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Save the Children

World Vision



Regional Review of the Child Protection Response for the South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 5

*"Thank you for coming, because I feel
I am an important person now.
I wish to have peace in South Sudan and go home."*

South Sudanese refugee boy, Kakuma, May 2015

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ACRONYMS

BIA - Best Interest Assessment

BID - Best Interest Determinations

CFS - Child Friendly Spaces

COR - Commissioner Office for Refugees

CP - Child Protection

CPIMS - Child Protection Information Management System

CPWG - Child Protection Working Group

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross

IEC - Information, Education and Communication Materials

IPP - Directorate General of Passports and Immigration

ISP - Information Sharing Protocol

LWF - The Lutheran World Federation

MRM - Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

PTA - Parent Teachers Associations

SGBV - Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SOP - Standard Operating Procedure

SRCS - Sudanese Red Crescent Society

UASC - Unaccompanied and Separated Children

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNICEF - United Nations Children Fund

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The expectant prospects of the world's youngest nation were shattered on December 2013, when violence broke out in South Sudan's capital, quickly spreading to other locations throughout the country. The conflict has resulted in wide-spread displacement inside and outside South Sudan. Over 1.5 million people have been displaced inside the country, and over 600,000 have fled to neighboring countries by July 2015; the number of refugees are now larger than when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed after decades of civil war.

In the neighboring Sudan, war broke out on June 2011 in the border region of South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Since the beginning of the conflict, humanitarian actors have had limited access to some of these regions. As a result of the conflict, there are currently over 264,000 Sudanese refugees in South Sudan.

Children bear the brunt of the conflict. With almost 70% of the refugees from South Sudan and Sudan under the age of 18, these conflicts are nothing less than a war on their children. As stated by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in regards to the South Sudan conflict, *"the impact of the conflict on children in the previous months has been greater than in the entire 21-year period of the second civil war"*¹. Children continue to be exposed to displacement, trauma, gender based violence, child recruitment and other forms of violence, suffering the distress of war and traumatic events.

UNHCR, UNICEF and over 14 child protection partners have worked against the clock to address the protection needs of these children. Yet challenges remain. While UNHCR and child protection partners are trying to work modalities to do more with less, it is imperative to make the needs of the South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children visible and mobilize more resources that allow the provision of qualitative and adequate services to them. Quality child protection programs enables refugee children to live healthy and productive lives, to develop their potential, and to build skills for their future self-reliance. Investing in child protection along with education nurtures peaceful coexistence, human rights and civic values, essential to break the cycle of violence and to build stable communities.

Sudan and South Sudan cannot afford to have a generation lost, as in them lies the future and hope of both nations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CHILD PROTECTION REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

1. Ensure that all refugee girls and boys are **registered individually** and documented with the relevant authorities
2. Ensure that refugee girls and boys have access to **child friendly procedures**
3. Ensure that refugee girls and boys are **protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation** at home, in the community and when in contact with humanitarian services.
4. Ensure that **girls and boys with specific needs** are identified, prioritized and provided ongoing, appropriate, and targeted support
5. Improve the protection and wellbeing of refugee children and adolescents through **education**

¹ African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Press Statement following mission of the ACERWC on the situation of children in South Sudan, August 2014, p.2.

2. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

OBJECTIVES REVISION

- ❖ **OBJECTIVE 1:** To assess the extent to which the child protection response in the five countries has met the five strategic objectives set in the Regional Framework. (Outcome assessment).
- ❖ **OBJECTIVE 2:** To identify common challenges and bottlenecks, areas of improvement for the response and lessons learned, and to discuss and agree on regional priorities for the child protection response beyond June 2015, based on the May 2014-June 2015 results. (Outcome assessment).
- ❖ **OBJECTIVE 3:** To gather lessons learned in regards to the drafting process and the monitoring of the Regional Framework, and to analyze its interlinkages with other action plans and documents used at the country level and regional level. (Process assessment).

In response to this crisis and in light of the serious impact on children, UNHCR and child protection partners decided to jointly develop a *Regional Framework for the Protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children* (the *Regional Child Protection Framework*) during the early months of 2014.

This Framework set a common vision for protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, and was complemented by more detailed country-specific plans and strategies for child protection. It intended to support a coordinated and predictable response for refugee children across the region, promoting the harmonization of activities and implementation of child protection minimum standards. The *Regional Child Protection Framework* was established for a one year period (May 2014-June 2015), after which it would be reviewed and updated.

During May-June, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Plan International, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF, World Vision, which are all part of the Regional Child Protection Network, conducted interagency missions to the concerned countries, to review the implementation of the *Regional Child Protection Framework* and assess the need for adjustments. The findings of these missions were validated during a regional inter-agency meeting on 15 -16 July in Nairobi, and five in-country reports were produced by the Regional Child Protection Network. This report is the regional synthesis of the different interagency missions conducted, based on the methodology that is explained below.

