



PROTECTION ASSESSMENT, RIGHT VIOLATION MONITORING AND ANALYSIS END OF YEAR REPORT 2020

LONGECHUK COUNTY, UPPER NILE STATE, SOUTH SUDAN

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, built 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 Behavior 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 was engaged by South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) to implement protection project from June 2020 to May 2021. The projects objective was to assess the general protection concerns in Upper Nile Longechuk County. As part of protection monitoring and risk analysis, Coalition for Humanity conducted 6 FGDs every month. The FGDs targeted Women, girls, boys, men, teachers and local authority. The main objective of the FGDs was to assess the protection concerns in the community, and find a redress mechanism on how the concerns and the risks can be minimized. A total of 60 focus group discussions were held between July 2020 and November 2020. A total of 720 people of different gender and age groups participated.

The findings of the FGDs are documented in this report. This report has 8 sections. The first section outlines women protection concerns, the second section outlines girl's protection concerns, the 3rd section outlines the boy's protection concerns. The fourth section outlines the role of men in protection, the 5th section outlines the role of teachers in child protection while the 6th section outlines the role of local authority and community leaders in protection and community risk analysis. The 7th section outlines conclusions and recommendations while the 8th section is a set of annexes for individual FGD reports per Payam per group of participants.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Longechuk County is calm apart from a few incidences of cattle rustling that cause community conflicts. The county has a serious water challenge, this has led to increased rate of diarrheal diseases. Women too walk long distances to access water at a one borehole in an entire Payam. Women queue for long hours and even fight at the water point due to scarcity of water. Most households practice open defecation.

There is a serious shortage of schools, children walk long distances to schools, and girls are raped along the way. The current schools don't go beyond primary 6. The parents are expected to take children to Ethiopia, of which they don't have the resources to do so. The current schools do not have enough classrooms, children learn under trees, and cannot learn during rainy season.

The rate of Gender Based Violence is high, this is acceptable within the culture, not even the local authority can interfere with family matters. Wife beating is acceptable, girls are forced to get married at a young age. The punishment for rape is two cows, the local authority takes one cow to preside over the case. This has encouraged GBV.

Customary laws are gender biased, they do not allow unmarried women to own land, housing or property. The fear is that women owning land and property can be problematic and become prostitutes.

Based on protection concerns raised and findings from the assessment and monitoring. Coalition for Humanity recommends further interventions focusing on the following areas.

1. There is need to review the outdated traditional/ customary laws that are gender biased.
2. There is need for a WASH project focusing on drilling of boreholes, water treatment and construction of latrines
3. There is need for an education project focusing on construction of classrooms, provision of scholastic materials and school feeding program
4. There is need for an integrated protection/ GBV project with case management of rape.
5. There is need for a food security and livelihood project promoting household's cultivation of crops

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

1.1 Women Protection Concerns

The women in Longechuk County are facing various challenges. Gender Based Violence (GBV) is rampant in this county. Women are suffering from intimate partner violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). After communal violence and cattle raiding, women are also abused by husbands' enemies as a way of revenge. There are safety concerns during distribution of food and Non-Food Items, Men bully women on the queues, some hide in the bush and snatch women the items. Women are raped on their way to fetch Food and Non-Food Items (NFIs) from distribution points. They also face the risk of sexual assault when going to fetch firewood, or to fetch Water. There is a serious water scarcity, with one borehole serving an entire Payam, women fight at the water point.

Culturally, men feel happy beating their wives, it's a sign that there is an authority in the home, some women believe the fight is also a sign of love. The women are helpless when it comes to decision making, they are not allowed to make decisions about child education, they don't decide on the early forced marriages, only the fathers, uncles make marriage arrangements. Women are not allowed to make decisions or comments in public meetings, this is a restriction by the husbands. Women are only given minor roles in the community, this role comes with no incentive, senior leadership roles that have incentives are reserved for men. Women are not allowed to own land and property. Only widows who have an elder sons can inherit land, housing and property. If a widow has no elder son, property is inherited by brother in-laws.

The women in Longechuk are suffering due to lack of access to basic needs like water, sanitation, and healthcare. Women are also suffering from Gender Based Violence (GBV). There are no proper redress mechanisms, no health facilities to handle GBV, no police stations to handle such cases. Women fear speaking out on issues of abuse because the leaders favour men in decision making. GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The community leaders, local authority have a major role to play in ending GBV.

Recommendations

- 1** The next project should be integrated, Protection, GBV and Case Management of Rape (CMR)
- 2** Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
- 3** Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men, community leaders and local authority on human rights.
- 4** Initiate a policy that makes it compulsory for gender balance in hiring and leadership positions by percentage at the local levels.
- 5** Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
- 6** Initiate a policy that protects widows who do not have an elder son.

1.1.1 General Security

The women in Mathiang, Jangok and Werweng Payam do not feel safe especially when travelling from one area to another. They face harassment and sexual abuse on their way to fetching water and collecting fire wood. There are many rape cases in this community. During distribution of Food and Non-Food Items (F&NFIs), men harass women. Men deny women taking their share at the right time. Sometimes when women line-up to receive food and NFIs, men don't queue, when the women complain they are beaten and branded disrespectful. Some men hide somewhere along the road waiting for women coming from distribution sites to snatch all the things that the women received especially NFIs. On the contrary, the women do not report cases of sexual assault because they have nowhere to report. They do not share these cases with anybody for fear of their secrets being exposed, which will be shameful to them and may lead to them committing suicide.

Due to inadequate water, frequent conflicts have been reported at the water point. Warweng Payam has got one borehole at Mockley Boma that is shared by the rest of the Payams. As a result, congestions are witnessed daily. One borehole served more than 300 households. Women participants requested Coalition for Humanity to provide them with dignity kits, blankets, cooking utensils, water jerry cans for storing enough water and soaps. The women in Mathiang do not feel safe while walking to fetch water especially when one has to walk alone, because one is faced with the problems of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. This type of abuse is perpetuated by alcoholic men, traders and youth.

1.1.2 Gender Based Violence

Physical and sexual violence was everywhere including when they travelled to Maiwut county. Due to the political difference, women would mostly be allowed to pass after sexual demands from the guards at the border. Women also, experience physical & sexual violence from their husband's enemies. Women said that men felt happy when they beat them. Culturally, this was a way they showed that there was a man in the home. Women said the men did not treat them like human beings. They would work the whole day but they would still be beaten up. The women also said they would be too exhausted other times to have sex but the husbands would still demand for sex. "They can't even give us time to breastfeed our young children". Failure to honour to the demands often resulted into conflicts. Even during sickness, the women said their husbands failed to take initiatives in finding them medication or taking them to hospital. They said they were not complaining about it because culturally, it was a sign of love. Some women would even intentionally cause problems so as to be beaten up. The community believed men had rights over their wives. In fact, parents would often warn their daughters never to report their husbands anywhere about conflicts inside the house. If reported, the elders settle the cases though in an unfair manner. When they find out that the problem was the man, they tend to encourage the family to stay peacefully but when it is the woman, she is thoroughly beaten. The woman in fact risks being divorced.

After communal violence or cattle raising, their husband's enemies' revenge by raping the wives or their children. Women get assistance from the police at a fee but generally police structures and rule of law are very weak. There was also a lot of problems especially from men who were addicted to alcohol and drugs. They would ask for sexual relationship including when they were not willing for it and any resistance would result into fighting at night. The women do not feel valued respected in their families. The men do not support the women. The men only idle waiting to find any mistake by women so that they beat them. Culturally, men in this community do not accept their mistakes. This means that if they do not have money, they are not offered any assistance. The fear to take any actions against abuse is because there is no support and no confidentiality, people start blaming it on the woman instead of the perpetrator.

1.1.3 Role of Women in Leadership and Decision Making

Women are not involved in major leadership positions especially like Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS), local authorities etc. Local authorities involved women in small leadership positions in the community such as Women League or Associations. Positions such as Payam leader or Payam administrator are reserved for men, even if the men are not educated. If they offer a woman a good position, she will just be volunteering without any incentive. Women were also not allowed to talk in public meetings and give suggestions. According to their culture, women have no rights to decide and its only their husbands who make decisions concerning them. Only the father of the child is the initiator and final decision maker concerning marriage in the family. Husbands and brother in-laws were the final decision makers concerning marriage issues and women had no rights to talk about it or give opinions. They therefore had no role to play in stopping early child marriage. Women do not play any role in forcing children into marriage because the men are the sole decision makers. Women insisted that there is absolutely nothing that they can do to stop child marriages, Women fear taking action because the extended family members will beat and excommunicate her. Despite most women having not been educated, they believed they had good ideas that would help the community if they shared in public gatherings. However, this was not possible because they would never be allowed by their husbands to speak in any public gathering or in front of people. (Warweng doesn't have women leader). It was reiterated that the community had had a belief since time immemorial that women could not lead

1.1.4 Housing Land and Property

Land is only owned by men. The family does not allow women to take the ownership of property, land and house. If a woman loses her husband, and doesn't have an elder son, control of property and land will be taken by the husband's brother immediately. The culture and laws do not support women to own properties. It only gives widows the right to own property, land and house if the widow has an elder son. If the widow has no elder son, the brother in-laws will inherit everything from the deceased brother.

1.1.5 Redress Mechanisms

In case of a problem facing women, there is no redress mechanisms. People were however not reporting because it was shameful especially when it happened to girls. Most girls would not get married because of the rape encounter so most families would prefer keeping it silent. Women do not talk to anyone about the problems they experience. They may talk to their parents or friends but all are helpless. When assaulted, women talk to fellow women about it, but they don't get the support that they need. Other women decide to commit suicide by hanging themselves in the bush. Relief international has a centre in the area and that is the only facility in Mathiang that assist women who have been assaulted. However, it does not handle cases related to rape. Instead, they refer these cases to Maban County which would require a woman to walk for four days before arriving there. The facilities are not easy to reach since they are located very far. The community lacks facilities that offer counselling psychosocial support or in-kind assistance to women survivors. The women suffer when they are raped or beaten by their husbands because they have no one to run to for counselling. Warweng Payam does not have a police station. Warweng has no health facility so most people would go to Mathiang Payam for treatment when assaulted. Other survivor services were also not available (counselling services and PSS)

1.1.6 Conclusions

The women in Longechuk are suffering due to lack of access to basic needs like water, sanitation, and healthcare. Women are also suffering from Gender Based Violence (GBV). There are no proper redress mechanisms, no health facilities to handle GBV, no police stations to handle such cases, Women are requesting to be treated like human beings. Based on the findings, the GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The most affected person is the woman and the person affecting the woman is the man. The community leaders who decide on GBV cases have a key role to play in ending GBV and protection concerns. There is need for sensitization workshops for men and community leaders to change their perspective about women. There is a need to provide security along the paths and venues during distribution of food and NFIs. There is a need for increasing water supply in the area, provision of water storage facilities. There is also a need for health facilities that can handle case management of rape, the outreach and PSS need to be enhanced in Longechuk County. There is need for gender balance in leadership positions. 'Women are requesting to be treated like human beings. Based on the findings, the GBV in the community is deeply rooted in the culture, conflict and calamity augments the situation. The most affected person is the woman and the person affecting the woman is the man. There is need for sensitization workshops for men and community leaders to change their perspective about women.

1.1.7 Recommendations

- 1 The next project should be integrated, either protection, GBV and Case Management of Rape (CMR)
- 2 Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
- 3 Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men and community leaders on human rights.
- 4 Initiate a policy that makes it compulsory for gender balance in hiring and leadership positions by percentage.
- 5 Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
- 6 Initiate a policy that protects widows who do not have an elder son.

2.0 Girls Protection Concerns

The safety of girls in Longechuk County is not guaranteed during cattle raiding and revenge killings, the girls are sexually abused. When girls refuse gifts from traders and men, they are hunted down and raped. In other cases, the girls could not turn down the offers because they viewed it as a means to get their necessities, as their parents could not provide due to poverty. The gifts included money as well as material items from the shop e.g. Clothes, shoes, underwear, sandals among others. Perpetrators were mentioned to be armed and unarmed youths, alcoholic men, traders and teachers.

The fathers and uncles make decision about the education of girl child, most of the time girls are withdrawn from school to concentrate on house chores like fetching water, firewood and taking care of siblings. Other barriers to girls accessing education were long distances to school, which was not safe for the girls and lack of basic needs provision by parents e.g. shoes, school uniform, pens. The girls are also forced into marriage as early as 12 years of age. Most girls who can't resist, run away from home, others commit suicide. Girls who get married at a young age are beaten by co-wives, and mother in-laws. Such girls also develop complications during child birth.

Lack of sanitary pads has been mentioned as one of the challenges facing girls. Girls depend on well-wishers for such items. There are no sanitary pads in the market, unless one goes to Ethiopia. The lack of pads has made most girls not to attend school. Girls stay at home until the period is over.

Recommendations

- 1 The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
- 2 There is need for a WASH/ GBV project to provide dignity kits to the girls
- 3 There is need for construction of more schools in Longechuk County
- 4 Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
- 5 There is need for psychosocial support to encouraging girls who are frustrated as well as helping victims of rape to cope

1.0 FINDINGS

2.1.1 General Safety and Security

The safety of girls in Longechuk County is not guaranteed because of cases of cattle raiding and revenge killings which were frequent between Mathiang Payam and Mading Payam of Nasir County. Girls who declined sexual advances were mostly affected because the young men would find them, rape them as well as beat them up in the bushes. The girls in Mathiang, Warweng and Jangok experienced the following protection concerns; gender-based violence, lack of food, lack of water and sanitation, lack of medical care, child protection issues, sexual exploitation and abuse, land & property issues as well as domestic violence. The schoolgirls experienced harassment and sexual abuse from youths, men and traders as they walk long distances to school and back homes. This would create fear; the girls would therefore choose to miss school. While doing their daily chores like fetching water, and collecting firewood, the girls were at risk of harassment and sexual abuse.

2.1.2 Menstrual Hygiene

Most girls lacked sanitary pads. This forced some girls to put on many clothes during their period, others would stay indoors and sleep all day, and others would take a bath three times a day. Sanitary pads were not readily available in the local markets. Most of these items would come from Ethiopia and the consistency in their supply was not guaranteed due to poor road networks especially during rainy seasons. Lack of sanitary towels was therefore a challenge to the girls as most of them would not go to school or even participate in other household chores until after their period was over. This contributed to girls performing poorly in school during exams. They believed that any provision or distribution of sanitary pads by a well-wisher in schools or even in the community would help them have their comfort during menstruation. They believed sanitary pads gave them freedom to carry out normal activities that include going to school without worries.

2.1.3 Access to Education

Fathers and uncles would make the final decision on whether a girl would continue with education or not. Many families apart from a few had their girls out of school and this is because most parents understood less about the importance of education. Local culture contributed a lot to girls not accessing education. Culturally, girls were a source of wealth for their fathers and they would do anything possible to keep the girls around including denying them education and marrying them off. Too much household responsibilities also contributed into girls staying home e.g. taking care of the siblings at the expense of education. Other barriers to girls accessing education were long distances to school, which was not safe for the girls and lack of basic needs provision by parents e.g. shoes, school uniform, pens etc. The lack of education for girls has contributed to girls lacking capacity to improve their standards of living, the poor living conditions in turn, forces the girls to get married at an early age. It has also contributed into them not knowing their rights. Because of no education, the girls also lack the capacity to contribute to community meetings.

2.1.4 Forced Marriage

Culturally, forced marriage was acceptable. It was a normal and common family affair and girls had no right to determine whom and when they would marry. In fact, to be born a first born daughter was unfortunate because they would marry them off as early as they reached 12 years of age in order to bring dowry that would be used to get wives for the elder brothers. As per the girls, it was normal and they had no voice over it. Their fathers, brothers and uncles were key decision makers on whom and when girls were supposed to get married and they would do so without seeking the consent of the girls. Early marriages posed a number of disadvantages to the girls. Their social life changed completely and their education ended prematurely as well. The girls' freedom of association was limited since she would be denied the opportunity to mingle with other girls of her age and who were not yet married. The girls also said that when they failed to accomplish certain tasks, first wives and their mothers-in-law would most of the time beat them up. Unfortunately, the husbands never intervened. Many would resort to committing suicide or run away from the community. Those who continued with the marriages were reported to develop birth complications during delivery, which was very risky to their lives. Girls would often persevere in the marriages because of the beating that they would receive from brothers whenever they would hear that the girls were not willing to continue. However, the right age for marriage according to the girls would be age 18-25 years old. The youngest age they had witnessed was a 12-year-old.

2.1.5 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Gifting for sexual return was a usual phenomenon in the community. Men would offer gifts for sexual favours. The girls reiterated that refusing the gifts would not help because the men would still go ahead and rape them especially while collecting firewood from the forest. In other cases, the girls could not turn down the offers because they viewed it as a means to get their necessities, as their parents could not provide due to poverty. The gifts included money as well as material items from the shop e.g. Clothes, shoes, underwear, sandals among others. Perpetrators were mentioned to be armed and unarmed youths, alcoholic men, traders and teachers. The outcomes of sexual exploitation and abuse was reported to be early pregnancies, dropping out of school and contracting Sexually Transmitted Infections such as HIV which led most girls into committing suicide. The girls in this community do not share SEA issues with the adults because they consider it shameful and that community members rarely keep any secrets as well fear of tough consequences that would befall them. They preferred to share only among themselves because they trusted each other.

2.1.6 Conclusions

The safety of girls in Longechuk County is not guaranteed because of incidences of cattle raiding and revenge killings. There are many rape cases in the county, most cases are not reported. Girls commit suicide for lack of redress mechanisms. There is lack of sanitary pads, lack of livelihood, which makes adults take advantage of girls and exploit them sexually. There is need for an integrated PROTECTION/GBV/WASH project to address the challenges

2.1.7 Recommendations

- 1** The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
- 2** There is need for a WASH/ GBV project to provide dignity kits to the girls
- 3** There is need for construction of more schools in Longechuk County
- 4** Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
- 5** There is need for psychosocial support to encouraging girls who are frustrated as well as helping victims of rape to cope

3.0 Boys Protection Concerns

The general security and safety for boys has improved in Longechuk County. The boys are no longer scared of abduction or being forced to join Militia. The situation in Warweng was not stable always because of indirect revenge attacks or ambushes from Gaguang Nuer youth from Mading Payam in Nasir County. The boys' safety is also threatened by swollen rivers, this makes it impossible to attend school during rainy season.

Most boys do not have access to education in this community because of the financial inabilities of families. The families cannot afford uniform, books and other school items. The schools are few, the kids have to walk long distances to access education. Most schools have no feeding program, this led to most children dropping out of school. Most of the time, teachers don't turn up regularly to teach, this was attributed to the lack of incentives (salary) for teachers. The teachers are tired of volunteering and there is nothing the school administration can do. The engagement of boys in domestic chores, like herding cattle, taking cattle to the market for sell, running family business has also been a barrier to access to education. Traders have also taken advantage of young boys; they give them items to sell the whole day as a source of cheap labour. Young boys who get used to earning money drop out of school. When the money is not sufficient, the boys engage in petty crimes.

Boys as young as 15 years are forced to get married, this too has affected their access to education. The boys don't have much control over the parent's decisions and choices when it comes to marriage. It believed that the parents' choice is the best because they do a better background check about the girl.

Recommendations

- 1 The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
- 2 There is need for construction of more schools in Longechuk County
- 3 There is need for school feeding program to improve school attendance
- 4 There is need to mobilize resources to pay teachers to continue offering services consistently.
- 5 There is need for policies and law enhancement to make sure traders don't employ children under the age of 18 years.
- 6 Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
- 7 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.

3.1.1 General Safety and Child Abduction

The security situation in Warweng was not stable always because of indirect revenge attacks or ambushes from Gaguang Nuer youth from Mading Payam in Nasir County. These youths terrorized people at night and would sometimes kill and leave. Currently, there is no abduction threat or being forced to join Militia, but between 2015 and 2018, local chiefs in the area were said to have mobilized their community members and encouraged them to allow school children to take up arms and defend their communities since there was no proper government in place to protect civilians. In Mathiang Payam there have not been recent attacks in the community in terms of national between government and opposition forces. Mathiang is not experiencing internal or external threats. There are no safety concerns for the boys on their way to schools. In the past, boys were abducted and forcefully recruited into the army against their will and that of their parents as well. Before August 2019, boys as young as 14 years old used to be recruited into both government and opposition forces as fighters.

3.1.2 Child Labour

There are many boys aged 13 years and below who are hired by local traders in Mathiang market to sell items like bread, biscuits, oil in gallons, sugar, salt, onions e.t.c. These traders pay the boys 50 birr a day. This was happening even before closure of schools due to Covid-19 pandemic. The boys engage in selling these goods as a means of earning a living because they lack good parental care. They always drop out of school because of poverty and lack of parental support. Other boys are taken advantage of by local traders to sell their goods while paying them very little money at the end of the day. A lot of families engaged boys with family businesses in the local market at the expense of schooling. For example, some boys would be told by their parents to take either one of the family cows, goats, or sheep and sell in Mathiang market so as to start some small family business. The boys working for money have got high chances of dropping out of school and ending their education life. This is because they frequently miss school and perform poorly during exams hence most of them fail to attain the pass mark for promotion into the next class. Others were reported to become criminals in order to sustain their urge for money.

3.1.3 Access to Education

Most boys do not have access to education in this community because the financial abilities of families vary, some families are rich and their children comfortably go to school, while children/boys who come from poor families rarely attend schools, and if they do, they do not manage to complete their studies. Barriers to accessing education include; lack of parental support, long distances to school, no school feeding program, lack of scholastic materials, and lack of teachers in the school. Other barriers stopping boys from accessing education were lack of teachers to teach in the school, lack of school uniforms, and lack of learning materials in cases where they were not provided by parents or supplied by schools. Lack of peace in the community especially when communal violence occurred was also mentioned. Boys who lack education resort to crimes while others engage in small businesses. Boys had no safety concerns on their way to school apart from the long distance which was a challenge for those who came from Bomas that were far away e.g. Mokley and Kuryiith. Coming to Warweng Central Primary school located at the payam headquarters would take them roughly one and half hours walk from those Bomas

In Jangok Payam boys were not given chance to go to school because of a lot of work at home e.g. taking care of herds of cattle and goats. The other challenge was the long distance that would be covered daily since there was only one school in Jangok. The boys reported that they used not to be taught regularly because some teachers did not come to school throughout the week since they didn't have incentives in terms of salary at the end of the month. This made them reluctant and would come to school whenever they wished. There was nothing the school administration would do about it. Another safety concern was the danger and risk of crossing rivers during the rainy season. Because of this, many children do not attend school during the rainy seasons. The boys said the streams would get full and dangerous making it difficult for some children to attend school.

3.1.4 Forced Marriage

Forced or child marriages is a common practice in this community. The boys are forced to respect the decision of their parents. According to their culture, boys who go against their parents' decisions/wishes are ex-communicated in the community because they are seen as outcast members. According to the boys in Mathiang, the most appropriate age for a man to get married is 20 years and above. A different group believed that the most appropriate age for a man to get marriage was 25 years and above as per the boys while for a girl they said 20 years old would be fine to get married. Fathers made marriage decisions in their families and they do not consult anyone for such arrangements. However, 15-year-old boys have been forced to marry. Fathers are the ones who make decisions in the family for one to get married. They usually arrange for such marriage without consulting their children because they think they have the right to choose wives for their children. There are so many circumstances where boys have been forced to marry by their parents. While some respect these decisions by getting married, others run away to their uncles or grandmothers' homes. Other boys may run mad if they cannot manage such stress. However, the choice of the parents was good because they would thoroughly check the background of the girl they wanted their child to get marriage to. They pushed their children into early marriage in order to avoid using their resources/cows on extended family relatives whose children planned to marry

3.1.5 Conclusions

The boy child is mostly affected by child labour and forced marriages. The long distance to school is a barrier to education. Lack of teachers in school, lack of school uniform, lack of education material has also contributed to boys not attending school.

3.1.6 Recommendations

- 1** The next project should be integrated, Child Protection, and Education
- 2** There is need for construction of more schools in Longechuk County
- 3** There is need for school feeding program to improve school attendance
- 4** There is need to mobilize resources to pay teachers to continue offering services consistently.
- 5** There is need for policies and law enhancement to make sure traders don't employ children under the age of 18 years.
- 6** Initiate a policy and law enhancement against forced marriages for children under the age of 18 years
- 7** 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.

4.0 Role of Men in Protection

Cattle raiding is the most common source of community violence. Young men impregnating young girls is also another source of conflict which can lead to killing. Women also fight at water points because of scarcity of water, this type of conflict can erupt to be communal. The desire for cows for dowry payments, purchasing guns and bullets and for prestige is a key motivation for cattle raiding.

Unmarried women or mature girls are not allowed to own lands or property. Local laws governing lands, property and housing ownership existed though such laws were said to be discriminatory, did not allow unmarried woman to own land or housing. If the host community received IDPS, returnees or refugees, they are taken to the local authority and accommodated by the community members.

Domestic violence or intimate violence is very common. Violence is caused by; alcoholism, poverty, failure of women to respond to sexual demands by the husband, laziness and suspected cases of adultery. There were no police posts in the whole of Jangok Payam. Among the group of police in Mathiang, there were no female officers who could help handle investigations related to GBV.

Both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to go to school. The community recommended providing school feeding programs in schools, buying uniforms for children going to school, motivating girls through cash programming in schools. Forced child marriage is very common in this community; Parents' desire for cows and property within the family are the key factors that force parents to marry off their daughters at a young age. Some girls end up committing suicide, others disappear in the man's homes.

The men suggested possible ways to resolve cattle raiding by inter communal dialogue, disarmament of youth who are involved in cattle raiding. Creating employment opportunities for youth who might be idle by engaging them in income generating activities. Further, perpetrators of cattle raiding should be punished. The alternative ways to resolving revenge killings, is through peacefully community dialogue. The other way to resolve such conflict is to identify criminals from both communities and punish them through fine or imprisonment and to compensate the relatives of the deceased. If the perpetrators are identified, they should be taken to local courts for judgement.

Recommendations

- 1 There is a need for peacebuilding and governance project in the area.
- 2 Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
- 3 Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men, community leaders and local authority on human rights.
- 4 Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
- 5 Initiate a policy that allows women to own land

4.1.1 General Security

The community had cases of cattle raiding between Gajaak Nuer of Longechuk County and Gaguang Nuer of Nasir County within Upper Nile State. Men aged 25 years and above are the ones who get involved in cattle raiding due to their desire for cows for dowry payments, purchasing guns and bullets and for prestige. When a man owns a good number of cows in the community, people highly respect and value him. Some would just want to have a lot of them for wealth and for starting business such as buying guns and ammunitions which would then be sold out to fellow community members or to other communities nearby who need them for self- protection. Cattle raiding brings a lot of destruction to the communities; it brings loss of lives and property, limit mobility, causes inter communal violence which then result into lack of peace, creates disharmony and mistrust between neighbouring communities, and due to cattle raiding, communities cannot move freely within their borders nor have joint trading or do any other business together. Now the communities in Longechuk cannot interact freely with the communities in Ulang County. The other source of communal violence is caused by girls being impregnated by boys aged 19 years and above. There are fights over crowded water points mostly among elderly women and girls aged 17 years and above. The community believed that people opt for revenge killings if; they experience delays from local authorities in taking action against the culprits, failure by the culprit to compensate the family of the deceased 100 cows, and unfair court judgement, if no reconciliation has taken place, and finally desire by the relative of the victim to seek justice which has been delayed or denied due to unfair case settlement in the local courts. The cycle of revenge killings would stop if quick actions were taken to arrest and prosecute culprits in the court of law in accordance with relevant laws.

4.1.2 Housing Land and Property

Unmarried women or mature girls are not allowed to own lands or property. Unmarried women are believed to become immoral if allowed to owned lands and stay alone. Local laws governing lands, property and housing ownership existed though such laws were said to be discriminatory in the sense that they did not allow unmarried woman to own land or housing due to traditional beliefs that denied women independence. Disputes over land are resolved in customary courts, and most serious ones are resolved by the county Commissioner who is also the highest authority at the county level. there was no provision in the law that allowed unmarried women to own lands or property. If the host community received IDPS, returnees or refugees, they are taken to the local authority and accommodated by the community members when asked to do so and if they need land, community elders are asked to allocate the land for them. Community members also mobilized to support on this through small contributions of food and non-food items.

4.1.3 Gender Based Violence

Domestic violence or intimate violence is very common in all Bomas and payams in Longechuk County because it is a cultural practice starting from grandfathers up to date and it is not considered as a big problem when one is seen or heard beating or slapping his wife while they are at their homes. Violence would be caused by; alcoholism, poverty, failure of women to respond to sexual demands by the husband, laziness and suspected cases of adultery. The men admitted that there were indeed so many incidences of domestic violence which involved close family members in the community. Unfortunately, nothing much would be done about it because family issues were treated as private affairs which neither the local authorities, chiefs, nor community elders had a hand on because such matters were culturally acceptable and treated as normal. There were no police posts in the whole of Jangok Payam and Police services would only be sourced from Mathiang Payam. It was further reported that among the group of police in Mathiang, there were no female officers who could help handle investigations related to GBV or women and girls issues.

4.1.4 Children access to education

Both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to go to school. The community recommended providing school feeding programs in schools, buying uniforms for children going to school, motivating girls through cash programming in schools.

4.1.5 Forced marriages

This is very common in this community; most parents force their girls into marriage at a tender age. As per the men, marriage was a very private family affair and would rarely be disclosed to the public. Parents' desire for cows and property within the family are the key factors that force parents to marry off their daughters at a young age. Some girls end up committing suicide, others disappear in the man's homes and this sometimes leads to stress, trauma and unhappiness in the marriage. Daughters marriage was valued because the cows that the father received in form of bride price were a sign of wealth and would be used to get him other wives and also support his elder sons to marry their own wives. Parents with single sons would therefore tend to force their sons into marriage so as to escape giving a helping hand (cows) to the relatives marrying sons.

4.1.6 Community Based Protection Mechanisms

Cattle raiding conflicts could be resolved through; deployment of police or other organized forces at intercommunal borders to patrol, disarmament of youth, creating employment for idle youth in the community, engaging youth in indoors and outdoors sporting activities. Local authorities and NGOS partners to come up with recreational activities that could engage the youth such as creating more employment opportunities for the youth to reduce idleness and promoting intercommunal dialogue between communities where cattle raiding take place. Traditional authorities should punish parents who force their children into marriage against their will. Some chiefs settle disputes fairly while others are unfair. Some tend to favor others even when they are on the wrong. They need to be trained on how to resolve disputes fairly in accordance to available customary laws. There is a functional police post in Mathiang with both male and female police officers. The community also recommended a training for Chiefs, police or judicial officers on the rule of law, peacebuilding and conflict resolution, land and property rights policy according to South Sudan laws and awareness on respect of human rights.

