

**BOYS RIGHTS VIOLATION, PROTECTION ASSESSMENT,
MONITORING AND ANALYSIS REPORT
DECEMBER 2020**

MAIWUT COUNTY UPPER NILE STATE, SOUTH SUDAN
July 2020 - November 2020 FINDINGS



FUNDED BY SOUTH SUDAN HUMANITARIAN FUND (SSHF)

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Coalition for Humanity is a National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, build resilience of the vulnerable people, through programmes in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, Protection/GBV, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition through strategies like community capacity building, Social Behaviour Change Communication, market linkages, advocacy and governance to enhance contextualized innovative solutions for service delivery in Emergency Response and Sustainable development in South Sudan. Coalition for Humanity is currently implementing a protection project funded by South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF). The project seeks to assess the general protection concerns in Upper Nile Maiwut County. A meeting was held with boys between the age of 12 and 17 years, the discussion sort to assess any protection concerns. The boys were asked questions about child recruitment and abduction, child labour, access to education, forced marriage and domestic violence. This report consolidates findings from 60 boys' participants of schooling age randomly sampled across different Payams in Maiwut County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan. A total of 5 focus group discussions were held, and the findings consolidated.

The findings of this report are necessary in raising awareness about challenges boys are facing, coming up with redress mechanisms and various interventions. This report is important for humanitarian workers, Protection and GBV cluster, WASH cluster, NFI clusters, South Sudan government, ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and global GBV call to action, the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Apart from the cattle raiding conflicts between Maiwut and Jekow that took place in June 2020, there were no major conflict. During the cattle raiding conflicts, the boys were forced to arm themselves in order to protect their communities against attacks. The situation in Maiwut county was calm as at November 2020. There are no major security concerns affecting Boys in Maiwut county. The boys in Maiwut are involved in labour, employed by local traders to sell items in the market. Boys are also sent by parents to sell cattle in the market. The involvement into business at a young age exposes boy to money and has been linked with the increase in the rate of drug abuse. Most boys are not able to advance academically because the parents can not afford to take them to school. Boys are victims of forced marriages, young boys who are first born, or only son are forced to marry at an early age so that they don't pass on without an offspring.

Recommendations

1. The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
2. There is need for policies and law enhancement to make sure traders don't employ children under the age of 18 years.
3. Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
4. There is need for psychosocial support to encourage parents to have an income generating activity to support family so that they can allow boys to go to school.

1.0 FINDINGS

1.1 General Safety and Child Abduction

In June, 2020 there was increased insecurity which was as a result of conflict that erupted between the community in Maiwut and Jekow. Due to cases of revenge killings, the situation was not safe for the boys and going to school was impossible. Abduction was not common in South Sudan though cases had been reported in Pibor, Jekow in Ethiopia. The boys were therefore fearing that there were possibilities that they would come for them. The boys joined the army during conflicts to protect the community though the situation was calm and they had not been taken into the army by force. The Boys were volunteering to join the army and other militia groups at the expense of education although in June 2020, most of them were forced into joining the army to prevent their community from attacks

1.2 Child Labour

A lot of boys engaged themselves in income generating activities (IGAs) especially those who were first born in their families. These responsibilities had negative impacts to the boys including dropping out of school, engaging in abuse of drugs and sometimes being victims of crimes. Instead of schooling, some had been hired by local traders. The boys also helped their parents in taking the goats and cows for grazing. Most of the boys would drop out of schools due to lack of support that has lower their ability prioritise and concentrate on education.

1.3 Access to Education

The boys knew the need to be educated. Parents, especially fathers were responsible for the education of their children, and for those who did not have fathers, their mothers were responsible. Most boys did not have access to education due to lack of resources. As a result, most of them lost hope because their parents were not able to afford education outside the country. This is because the system of education was still very poor in the county and most schools would barely offer education up to primary five and six. Apart from most of them going to school, a few boys had not gone to school and some had just dropped out at some point. Those from poor families lacked support from their parents in terms of meeting their basic needs. Boys who lacked education resorted to crimes while others engaged in income generating activities.