TWO OVERARCHING QUESTIONS

- ❖ If we did what we said we would do (revision of outcomes).
- ❖ If what we said we would do was adequately framed and responds to the main issues to ensure the protection of refugee children (revision of the design and process of the *Regional Child Protection Framework's* development).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. OVERVIEW

The review used mixed methodologies in order to probe different aspects of the response and to triangulate the responses received. The principle sources of information used were: secondary data review; meetings with government, sectors and child protection actors; focus group discussions with refugees and host community members; and observation. The design of the methodology has been guided by the purpose of the exercise, which is not to evaluate the response, but rather to identify the successes and challenges in the response, the extent to which the response has been approached strategically and in a coordinated way, and the degree to which the *Regional Child Protection Framework* has been useful.

The proposed review faced the challenge of how to compare and consolidate information across a variety of locations, countries and respondents. In order to analyze the data effectively given the limited time and resources, the review adopted several measures to structure information to facilitate easy comparability. For **secondary data**, an indicator matrix was developed, which different operations were asked to fill in according to the information available to them. These matrixes were also reviewed on the spot with the UNHCR or child protection focal point in the specific location. For **meetings and focus group discussions**, several strategies were used. A ‘tag word’ approach was adopted for several questions, where essentially those conducting discussions were asked to assign no more than 5 tag words to capture the main issues raised. These tag words were then reviewed at the end of the mission so that points relating to the same issue were grouped under the same tag, and tags were given refined definitions as the exercise went forward. A number of questions that asked respondents to assign a number to a particular question (either a rating or a percentage) were also introduced as a way to compare the relative positioning of issues across locations and countries. Finally for **observation**, a specific set of areas of assessment was prepared to be filled in by the review team.

For the purpose of the review, the above listed objectives were broken down into the following review questions, and the structure of this report is broken down by objective area:

Table 1: Review questions

Obj.	Question	Principle data sources
1	How was the response coordinated?	Group discussions with child protection actors
	What were the main achievements of the child protection response?	Group discussion with child protection actors and refugees, response indicators
	To what extent have the specific objectives of the <i>Regional Child Protection Framework</i> been met?	Group discussion with child protection actors and refugees, response indicators, observation

2	What were the main challenges in implementing the child protection response?	Group discussion with child protection actors and refugees, secondary data review, observation
	What are the main lessons learned from the response to date?	Group discussion with child protection actors, observation
	What should be the priorities for the child protection response going forward?	Group discussion with child protection actors and refugees, secondary data review, observation
3	How useful was the <i>Regional Child Protection Framework</i> for actors working on the response?	Group discussion with child protection actors
	What are the recommendations for the future of the <i>Regional Child Protection Framework</i> ?	Group discussion with child protection actors

3.2. REVIEW ACTIVITIES

The Review team visited 15 camps or settlements in the five countries, as the list below:

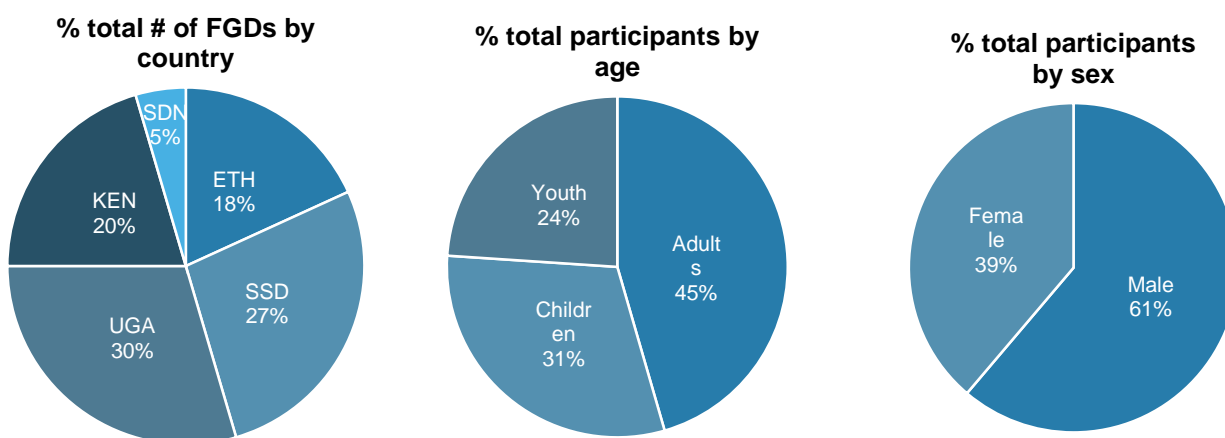
Table 2: *Camps/Settlements visited by review team*

