



Rapid Household Economy Analysis,  
Bidibidi Refugee Settlement,  
Yumbe District, Uganda

*Household Economy Analysis (HEA) Assessment conducted by  
DanChurchAid-DCA and Save the Children,*

*February 2017*

**Report Prepared by:**

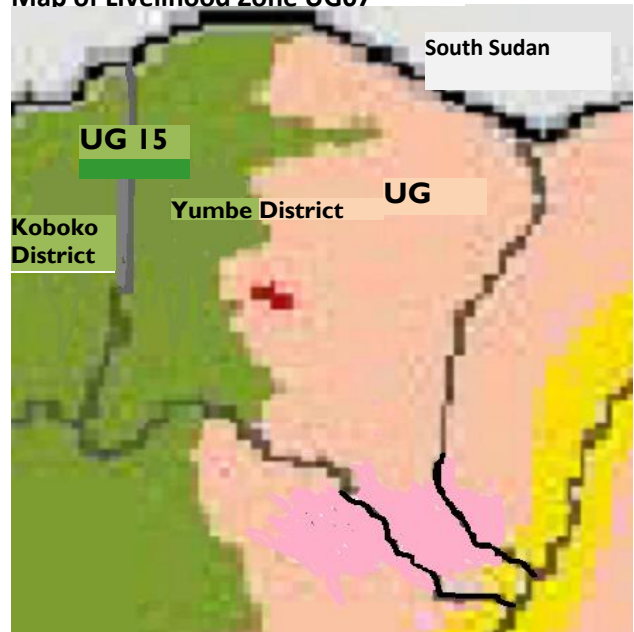
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**(With remote technical support from Jennifer Bush, Food Economy Group)**

## Introduction

Yumbe District (Bidibidi settlement) hosts about 272,206<sup>1</sup> refugees from South Sudan. An influx of refugees to Bidibidi settlement, Yumbe District, took place starting from August 2016 due to the increased conflict, scarcity of food, and subsequent financial instability caused by hyperinflation in South Sudan. Dan Church Aid (DCA) and Save the Children conducted a rapid Household Economy Analysis (HEA) to get a better understanding of the livelihood opportunities for the refugees. The assessment aims to inform appropriate livelihood interventions targeted at refugee communities. Note that the HEA findings are useful for the **next six months** only as the assessment was conducted at a time when refugees were becoming settled in their new place and therefore many changes might occur in the next few months. The assessment also focused only on 2 out of 5 refugee settlement zones where refugees had been settled for at least four months. The reference period used for data collection and analysis is only four months from October 2007 to January 2017. Various assessments had earlier been conducted focusing on the refugee community but HEA adds value by quantifying refugee access to food and income and by an analysis of household expenditures. HEA therefore determines level of humanitarian aid needed by refugees and identifies appropriate livelihoods interventions to enable refugees increase own production and thus reduce reliance on external aid.

Map of Livelihood Zone UG07



Bidibidi refugee settlement is situated across 5 Sub-Countries of Romogi, Kululu, Kochi, Odravu and Ariwa, all of which fall within Uganda Livelihood Zone 07 (orange geographical part) shown on map above. Most of the population in Bidibidi refugee settlement is female (53%) and children (68%)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, most households are female headed.

## Household Economy Analysis (HEA) Framework and Methodology

Household Economy Analysis (HEA) is a unique livelihoods-based analytical framework designed to provide a clear and accurate representation of the inside workings of household economies at different levels of a wealth continuum and in different parts of the world. This picture can be used for a wide range of purposes, including development planning, emergency response, early warning, monitoring & evaluation, poverty analysis and reduction, and policy analysis.

