” The female police officer in Kyaka II said that some adult women come to her for help, but that “girls rarely come.”

Instead of turning to police for justice following up on girls’ experiences of GBV, refugees most often first turn to their own elders, clan leaders and RWC members, including chairpersons for villages and zones. Community leaders and structures provide advice and counseling to families as they recover from these experiences and, in some cases, solutions are found. These solutions might include marriage for the girl to the perpetrator, payment to the girl’s family or other remedies.

Girls face several challenges reporting rape and other forms of GBV through formal channels. The topic of sex holds many taboos, and many girls feel ashamed to raise it and/or they question what good will come from doing so. Although much GBV sensitization occurs, including GBV clubs and informational posters in schools and the existence of the SGBV referral pathway placards in English and Kiswahili throughout the settlement, girls do not always find it easy or beneficial to use formal channels that are not adolescent-friendly. Many girls cannot read the signs easily, as all classes in school are not taught in English, and not all speak and read Kiswahili. Girls also fear repercussions from boys they accuse of GBV. One said, “Girls are afraid to report the boys, because of the boys’ reaction if they get kicked out of school as a result.” In general, girls “fear going to ask for things [from authorities], as the response is often ‘no.’”

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Adolescent girls ages 10 to 16 in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement are facing threats to their lives, health and welfare as a result of economic, social, cultural, structural and systemic factors, chief among them perhaps being poverty, parental neglect and poor program funding for services in Kyaka II overall. Weak peer support among girls undermines their ability to take advantage of and create opportunities for improving their lives. Several forms of GBV against girls flourish amid the deprivations. Yet despite the challenges they face, girls continue to dream big and envision a better future.

The recommendations are of relevance to the refugee adolescent girls residing in the settlements as well as the host community adolescent girls who access services within the settlements.

### Girls' Own Recommendations for Themselves

As part of the research the WRC undertook, we asked girls to think of ways to improve their well-being, to achieve their goals and to protect themselves from exploitation and abuse at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement. The following recommendations are what the girls said they could do to help themselves, with support and guidance from others, directed primarily to the stakeholders responsible for protection and services in Kyaka II:

- **Take safety precautions:** Get home early and avoid being out at night. Travel in groups of other girls and parents so boys and men will not harass you. Be more self-aware and do not be duped by men offering money for sex. Run away from boys who look suspicious or are acting in a funny way like they want to touch you. Be assertive at school when approached by boys; say no and report to trustworthy teacher. Be bold enough to tell boys that you are not ready for sex or marriage. Walk



Girls sharing their action plans with the research team in Bukere, Kyaka II.

carefully on roads to avoid being struck by cars.

- **Make education a priority:** Stay focused on studying. Listen to teachers. Work hard and read a lot of books. Be driven to achieving your goals and gaining knowledge about how to achieve them. Work with others to talk to parents, teachers, partners, girls and others about respecting children's rights to education and not to impose early marriage on girls.
- **Build strong life skills:** Develop healthy relationships with those around you, including with parents, teachers and other girls, to win their support and friendships so that they can become your ally and resource when you need help. Avoid bad peer groups at school and outside school. Build strong character by working hard whether at school or at home, respect those in authority and listen to the advice of others. Take care of your health and stay healthy; boil water for drinking, bathe and clean your environment. Abstain from sex to avoid disease and pregnancy and death related to childbirth. Stick to one boyfriend. Sensitize child mothers on how to adapt to a new life and responsibilities after giving birth. Find out where to best report GBV and report those that harass or hurt you, even if they are people in authority.

- **Build relationships with other girls:** Meet with other girls regularly in groups to socialize, share challenges you face and be supportive of one another. Girls should form community-serving groups and apply for funding to buy books, uniforms, shoes and other basic needs. Form a girls' protection club to watch over each other and report any kind of violence in the community to teachers and police. Help each other to plan for future livelihood options.
- **Plan for the future together as girls:** Learn from others who can help you improve livelihood options for the future. Girls should form agricultural clubs so that they can farm together and sell their produce to meet their personal needs. Girls should farm or wash clothes together to earn money to pay for school fees and materials and to meet other basic needs. Invest in hens; grow and sell hens. Find alternatives to prostitution or transactional sex and maintain your character.

### Recommendations for Others

In light of the findings and the above recommendations made by the girls themselves, the following recommendations have been developed, directed at donors, UNHCR and service providers and refugee organizations at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.

### Donors

- **Prioritize funding allocations to programs that incorporate outcomes that are specific to adolescent girls:** Donors must take the lead in guiding program implementation to address the critical needs of this traditionally neglected population. New sources of funding are critical in order to address some of the program gaps identified by girls and their community, such as improving the quality of education, strengthening life skills, increasing opportunities to build social assets (e.g., networks and support groups) and preparing girls for safe livelihood options. While some girl-specific indicators may currently be tracked within program

budgets, some ideas brought forward by girls themselves require systemic changes in how implementers approach program design and monitoring, as well as increased training and personnel to strengthen sensitization efforts around girls' issues.