4.1.7 Conclusions

Cattle raiding is the main source of conflict in Longechuk County. Men impregnating girls is another source of conflict. Possible ways to resolve cattle raiding is by inter communal dialogue, disarmament of youth who are involved in cattle raiding. Creating employment opportunities for youth who might be idle by engaging them in income generating activities. Further, perpetrators of cattle raiding should be punished. The alternative ways to resolving revenge killings, is through peacefully community dialogue. The other way to resolve such conflict is to identify criminals from both communities and punish them through fine or imprisonment and to compensate the relatives of the deceased. If the perpetrators are identified, they should be taken to local courts for judgement.

4.1.8 Recommendations

- 1** There is a need for peacebuilding and governance project in the area.
- 2** Provide a WASH project focusing on hardware, to increase number of boreholes in the county
- 3** Integrate emergency response with long term social behaviour change communication strategies, with specific focus on sensitization of men, community leaders and local authority on human rights.
- 4** Initiate a policy against any form of GBV, follow through policy implementation at grassroot level.
- 5** Initiate a policy that allows women to own land, including widows who do not have an elder son

5.0 Role of Teachers in Protection

Scarcity of schools and long distance covered to school is a major threat to school going children. Girls are raped along the way to schools. Teachers have made an effort to report rape cases but no action was taken. In most areas, there is no functional police station, and also no female police to handle GBV cases. During rainy season, the swollen rivers are a threat to access to education. Children stay at home waiting for dry season. The schools lack proper fencing, drunkards make noise and cause disturbance crossing school compound. Lack of sufficient classrooms is also a barrier to education; children learn under a tree and are not able to attend classes during rainy season. The schools lack essentials like water and sanitation facilities. Girls lack dignity kits, the lack of access to sanitary pads make girls miss out in school. The schools don't have latrines or wash rooms to provide privacy for girls.

Some children have been separated from parents due to displacements. Those with parents, the parents do not see the value of education, they don't provide writing materials, no uniform, no shoes. Some parents withdraw kids from school and send them to the market to sell some items. Girls are mostly engaged in household chores while boys heard cattle. Some parents marry off girls at a tender age, to get cows.

Most teachers are not qualified professionally to teach. Most teachers volunteer and are not willing to teach due to lack of incentives. Teachers said that they were facing a lot of challenges in the process of providing education to the pupils. A number of challenges needed to be addressed so as to ensure improved levels of children welfare in the schools.

Recommendations

- 1 There is need for an integrated Education/WASH/ Protection/GBV in school's project.
- 2 The projects should focus on construction of schools, boreholes and construction of latrines.
- 3 The projects should consider provision of learning materials
Projects to consider provision of incentive for teachers.
- 4 There is need for sensitization of the community on the importance of education
- 5 There is need for law enforcement on education, to compel parents to take children to school
- 6 There need for law enforcement against early child forced marriages

5.1.1 General security and safety of children

Girls suffered from sexual assault due to the long distances they covered to school. In December 2019, a 14-year-old girl was raped by a drunk youth on her way from Wunkiir primary school. This happened between Benjiel and Wunkiir Bomas at around 1pm. The teachers said they had tried to report the case to police but the family of the girl refused and said they were able to handle the case in their own way. Rape cases were many in the community of but they were less reported. The area was not safe for the children. Lessons faced interference from drunk people who would cross the school compound making noise due to lack of fence. During rainy seasons some children would fear coming to school because some streams would overflow and were a danger to children especially those would be 12 years of age and below. There was nothing teachers would do to guarantee the safety of children outside the school compound especially on their way home and to school.

5.1.2 Children Access to Education

Warweng Payam did not have enough schools. There was a total of 3 schools (two in Bengjiel and Wunkiir Bomas and one in Warweng payam) those schools have primary 1-5 level and only have 2 class rooms which is primary four and five children. Most children however failed to progress to secondary education because even in Mathiang most schools only offer classes up to primary six. Kamboor Boma and Mathiang Town were however the only places that had schools from primary 1-8 level. There was also one secondary school in Mathiang though it was not admitting students due to lack of support from NGOs and local government has no capacity to support it. Parents were therefore expected that from primary 8 in Mathiang they transfer their children for secondary in Ethiopia. Due to lack of secondary schools, the teachers were unable to determine the level of transition to secondary schools. There were no school reading materials, classrooms were few in the schools and children learned under the trees therefore children were not taught during rainy seasons until the onset of dry seasons. There were no boreholes and latrine in the schools or near by the schools and hence most parents were not allowing their children to school especially the small children aged from 2-8 years old due to the difficult conditions. Children in the community started school at 9 years of age which was very late as per the teachers. Most children had been engaged in Business in the local market selling goods in the expense of education. Girls would stay at home, collect firewood with their mothers and sell in the market. Some girls were also employed as restaurant and alcohol den attendants.

5.1.3 Children Welfare

Some children had been separated with parents due to displacements and this had led to their poor performance in school. The girls also lacked enough support (dignity kits & WASH rooms) during menstruation and the reason as to why most of them stayed at home during their periods. Parents understood very little about education and its importance hence the reasons as to why most of them failed to support their children access education. Due to prestige and the urge for quick wealth, the parents also had a tendency to marry off the girls at an early age. Parents were a major setback in Jangok community. According to the teachers, most of them lacked information about the importance of education and hence getting support from them to push their children to go school was a hard nut to crack. Others would release their children but they rarely followed up with provision of certain basic needs such as school uniforms, shoes, textbooks and pens.

5.1.4 Teachers Welfare

The teachers in the community not willing to teach due to lack of incentives hence most of the teachers only volunteer. Teachers said that they were facing a lot of challenges in the process of providing education to the pupils. Lack of enough classrooms made it difficult for pupils to attend classes during rainy seasons and pupils would hence be forced to stay home due to lack of sufficient shelter to enable them attend the lessons when there was rain. Another problem mentioned by the teachers was lack of enough learning materials for the pupils which made delivery of content a bit challenging due to lack of reference materials for pupils. Some teachers get absent without permission because school administration had no right to restrict them since they were not paying them anything. Some teachers had actually stopped teaching since late 2019 after Christian Mission for Development (CMD) terminated their monthly support of \$50 salary per primary school teacher. Most schools were therefore recording poor performance which was attributed to lack of professional teaching staffs. Most teachers in the area also lacked the necessary qualifications/experience in teaching.

5.1.5 Conclusions

A number of challenges needed to be addressed so as to ensure improved levels of children welfare in the schools. There is need for construction of classrooms, provision of seats for the pupils, drinking water, additional classrooms, emergency first aid services, school feeding program, provision of sanitation facilities, provision of learning and writing materials e.g. textbooks and pens and provision of dignity kits for the girls. Schools lacked adequate water and sanitation blocks/changing rooms for the girls. The teachers believed that there would be need to follow up and scale up provision of menstrual hygiene dignity kits in all schools. The consistency in learning depends on supporting teachers with an incentive.

5.1.6 Recommendations

- 1** There is need for an integrated Education/WASH/ Protection/GBV in school's project.
- 2** The projects should focus on construction of schools, boreholes and construction of latrines.
- 3** The projects should consider provision of learning materials
Projects to consider provision of incentive for teachers.
- 4** There is need for sensitization of the community on the importance of education
- 5** There is need for law enforcement on education, to compel parents to take children to school
- 6** There need for law enforcement against early child forced marriages

6.0 Role of Community Leaders in Protection

The county Longechuk has a serious water sanitation and hygiene challenge that has led to the spread of diarrheal diseases. There are no enough sources of clean water, one bore holes serves the entire Payam. Gender Based Violence (GBV) is underrated. Domestic violence is considered a family affair and people don't interfere. Local authorities are helpless, they have no control over husband-and-wife fights. They have no control over early child forced marriages. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) is never reported because it brings shame to the victim. Rape is a minor offense with the perpetrators paying only two cows. Local authorities are beneficiaries because they also get a cow to preside over rape cases. Unmarried women are not allowed to own Housing, Land and Property (HLP), it is believed that they will become prostitutes. The community is begging to understand the importance of education, the silent fear is that girls are likely to interact with boys and men on their way to school and in schools. This makes parents withdraw their girls from school just to stay at home.

The local authority admits that some customary laws like barring women from owning land and property, from leadership positions are outdated and there is need for change. The leaders recommended the need to relook into and amend some of the negative cultural practices through adoption of new policies that complied with modern law.

Recommendations

- 1 The policy on marriage need to be changed by setting no limit on dowry, but should depend on the agreement between the girls' parents and man's parents based on what the man would offer.
- 2 Housing land and property Policies - Have a local policy in place that ensures that everyone had equal rights to own a house, land and property including unmarried woman in the community.
- 3 Child force marriage policies - Come up with a local policy that says it is unlawful for parents to marry off their children below the age of 18 years and have them respect the choice of their children to marry when they want and whom they want.
- 4 Gender based violence domestic violence policies - Arrest perpetrators of GBV especially in case of rape or attempted rape.
- 5 Arrest men who are drunkards and are found of disturbing their wives whenever they are under the influence of alcohol. Encourage leaders to participate in GBV prevention, protection and response.
- 6 Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse policies -Local authority should arrest and prosecute any community member found exploiting and abusing vulnerable people in the community.
- 7 Access to education policies – laying down policies that would make it compulsory for all children above 5 years to go to school. Local authority to arrest and punish parents who deny children access to education
- 8 The local authority can support children that would have been denied access to education through community dialogues, raising awareness on the importance of education

6.1.1 General security and safety

Generally, security situation in greater Longechuk was calm. There had been a case of cattle raiding in June, 2020 which was carried out by Ngueny payam youths from Kiechkuon County of greater Nasir. Besides security issues, the community had other challenges that needed immediate attention. Water was however scarce since there was only one borehole in the Payam that served a population of over 25,000 people. This had resulted into frequent conflicts and fighting amongst girls and women while scrambling for the resource. The problem was limited access to safe and clean drinking water. As a result, waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea had been reported. The general access to sanitation was also not good, some families practiced open defecation due to lack of latrines. The community relied mostly on relief food. In July 2019, people had starved due to lack of enough food in all greater Longechuk Payams (Mathiang, Jangok, Warweng, Pamach, Malual, Belwang and Udier). This was due to delays in food distribution by WFP (World Food Program) through World Vision.

6.1.2 Domestic and Gender Based Violence

There are cases of rape in the community, not all are reported, sometimes families settle it quietly. In August, community reported a case of rape that involved a pregnant woman in her seventh month pregnancy. It took place on 23rd August, 2020 at around 6:30am between Warweng Payam and Mathiang Payam. Cases related to domestic violence had not been reported of late and this is not because they were not happening but because those affected would mostly choose not to say anything about it. This is because culturally, the community considered it private and no one was expected to share in the public domain. About forced Mariages, marital affairs were less an issue of concern to the local authorities and this is because parents had the sole responsibility/role of determining who a child married and/or should be married to. Local authorities were hence not allowed to interfere with such arrangements. This has been culturally practised for a long time. Unwilling children would occasionally seek help from either paternal or maternal uncles. In cases where the uncles failed to intervene against the parents, most of them resorted to committing suicide or just disappear from the community. Not even the local authority had power to influence family decisions on marriage since it was deeply ingrained into the peoples' culture.

6.1.3 Access to Education

Every child had a right to education unlike in the past days when girls would be denied access to education by parents. Girls stayed at home to take care of the young siblings and also cook for the family. Some parents believed that girls would get pregnant in school because it was only in school where they would frequently interact with boys. Girls were left at home to cook for the siblings. It was also believed that educated girls had no morals and would hence be spoiled by boys and/or become prostitutes. Local authorities had also intervened in situations where children had been denied their right to education by parents through convening community meetings at both Payam and Boma levels to sensitize parents on the importance of education.

6.1.4 Housing Land and Property

The most recent land dispute was in June, 2020. Such land disputes were said to have not been very common since there was still enough land for everyone in community hence, all people had equal rights to ownership of a house, land or property except for the unmarried women. The community believed that unmarried women who owned houses or land were prostitutes and the community would do everything possible to prevent them from land ownership. In case of IDPS, Refugees and Returnees, the local authority and elders supported/organized temporary settlement for them. Those who stayed longer were allocated pieces of land for permanent settlement. People who left their original lands and fled due to conflicts were helped regain back their properties when they returned provided, they knew the locations of their lands and had people to witness for them.

6.1.5 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Leaders said they had not received any cases of sexual exploitation and abuse though they recognized that such cases could be existing but people rarely reported. People would not report because it was shameful. Such cases would be rarely reported in the community because people did not have proper reporting structures and the most vulnerable group of people (widows, children without parents/caregivers, orphans, single parents (mostly women), job seekers and school children) were at risk. Those who held big leadership positions, rich people and businessmen would easily take advantage of vulnerable people.

6.1.6 Culture

Forced marriages, revenge killings and denying women the rights to hold leadership positions in the community and denying women chance to speak in community meetings were some of the deep cultural practices that leaders said were affecting the community negatively. Some of the cultural practises were gender biased and were not providing and equal rights platform for both women, men, boys and girls. Denying women leadership positions in the community and not allowing unmarried women to own a house or land in the community are some of the examples. According to the leaders, cultural practices such as forced marriage, denying women rights to hold leadership positions in the community and discrimination or denial of property rights for unmarried women were outdated and needed to change. The local authority would play a role in changing this by coming up with local policies or laws against discrimination or rights violations, promote positive cultural practices that would be sensitive to gender equality and women empowerment, raise awareness by sensitizing traditional leaders on human rights promotion and protection and by always ensuring that women are appointed to various leadership positions in the community and have their views heard in key decision making in community affairs.

6.1.7 Leadership and Decision Making

Leaders said there was fair distribution of leadership positions among youth, women and men in various offices and in the community. The proportion representing men was 60%, women 25% and youth (boys and girls) represented 15 %. They added by saying that all gender had equal rights to take up leadership positions but only it depended on the capacity and abilities of the individuals.

6.1.8 Customary Laws and Other Laws

Most cases were presided over by the Local authorities in the community. As a result, they would be guided by a number of laid down customary laws. For example, men found guilty of rape would be arrested and also punished by making them pay 3 cows or pay an equivalent of 8,000 Birr. Two cows given to the parents of the victim and local authority would take one. Men who had committed adultery would be arrested and fined 8 cows i.e 6 cows for the woman's husband and 2 cows for the customary court. Revenge killing criminals would compensate relatives 100 cows. Those who sexually exploited the vulnerable would be arrested and punished and would be asked also to pay a heifer (young mature cow) or pay 4,000 Birr. In case of land disputes, rightful owners would always be given back their pieces of land. Some of these laws were practically outdated and needed to be reconsidered according to the leaders. They believed the local authority were in position to influence some changes on this by calling a meeting with community elders to discuss the impacts of the negative cultural practises and the need to abolish or change them.

6.1.9 Conclusions

The county has a serious WASH challenge. The community leaders are helpless and have no control over decisions made at family level especially regarding domestic violence or forced early marriages. The customary laws are gender biased. Some laws are outdated and the leaders recommended for the need to relook into and amend some of the negative cultural practices through adoption of new policies that complied with modern law.

6.1.10 Recommended Policy and Legal framework changes

- 1** The policy on marriage need to be changed by setting no limit on dowry, but should depend on the agreement between the girls' parents and man's parents based on what the man would offer.
- 2** Housing land and property Policies - Have a local policy in place that ensures that everyone had equal rights to own a house, land and property including unmarried woman in the community.
- 3** Child force marriage policies – Come up with a local policy that says it is unlawful for parents to marry off their children below the age of 18 years and have them respect the choice of their children to marry when they want and whom they want.
- 4** Gender based violence domestic violence policies -Arrest perpetrators of GBV especially in case of rape or attempted rape.
- 5** Arrest men who are drunkards and are found of disturbing their wives whenever they are under the influence of alcohol. Encourage leaders to participate in GBV prevention, protection and response.
- 6** Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse policies -Local authority should arrest and prosecute any community member found exploiting and abusing vulnerable people in the community.
- 7** Access to education policies – laying down policies that would make it compulsory for all children above 5 years to go to school. Local authority to arrest and punish parents who deny children access to education
- 8** The local authority can support children that would have been denied access to education through community dialogues, raising awareness on the importance of education.

7.1.1 Conclusions

The county has a serious WASH challenge. The county depends on food distributed by WFP. There are no enough classes to provide children with education. The teachers are not motivated enough to offer services. The teachers are also not qualified. Gender based violence is underrated. The community leaders are helpless and have no control over decisions made at family level especially regarding domestic violence or forced early marriages. The customary laws are gender biased. Some laws are outdated and the leaders recommended for the need to relook into and amend some of the negative cultural practices through adoption of new policies that complied with modern law.

7.1.2 Recommended Policy and Legal framework changes

- 1 There is need to review the outdated traditional/ customary laws that are gender biased.
- 2 There is need for a WASH project focusing on drilling of boreholes, water treatment and construction of latrines
- 3 There is need for an education project focusing on construction of classrooms, provision of scholastic materials and school feeding program
- 4 There is need for an integrated protection/ GBV project with case management of rape.
- 5 There is need for a food security and livelihood project promoting household's cultivation of crops

8.0 Recommended Policy and Legal framework changes

8.1 ANNEXES MONTHLY WOMEN FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Women FGD July



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women:
Lonechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan**

Date: 24/7/2020
State: Upper Nile County: Longechuk
Payam: Mathiang

Background

Coalition for Humanity is National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built resilience of the vulnerable people, through programmes in Peace Building and Conflict Transformation, Protection/GBV, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition through strategies like community capacity building, Social Behavior 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 Longechuk County. A meeting was held with women between the age of 20 and 46 years, the discussion sort to asses any protection concerns. The women were asked questions about general safety and security during distribution of NFIs, WASH related protection concerns, forced child marriage, their role in decision making, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, housing land and property, and the role of women in leadership.

General Security

The women in Mathiang do not feel safe especially when travelling from one area to another. They face harassment and sexual abuse on their way to fetching water and collecting fire wood. There are many rape cases in this community. For example, in May 2020, an old woman was raped on her way from Mathiang town to Paytath Boma in the evening. The case was reported to the police though the action taken against the perpetrator is not yet known. In June 2020, an 11-year-old girl from Mathiang town was raped while collecting firewood in a bush in Matoor Boma. The perpetrator was a 23-year-old man. The incident, which happened in the morning hours, was reported to Relief International and the police. As a way of resolving the issue, the family of the perpetrator was fined a number of cows. The girl was later taken to Ethiopia for checkup and medication. A separate incident happened on 26/07/2020 where a 16-year-old girl was raped in Phalang Boma on her way to collecting firewood around 10am. On the day after, it was reported that the girl had disappeared from their house and her whereabouts still unknown.

Safety and Security During F &NFIs Distributions

During distribution of Food and Non-Food Items (F&NFIs), men harass women. Men deny women taking their share at the right time. Sometimes when women line-up to receive food and NIFs, men don't queue, when the women complain they are beaten and branded disrespectful. In other occasions, the husbands of these women make a deal with the food or NFI distributor to lie to the women that they are no longer in the distribution list only for these husbands to take the share that belonged to the women and sell it in the market. The women end up returning home empty handed. Some men hide somewhere along the road waiting for women coming from distribution sites to snatch all the things that the women received especially NFIs. When these women try to complain, they are beaten and no one in the community will intervene to help them. The women recommended that, during distribution of F&NFIs, people with special needs, people with disability, and the elderly cards should be taken and their share brought home to them. This is because if forced to come and collect, women are supposed to carry them or support them to walk by holding their hands or pushing their bicycles to the distribution site and line-up on their behalf.

Gender Based Violence

Women in Longechuk experience physical, sexual and economic violence. Regarding economic violence, these women face many challenges concerning family responsibilities. They do a lot of work to make sure they provide food but their men do not appreciate. The men ask for money from the women for alcohol and if the women do not comply, they are beaten. Women also, experience physical & sexual violence from their husband's enemies. After communal violence or cattle raising, their husband's enemies' revenge by raping the wives or their children. There is no organization assisting women facing violence. Sometimes, these women get assistance from the police at a fee but police structures and rules of law is generally weak. This means that if they do not have money, they are not offered any assistance. Women in this community recommended that there is need to create a safe environment for women, by raising the level of awareness especially on rape issues, domestic violence, cattle raiding, economic violence, communal violence, and also there is need for Capacity building training on GBV and its effects in the community targeting men so that men can understand what they're doing is not good for women health and also women recommend that there is a need for a place where they can go to for support whenever they experience any kind of GBV in the community.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Women of Mathiang sometimes fight because the late comers to the water points who want to get water as soon as they arrive which becomes a problem. They normally report the incidences to the police. The women in Mathiang do not feel safe while walking to fetch water especially when one has to walk alone, because one is faced with the problems of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. For this reason, women [refer walking in groups in order to feel safe. This type of abuse is perpetuated by alcoholic men, traders and youth. On the contrary, the women do not report cases of sexual assault because they have nowhere to report. They do not share these cases with anybody for fear of their secrets being exposed, which will be shameful to them and may lead to them committing suicide. The fear to take any actions against abuse is because there is no support and no confidentiality, people start blaming it on the woman instead of the perpetrator. The women recommended the need for creation awareness on the issues that are affecting women. The women also need counselling services or organizations that deal with such issues.

Domestic / Intimate Partner Violence

Domestic violence is common in this community particularly physical, sexual and economic violence. The women do not feel valued respected in their families. The men do not support the women. The men only idle waiting to find any mistake by women so that they beat them. To resolve conflicts, the elders call for family meetings to find out what caused the conflict and try to address it. If it happens that the man was the cause of the problem, the elders will not take any disciplinary action but if the woman or the children were the cause of the problem, they will be brutally beaten. Culturally, men in this community do not accept their mistakes. Women in Mathiang are beaten by their husbands specifically the alcoholic ones. The husbands demand sexual or romantic relationships at any time they please and if a woman refuses for a reason or another, it becomes a problem. When a woman does not perform her daily duties at home, she also experiences partner violence also failure of men to take responsibility leads to intimate partner violence. The women of Mathiang payam do not take any action because they lack the courage and support to express themselves, or to talk about the problems they are facing in the community. There is no one to support them or even, hear them out. If their husbands find out that they talked about the issue to anyone, they beat the women and may also decide to divorce them

Forced Child Marriage

Early marriages are a common occurrence in this community. In May 2020, a 10-year-old girl was forced to get married in Phalang-A Boma for exchange of dowry. However sad this incidence is, the women cannot talk about it because they lack the power to talk about such issues. Only the father of the child is the initiator and final decision maker concerning marriage in the family. Women do not play any role in forcing children into marriage because the men are the sole decision makers. Women lack the rights to give their opinion. Whether women like it or not, the young girl will be forced into marriage. Women insisted that there is absolutely nothing that they can do to stop child marriages, because their voice is not considered in the community. This practice is also rooted in the culture and the community abides by it. Women fear taking action because the extended family members will beat and excommunicate her.

Decision Making at Home

Women are not allowed to make decisions for the family except decisions on what meals to be taken and to get food to feed the family. In fact, theirs is to obey the decisions made by men. Women are also not consulted in most of the family affairs. If a woman made any critical decision without the permission of her husband, the husband and brothers in-laws beat a woman and they may even chase her from the home.

Housing Land and Property

In this community, land is only owned by men. The family does not allow women to take the ownership of property, land and house. If a woman loses her husband, and doesn't have an elder son, control of property and land will be taken by the husband's brother immediately. The culture and laws do not support women to own properties. It only gives widows the right to own property, land and house if the widow has an elder son. If not, the late husband's brother will take control. The brother in-laws to the widow control everything, which belonged to her late husband. This makes it difficult for the children to have a happy life or to access their fathers' property. For this reason, women have to struggle to collect firewood from the bush to sell in the market for them to get money for food for their children. The women believed that there is need for creating awareness in the community women rights to land and property. They also recommended capacity building for male leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women on women rights.

Role of Women in Leadership

Women are not involved in major leadership positions especially like Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS), local authorities etc. These major positions in the community are reserved for men, even if the men are not educated. Educated women in the community are not given any leadership roles, if they offer a woman a good position, she will just be volunteering without any incentive. Their men counterparts receive incentives so women just end up being limited to domestic work. Women are also not involved in decision making in Mathiang Payam. For example, in matters concerning marriage, the family does not give an opportunity for women to express themselves. For this reason, women do not feel valued in this community. Most women are not educated and their husbands do not allow them to go to any public gathering or to address people. According to their culture, women have no rights to decide and its only their husbands who make decisions concerning them. Lack of education, culture, and control by husbands remain the greatest barriers in women participating in leadership and decision making. The women recommended Awareness raising in the community on women rights to leadership and decision making, capacity building and training for women and men to understand the important of involving women in leadership position so that women can participate in community leadership, politics and government

Redress Mechanisms

In case of a problem facing women, there is no redress mechanisms. Women do not talk to anyone about the problems they experience. They may talk to their parents or friends but all are helpless. When assaulted, women talk to fellow women about it, but they don't get the support that they need because there are no policies put in place to address women issues. Violence against women/ assault is not resolved because no one is available to solve these issues in the community. It is for this reason that women sometimes do not report these cases. Women do nothing but just continue with their normal duties and responsibilities because community will not support them any case against a man. Other women decide to commit suicide by hanging themselves in the bush. Relief international is the only facility in Mathiang that assist women who have been assaulted. However, it does not handle cases related to rape. Instead, they refer these cases to Maban County which would require a woman to walk for four days before arriving there. The facilities are not easy to reach since they are located very far. The community lacks facilities that offer counselling psychosocial support or in-kind assistance to women survivors. The women suffer when they are raped or beaten by their husbands because they have no one to run to for counselling.

Summary of Findings

- 1** Rights denial: women are not allowed to own lands in this community.
- 2** Domestic violence is common within the community because it has something to do with the culture inherited from grandfathers and ancestors.
- 3** Sexual violence is also another issue in this community. Women are not safe when moving from area to another.
- 4** Women are not allowed to make decisions at family and community level. They are also not allowed to participate in leadership positions.
- 5** GBV issues are common in Longechuk County where by women lack the rights to live their lives freely.
- 6** There were cases of forced and child marriages in all the Bomas and payams as reported by women FGD participants.
- 7** Intimate partner violence is also common in this community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1** There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in the greater Longechuk community to handle GBV cases.
- 2** Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 3** There is need for women and girl's friendly spaces so women can go and express their issues and learn from each other experience.
- 4** Need for capacity building and training on women rights to be offered to parents, local leaders police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 5** Conduct awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on rights violations,
- 6** GBV and challenge negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership.
- 7** Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
Engaging women in small income generating activities to empower them

Findings from Women FGD August



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women: Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan

Date: 27th August, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 27th August, 2020 from 4.00pm to 4.55pm. Twelve women attended the meeting with all of them coming from the host community. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longgechuk County.

General security

Women said they were not safe in greater Longechuk especially when moving from one place to another. They faced problems on their way to fetch water and collect firewood. They would often be harassed and abused sexually and sometimes physically. They said there were a lot of GBV cases that happened in the community e.g. rape and an example of a case that happened in March 2020 was given. They said a woman was raped by a young man on her way from Mathiang to Palkach Boma. It was in the evening hours and nobody took the matter into consideration. The same thing happened in the second week of August, 2020 where a pregnant woman was raped on her way from Pelweang Boma to Mathiang town during food distribution. This happened at around 9.00am. She was rushed to Mathiang hospital for treatment though the case was reported to the police. The perpetrator was later arrested and jailed. According to the women, the community was not safe because rape cases were many. People were however not reporting because it was shameful especially when it happened to girls. Most girls would not get married because of the rape encounter so most families would prefer keeping it silent.

The participants further said that women faced problems at distribution points. Men harassed them and sometimes took what they would have acquired. They added that sometimes the men would collude with the food and NFI distributers to falsely tell the women that their cards were expired so as to take everything that would be meant for them. Some men would hide along the roads to forcefully snatch women their items. The bad thing according to the women is that nobody stood for them in all the frustrations. It was however highlighted that the elderly and people with disabilities were helped by their relatives during distribution either by escorting them or by picking the items on their behalf.

Women said that men felt happy when they beat them and children because it was a routine for them to get drunk and cause problems when they returned home. Culturally, this was a way they showed that there was a man in the home. They also said that men economically frustrated them by taking all the money they made through collection and selling of firewood or other items. Men would demand the small money to go and drink alcohol or take tea with other men in the market.

Therefore, to create a safe environment for women, they believed creation of awareness in the community against rape, physical violence and economic violence would help. They also recommended establishment of youth centers so that the youth would get busy in the center rather than going to market and drink alcohol and abuse drugs.

WASH related protection Concerns

Women said they sometimes fought because of new or old issues that they would be having with neighbours. This usually happened at water points especially when those they had issues with came and went ahead of them. They said they were not safe also on their way to water points. They faced challenges such as sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse. They however added that walking in groups was safer than walking as an individual especially in the evening hours. Perpetrators were; men, youth and armed youth who drink alcohol and those who were addicted to drugs including traders.

In such incidences, most women would not take action because the community would never support them and they said even reporting to the police was not helping because they never assisted pro bono. The women said they preferred keeping silent with their unfortunate encounters because it was worse when the community got to be aware of it because it would be so traumatizing because everybody would be talking about it including in the market places. Women believed creation of awareness in the community on effects of sexual assault would help minimize their problems. They also suggested the need for establishment of centers that would offer counselling and other PSS services to the victims

Domestic Violence

Women said the men did not treat them like human beings. They would work the whole day i.e. collect firewood, fetch water, cook and bath children but they would still be beaten up by their husbands without any concrete reasons. Even during sickness, the women said their husbands failed to take initiatives in finding them medication or taking them to hospital. Furthermore, they would not take an initiative in relieving them from household chores instead they will leave and come in the evening to ask for food. Failure to serve food leads to them being fought despite their sickness. Women felt men never valued them and living as a woman was just but a frustration. The women said elders occasionally took part in settling the misunderstanding though they always encouraged the women to persevere and understand that being beaten was part of life.

Intimate partner Violence

According to women, there was a lot of problems especially from men who were addicted to alcohol and drugs. They would ask for sexual relationship including when they were not willing for it and any resistance would result into fighting at night and such wouldn't be reported to anyone. Failure to perform other duties also provoked the men and they would be beaten. Physical and sexual violence was therefore common and women frequently suffered from it. Despite the assault, the women would not share with anybody because culturally they were household issues and there were no laws and policies that protected women from them.

Child marriage

Early child marriage was common in the community. A 17-year-old girl was forced into marriage with an old man in August at Kamboor Boma. The girl was schooling in Ethiopia and had just come home to visit her parents after the schools closed due to the pandemic. She was told to forget about education because the father had already taken a number of cows from the old man. Currently, the girl looks mentally disturbed because her behaviour became weird since she was given the news by the parents. Husbands or the fathers of the children were the final decision maker concerning under age marriages in the families. Women would not play any role in this because they were not allowed to participate or give their opinion on the issues and this meant that they were also not able even to stop it. The women added and said the biggest barrier was culture because it fully supported early marriages.

Decision making at home

The participants said women in the community were not allowed to participate in any issues related to decision making in the family because they were just house-keepers and had no voice to express their opinion. The family only allowed women to decide on the issues relating to food and taking care of the children at home. They would therefore not attempt to decide on anything related to household affairs without permission or in the absence of their husbands. Going against this would result into being beaten up or divorced.