This assessment covered two refugee settlement zones (two villages per zone) within Bidibidi refugee settlement. The assessment team interviewed community leaders (10-15 leaders) in each of the 4 villages captured information on wealth breakdown, income sources, market prices, hazards and coping strategies, and short and long-term development priorities. Focused group interviews were conducted for 5-10 typical households representing each of the three wealth groups (poor, middle and better off<sup>3</sup>) in each of

<sup>1</sup>UNHCR Operational update, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

<sup>2</sup>UNHCR Operational Update, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2007

<sup>3</sup> Wealth breakdown by refugee community leaders in each of the 4 villages identified only three wealth groups – poor, very poor and better off. Wealth breakdown is relative (not in absolute terms) and doesn't necessarily mean that refugee communities are wealthier than the host community who have four wealth groups – very poor, poor, middle and better off.

the 4 villages. Wealth groups' interviews captured information mainly on sources of food, sources of income, expenditure patterns and coping strategies pursued by each wealth group.

For more information on the Household Economy Analysis framework and methodology, please see the following resources:

1. HEA Guide for Programme Planners and Policy Makers:

<http://foodeconomy.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/HEA-Guide-for-Programme-Policy-Makers.pdf>

2. HEA Practitioners' Guide:

<http://foodeconomy.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/The-Practitioners-Guide-to-HEA.pdf>

## **Livelihood Zone and Opportunities for Refugees**

The settlement falls within UG07 livelihood zone of Uganda, which is described in the HEA baseline profile for UG07 – Yumbe Host Community. Uganda government refugee policy<sup>4</sup> allows freedom of movement and right to work by refugees. Therefore, the livelihoods opportunities available for UG07 host community can also be accessed by the refugees. The opportunities include crop production, livestock rearing, trade, skilled and unskilled labor opportunities. Access to opportunities such as crop production will however be limited by access to land.

### **Refugees Access to Markets**

As was established by inter-agency Rapid Assessments for Markets in November 2007, the growing demand in the refugee settlement combined with cash based interventions has stimulated growth of markets within the refugee settlements. These are interlinked with main host community markets such as Yumbe town, Barakala, Tikijore, Okubani and Kochi. The good road network and means of transport allows refugee traders to access and sell goods from the main markets.

### **Seasonal Calendar and Opportunities available for refugees**

The seasonal calendar for UG 07 Livelihood Zone (detailed in the host community profile) presents opportunities for the refugee population As the calendar is similar to the equatorial region of South Sudan from where most of the refugees originate.

The refugees arrived during the main crop season in 2016, shortly before harvest in August-September 2016. Unfortunately, the refugees were not able to utilize the crop season as they were mostly engaged in constructing their shelters. However, some refugees did plant vegetables and sweet potatoes. Furthermore the utilization of seasonal rains for crop production has been limited by the current land acreage allocated (30mx30m) to refugees. There are however, plans by Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to further allocate 50mx50m plots per household for agricultural production. Negotiations regarding allocation of the refugees plots for crop production are being undertaken by the Yumbe District Local Government and the host community.

With these plans underway, opportunities for refugees own crop production will increase in the 2018 production year.