### UNHCR

- **In collaboration with the Ugandan government, strengthen security in Kyaka II:** Install lights on passageways to and from wells. Clear the bushes around the boreholes. Explore placement of security personnel on roads, in and near markets, schools, water points and firewood collection areas.
- **Increase advocacy with the Ugandan government and work closely with implementing partners to remove barriers to girls' education:** English should be the primary teaching language at all levels, and teachers should be qualified and equipped to teach in English. Strengthen the provision of ongoing training for teachers to maintain standards and provide incentives to retain good teachers. Explore ways to increase scholarships for secondary education to expand girls' learning opportunities beyond primary school. Construct more and larger classrooms to address overcrowding in schools.
- **Support coordination among implementing partners serving Kyaka II to address issues affecting adolescent girls within existing programs:** Consider ways to respond to girls' suggestions for action outlined above through existing programs and possible new ones. Facilitate increased cross-sector coordination among implementing partners to ensure a comprehensive, integrated approach to programs that support girls. Request from partners an analysis of how existing programs address adolescent girls and how program access, quality and outcomes can be improved for girls within existing budgets.
- **Ensure that AGDM participatory assessment results are reflected in program plans and bud-**

**gets:** Input from adolescent girls and their communities on the needs, risks and proposed solutions for protecting and empowering adolescent girls need to be included in country operation plans and budgeted for program plan implementation. This would ensure that UNHCR is responsive to the expressed needs of girls and directly working with communities to improve services for them.

### Service Providers and Refugee Organizations

- **Increase protection in schools:** Sensitize teachers to stop unfair punishment of children at school and encourage a supportive environment for girls to report GBV. Create an accountability structure in the schools so that teachers, administrators and students all have clear boundaries, and roles and responsibilities are delineated, with an appropriate feedback loop in place.
- **Increase participation of adolescent girls in non-formal education:** Starting with out-of-school girls, married girls and girls from marginalized groups, offer flexible access to training in life skills, decision-making, critical thinking, communication and negotiation skills. Programs should be designed in cooperation with a diverse group of girls to help programmers work around the various constraints on girls' participation.
- **Support girls' protection and empowerment through increasing their access to social assets:** Respond to girls' requests for opportunities to increase socializing, networking and organizing among themselves in order to build their social assets. Ensure girls get space and time to build friendships and find mutual support among peers and from adults in their communities. These may involve specific events for girls and/or their suggestions for forming groups, clubs and networks. Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical to sustaining community economic development<sup>19</sup> and thus investing in girls' social capital can also positively impact their economic outcomes. Recognize that girls' programs will not produce a desirable outcome without also addressing the needs of boys and men. Create ways for boys and men to support activities that target girls as primary beneficiaries.
- **Increase girls' access to economic assets:** Support skills training programs for older adolescent girls, including IGAs that are alternatives to farming and, if feasible, empower older girls to pursue trades that are not traditional for women, as these tend to pay more than traditional female trades. Alternative livelihood options should be based on a gendered market assessment and on local demand for goods and services in order not to oversaturate the market with just a few of the same trades.<sup>20</sup> Beyond the vocational component, focus on employment-readiness approaches that emphasize employability skills, how to look for jobs and customer service and communication skills. If girls want to pursue self-employment, provide them with information and advice on how to set up a business and ensure that necessary networks and linkages are available,<sup>21, 22</sup> especially to experiential learning opportunities such as business mentorship, internships and apprenticeships. Provide all girls with basic financial literacy skills.
- **Increase girls' access to youth-led and youth-serving organizations and support girls' groups:** Engage youth as key partners in programming through the settlement's youth committee and youth center, building their capacity to take leadership roles and manage projects to support empowerment and GBV prevention among girls. Challenge youth to engage girls in youth activism and activities, including taking advantage of the decentralized structure of the youth committee throughout Kyaka II's nine zones. In addition, support girls-only groups and girls-only clubs, such as ones the girls mentioned above, to build girls' protective assets and foster social interactions among them.
- **Review the current SGBV referral system for improvement and incorporate child- and adolescent-friendly protection practices:** Service pro-





SGBV referral sign in Kiswahili, Kyaka II Settlement.

viders should collaborate closely among relevant sectors (e.g., health, protection, security) to identify cases of GBV experienced by adolescent girls and ensure adequate follow-up. Engage children and adolescents to identify and implement approaches that make the current SGBV referral system more adolescent-friendly, addressing language barriers, privacy issues and outcomes for girls. To the extent possible, follow through with external monitoring and evaluation on the referral system's effectiveness in reaching adolescents.

- **Sensitize parents and guardians on girls' rights and responsibilities through adapting more personalized outreach approach:** Ensure parents understand the disadvantages of labor exploitation of their children and the benefits of education. Explore

ways to increase personalized outreach approaches to encourage parents to learn to listen to their children and take action to support their security and their futures. Sensitize parents and girls who are in school and out of school on the rights of children to education and on the disadvantages of early marriage.

- **In distributions of non-food items, prioritize basic needs that impact girls' protection:** Directly provide or support programs for girls and their caregivers with items such as soap, basins, sanitary pads, clothing, including underwear and uniforms, scholastic materials, and shelter materials for housing improvements.

## Next Steps

The Women's Refugee Commission is in the process of identifying a local partner that will implement an 18-month pilot project at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement to test approaches and ideas brought forward by refugee adolescent girls and community members themselves. Pilot projects are also to be undertaken in Ethiopia and Tanzania and lessons learned from these pilots will lead to models on programming for adolescent girls in the humanitarian context. A guidance paper on the learning from the pilots, as well as aggregate findings from the three research missions, will be written in 2014 aimed at humanitarian actors working with adolescent girls in emergencies in order to inform, support and guide their work with this vulnerable and often marginalized group.

See WRC's website for more information on adolescent girls. <http://wrc.ms/SJBGzC>.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Coalition for Adolescent Girls, *Missing the Emergency: Shifting the Paradigm for Relief to Adolescent Girls* (Washington, D.C., 2012). <http://wrc.ms/Z5Q0I4>.