Housing land and property

Men owned land in the community and not women. In cases where a man died without a son, the land and properties were inherited by the husband's brother immediately and who then becomes the controller of everything. The culture and laws did not support women to own properties. Widows would only have the right to ownership of property, land and house if they had a big son and if not the brother to the late husband takes control of everything. This had challenges according to the women because children suffered a lot because they would have no authority to sell whatever their father left them for upkeep. Most of them would therefore resort to collection and selling of firewood in the local market in order to buy food and other essential basic needs. To ensure women get their right to own property, women believed awareness raising in the community about women rights would help and it would be more effective to target men leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women.

Role of women in leadership

The participants said the local authorities involved women in small leadership positions in the community for example they were always given chance to become Boma women leader. Other big positions such as Payam leader or Payam administrator were however not given to women despite the level of education a woman would have attained. Those who got a chance to work in higher positions only worked as volunteers without any incentives. Salaries went to the men. Women were also not involved in decision making in the community e.g. issues related to marriage or even cattle raiding. They were not allowed to talk about it despite having good solutions to the problems. Women were also not allowed to talk in public meetings and give suggestions. They only had some small freedom when it comes to determining the type of food to be eaten in the house.

Most women were not educated and this limited them from taking up leadership positions because they were not aware of their rights. Husbands also never allowed women to take part in public issues or even speak in certain gatherings. According to the culture, husbands decided everything that a woman was supposed to do. To ensure women participation, the women recommended creation of awareness in the community on human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls, leaders and local authorities. According to them, this would help the community understand the important of involving women in leadership positions. They also suggested for women empowerment training on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress mechanisms

In the community, women had no one to talk to when they experience problems. They only shared their issues with close trusted friends and parents when they visit though it would just be for their information because they never helped in bringing a solution to their problems. Some women report to the Boma Women leader but she would not help because culturally the women were not allowed to express their grievances to the public. This included cases of violence/assault and it was said to be the reason as to why most women would prefer keeping the problems to themselves. Those who would be physically assaulted or raped sought help from Relief International Health facility in Mathiang Payam which is not very far from their Bomas. However, there were no facilities that offered services or support to women survivors in the community in terms of counselling or even PSS.

Summary of findings

- Women are sexually harassed on their way to water points and while fetching firewood
- Women have got no right to land, housing and property ownership
- Culture supports assault and violence against women
- The women lack proper channels to report their problems
- Culturally, women have got no chance to take up leadership position and contribute to decision making in the community

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 There is a need for awareness raising targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on human rights violations, GBV and negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership and decision making.
- 2 There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in greater community of Longechuk to handle GBV cases.
- 3 Empower women through small income generating activities to improve their living standard.
- 4 There is a need of women and girl's friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other experience.
- 5 Men and youth need to be train on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 6 Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders police personnel's, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 7 Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.

Findings from Women FGD September



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women: Lonechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan

Date: 11th September, 2020
Payam: Warweng
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 11th September, 2020 from 10.45am to 11.45am. Twelve women attended the discussions which were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General security

The participants said they were not safe in Werweng Payam because there was a lot of physical and sexual violence happening in the community especially when women move from one area to another or go collect firewood and fetch water from far places. They faced challenges on the way such as harassment and sexual abuse. On the last week of August 2020 there was a woman from Kuryith Boma of Werweng Payam who was badly beaten by a man on her way from Mathiang around evening hours, she was trying to rescue herself from being raped. This was reported to the police in Mathiang because Warweng does not have a police station. The perpetrator was arrested for seven days only. In April 2020, another woman was violated on her way after she had collected firewood in Wunikirr Boma. She met with a youth on the way who asked money. When she told him, she didn't have the money, the youth instead raped her. This happened in the morning hours though this one was not reported to the police.

Participants said they also had issues during distribution on their way from Mathiang. Due to the distance, some men hiding in the bushes took advantage by taking from them whatever they would have collected. They further reported that NFI were the most targeted because they would easily sell in the market or use in drinking alcohol. There were also a lot of frustrations in the distribution lines. Men would often come late and overtake them by lining up in front of them and they wouldn't speak about it for fear of being beaten up. The elderly and persons living with disabilities were assisted in collection of food and NFIs. Relatives would just take with them the distribution cards and receive the items on their behalf. Sometimes they would be helped to reach the distribution sites by children who pushed their wheel chairs or hold their hands to the sites. However, family members always accompanied them to carry the items.

Physical and sexual violence was everywhere including when they travelled to Maiwut county. Due to the political difference, women would mostly be allowed to pass after sexual demands from the guards at the border though men would just be killed. Economic violence at the household level was another challenge because men demanded a share of any money that would have been collected by the women despite the means. It was reported that the men would take up to half the money they would have struggled to get through collection and selling of firewood to just spend at the restaurant, drink alcohol and take tea at the market. According to them, nobody would help them out of their problems because the police also demanded money to seriously follow up a case. They however believed that awareness raising on the effects of physical violence, rape and economic violence would help change the perspective of the locals on women. They also recommended capacity building of men, youths, chiefs, police and local authorities on the rights of women.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Due to inadequate water, frequent conflicts have been reported at the water point. Warweng Payam has got one borehole at Mockley Boma that is shared by the rest of the Payams. As a result, congestions are witnessed daily. Families which are unable to keep up the competition for the limited resource tend to opt for rain water (during rainy season) or go up to Mathiang in order to fetch drinking water for the family. This long-distance travelling had implications according to the women. They reported to experience cases of sexual harassment and abuse along the way though they didn't know who to report to. The perpetrators were said to be armed youth, unarmed youth, men, soldiers, drunk men and traders. In addition, they said they had no motivation to report to the community because instead of comfort most people would turn against them and this was always shameful. Local policies to protect women were not there and they would most of the time suffer in silence. They however believed that awareness creation on the negative consequences of sexual harassment and assault would help change the society. They also suggested capacity building of leaders, local authority, chiefs and youths on the consequences of Gender Based Violence.

Domestic Violence

In the community, domestic violence was very common and women were the most affected. It was said that adolescent girls were more respected than women because they were a source of wealth. Women who had no girls would be beaten almost on a daily basis and this frustration had caused some of them to commit suicide. Boys would sometimes intervene to rescue their mothers from the fight which even causes more problems. Most of the time the elders settle the cases though in an unfair manner. When they find out that the problem was the man, they tend to encourage the family to stay peacefully but when it is the woman, she is thoroughly beaten. The woman in fact risks being divorced.

Intimate Partner Violence

Women reported that they frequently got beaten up by their husbands especially those who were alcoholic. This would be prompted by when men presumed the women had not performed certain duties. The women also said they would be too exhausted other times to have sex but the husbands would still demand for sexual relationship. "They can't even give us time to breastfeed our young children". Failure to honour to the demands often resulted into conflicts. Despite the violence, women persevered because they didn't have anyone to report to. The community believed men had rights over their wives. In fact, parents would often warn their daughters never to report their husbands anywhere about conflicts inside the house.

Child Marriage

The participants said forced child marriages were common and normal in their community because they also married people they had never known. According to them, girls had no chance to fall in love and marry whomever they chose. An example was given that a 13-year-old girl was forced into marrying an Ethiopian trader in 2019 because the old man had a lot of cows. The man was unfortunately killed on his way to Maiwut and the son had to inherit the girl as his wife. Another case happened in Kuryith Boma in the first weeks of September, 2020 where a 17-year-old girl from Benjiel Primary school was forced into marriage. The parents said she had become mature and after all schools had been closed due to Corona virus pandemic. Husbands and brother in-laws were the final decision makers concerning marriage issues and women had no rights to talk about it or give opinions. They therefore had no role to play in stopping early child marriage because culturally they had been restricted. An attempt to do so would result into the family beating the woman or chasing her away for good because of disrespecting the culture and beliefs and also disrespecting the husband and family.

Decision Making at Home

Women said they were not allowed to make any decisions in the family matters and men never consulted on anything. Women would only make decision freely when it came to what the family would eat, when to collect firewood and when to fetch water. They added that it was a form of taboo to make decisions in the absence of their husbands. In the case of a deceased husband, brother in-laws would make family decisions.

Housing Land and Property

Women were generally not allowed to own land or take ownership of property in Warweng Payam unless the husbands had passed on. Most property would however be controlled by a brother in-law. This situation was not being the same if the deceased left a mature son because he would directly inherit the father's property. It was added that it would always be frustrating and worse when a brother in-law inherits. The children drop out of school and getting even a meal a day becomes a problem. To sustain the family, the widows collect and sell firewood in order to feed the children. The women therefore recommended awareness raising in the community on the rights of women on owing property, land and housing. They also suggested the need for capacity building men leaders, local authorities, opinion leaders, chiefs and church leaders including women on the rights of women

Role of Women in Leadership

According to the participants, women were not involved in any big leadership position in the community especially positions like Local authorities such as commissioner, Director of Relief organization for South Sudan (ROSS) or even Payam leader. The positions were reserved for the men. For any big position, women worked as volunteers. This meant that men took all the incentives for the position and the reasons as to why they would just choose to stay at home. They were also not allowed to participate in decision making and/or give their opinion concerning certain issues such as revenge killings or marriage. Despite most women having not been educated, they believed they had good ideas that would help the community if they shared in public gatherings. However, this was not possible because they would never be allowed by their husbands to speak in any public gathering or in front of people. They recommended awareness raising in the community on the human rights and capacity building training for women and men to understand the important of involving women in leadership position.

Redress Mechanisms

Generally, women had no one to talk to in the community. They would attempt to share their concerns with close friends as well as parents but they would never get the support they would look forward to. This happened also when the issues were reported to the chiefs and the women leaders in Mathiang (Warweng doesn't have women leader). According to them, the slow action was as a result of lack of policies put in place to address the issues of women. As a result, a few women resort to commit suicide due to frustrations. Warweng has no health facility so most people would go to Mathiang Payam for treatment when assaulted. Other survivor services were also not available (counselling services and PSS).

Summary of Findings

Women are not allowed to own land in the community and domestic violence was a common practice that seemed ingrained in the local culture. Practically there's no evidence of any rights that would be accorded to women in the community. Women would undergo domestic violence, intimate partner violence and sexual violence outside the home set up and there is little or no step that would be taken/holding perpetrators accountable. The women have no authority to participate and influence decision making on issues that would be affecting the society.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1** There is need for women and girl's friendly spaces in Warweng Payam so women can go and express their issues and learn from each other's experiences
- 2** Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them on family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarreling or beating their wives.
- 3** There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in Warweng Payam to handle GBV cases.
- 4** There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on rights violations, GBV, negative cultural practices, behaviors and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership.
- 5** Youth and men need to be aware and trained on negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
- 6** Engaging women in small income generating activities to empower them and build their capacity would be key in ensuring their independence.
- 7** Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders, police personnel's, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary court.

Findings from Women FGD October



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women: Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan

Date: 16th October, 2020
Payam: Jangok
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 16th of October, 2020 in Jangok Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 women between the age of 24 and 40 years from 5 Bomas (Riangchusk, Wunthow, Tochwangthok, Lualthiang and Dulthiang). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

General Security

Women said their safety in Jangok Payam was not guaranteed. Movement from one place to the other during collection of firewood and fetching water was risky due to incidences of sexual harassment, sexual abuse and physical assault. According to them, there were a lot of GBV cases happening in the community and they gave an example that in July, 2019 a woman was raped by a man on her way from Warweng Payam to Jangok Payam though it was not reported. They added that rape cases were high though most victims never reported. This is because such an encounter was shameful especially when it happened to a girl. This would bring shame to the entire family because the girl would easily end up not getting married. A lot of risks were also associated with distribution of food and NFIs. Men hiding in the bushes were reported to snatch items from women after distribution especially the NFIs. According to the women, this would happen but never would it be followed up by the local authority. The elderly and persons with disabilities were however supported by family members to reach the distribution sites or sometimes family members would carry with them their distribution cards to receive the items on their behalf.

Economic violence was real and was reported to have badly affected women. Most of the time, the women would struggle to make ends meet probably by fetching firewood for sell in the local market so as to buy food for the children. When men return home at the end of the day, they shamelessly demanded a share of the small money they would have acquired from the market. Denying them would result into violence or even sometimes stopping the women from the business. Due to lack of other options, these women are forced to give in and share for the sake of the family. Because there was nobody to report to when such cases occurred, they recommended on the need to create awareness in the community on the importance of economically empowering and supporting women, sensitizing the community on the consequences of physical and economic violence, capacity building youth and men on the health and physical consequences of rape and establishment of a youth center to engage youth in constructive issues instead of idling in the market and drinking alcohol.

WASH related protection Concerns

Fighting at water points was a daily routine because there was only one borehole in Dulthiang Boma that served all the five Bomas in Jangok. Conflicts were said to arise due to congestion at the water point and by trying put some order into who had come first to fetch water. They also added and said they were using the water point to fight those who had wronged them especially neighbours so they would wait until they meet at the water point. Such issues were not reported because they were considered normal with women. Safety to the water point was however not guaranteed due to experiences of sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, Sexual exploitation and other forms of abuses from men, unarmed and armed youth, drug addicts and local traders. Due to lack of support in the community, most women wouldn't report such occurrences. They also said such issues were not handled with the privacy it deserved in the community because the issue would be talked about and the shame would be quite traumatizing and destructive to the victims. They however recommended awareness creation to sensitize the community on the effects of sexual assault. They also suggested the need for counselling services and PSS or organization to deal with such issues in the community.

Domestic Violence

Most domestic violence was said to involve husbands and their wives and not children. It was said that women would do everything including fetching water, collecting firewood, bathing children and cooking but the husbands would still come and beat them up without any reason. They said they were not complaining about it because culturally, it was a sign of love. Some women would even intentionally cause problems so as to be beaten up. They would then share with friends about the fight. The fights were therefore not being resolved in any way. They said the fights didn't need to be resolved especially the one between wife and husband because it was culturally accepted.

Intimate Partner Violence

The women said intimate partner violence was the order of the day. According to them, physical and sexual violence had now become part of life because of the frequency at which it was happening in the community. Men would force them into having sex even when they were not willing and there would be nothing they would do especially the alcoholic and drug addicts. They would instead be beaten up silently in the rooms. Such assault would not be reported anywhere because of their limited rights of expression and additionally, they would not report due to lack of established structures to handle their concerns with their husband.

Child Marriage

According to the women, forced and early child marriages were not very common in the community and had not been heard of for many years though their husbands/fathers to the girls were the final decision makers concerning any marriage arrangements in the family. They also added by saying that as women, they were never allowed to take any roles in such negotiations.

Decision Making at Home

Women said they were not allowed to participate in any decision-making process in the family. Perhaps when it comes to food and taking care of the children at home. They therefore would never attempt to make any critical decisions in the household because they already knew their limits and consequences when they went overboard.

Housing land and property

It was very clear from the women that Housing, land and property were things that men owned and not women. They further made clarifications on this by explaining that in case of an unfortunate death of a husband, all the property would be immediately inherited and controlled by a brother to the husband especially when the deceased didn't have a son at his death and the culture and laws of the society supported this type of arrangement. However, according to the women, this was unfair to the affected families because a lot of challenges would come along this. Children of the deceased most times experienced a lot of difficulties to cope with life and this was due to the denied access to their father's property. Due to limited options, many families would resort to venturing into other means of acquiring income such as collection and selling of firewood from the forest in order to buy food for the children and take care of other needs in the house. Women hence believed that the need for vigorous awareness creation in the community to at least advocate for the rights of women towards ownership of property, land and housing was a solution to take up. They also suggested on the need to capacity build men leaders, local authority, chiefs, opinion leaders and church leaders including women on the need to fight for the rights of the women

Role of Women in Leadership

It was reiterated that the community had had a belief since time immemorial that women could not lead. As a result, the local authority did not involve women in Jangok in any leadership position other than the Boma Women's Leader and based on the women information, this had been the case regardless of the level of education a woman would be having. When it came to community decision making, they said women were not involved in any way and issues related to marriage and cattle raiding were given as examples. In such meetings, women were never allowed to talk in fact, they were not expected to speak publicly in any community meetings. Culture was therefore a barrier towards effective women participation in meetings and including leadership positions i.e. it was said that their husbands would never allow them speak in any public gathering or talk in front of the people. "according to our culture, we have no rights. Our husbands decide everything concerning us" they said. Creation of awareness in the community on human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls, leaders and local authorities would help sensitize the community to understand the importance of women involvement in leadership positions. They also suggested for frequent women empowerment trainings on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress mechanisms

It was learned that women had no one to talk to in the community when they have problems apart from very close friends or parents who most of the time never helped other than encouraging them to persevere. The women would also report to the Boma Women Leader but she would rarely assist or support due to strong cultural barriers that denied women the right of expression. This was said to have led into many cases of unresolved domestic violence/assault which had made women choose not to report similar occurrences because nobody cared or took them seriously. However, women who became physically assaulted or raped were said to be receiving help from a Relief International Health Facility, the only one in Jangok. Though, the women added that the issues were handled with a lot of privacy and were never reported especially those that involved rape due to the shame that came with it. They also highlighted further that the RI facility was accessible. The only problem was that there were no other facilities that supported women survivors with services such as Counselling and PSS.

Summary of Findings

GBV issues are common in Jangok Payam and women have got no rights over most issues. All payams were reported to have had cases of rape though the cases were less reported due to shame that victims experienced. Intimate partner violence is the order of the day since it seemed heavily supported by the culture. Safety of women was also not guaranteed due to sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence on the way either from fetching water or firewood. Their level of decision making was also very low, perhaps inside the house but not in the community issues. The women were also not allowed to take up any senior leadership positions and would not be allowed to talk in any public meetings. The women however mentioned that cases of forced child marriage were not very common in the community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1** Youth and men need awareness and training on the negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic violence.
- 2** There is a need for case management and psychosocial support services in Jangok Payam to handle GBV cases.
- 3** There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on human rights violations and GBV as well as challenge the negative cultural practices, behaviors and social norms that discriminated women and girls against land ownership and decision making.
- 4** Need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 5** There is a need to establish more women and girls' friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other's experience.
- 6** Men and youth need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 7** There is need to empower women through small income generating activities to improve their standards of living.

Findings from Women FGD November



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Right Violation of Women: Longechuk County Upper Nile Report, South Sudan

Date: 18th November , 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 18th of November, 2020 in Mathiang Payam Community Centre. The discussion was attended by 12 women between the age of 24 and 40 years from 11 Bomas (Kuembor, New site, Paytath, Phalang B, Phalang A, Matar, Boryuwen, Palkach, Relbek, Palkach, and Mathiang Boma). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County, Mathiang Payam.

General Security

Safety in Mathiang Payam was not okay as per the women. Collection of firewood and fetching water were risky for women because they would encounter cases of sexual harassment and assault from drunk men and youths. They also reported other GBV related cases which used to happen on daily basis in the community, for example, they reported that on 14th October, 2020, a pregnant woman who was seven months in her pregnancy was raped by a drunk man on her way from Wunkir Boma to Mathiang Payam while returning from the forest after collecting firewood at around 6:27PM. This was reported to local authority who ordered police to go and search for the perpetrator, but they could not find him from the scene. The women FGD participants reported that there are other GBV related risks which are not even reported because authority seemed to be reluctant to take action on them when they were reported by the GBV survivors. This had contributed to less reporting of such cases to the local leaders including the protection unit/ police. Another factor that contributed to less reporting of such cases was negative traditional mind-set that looked at issues that affected women as normal.

There were other risks which were reported by the women to be affecting them and this was distribution of food and NFIs in Mathiang Payam. Women reported that when they go to receive food and NFIS, they experienced a lot of challenges that included; walking long distances, disrespect from men whenever they queued up even with expectant women. There was no particular arrangement for them including lactating mothers, people with special needs and the elderly. Women said that men used to beat them whenever they try to express their opinions when mistreated during food and NFIS distributions. Women also stated that there were no enough NFIs in Mathiang. A few were distributed by ADRA and they included blankets and soaps. Dignity kits which they considered very important for personal hygiene during their monthly periods also missed. Women participants requested CH to provide them with dignity kits, blankets, cooking utensils, water jerry cans for storing enough water and soaps. The women also reported that the elderly and persons with disabilities were occasionally supported by family members to reach distribution sites and sometimes family members would carry their distribution cards with them to receive the items on their behalf. Women reported that economic violence was widely practiced by their husbands' almost on daily basis and this had badly affected them emotionally. As a way to make ends meet for their families, most women would run up and down gathering wild fruits and fetching of firewood for sell in the local market so as to buy food for their children. Unfortunately, men less supported this initiative and would authoritatively demanded to be shown the money that was generated by their wives through the selling of the items. Women who refused to cooperate on these demands were beaten seriously even in front of the children.

Women stated that they showed their husbands the money they had generated from selling of firewood to avoid being physically assaulted. Women complained that they do not have someone in the community to report GBV related cases in their families, and that is why they always give in to their husbands' demands even if they were against their will. They recommended that there is a need to raise awareness in the community on the importance of economic empowerment for women and supporting them when they are physically or emotionally assaulted by their men, this awareness should target mostly men who are married and youth should be capacitated on negative consequences of rape and establishment of a youth center to engage youth through in door games and outdoor games plus other engagements on constructive issues instead of idling in the market and drinking alcohol.

WASH Related Protection Concerns

Women reported that there used to be fighting every day at the water points among women and girls who used to go and fetch water for their households at the boreholes. Due to the limited boreholes in Mathiang, congestion was experienced during water collection on a daily basis. It was said that there was one borehole in each Boma that served an estimated 300 households. The shortage of enough boreholes is a contributing factor to women and girls fighting at the boreholes. Issues related to water conflicts used to be reported to water management committee in the community, but they seemed to take matters very lightly. Women said they raised the complains of water shortage due to lack of enough boreholes and daily conflicts at water points but no action had taken by the committee and this had angered the women and they stopped reporting cases to the committee since they seemed to be irresponsible with their don't care attitudes. Women and girls who came from far villages reported that their Safety to the water points was not okay due to experiences of sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, Sexual exploitation from local traders and other forms of abuses from drunk men and irresponsible youths who seemed to be drug addicts. Due to lack of support in the community, most women and girls did not report such occurrences although they were affecting them on daily basis. However, the women recommended awareness creation to sensitize the community on the effects of sexual assault and other forms of GBV related issues that were affecting women and girls in the community every day. They also proposed the need for group and individual counselling services and PSS targeting women, girls, men and youth in the community.

Domestic Violence

Women reported that domestic violence was normal and very common in Mathiang. They said they were overburdened with household responsibilities and duties such as fetching firewood, gathering wild fruits, cooking, looking after children etc. but when one's husband returned home at the end of the day while drunk, most of them would be abused and sometimes beaten up when they try to defend themselves. Most domestic violence was said to involve husbands and their wives and only on few cases would children be involved. They said they were not complaining about this domestic violence related cases because they were culturally acceptable and it was a sign of love for a woman to be beaten by her husband. "If your husband does not beat you people consider it that he does not love you according to our culture, for example, some women here in Mathiang intentionally cause problems in their homes so as to be beaten up by their husbands and then they feel good about the fight." One woman said. They would then share the story of the fight with their friends. The fights at household level were therefore not being resolved in any way in all Mathiang because the fights did not need to be resolved by outsiders especially the one between wives and husbands. This was culturally acceptable and considered as family matters that should be handled behind the doors.

Intimate Partner Violence

The women participants said intimate partner violence was very common in their homes and in the community as well. According to them, physical and sexual violence had now become part of life because of the frequency at which it was happening in the community. Men would force women to have sex with them even when they were not willing and there would be nothing they could do especially the alcoholic and drug addicts, if they refused, they would instead be beaten up silently in the rooms mostly at night while everyone had slept. Such assault would not be reported anywhere because of their limited rights of expression and additionally, they would not report due to lack of established structures to handle their concerns with their husbands plus negative cultural perception that recommended or condoned intimate partner violence.

Child Marriage

According to the women FGD participants, forced and early child marriages were not very common in the community this year, and had not been heard of for all these months though such marriages used to be arranged by their husbands/fathers to the girls who were the final decision makers concerning any marriage arrangements in the family. They also stated that as women, they were never allowed to take any roles in marital arrangements and negotiation which were considered as men responsibilities.

Decision Making at Home

Women reported that they were not allowed to participate in any decision-making process in the family affairs, and they only made decisions related to what kind of food to be cooked each day and taking care of the children at home. They therefore would never attempt to make any critical decisions in the household because they already knew their limits and consequences when they made decisions that could only be made by their husbands.

Housing Land and Property

Women stated it very clearly that issues to do with the Housing, land and property were things that men owned and not women according to their culture. They further made clarifications on this by explaining that in case of an unfortunate death of a husband, all the property would be immediately inherited and controlled by the elder brother to the dead husband especially when the deceased didn't have a son at his death and the culture and laws of the society supported this type of arrangement. However, according to the women, this was unfair to the affected families because a lot of challenges would come along this. Children of the deceased most times experienced a lot of difficulties to cope with life and this was due to the denied access to their father's property. Due to limited options, many families would resort to venturing into other means of acquiring income such as gathering of wild fruits, collection and selling of firewood from the forest in order to buy food for the children and take care of other family needs in the house. Women hence believed that there is a need for strong awareness creation in the community to at least advocate for the rights of women towards ownership of property, land and housing. They also suggested on the need to capacity build men leaders, local authority, chiefs, opinion leaders, and church leaders including women on the need to fight for the rights of the women and other vulnerable groups in the Bomas and Payams.

Role of Women in Leadership

Women reported that the community had had a belief since time in memorial that women were not fit to hold leadership positions because they were considered lesser humans and not strong enough to make bold decisions when things get worse in the community. The women in Mathiang appreciated the current care taker commission and particularly the Payam administrator of Mathiang who had appointed 10 women to lead 10 Bomas in Mathiang. The local authority also involved women in Mathiang in any leadership position other than the Boma Women's Leader and based on the women information, this had been the case regardless of the level of education a woman would be having.

Following interventions by Coalition for Humanity, the situation in Mathiang Payam has now improved, some women are now being involved. Issues related to marriage and cattle raiding were given as examples where women were consulted, when such issues arose and there was need for collective decision by Payam leaders. In such meetings, women were allowed to talk in freely in any community meetings. Culture was therefore a barrier towards effective women participation in meetings as women stated during the discussion. They described their culture as something that only favoured men and not women when it came to leadership positions and decision makings in the community. "According to our culture, we have no rights. Our husbands decide everything concerning us" they said. Women proposed creation of awareness in the community on respect for human rights targeting men, women, boys, girls and leaders and local authorities would help sensitize the community to understand the important of women involvement in leadership positions. They also suggested for frequent women empowerment trainings on leadership skills to improve their standard in community.

Redress Mechanisms

Women regretted that they had no one to talk to in the community when they have problems apart from very close friends or parents who most of the time never helped other than encouraging them to persevere. The women would also report to the Boma Women Leader but she would rarely assist or support due to strong cultural barriers that denied women the right of expression. This was said to have led into many cases of unresolved domestic violence/assault which had made women choose not to report similar occurrences because nobody cared or took them seriously. However, women who became physically assaulted or raped were said to be receiving help from a Relief International Health Facility, Women Aid Vision, and Coalition for Humanity in Mathiang. Though, the women added that the issues were handled with a lot of privacy and were never reported especially those that involved rape due to the shame that came with it. They also highlighted further that the RI facility was accessible. The only problem was that there were no other facilities that supported women survivors with medical services but group and individual Counselling and PSS used to be provided by WAV and CH GBV focal points.

Summary of Findings

GBV issues are common in Mathiang Payam and women have got no rights over such issues. All Bomas were reported to have had cases of sexual harassment, physical assault, and abuses though the cases were less reported due to shame that victims experienced when others learned about such cases. Intimate partner violence is the order of the day since it seemed heavily supported by the culture and women seem to feel comfortable about it. Safety of women was also not guaranteed due to sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence on the way either from fetching water, gathering wild fruits, or collecting firewood. Their level of decision making was also very low, perhaps inside the house but not in the community issues. The women were also allowed to take up any senior leadership positions and were allowed to talk in any public meetings nowadays compare to the past when they used not be allowed to be leaders and part of decisions making in the community. The women however mentioned that cases of forced child marriage were not very common in the community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 There is need to raise awareness for the youth and men and also train them on the negative impacts of sexual violence, domestic violence, rape, and economic violence.
- 2 There is a need to strengthen case management and psychosocial support services which used to be provided by WAV and CH through their GBV focal points in Mathiang Payam to handle GBV cases effectively.
- 3 There is a need for awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on respect for human rights violations and GBV issues as well as challenge the negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminated women and girls against land ownership and decision making.
- 4 There is need for capacity building training on human rights for parents, local leaders, police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts.
- 5 There is a need to establish women and girls' friendly spaces to support women and let them express their issues and learn from each other's experience.
- 6 Men who are married need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 7 There is need to empower women through small income generating activities to improve their standards of living

8.2 ANNEX 2 MONTHLY GIRLS FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from girls FGD July



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violations of Girls:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 25/7/2020
State: Upper Nile County: Longechuk
Payam: Mathiang

Background

Coalition for Humanity is a National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built 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 Behavior 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 state, Longechuk County. A meeting was held with girls between the age of 12 and 17 years, the discussions sort to assess any protection concerns. The girls were asked questions about general safety and security of girls, access to education status, menstrual hygiene, forced marriages, sexual exploitation and abuse and domestic violence. This report is part of monthly series of FGDs and KIIs conducted in Longechuk to identify protection concerns and right violations among girls.

General Safety and Security

Mathiang payam is not safe for girls, the area is experiencing the following protection concerns; gender-based violence, lack of food, lack of water and sanitation, lack of medical care, child protection issues, sexual exploitation and abuse, land & property issues as well as domestic violence. The schoolgirls in Mathiang area are not safe especially if they have to walk long distances to school and back home. This is because they normally experience harassment and sexual abuse from youths, men and traders. A recent example is a 14-year-old girl in Matoor boma who was last year raped by a trader in the morning on her way to school. It is for this reason that at the age of 10 years, school girls are forced to drop out of school as their fathers consider it a way of protecting them from sexual harassment and abuse.

The girls in this area are unsafe while collecting firewood and fetching water. In June 2020, an 11-year-old girl from Mathiang town was raped while collecting firewood in a bush in Matoor Boma. The perpetrator was a 23-year-old man. The incident, which happened in the morning hours, was reported to Relief International and to the police. As a way of resolving the issue, the family of the perpetrator was fined a number of cows. The girl was later taken to Ethiopia for checkup and medication since there was no better health facility in the area to handle the case. A separate incident happened on 26/07/2020 where a 16-year-old girl was raped in Phalang-A Boma on her way to collecting firewood around 10am. On the following day, it was reported that the girl had disappeared from the house and her whereabouts still unknown as at August 5th 2020

Menstrual Hygiene

Girls understand menstrual hygiene to be a way of keeping oneself clean during menstruation period by using sanitary pads. They also believe sanitary pads give them freedom to carry out normal activities that include going to school without worries. Girls in Mathiang lack sanitary pads and are forced to put on so many cloths during menstruation, which makes going to school impossible. The lack of sanitary pads makes them miss school during period days. Sanitary pads are not readily available and there is no one distributing them to the girls. The main challenge that girls in Mathiang area face during menstruation is lack of sanitary pads. For those who can afford to buy, it is a challenge especially during the rainy season since getting to the market is difficult because the road from Mathiang town to Ethiopia is impassable. Consequently, this prevents girls from doing their daily activities as well as going to school. The girls recommended provision and distribution of sanitary pads in the schools and even in the community because other girls are not accessing school.