### **Refugees Wealth Breakdown**

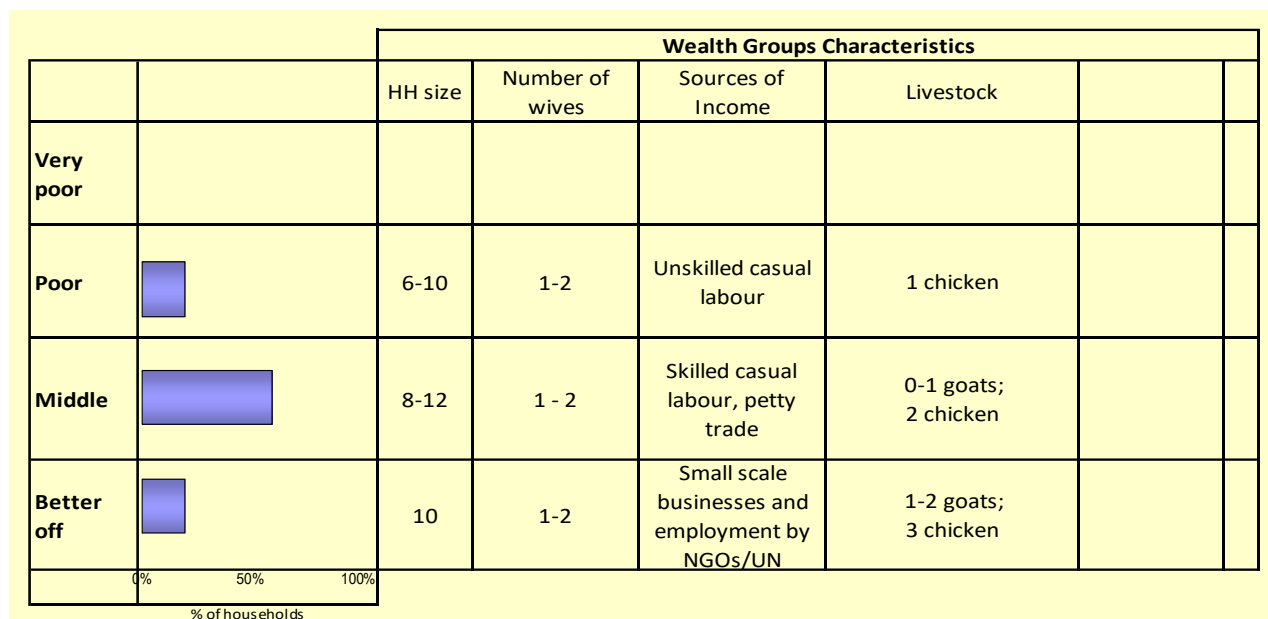
Leaders in four refugee villages undertook wealth groupings for their community and determined three main groups – poor, middle and better off, as per their knowledge of the community during the reference

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<sup>4</sup>Uganda Government 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugees Regulations.

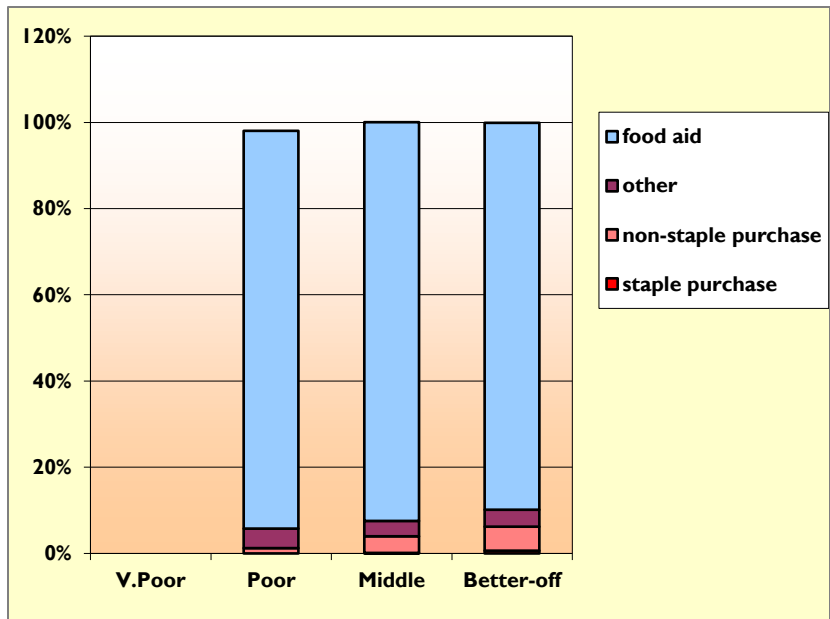
period from October 2016-January 2017. As such no 'very poor' households were identified. Wealth has been ranked relative to the community at Bidibidi settlement and does not refer to previous wealth status prior to displacement which is unknown to the community leaders at Bidibidi.