COUNTRY	CAMP/SETTLEMENT	ORGANIZATIONS
ETHIOPIA <i>Gambella</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kule • Tierkidi • Jewi • Pugnido 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNHCR ○ UNICEF ○ LWF ○ World Vision
KENYA <i>Kakuma</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kakuma 2 • Kakuma 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNHCR ○ UNICEF ○ Plan International
SOUTH SUDAN <i>Unity and Upper Nile</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maban • Ajang Thok • Yida 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNHCR ○ UNICEF ○ World Vision
SUDAN <i>Khartoum and White Nile</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bantiu • Um Sangor • El Khasafa • El Redis 1 and 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNHCR
UGANDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiryandongo • Adjumani 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNHCR ○ UNICEF ○ LWF ○ World Vision

The Review team conducted a total of **44 focus group discussions** with 714 refugee leaders, community structures, children and youth, held **14 meetings** with 116 representatives of child protection stakeholders from the government, UN agencies and NGOs, and made several site visits to conduct **observation** activities.

For the focus group discussions, the breakdown of participants was as follows:

Table 3: Participant breakdown



3.3. LIMITATIONS

The principal limitations of this review are in its scope: it is important to be aware that the review does not attempt to evaluate the response or even the *Regional Child Protection Framework*, but rather to identify common achievements, challenges and ways forward. The findings of this review must therefore be seen as indicative rather than definitive. The review was limited especially in time (often only one day spent in a location to collect information), and in resources (review team size varied from one to eight persons, but only one person was constant for all of the missions). As explained above, the methodology adopted ‘work tagging’ and numerical ratings, which are helpful in being able to compare issues across settings, but are subjected to oversimplification. These approaches are inevitably subject to the lens of the persons assigning and cleaning the tag words, and – given that the discussions were conducted by a variety of different persons – ensuring consistency and faithfulness to the original discussions was often at odds. However these limitations were mitigated to the extent possible by taking extensive notes which could be referred back to in order to confirm the original meaning of tag words, and by ensuring that more than one person was involved in all the stages of the process.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. CHILD PROTECTION OUTLOOK

The history and present reality in Sudan and South Sudan are characterized by war, displacement, and deprivation. Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees have been displaced from the new boundary's regions along both countries, where most of the fighting of the previous two-decade civil war took place. Refugees have settled in the border regions with Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan, which are prone to some of the highest levels of chronic vulnerability in the world, further straining the already scarce resources of hosting communities. As a result, refugee households are extremely vulnerable, with generational impacts on education opportunities, food insecurity and an exhaustion of coping mechanisms.

"I was separated from my mother during the war. There were bombs at school, everywhere. Many people died. I don't know where my family is. We were taken in a lorry, I asked for my mother, but they told me to come. So many bombs, many people died. I can't sleep. I worry."

Refugee boy,
Kakuma, Kenya,
May 2015

Despite the challenging context, all the Governments' of asylum have set open border policies, and therefore all Sudanese and South Sudanese adults and children have so far had **access to asylum** on a *prima facie* basis, and benefited from an overall unrestricted access to host countries' territory. However, restrictions and lack of regular access to border crossing points by humanitarian actors in some countries, have put refugee boys and girls at risk. Reception and transit centers have been established in all border areas, with child-friendly procedures established for the identification of children with specific needs. Nevertheless, with the delays in transfers to the refugee settlements, some children have remained for months in transit locations without adequate care and protection. Despite the challenges, generally refugee children have had access to physical and legal protection as well as to basic life-saving emergency provisions, such as water, sanitation and hygiene, primary health care, nutrition services and shelter.

In order to understand the challenges presented throughout the report, an understanding of the population demographics is essential. A prominent feature in the Sudan and South Sudanese refugee crisis is the **disproportionate number of children**. On average, 67% of the refugee population are children. If we take only South Sudanese refugees, the percentage increases to 68%. This is a highly significant number of children, calling for specific attention to the needs of the majority of the refugee population.

Table 4: Percentage of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children²