Access to Education

The girls in Mathiang Payam believe that education is very important because by acquiring the knowledge, a girl will be able to differentiate right from wrong. Education will change their behavior and attitude. They also believe that an educated girl can support her family financially and support her community as well as advocate for equal rights. In this community, it is believed that fathers are responsible for the girls' education and they are the final decision makers about girl child education. Most of the families in Mathiang area do not allow girls to go to school. For the few that take girls to school, these schools are far, girls have to walk long distances to school. Some girls have been forced to drop out of school to work and support their families. Girls are considered a source of wealth, and are married off early. This is because most parents are ignorant on the benefits of education. The lack of education for girls has contributed to girls lacking capacity to improve their standards of living, the poor living conditions in turn, forces the girls to get married at an early age.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage in Mathiang area is common since the girls do not have any say on matters marriage. Their fathers are the final decision makers, and they do without seeking the consent from the girls. Marriage in this community is just an exchange for dowry and the way of being rich without considering the feelings of the girl. The girls believe that the appropriate age for getting married is 20 years old. In the recent past, a father married off her 10-year-old girl because he was poor and wanted to enrich himself by getting many cows that were paid as dowry. The girls believe that fathers and uncles are the decision makers concerning child marriages. Girls in Mathiang are aware that early marriages affect the life of girls in the community by ending their education prematurely. The girls' freedom of association is limited since she is not allowed to mingle with other girls of her age and who are not yet married. The girls' work is limited to domestic duties alone and she is isolated from the peers.

The girls strongly believe that there is no positive impact of early marriages in this community but a number of negative impacts. Girls are often married off to men who are much older. Their mothers-in-laws also physically abuse the girls. The girls in this community are helpless when they are forced to get married because they fear being beaten by their brothers. Other girls commit suicide or disappear from the village. There is no one in Mathiang community that the girls can talk to when they are forced into marriage since it is culturally accepted. Once the father decides it, the girls do not have an option other than to get married. The girls suggested awareness creation in the community on the effect of early marriages and importance of education targeting the parents, leaders, local authorities, chiefs e.t.c

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

At times, girls in Matiang area experience Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) from teachers who ask for sexual act to let them pass in the subjects they teach. Traders also abuse girls sexually because of what they can give in return. In exchange for sex, girls in this community are given money to buy the basic things like underwear, clothes, shoes etc. because their parents do not provide these needs to them. This forces girls to accept any help from any person in return for sex. A trader, men who drink alcohol, youth and even school teachers engage sexually with school girls in exchange for money. The girls believed that engagement in sex can lead to early pregnancies, dropping out of school and infected with HIV.

Girls are not able to refuse such sexual advances because of poverty; they feel they are doing it for their own benefit since their parents cannot afford to fully fill their needs at home. The girls in this community do not share SEA issues with the adults because they consider it shameful and that people in this community do not keep secrets. They prefer to share only with friends because they trust each other. The girls suggested that there is need to support girls involved in SEA and prevent it from further happening in Mathiang community. They recommended the need for awareness creation in the community about SEA and its effects.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is common in Mathiang. It happens when children fail to perform daily duties in the family. Sometimes conflict is caused by children and mothers not performing all the domestic work especially providing food. Girls and mothers are beaten. For instance, the father does not help in doing any domestic work but instead goes to the market place and stays in the restaurants, tea & alcohol places. At the end of the day, he expects the mothers and girls to cook good food for them while they do not contribute any money or doing anything to bring food home. Therefore, when they get no food for them to eat they beat the girls together with their mothers. Whenever there is dispute between parents and children, elders and uncles handle disputes between parents and their girls, sometimes they do not handle it fairly especially if the parents were the cause of the problem they will still blame it on the children. If a parent in Mathiang abuses a girl, no one in the community will support or assist her at all. The whole community will stand against her by blaming her that she has no respect for her parents even when the girl was on the right. Therefore, the girls suffer a lot because there is no one they can express their pain to. The girls recommended massive awareness creation in the community concerning domestic violence and child rights

Summary of Findings

Mathiang payam in Longechuck County, Upper Nile state is unsafe for girl child, girls are experiencing, gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, forced marriages. Fathers and uncles are the key decision makers on marriage issues. Girls are married off at an early age and are not given an opportunity to go to school. The girls themselves believe that 20 years old is the best age to get married. Sexual exploitation and abuse, rape is rampant in the area. The fear for girls being abused has led to parents withdrawing them from school. Girls lack access to sanitary pads,

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 There is need for awareness raising in the community about SEA and SEA capacity building training targeting teachers, men, youth local authorities, chiefs etc.
- 2 There is need for Provision of dignity kits in the schools or even in the community so that the adolescent girls practice their daily activities normally
- 3 There is need of massive awareness raising in the community concerning domestic violence, forced marriages and human and child rights and also capacity building training targeting men, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence in children.
- 4 There is a need for establishing women and girls friendly centre to respond and prevent GBV cases through case management, counselling and psychosocial support services.

Findings from girls FGD August



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violations of Girls: Longechuk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan Report

Date: 25th August, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 25th August, 2020 and twelve girls attended the meeting. All the girls came from the host community. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General safety and security

The security situation could not be guaranteed as safe according to the girls. This is because cases of cattle raiding and revenge killings had been experienced frequently between Mathiang Payam and Mading Payam of Nasir County. "People from Mading would come to Mathiang at night and move around looking for specific people from the community. If they find you on the way, they would ask you about your clan. When they find you being the target they take you and kill you in the bush as a way of revenging" they said. A number of concerns were also reported ranging from; lack of enough food, lack of sufficient water and sanitation, lack of medicine in the hospital (drugs spoiled after medicine soaked as a result of heavy rains), gender based violence, child protection issues and domestic violence. Going to school was a risk in itself because of the experiences girls encountered on the way such as harassment and sexual abuse from youths, men and traders. The girls had the same experience while collecting firewood and fetching water. Girls that had been seduced and refused to enter into the relationship were the most affected because the young men would ensure they find them by force through rape as well as beating them up in the bushes. In July, 2020 at around 6:30pm, a 17 years old girl who had been engaged to a certain man was raped on her way back from the water point in New side Boma. The repercussions were bad because the man who was to marry her declined after the disappointment. It was a big problem in the community and the family of the girl swore to look for the perpetrator and kill him. The case was not reported to any organization in the area because they wanted to solve it locally

Access to education

Education was important to the girls and they understood that those who were educated had a better chance to; support their families financially, initiate good plans for the community and give good advice for growth of the County and they would also be able to identify problems in the community and find solutions to those problems. It was also added that the educated had their attitudes and behavior changed and they also reasoned maturely. Fathers and uncles were responsible for the education of the children and would make most decisions concerning their daughters' education.

Other barriers also stopped girls from accessing education; long distances to school which were not safe to the girls, lack of basic needs provision by parents e.g. shoes, school uniform, pens etc. other responsibilities at home to support the family and the tradition that girls were a source of wealth so they could be stopped at any level of their schooling and married off for cows. Little or no education badly affected the girls. They said uneducated had no capacity to improve their lives hence most of them ended up getting married early due to lack of options.

Menstrual hygiene

Menstrual hygiene meant taking good care of oneself during menstruation by showering twice a day when using sanitary pads. For those without access to sanitary pads, it would mean taking shower three times a day to keep clean all the time of the menstruation period. Pads were not readily available in the market because the girls would sometimes miss them. Most of these items were said to come from Ethiopia and their consistency was not guaranteed due to poor road networks especially during rainy seasons. This was the reason as to why many girls were facing challenges during menstruation and most of them would not go to school or even participate in other household chores until after the periods were over.

Forced marriage

Generally, early child marriages have been part of the community since and they frequently occur. As per the girls, it was normal and they had no voice over it. However, the right age for marriage according to them would be age 18-25 years old. The youngest age they had witnessed was 12 years old. This girl from Relbek Boma was forced into marriage so as to settle a case of rape that required a lot of cows in compensation. To solve this, the girl's family resorted to marrying off their daughter to the family of the rape victim to balance the matter. These decisions were made by the fathers of the girls.

However, the early marriages had consequences on the girls. They said they would miss the company of their childhood friends who were not yet married because of the extra responsibilities that they would have been added. They also reported that the first wives would beat them up when the girls failed to accomplish certain tasks as shall have been assigned. Unfortunately, the husbands never talked about it or even defend them. Education life would also end due to untimely responsibilities. There was therefore nothing positive about early child marriage. Some girls would even commit suicide due to frustrations. It was highlighted that these girls had no one to talk to because culturally, forced marriages were acceptable. Based on this, the girls believed a massive awareness raising in the community on the effects of early marriage and the importance of education would change their situation. The suggested targeting of parents, community leaders and the entire community members during sensitization.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Gifting for sexual return was said to be a usual phenomenon in the community. This was frequently perpetuated by men who were not relatives. They sometimes experienced SEA from the sellers in the market especially those who came from Ethiopia with a lot of goods. The traders ask for sex with the girls in exchange of goods at the shop. Teachers were also reported to award more marks to girls for sex. The gifts include; clothes, shoes, sandal and money to buy basic things that parents were not able to provide. Therefore, Youths, traders, men who drink alcohol and even school teachers engaged with girls in sex. This had negative impact to the girls because it led to early pregnancies and sometimes HIV infections which caused many girls to drop out of school. Girls cannot be blamed sometimes for this because poverty pushes them into such behavior. They said their fathers lacked resource to take care of them when it comes to the basic unavoidable needs. Due to tough consequences, most girls would choose not to report cases of sexual abuse. The only people they would attempt to talk to were close friends because other people would not keep their secrets. They however believed awareness raising would help address the consequences of SEA issues in the community

Domestic violence

Fighting in the families was a normal thing in Mathiang and would sometimes happen without any concrete reasons. Collection of firewood until late would lead to caning by brothers and fathers despite the long distances travelled. The girls said this type of frustrations and lack of freedom had affected them physically and mentally and most of them performed poorly in school. Other conflicts would come as a result of lack of food at home. Despite not providing, fathers would demand for food which when it misses girls and their mothers are beaten up. Girls who got abused had nowhere to go because nobody would want to listen to them because of the community mentality that everything that a parent does was right and justifiable. To stop the violence against girls, awareness raising in the community was recommended to address issues concerning child rights and domestic violence. Capacity building training for fathers, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader and church leaders was also suggested so as to initiate a critical understanding about the effect of domestic violence on children.

Summary of findings

- 1 GBV issues are common in Longechuk County and girls have no rights over their lives.
- 2 Girls are sexually assaulted and they receive no assistance because of how the society has positioned the female gender
- 3 Domestic violence is a family issue that no outsider is allowed to interfere with. It is culturally normal and acceptable
- 4 Girls lack sanitary pads. Most of these items are not readily available even at the local market which has resulted into many frustrations during menstrual periods. Girls literally miss school because of periods.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** There is a need for establishing women and girls' friendly centers to respond and prevent GBV cases through case management, counselling and psychosocial support services.
- 2** Need for massive awareness raising in the community concerning domestic violence, forced marriage and human and child rights violation and also conducting capacity building training on human rights and protection concerns targeting men, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence in children.
- 3** Need to actively create awareness in the community about effects of SEA and capacity build the teachers, men, youth, local authorities and chiefs on the same.
- 4** Need for provision of dignity kits in the schools or even in the community so that the adolescent girls are able to fully attend school and practice their daily activities normally.

Findings from girls FGD September



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violations of Girls: Longechuk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan Report

Date: 10th September, 2020

Payam: Warweng

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 10th September, 2020 from 10.00am to 11.00am. Twelve girls from Benjiel, Mokley, Wunkiir and Kuryith Bomas attended the meeting. All the girls were from the host community and the discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

General safety and security

General security was normal though a number of protection concerns came up from the discussions; lack of food, lack of health facilities in Warweng, lack of clean and safe water, lack of hygiene and sanitation facilities, malnutrition and gender based violence issues e.g. rape. Due to distance, girls were not safe on their way to and back from school. In November, 2019, a 15-year-old girl from Mokley Boma was raped on her way back from school by a youth between Mathiang and Warweng Payam. She was rescued by an old man who informed the family and was rushed to Mathiang hospital for treatment. The police started a man hand for the perpetrator though he disappeared from the village up to date. The girls also hinted that the family was doing their own search for the perpetrator whom they would kill when they find. Insecurity was generally high for the girls during firewood collection and fetching water. In August, 2020, a 17-year-old girl was raped by an armed man while she collected firewood at around 10am in a nearby forest. It was highlighted that the man had threatened to shoot her if she had refused to cooperate. The case was reported to the police though they never followed up until the perpetrator left the village. The girls said he went to Maiwut County for fear of being killed by the survivor's family.

Access to education

The girls' education perspective was encouraging. They believed that successful future was dependent on education since daily struggles of firewood collection, selling of items in the market for survival and fetching water from distant water points would end with education. They also believed educated girls were financially stable, helped their families and were empowered to differentiate good from bad. Fathers and uncles supported girls most in terms of education and their decision was final on whether a girl would continue with education or not. A lot of families apart from a few had their girls out of school and this is because most parents understood less about the importance of education. Local culture attributed a lot to girls not accessing education. Culturally, girls were a source of wealth for their fathers and they would do anything possible to keep the girls around including denying them education and marrying them off. Too much household responsibilities also contributed into girls staying home e.g. taking care of the siblings at the expense of education. The lack of education had affected many girls and they believed it had contributed into them not knowing their rights

Menstrual hygiene

In their own opinion menstrual hygiene meant taking good care of oneself by bathing twice a day i.e. morning and evening and putting on a sanitary pad during menstruation periods. They also added that for those who would not afford to have the pads, menstrual hygiene would mean staying in the house/sleeping the whole day and bathing three times a day. Sanitary pads were inaccessible in Warweng unless one walked to Mathiang town which was also not a guarantee to get. During rainy seasons, this would worsen since the items would not be moved from Ethiopia to Longechuk due to poor road accessibility. It was therefore evident that there were no pads in the community and most girls would not use anything during their periods other than sleeping and bathing. This meant that they would neither engage in any daily activities nor go to school until the periods were over. They however believed that any provision or distribution of sanitary pads by a well-wisher in schools or even in the community would relieve them the stress of having to stay at home during the periods

Forced marriage

Culturally, forced marriage was acceptable. It was a normal and common family affair and girls had no right to determine whom and when they would marry. In fact, to be born a first born daughter was unfortunate because they would marry them off as early as they reached 12 years of age in order to bring dowry that would be used to get wives for the elder brothers. Eighteen (18) years and above was however the best age for girls to get married. This was not the case for a 13-year-old girl in Benjiel Boma who was forced into getting married to an old man in July 2020 so her father could get himself the fourth wife from her dowry. The father, brothers and uncles were key decision makers on who and when girls were supposed to get married. Early forced marriage affected girls because once married, their social life changed completely. They would no longer associate with their unmarried friends in the community despite being the same age.

The girls also added that early marriage ended their education life forever because they would have been handed over full family responsibilities of looking for firewood, cooking and raising children. Therefore, the girls believed there was nothing positive about marrying early instead a lot of negative aspects befell their lives e.g. the girls experienced birth complications due to undeveloped reproductive systems, a lot of them became mentally sick due to the trauma and frustrations and they also got physically violated by mother-in-laws and first wives in the family due to their subordinate status. Most girls would not do anything about the forced marriages because of the possible beatings from their brothers and fathers. However, the few who would not persevere were reported to commit suicide or disappear from the village. Unfortunately, the girls reported not to have anybody to report to about their frustrations because marrying them off was completely a family affair and they had no voice over it. They however believed that awareness creation through sensitization of the community on the effects of early marriages and informing the community about the importance of educated girls would have an impact over time even if it wouldn't be felt immediately. Based on this they recommended parents, leaders, local authorities and chiefs to be targeted.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Gifts were given by men for sexual favours. The girls reiterated that refusing the gifts would not help because the men would still go ahead and rape them especially when they found themselves cornered in certain places like when they collect firewood from the forest. The gifts included money as well as material items from the shop. Perpetrators were mentioned to be armed and unarmed youths, alcoholic men, traders and teachers. The aftermath of this was said to be pregnancy, dropping out of school and Sexually Transmitted Infections such as HIV which lead most girls into committing suicide.

According to the girls, resisting some of the advancements was difficult due to lack of certain basic needs that parents would be unable to afford/provide. These issues were not shared with anybody apart from close friends because the society would expose them something they said they wouldn't bare the shame. They recommended awareness raising in the community about SEA and its effect and SEA capacity building training for teachers, men and youths.

Domestic violence

A lot of domestic violence was said to be happening among parents and the genesis was when fathers came home drunk. The girls said they would always look for petty issues to fight them and their mothers. This had affected children mentally including their performance in school. Some children were stressed up and always lived in fear. The disputes would be settled by elders or uncles if they reached certain extents though they were occasionally unfairly resolved. Abused girls at home had no one to stand for them since parents were always right and blames often times went back to them as children who had no respect for their parents. The girls however recommended massive awareness raising in the community concerning domestic violence and child rights. They also suggested capacity building training for their fathers, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence on children.

Summary of findings

- 1 Forced marriages and domestic violence are culturally acceptable hence there are no formal structures handling grievances from girls
- 2 Girls are sexually exploited and abused in the community by men, youths, traders and teachers who take advantage of their vulnerability
- 3 Girls have got the desire for education but they are limited by negative cultural beliefs. No one including the local authority have come out strongly to advocate for their rights to education
- 4 Girls have got limited channels to report Gender Based Violence issues that affect them
Girls lack sanitary pads and there is nothing they use during menses apart from sleeping and bathing. This denies them the opportunity to go to school during menses as well as performing other daily duties

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** There is need for massive awareness raising in the community about the effects of domestic violence, forced marriages and human and child rights violation.
- 2** Need for capacity building training targeting men, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence in children.
- 3** Need for support and provision of dignity kits for adolescent girls in school and in the community to ensure they don't miss going to school during menses and can also comfortably perform their duties while at home.
- 4** There is need for awareness raising in the community about PSEA for girls
- 5** There would be need for SEA capacity building training that would target teachers, men, youths, local authorities and chiefs
- 6** There is a need for establishing women and girls' friendly centers to respond and prevent GBV cases through case management, counselling and psychosocial support services.

Findings from girls FGD October



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violations of Girls: Longechuk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan Report

Date: 20th October, 2020

Payam: Jangok

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Jangok Payam on 20th October, 2020. Twelve girls attended the meeting. All the girls were from the host community and the discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General safety and security

The general security was normal however, some protection concerns were mentioned as follows; there was lack of enough food in the homes, lack of sufficient clean and safe water, lack of good sanitation facilities at home and school, lack of medicine in the health facilities, GBV issues, child protection issues and domestic violence. There were safety concerns which the girls said to have mostly affected them on their way to and from school. Due to the long distances they covered from home to school, they would often be sexually harassed by youths and men. Safety was also not guaranteed during firewood collection and fetching of water. They gave an example of a 13-year-old girl who was raped in February, 2020. They said the young girl was raped on her way from the forest after collection of firewood in Tochwangthok Boma in the evening hours. The case was however never reported due to shame that would get the girl plus her family.

Access to education

Education was compared to light by the girls. They believed those who were educated were more exposed and had improved living standards. Educated girls were also able to help their families financially as well as make decisions that would assist the community at large. Fathers and uncles were said to be key decision makers concerning girls' education and whatever they decided was final. They however faced challenges relating to their studies; long distance walking to and from school and lack of basic needs e.g. shoes, school uniforms, pens etc. Lack of education was said to affect them because they lacked power to talk in the community meetings and they also ended up getting married early.

Menstrual Hygiene

Menstrual hygiene meant taking good care of oneself by bathing twice a day i.e. morning and evening and putting on a sanitary pad during menstruation periods. They also added that for those who would not afford to have the pads, menstrual hygiene would mean staying in the house/sleeping the whole day and bathing three times a day. Sanitary pads were inaccessible in Jangok unless one walked to Mathiang town which would roughly take someone 2 hours. Getting the pads was also not a guarantee and the situation was worse during the rainy season due to inaccessibility. It was therefore clear that there were no pads in the community including in school and most girls would not use anything during their periods other than sleeping and bathing. This meant that they would neither engage in any daily activities nor go to school until the periods were over. They however believed that any provision or distribution of sanitary pads by a well-wisher in schools or even in the community would help them have their comfort during menstruation.

Forced marriage

Early marriage was there but not very common as per the girls. They said they had no right to decide upon whom and when they were supposed to marry. Fathers were final decision makers on the issue of marriage and would arrange it whenever it pleased them. They preferred the age for marriage to be between 18-24 years of age. They had however not heard of any early marriages in the community below 18 years. Early marriage had some disadvantages. The girls said first wives of the husbands and the mother in-laws were very cruel and would most of the time beat up the young girls when they failed to accomplish certain tasks that would have been assigned to them. Unfortunately, the husbands never intervened. This also led to an end in education of the girls and the reason as to why many would resort to committing suicide or escape away from the community. Those who continued with the marriages were said to develop birth complications during delivery and was mostly very risky to their lives. Girls would often persevere in the marriages because of the beating that they would receive from brothers whenever they would hear that the girls were not willing to continue. The girls recommended on the need to raise awareness on the effects of forced marriages and the importance of education. This they suggested to target parents, community leaders and the community members at large.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

According to the girls, they had not experienced a case where girls had been given gifts by men who were not their relatives for sexual relationship. They however said there were a lot of rape cases that were caused by men and youths who drank alcohol though they had no one to report to. The girls recommended awareness raising in the community on the effects of sexual harassment and assault.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence was common according to the girls. Small mistakes like delaying in the forest during firewood collection would lead to being beaten up by brothers and fathers. They would less consider possible causes of the lateness such as long distances covered. The lack of freedom and unjustified punishment affected the girls mentally and physically and contributed to their poor performance in school. It was also added that lack of early food preparation would cause some fight especially when fathers came home drunk. Despite not having left money to buy food, the men would still demand to be provided with food. Elders and uncles mostly handled the issues. They however reiterated that the issues were most of the time not fairly settled because their fathers would always be favoured. In fact, they would always be blamed for the problems together with their mothers. Those who would be abused/beaten by parent would hence not take the complaints anywhere other than keeping it to themselves. The community had the mentality that anything that a parent would do to a child was always right and therefore nobody would dare go against. They however believed that awareness creation in the community concerning children rights would improve their status against domestic violence and other forms of abuses. They also recommended on the need for capacity building of fathers, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders and church leaders to under the effects of domestic violence on children.

Summary of findings

- 1 Forced marriages and domestic violence are culturally acceptable hence there are no formal structures handling grievances from girls
- 2 Girls have got the desire for education but they are limited by negative cultural beliefs. No one including the local authority have come out strongly to advocate for their rights to education
- 3 Girls have got limited channels to report Gender Based Violence issues that affect them
- 4 Girls lack sanitary pads and there is nothing they use during menses apart from sleeping and bathing. This denies them the opportunity to go to school during menses as well as performing other daily duties

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 There is need for massive awareness raising in the community about the effects of domestic violence, forced marriages and human and child rights violation.
- 2 Need for capacity building training targeting men, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence in children.
- 3 Need for support and provision of dignity kits for adolescent girls in school and in the community to ensure they don't miss going to school during menses and can also comfortably perform their duties while at home.
- 4 There is a need for establishing women and girls' friendly centres to respond and prevent GBV cases through case management, counselling and psychosocial support services.

Findings from girls FGD November



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violations of Girls: Longechuk County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan Report

Date: 20th November, 2020
Payam: Mathiang
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The girls' focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 20th November, 2020 and twelve girls attended the discussion. All the girls' participants came from the host community. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County- Mathiang Payam.

General safety and security

According to the girls the security situation could not be guaranteed as safe for them. This is because there were cases of cattle raiding and revenge killings which used to be experienced frequently between Mathiang Payam youth and Mading Payam of Nasir County which sometimes created fear for the girls to attend classes. According to girls "people from Mading would come to Mathiang at night and move around looking for specific people from the community. If they find you on the way at night, they would take you aside and ask you about your clan. When they find you belonged to the targeted clan in Mathiang, then they would take you and kill you in the bush as a way of revenging" they said. A number of concerns were also reported by the girls ranging from; lack of feeding program in the school, text books, lack of incentive for teachers to enable teach freely in the schools, lack of enough food in their families which made some to feel reluctant to attend classes, lack of sufficient water and sanitation in the school, school latrines have become old and could not be used by them, lack of dignity kits to be used by girls during their periods, among other concerns such as GBV related cases, child protection issues and domestic violence. Going to school was a risk in itself because of the experiences girls encountered on the way such as harassment and sexual abuse from youths and drunk men whom they meet with on their way to school and from school. They said that they used to report such incidences to the school administration and their parents but no action had been taken so far because issues affecting girls and women used to be taken very lightly by men and the local leaders due to cultural mindset that overlooked issues affecting women and girls in the community.

Access to education

Girls stated that education was important to them, and they understood that those who were educated had a better chance to; support their families financially, initiate good plans for the community and give good advice for growth of the County and they would also be able to identify problems in the community and find solutions to those problems. It was also added that the educated girls had their attitudes and behavior changed and they also reasoned maturely when people discussed important community concerns. According to girls, fathers and uncles were responsible for the education of the children and would make most decisions concerning their daughters' education.

Girls mentioned other barriers which also stopped girls from accessing education; long distances to school which were not safe to the girls, lack of basic needs provision by parents e.g. shoes, school uniform, pens, text books, etc. other responsibilities at home to support the family especially the responsibility to look after young ones, and the tradition that girls were a source of wealth so they could be stopped at any level of their schooling and married off for cows. Little or no education badly affected the girls. They said uneducated girls had no capacity to improve their lives hence most of them ended up getting married early due to lack of other available options.

Menstrual Hygiene

Girls defined menstrual hygiene as taking good care of oneself during menstruation by showering twice a day while using sanitary pads before and after showering. For those without access to sanitary pads, it would mean taking shower three times a day to keep clean all the time of the menstruation period. Sanitary pads were not readily available in Mathiang market because the girls would sometimes miss them. Most of these items were said to come from Juba, Ethiopia, and their consistency was not guaranteed due to poor road networks especially during rainy seasons. This was the reason as to why many girls were facing challenges during menstruation and most of them would not go to school or even participate in other household chores until after the periods were over. This contributed to girls performing poorly in school during exams.

Forced marriage

According to the girls, child marriages have been part of the community since and they frequently occur. As per the girls, it was normal and they had no voice over it. However, they said that the right age for marriage according to them would be age 18-25 years old. The youngest age they had witnessed was 13 years old being forced into marriage because her parents wanted cows, for example, in Matar Boma, a 13-year-old girl was forced into marriage by her parents so as to settle a case of her elder brother who was getting married, but the cows his parents had were not enough to pay the girls dowries. To solve this, the girl's parents decided to marrying off their daughter to the family of a man who was older than their daughter, but they didn't care because they were interested in his many cows which he was willing to offer them as long as they gave him the girl. These decisions were made by the fathers of the girls without even consulting her.

According to the girls; early marriages had consequences on the girls. They said they would miss the company of their childhood friends who were not yet married because of the extra responsibilities that they would have been added. They also reported that the first wives would beat them up when the girls failed to accomplish certain tasks as shall have been assigned since she has been married as second wife. The girls said there was therefore nothing positive about early child marriage. Some girls would even commit suicide due to frustrations while others disappeared from their husbands' homes for good. It was highlighted that these girls had no one to talk to because culturally, forced marriages were acceptable. Based on this, the girls believed a massive awareness raising in the community on the effects of early marriage and the importance of education would change people attitude in the community. This awareness should be targeting parents, community leaders, and the entire community members.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Giving of gifts with the intention for sexual return was said to be a usual practice in the community, but it used to be done secretly by traders, and leaders holding key positions in the community. This was frequently perpetuated by men who were not relatives to the girls. They sometimes experienced SEA from the sellers in the market especially those who came from Ethiopia and Sudan with a lot of goods. The traders ask for sex with the girls in exchange of goods at the shop or school materials. Teachers were also reported to award more marks to girls for sex mostly during exams. The gifts traders offer to girls include; clothes, shoes, sandals, and money to buy basic things that parents were not able to provide. Therefore, Youths, traders, and men who drink alcohol and even school teachers engaged with girls in sex secretly in the community, but no one reported them. This silent business had negative impact to the girls because it led to early pregnancies, drop out of school, and sometimes HIV infections which caused many girls to leave school. Girls couldn't be blamed sometimes for this because poverty pushed them into such behavior. They said their fathers lacked resource to take care of them when it comes to the basic unavoidable needs. Due to tough consequences, most girls would choose not to report cases of sexual abuse. The only people they would attempt to talk to were close friends because other people would not keep their secrets. They however believed awareness raising would help address the consequences of SEA issues in the community and establishing of PSEA focal points in the community and among the NGO partners in Mathiang Payam.

Domestic violence

According to girls, fighting in the families was a normal thing and would sometimes happen without any concrete reasons. Collection of firewood and fetching of water until late hours would lead to caning by brothers and fathers despite the long distances travelled. The girls said this type of frustrations and lack of freedom had affected them physically and mentally and most of them performed poorly in school. Other conflicts would come as a result of lack of food at home. Although some fathers do not provide anything in the house, they would demand for food which when it misses girls and their mothers are beaten up. Girls who got abused had nowhere to go because nobody would want to listen to them because of the community mentality that everything that a parent does was his rightful responsibility. To stop the violence against girls, awareness raising in the community was recommended to address issues concerning child rights and domestic violence. Capacity building training for fathers, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader and church leaders was also suggested so as to create a critical understanding about the effects of domestic violence on their children.

Summary of findings

- 1 GBV related issues are common in Mathiang Payam and girls have no rights over their lives since no one advocate against these issues.
- 2 Girls used to be sexually assaulted and they receive no assistance because of how the community overlook girls and women issues as normal.
- 3 Domestic violence is a family issue that no outsider is allowed to interfere with it because it is culturally normal and acceptable.
- 4 Girls lack sanitary pads when on their periods because they are not readily available even at the local market in Mathiang which has resulted into many frustrations during menstrual periods and girls end up missing school because of periods.
- 5 There are cases of SEA but they are done behind closed doors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1 Need for establishment of women and girls' friendly spaces to respond and prevent GBV related cases by conducting case management, counselling, and psychosocial support services.
- 2 There is need for massive awareness raising in the community concerning domestic violence, forced marriage, and respect for human and child rights violations, and also conducting capacity building training on the same targeting men, community leaders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leader, and church leaders to understand the effect of domestic violence in children.
- 3 There is need to actively create awareness in the community about effects of SEA and conduct capacity building for the teachers, men, youth, local authorities, and chiefs on the same.
- 4 There is need for provision of dignity kits in the schools or even in the community so that the adolescent girls are able to fully attend school and practice their daily activities freely.