<sup>2</sup> Primary schools are located in five out of Kyaka II's nine zones—Byabakora, Sweswe, Bukere, Itambabiniga and Mukondo. There is also a primary school in Bujubuli, the base camp. Zones without a primary school are Buliti, Bwiriza, Kaborogota and Kakoni. The farthest distance some students must travel to attend a primary school outside their zone is about 14 kilometers, from Kaborogota to Bujubuli.

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR provides support to this “Self Help Vocational Secondary School” with materials such as carpentry tools, catering equipment and tailoring supplies; however, as the school only relies on participants' contributions for tuition fees for its operation, this greatly affects the quality and availability of vocational skills training being offered to refugee students.

<sup>4</sup> This approach is an innovation, and is inspired, in part, by the “neighborhood method” survey methodology developed at Columbia University. The neighborhood method is built on the assumption that, in certain contexts, people are able to speak knowledgeably about the experiences of their neighbors; more information about the method can be found on <http://forcedmigration.columbia.edu/research/ar.html>. The buddy method, by contrast, asks girls about their close female friends, aged 10 to 16, whom they speak with regularly about their lives.

<sup>5</sup> Questions were developed and finalized in collaboration with UNHCR Kyaka II Protection and Community Services staff and GIZ Sexual and Gender-based Violence program staff and following pilot testing with 19 refugee adolescent girls involved in two discussion sessions.

<sup>6</sup> Scholarships are administered by WTU and UNHCR, with funding from PEPFAR.

<sup>7</sup> WTU and AHA conduct annual assessment on children with disabilities; as a result, 19 special needs children were identified to be supported by UNHCR to attend Kinyinya Primary School's special needs programs.

<sup>8</sup> According to WTU, approximately 5,653 students are enrolled in primary and secondary school, including 263 at the secondary level, 162, or 62 percent, of whom are girls. Information on attendance from WTU records, “Students' Enrolment Form for Kyaka II Refugee Settlement Secondary Schools.”

<sup>9</sup> WRC focus group discussions with one group of adolescent girls ages 10-16 in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, October 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Focus group discussion with 10- to 16-year-old girls in Sweswe,

Kyaka II Refugee Camp, October 17, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> About 5.8 percent of girls have had sex by age 12, 10.0 percent by age 13, 15.3 percent by 14, 22.8 by 15 and 28.6 percent by 16. About 8.5 percent of self-respondents say they don't know if the friend they are answering further questions about has had sex.

<sup>12</sup> Focus group discussions with 10- to 16-year-old girls in Kakoni, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, October 30, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> According to interviews with GBV counselor from Africa Humanitarian Action.

<sup>14</sup> Focus group discussions with eight 10- to 16-year-old girls in Kaborogota, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, October 2013.

<sup>15</sup> It should also be noted that the shelter construction materials that refugees receive, such as plastic sheeting, do not allow them to build structures that provide adequate privacy for adults and children.

<sup>16</sup> WRC interview with an RWC member and GIZ in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, October 2012.

<sup>17</sup> Community outreach workers are refugees living within Kyaka II, who receive a modest monthly incentive to perform their duties with oversight from an implementing partner organization with offices in the settlement's base camp area, Bujubuli.

<sup>18</sup> WRC interview with Kyaka II Refugee Settlement police commander, October 10, 2012.

<sup>19</sup> The World Bank, “What is Social Capital?,” *PovertyNet* (1999). <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/whatsc.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> The Women's Refugee Commission and Columbia University have developed a market assessment toolkit for this purpose: Women's Refugee Commission, *Market Assessment Toolkit for Training Providers and Youth* (2009), <http://wrc.ms/Rlit8O> and Women's Refugee Commission, *Toolkit User Guide* (2011), <http://wrc.ms/T0sG8k>.

<sup>21</sup> Beauvy et al. *Lessons Learned from Moving the Haitian Out of School Youth Livelihood Initiative Beyond the Pilot Phase* (2010). <http://wrc.ms/SzObQB>.

<sup>22</sup> Equip3. *Lessons Learned 2003-2012: Experiences in Livelihoods, Literacy, and Leadership in Youth Programs in 26 Countries* (2012). <http://wrc.ms/TnYIEI>.

## Appendix A: Additional Details on Research Design and Methods

Girls ages 10 to 16 in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement were randomly sampled from a list produced by the UN-HCR Kyaka II Field Office from its ProGres database.<sup>a</sup> The list included a total of 1,504 refugee and asylum seeker girls between the ages of 10 and 16 registered as living in Kyaka II. Using an online computer program to generate random numbers,<sup>b</sup> the WRC selected 150 adolescent girls between the ages of 10 and 16 from among these 1,504 girls as potential respondents.

For several of the structured survey questions related to girls' experiences of GBV, the respondents were also asked about the experiences of two of their female friends between the ages of 10 and 16 who live in the settlement, but who are not among those randomly selected to participate in a discussion group. This "buddy method" is inspired by the "neighborhood method" used in previous studies of GBV, principally among adult women in situations of armed conflict, including in Uganda.<sup>c</sup> It expands the sample size for several of the research questions, offering an efficient way to gather information on more girls given limited resources.<sup>d</sup> The buddy method asks adolescent girls about friends in their peer group, however, not neighbors. This study thus also provides a unique opportunity to test this innovative approach to gaining information about refugee girls' lives based on girls' knowledge of their peers. The assessment's focus on girls aged 10 to 16 further addresses gaps in existing information sources on GBV and social capital among refugee adolescent girls in general and in Kyaka II.