	SOUTH SUDANESE REFUGEES				
	ETHIOPIA	KENYA	SUDAN	UGANDA	REGIONAL AVERAGE
% Children	69%	68%	63%	67%	67%

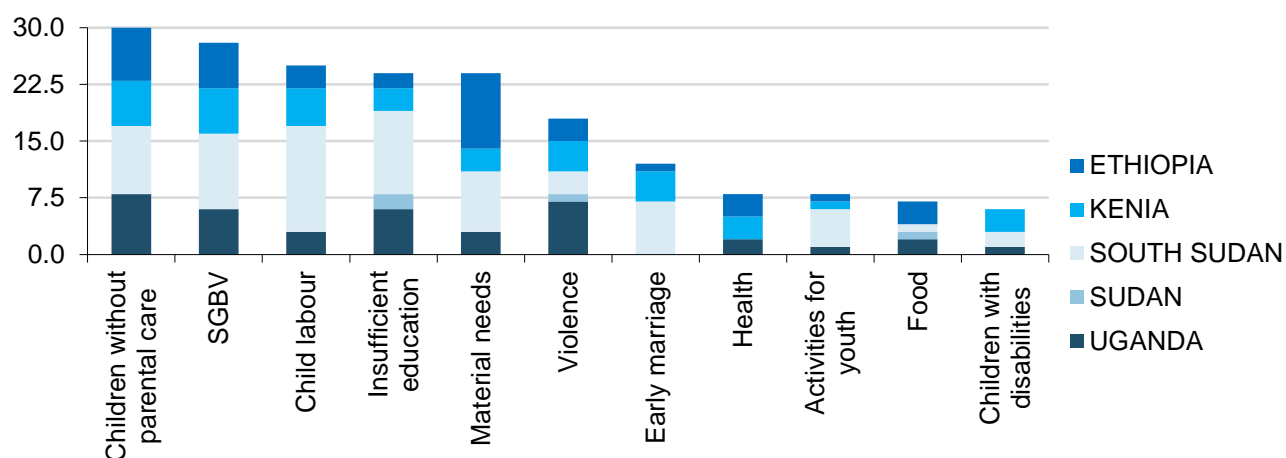
Approximately 80% of the households are **women** headed, which must take care of large numbers of children. As the chart below shows, with the exception of refugees in South Sudan, the number of women significantly exceeds that of men. In three of the operations (Uganda, Kenya and Sudan), women represent a constant 61% of the adult population, while in Ethiopia that percentage rises to 72%.

Table 5: Gender population percentages for South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees³

	ETHIOPIA		KENYA		SOUTH SUDAN		SUDAN		UGANDA	
	M%	F%	M%	F%	% M	% F	% M	% F	% M	% F
Total Children	51%	49%	52%	48%	49%	51%	52%	48%	52%	48%
Total Adults	28%	72%	39%	61%	53%	47%	39%	61%	39%	61%
Gran Total	44%	56%	47%	53%	51%	49%	47%	53%	47%	53%

Children have been separated from their families on an unprecedented scale, and as a result, the large number of unaccompanied and separated children continues to be the biggest protection challenge. “Children without parental care” was in fact reported by refugee and host communities as the main concern, as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Refugees and host communities key protection concerns for children –disaggregated by country



² Based on new arrivals post 15 December 2013.

³ Based on new arrivals post 15 December 2013.

Over 34,000 unaccompanied and separated children have been registered. In countries such as Kenya or Ethiopia, they represent up to 10% of the child population, even though the numbers in all locations may be much larger, especially in Sudan, where individual registration has not taken place systematically. Many children have been separated from their families as a result of the conflict, but separations also occur as families have their coping mechanisms depleted and are unable to support children in their care. Due to the large numbers, placement of all these children in alternative care arrangements, remains difficult. Some have become heads of households, which pose additional challenges to access to services. Similarly, due to the prevailing insecurity in both South Sudan and Sudan, tracing activities and family reunifications are rarely a possibility.

Table 7: Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC)⁴

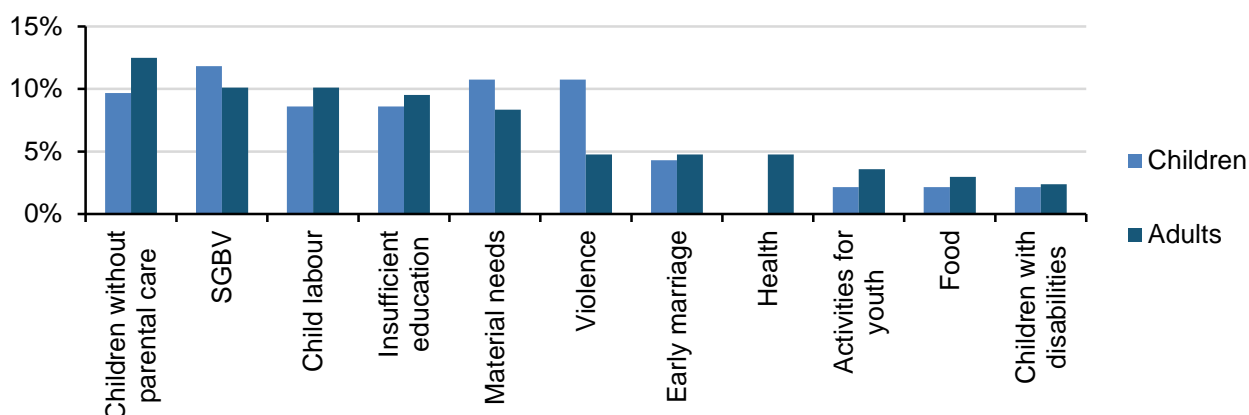
	ETHIOPIA	KENYA	SOUTH SUDAN	SUDAN	UGANDA
Total UASC	18,764	5,935	5,570	617	3,180
% UASC	10%	10%	4%	1%	3%