8.3 ANNEX 3 MONTHLY BOYS FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Boys FGD July



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 21/7/2020
State: Upper Nile County: Longechuk
Payam: Mathiang

Background

Coalition for Humanity is a National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built 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 Behavior 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 Longechuk County. A meeting was held with Men between the age of 12 and 17 years, the discussion sort to asses any protection concerns. The boys were asked questions about child recruitment and abduction, child labour, access to education, forced marriage and domestic violence

General Safety and Child Abduction

There have not been recent attacks in the community in term of national conflict between government and opposition forces. Mathiang is not experiencing internal or external threats due to the ongoing peace between the government and the opposition parties who were signatories to the signed peace agreement that is now under implementation. There are no safety concerns for the boys on their way to schools In the past, boys were abducted and forcefully recruited into the army against their will and that of their parents as well.

This used to take place in the greater Longechuk Payams such as Mathiang, Pamach, Belwang, Jangok, and Malual. This has changed in the recent past since the peace agreement was signed. Currently there are no circumstances where boys voluntarily join child army or other militia groups during or after the war. Before August 2019, boys as young as 14 years old used to be recruited into both government and opposition forces as fighters in the Payams listed above.

Child Labour

There are many boys aged 13 years and below who are hired by local traders in Mathiang market to sell items like bread, biscuits, oil in gallons, sugar, salt, onions e.t.c. These traders pay the boys 50 birr a day. This was happening even before closure of schools due to Covid-19 pandemic. The boys engage in selling these goods as a means of earning a living because they lack good parental care. They always drop out of school because of poverty and lack of parental support. The boys believed that when schoolboys engage in work for money, they may end up becoming criminals in future because they will be living stressful lives without hope for a better tomorrow.

Access to Education

The boys believe that education is important. Education makes a person responsible and useful in the community because when a person is educated, he may become a doctor, teacher, engineer, mechanic, lawyer, a nurse, a scientist, etc and serve the community with his/her knowledge. They also believed that parents, especially fathers are responsible for the education of their children as they are the ones who make final decisions in the family. Most boys do not have access to education in this community because the financial abilities of families vary, some families are rich and their children comfortably go to school, while children/boys who come from poor families rarely attend schools, and if they do, they do not manage to complete their studies. Barriers to accessing education include; lack of parental support, long distances to school, no school feeding program, lack of scholastic materials, and lack of teachers in the school. Boys who lack education resort to crimes while others engage in small businesses. Other boys are taken advantage of by local traders to sell their goods while paying them very little money at the end of the day.

Forced Marriage

Forced or child marriages is a common practice in this community. For example, a 15-year old boy was forced to get married to a 19-year old girl by his parent in April 2020 in Malual payam. The boy was forced to respect the decision of his parent despite the fact that the girl was older than the boy. According to their culture, boys who go against their parents' decisions/wishes are ex-communicated in the community because they are seen as outcast members. They are not regarded as good boys. According to the boys in Mathiang, the most appropriate age for a man to get married is 20 years and above. However, the youngest age was a 15-year-old boy in Malual Payam who was forced to get married. Fathers are the ones who make decisions in the family for one to get married. They usually arrange for such marriage without consulting their children because they think they have the right to choose wives for their children. There are so many circumstances where boys have been forced to marry by their parents. While some respect these decisions by getting married, others run away to their uncles or grandmothers' homes. Others, even forced, refuse to go back to their biological parents.

The boys believed that it is good for boys to respect the choice of their parents, but they should not necessarily enter into forced/early marriages because it may lead to them running away from the home or even commit suicide. Other boys may run mad if they cannot manage such stress. Culturally, boys talk to their paternal or maternal uncles or grandmothers when they experience mistreatment from their parents. The uncle then calls the boy's father to his home to discuss reasons for mistreating his child. The boys' father would then explain the problem, and then the matter is resolved peacefully. This is the same if the boy ran to his grandmothers' home. The boy would later return home or remain at his uncles or grandmothers' home. The boys recommended that, the parents need to be made aware of child rights and the importance of an educated child to the family and community at large.

Domestic Violence

There are fights in the family between parents due to misunderstandings brought about by the father coming home drunk, or the mother failing to prepare food for the family on time and even the father failing to provide food for the family. Most of the conflict, fights and beating in the households are caused by misunderstandings between the husband and wife. A husband involving in excessive drinking becomes violent against his wife. Failure of a wife to prepare family meals on time angers the husband and he may beat her. Another source of conflict is failure of the father to provide food or clothing for the family. In case of fights, the paternal or maternal uncles or grandmothers settle disputes between boy child and his parents. If boys fall out with parents, their paternal uncle, maternal uncles and grandmothers on either from his mother or father sides all the times, assists them. The boys recommended that older community members should counsel them; paternal uncles or maternal uncles and their parents should be advised very strongly by community elders and other opinion leaders in the community to stop mistreating their children.

Summary of Findings

- 1 Child labor:** Young boys aged 13 years and below are being hired by local traders in Mathiang local market to sell their goods in small scale in the market or open places, and only pay them 50 Birr at the end of the day, which is exploitation and child abuse.
- 2 Limited access to education:** education is only accessible to children who come from rich families, while children who come from poor families and lack parental support while in school, drop out of school and end up in the market selling goods for local traders when they are supposed to be in school.
- 3 Child or forced marriage:** Child or forced marriages is a cultural practice in the community, and children as young as 15 years old are forced to marry by their parents. An incident happened in April 2020 in Malual Payam of Longechuk County. This is a violation of children rights, which needs to be addressed by creating awareness targeting parents, community elders and leaders who see it as a normal cultural practice.
- 4 Domestic violence:** Wives battering is considered here as a cultural practice that is even acceptable to the women themselves and no one takes it seriously. Parents quarrel and fights openly before their children and community considers it as a normal.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** Need to raise awareness on child labor or child rights targeting local traders in Mathiang Payam who hire and engage the young boys to sell their goods in the open market.
- 2** Provision of school feeding program to support children who come from poor families. Local authority and CH team in Juba and in the field to share this concern with World Vision that is in charge of General food distribution (GFD) in greater Longechuk so that they can provide school feeding program when schools reopen.
- 3** Creation of awareness on child or forced marriage targeting parents and community elders in order to change their cultural perspective that allows forced marriages among young children.
- 4** Raising awareness on domestic violence and the importance of respecting human rights especially respect for women rights putting into consideration that women rights are human rights that need to be respected by husbands and community.

Findings from Boys FGD August



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 31st August, 2020
Payam: Mathiang
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 31st August, 2020 from 4.00pm with twelve boys attending the meeting. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

There were no safety concerns for the boys on their way to schools. They moved freely to and from school without anyone disturbing them. There were also no security issues or fear of abduction or forceful recruitment into armed groups for the boys in the county. However, such cases of forceful recruitment of boys into army forces were common in greater Longechuk from late 2018 backwards especially during the war in South Sudan. Such practices had stopped since signing of the peace agreement between government and opposition forces in 2018. Voluntarily joining of the boys into child army or other militia groups were also not there.

Child labour

Child labour is common with Local traders in Mathiang Market. They hire boys aged 13 years and below for as low as 50 Birr per day. This was said to have been the practice even before schools got closed as a result of the Pandemic outbreak. The boys working for money have got high chances of dropping out of school and ending their education life. This is because they frequently miss school and perform poorly during exams hence most of them fail to attain the pass mark for promotion into the next class. Others were reported to become criminals in order to sustain their urge for money.

Access to education

Education makes a boy become a responsible person 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 in the community because the conditions of the families were not the same, some families were rich while others were poor and couldn't afford taking good care of their children educational needs. The barriers stopping boys from accessing education were lack of teachers to teach in the school, lack of school uniforms, lack of learning materials in cases where they were not provided by parents or supplied by schools and lack of peace in the community especially when communal violence occurred and incidences of engaging boys in income generating activities i.e. those who came from poor families, e.g., those who were being hired to sell goods in the local market during schooling time. Boys who lacked education became unhappy, idle and most likely resort to stealing other peoples' property or turn out to be criminals.

Forced marriage

Early marriage was a common practice in the community, for example, in the recent past, in July, 2018, a 15 years old girl was forced to marry a 35 years old man in Mathiang Payam and nothing was done about it because marriage was considered a family affair and girls or boys were expected to accept marriage arrangements that would be made by their parents. Those who resisted were bad children according to the parents and the community. The most appropriate age for a man to get marriage was 25 years and above as per the boys while for a girl they said 20 years old would be fine to get married. Fathers made marriage decisions in their families and they do not consult anyone for such arrangements. According to the boys, many had been forced into marriages they never wanted. This affected both boys and girls. As a result, unwilling ones' escaped to their paternal or maternal uncles while others disappear from their biological parents' homes and do not come back for good. However, the choice of the parents because they would thoroughly check the background of the lady they wanted their child to get marriage to. The bad side of this would be if both the boy and the girl were not willing. Paternal and maternal uncles or grandmothers played a critical part in settling a mistreatment dispute between boys and their parents. It was however recommended that parents need to be made aware about the importance of schooling for their children by explaining to them the importance of educated children.

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

Young people should be counselled by elderly community members such as their paternal uncles, maternal uncles and their grandmothers also their parents should be advised to treat their children well by the elderly people in the community and also local authority should take care of them by talking to their parents too to stop mistreating their children.

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** Need for community awareness on child labor or child rights targeting local traders in Mathiang Payam hiring and engaging young children in the open market and shop businesses.
- 2** Provision of school feeding program to support children who come from poor families would be key. Local authority and CH team in Juba and in the field to share this concern with World Vision who is in charge of
- 3** General food distribution (GFD) in greater Longechuk so that they can provide school feeding program for schools when they are reopened this year or next year.
- 4** There is need to raise public awareness on child or forced marriage targeting parents and community elders in order to change their mind set on forced marriage and violation of their children rights to marry at the right time and chose whom they want to marry.
- 5** Raising awareness on domestic violence; Focus should be on the importance of respecting human rights especially respect for women rights and peaceful settlement of family affairs between husbands and wives.

Findings from Boys FGD September



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation: Upper Nile State Report

Date: 16th September, 2020

Payam: Warweng

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted in Warweng Payam on 16th September, 2020 from 11.00am with twelve boys attending the meeting. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The security situation in Warweng was not stable always because of indirect revenge attacks or ambushes from Gaguang Nuer youth from Mading Payam in Nasir County. These youths terrorized people at night and would sometimes kill and leave. They would take with them cattle that would be found outside the family tukuls (Luaak). These would happen in the dawn when nobody would hear them. The boys reported that the local leaders in the area had tried several times to apprehend the criminals but it had not been successful. Boys had no safety concerns on their way to school apart from the long distance which was a challenge for those who came from Bomas that were far away e.g. Mokley and Kuryiith. Coming to Warweng Central Primary school located at the payam headquarters would take them roughly one and half hours walk from those Bomas.

Insecurity issues for boys had also not been experienced of late e.g. abduction or being forced into groups that they didn't like. However, this was the case in the recent past before the end of the civil war in South Sudan in late August, 2018. School boys would be recruited into armed groups to be used as fighters in order to defend the community against external aggression. In 2015, school boys from Warweng Central voluntarily joined militia groups because they wanted to defend their community since the war was affecting everyone including women, girls and young children. Local chiefs in the area were said to have mobilized their community members then by encouraging them to allow school children to take up arms and defend their communities since there was no proper government in place to protect civilians.

Child labour

A lot of families engaged boys with family businesses in the local market at the expense of schooling. For example, some boys would be told by their parents to take either one of the family cows, goats, or sheep and sell in Mathiang market so as to start some small family business. Others were hired by local traders to sell out their goods in small scale in the open air market and later pay them 50 Ethiopian Birr at the end of the day. This kind of engagement for money had a lot of negative impact on the life of the young boys because most of them ended up out of school. Some performed poorly because of not fully attending lessons while others resorted to criminal activities

Access to education

Boys understood that education made people become knowledgeable and intelligent in the community. It was also a source of employment because those who were educated worked anywhere in the world and 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 families in terms of meeting certain basic needs and some got discouraged by the long distances covered daily to reach school. It was also reported that lack of school feeding program, lack of scholastic materials and lack of enough teachers in school had also demotivated some of the boys from going to school.

Boys who lacked education resorted to crimes while others engaged in income generating activities. Some had been exploited and abused or hired to work only for their daily bread without a clear future plan.

Forced marriage

Forced or child marriages were a common practice in the community. They were frequently done by parents who had single sons. They pushed their children into early marriage in order to avoid using their resources/cows on extended family relatives whose children planned to marry. According to the boys, the most appropriate age for a man to get married was 18 years and above. However, in November, 2019 in Kuryiith Boma, a 16-year-old boy was forced to marry because he was the only son to the parents. The parents brought him a girl whom they claimed to have loved her because she was good mannered and they had known her parents for a long time. Hence, 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. Maternal and paternal uncles handled most cases of misunderstanding between children and their parents. The uncles often times listen to both the father and the son after which the conflict would be resolved peacefully. To show that the matter was completely settled, the boy usually returns home with the father. 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. They also suggested that their parents should be advised to stop mistreating them because it would allow them concentrate in constructive things including their education. They also said the local authority should take interest and intervene

Summary of findings

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

Access to education: The long distance from home to school prevents some children from accessing education

Domestic violence: Wives mistreatment exists in Warweng Payam and it is an acceptable cultural practice because no one takes it seriously including the local authority. Parents also quarrel and fights in front of their children without any problem because the community seems to have normalized it despite the effects to children.

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 would be need to construct more schools at the proximity of homes in order to reduce the distance that children cover to and from school daily
- 3 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.
- 4 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 FGD October



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation: Upper Nile State Report

Date: 20th October, 2020

Payam: Jangok

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 20th October, 2020 in Jangok Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 Boys (Hosts) from 11 Bomas (Kuembor, Palkack, Relbek, Mathiang, Boryuween, Paytath, Mataar, Kuembor, New Site, Phalang A and Phalang B). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The general security was said to be normal. The only issue was that some boys were not given chance to go to school because of a lot of work at home e.g. taking care of herds of cattle and goats. The parents would also interfere with schooling through forced early marriage arrangements. Safety concerns including walking to school were not reported. The only challenge was the long distance that would be covered daily since there was only one school in Jangok Payam which disadvantaged children from Bomas faraway from school e.g. Taywengthuok and Kamel. Walking would take about 30 to 40 minutes. They also highlighted that there were no insecurity issues for them in terms of fear of abduction or forceful recruitment into armed groups. This was however the case in the recent past during the 2013 crises in greater Longechuk including early 2018. It however stopped since signing of the peace agreement between government and opposition forces in 2018 and boys were no more volunteering to join the army and other militia groups at the expense of education.

Child labour

Boys as young as 11 years ran small businesses in the local market in mathiang. Instead of schooling, some had been hired by local traders who pay them 50Birr a day. The boys also helped their parents in taking the goats and cows to the market for sell and this had resulted into a lot of school drop outs as well as poor performance for those who were still attending school. 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 begun by recognizing 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. 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, the lack of teachers in school to provide them the correct learning, the long distances that would be covered from home to school on a daily basis (30-40min walk), lack of scholastic materials and early child labour at the expense of schooling. These challenges were said to have increased the rate of school drop outs who end up involving themselves in criminal activities in the society

Forced marriage

Early or child marriage was said to be a traditional practice that allowed children/boys who were born single to their families to get married early so that parents could avoid spending resources on other close relatives. The marriages were often arranged by parents even without the knowledge/consent of the children. Those who never complied were considered rude and outcasts from the community. According to the boys, the most appropriate age to get married would be from 20years and above. A young man in Nyathoan Boma had however been forced by the parents to get married in April, 2019 at 17 years of age. The boy was a single child to their parents hence the early arrangement. 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 while others resorted to committing suicide through hanging or even shooting themselves either with a gun or an arrow. In their own opinion, the choice of parents to arrange for marriage was good in the sense that they often did a thorough background check about the girl's family. The negative side was that sometimes the boys were not consulted to find out their readiness/willingness into marriage In search situations, the boys would talk to their paternal or maternal uncles who would always intervene in finding a solution. 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 and it mainly involved parents especially when a man came home drunk. They would always fight the boys' mothers 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. A part from the untimely preparation of meals, the fights were also caused by unfaithfulness between the couples, when the mothers support their daughters against marrying and poverty. Disputes amongst boys and parents were however frequently settled by either maternal or paternal uncles. Boys would be guided into doing the correct things while parents will always be asked to give a second chance on issues. 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 violently.

Summary of findings

- 1 Child labor: Due to lack of means and proper structures to govern children welfare, children rights are violated by their parents and local traders
- 2 Forced marriage: Forced/child marriage is an acceptable traditional practice that silently takes place in the families. It however has negative impact in the children involved
- 3 Access to education: Children who come from poor family backgrounds face challenges meeting their schooling needs e.g. fees, school uniforms, and other scholastic material needs because they lack parental support and are vulnerable to dropping out of school.
- 4 Domestic violence: Fighting in families is real and is as a result of small misunderstanding over petty family matters. Due to the cultural back up, men are the source of most violence cases

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 Need for provision of scholastic materials which would help support and keep children in school especially those who come from poor families
- 3 There would be need to raise awareness on the effects of child or forced marriages through targeting parents and community elders in order to change their mind set on the outdated cultural practice.
- 4 There would be need for awareness raising on effects domestic violence on the wellbeing of families

Findings from Boys FGD November



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation: Upper Nile State Report

Date: 17th November, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion with adolescent boys was conducted on 17th November, 2020 in Mathiang Payam Primary school. The discussion was attended by 12 Boys representing 11 Bomas of Mathiang (Kuembor, Palkach, Relbek, Mathiang, Boryuween, Paytath, Mataar, Payweng, New Site, Phalang A and Phalang B). The purpose of the discussions was to find out protection concerns affecting children access to education in Mathiang Payam and it was facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

Child recruitment and Abduction

The boys reported that the general security situation in Mathiang was normal. The issues they raised were that some of the girls and boys used not to be given chance by their parents to attend classes regularly due to home assignments which they were being given by their parents at the time they should be going to attend classes. They also stated that some of the boys missed lessons because they were engaged in the market by local traders to sell out their goods at 50 Birr payment per day only. Beside those issues, the boys reported that they used not to be taught regularly because some teachers did not come to school throughout the week since they didn't have incentives in terms of salary at the end of the month. This made them reluctant and would come to school whenever they wished. There was nothing the school administration would do about it. The boys also reported that some of their parents interfered with their studies by forcing them to get married before they completed their schooling. They reported these problems as major protection concerns that required advocacy from local authorities and child protection partners.

There were no safety concerns on the way to and from school as was reported by the boys. They had only two major concerns; long distances to and from school. Boys and girls promoted to primary 7 & 8 covered about 2 hours walk from Jangok and those from Warweng would do 1 hour daily to attend classes in Mathiang. Most of them would arrive when lessons would have already started or even ending. Another safety concern was the danger and risk of crossing rivers during the rainy season. Because of this, many children didn't attend school during the rainy seasons. The boys said the streams would get full and dangerous making it difficult for some children to attend school especially the young children. Some could only make it to school when accompanied by their parents.

Child labour

Boys as young as 13 years old were engaged in running small businesses in Mathiang market at the expense of schooling. They further reported that the issue had been shared with school administration including Parents Teachers Association (PTA) but no action had been taken to stop such exploitation of young boys because they used to be hired by local traders who only paid 50 Ethiopian Birr a day. Some helped their parents in selling out family cows, goats and sheep to the market and this had resulted into a lot of school drop outs as well as poor performance for those who attended school irregularly. The boys recommended that such issues needed the attention of partners like Coalition for Humanity (CH) and local leaders to jointly address the issues in the community with the help of local leaders, teachers and Parents Teachers Association.

Access to education

The boys stated that education made someone important in the community and also in the nation because an educated person could work anywhere in the world. They also added that educated children had a brighter future compared to those who were not educated because they would be employed and support their parents. Those who would not be educated would not support their parents financially instead they become burdens to their parents. It was therefore the responsibility of parents to take their children to school since they would benefit from their children schooling in future. The boys also mentioned that children who came from poor families rarely accomplished their studies due to lack of parental support with provision of basic needs such as food and educational needs while in school. They also underperformed due to lack of concentration in class. Other problems reported to have hindered boys from accessing education were; lack of enough teachers (due to lack of incentives for them), lack of scholastic materials, lack of feeding program in school, walking long distances to school, flooding of streams during rainy seasons and child labor (some children worked during school time). These challenges were reported to have increased the rate of school drop outs every year.

Forced marriage

Early or forced marriages were said to be a traditional practice that allowed children/boys who were born single to their families to get married early so that parents could avoid spending resources on other close relative's children. The marriages were arranged by one's parents without their consent. Parents believed they knew what was best for their children. It was therefore clear that children who went against their parents' wishes were considered indiscipline and would sometimes be ex-communicated by their parents and even the entire community. Those children who complied were praised for being a good example to the rest in the community. The boys further reported that forced marriages were real and normal since it was part of their culture. No one therefore cared about the unfairness to do with it not even the local authorities and the community elders. They had therefore not heard about it because they believed the arrangements were done silently without the knowledge of the public. Those who were not comfortable at all were said to escape from their homes, commit suicide through hanging on trees or even shoot themselves either with a gun or by piercing themselves with spears.

According to the boys' opinion, the choice of parents to arrange for marriage for them was good in the sense that they often did a thorough background check about the girl's family before proposing for such marriage but the bad side of it was that sometimes the boys were not consulted to find out their readiness/willingness into such marriages. In situations where the boys were unhappy, they would talk to their paternal or maternal uncles who would always intervene in to finding a solution by talking to their parents and advising them accordingly. For example, they would be told that educated children were able to get jobs and support them financially in case they wanted to stop them from continuing with their education.

Domestic violence

The boys reported that domestic violence was common in their families and it mainly involved parents especially when a man came home drunk or when a woman failed to carry out her duties and responsibilities as expected by her husband. Sometimes when the man come home drunk, he would always fight the wife without any reason at all. Sometimes failure to prepare the family meals early would trigger the fighting. According to the boys, such issues contributed to dropping out of school and poor performance. Besides the untimely preparation of family meals, the fights were also caused by unfaithfulness between the couples and when the mothers supported their daughters against marrying a man who would not be of their choice. The disputes amongst boys and parents were however frequently settled by either maternal or paternal uncles. The boys however recommended that creating awareness on peaceful coexistence between parents and children would be key as well as involving the local authority and community elders where children would be treated violently by their parents.

Summary of findings

- 1 There were issues of child labour as reported by the boys: This is due to the lack of child protection partner in Longechuk and proper structures in place that could govern children welfare, and as such children rights are being violated by parents and traders.
- 2 Forced and early marriage: Forced and child marriage were said to be an acceptable traditional practice that silently happened among many families. It however had negative impact in the children schooling.
- 3 Access to education: most children who came from poor family backgrounds faced many challenges meeting their schooling needs such as school fees, school uniforms, and other scholastic material because they lacked parental support and were vulnerable to dropping out of school or poorly perform in exams and home works given by teachers because they would less concentrate
- 4 Domestic violence: Boys reported that fighting in their families was real and was brought about by misunderstanding over small family matters between parents themselves and parents with the children.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 Need for community awareness on child labour through sensitization of parents and local traders on the effects of child labour and importance of education for their children.
- 2 There is need to provide incentive for teachers and also provision of scholastic materials which would help support and keep children in school especially those who lacked proper parental support.
- 3 There is need to raise awareness on the disadvantages of early or forced marriages through targeting parents, community elders and sensitization of local authority in order to change their mind set on the outdated cultural practices that are harmful to their children.
- 4 There is need for awareness raising on disadvantages of domestic violence in the families and importance of maintaining peace in the homes.

8.4 ANNEX 4 MONTHLY MEN FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Men FGD July



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 15/7/2020
State: Upper Nile County: Longechuk
Payam: Mathiang

Background

Coalition for Humanity is a National NGO (NNGO) with its headquarters in Juba. Coalition for Humanity's mission is to save lives, alleviate suffering, built 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 Behavior 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 Longechuk County. A meeting was held with Men between the age of 20 and 50 years, the discussion sort to asses any protection concerns. The men were asked questions about cattle raiding, revenge killings, communal conflict, housing, land and property, domestic violence, children access to education, forced marriages, and community-based protection mechanisms.

Cattle Raiding

There are cattle raiding cases in Mathiang payam. Cattle raiding is commonly carried out by the youth who are motivated by the desire to acquire cows for dowry payments, selling them to get money for purchasing guns and bullets for defending their communities or for raiding other nearby communities. Youth of both Longechuk and Ulang Counties of Upper Nile State are involved in this practice. In June 2020, youths from Ulang County attempted to carry out a cattle raid at Warweng Boma Cattle camp in Mathiang payam located at Southern part of Longechuk County, but those cattle raiders were repulsed by youth from Longechuk after discovering their plan. Men aged 25 years and above are the ones who get involved in cattle raiding due to their desire for cows for dowry payments, purchasing guns and bullets and for prestige. When a man owns a good number of cows in the community, people highly respect and value him. Poverty and prestige are the contributing factors or motivation for communities to get involved in cattle raiding especially youth who come from poor families.

Cattle raiding brings a lot of destruction to the communities; it brings loss of lives and property, limit mobility, causes inter communal violence which then result into lack of peace, creates disharmony and mistrust between neighboring communities, and due to cattle raiding, communities cannot move freely within their borders nor have joint trading or do any other business together. Now the communities in Longechuk cannot interact freely with the communities in Ulang County. The men suggested possible ways to resolve cattle raiding by inter communal dialogue, disarmament of youth who are involved in cattle raiding and creating employment opportunities for youth who might be idle by engaging them in income generating activities. Further, perpetrators of cattle raiding should be punished and raising awareness among youth and train them on the dangers of cattle raiding to change their attitudes and become responsible community members.

Revenge Killing

Unknown people innocently killed two students from Longechuk County. The students were trekking to Ethiopia for their studies since there is no high school in Longechuk. The incident took place in June 2020, in Koor, a border between Longechuk and Nasir County. When the youth from Longechuk learned of this incident, they suspected people from Ulang County to have been involved in the evil act. They then organized themselves to take revenge against a community in Nasir County since nobody claimed responsibility of these killings from that side. The angry youth were advised by community elders and local authorities from Longechuk not to take law into their hands, and persuaded them that community elders from both sides, should discuss the matter and they complied. The community suggested alternative ways to resolving revenge killings, for example, the incidence of the two boys who were killed by criminal people suspected to be from Nasir County was resolved peacefully by community elders through communal dialogue. The other way to resolve such conflict is to identify criminals from both communities and punish them through fine or imprisonment and to compensate the relatives of the deceased. If the perpetrators are identified, they should be taken to local courts for judgement. The community believed that people opt for revenge killings if; they experience delays from local authorities in taking action against the culprits, failure by the culprit to compensate the family of the deceased, if no reconciliation has taken place, and finally desire by the relative of the victim to seek justice which has been delayed or denied due to unfair case settlement in the local courts. They recommended that the best way to stop the cycle of revenge killings is quick action by local authorities i.e the chiefs and elders to arrest, imprison and fine the offenders if revenge killings occurs. The relatives of the deceased should be compensated immediately, promotion of communal dialogues in case of revenge killing incidences, and also punishing thoroughly culprits/perpetrators to serve as example to other people not to do the same in the community.

Communal Conflict

There was communal violence, which took place in Makuei Boma of Mathiang payam involving two clans because of a girl being impregnated. It was later stopped and resolved by local authorities after the elders reported the matter, and the boy who impregnated the girl was asked to marry the girl whom he accepted and his parents paid dowry to the girls' parents; that matter was peacefully settled. Most communal violence is caused by girls being impregnated by boys aged 19 years and above, excessive consumption of alcohol by some married men who end up being violent to their wives, fights over crowded water points mostly among elderly women and girls aged 17 years and above. Another cause is some men singing provocative songs which tend to target some individual members in the community who are angered and cause violence. communal violence is both internal and external. Internal issues include the earlier mentioned causes such as girls being impregnated, excessive consumption of alcohol, fighting over crowded water points and some men singing provocative songs targeting individuals in the community. The external issues include cattle raiding and revenge killing which is sometimes internal and external issue at the intercommunity borders. Community elders, local authorities, chiefs, opinion leaders, police, and religious leaders take lead in resolving the issues. The community suggested some workable solutions which include punishing offenders according to the local laws when found guilty. Compensating those who lost their loved ones because of revenge killings, conduct capacity building trainings for elders, chiefs, and local authorities on peaceful co-existence and peaceful resolution of conflicts and also promoting intercommunal dialogues within the communities. They also suggested a way forward to prevent communal violence includes; Imprisonment and punishing offenders, creating awareness in the community on issues that caused communal violence, training youth and elders on peaceful co-existence across different clans and communities.

Housing Land and Property

The community members mostly by married people, both men and women, owns the land. Unmarried women or mature girls are not allowed to own lands or property. The community rarely experiences conflict over land because there is enough land which is available for any family who might ask for one from community elders. In case of disputes over land, it is resolved in community in customary courts, and serious ones if emerges are resolved by paramount chiefs, chiefs, community elders and Commissioner. The leaders apply local laws governing land; women who are not married are not allowed to own land according to the community traditional practice. Unmarried women are believed to become immoral if allowed to owned lands and stay alone. If the host community received IDPS, returnees or refugees, they are taken to the local authority and accommodated by the community members when asked to do so and if they need land, community elders are asked to allocate the land for them.

Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence

Domestic violence or intimate violence is very common in all Bomas and payams in Longechuk County because it is a cultural practice starting from grandfathers up to date and it is not considered as a big problem when one is seen or heard beating or slapping his wife while they are at their homes. The leading causes of domestic violence in families includes; Lack of parental care for the children and poverty; due to the man's failure to provide food in the family. Another cause is excessive consumption of alcohol by irresponsible husbands who later turn violent against their wives. Women who side with their girls when they get pregnant and others who fail to perform their household duties also causes domestic violence. Additionally, when a woman commits adultery, it leads to domestic violence. The community suggested ways in which domestic violence can be minimized. There are many ways to minimize domestic violence such as providing parental care for the children, being faithful marriage partners, avoiding taking alcohol or drink responsibly and providing food for the family.

Children Access to Education

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their children go to school and are properly looked after and their educational needs are provided for. Both boys and girls have an equal opportunity to go to school in this community because many parents have known the importance of education for their children. The community recommended providing school feeding programs in schools, buying uniforms for children going to school, motivating girls through cash programming in schools and catering for other needs of the school going children by their parents and protecting the children from abuse, exploitation and child labour.