Despite being a refugee settlement, there were variations in household wealth status. The main determinants of wealth were assets such as goats, cattle and chicken, access to employment (such as with the UN or NGOs) and types of work undertaken (i.e. casual unskilled or skilled labor and trading activities). Below are the criteria used to arrive at three wealth groups in the four villages. Of the three, the middle group was proportionally the largest (an estimated 60% of refugee households):



### Sources of Food (October 20016 to January 2017)

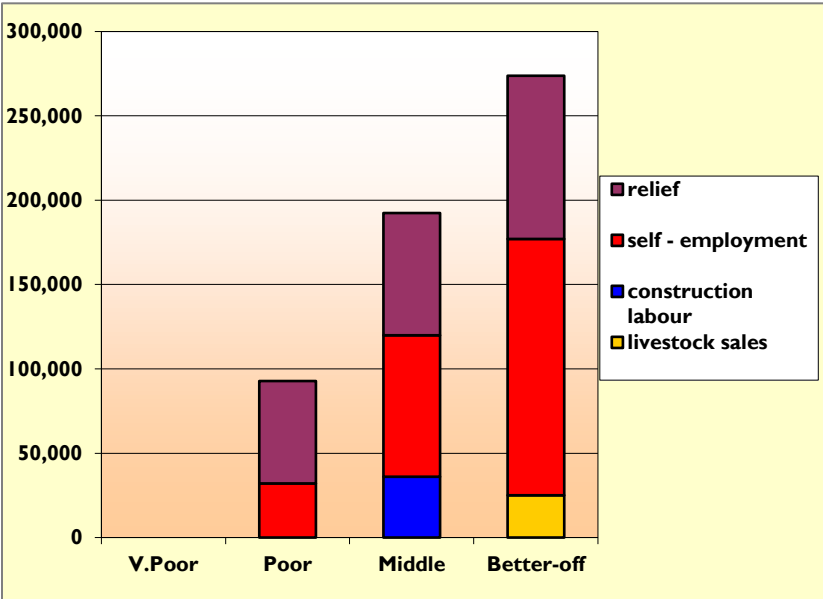
The graph below presents the sources of food for refugee households in different wealth groups for the months of October 2016 to January 2017. The main source of food is food aid (in blue) which consists of



maize, beans, cooking oil and salt. Other food (in purple) is corn soy blend (CSB) which is also part of food aid ration. Food aid therefore constitutes 94-97% of the staple food energy needs of households in all three wealth groups. Note in the graph how food purchases increase with wealth. Food purchased (1-6%) includes rice, groundnuts, sugar, meat, fish, cassava flour and vegetables. This pattern of access to food is reflective of the first four months in the settlement and might change with time, as refugees increase their income and hence purchasing power. Refugees are expected to

increase own crop production after the planned further allocation of 50mX50m land per household however the opportunity for planting in 2017 will be missed if the allocations are made after the planting period April-May.

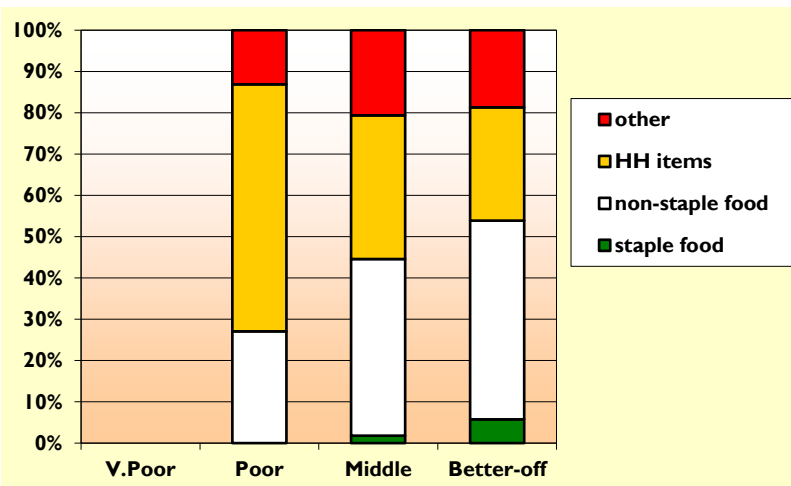
**Sources of Income (October 2016 to January 2017)**