As the violence in South Sudan and Sudan continues, children are experiencing high levels of **psychosocial distress**. The suffering and witnessing of killings, loss of family and friends, destruction of homes and displacement, have long-lasting effects on the psychosocial wellbeing and mental health of children. This requires specialized psychosocial support, which is not readily available in the host countries. During the interagency review exercise, refugee children frequently reported a sense of insecurity. When inquiring about the reasons for that perception, children referred most often to episodes they experienced while in South Sudan or in Sudan (for Sudanese refugees). This reflects the high level of trauma and psychosocial distress they still suffer, despite the fact that many of them fled over a year ago. Finally, difficulties in accessing food, water, education, livelihoods, recreational and other services, contribute to children's and caregivers' accumulated stress on a daily basis.

Different forms of violence, abuse and exploitation continue to affect refugee children from Sudan and South Sudan. The graph below shows the reported main protection concerns during the interagency review exercise, disaggregated by adults and children. It is important to notice that children vis-a-vis adults reported more prominently different forms of violence, including sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), along with material and educational needs. This reiterates the seriousness of the children's exposure to violence and offers a reminder on the importance of setting up specific mechanisms to ensure children have confidential and appropriate means to report violence, abuse and exploitation.

⁴ Based on new arrivals post 15 December 2013.

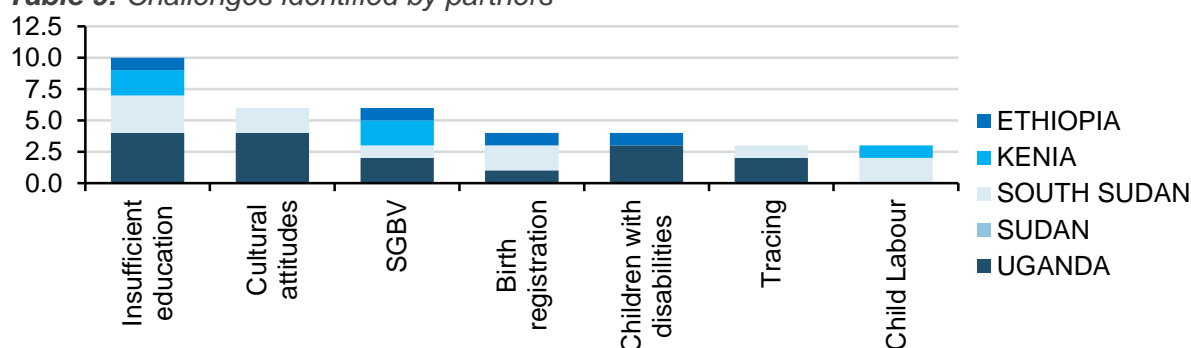
Table 8: Refugees and host communities key protection concerns for children –disaggregated by children/adult responses



SGBV has been a consistent feature of the conflict in South Sudan, with evidence of deliberate ethnic targeting of and reprisals against women and girls⁵. It is striking to note that according to data from the MRM, 98% of reported cases of sexual violence against children in the context of the conflict under this mechanism were perpetrated against girls⁶. Similarly, it is also revealing the fact that SGBV was listed as the second element of concern by the host and refugee communities during the interagency review exercise (see Table 6). Due to the cultural norms of silence around this issue, it is notable that barriers were brought down during discussions in order to generate this high level of response for SGBV as a priority area. Mindful of the fact that SGBV is very much underreported, however, the prominence of this issue throughout the discussions indicates that the numbers of victims of SGBV must be much higher than what child protection partners have been able to register and respond to.

Not all SGBV is related to the conflict. The impact of structural gender inequality conveyed by cultural norms and practices also plays a significant role in the persistence of SGBV, as was indicated by partners, which identified cultural attitudes as the second main challenge (see Table 9). Of particular concern is the issue of early marriage of girls. Many of the marriages take place in South Sudan and there is therefore a need to combine efforts with the country of origin.

Table 9: Challenges identified by partners



⁵ SGBV Sub-Cluster, Guidance Note on Security and Safety, June 2015.