1.4 Forced Marriage

Forced or child marriages were common in the community. Fathers and mothers made decisions on behalf of their children to get married and they usually arrange such marriages without consulting their children because they always thought they had the best choices for them. Most boys found themselves in such situations and because they respected their parents, they had no other options other than abiding by it. Recently, a boy had brought home a girl whom he loved for marriage. The parents told him that they had arranged a different option of a girl whom they liked to be his wife. According to the boys, the young man ended up marrying two wives that is one for himself and the other one for the parents. In such situations, uncles intervene to bring harmony though most of the time parent's decision is respected. The boys however believed that some of these issues can stop only if parents are sensitized on the importance of boy and girl child's education so that they don't push them into marrying the boys. Some boys who had not been comfortable with the marriages escaped from their homes and sort refuge from their friends, aunties and uncles.

1.5 Conclusions

Cattle raiding and intercommunal conflict is one of the main reasons to why boys arm themselves to protect their community. Lack of education is one of the major protection concerns facing both boys and girls in Maiwut county.

1.6 Recommendations

1. The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
2. There is need for policies and law enhancement to make sure traders don't employ children under the age of 18 years.
3. Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
4. There is need for psychosocial support to encourage parents to have an income generating activity to support family so that they can allow boys to go to school.

ANNEX MONTHLY BOYS FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Boys FGD July



Maiwut County
protection monitoring Report, Boys FGD

Date: 20th July, 2020

Payam: Jekow

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 20th July, 2020 in Jeckow Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 Boys. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Maiwut County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

General security was normal and safety concerns including walking to school were not reported. The only challenge was that the boys crossed a river to the other side of Ethiopia for schooling which was not safe to children. Risks related to drowning and attack from animals were mentioned. The Boys were not volunteering to join the army and other militia groups at the expense of education though in June, 2020 most of them were forced into joining the army to prevent their community from attacks.

Child Labour

Child labour was the order of the day and many small boys were running small businesses in the local market in Jekow. Instead of schooling, some had been hired by local traders. The boys also helped their parents in taking the goats and cows for grazing. There were consequences as a result of early engagement of boys in working for money. It came out that they would get used to having money and lacking at some point would push them to engage in criminal activities such as stealing and abusing drugs. Most of this group were associated with raping of girls and doing other forms of sexual harassment and assault to girls and women in the community.

Access to education

The boys said that educated children had a brighter future compared to those who were not educated because they would be employed and support their parents. It was therefore the responsibility of parents to ensure that children were taken to school. They however mentioned that children who came from rich families had more advantage over those from poor families because the parents were able to afford to provide for their education needs in schools outside the country. Jekow had no secondary schools and colleges. Hence those whose parents were poor ended up dropping out of school because the parents would not sustain them in the education system.

Forced marriage

Early child marriages were said to be traditional practices that were often arranged by parents even without the knowledge/consent of the children. Fathers always made the plans concerning marriage and never consulted any other person in the family including the child that was to be married off. It was however reported that some boys who had not been comfortable with the marriages escaped from their homes and sort refuge from somewhere else e.g. at friends, aunties or uncles' places.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence was common in families. Boys' mothers would be fought without any reason. Sometimes failure to prepare the meals early would trigger the fighting. According to the boys, this was disgusting and had contributed to children dropping out of school and poor performance by those who continued with their studies. Disputes amongst boys and parents were frequently settled by either maternal or paternal uncles. It was however recommended that creating awareness on peaceful coexistence between parents and children would be key as well as involving the local authority where children would be treated unfairly

Conclusions and recommendations:

1. There is need for community awareness on child labor through sensitization of parents and traders on the effects of child labour and importance of education
2. There would be need to raise awareness on the effects of child or forced marriages by targeting parents and community elders in order to change their mind set on the outdated cultural practice.