Child Forced Marriages

This is very common in this community; most parents force their girls into marriage at a tender age, sometimes, 16 and below. This is very common in the Bomas and villages where parents are ignorant of child rights and the importance of an educated child. In Mathiang, Malual Boma a 15-year-old boy was forced to get married to a 19-year-old girl simply because the parent said that they liked the girl and their boy should marry her although the girl is older than the boy, and such marriage was done without any objection from local authority and community elders because it has something to do with the community culture. Parents' desire for cows and property within the family are the key factors that force parents to marry off their daughters even if they are young or are not willing to marry the man who is not their choice. Some girls end up committing suicide, others disappear in the man's homes and this sometimes leads to stress, trauma and unhappiness in the marriage. The community also recommended Creating awareness in the community targeting parents on child rights violations especially child or early marriage and importance of respecting the decision of their children when it comes to choosing a marriage partner when one is grown up and interested in marriage

Community Based Protection Mechanisms

The community recommended some solutions to the challenges, that traditional authorities should punish parents who force their children into marriage against their will. Some chiefs settle disputes fairly while others are unfair. Some tend to favor others even when they are on the wrong. They need to be trained on how to resolve disputes fairly in accordance to available customary laws. The failure to handle disputes fairly leads to communal violence or clans breaking away from the same community. Unfair judgments result into communal violence and breaking away of some clan members. There is a functional police post with both male and female police officers. The community also recommended a training for Chiefs, police or judicial officers on the rule of law, peacebuilding and conflict resolution, land and property rights and human rights. Judgement is based on who is on the wrong according to the community laws, only in some limited cases, such unfair settlement of such issues happens.

Summary of Findings

- 1 There were cases of forced and child marriage almost in all the Bomas and payams as reported by men FGD participants.
- 2 Revenge killings, which are intercommunal between Longechuk Youth and Nasir youth, which happens mostly at the borders of these communities.
- 3 Lack of respecting womens' right to own lands: unmarried women or ladies are not allowed to own land in the community.
- 4 Cattle raiding: this is common between youth of Longechuk and Nasir Counties due to desire for cows which when sold for buying guns, bullets, and for dowry.
- 5 Domestic violence: FGD participants and KIIs reported that this is a common practice within the community because it has something to do with the culture received from grandfathers and ancestors.
- 6 Communal violence: this is caused by so many factors such as failure to compensate a deceased parent or relatives when there is revenge killing, adultery, impregnating of girl

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** Need for capacity building training on human rights targeting parents, local leaders police personnel, chiefs, paramount chiefs and customary courts officers.
- 2** Conduct awareness raising sessions targeting men, opinion leaders, chiefs and local leaders on rights violations and challenge negative cultural practices, behaviours and social norms that discriminates women and girls on land ownership.
- 3** Youth need to be trained on negative impacts of cattle raiding and peaceful co-existence with their neighbouring Counties.
- 4** Engaging youth on income generating activities so that they are not idle and think of going out for cattle raids.
- 5** Men need to be trained on the importance of respecting their wives, consulting them in family affairs and resolving family issues peacefully without quarrelling or beating their wives.
- 6** Need for capacity building trainings on peaceful co-existence and conflict resolutions on issues that caused communal violence such as adultery, impregnating of girls, unfair resolution of cases in local courts, failure to compensate a relatives or family whose person was killed as result of revenge killing, etc, this should target youth, men, chiefs, paramount chiefs and elders.

Findings from Men FGD August



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation: Upper Nile State Report

Date: 25th August, 2020
Payam: Mathiang
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 25th August, 2020 from 4.00pm to 4.55pm. Twelve men attended the meeting with all of them coming from the host community. The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Cattle Raiding

The community had cases of cattle raiding between Gajaak Nuer of Longechuk County and Gaguang Nuer of Nasir County within Upper Nile State. Male youth aged 19 years and above were largely involved in the cattle raiding. They did this to get cows for marriage, sell some out to buy guns and bullets and keep some of the cows to be a source of wealth. The negative effects of cattle raiding were stated as; deaths due to gunshots, loss of property, displacement, poverty especially among those whose cattle are taken by raiders, destruction, creates mistrust, derails peace initiatives between communities, causes communal violence and general insecurity including breaking trade ties among communities. A number of ways could be used to resolve the issues of cattle raiding. The recommendations were disarmament of the youth, creating more job opportunities for them, promoting intercommunal dialogue, engaging the youth in sporting activities, punishing perpetrators of cattle raiding, raising awareness in the community on the negative effects of cattle raiding and providing intercommunal borders security or protection by deploying police or other organized forces to patrol the community borders.

Revenge Killing

There was revenge killing in Mading Payam in July, 2019. One person was killed by someone from Udier Payam and the criminal escaped. Those of Mading payam planned for a revenge killing in November, 2019 and killed two innocent school boys who were trekking on foot from Longechuk county to Ethiopia for studies. The boys killing happened around Nyawiech Boma between Longechuk and Ethiopia border. The innocent boys were killed by gun shots. There were however better ways of resolving conflicts other than revenge killing. The participants proposed; intercommunal dialogues, intervention of local authority to settle such case through local courts, disarmament of the locals, compensation of the family of the deceased and punishing of revenge killings perpetrators through heavy fines and long-time imprisonment.

People opted for revenge killings due to the pain of losing loved ones, slow action to compensate the family of the deceased (100 cows) and unfair court judgement. To stop the cycle of revenge killings, the following were also recommended; promotion of intercommunal dialogue, immediate action by local authorities to arrest and imprison those who would have committed revenge killings, encouraging local chiefs and community elders to always advise the youth in their communities to live peacefully among themselves and raising awareness among the youth through community meetings.

Communal conflict

Of late there had been no cases of communal violence. The common causes of the violence were: revenge killings, cattle raiding, singing bad songs against others, men or women committing adultery, land disputes if not fairly settled in local courts, excessive consumption of local brews, impregnating of girls, rape or attempted rapes, and living a life of poverty and overcrowded water points that lead to disagreement among women. The male youth aged 19 years and above were the perpetrators and always took lead in all these forms of violence. The working solutions to restore peaceful co-existence would include; Punishing offenders, immediate Compensation of those who lost their loved ones as a result of revenge killings, conducting capacity building trainings for local courts and local elders, chiefs, and local authorities on fair judgements of community issues, conflict resolutions and mediation and importance of promoting peaceful co-existence and promoting intercommunal dialogues across counties. The way to prevent communal violence would include; peaceful settlement of cases such as revenge killings, cattle raids, immediate action of punishing committed crimes, raising awareness in the community on issues that caused communal violence, training youth and elders on peaceful co-existence across different communities and counties.

Housing land and property

The land is owned by the community, and those allowed to own land were mature people who were married and had families. However, unmarried women or mature girls were not allowed to own land or property because it was believed they would fall into the temptation of prostitution when they are on their own. Recently, in August 2020, a piece of land had a dispute in Mathiang market. The matter was referred to the local court who intervened and resolved the dispute peacefully by returning the piece of land to the rightful owner. Disputes over land are resolved in customary courts, and most serious ones are resolved by the county Commissioner who is also the highest authority at the county level. Local laws that govern lands, property and housing also existed though there was no provision in the law that allowed unmarried women to own lands or property. All land and settlement arrangements relating to the IDPs, returnees or refugees were handled by the local authority. They have always been given temporary places to stay. However, village elders would be instructed to allocate permanent settlement when the local authority gets convinced that the IDPs, Returnees and refugees had stayed longer than enough because they simply become part and parcel of the community.

Domestic/intimate partner violence

Intimate partner violence was part of the society and would be caused by; alcoholism, poverty, failure of women to respond to sexual demands by the husband, laziness and suspected cases of adultery. These issues could be minimized when; partners embrace faithfulness, men reduce their levels of alcoholism, women become responsible and take good care of the family and when men embrace conversation when it comes to sexual matters.

Children access to education

All children had equal rights to schooling and parents facilitated. This was the case because most parents had started knowing the importance of education. The case was different before when boys were more provided the opportunity compared to girls. To sustain the gains, there would be need for the local authority to develop policies that would protect the right of children to education. Basic provision of needs will also be made compulsory e.g. provision of school uniforms, motivation of girls through cash programming and provision of school feeding program to children.

Forced marriages

A 17-year-old girl was forced to get married to a 32-year-old man in May, 2020 in Relbek Boma in Mathiang Payam. The local authority did not have anything to do about it because it was a family matter. This cultural practice had a lot of negative impact but the victims received less attention from the society. The men however believed that traditional authorities had roles in creating protective environment (Community based protection mechanisms). Traditional authorities or community elders should punish parents who force their children into marriage at tender age or found violating their rights. However, some chiefs settled disputes fairly while others made wrong judgements. Some were biased when settling cases while others settled the cases fairly. The unfair judgement resulted into communal violence and rejection of those judging cases in local courts. Men therefore recommended on the need for training of authorities on the rule of law, peace building and conflict resolution, land and property rights policy according to South Sudan laws and awareness on respect of human right.

Summary of the findings

- 1 Presence of forced marriage was common in almost all Bomas and payams as reported by men FGD participants and no one could interfere with it because it was culturally acceptable.
- 2 Revenge killings were active which is intercommunal across nearing in Udier Payam of Longechuk and Mading Payam of Nasir County
- 3 There is violation of unmarried women rights to own lands, housing and property in the community.
- 4 Cattle raiding is common between Gajaak Nuer and Gajiook Nuer within the same state.
- 5 Domestic violence: FGD participants and KII reported that this is a common practice and culture supported i.e. nothing could be done despite being unfair.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** Need to conduct capacity building training on respect for human rights including forced marriage targeting married men, community elders and local courts.
- 2** Conduct awareness raising sessions against revenge killings.
- 3** Raise awareness among youth on negative impacts of cattle raiding
- 4** Engage the youth on sporting activities such as outdoor games and indoor games to divert their attention on cattle raiding and avoiding idleness.
- 5** Raise awareness among married men on the importance of respecting their wives.

Findings from Men FGD September



Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation: Upper Nile State Report

Date: 10th September, 2020
Payam: Warweng
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 10th September, 2020 from 4.00 pm to 4.55pm. Twelve men attended the meeting and discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Cattle Raiding

There were cattle raiding cases between Gaguang Nuer of Mading Payam of Nasir County and the Gajaak Nuer of Warweng payam of Longechuk County. In April 28th 2020, youth from Mading Payam came at dawn to attack one of the cattle camps called Lang, and went with over 370 cows. Warweng youth had no intelligence about the attack and they lost all the cows. Males aged 28 years and above are most involved in the raids. The motivation is for them to get more cows used during marriage to pay dowry, buy guns and bullets by selling them and others would use them for prestige/ to show wealth. Cattle raiding was dangerous according to the men because it brought; death, destruction of property, displacement of people, lack of intercommunal peace and insecurity, contributed to poverty especially when one lost his cattle which could have been the only source of livelihoods. However, cattle raiding conflicts could be resolved through; deployment of police or other organized forces at intercommunal borders to patrol, disarmament of youth, creating employment for idle youth in the community, engaging youth in indoors and outdoors sporting activities and promoting intercommunal dialogue between communities where cattle raiding take place.

Revenge Killing

The men reiterated that they had witnessed one case of revenge killing in the month of July, 2019 in Mading payam of Nasir County. One person was killed by someone from Udier Payam and the criminal left and was not found hence those of Mading payam planned for a revenge killing on July, 2020 and killed 2 innocent people at Kuryiith Boma of Warweng and the criminal sneaked away before they were caught by the police who had been informed at Payam headquarters about the incidence 30 minutes after the killing. A number of alternative ways for resolving revenge killings were mentioned such as intercommunal dialogues and intervention of local chiefs to settle the cases through customary courts. For example, a revenge killing attack which led to death of two innocent school children in Koor, a border between Mading Payam and Warweng Payam was resolved peacefully by elders from both sides of the community. People opted for revenge killings due to anger for loss of loved ones, failure of criminal to show up and compensate the relatives/parents of the deceased and the desire to seek justice when courts settle the revenge killing cases unfairly. The best way to stop the cycle of revenge killings would however be to promote; intercommunal dialogue, immediate arrest and imprisonment of people who would have committed capital crimes such as the revenge killings and rapes, and recommending community elders to always encourage youth and entire community to live peacefully among themselves, and raising awareness about the consequences in community meetings.

Communal conflict

Communal conflicts and violence had not been witnessed. The common causes were however; revenge killings, cattle raids, men or women caught committing adultery, land disputes if they were not fairly settled in local courts, excessive consumption of local brewerries, impregnating of girls, rape or attempted rapes, and poverty which led people into crimes. Internal forms of conflicts would be said to have been as a result of; when girls get impregnated and when some men sing bad songs against other men with an intention to hurt their feelings. On the other hand, external causes would include; cattle raiding and revenge killings.

The working solutions to restore peaceful co-existence would include; Punishing offenders, immediate compensation of those who lost their loved ones as a result of revenge killings and conducting capacity building trainings that would target local authorities, local elders, youth, chiefs, and local courts on fair judgement of community issues.

Housing land and property

The land was owned by the community and mature people (men) who were married and had families were the specific owners. Unmarried women were however not allowed to own land due to the belief that they would easily become prostitutes when they stayed alone.

Land disputes were settled by respected elders and the customary courts with serious ones being handled by the county commissioner. Land, housing and property were governed by written local laws which did not include unmarried women ownership.

IDPs, Refugees and returnees were allocated temporary land through the local authority who also gave permanent residence to them depending on the duration they would have stayed and wished to continue.

Domestic/intimate partner violence

All Bomas had cases of domestic/intimate partner violence almost on a weekly basis. Practically nothing is done because domestic violence issues were culturally considered as family affair that were normal and needed not interference from outsiders, except, the extended family members from both the side of husband and wife. Local authority only came in when the issues led into possible divorce of the couples and needed the court of law intervention. The leading causes of domestic violence were said to include; drunkenness of the men, failure of women to corporate on sexual matters especially when demanded by the husbands, when women were presumed to be lazy by the husbands to taking good care of the kids and when the women were suspected to having committed adultery.

To minimize cases of domestic violence, the men suggested the need for husbands to treat their wives with love and respect, faithfulness among the partners, provision of household basic needs by men, women taking good care of children and men considering matters of sex especially when the wives were not in the mood.

Children access to education

As per the men, all children had been given equal rights to go to school and were facilitated by their parents to stay in school with young children often being escorted to school by their parents. Both boys and girls had been given equal opportunity to go to school unlike in the past when boys had more preference over girls though the men, confirmed that this mentality had greatly changed. They however recommended parents to buy uniforms for their children and girls to be motivated through cash programming and school feeding program.

Forced marriages

The men claimed not having heard about forced marriages in the community though, they hinted that they would be happening secretly at household level only that marriage issues were a family affair and the public would mostly not hear about them. Daughters marriage was valued because the cows that the father received in form of bride price were a sign of wealth and would be used to get him other wives and also support his elder sons to marry their own wives.

Forced marriages were not welcome by every child. Some committed suicide, others would disappear from their homes while others would seek refuge from their maternal and paternal uncles. Those who chose to continue the arrangement were described as people who lived unhappily in their marriage lives.

They however recommended awareness raising among the parents and community elders on the importance of respecting children marriage rights to choose whom and when they wanted to marry. They also suggested on the need for the local authority to establish a protective environment (community based protection mechanism) for the children and punish parents who violated the rights by marrying off their children at an early age.

According to the men, some chiefs settled cases fairly while others did it unfairly which contributed to a lot of communal conflicts. They hence recommended on the need for extra training of chiefs, local authority and community leaders on the rule of law, peace building and conflict resolution strategies and establishment of proper land, housing and property rights policies

Summary of the findings

- 1** Forced marriage; the men FGD participants acknowledged the existence of forced marriages in the community only that they were less reported to community leaders. Culturally, marriage is considered a family affair and no one outside the family is allowed to know or interfere with it including the local authority or local courts even if parents disagreed with their children whom they would be marrying off against their will.
- 2** Revenge killings; Revenge killings happen almost on a yearly basis between Gaguang Nuer of Mading Payam in Nasir County and Gajaak Nuer of Warweng Payam in Longechuk County. This has caused fear, mistrust, and lack of intercommunal peace between these two communities until today.
- 3** Denial of rights: unmarried women are denied rights to own land, housing and property in the community simply because of the negative cultural believes that unmarried women would become prostitutes when they stayed on their own. Children are also denied rights to marry when and whom they wanted and parents still arrange marriage for them without their consent.
- 4** Cattle raiding: this is a common practice between Gajaak Nuer and Majiok Nuer youth and it happens almost on quarterly basis. When it happens, it results into loss of lives and property and causes poverty.
- 5** Domestic violence: FGD participants reported that this is a common cultural practice and nothing is done about it because it is culturally normal.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** Conduct capacity building trainings on respect for human rights including marriage rights by targeting married men, community elders, local courts and local authority.
- 2** There is need for awareness raising in both Mading payam and Warweng payam to stop the cycle of revenge killings between the 2 communities.
- 3** There is need for awareness among the youth on the negative impacts of cattle raids; this should target both Mading payam in Nasir County and Longechuk Youth in Warweng payam.
- 4** There is need to engage youth on sporting activities such as outdoor and indoor games to divert their attention on cattle raiding by avoiding idleness.
- 5** Need to raise awareness among married men on the importance of respecting their wives.
- 6** Need to re-establish functional police post in Warweng to provide protection for the community against criminals of revenge killings and those who committed capital crimes such as rape.

Findings from Men FGD October



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 16th October, 2020
Payam: Jangok
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The men Focus Group Discussion took place on 16th October 2020 from 10.00am to 11.00am in Jangok Payam with a total of 12 participants. All the participants were Host community members and facilitations were conducted by Coalition for Humanity field staff based in Longechuk County.

Cattle Raiding

From the discussions, it was quite evident that cattle raiding frequently happened. To justify this, the men gave an example of a recent cattle raiding case that had been witnessed in the first weeks of June, 2020 where youth from Ngueny Payam of Kieckuon County of greater Nasir came to raid Jangok. This was something that was mentioned to have been happening on a yearly basis. The cattle raiding in Kamel Boma of Jangok Payam happened at dawn around 5:00am but the youths managed to repulse the invaders. The local authorities had never addressed the issue. Communities were motivated to raid cattle due to the desire to have more cows which would mostly be used to pay dowry. Some would just want to have a lot of them for wealth and for starting business such as buying guns and ammunitions which would then be sold out to fellow community members or to other communities nearby who need them for self-protection.

This practice had a lot of negative effect which were mentioned to include; general insecurity, intercommunal violence, displacement of communities, infliction of suffering on innocent community members, lack of peace and stability, loss of lives and property and poverty and vulnerability especially when one lost all the livestock that they depended on for survival.

Possible ways to resolve this habit were suggested as; disarmament of the youths, deployment of police at intercommunal borders for border patrols, encouraging community elders to always advise their youth on negative impacts of cattle raids, local authorities and NGOS partners to come up with recreational activities that could engage the youth such as sporting activities and creating more employment opportunities for the youth to reduce idleness.

Revenge Killing

Revenge killings had not been witnessed in the recent past. According to them, they had other alternative ways of conflict resolution other than revenge killings e.g. taking up the matter with the police who would then follow up and prosecute the suspects. Guilty suspects are fined 100 cows to compensate the family members of the deceased or sometimes put into life imprisonment if they failed to provide the cows. Highly respected community elders would also initiate a dialogue for peaceful resolution of conflict rather than revenge killing. However, communities resorted to revenge killings due to weak rule of law, unfair ruling in the courts of law, failure of police or local authority to arrest and fine the culprits with immediate effect.

It was believed that the cycle of revenge killings would stop if quick actions were taken to arrest and prosecute culprits in the court of law in accordance with relevant laws. Awareness creation in the community on the importance of peaceful co-existence and educating community members on the negative impacts of revenge killings would also contribute towards stopping the habit.

Communal conflict

From the discussions, communal violence had not been witnessed again in the community since the war that broke in 2013 and 2018 which stopped after a peace agreement was signed by warring parties. The most common causes of communal violence were however said to be as a result of; cattle raids which were mostly instigated by neighboring youth mostly aged 17 years and above from Ngueny Payam of Kieckuon County of greater Nasir, Women or men aged 25 years and above caught committing adultery, Drug abuse amongst the youth e.g. use of Bhang which lead them into causing disturbances in the community, unfairly settled land disputes by the local courts, unfair distribution of resources by leaders including leadership positions, impregnating of girls by adolescent boys and raping of girls or women when they go for firewood , fetching water or gathering wild fruits in the forest by men and youth.

Therefore, internal causes of violence according to the men include; impregnating girls, drug abuse, unfair judgement of cases and committing of adultery by women and men. External causes on the other hand would include cattle raids by neighbouring youth which mostly resulted into intercommunal violence.

The issues surrounding communal violence were however being resolved by community elders, local authorities, local chiefs, religious leaders, police, and youth leaders though the working solutions to restore peaceful co-existence would only include punishing offenders who would have committed the crimes. Conducting capacity building trainings for local authorities, local elders, youth, chiefs and local courts on peace building and conflict resolutions would also promote a lasting solution. Above all, they recommended promotion of peaceful co-existence through community dialogues and fair court judgements to be the best way forward towards prevention of communal violence.

Housing land and property

Land is communally owned by mature people who were married and had families. Unmarried women were however not allowed to own land according to the culture. Women who owned land and houses and stayed alone were believed to be prostitutes. Conflicts arising out of land dispute, housing or property had not been witnessed simply because the land was enough for everyone in the community. In case of disputes that would arise over land, housing or property issues, respected community elders and local chiefs would be involved to amicably resolve the disagreement though serious disputes would be forwarded to the county Commissioner office for final verdicts. Therefore, local laws governing lands, property and housing ownership existed though such laws were said to be discriminatory in the sense that they did not allow unmarried woman to own land or housing due to traditional beliefs that denied women independence.

In cases where IDPS, returnees or refugees came into the community, the local authority or community elders were made aware who then take step by arranging for them temporary accommodation, food and other NFIs (community members are mobilized to support on this through small contributions). Those who stay longer than expected are allocated land for settlement.

Domestic/intimate partner violence

The men admitted that there were indeed so many incidences of domestic violence which involved close family members in the community. Unfortunately, nothing much would be done about it because family issues were treated as private affairs which neither the local authorities, chiefs, nor community elders had a hand on because such matters were culturally acceptable and treated as normal. The leading causes of domestic violence among close family members were however said to include; excessive consumption of alcohol by men leading to misunderstanding with family members, failure of women to give husbands their conjugal rights, failure of the man to provide food to his family members, failure of women to take good care of the kids and finally if the women were suspected to have affairs with other men. They recommended though that families could adapt to minimize domestic violence through; husbands learning how to respect their wives and children, couples being faithful to each other, men taking up responsibility for their family basic needs, and women taking good care of their family members and also preparing food for them on time.

Children access to education

According to the men, most parents had become aware about the importance of education and hence most children had been left to enjoy the right to education in the community. It was said that some parents were in fact facilitating their children to be in school while other parents would literally escort their young children to school mostly in the mornings. Both Boys and Girls were given equal chance to education unlike in the past when Boys were more considered for schooling over Girls. It was recommended that it would be good for parents to motivate their children through provision of basic school needs such as uniforms, initiation of school cash programming by NGOs for girls and school feeding Programme for all pupils.

Forced marriages

As per the men, they had not heard of incidences where parents had forced their children into marriage against their wishes. This is because marriage was a very private family affair and would rarely be disclosed to the public. Parents would however get motivated into forcing their children to get married due to their desire to own more cows as a sign of wealth, some parents would desire the bride price from their daughters and would instead use the same cows for marrying more wives and sometimes help their mature sons also get wives. Parents with single sons would therefore tend to force their sons into marriage so as to escape giving a helping hand (cows) to the relatives marrying sons.

This had a number of disadvantages according to the men; some of the girls or boys would run away from their parents or husbands' homes, others would end up committing suicide, others would disappear into unknown places though a few would seek refuge from close relatives such as paternal or maternal uncles. However, those who would accept to stay into the marriage would most of the time live stressed throughout their lives.

To avoid this, it was recommended that awareness raising that would target parents would be good in ensuring that the rights of children towards getting married to spouses of their choice were advocated for. They also suggested for the traditional authorities to create a protective environment (Community based protection mechanisms) as well as punish parents who forced their children into marriage at younger age or against their will. Community disputes over resources/cattle/marriage were fairly settled by chiefs though a few cases were reported to have been unfairly decided which according to the participants were a potential trigger to communal violence.

There were no police posts in the whole of Jangok Payam and Police services would only be sourced from Mathiang Payam. It was further reported that among the group of police in Mathiang, there were no female officers who could help handle investigations related to work. A training to support the police/chiefs or judicial officers would be key to improve their understanding and expertise on the rule of law, respect for human rights, peace building and conflict resolution, land and property rights policy. However, most cases charged based on who was right and who was wrong by the courts.

Summary of the findings

Forced marriage; the FGD participants acknowledged the existence of forced marriage in the community though the cases were not being reported to community leaders /local authority because, marital matters were considered as family affairs and no one outside the family would be allowed to know or interfere with it in any way.

Denial of rights for unmarried women to own land and house: unmarried women were denied rights to own land, house and property in the community simply because of the negative cultural believes that unmarried women would practice prostitution.

Cattle raiding: this is commonly carried out on yearly basis by youth from Ngueny Payam of Kiechkuon County in greater Nasir. According to the FGD participants these youths used to come and raid their cattle almost on yearly basis and nothing had been done about it by local authority from both counties i.e. Longechuk and Kiechkuon.

Domestic violence/intimate partner violent: FGD participants reported that this was a common cultural practice and there was nothing to be done about it although one witnessed it in the community because it is acceptable even by the women themselves because community think that it is part of their communal life.

No functional police post in Jangok Payam: The men participants reported that there were no functional police post in Jangok in the past and even at present and most cases which needed police intervention were mostly referred to Mathiang Payam for settlement.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 There is need to conduct awareness raising sessions targeting parents on respect for child rights including forced and child marriage and respect of women rights to own land, house and property
- 2 There is need for deployment of border committee from both counties to resolve the issue of cattle raids that seem to be normal business for youth.
- 3 There is need for awareness raising among the youth on negative impacts of cattle raids.
- 4 Local courts need to be trained on the rule of law to ensure fair settlement of cases that sometimes contribute to communal violence.
- 5 There is need to raise awareness for married men on the importance of respecting their female partners and treating them fairly.
- 6 There is need for establishment of functional police post in Jangok Payam to respond to local crimes and cattle raids.

Findings from Men FGD November



**Protection Assessment, Analysis and Rights Violation:
Upper Nile State Report**

Date: 24th November, 2020
Payam: Mathiang
State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The men Focus Group Discussion was done on 24th October 2020 from 10.30am to 11.30am in Mathiang community Centre, Mathiang Payam with a total of 12 participants. All the participants were Host community members and facilitations were conducted by Coalition for Humanity field staff based in Longechuk County.

Cattle Raiding

From the discussions with men, they reported that cattle raiding frequently happened in Mathiang Payam and it was usually done by neighbouring community youth from Kieckuon Payam of Nasir County, for example, the men gave an example of a recent cattle raiding case that had been witnessed on the 26th April, 2020 where youth from Kieckuon of greater Nasir came to raid 4,000 cattle in Boyay Boma cattle camp north east of Mathang Payam. Men reported that cattle raiding used to happen on a yearly basis. The cattle raiding which took place in Boyay Boma cattle camp took place at dawn around 5:00am but the youth from Longechuk did not manage to recover those cattle from the invaders. The local authorities from both Counties had never thought of addressing such cycle of cattle raids which seemed to be business as usual for Kieckuon Youth. Men stated that communities were motivated to raid cattle due to the desire to have more cows which would mostly be used to pay dowries. Some wanted to have a lot of them for wealth and for starting business such as buying guns and ammunitions which would then be sold out to fellow community members or to other communities nearby communities who needed them for self-protection. Men reported that a cost of one gun with a cow was 50,000 Ethiopian Birr (equivalent to 1,430 USD). Men reported that such practices had a lot of negative effects which included; general insecurity, intercommunal violence, displacement of communities, infliction of suffering on innocent community members, lack of peace and stability, loss of lives and property, poverty and vulnerability especially when one lost all the livestock that they used to depend on for daily survival. The participants suggested that the possible ways to resolve this habit could be ; disarmament of the youths, deployment of police at intercommunal borders for border patrols, encouraging community elders to always advise their youth on negative impacts of cattle raids, local authorities and NGOS partners to come up with recreational activities that could engage the youth such as sporting activities and creating more employment opportunities for the youth to reduce idleness that make youth think to go for a raid due to boredom.

Revenge Killing

Participants reported that revenge killings had not been witnessed in the recent past, and according to them they had other alternative ways of conflict resolution other than revenge killings e.g. taking up the matter with the police who would then follow up and prosecute the suspects, arrest the criminals and judge them in local courts, for example, guilty suspects were fined 100 cows to compensate the family members of the deceased or sometimes they were put into life imprisonment if they failed to provide the cows. Highly respected community elders would also initiate a dialogue for peaceful resolution of conflict rather than revenge killing. However, communities resorted to revenge killings due to weak rule of law, unfair ruling in the courts of law and failure of police or local authority to arrest and fine the culprits with immediate effect.

Participants believed that the cycle of revenge killings would stop if quick actions were taken to arrest and prosecute culprits in the court of law in accordance with relevant laws. Awareness creation in the community on the importance of peaceful co-existence and educating community members on the negative impacts of revenge killings would also contribute towards stopping the cycle of the revenge killings in the communities.

Communal conflict

During the discussions with men, they clearly said that communal violence had not been witnessed again in the community after the signing of peace agreement in 2018 which stopped the political war which began in 2013. Men said that the most common causes of communal violence were as a result of; cattle raids which were mostly instigated by neighboring youth mostly aged 20 years and above from Kieckuon County of greater Nasir, Women or men who used to be caught committing adultery, drug abuse by the youth and men e.g. use of Bhang which led them into causing disturbances in the community, unfairly settled land disputes by the local courts, unfair distribution of resources by leaders including leadership positions in the community, impregnating of girls by adolescent boys and raping of girls or women when they go for firewood, fetching water or gathering wild fruits in the forest by drunk men.

Participants said that issues surrounding communal violence were however being resolved by community elders, local authorities, local chiefs, religious leaders, police and youth leaders though the working solutions to restore peaceful co-existence would only include punishing offenders who would have committed the crimes. Conducting capacity building trainings for local authorities, local elders, youth, chiefs and local courts on peace building and conflict resolutions would also promote a lasting solution. Above all, they recommended promotion of peaceful co-existence through community dialogues and fair court judgements to be the best way forward towards prevention of communal violence.

Housing land and property

Land was said to be communally owned by mature people who were married and had families, and unmarried women were however not allowed to own land according to the culture. Women who owned land and houses and stayed alone were believed to be prostitutes. Conflicts arising out of land dispute, housing or property had not been witnessed simply because the land was enough for everyone in the community. In case of disputes that would arise over land, housing or property issues, respected community elders and local chiefs would be involved to amicably resolve the disagreement though serious disputes would be forwarded to the county Commissioner office for final verdicts. Therefore, local laws governing lands, property and housing ownership existed though such laws were said to be discriminatory in the sense that they did not allow unmarried woman to own land or housing due to traditional beliefs that denied women independence.

In cases of IDPS, returnees or refugees who come into the community, the local authority or community elders were made aware who then would take step by arranging for them temporary accommodation ask community members to contribute food and other NFIs (community members are mobilized to support on this through small contributions). Those who stayed longer than expected were allocated land for permanent settlement.