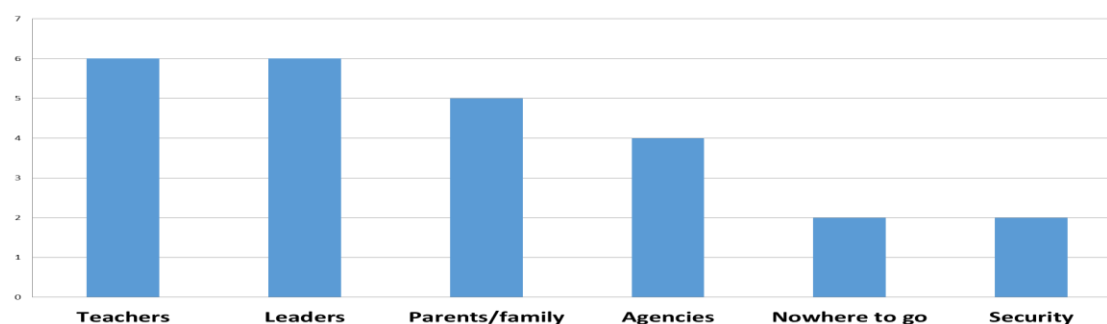
⁶ Protection Cluster, Protection Trends South Sudan, N.5 – April-June 2015, p.6.

Children have been victims of **grave violations committed against children in situations of armed conflict**. During the second quarter of 2015, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) for South Sudan received 279 incidents of grave violations against children, more than twice as many reports of incidents of grave violations against children compared to the first quarter⁷. UNICEF has reported that over 12,000 children have been **recruited** into armed groups in South Sudan. Given the fact that the civilian character of the camps and settlements have been compromised in some regions, the risk of recruitment of refugee children has increased in some locations, particularly in the refugee areas inside South Sudan and likely Ethiopia. The Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in South Sudan indicated in fact that “*the United Nations also received reports of cross-border mobilization of children by foreign armed groups, from within refugee populations inside South Sudan along the Sudanese border*”⁸. Children formerly associated with armed groups and forces that cross the border are in need of specific protection services.

Exploitation, including child labor, is also an issue of concern, not only within the refugee population, but also within the host community. In Kakuma (Kenya), for example, child protection actors have conducted an assessment and identified over 3,000 children that work in the refugee camp on a daily basis. Child labor is also a prominent issue of concern in South Sudan, as reflected in Table 8. Refugee children outside parental care are more at risk of exploitation, leading some to move to live away from their caretakers and to overnight in market areas.

UNICEF estimates that around 400,000 South Sudanese children have been pushed out of the education system. South Sudanese and Sudanese communities value highly **education**, often being a trigger for children to cross the border and to seek asylum. Given the huge influx of school-aged refugee children in South Sudan’s and Sudan’s neighboring countries, education services are currently very strained. Despite the huge investment to scale up the provision of educational services, the enrolment rate for this population is still only 55.6%, with important disparities across the different countries (see Table 19). However, education remains a crucial element of a holistic protection. It is interesting to note that when children were asked where they go to when they have a problem, teachers were highlighted as the first source, together with the leaders, and ahead of parents or family. That indicates the pivotal role education actors can play in terms of identification, referral and response to protection concerns.

Table 10: Who children go to when they have a problem



⁷ Protection Cluster, Protection Trends South Sudan, N.5 – April-June 2015, p.6.

⁸ S/2014/884, 11th December 2014. Para 18.

Children, adolescent youth represent around 80% of refugees. Conflict has uprooted thousands of **adolescents and youth** people from their places of origin in a critical time of their lives, disrupting their education and curtailing their opportunities to have a self-sufficient and prosperous life.

Finally, full access to **birth registration** remains an outstanding goal, not only for refugee children, but also for national children in many of the countries of asylum. Birth registration is more than a right, it is the means for the legal recognition of the child's existence. With no proof of age and identity children may lack the most basic protection against abuse, exploitation and discrimination, and are exposed to lack of access to education, health care and other basic services.

4.2. EXTENT TO WHICH OBJECTIVES ARE MET ACCORDING TO CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS

4.2.1. General Overview

The interagency review team found that **child protection systems** have been put in place and strengthened since the beginning of the crisis, **procedures** have been set up and are operational, and key policy work for child protection is being advanced. In addition, the development of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs), information sharing protocols (ISPs), and Child Protection Plans and strategies are being put in place. All five countries have partners working on the five different objectives of the *Regional Child Protection Framework*. Child protection actors are aware of the systems, standards and procedures, but some duplications, inefficiencies and lack of clarity were identified. In the broader spectrum of the response, there is a recognition of the South Sudanese as a "children's crisis". As such, some sectors have included child-friendly procedures in their *modus operandi*. However, this has not necessarily translated into enough budget allocation and resource mobilization for child protection programmes.

"[The program] helped me to turn around stress. If they tell me now negative things, like you are ugly, I don't care anymore, because now I think I am beautiful. I now forget all and I learn how to do kindness."

"Because we had a lot of things in our mind. Now we can counsel even others."