The sample is stratified by location, according to proximity to one of the settlement's nine zones. Grouped for the purposes of this study only, Zone Group 1 includes the zones Bukere, Bwiriza, Itambabiniga and Sweswe, and Zone Group 2 includes Buliti, Byaba-

kora, Kaborogota, Kakoni and Mukondo. The sample size calculated was distributed within the Zone Groups proportional to population size, where each contains almost exactly 50 percent of the settlement's population of adolescent girls ages 10 to 16.

### Sampling

Thirteen community outreach workers,<sup>e</sup> composed principally of those working on protection, community services and community development in the various Kyaka II zones, were engaged to identify and invite the 150 randomly selected adolescent girls to participate in the assessment, and to obtain parental or guardian permission. In the absence of a parent or guardian, self-consent was sought from the research participant herself. Following an orientation to the project and sampling approach provided by the WRC, each community outreach worker was given a portion of the list of randomly selected girls, focusing only on his or her regular zone of operation. They were also given a form for recording details on their progress, as well as a checklist document for their reference, summarizing the details and procedures for ensuring informed consent and parental or guardian permission.

The final sample size drawn of girls 10-16 in Kyaka II was 212, including 93 self-responding girls and 127 of their friends.<sup>f</sup> Approximately 53 percent of them live in Zone Group 1 within Kyaka II and 47 percent of them live in Zone Group 2. About 89 percent are Congolese, 8 percent are Rwandan and 3 percent are Burundian. Although the vast majority claims Congolese nationality, their tribal heritage is very diverse; they belong to nearly 40 different tribes.<sup>g</sup> Ninety-nine percent of the girls are refugees, and 1 percent is asylum seekers. On average, they are 13 years old and have been living in the settlement for nearly six years. The range of their length of stay in Kyaka is wide, however; the WRC met girls who had only just arrived in recent days and weeks and those who had lived there all their lives. Most live with at least some member of their family, and only one lives alone with her own child. On average, they live

with six to seven people in households that are often just one room. About a quarter do not live with their mother, and nearly half do not live with their father. Many live with just their sisters, brothers and/or another relative. Three of the girls (1.4 percent of the sample) are married, the youngest approximately 12 years old; and 14, or 6.6 percent of them, are already mothers, the youngest also approximately 12 years old.<sup>h</sup> About 81 percent of the sample is enrolled in school, the vast majority in primary school, with just 1.4 percent in secondary school. The largest proportion of them, about 43 percent, have reached Primary Grade 4 or 5, and a little more than a quarter of them are involved in an income-generating activity. See Table 1 below for additional details on the characteristics of the sample.

### Ethics, Strengths and Limitations

The ethics of surveying very young adolescent girls directly about their lives, including GBV in Kyaka II, was strongly considered. The WRC interviewed UNHCR Kyaka II protection staff, GIZ's community services and GBV program staff, community outreach workers working on protection and community services, as well as an external expert in child participation and protection working with young girls in the settlement. These interviews revealed significant exposure to conversations about sex among even very young adolescent girls. All primary schools in Kyaka II receive sensitization on GBV, including explicit discussions of sex. There are also GBV clubs in primary schools, and large posters in many areas of the settlement on GBV, including reporting procedures. The girls involved in the first group session, which served as a pilot for the various approaches, also provided feedback on questions. Surveys with girls were undertaken by female adults only, with experience addressing GBV and other protection issues among refugee adults, children and adolescents, including GIZ's GBV officer and counselor; a community outreach worker working on protection issues; the WRC's consultant with experience interviewing refugee women and girls, including about sexual violence; and the WRC's Geneva representative, with

experience working with refugee women and girls. Procedures of informed consent, parental/guardian permission, confidentiality and referral were followed.

The collection of both quantitative and qualitative information allows for understanding of both the types and prevalence of girls' experiences, as well as the dynamics and factors influencing them in more detail. This strengthens rigor and helps avoid programming decisions being made based solely on opinions and assumptions. The method used perhaps shows a weakness as it produced differences in self-reporting and reporting on friends, and suggests that it may help reveal patterns hidden by shame and mistrust by asking girls sensitive questions both about themselves and their friends. It might be a way to correct for systematic underreporting of girls' experiences of GBV. Given limited resources and time, the dedication of the research team and responsiveness of the refugee community, service providers and authorities was a key strength. Their expertise working with refugee adolescent girls and women also supported an ethical approach, as they remain in the community ready to provide follow-up support to individual girls. Almost all of the girls who were contacted agreed to participate, as did their parent or guardian providing permission. Some made multiple efforts to join and complete discussion sessions given problems with access due to poor weather and travel conditions.

As for weaknesses of the "buddy method," the reliability on girls' self-reporting is unclear, as the survey found that their friends' sexual experiences are consistently worse than their own, which suggests that girls may be underreporting their own sexual experience. It also suggests that however bad some reports are about their own experience, they actually could be worse. Additional research to verify the validity of this method would be a useful next step in light of the findings it has produced. Other weaknesses include that girls did not always know their precise age and that of their friends. Thus, some inaccuracy in the recording of age and related conclusions is likely. It may be, for example, that 10-year-olds described as having had sex might actu-



ally be a bit older. Budget and time to design and implement the assessment were limited. With more time and resources, a larger sample size of girls, a corresponding representative random sample of adolescent boys and a wider array of questions might have been possible, strengthening assessment findings, conclusions and recommendations. Limited time also meant less time to engage with girls individually to build trust to discuss sensitive issues. Implementation was also constrained by rainy weather and poor road conditions, which precluded participation of some young people and interrupted the flow of some discussion sessions. Some community outreach workers were also unable to finish their initial outreach work. Married girls and their parents and husbands often refused to participate, limiting their contributions to the results.

of adolescent girls for which information was collected to 249.