Findings from Boys August



Maiwut County
protection monitoring Report, Boys FGD

Date: 27th August, 2020

Payam: Pagak

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted in Pagak on 27th August, 2020 from 10.00am with twelve boys attending the meeting. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Maiwut County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

There were no safety concerns for the boys at the time of the focus group discussion. However, it was reported that in June, 2020 there was increased insecurity which was as a result of conflict that erupted between the community in Maiwut and Jekow. Due to cases of revenge killings, the situation was not safe for the boys and going to school was impossible. Floods had also affected the movements including going to classrooms which were submerged in water. Abduction was not common in South Sudan though cases had been reported in Pibor, Jekow in Ethiopia. The boys were therefore fearing that there were possibilities that they would come for them. The boys joined the army during conflicts to protect the community though the situation was calm and they had not been taken into the army.

Child Labour

It was said that a lot of boys in the community were engaged in income generating activities (IGAs). The boys said they had no option other than support the family because most of their fathers would just get drunk all the time and never provide for the family.

This type of responsibility of working for money to support the family had negative consequences because a lot of boys would drop out of school due to lack of concentration on education matters. This would also push them into cattle raiding in order to make ends meet.

Access to education

Education makes a boy become a responsible man and helps his/her community and parents, for example, they said that when you are educated, you can work anywhere in the world and you can support your parents. Parents, especially fathers were responsible for the education of their children, and for those who did not have fathers, their mothers were responsible to take them to school. Most boys did not have access to education due to lack of resources. As a result, most of them lost hope because their parents were not able to afford education outside the country. This is because the system of education was still very poor in the county and most schools would barely offer education up to primary five and six only

Forced marriage

According to the boys, forced marriage was common in their community and this affected both boys and girls. To them, the best age for one to get married was after school completion and one was employed because at that age a man would be in position to sustain his family and parents. It was also clear that mothers had a lot of force into getting boys married especially when the boy was the first born. A son marrying would relieve a mother from certain duties that would be taken up by a daughter in law. They also said that pushing a son into marriage was a way to fast-track acquisition of resources (cows) into the family including paying some to the uncles. Recently, a boy had brought home a girl whom he loved for marriage. The parents told him that they had arranged a different option of a girl whom they liked to be his wife. According to the boys, the young man ended up marrying two wives that is one for himself and the other one for the parents. In such situations, uncles intervene to bring harmony though most of the time parent's decision is respected. The boys however believed that some of these issues can stop only if parents will be sensitized on the importance of a girl's education so that they don't push them into marrying the boys. They also recommended on the need to come up with community policies that would ensure education is a must

Domestic violence

In the domestic set up, "small mistakes" resulted into family wrangles. For example, mothers would be beaten up by fathers when they failed to prepare food in good time. This was reported to be common with drinking fathers. The flip side of this is that children became psychologically affected. The boys therefore recommended for proper channels where certain issues that affect them at family level could be reported and attended to.

Summary of findings

1. Child labour is still common in the local community and children as young as 13 years old are engaged by traders in the expense of schooling
2. Forced child marriage is practiced and children have got no voice over their parents
3. Domestic violence happens though it affected children psychologically. Culture supports the violence between husbands and wives and there is nothing the local authority can do

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Parents need more sensitization on the rights of children and their roles in ensuring a better future for the children
2. The local authority needs to analyse the situation and put policies in place that will protect children from domestic abuse
3. More protection centres need to be developed to enable children freely report protection issues that affect them

Findings from Boys September



Maiwut County
protection monitoring Report, Boys FGD

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 24th September, 2020 in Jekow Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 Boys (5 hosts and 7 IDPs). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Maiwut County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The general security was said to be normal. Safety concerns including walking to school were not reported. The only challenge was that the boys crossed a river to the other side of Ethiopia for schooling which was not safe to them. Risks related to drowning and attack from animals were mentioned. The Boys were not volunteering to join the army and other militia groups at the expense of education though in June, 2020 most of them were forced into joining the army to prevent their community from attacks