Domestic/intimate partner violence

The men acknowledged that there were indeed incidences of domestic violence which involved husbands and wives, children and parents, and sometimes close family members in the community. Unfortunately, nothing much would be done about it because family issues were treated as private affairs which neither the local authorities, chiefs, nor community elders had a hand on because such matters were culturally acceptable and treated as normal. The leading causes of domestic violence among married men and women, close family members were however said to include; excessive consumption of alcohol by men leading to misunderstanding with family members, failure of women to give husbands their conjugal rights, failure of the man to provide food to his family, failure of women to take good care of the kids and finally if the women were suspected to have had an affair with other men. They recommended though that families could adapt to minimize domestic violence through; husbands learning how to respect their wives and children, couples being faithful to each other, men taking up responsibility for their family basic needs, and women taking good care of their children, close family members and also preparing food for them on time.

Children access to education

The men participants reported that most parents had become aware about the importance of education and hence most children had been left to enjoy the right to education in the community. It was said that some parents were in fact facilitating their children to be in school while other parents would literally escort their young children to school mostly in the mornings and receive them back after school. Both Boys and Girls were given equal opportunities to education unlike in the past when Boys were more considered for schooling over Girls. It was recommended that it would be good for parents to motivate their children through provision of basic school needs such as uniforms, initiation of school cash programming by NGOs for girls and establish school feeding Programme for all pupils to boost even school attendance.

Forced marriages

Men said that they had not heard of incidences where parents had forced their children into marriage against their wishes, but in the recent past such cases used to be experienced. Marriages in the community were handled behind closed doors because they were considered as private family affair and would rarely be disclosed to the public. Parents would however get motivated into forcing their children to get married due to their desire to own more cows as a sign of wealth, pride, and some parents would desire the bride price from their daughters and would instead use the same cows for marrying more wives and sometimes help their mature sons also get wives. Parents with single sons would therefore tend to force their sons into marriage so as to escape giving a helping hand (cows) to the relatives marrying sons. Men said that forced marriage had a lot of disadvantages which included; some of the girls or boys would running away from their parents or husbands' homes, others would end up committing suicide and others would disappear into unknown places though a few would seek refuge from close relatives such as paternal or maternal uncles. However, those who would accept to stay into the marriage would most of the time live stressful throughout their lives.

To avoid this, it was recommended that awareness raising that would target parents would be good in ensuring that the rights of children towards getting married to spouses of their choice were advocated for. They also suggested for the traditional authorities to create a protective environment (Community based protection mechanisms) as well as punish parents who forced their children into marriage at younger age or against their will. Community disputes over resources/cattle/marriage were fairly settled by chiefs though a few cases were reported to have been unfairly decided which according to the participants were a potential trigger to communal violence. There is a police posts in Mathiang Payam with few female officers who could help handle investigation cases related to women. A training to support the police/chiefs or judicial officers would be key to improve their understanding and expertise on the rule of law, respect for human rights, peace building and conflict resolution, land and property rights policy. However, cases charged based on who was right and who was wrong by the courts, the participants said.

Summary of the findings

Forced marriage; the FGD participants acknowledged the existence of forced marriage in the community though the cases were not being reported to community leaders /local authority because, marital matters were considered as family affairs and no one outside the family would be allowed to know or interfere with it in any way. Denial of rights for unmarried women to own land and house: unmarried women were denied rights to own land, house and property in the community simply because of the negative cultural believes that unmarried women would practice prostitution. Cattle raiding: this is commonly carried out on yearly basis by youth from Kiechkuon County in greater Nasir and it seem not action taken by authorities on both sides, According to the FGD participants these youths used to come and raid their cattle almost on yearly basis and nothing had been done to stop it. Domestic violence/intimate partner violent: FGD participants reported that this was a common cultural practice and there was nothing to be done about it although one witnessed it in the community because it is acceptable even by the women themselves because community think that it is part of their cultural life.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 Need to conduct awareness raising sessions targeting parents on respect for child rights including forced and child marriage and respect of women rights to own land, house and property targeting leaders and community elders to change the cultural mind sets that discriminates against women.
- 2 There is need for deployment of border police to carry out daily patrols, and constituting of border committee from both counties to resolve the issue of cattle raids that seem to be business as usual for youth.
- 3 Need for awareness raising among the youth on negative impacts of cattle raids.
- 4 There is need to conduct capacity building for local courts to be trained on the rule of law to ensure fair settlement of cases that sometimes contribute to communal violence.
- 5 There is need to raise awareness for married men on the importance of respecting their wives and treat them fairly.

8.5 ANNEX 5 MONTHLY TEACHERS FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from Teachers FGD August



**Longechuk County
Protection Monitoring Report , Teachers FGD**

Date: 31st August, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Mathiang Payam on 31st August, 2020. Twelve teachers from Phalang-A, New site, Penchweeng, Relbek, Matoor, Boryuween, Phalang-B and Kuemboor Bomas attended the meeting. All the teachers were from the host community and the discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

Teacher's welfare

The participants said they faced a lot of challenges. There were no school reading materials, classrooms were few in the schools and children learned under the trees therefore children were not taught during rainy seasons until the onset of dry seasons. There were no boreholes and latrine in the schools or near by the schools and hence most parents were not allowing their children to school especially the small children aged from 2-8years old due to the difficult conditions. Teacher in the community not willing to teach due to lack of incentives hence most of the teachers only volunteered. Two years back Christian Mission for Development (CMD) supported schools by paying teachers incentives but they stopped and the teachers said at the moment there was no NGO on the ground that took care of them in Mathiang. Most teachers in the area also lacked the necessary qualifications/experience in teaching and hence they only volunteered for the sake of the community because trained teachers were not there. Children covered long distances to and from school which led to lateness of children in the school and even at home. The teachers said that there were no safety concerns in school. The only problem was interference from drunk people who would cross the school compound making noise due to lack of fence but they caused less harm to the pupils and teachers. The participants recommended for schools upgrading/construction including fences so that they could continuously teach the children during rainy seasons and dry seasons. They also recommended massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of education for children and the consequence of not releasing children to go to school. They also suggested on the need for additional schools reading materials, extra training on how to deliver content to pupils and support in terms of incentives from NGOs.

General safety security of children

The teachers reported that a 15-year-old girl had been raped by a youth on her way from home to school in Belwang Boma of Mathaing Payam in the morning. The case was reported to the police but nothing had been done. Girls suffered from sexual assault due to the long distances they covered to school. Schools were however safe environments for the children. In school, the teachers said children would learn and play under their watch and this relieved them from stress that they would have encountered at home. They said that every Wednesday was a sports day in the school where every child was expected to play and enjoy him/her self through traditional dances and athletics. The only limitation was lack of games kits for the pupils but they were trying to ensure that school was the best environment for the pupils.

They however mentioned that they frequently encountered problems with the female students because their attention to session was always affected and this they attributed to overburdening at home. Girls between the age of 10-18 years old were also vulnerable according to the teachers due to many types of violence at home such as physical violence, domestic violence and even economic violence. They were however limited to influence what happened to children at home. The teachers recommended that there would be need for creation of massive awareness in the community about the effect and consequences of sexual violence for children on their way to school. They also suggested on the need for door-to-door awareness raising on child protection issues and the importance of education so that the entire community supports education.

Access to education

Schooling in the community was very affordable according to teachers. Each child was charged 70 Birr (2.12\$) for school fees though those who didn't have were never send home. The children were also expected to remit 50 Birr (1.5\$) per month for office support i.e. buying of chalks, pencils, pens and papers among other needs. Some parents didn't also afford this payment and children were as well not send home from school. They said the problem in the community was that most children had been engaged in Business in the local market selling goods in the expense of education. Girls would stay at home, collect firewood with their mothers and sell in the market. Some girls were also employed as restaurant and alcohol den attendants. They added and said children in the community started school at 9 years of age which was very late as per the teachers. This was attributed to the distance from home to school that children were expected to cover on a daily basis. Schools also lacked basic needs for children such as latrines, school feeding program and boreholes for clean and safe drinking water. Based on this, most parents were not comfortable releasing their children below 9 years of age to study in such conditions. According to teachers, the ideal age to start school was 3 years.

Progress from one class level to the other depended on the marks that would be scored by a child. Pass mark for promotion to the next level was said to be 50% per subject so for 5 subjects, a child was expected to score 250 marks and above out of 500. Most children however failed to progress to secondary education because in Mathiang most schools only reached primary six. Kamboor Boma and Mathiang Town were however the only places that had schools from primary 1-8 level. There was also one secondary school in Mathiang though it was not admitting students due to lack of support from NGOs. Parents were therefore expected that from primary 8 in Mathiang they transfer their children for secondary in Ethiopia.

The girl child was the most affected because most parents would in fact prefer them staying at home in preparation for marriage. The teachers recommended creation of awareness in the community on the importance of education, and the effect of child domestic violence. They also recommended for construction of schools, provision of school learning materials, water points, latrines and schools feeding program.

Children welfare

According to the teachers, children had a difficult time in school because most schools lacked; latrines, benches for sitting, boreholes for clean and safe water, feeding program, textbooks, pens and emergency first aid kits for children. Some children had been separated with parents due to displacements and this had led to their poor performance in school. Parents were also not supportive in terms of contribution to pay casual workers. They said two women had been engaged to sweep classrooms and ensure there was drinking water in school but the engagement didn't last long because parents declined to pay the money after 2 months. Teachers attributed this to lack of interest in education by parents. The area also lacked enough WASH partners to support with drilling of boreholes and school feeding program. The girls also lacked enough support (dignity kits & WASH rooms) during menstruation and the reason as to why most of them stayed at home during the periods. They however recommended for support in terms of dignity kits provision for the girls, construction of additional classrooms and latrines and drilling of boreholes to supply schools with clean and safe water for drinking.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The teachers said there was no sexual exploitation and abuse in Mathiang Payam i.e. in the community and in schools. According to the teachers, they had not taken any action before because they had not come across any SEA cases in school. In fact, there were no such policies in place to prevent SEA. They however recommended for teachers' capacity building on PSEA.

Summary of Findings

- 1** Children are not schooling in the rainy season due to lack of enough classrooms. Most of them study under the trees
- 2** Child protection issues are common in the community.
Teachers lack motivation in terms of monthly incentives hence most of them just volunteer
- 3** Schools are very far from where children stay and hence most of them run late into classes.
- 4** Children have been raped by the drunk men and youth on their way to school. There are no proper policies or actions put in place to ensure safety of the children on their way to or from school.
- 5** Most teachers are untrained hence they lack the basic teaching techniques to properly deliver content to the learners.
Schools lack enough reading materials, seats, sport materials, boreholes and latrines for the pupils.
- 6** Girls lack dignity kits and this had contributed to their absence in school during periods
The issues of sexual exploitation and abuse were not there in Mathiang Payam according to the participants.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** There's need of school construction and upgrading i.e. fencing, drilling of boreholes and construction of latrines for girls and boys
- 2** There's need to provide dignity kits in the schools so that female students can continuously attend classes during menstruation cycle.
- 3** There's need for capacity building training for teacher on how to handle children in the school and teach them in proper way so that they can deliver good education to children.
- 4** Massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of education for children and the consequence of not releasing children to go to school and effect and consequences of sexual violence for children on their way to school.
- 5** Door to door awareness raising on child protection issues and the importance of the education so that the entire community understands the importance on education.
- 6** Provision of school materials, including seats and school feeding program.

Findings from Teachers FGD September



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report , Teachers FGD

Date: 16th September, 2020

Payam: Warweng

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 10th September, 2020 from 10.00am to 11.00am. Twelve teachers from Benjiel, Mokley, Wunkiir and Kuryith Bomas attended the meeting. All the teachers were from the host community and the discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longuchuk County.

Teacher's welfare

Warweng Payam did not have enough schools. There were a total of 3 schools (two in Bengjiel and Wunkiir Bomas and one in Warweng payam) those schools have primary 1-5 level and only have 2 class rooms which is primary four and five children. Primary one to three study under the trees. Therefore, during rainy season, these children are not taught until the onset of the dry season. The schools also had limited learning materials e.g. the textbooks. The teachers were also not motivated and most of them were just working as volunteers. Christian Mission for Development (CMD) supported the teachers with salary payment but they had stopped since 2019 and presently there was no NGO in Warweng Payam that supported the school teachers. Schools also lacked latrines and boreholes for clean and safe drinking water for the pupils. This had affected attendance of pupils between the age of 2-6 years old. Their lack of attendance had also been contributed by the long distances that would be covered daily from home to school and back. For those who made to go to school had a lot of issues with lateness though there was very little that could be done.

Protection issues had not been experienced though a few cases of interference from the locals had been reported. It was said that drunk women and men would sometimes pass by the schools while making noise which interrupted learning sessions due to lack of fences along the school boundaries. Some of this people would come and rest under the trees in school something that somehow affected the attention of the pupils. They however caused no harm to teachers and pupils. The teachers however recommended the need for addition of extra learning materials for the pupils, some form of motivation in terms of salary (possibly by an NGO/well-wisher) and school construction in terms of additional classrooms, sanitation facilities and the fences. They also suggested on the need for a massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of child education and the consequence of not releasing children to go to school.

General safety security of children

In December 2019, a 14-year-old girl was raped by a drunk youth on her way from Wunkiir primary school. This happened between Benjiel and Wunkiir Bomas at around 1pm. The teachers said they had tried to report the case to police but the family of the girl refused and said they were able to handle the case in their own way. Rape cases were many in the community of but they were less reported. According to them, the area was not safe for the children apart from school where they would spend the whole day being taught and trained on sports. They made sure every child played and enjoyed themselves through traditional dances, running competition between two groups, football, volleyball and skipping for girls. They however lacked game skits and other playing items such as balls. They had however improvised local balls from old clothes and polythene for the boys to use during games. Most female students underperformed and they attributed this to too much responsibility at home. This prevented them from personal extra studies at home. The children also experienced cases of domestic violence and economic violence especially for girls who were between 7-18 years old. They were more affected physically and mentally than boys. They however acknowledged that they didn't have any power to determine the safety of children on their way to school or home though they were safe at school. They believed that door to door awareness raising on child protection issues and the importance of education would change the community perspective of children and their rights. They also suggested on the need to create massive awareness raising in the community about the effects and consequences of sexual violence for children on their way to or from school.

Access to education

The participants said schooling in the community was free of charge and parents were not paying school fees though a few parents were still not releasing their children to go to school. These parents were said to have engaged the children in businesses at the local market. Most girls would be left home to do other domestic duties. Girls also participated in collection and selling of firewood in the local market. Some of them were engaged as attendants at the local restaurants and tea places. Generally, children started schooling at an advanced age of 7 years and above. The delay was prompted by; the long distances to school (due to limited number of schools), lack of essential facilities in school such as boreholes, latrines and feeding program services that would take care of the young pupils. Some schools also lacked classrooms for the lower classes which was not very safe for the young children especially seating under the hot sun and/or rain during rainy seasons. The teachers however believed that the right age to start school was 2 years. Pupils progress from one class to the other was dependent on the grade they scored in the previous class. It was clarified that pupils learned 5 subjects whose pass mark to allow a pupil proceed from one class to another was 250 marks out of 500. The children were also not completing primary schooling because only level 1-5 existed. Those who successfully complete primary 5 were said to proceed to primary 6-8 in Kamboor Boma of Mathiang Payam. Due to lack of secondary schools, the teachers were unable to determine the level of transition to secondary schools.

Apart from the difficult conditions in school, the teachers mentioned that parents understood very little about education and its importance hence the reasons as to why most of them failed to support their children access education. Those who released their children never supported them with basic needs such as school uniforms, shoes, textbooks, pencils and pens. It was noted that girls were the most affected in terms of the rate of transitioning from one level to the other due to them being overburdened with responsibilities at home.

They recommended awareness raising in the community on the importance of education and the effects of child domestic violence. They also recommended construction of schools, provision of school materials, water points, latrines and implementation of schools feeding program.

Children welfare

A number of challenges needed to be addressed so as to ensure improved levels of children welfare in the schools e.g. provision of seats for the pupils, drinking water, additional classrooms, emergency first aid services, school feeding program, provision of sanitation facilities, provision of learning and writing materials e.g. textbooks and pens and provision of dignity kits for the girls.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The teachers said they had not heard about sexual exploitation and abuse in Warweng Payam neither had it happened within the school environment. They attributed this to strong rules and regulations that guided teachers and children in school. They however recommended for teachers' capacity building on PSEA.

Summary of findings

Lack of a consistent system of education e.g. primary 1-8 contributed into lower chances of children progressing from one class level to the other. Compromised levels of children welfare also discouraged parents from releasing their children at a tender age (the right age) into going to school. Due to the small number of schools, children were forced to travel long distances to access education. This affect the age at which small children (beginners) started schooling. Child protection issues existed in the community less reported. Children have been raped and denied their rights to education though cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are not there in Warweng Payam.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 There is need for school construction including fencing, boreholes, latrines and washrooms construction for girls to use during menstrual cycle to make the school a safer place for children and to let teachers continue with teaching during rainy seasons.
- 2 There is need to provide dignity kits in schools so that female students can continuously go to school during menstruation.
- 3 There is need for massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of education, consequence of not releasing children to school and effect and consequence of sexual violence against children.
- 4 Door to door awareness raising on child protection issues and the importance of education so that the entire community will understand the importance on education.
- 5 There is a need for provision of school materials, including seats and school feeding program.

Findings from Teachers FGD October



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report , Teachers FGD

Date: 16th October, 2020

Payam: Jangok

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 16th of October, 2020 in Jangok Payam. The meeting was attended by 12 teachers between the age of 24 and 40 years from 5 Bomas (Riangchusk, Wunthow, Tochwangthok, Lualthiang and Dulthiang). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Teacher's welfare

Teachers said they were facing a lot of challenges in the process of providing education to the pupils. Some of the issues they mentioned included; lack of enough class rooms in the schools and learning sessions were being conducted under the trees. This situation would be favorable only in the dry seasons however, during rainy seasons, pupils would be forced to stay home due to lack of sufficient shelter to enable them attend the lessons. Another problem mentioned was lack of enough learning materials for the pupils which made delivery of content a bit challenging due to lack of reference materials for pupils. The schools also lacked boreholes and latrines. This had caused many parents to hold back their children at home especially those that fell between the age of 3-9 years. Long distances to the education facilities was also a problem since children would walk for long hours before getting to school. As a result, late coming was the order of the day e.g. pupils would walk for at least one hour and forty-minutes' from Jangok Center to Riangchuk on a daily basis. As a result, some would arrive when they were already tired to attend class sessions. Teachers were also not motivated with any form of incentives or salary meaning majority of them were just volunteering. Some actually stopped teaching since 2019 after Christian Mission for Development (CMD) terminated their monthly support of \$50 salary. Most schools were therefore recording poor performance which was attributed to lack of professional teaching staffs since most of them were untrained volunteers. However, there were no protection and safety concerns during school days. Teachers only recommended for attention towards addition of school reading materials, construction of more classrooms including the fences and consideration on their monthly salary.

General safety security of children

A defilement/rape case that involved a 13-year-old school girl and an old man was reported in May, 2019. The girl encountered the unfortunate ordeal on her way back home from school. This was around 1pm in the afternoon. The incident took place in Riangchusk Boma of Jangok Payam. The case was reported to the local authorities but nothing had been done about it yet. According to the teachers, children were at risk due to the long distances they walked between home and school and the perpetrators were mostly youth and drinking men. Incidences of child abduction and kidnapping had however not been witnessed. According to teachers, school was the safest place for children because they engaged in a number of activities apart from education e.g. sports and traditional dances which prevented children from other forms of abuse that they would frequently encounter at home. There was nothing however they would do to guarantee the safety of children outside the school compound especially on their way home and to school. They however recommended upgrading of schools to make sure children were comfortable and safe all the time when in school

Access to education

Despite schools being free of charge, it was reiterated that most children in the community were not schooling. This is because a lot of them had been engaged in the market by traders in selling goods. Most girls on the other hand stayed at home doing domestic chores as well as fetching firewood to sell in the local market. A few girls were also reported to be attendants in the local market restaurants. In general, children in the community were beginning school at an advanced age mostly above 5 years because of long distances to school which would not be managed by under-fives (5). Lack of other vital facilities in schools such as latrines and safe water for drinking also contributed to parents delaying their children from attending school. However, the ideal age according to the teachers would be 3 years. The rate of progression from one level to another was challenging to determine because Jangok had only schools from primary 1-5. Primary 6-8 and secondary level were not there and hence tracking the level of transition was very difficult. Parents were a major setback in Jangok community. According to the teachers, most of them lacked information about the importance of education and hence getting support from them to push their children to go school was a hard nut to crack. Others would release their children but they rarely followed up with provision of certain basic needs such as school uniforms, shoes, textbooks and pens. Other factors that greatly affected attendance were mentioned as; lack of enough classrooms, latrines, boreholes, school feeding program and general insecurity of the area which sometimes contributed to high levels of drop out from school. Girls were the most affected gender as was highlighted by the teachers and this was due to a lot of responsibilities that they were being assigned by their parents at home. Due to prestige and the urge for quick wealth, the parents also had a tendency to marry off the girls at an early age. The teachers however strongly recommended on the need for awareness creation in the community on the importance of education for all children as well as the effects of early child labor and other forms of domestic violence

Children welfare

Children faced a number of challenges while in school; congestion due to lack of enough classrooms, lack of latrines for both girls and boys, seats, boreholes for drinking water, lack of school feeding programs (children between the age of 3-5 don't go to school because they can't stay longer without food and drinking water), lack of textbooks and pens, lack of emergency first aid for the children and low performance due to separation of parents due to displacements. The teachers however said that they had made arrangements with parents to hire some women from the community to bring water and take care of the school by cleaning the classrooms and the compound 2 times a week but it didn't work. Parents could not afford the cost and they hence stopped their contributions. Due to resource constraints, the school administration could not as well sustain the casual workers. It was though mentioned that parents were generally less concerned about education and hence the reluctance in sustaining some of the welfare initiatives. They also highlighted that potential partners in education were limited hence the consistent lack of reforms in the sector. Girls missed school during their periods. The schools lacked essential facilities that would help the girls in their menstrual hygiene i.e. most schools if not all lacked adequate water and sanitation blocks/changing rooms for the girls as per the teachers. The teachers believed that there would be need to follow up and scale up provision of menstrual hygiene dignity kits in all schools. In addition, provision of certain facilities such as latrines would be essential in ensuring better welfare for the children.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The teachers said in Jangok Payam there were no sexual exploitation and abuse cases that had been reported so far. According to them, they had not heard of any issues related to sexual exploitation and abuse happening in the community as well as any notorious persons that were associated with sexual exploitation. Therefore, schools had had no actions taken before concerning Sexual exploitation and Abuse. They however recommended teachers capacity building around PSEA in order to minimize chances of such occurrences in the school environment

Summary of findings

- 1 Teachers lack motivation to teach due to lack of incentives hence most of them only volunteer
Majority of the teachers lack the prerequisite skills in teaching (untrained).
- 2 Children get to school late due to the long distances they cover from home.
- 3 The children lack basic needs e.g. uniforms and books,
- 4 The school lacks proper learning facilities e.g. classrooms, toilets etc.
- 5 No NGO supported schools to distribute dignity kits for girls.
- 6 Child protection issues are common in the community though there are no proper actions or policies put in place to consider the safety of the children on the way going or coming from school.
- 7 The issues of Sexual exploitation and abuse are not there in Jangok Payam according to the participants

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1 Provision of school materials, including seats and books
- 2 Need to adopt a school feeding program for pupils in schools to address their nutritional needs and to enhance their concentration during studies
- 3 There's a need for capacity building training for teacher on how to handle children in the school and teach them in proper way so that they can deliver good education to children.
- 4 Massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of education for children and the consequence of not releasing children to go to school and effect and consequence of sexual violence for children on their way to school.
- 5 There's a need to provide dignity kits in the schools so that female students can continuously attend school during menstruation periods.
- 6 There's need to upgrade schools through construction of fences, boreholes and latrine to make school a safer and better place for children as well as teachers

Findings from Teachers FGD November



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report , Teachers FGD

Date: 26th November, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The teachers' focus group discussion was conducted on 26th of November, 2020 in Mathian Payam Primary school. The discussion was attended by 11 teachers between the age of 24 and 44 years from 11 Bomas (Mathiang, Payweng, Palkach, Paytath, Relbek, Boryuwen, Kuembor, Phalang A and Phalang B). The discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

Teacher's welfare

Teachers said that they were facing a lot of challenges in the process of providing education to the pupils. Some of the issues they mentioned included; lack of enough class rooms in the schools making some of the learning sessions to be conducted under the trees, lack of scholastic or learning materials, lack of school feeding program to motivate the pupils, lack of incentive for the teachers and lack of school uniforms for the pupils. Lack of enough classrooms made it difficult for pupils to attend classes during rainy seasons and pupils would hence be forced to stay home due to lack of sufficient shelter to enable them attend the lessons when there was rain. Another problem mentioned by the teachers was lack of enough learning materials for the pupils which made delivery of content a bit challenging due to lack of reference materials for pupils. The schools also lacked boreholes and latrines because the latrines which were once dug had become old and needed decommissioning because they had become a danger. This had caused many parents to hold back their children at home especially those that fell between the age of 3-9 years due to lack of good latrines in the school.

Long distances to the education facilities was also a problem since children would walk for long hours before getting to school especially children who used to come from far Bomas. As a result, late coming was the order of the day e.g. pupils would walk for at least one hour and thirty-minutes' from outside Bomas to Mathiang center primary school on a daily basis. As a result, some would arrive when they were already tired to attend class sessions and could not concentrate very well when in class. Teachers were also not motivated with any form of incentives or salary meaning majority of them were just volunteering and they would come to teach children in the school when they wanted. Some get absent without permission and if asked by the school administration they would argue that the school administration had no right to restrict them since they were not paying them anything. In fact, some teachers had actually stopped teaching since late 2019 after Christian Mission for Development (CMD) terminated their monthly support of \$50 salary per primary school teacher. Most schools were therefore recording poor performance which was attributed to lack of professional teaching staffs. Most of them were untrained volunteers.

However, the teachers reported that there were no protection and safety concerns during school days. Teachers only recommended for supply of school reading materials, provision of school feeding program, motivation of teachers with incentives, and construction of more classrooms including the fences around the school.

General safety security of children

Teachers said that there were no safety/security concerns for children, only that during rainy seasons some children would fear coming to school because some streams would overflow and were a danger to children especially those would be 12 years of age and below. Some parents were reported to occasionally escort their children to school during rains to prevent them from drowning in the streams. According to the teachers, school was the safest place for children because they engaged in a number of activities apart from education e.g. sports and traditional dances which prevented children from other forms of abuse that they would frequently encounter at home. There was nothing however they would do to guarantee the safety of children outside the school compound especially on their way home and to school because that become the responsibility of their parents. They however recommended construction of more classrooms, renovation of school latrines, and upgrading of schools to make sure children were comfortable and safe all the time when they are in school.

Access to education

The teachers reported that despite schools being free of charge, it was reiterated that most children in the community were not going to school. This is because a lot of them had been engaged in the market by traders in selling goods and others were engaged by their parents to look after young ones in the house, especially girls. Boys would look after cattle or send to the market to sell out family cow, goat and chicken. Most girls on the other hand stayed at home doing domestic chores as well as fetching firewood to sell in the local market. A few girls were also reported to be attendants in the local market restaurants.

Generally, children in the community were beginning school at an advanced age mostly above 5 years because of long distances to school which would not be managed by under-fives (5). Lack of other vital facilities in schools such as latrines, insecurity in the school due to lack of fence and safe water for drinking also contributed to parents delaying their children from attending school. However, the ideal age according to the teachers would be 5 years and above. The rate of progression from one level to another was said to be 250 marks and above for those children who did five subjects while those who studied seven subjects there pass mark was 350 and above. Those who did not meet the pass mark were made to repeat classes in Mathiang Center primary school. Some parents contributed to major setback of their children schooling. According to the teachers, most of them lacked information about the importance of education and hence getting support from them to push their children to go to school was a hard thing for one to do. Others would release their children but they rarely followed up with provision of certain basic needs such as school uniforms, shoes, textbooks and pens. Other factors that greatly affected attendance were mentioned as; lack of enough classrooms, latrines, boreholes, school feeding program, teachers not being regular in school, and general insecurity of the area which sometimes contributed to high levels of drop out from school especially when there is communal violence and cattle raids once in a while. Girls were the most affected gender as was highlighted by the teachers and this was due to a lot of responsibilities that they were being assigned by their parents at home. Due to prestige and the urge for quick wealth, the parents also had a tendency to marry off the girls at an early age and no one question them (parents). The teachers however strongly recommended on the need for awareness creation in the community on the importance of education for all children as well as the effects of child marriage and child labor and other forms of domestic violence that interferes with children schooling.

Children welfare

Teachers said that children faced a number of challenges while in school; congestion due to lack of enough classrooms, lack of separate latrines for both girls and boys, lack of enough seats, boreholes for drinking water, lack of school feeding programs (children between the age of 3-5 don't go to school because they can't stay longer without food and drinking water), lack of textbooks and pens, lack of hygiene kits for girls when they are on their periods, lack of emergency first aid for the children and low performance due to separation of parents caused by displacements and other forms of violence.

The teachers however said that they had made arrangements with parents to hire some women from the community to bring water and take care of the school by cleaning the classrooms and the compound at least twice a week but it didn't work because sometimes there was no money for hiring them. Parents could not afford the cost and they hence stopped their contributions. Due to resource constraints, the school administration could not as well sustain these casual workers. It was though mentioned that parents were generally less concerned about education and hence the reluctance in sustaining some of the welfare initiatives. They also highlighted that potential partners in education were limited hence the consistent lack of reforms in the education sector.

Girls missed school during their periods. The schools lacked essential facilities that would help the girls in their menstrual hygiene i.e. most schools if not all lacked adequate water and sanitation blocks/changing rooms for the girls as per the teachers. The teachers believed that there would be need to follow up and scale up provision of menstrual hygiene dignity kits in all schools. In addition, provision of certain facilities such as latrines would be essential in ensuring better welfare for the children.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The teachers said that there were no cases of SEA in Mathiang Centre primary school and no case had been reported so far. According to them, they had not heard of any issues related to sexual exploitation and abuse happening in the community as well as any notorious persons that were associated with sexual exploitation. Therefore, schools had had no actions taken before concerning Sexual exploitation and Abuse. They however recommended teachers capacity building around PSEA in order to minimize chances of such occurrences in the school environment.