<sup>g</sup> Most often, girls say they and their friends are Munyabwisha/ Nyabwisha (20.8 percent of the sample), followed by Mugegere (10.4 percent), Hutu (8.0 percent), Muhema (7.5 percent), Banyamulange (6.1 percent) and Alur (4.7 percent). Together, these groups comprise just 40 percent of the tribal affiliations named, speaking to the tribal, or ethnic, diversity of this population.

<sup>h</sup> As also described in the notes on Ethics and Limitations, below, girls do not always precisely know their own age or that of their friends.

## Notes

<sup>a</sup> ProGres contains the most up-to-date demographic and household statistics on the Kyaka II refugee settlement population, the most recent verification having been completed recently in 2012.

<sup>b</sup> The OpenEpi Random Number Generator was used: <http://www.openepi.com/OE2.3/Menu/OpenEpiMenu.htm>.

<sup>c</sup> For more information, see Start, L. et al., "Measuring violence against women amidst war and displacement in northern Uganda using the 'neighborhood method,'" *Journal of Epidemiology and Health* (2010) 64:1056-1061 doi:10.1136/jech.2009.093799. <http://jech.bmj.com/content/64/12/1056.abstract>.

<sup>d</sup> Note that girls who are primary respondents are oversampled by approximately 47 percent to ensure a sample size of 306 survey responses for questions related to sexual exploitation and abuse using this method' Sample size calculated using Creative Research Systems online sample size calculator. <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>.

<sup>e</sup> Focus group discussions with eight 10- to 16-year-old girls in Kaborogota, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, October 2013.

<sup>f</sup> An additional 14 girls attending primary school were surveyed, who also provided information on 23 of their friends. These survey results are not included in this analysis, as these girls were not randomly sampled. Qualitative findings from their discussion group are, however, reflected in the analysis. This brings the total number



Appendix B: (continued)

Characteristic	Kyaka II All		Zone Group 1		Zone Group 2		Self		Friend		Age Group 10-12		Age Group 13-16	
	Frequency	% within All	Frequency	% within Group 1	Frequency	% within Group 2	Frequency	% within Self	Frequency	% within Friend	Frequency	% within 10-12	Frequency	% within 13-16
Married	3	1.4	2	1.8	1	1.0	0	0.0	3	2.5	1	1.2	2	1.6
Has child of own	14	6.6	9	8.0	5	5.0	3	3.2	11	9.2	1	1.2	11	8.7
Enrolled in school														
Yes	172	81.1	90	80.4	82	82.0	78	83.9	94	79.0	74	91.4	96	75.6
No	39	18.4	22	19.6	17	17.0	15	16.1	24	10.0	7	8.6	30	23.6
Missing	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8	0	0	1	0.8
Last level of school attended	13.2	N/A	13.28	N/A	13.06	N/A	13.03	N/A	13.29	N/A	11.2	N/A	14.4	N/A
None	1	0.5	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Primary 1, 2 or 3	75	35.4	30	26.8	45	45.0	39	42.0	36	30.2	44	54.4	29	22.9
Primary 4 or 5	91	42.9	53	47.3	38	38.0	39	41.9	52	43.7	28	34.6	62	48.8
Primary 6 or 7	22	10.3	13	11.6	9	9.0	7	7.6	15	12.6	2	2.4	20	15.7
Secondary 1 or 2	3	1.4	3	2.7	0	0.0	1	1.1	2	1.6	0	0.0	3	2.4
Missing	20	9.4	12	10.7	8	8.0	6	6.5	14	11.7	7	8.7	12	9.5
Involved in income-generating activity	56	26.4	19	17.0	37	37.0	29	31.2	27	22.7	15	18.5	41	32.3



## Appendix C: Adolescent Girls' Group Discussion Activities and Survey Questionnaires

Structured Survey Questionnaire (adapted and condensed for publication)

Arrival/Intake Questions: Information recorded for the research participant and up to two female friends of the participant between the ages of 10 and 16 also living as refugees within Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.

- o Age: a. 10 b. 11 c. 12 d. 13 e. 14 f. 15 g. 16
  - o Zone: a. Bukere b. Buliti c. Bwiriza d. Byabakora e. Itambabiniga f. Kaborogota g. Kakoni h. Mukondo i. Sweswe
  - o Nationality: a. Congolese b. Rwandan c. Burundian d. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Ethnic group/tribe: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Number of years in Kyaka II: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Refugee or asylum seeker status: a. refugee b. asylum seeker
  - o Number of family members living with you in Kyaka II: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o I live with my: a. mother b. father c. sister/s d. brother/s e. others f. I live alone
  - o Marital status: a. Married b. Not Married
  - o Do you have a child of your own? a. Yes b. No
  - o Are you currently enrolled in school: a. Yes b. No
  - o Your current or last level of school attended: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Do you currently engage in activities that earn some money? a. Yes b. No
- If so, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Brainstorm and Discussion on Life Goals and Issues Facing Girls: The girls engage in games that allow them to think about their future life goals, talk about what kinds of things they feel they need to achieve these goals, and name and begin to talk about as many issues facing girls in Kyaka II as they can think of. The issues raised cover topics relating to the wider range of abuses and exploitation girls experience beyond sexual exploitation and abuse (misuse of power for sexual favors) and reveal information on girls' social capital.