**Refugee boy, Kakuma,
Kenya,
May 2015**

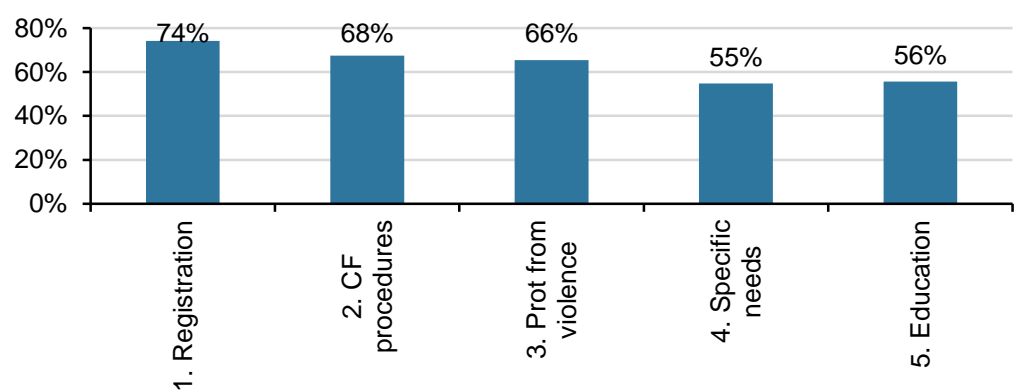
Despite steady progress in **coverage**, there is a need to scale up and improve the **quality** of child protection services. Quality standards are challenged not only by funding constraints and high numbers, but also by the scarcity of qualified social workers in the vast areas of the refugee settlements and the limited level of education of both host and refugee communities from where the workforce is hired. To enhance coverage and quality, it is important to continue working towards the strengthening of the case management system (including the setup of clear prioritization criteria and simplification of procedures), improving the monitoring of human resource's allocation and performance, and the reinforcement of community-based approaches.

Looking at the **engagement with the community**, there have been numerous efforts and important initiatives advanced on child and community participation. Still, the response and the efforts on capacity building have been heavily focused on service providers, and the implementation of community participation and empowerment' has not been systematic in some aspects of the response. Strengthening community based approaches will ensure sustainability and improve the outreach of the child protection response.

Given the emergency nature of the South Sudan and Sudan regional refugee response, the child protection program has been **more reactive than preventive**, focusing on the identification and response of protection concerns and the follow up of children at risk. Similarly, the program design of child protection has also focused more heavily on issues directly related to the **conflict**, such as family separation. However, child protection actors acknowledge that some key protection concerns, such as early marriage, are related to **cultural practices** that require more sophisticated programs based on social norms' theory of change. Other concerns are closely linked to the economic and educational levels of families, which demands a closer collaboration with livelihood programs and the education sector for the the strengthening of the resilience of children, families and communities.

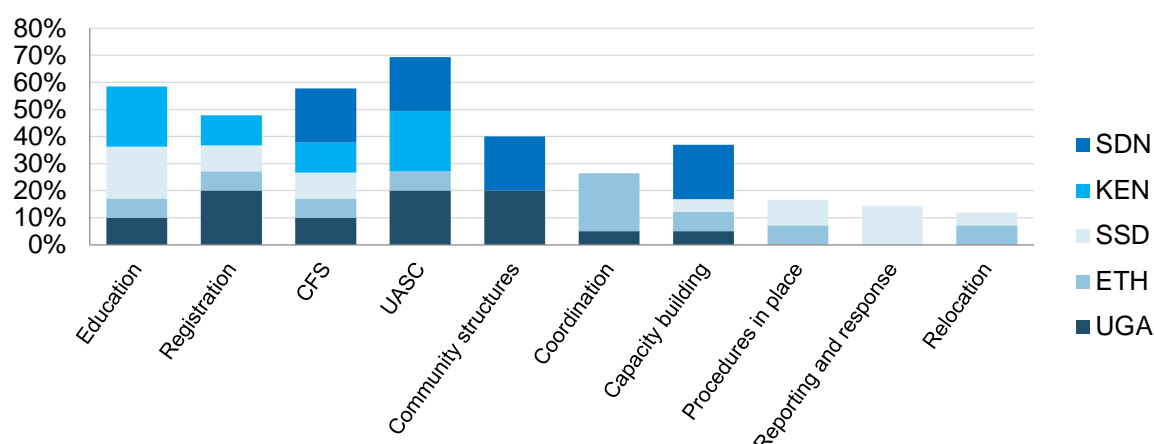
As it will be elaborated further below, **good coordination** dynamics at the field level was observed in all locations, including with government structures. However there is a need to strengthen connections with the national level to ensure a harmonized approach and further mainstream child protection issues within the national policies and services. As the South Sudan and Sudanese emergency moves towards its second year and fourth year respectively, it is imperative to work closely with **national child protection systems** to ensure a longer term vision of the child protection response.

Table 11: Extent objectives have been met in all countries –based on field self assesment



Analyzing achievements per objective, child protection actors (including UN agencies, NGO partners and government officials) were asked what they considered to be the achievements, gaps and priorities for the child protection response in each country. This chart represents the collated responses. As the chart illustrates, Registration (Objective 1), was most often cited as the greatest achievement under the *Regional Child Protection Framework*. This is followed by Child Friendly Procedures (Objective 2) and Protection from Violence (Objective 3). Specific Needs (Objective 4) and Education (Objective 5), were cited as achievements but with significant room for improvement. Further details per objective will be provided in section 4.2.3 Child Protection Response per Objective. The table below shows the main achievements reported by partners.