Summary of findings

- 1** Teachers lack motivation to teach due to lack of incentives hence most of them only work as volunteers.
- 2** Majority of the teachers lack the prerequisite skills in teaching (untrained).
- 3** Children get to school late due to the long distances they cover from home.
- 4** The children lack basic needs e.g. school feeding program, uniforms and text books
- 5** The school lacks proper learning facilities e.g. classrooms, toilets which need repairs etc.
- 6** No NGO supported schools to pay teachers incentive and distribute dignity kits for girls.
- 7** Child protection issues are common in the community though there are no proper actions or policies put in place to consider the safety of the children on the way going or coming from school since there is no child protection partner in longechuk.
- 8** No issues of Sexual exploitation and abuse in Mathiang Payam according to the teachers participants.
- 9** There are issues to do with child labor and lack of parent knowledge on the importance of education

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1** Provision of school materials, including seats and text books.
- 2** Need to adopt a school feeding program for pupils in schools to address their nutritional needs and to enhance their concentration during studies.
- 3** Need for capacity building training for teacher on how to handle children in the school and teach them in proper way so that they can deliver good education to children.
- 4** Massive awareness raising in the community about the importance of education for children and the consequence of not releasing children to go to school and effect and consequence of sexual violence for children on their way to school.
- 5** Need to provide dignity kits in the schools so that female students can continuously attend school during menstruation periods.
- 6** Need to upgrade schools through construction of fences, boreholes and latrine to make school a safer and better place for children as well as teachers

8.6 ANNEX 6 MONTHLY LEADERS FGDs JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2020

Findings from leaders FGD August



**Longechuk County
Protection Monitoring Report, Leaders FGD**

Date: 27th August, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion with Leaders took place on the 27th of August, 2020 from 11.30am to 12.25pm in Mathiang Payam. The 12 participants that attended were drawn from; Mathiang, Jangok, Belwang, Pamach and Malual Payams. The discussions were conducted by Coalition for Humanity (CH) field staff based in Longechuk County, Upper Nile State.

General safety and security

Generally, security situation in greater Longechuk was calm, and there had been no reported cases of communal violence, cattle raiding and revenge killings. It was only highlighted that in the month of July 2019, people had starved due to lack of enough food in all greater Longechuk Payams (Mathiang, Jangok, Warweng, Pamach, Malual, Belwang and Udier). This was due to delays in food distribution by WFP (World Food Program) through World Vision. The general access to sanitation was also not good and this is because not all families had constructed latrines despite having received support from Relief International's (RI) WASH program that targeted the whole of Longechuk Payams and Bomas.

Domestic violence/ Intimate partner

Cases related to domestic violence had not been reported of late and this is not because they were not happening but because those affected would mostly choose not to say anything about it. This is because culturally, these were issues the community considered private and no one was expected to share in the public domain. In situations where the cases got serious to lead into divorce, customary courts would be engaged to settle. Sometimes the families from both the husband and wives side would resolve or community elders would be engaged to handle. In most cases, the women parents would report these issues or sometimes the women themselves especially where parents supported the husbands. Most conflicts would arise as a result of drunkenness, irresponsibility to provide for the family, infertility from either men or women, failure of women to prepare and serve food for the family in good time or unfaithfulness of either the man or woman. It was also found that children were the most affected when such cases came up. Most children would become unhappy, stressful, traumatized, depressed and sometimes think of abandoning their families instead of being subjected to seeing parents quarrelling or fighting in the house.

Forced marriage

Marital affairs were less an issue of concern to the local authorities and this is because parents had the sole responsibility/role of determining who a child married and/or should be married to. Local authorities were hence not allowed to interfere with such arrangements. This has been culturally practised for a long time. Unwilling children would occasionally seek help from either paternal or maternal uncles. In cases where the uncles failed to intervene against the parents, most of them resorted to committing suicide or just disappear from the community.

Access to education

Every child had a right to education unlike in the past days when girls would be denied access to education by parents. Girls stayed at home to take care of the young siblings and also cook for the family. It was believed that educated girls had no morals and would hence be spoiled by boys and/or become prostitutes. This is not the case currently because many parents had now understood the importance of education. It was reported that local authorities had also intervened in situations where children had been denied their right to education by parents through convening community meetings at both Payam and Boma levels to sensitize parents on the importance of education. They would also occasionally punish parents who failed to allow their children to go to school. Incidences of rape, attack, kidnapping or abduction of children on their way to school had however not been reported in the community.

Housing, land and property

The most recent land dispute was in June, 2020 when 2 men in Boryuwen Boma of Mathiang Payam disagreed over a piece of land and seriously fought. They were separated by the police who arrested them and locked them in prison. The case was however peacefully settled by the local court after a few days. Such land disputes were said to have not been very common since there was still enough land for everyone in community hence, all people had equal rights to ownership of a house, land or property except for the unmarried women. The community believed that unmarried women who owned houses or land were prostitutes and the community would do everything possible to prevent them from land ownership. When IDPs, returnees or refugees came to the community, the local authority or community elders received them. They organized for them where to stay temporarily and community members would be mobilized to support them with food and other non-food items. Based on their duration of stay, community leaders would allocate them pieces of land. Those who had left the community and had lost land and property would be helped to reclaim back their lands or property provided they remembered the locations.

Sexual abuse and Exploitation

Leaders said they had not received any cases of sexual exploitation and abuse though they recognized that such cases could be existing but people rarely reported. They added and said that people would not report because it was shameful. Those who held big leadership positions, rich people and businessmen would easily take advantage of vulnerable people

The leaders said the local authorities were able to punish those who would be found exploiting the vulnerable by either imprisonment or heavily fining them with cows or money.

Culture

Forced marriages, revenge killings and denying women the rights to hold leadership positions in the community were some of the deep cultural practices that leaders said were affecting the community negatively. In fact, some of the cultural practises were gender biased and were not providing an equal rights platform for both women, men, boys and girls e.g. denying women leadership positions in the community and not allowing unmarried women to own a house or land in the community. According to the leaders, cultural practices such as forced marriage, denying women rights to hold leadership positions in the community and discrimination or denial of property rights for unmarried women were outdated and needed to change. The local authority would play a role in changing this by coming up with local policies or laws against discrimination or rights violations, promote positive cultural practices that would be sensitive to gender equality and women empowerment, raise awareness by sensitizing traditional leaders on human rights promotion and protection and by always ensuring that women are appointed to various leadership positions in the community and have their views heard in key decision making in community affairs.

Leadership and decision making

Leaders said there was fair distribution of leadership positions among youth, women and men in various offices and in the community. The proportion representing men was 60%, women 25% and youth (boys and girls) represented 15 %. They added by saying that all gender had equal rights to take up leadership positions but only it depended on the capacity and abilities of the individuals. Women had however been given opportunity to participate actively in key decision-making processes that affected the community. They also said they would ensure equal participation of all people including youth and persons living with disabilities by distributing leadership positions equally among these groups and ensuring each group views are heard and incorporated in key community decisions making.

Customary laws/ any other laws

Most cases were presided over by the Local authorities in the community. As a result, they would be guided by a number of laid down customary laws. For example, men found guilty of rape would be arrested and also punished by making them pay 2 cows or pay an equivalent of 8,000 Birr. Men who had committed adultery would be arrested and fined 8 cows i.e. 6 cows for the woman's husband and 2 cows for the customary court. Revenge killing criminals would compensate relatives 100 cows. Those who sexually exploited the vulnerable would be arrested and punished and would be asked also to pay a heifer (young mature cow) or pay 4,000 Birr. In case of land disputes, rightful owners would always be given back their pieces of land. Some customary laws were however conflicting with the modern laws/norms. For example, marriage among the community members has a fixed limit of 15 cows or equivalent of 60,000 Birr despite the status of the person who was marrying. It therefore evidently favoured those who were rich. Parents also claimed the rights to organize marriage for their children without interference from local authority even if the marriage was against their children choice or wish. Some of these laws were practically outdated and needed to be reconsidered according to the leaders. They believed the local authority were in position to influence some changes on this by calling a meeting with community elders to discuss the impacts of the negative cultural practises and the need to abolish or change them.

Policy/ legal framework

Policies, regulations and guiding principles exist and guide the local authorities and customary courts in settling cases in the community. For example, marital policy says that anyone who wants to marry a girl should pay at least 15 cows or an equivalent in Birr or dollars and if a person killed someone intentionally or unintentionally, he/she will compensate the deceased relatives with 100 cows or equivalent in monetary value. However, some of these policies, regulations and guiding principles need to change e.g. the policy on marriage need to be changed by setting no limit on dowry, but should depend on the agreement between the girls' parents and man's parents based on what the man would offer. This will allow flexibility to someone who cannot afford paying dowries at one time.

They also recommended the following regarding policies and regulations;

- Housing land and property Policies - Have a local policy in place that ensures that everyone had equal rights to own a house, land and property including unmarried woman in the community.
- Child force marriage policies - Coming up with a local policy that says it is unlawful for parents to marry off their children below the age of 18 years and have them respect the choice of their children to marry when they want and whom they want.
- Gender based violence domestic violence policies- Arrest perpetrators of GBV especially in case of rape or attempted rape. Arrest men who are drunkards and are found of disturbing their wives whenever they are under the influence of alcohol. Encourage leaders to participate in GBV prevention, protection and response.
- Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse policies- Local authority should arrest and prosecute any community member found exploiting and abusing vulnerable people in the community.
- Access to education policies- Local authority to arrest and punish parents who deny children access to education

Findings from leaders FGD September



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report, Leaders FGD

Date: 10th September, 2020

Payam: Warweng

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in Warweng Payam on 10th September, 2020 from 11.20am to 12.25pm. Twelve leaders from Benjiel, Mokley, Wunkiir and Kuryith Bomas attended the meeting. All leaders were members from the host community and discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General safety and security

The general security situation in Warweng payam was normal and there were no reported cases of communal violence, cattle raiding nor revenge killings from all the four Bomas. The problem was limited access to safe and clean drinking water. All the Bomas i.e. Mokley, Kuryith,Wunkiir, and Benjiel depended on water from two functional boreholes that were drilled by Relief International. The boreholes served a population of over 2,000 people across the payam. Due to limited access, some families had resorted to directly use water from the nearby streams and rain water that would be gathered at some pools during rainy seasons which were not safe for drinking. As a result, waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea had been reported. The general access to sanitation was not good because some families practiced open defecation due to lack of latrines. However, a few families had latrines which had been constructed by Relief International (RI) WASH program.

Domestic violence/ Intimate partner

Cases of domestic violence were said to be a family issue and were mostly handled by relatives of the husband and the wife. Maternal and paternal uncles would also be invited where third party interventions were required. However, cases of divorce were handled in the local courts when reported. Women would mostly report because they were the most affected/mistreated and the violence would come as a result of misunderstanding on small issues at the household level. This however had a lot of impact on the well-being of children.

Children that lived in such families looked stressed up and unhappy and some lived admiring never to live close to their parents.

Forced marriage

Marriage according to the leaders was a family affair. Therefore, they rarely heard about or handled such cases. They said forced marriages could be happening in the community but they were often handled up to the extended family level where maternal or paternal uncles would intervene for the victims. It was made clear that not even the local authorities would interfere with such arrangements because culturally it was a parents' responsibility.

Access to education

Every child had an equal right and opportunity to education unlike before when girls were strictly not allowed to go to school. Parents believed that girls would get pregnant in school because it was only in school where they would frequently interact with boys. Girls were left at home to cook for the siblings.

The local authority can however support children that would have been denied access to education through community dialogues, raising awareness on the importance of education and through putting down policies that would make it compulsory for all children above 5 years to go to school. Cases of children attacks, rape, kidnapping and abduction had not been heard in the community.

Housing, land and property

Leaders presided over cases related to land, housing and property. In 2011, there was an incident of land dispute that involved the residents of Warweng and Belwang Payams after people from Belwang claimed that Panchool Boma (currently known as Mokley) belonged to them. It resulted into a hot dispute that was settled by community elders from both payams who exactly understood the historical background and boundaries of the 2 payams. The right to land ownership was limited to mature and married men only. Unmarried women were not allowed in the community to own land because they were believed to become promiscuous when given the opportunity. In case of IDPS, Refugees and Returnees, the local authority and elders supported/organized temporary settlement for them. Those who stayed longer were allocated pieces of land for permanent settlement. People who left their original lands and fled due to conflicts were helped regain back their properties when they returned provided they knew the locations of their lands and had people to witness for them.

Sexual abuse and Exploitation

Cases of sexual exploitation and abuse had neither been handled nor heard of by the leaders. They however recognized that it could be happening in the community though victims would rarely report due to shame. According to the leaders, perpetrators would be businessmen and other wealthy men. The local authority can help victims by punishing those who would be found guilty through imprisonment or fine them with cows or some huge amount of money.

Sexual abuse and Exploitation

The leaders mentioned deep cultural practices and beliefs that negatively affected the community. They included denying women chance to speak in community meetings by men, forced marriage/parents arranging marriage for their children without seeking their consent, revenge killings, denying unmarried women right to own lands and denying women the rights to leadership positions. They added that these cultural practices were also gender biased and favoured men more than the women. In fact, they said some practices such as denying women to hold leadership positions and right to land ownership, cattle raiding and revenge killings were outdated and they believed the local authority were in a better position to change such by coming up with policies and laws that would align with modernity. They also suggested frequent awareness raising among the community members on the effects of such traditional practices and believes

Leadership and decision making

Proportionally, leadership committees included 75% men and youths and 25% women and the girls with all gender having equal rights to take up leadership roles based on their capabilities. Women actively participated in all key decision making in the community. To ensure equal participation of all men, women, people with disabilities and youths (boys and girls), the community leaders suggested providing them equal opportunities and by ensuring their voices are heard in key decision making in the community.

Customary laws/ any other laws

Customary laws guided local authority in presiding over cases. A man found to have raped a girl was charged 2 cows or would pay 8,000 Birr as fine. An adulterous man would be arrested and fined 8 cows. Blood compensation as a result of revenge killings would cost the perpetrator 100 cows, arrest and punishment. Perpetrators of sexual exploitation would pay a heifer or an equivalent amount of 4000 Birr. In case of land disputes, rightful owners would be given back their land based on evidence and support by true witnesses

Some customary laws were however conflicting with modern law. Marriage would cost the suitor a fixed limit of 15 cows despite the status of the person marrying the lady. Parents traditionally marrying off their children without their consent and denying women the right to leadership positions as well as not allowing unmarried women the right to land or house ownership. These customary laws were outdated according to the leaders hence they recommended on the need to engage the community elders to discuss the impacts of such negative laws and propose possible amendments for the good of the community

Policy/ legal framework

Local authorities settled cases based on policies, regulations and guiding principles that guided their decisions. However, some policies needed amendments as per the local leaders e.g. the policy on bride price. The leaders suggested that instead of having it fixed at 15 cows, they proposed to have it flexed and dependent on mutual agreement between the families.

Recommendations regarding policies and regulations

- 1 Housing, land and property** - There is need to have a local policy in place that would ensure that everyone including unmarried women have the right to land, house and property ownership
- 2 Child forced marriage** - There would be need to come up with policies that would make it unlawful for parents to marry off their children below 18 years of age as well as not arrange any marriages without children consent.
- 3 Gender based violence and domestic violence** - Need to come up with policies that will investigate, arrest and punish perpetrators of GBV especially in cases of rape or attempted rape.
- 4 Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse** - Clear laws should be put in place to prevent the vulnerable members of the community from sexual exploitation and abuse. Those who take advantage of them should be arrested and prosecuted.
- 5 Access to education** - Parents should be made aware that those who denying their children access to education will be arrested and prosecuted. It should therefore be made lawful that all children from 5 years must go to school.

Findings from leaders FGD October



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report, Leaders FGD

Date: 16th October, 2020

Payam: Jangok

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The focus group discussion was conducted on 16th October, 2020 in Jangok Payam from 2.00pm to 3.00pm. The meeting was attended by 12 Leaders from 6 Bomas (Kamel, Nyathoan, Taywengthuok, Roam, Lualthiang and Duolthiang). All participants were from the host community and discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General safety and security

The general security within their territory was normal and cases of communal violence, cattle raiding and revenge killings had not been heard. However, there had been a case of cattle raiding in June, 2020 which was carried out by Ngueny payam youths from Kiechkuon County of greater Nasir. The raid was planned and attempted at 5.00am in the morning but fortunately they did not succeed to take away the cattle. It was hinted that Jangok youth were aware of the plan. Starvation had been experienced in the recent past and the leaders gave an example that occurred in late 2014 when people from Guelguk Payam of Longechuk County (located North West of Jangok Payam) got displaced due to war between the government and opposition forces.

The leaders said that they moved to Jangok Payam without anything and community leaders together with the local authority had to come in to mobilize the community members to support through provision of food and other non-food items such as sleeping mats, blankets, cooking pans and mosquito nets until WFP (World Food Program) came in to provide some food assistance. General sanitation of the area was not good as was reported by the leaders. Many families practised open defecation in the nearby forests due to lack of latrines. The few families who had latrines had been assisted by RI through their WASH program to construct. Water was however scarce since there was only one borehole in the Payam that served a population of over 25,000 people. This had resulted into frequent conflicts and fighting amongst girls and women while scrambling for the resource. They added that families were not able to withstand the pressure often resorted to direct consumption of stream and river water which was not very safe for drinking.

Domestic violence/ Intimate partner

The leaders categorically informed that they rarely handled cases that related to domestic violence. According to them, those were family issues that were mostly solved privately by family members (the husband & wife families, the extended family and immediate clan elders). Third parties (courts) would be involved only if they would have failed completely to give a solution especially if it has to do with divorce. Women easily reported domestic violence and sometimes their parents and close relatives would do. Such conflicts could be caused by misunderstanding over family matters, drunkenness, adultery (by women), women natural defence against scolding of their impregnated daughters (perhaps by an irresponsible boy) and general irresponsibility by men to support family needs. As a result, children get very affected; they become unhappy and lack self-confidence, some think of leaving their parents homes to find refuge somewhere else and those schooling drop out of school or frequently record poor performance

Forced marriage

Because marriage affairs were generally a family matter, the leaders claimed not to have handled any cases related to forced marriages. They also put across that nobody, not even the local authority had power to influence family decisions on marriage since it was deeply ingrained into the peoples' culture. They however mentioned that those who had been affected would disappear from home either to the uncles or to some unknown places or even commit suicide.

Access to education

All children had a right to education and an equal opportunity to access it. However, they highlighted that this was not the case in the past when girls would be denied the right to education due to parents' fear that they would get impregnated by boys while at school. Based on this, girls would be kept home to take care of young siblings and perform other household chores. However, this had since changed after parents got enlightened on the importance of education to all gender. The local authority however had the power to convene meetings, discuss and raise awareness about education and eventually pass policies that would make it compulsory for all children above 5 years of age to go to school.

Cases of child kidnapping and abduction had however not been heard of in Jangok Payam.

Housing, land and property

Land was enough for all the community members including strangers who would choose to stay in Jangok. As such, the leaders said they had not presided over any conflict cases concerning land. It was reiterated though that not everyone had equal rights to land or house ownership. They said that unmarried women were not allowed to own land in their community due to the perception that such women would become promiscuous. IDPS, returnees or refugees would be accommodated following the approval of the local authority and community elders. Those who stayed longer were allocated some land for permanent settlement. On the other hand, community members who had left the community and lost land and property and had returned were helped to reclaim back their land provided they were aware of their original location of settlement.

Sexual abuse and Exploitation

There were no cases of sexual abuse and exploitation that had been heard of or settled by leaders. They admitted that such cases could be existing in the community but they had not been reported. Such cases would be rarely reported in the community because people did not have proper reporting structures and the most vulnerable group of people (widows, children without parents/caregivers, orphans, single parents (mostly women), job seekers and school children) were at risk. The leaders believed that punishment would be the best solution to stop sexual abuse and exploitation because many people would learn from it. They also recommended the local authority to work closely with protection partners in order to ensure that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse received proper assistance

Culture

It was evident that deep cultural practices and beliefs; denied unmarried women the rights to owning land or housing, denied women the right to leadership position in the community, it limited women from public speaking, propagated forced child marriage and instigated the cycle of revenge killings. More so, the cultural practices and beliefs were gender biased and never favoured women. Based on this, the leaders recommended for the need to relook into and amend some of the negative cultural practices through adoption of new policies that complied with modern law.

Leadership and decision making

A lot was happening in revolutionizing leadership. Out of 11 Bomas, women occupied seats for 10 Bomas. Therefore, proportionally men occupied 60%, women 25% and youths (boys and girls) occupied 15% of the positions.

To the leaders, all gender had equal opportunity to take up leadership roles in the community based on their abilities. Women were specifically considered during key community decision making processes.

Customary laws/ any other laws

Perpetrators of GBV issues such as rape are arrested and fined 2 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr. Adultery with peoples' wives would call for a fine of 8 cows. Blood compensation or revenge killing 100 cows, marriage price (where the court was involved) 15 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr and those disputing over land would be given back their lands based on strong evidence through the support of true witnesses. A few laws were however conflicting with modern laws, for example, to marry a girl in the community, one would be required to meet a fixed limit of 15 cow or an equivalent of 60,000 Birr despite the status of suitor. Marriage had been left to the parents to decide who their children would marry despite their lack of consent and unmarried women were denied the right to land and house ownership. These unfair traditional practices and beliefs made it difficult for community leaders and local authority to resolve issues in the community in the right way.

Customary laws such as fixing bride price, parents arranging marriage for their children, denying unmarried women rights to land and housing ownership and denying leadership positions for women just because they were women were outdated and needed to change in order to suit modern laws. To change these laws, the leaders suggested a meeting between the local authority and community elders. In the meeting, the negative impacts of the cultural practices would be discussed and possible amendments proposed.

Policy/ legal framework

Policies, regulations and guiding principles existed and were used in customary courts during settlement of cases in the community. Those found guilty would be arrested, beaten up and sometimes fined as shall have been decided by the police officers on duty. Perpetrators of GBV issues such as rape were arrested and fined 2 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr. Adultery with peoples' wives would call for a fine of 8 cows. Blood compensation or revenge killing 100 cows, marriage price (where the court was involved) 15 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr and those disputing over land would be given back their lands based on the support of true witnesses

Policies, regulation and guiding principles such as fixing bride price, parents arranging marriage for their children, denying unmarried women rights to own land and a house and denying leadership positions for women just because they were women were unfair and would need to change. The following recommendations concerning policies, regulations and guiding principles were made;

- 1 Housing land and property policies- There is need for a local policy that would ensure that everyone has a right to own a house, a land and property including unmarried women.
- 2 Child force marriage policies- There is need for a local policy that will make it unlawful for parents to marry off their children below the age of 18 years and should not be allowed to arrange marriages without their children consents.
- 3 Gender based violence domestic violence policies- Perpetrators of GBV related issues such as rape and attempted rape should be arrested and punished accordingly.
- 4 Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse policies- Local authority should arrest and prosecute any community member found exploiting and abusing vulnerable people in the community and code of conduct to be signed by every community member holding any leadership position.
- 5 Access to education policies- Local authority to arrest and punish parents who deny children access to education as well as make it compulsory for children from 5 years old and above to go to school.

Findings from leaders FGD November



Longechuk County Protection Monitoring Report, Leaders FGD

Date: 27th November, 2020

Payam: Mathiang

State: Upper Nile

Introduction

The leaders' focus group discussion was conducted on 27th November, 2020 in Mathiang Payam from 10.00am to 11.00am. The meeting was attended by 12 Leaders from 11 Bomas of Mathiang (Paytath, Relbek, Payweng, Boryuwen, Matar, New Site, Mathiang, Kuembor, Phalng A, Phalang B, and Palkach). All participants were from the host community and discussions were facilitated by Coalition for Humanity Field Staff based in Longechuk County.

General safety and security

The general security situation within Mathiang was reported as normal, and no cases of communal violence, cattle raiding, and revenge killings had been heard. However, there had been a case of rape that involved a pregnant woman in her seventh month pregnancy. It took place on 23rd August, 2020 at around 6:30am between Warweng Payam and Mathiang Payam. The perpetrator was reported to be a drunk man who was coming from Mathiang Payam going to Warweng. The pregnant woman was returning from collection of fire woods in the nearby forest, and then he asked the woman for sex, but the woman refused, and then he used force to rape her, and after that he ran away. The woman reported the matter to her husband who went to inform the police about it and police were sent to search for him but all in vain but the woman managed to get some medication at RI medical facilities and recovered after the completion of her medication.

Leaders reported that starvation had been experienced in the recent past and the leaders gave an example that occurred in June 2019 when World Vision delayed to distribute food on time in Mathiang. Many families' resorted to other coping strategies such as gathering wild fruits, fishing and collecting firewood for sell in the local market in order to support their families. General sanitation of the area was not good as was stated by the leaders. Many families practised open defecation in the nearby forests due to lack of enough latrines in many housed holds. The few families who had latrines had been assisted by RI through their WASH program to construct latrines in their homes. Water was however scarce since there were only few boreholes in Mathiang Payam that served a population of over 5,000 people. Shortage of water had resulted into frequent conflicts and fighting amongst girls and women while scrambling for the scarce resource. Leaders added that families which were not able to withstand the pressure often resorted to direct consumption of stream and river water which was not very safe for drinking.

Domestic violence/ Intimate partner

The leaders reported that they rarely handled cases that related to domestic violence because according to them, those were family issues that were mostly solved privately by family members (the husband & wife families, the extended family and immediate clan elders). Third parties (courts) would be involved only if they would have failed completely to give a solution especially if it has to do with divorce.

Women easily reported domestic violence and sometimes their parents and close relatives would do. Conflicts in many households used to be caused by misunderstanding over family matters, drunkenness, adultery (by women), women natural defence against scolding of their impregnated daughters (perhaps by an irresponsible boy) and general irresponsibility by men to support family needs. As a result, children get very affected; they become unhappy, very stressful, and lack self-confidence, some think of leaving their parents homes to find refuge somewhere else and those schooling drop out of school or frequently record poor performance when doing exams or weekly tests.

Forced marriage

Marriage affairs were generally considered as family matters, the leaders claimed that they did not handle any cases related to forced marriages. They also put across that nobody, not even the local authority had power to influence family decisions on marriage since it was deeply ingrained into the peoples' culture. They however mentioned that those who had been affected would disappear from home either to the uncles or to some unknown places or even commit suicide if they were not monitored very well by close relatives.

Access to education

The leaders reported that all children had a right to education and an equal opportunity to access it. However, they highlighted that this was not the case in the recent past when girls would be denied the right to education due to parents' fear that they would get impregnated by boys while at school. Based on this, girls would be kept home to take care of young siblings and perform other household chores. However, this had since changed after parents got enlightened on the importance of education to all gender. The local authority however had the power to convene meetings, discuss and raise awareness about education and eventually pass policies that would make it compulsory for all children above 5 years of age to go to school. Leaders said cases of child kidnapping and abduction had however not been heard of in Mathiang Payam.

Housing, land and property

Leaders said that Land was enough for all the community members including strangers who would choose to stay in Jangok. As such, the leaders said they had not presided over any conflict cases concerning land. It was reiterated though that not everyone had equal rights to land or house ownership. They said that unmarried women were not allowed to own land in their community due to the perception that such women would become promiscuous IDPS, returnees or refugees would be accommodated following the approval of the local authority and community elders. Those who stayed longer were allocated some land for permanent settlement. On the other hand, community members who had left the community and lost land and property and had returned were helped to reclaim back their land provided they were aware of their original location of settlement.

Sexual abuse and Exploitation

Leaders reported that there were no cases of sexual abuse and exploitation that had been heard of or settled by them. They admitted that such cases could be existing in the community but they had not been reported. Such cases would be rarely reported in the community because people did not have proper reporting structures and the most vulnerable group of people (widows, children without parents/caregivers, orphans, single parents (mostly women), job seekers and school children) were at risk. The leaders believed that punishment would be the best solution to stop sexual abuse and exploitation because many people would learn from it. They also recommended the local authority to work closely with protection and other GBV partners in the Payam in order to ensure that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse received proper assistance and care when they report their cases to the GBV and PSEA focal points.

Culture

It was very clear that deep cultural practices and beliefs; denied unmarried women the rights to owning land or housing, denied women the right to leadership position in the community, it limited women from public speaking, propagated forced child marriage and instigated the cycle of revenge killings. More so, the cultural practices and beliefs were gender biased and never favoured women. Based on this, the leaders recommended for the need to review and amend some of the negative cultural practices through adoption of new policies that complied with modern laws that favors all genders.

Leadership and decision making

Leaders said that Mathiang Payam administrator had made a lot of changes in the Payam leadership structure, for example, out of 11 Bomas in Mathiang, women occupied seats for 10 Bomas and only one Boma was headed by a man. Therefore, proportionally men occupied 25%, women 60% and youths (boys and girls) occupied 15% of the positions.

To the leaders, all gender had equal opportunity to take up leadership roles in the community based on their abilities and no discrimination based on gender. Women were specifically considered during key community decision making processes since they are part of the Payam leadership.

Customary laws/ any other laws

Perpetrators of GBV issues such as rape used to be arrested and fined 3 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr, 2 cows given to the parents of the victim and local authority would take one. Adultery with peoples' wives would call for a fine of 8 cows. Blood compensation or revenge killing 100 cows, marriage price (where the court was involved) 15 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr and those disputing over land would be given back their lands based on strong evidence through the support of true witnesses. A few laws were however conflicting with modern laws, for example, to marry a girl in the community, one would be required to meet a fixed limit of 15 cow or an equivalent of 60,000 Birr despite the status of suitor. Marriage had been left to the parents to decide who their children would marry despite their lack of consent and unmarried women were denied the right to land and house ownership. These unfair traditional practices and beliefs made it difficult for community leaders and local authority to resolve issues in the community in the right way.

Customary laws such as fixing bride price, parents arranging marriage for their children, denying unmarried women rights to land and housing ownership and denying leadership positions for women just because they were women were outdated and needed to change in order to suit modern laws. To change these laws, the leaders suggested a meeting between the local authority and community elders. In the meeting, the negative impacts of the cultural practices would be discussed and possible amendments proposed and effected.

Policy/ legal framework

There are Policies, regulations and guiding principles that existed and were used in customary courts during settlement of cases in the community. Those found guilty would be arrested, beaten up and sometimes fined as shall have been decided by the police officers on duty. Perpetrators of GBV issues such as rape were arrested and fined 3 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr. Adultery with peoples' wives would call for a fine of 8 cows. Blood compensation or revenge killing 100 cows, marriage price (where the court was involved) 15 cows or an equivalent amount in Birr and those disputing over land would be given back their lands based on the support of true witnesses

Policies, regulation and guiding principles such as fixing bride price, parents arranging marriage for their children, denying unmarried women rights to own land and a house and denying leadership positions for women just because they were women were unfair and would need to change.

The following recommendations concerning policies, regulations and guiding principles were made;

- 1 Housing land and property policies- There is need for a local policy that would ensure that everyone has a right to own a house, a land and property including unmarried women.
- 2 Child force marriage policies-There is need for a local policy that will make it unlawful for parents to marry off their children below the age of 18 years and should not be allowed to arrange marriages without their children consents.
- 3 Gender based violence domestic violence policies- Perpetrators of GBV related issues such as rape and attempted rape should be arrested and punished accordingly, others should be given life imprisonment.
- 4 Protection of Sexual exploitation and abuse policies- Local authority should arrest and prosecute any community member found exploiting and abusing vulnerable people in the community and code of conduct to be signed by every community member holding any leadership position.
- 5 Access to education policies- Local authority to arrest and punish parents who deny children access to education as well as make it compulsory for children from 5 years old and above to go to school.

PROTECTION ASSESSMENT, RIGHT VIOLATION MONITORING AND ANALYSIS END OF YEAR REPORT 2020

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