SEA Structured Survey Questions: Questions asked of the research participant in her own personal experience of SEA in Kyaka II and about that of up to two of her female friends ages 10 to 16 living in Kyaka II, who she knows and talks to.

- Have/Has you/she had sex before?                      a. Yes                      b. No
- If yes, with whom did you/she have sex? Check all that apply.
  - a. A family member      b. A friend or someone else you/she know/s (not family)
  - c. A stranger                      d. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- If you answered yes, you/she had sex, circle which one of the following applies:
  - a. I/She was forced                      b. It was my/her choice/It was consensual
  - c. At times I/she was forced, at times it was my/her choice
- If you answered that you/she were/was forced, did you/she tell anyone what happened to you/her?
  - a. Yes                      b. No
- If you answered yes, you/she reported the forced sex, did you/she tell someone right away?
  - a. Yes, right away, within three days      b. Yes, within one week                      c. Yes, after one week
- If you answered yes, you/she reported the forced sex, whom did you/she tell? Check all that apply.
  - a. Friend                      b. Sister                      c. Brother
  - d. Mother                      e. Father                      f. Other relative
  - g. Police                      h. UNHCR                      i. Other\_\_\_\_\_
- Apart from being forced to have sex, has any man or boy harassed you/her in another way?
  - a. Yes                      b. No
- Have/Has you/she exchanged sexual favors for some sort of help (digging, school fees, salt, lotions, other)?
  - a. Yes                      b. No
- Have/Has you/she participated in commercial sex work (as a way to make a living more regularly)?
  - a. Yes                      b. No

The following additional questions are for girls who are married only.

- Did you/she choose to get married, or were/was you/she forced?
  - a. I/She chose to marry                      b. I/She was forced to marry

- o Were/Was you/she ever forced to have sex with your/her husband when you/she did not want to?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

The below questions are asked of the research participant only, not relating to their friends.

- o When you have a problem, whom do you talk to about it first? Choose one only.
  - a. Mother
  - b. Father
  - c. Sister
  - d. Brother
  - e. Other relative
  - f. Friend
  - g. Officers
  - h. Community worker
  - i. Refugee committee
  - j. Police
  - k. Other\_\_\_\_\_
- o What activities are you involved in in Kyaka II? Circle all that apply.
  - a. Housework
  - b. Digging
  - c. Caring for children
  - d. Fetching water and/or firewood
  - e. Going to school
  - e. Sports
  - f. Going for skills training
  - g. Income-generating activity
  - h. Going to the youth center
  - i. Youth committee
  - j. Going to video stores
  - k. Going to bars
  - l. Drama
  - m. Singing
  - n. Going to church/other religious group
  - o. SGBV club
  - p. Action on the Rights of the Child club
  - q. Other club/organization\_\_\_\_\_
  - r. Other\_\_\_\_\_

**Safety Map – Drawing and Discussion:** Girls are asked to make individual drawings of their environment, including the places they go around Kyaka II. Girls are then asked to color in red the places on their drawings where they sometimes or all the time do not feel safe. Girls present and discuss their drawings with the full group, which notes the many places described and the reasons girls at times feel unsafe in some of them. Girls are asked to discuss how these places could be made safer.

**Action to Address Girls Discussion –** Girls are asked as a group more about the kinds of activities they would like to participate in in Kyaka II. They are asked more about what kinds of programs they feel have benefited them, those that could benefit them and why. They are asked about what roles girls themselves would like to play in designing and implementing programs that address girls in the settlement.

## Appendix D: Figures

Figure 1. When you have a problem, whom do you talk to about it first? Percentages (by all)

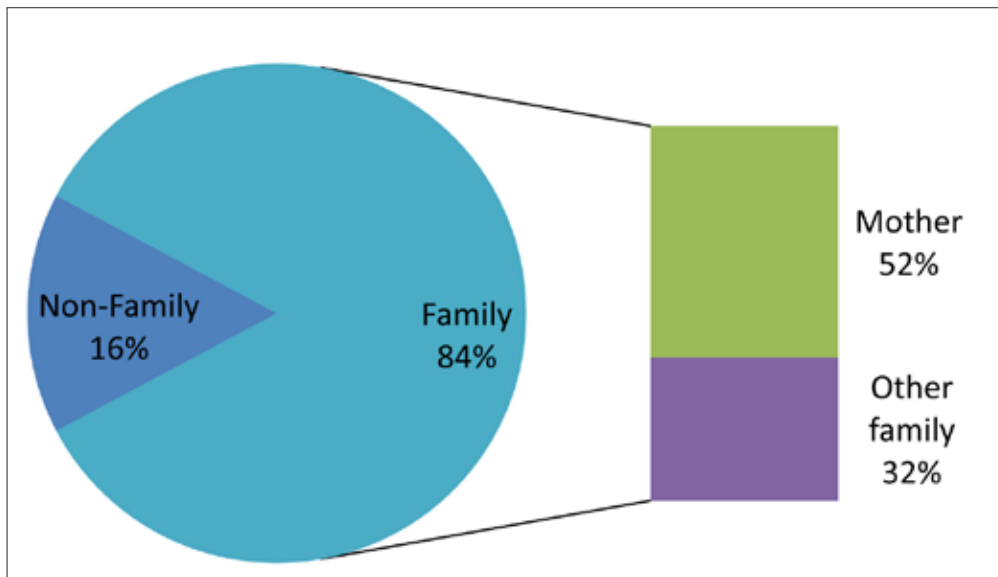


Figure 2a. Involvement of girls ages 10 to 16 in activities in Kyaka II, Percentages (by all)