Child Labour

Boys were running small businesses in the local market in Jekow. Instead of schooling, some had been hired by local traders. The boys also helped their parents in taking the goats and cows for grazing. There were consequences as a result of early engagement of boys in working for money. It came out that they would get used to having money and lacking at some point would push them to engage in criminal activities such as stealing and abusing drugs

Access to education

The boys knew that education made people responsible in the society. They also added and said that educated children had a brighter future compared to those who were not educated because they would be employed and support their parents financially. It was therefore the responsibility of parents to take their children to school. They however mentioned that children who came from rich families had more advantage because the parents were able to afford to provide for their education needs in schools outside the country. Jekow had no secondary schools and colleges. Hence those whose parents were poor ended up dropping out of school because the parents would not sustain them in the education system.

Other challenges that also hindered boys from accessing education were; intentional lack of support from parents to provide essential basic needs such as school uniforms. These challenges were said to have increased the rate of school drop outs who ended up involving themselves in criminal activities in the society. Some boys would join the army to earn income.

Forced marriage

Early or child marriage was said to be a traditional practice. The marriages were often arranged by parents even without the knowledge/consent of the children. Fathers always made the plans concerning marriage and never consulted any other person in the family. It was however reported that some boys who had not been comfortable with the marriages escaped from their homes and sort refuge from their friends, aunties and uncles.

Parents should however be made aware about the importance of schooling for their children. For example, they would be told that educated children are able to get jobs and support them financially.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence was common in families. Boys' mothers would be fought without any reason. Sometimes failure to prepare the meals early would trigger the fighting. According to the boys, this was disgusting and had contributed to dropping out of school and poor performance.

Disputes amongst boys and parents were however frequently settled by either maternal or paternal uncles. It was however recommended that creating awareness on peaceful coexistence between parents and children would be key as well as involving the local authority where children would be treated unfairly

Conclusions and recommendations:

1. There is need for community awareness on child labour through sensitization of parents and traders on the effects of child labour and importance of education
2. There would be need to raise awareness on the effects of child or forced marriages by targeting parents and community elders in order to change their mind set on the outdated cultural practice.

Findings from Boys October



Maiwut County
protection monitoring Report, Boys FGD

Date: 27th October, 2020

Payam: Jekow

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 27th October, 2020 with twelve boys attending the meeting. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Maiwut County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The security situation was not bad despite the conflict that had been experienced between Jekow and Maiwut communities. The boys had only one challenge which was to cross the river to the other side of Ethiopia where they attended school. Cases of abduction or forcing boys into the army had not been reported.

Child Labour

A lot of boys engaged themselves in income generating activities (IGAs) especially those who were first born in their families. These responsibilities had negative impacts to the boys including dropping out of school, engaging in alcoholism and other drugs and sometimes being victims of crimes.

Access to education

Boys understood that education made people become knowledgeable, intelligent and respectable in the community. It was also a source of employment and those who worked offered financial support to their parents. According to them, parents were responsible of taking their children to school. Apart from most of them going to school, a few boys had not and some had just dropped out at some point. Those from poor families lacked support from their parents in terms of meeting certain basic needs. Boys who lacked education resorted to crimes while others engaged in income generating activities.

Forced marriage

Forced or child marriages were a common practice in the community and fathers and mothers made decisions for their children to get married and they usually arranged such marriages without consulting their children because they always thought they had the best choices for them. Most boys found themselves in such situations and because they respected their parents, they had no other options other than abiding by it. Parents of the boys however need thorough sensitization on the existence of child rights and the importance of education to their children

Domestic violence

Parents fight due to; family misunderstanding, drunkenness, failure of a mother to carry out her duties as instructed by a father and failure of a father to provide food and other basic needs for the family. These constant conflicts between parents make the children unhappy and sometimes influence them to move out and settle elsewhere in unknown places. Disputes between boys and their parents are often settled by either the paternal or maternal uncles or their grandmothers from both sides. They recommended that it would be good for the boys to frequently receive counselling from their elderly community members, paternal uncles or maternal uncles.