The graph presents income sources (in Uganda Shillings - UGX) by wealth group for the refugee community for the period October 2016 to January 2017. Income from self-employment includes construction labor, sale of firewood and small-scale businesses. Poor households undertake casual labor such as mud smearing of tukuls as refugees move out of temporary tarpaulin structures, digging latrines, fetching water, collection and sale of firewood. Middle households engage in petty trade and skilled construction while the

better off undertake small- scale businesses. All the wealth groups undertake the sale of food aid for income. They mostly sell maize, pulses and CSB. Income from the sale of food aid increases with wealth and corresponds with increase in alternative sources of income. The better-off also earned some income from one off sale of goats.

**Expenditure Patterns (October 2016 to January 2017)**



Refugees used the income described above to purchase preferred staple and non-staple food (green/white) such as cassava, groundnuts and simsim, meat and vegetables. Food purchases both as a proportion of expenditure and in absolute amounts increases with each wealth group. Household items purchased (yellow) include tea leaves, salt, soap and grinding cost. Although as a proportion of total expenditure these costs decrease from poor to better off,

the absolute amounts spent on household items increases from poor to better off – for instance, the poor spend UGX55,550 per household while the better off spend UGX 75,140 each. Other items (red) include household expenditures on phone charging, transport and festivals. Services such as health and education are provided by humanitarian agencies.

### Gender Division of Labor

Gender analysis of who does what within a refugee household demonstrated that women and girls do more activities than men and boys during the day. Women and girls undertake household activities such as fetching water, cooking, collecting firewood, feeding children and washing clothes. They also contribute to self-employment activities such as brewing, petty trade and small-scale businesses. Men and boys are engaged in income generating activities such as construction labor and small-scale businesses. Men and boys from middle and better off wealth groups also take care of livestock – mainly goats.

### Recommendations

#### Humanitarian Support to Livelihoods Strategies for Refugee Community

Although most of their basic needs are provided by humanitarian agencies, refugees are eager to pursue livelihoods strategies to increase their self-reliance. Below are some of livelihoods initiatives suggested during refugee village leaders and wealth group interviews. However, further analysis is required on the feasibility of suggested livelihoods opportunities for refugees.

1. **Own crop production:** This requires support with suitable seeds and tools to enable refugees utilize the 50mX50m agricultural plots planned for allocation by Uganda Government. The allocation of land and provision of seeds and tools need to be hastened so that refugees prepare land and plant crops by April. Crop production will enable refugees increase and diversify food and increase income through sale of crops.
2. **Small-scale businesses:** Better-off refugees are running small scale shops/kiosks. However, some poor and middle wealth households experienced in trading activities intend to start small business activities but they are constrained by a lack of start-up funds. They have requested support with micro-credit, or support to strengthen existing group Savings and Loans associations to enable them to increase amounts of micro-credit available to members.

3. **Cash for work programs:** Refugees interviewed in the four villages consistently indicated that they are idle most of the time. They would like to make use of the time by participating in feasible cash for work programs in the settlement. Agencies need to explore opportunities for cash for work programs in the refugee settlement in coordination with UNDP who have stated their intent to provide CFW opportunities. .
4. **Vocational skills for youth:** Refugee youth (girls and boys) who are not engaged in education or paid work require relevant and appropriate vocational skills training to increase their employability. Skills areas for training need to be identified through labor market analysis.

#### **Recommendation for further analysis**

- I. Undertake a comprehensive HEA baseline profile for Bidibidi refugee community after 6 month to one year. By that time all refugees (as no new refugees are being settled) will have settled for one year and initiated certain livelihoods strategies. The assessment will then cover all the refugee settlement zones, and thus establish a clear understanding of the refugee household economy and inform appropriate interventions.