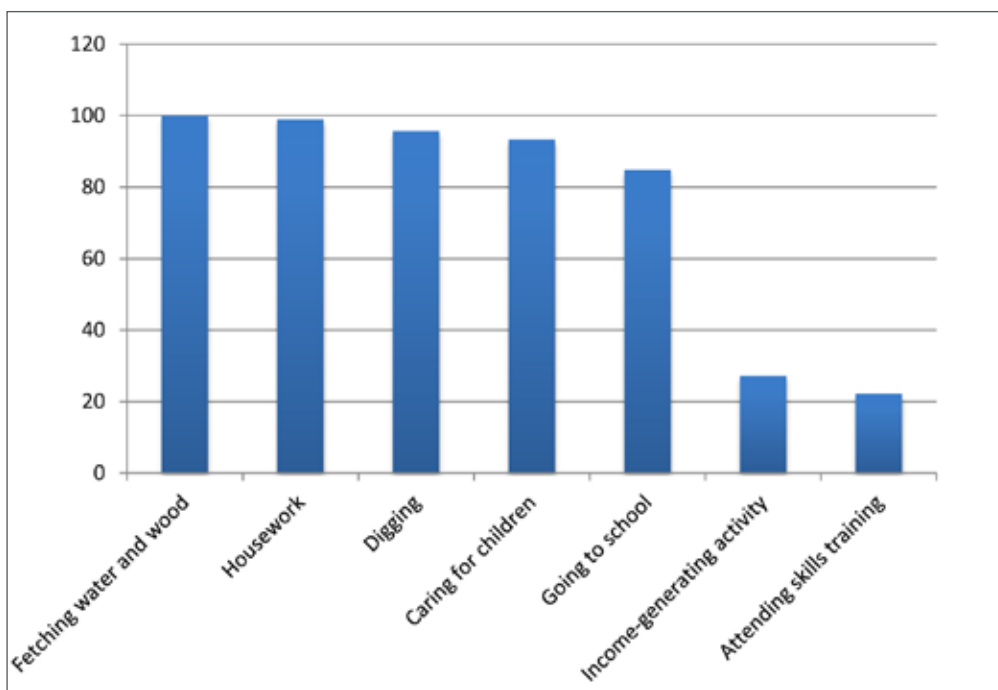


Figure 2b. Involvement of girls ages 10 to 16 in activities in Kyaka II, Percentages (by all)

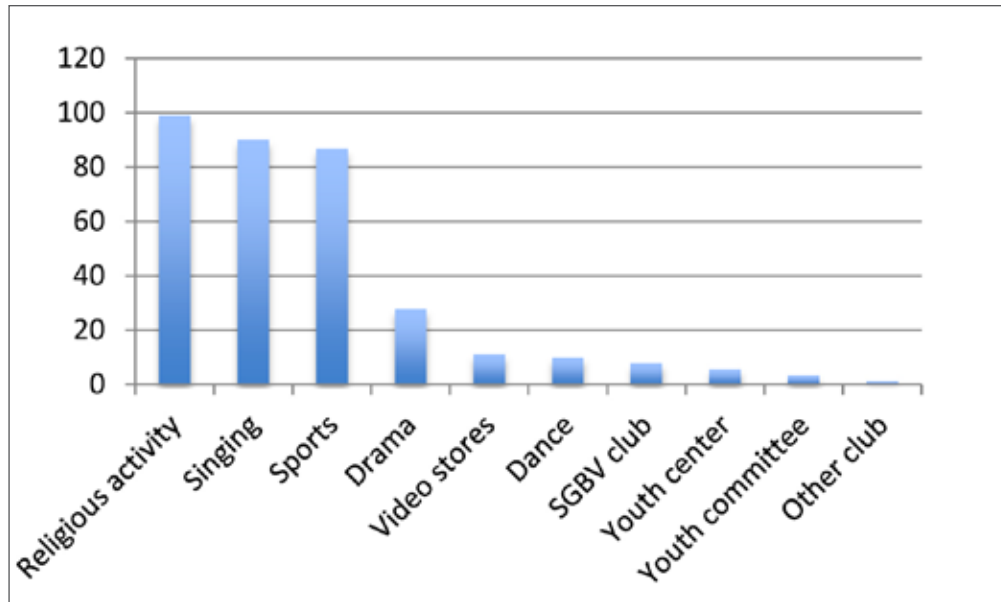
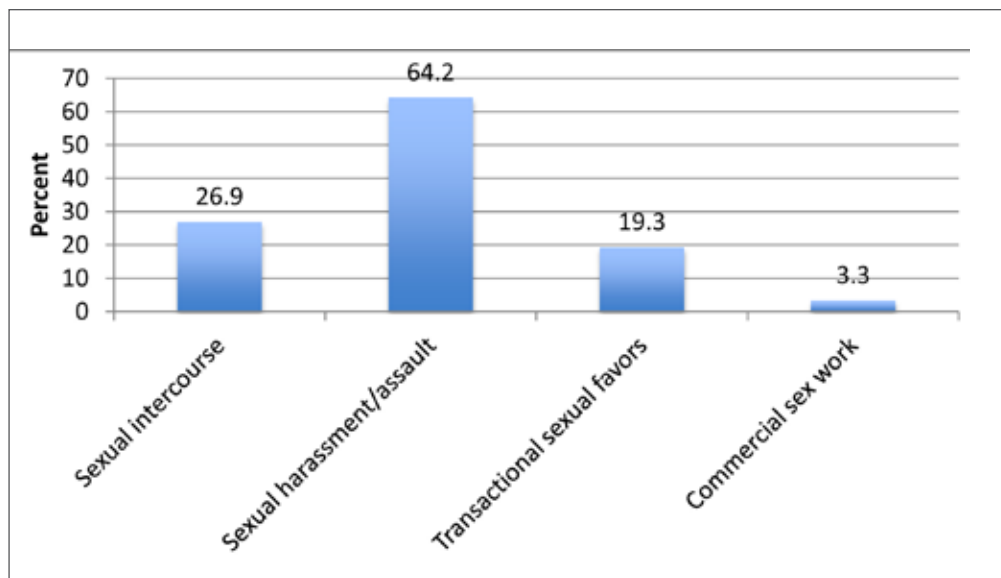