Summary of findings

1. Child protection: Children are forced into marriage by their parents at an early age. They are also engaged in business by their parents and local traders instead of schooling
2. Access to education: lack of resources prevents some children from accessing education
3. Domestic violence: Wives mistreatment exists in Jekow Payam and it is an acceptable cultural practice because no one takes it seriously including the local authority.

Conclusions and recommendations:

1. There is need to advocate for the rights of children to education by discouraging all forms of child labour
2. There is need to create awareness on the effects of child or forced marriages and how they infringe on the rights of children. The sensitization would target parents and community members in order to change their cultural perception about forced /early marriage for young children against their will.
3. There is need to raise awareness on the effects of domestic violence to children by targeting men who mistreat and beat their wives

Findings from Boys November



Maiwut County
protection monitoring Report, Boys FGD

Date: 17th November, 2020

Payam: Jekow

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 17th December, 2020 with twelve boys attending the meeting. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Maiwut County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The situation in Jekow was said to be calm and most families were finalizing with land preparations in readiness for the dry season planting. Protection concerns were however mentioned which included; domestic violence, rape and child labour. According to the boys, there were no safety concerns for boys on their way to school especially in the schools within Jekow. However, cases of abduction which involved 4 children were reported on 23rd November, 2020 in Kumedur area in the outskirts of Jekow. Boys also feared for their lives due to the conflicts that had been experienced. It was reported that some 2 children had also been kidnapped sometimes back by the enemies. Young boys were said to have joined child army in January 2020 to fight on behalf of the community.

Child Labour

The boys said a lot of them engaged in income generating activities at the expense of schooling due to lack of resources to further their studies. This habit puts them in a situation where they can't stay without money and hence they end up involving themselves in drug abuse as well as crime.

Access to education

Education was essential to the boys and they knew that without it there would be no development in the community. They would as well not be able to provide for themselves or their families. According to the boys, parents were responsible for their education and the final decision makers concerning their education were their fathers. However, most of the boys lacked basic education due to limited resources as well as poor quality of education in the area. Other barriers were; intentional lack of support from parents, peer pressure from drug addicts and community conflicts which was said to shift their concentration and interest from education. Due to poor levels of education, the boys said most of them were not able to get employment within their areas due to lack of capacity despite the availability of job opportunities.

Forced marriage

Early marriages were as a result of cultural norms according to the boys. However, according to them, the most appropriate age for marriage would be 25 years of age and above because a man would be independent and able to support his family. They said that for early marriages, parents usually made the decisions including whom they were supposed to marry and all the arrangements would be made without their knowledge and/or consulting them. When forced to marry, some boys resort to committing suicide while others join the army. They said that the positive impact of early marriage was the independence one acquired in making their own decisions. However, the negative part was that some boys would be too young even to support their own families with basic needs. They said they had nobody to talk to concerning the early marriage frustrations because culturally it was acceptable and all issues were handled within the family set-up. They however believed that boys who would be willing to continue with their education instead of marrying should be supported fully with the necessary basic needs to realize their dreams.

Domestic violence

Domestic fighting was common according to the boys. The scene of events was however not encouraging at all as per the boys. Fighting of parents affected them mentally and psychologically. They said poverty contributed to the conflicts at home as well as too much consumption of alcohol. Such cases were said to be resolved by elders and other relatives through a family meeting. They however recommended on the need for parents to be enlightened on children rights.

Summary of findings

1. Child protection: Children are forced into marriage by their parents at an early age. They are also engaged in business by their parents and local traders instead of schooling
2. Access to education: lack of resources prevents some children from accessing education
3. Domestic violence: Wives mistreatment exists in Jekow Payam and it is an acceptable cultural practice because no one takes it seriously including the local authority.

Conclusions and recommendations:

1. There is need to advocate for the rights of children to education by discouraging all forms of child labour
There is need to create awareness on the effects of child or forced marriages and how they infringe on the rights
2. of children. The sensitization would target parents and community members in order to change their cultural perception about forced /early marriage for young children against their will.
3. There is need to raise awareness on the effects of domestic violence to children by targeting men who mistreat and beat their wives



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