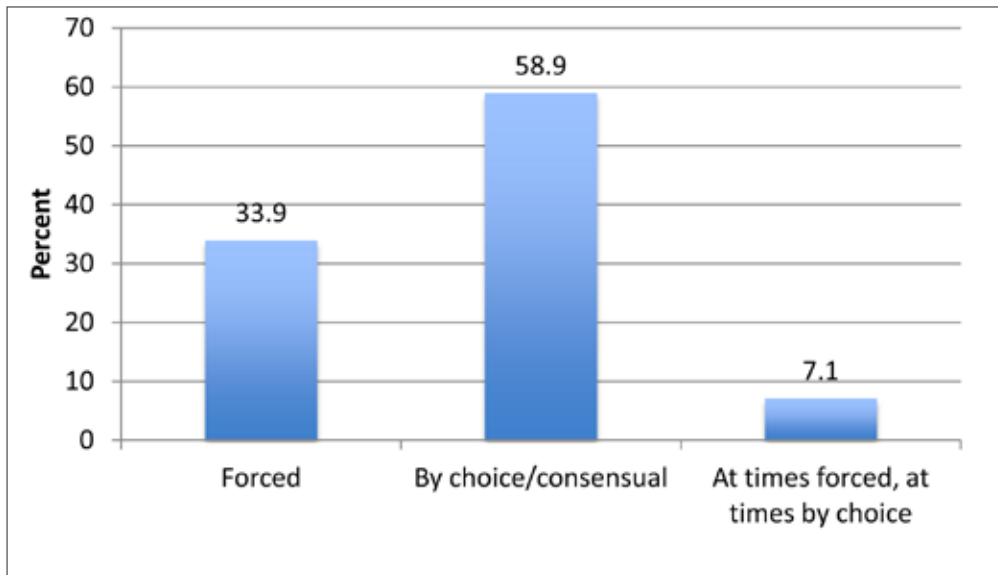
Figure 3. Sexual experiences of girls aged 10-16 in Kyaka II, percentages (by all)



Based on responses related to 212 refugee adolescent girls aged 10-16 in Kyaka II.

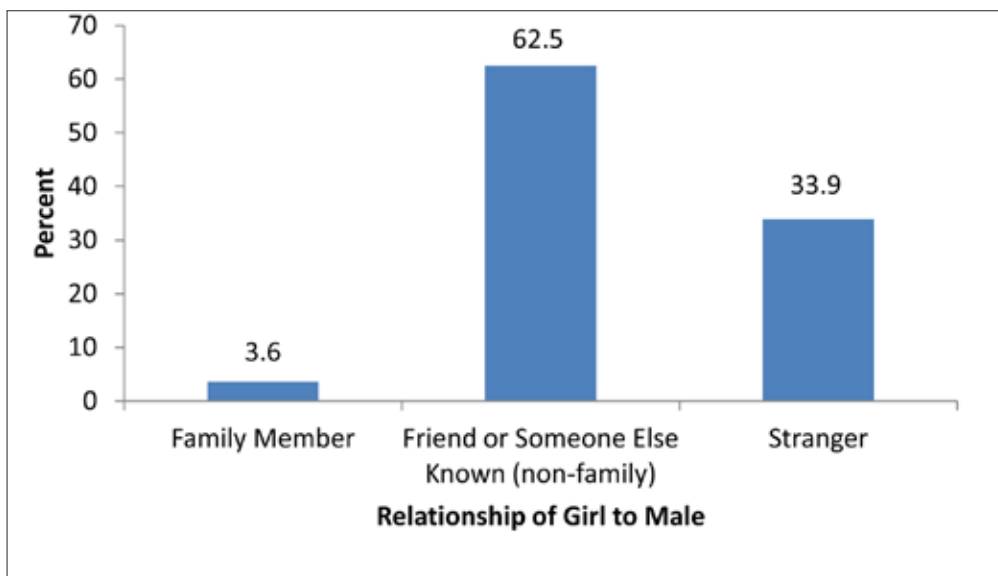


Figure 4. Reports of girls' aged 10-16 in Kyaka II on whether sexual intercourse was forced or consensual (by all)



Based on the experiences of 56 girls reported to have experienced sexual intercourse.

Figure 5. Relationship of girls aged 10-16 in Kyaka II with males with whom they have had sexual intercourse (by all)



Based on reports of sexual intercourse experienced by 56 adolescent girls aged 10-16 in Kyaka II.



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