Table 12: Main achievements according to partners



4.2.2. Coordination of the Child Protection Response

Given the complexity and multifaceted nature of a child protection program, coordination is an essential aspect of the response. In all locations where Sudanese and South Sudanese refugee children are, Child Protection Working Groups (CPWG) for refugees are operational. In general, coordination was assessed as positive and organic at the field level. Government refugee bodies are involved in the coordination in all locations, as well as the departments of social welfare. In South Sudan, the refugee hosting areas have been affected by the ongoing conflict resulting in weak governance and absent rule of law structures, and therefore the participation of social welfare officials is more limited. However, UNHCR in South Sudan continues to coordinate the child protection response with the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs. In some areas like Gambella (Ethiopia), there are parallel coordination structures for refugees and for the general population. In others like Sudan and Uganda, the CPWG covers both the refugee and non-refugee population.

Most of the CWPGs have developed, or are in the process of developing, a Child Protection Action Plan or Strategy using the *Regional Child Protection Framework*. In Kakuma (Kenya) and Gambella (Ethiopia), they have been endorsed, while in Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda, they are in the drafting process.

In all locations there are Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Education Working Groups, which operate on varying levels of coordination alongside the CPWGs. In Kakuma for example, quarterly meetings have been arranged among the three groups, to ensure enhanced coordination and strategic planning. In Ethiopia, additional information management and case management coordination working groups have been set up.

Coordination of the child protection response for refugee children has primarily been driven by the field. Although decentralization has reportedly worked well at the operational level, it has at times deprived the child protection response from a more harmonized and strategic approach. In most of the countries at the national level, refugee child protection responses are discussed in the more general Protection or Multi-Sector Refugee Coordination meetings. These forums provide inadequate venues for more in-depth discussions which provide strategic guidance and oversight to the field level operations.

4.2.3. Child Protection Response per Objective

Objective 1: Ensure that all refugee girls and boys are **registered** individually and documented with the relevant authorities

The full registration of all children is reportedly one of the major successes in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan, particularly the full registration of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). An important aspect of registration is the effective set up of procedures for children, as well as the training of registration staff on child protection issues. In 85% of the registration points, community or child protection desk for the identification and registration of children have been setup.

In Sudan, individual registration is not yet operational, but household registration and identification of UASC is currently conducted by the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) across the country. In White Nile, Sudan, individual registration and the implementation of the community services' desk began operating in April 2015.

In Gambella (Ethiopia) and Kakuma (Kenya), UASC and other vulnerable children are registered in the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS), the platform for case management. In Uganda, the Rapid FTR Tool operates, but there are already plans to set up the CPIMS before the end of the year. In South Sudan, discussions for the set up of the same system are also ongoing⁹.

Table 13: Objective 1 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of children individually registered	100%	100%	100%	10%	100%	85%
% registration points with child protection personnel	100%	100%	80%	100%	13%	85%

Despite achievements, child protection actors stated the identification of vulnerability other than UASC to be a challenge. Some issues such as SGBV are often more difficult to identify at the point of registration, signaling a need for staff to be trained in methods of identifying vulnerabilities beyond UASC.

Another challenge facing all operations is the mismatched figures in the UNHCR refugee database, proGres, and the CPIMS (or other databases) managed by child protection partners. In Ethiopia and Kenya, there have been some efforts to harmonize data, but such harmonization has not been carried out systematically. This mismatch of information decreases the ability for effective prioritization and service provision for children with specific needs.

⁹ In Sudan, a national CPIMS operates at the country level, but it is not being used for refugees.

Ensuring full access to birth registration remains an outstanding goal. In all countries, birth notifications are regularly provided, but very few receive birth certificates. In Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda, the provision of birth registration to refugees is envisioned in the national policies. However due to the lack of Registry Offices in the areas where refugees are, coupled with the lack of awareness among the refugee population of the importance of registration, very few refugee children have access to birth registration. It is important to note that birth registration is not only an issue for the refugee population, but also for the nationals.

Table 14: Objective 1 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
Health service centers with systems for provision of birth notifications in place	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5 / 5
Government has procedures in place to register births and provide birth certificates for refugee children	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 / 5
Are birth registration or ID docs required to access school or other national or humanitarian services?	No	No	No	No	No	5 / 5

In Uganda, a decentralized birth registration center in the north of the country, where many South Sudanese refugees reside, has been set up. In Kakuma (Kenya), Civil Registry personnel visit Kakuma camp on quarterly basis, but there are ongoing discussions to improve the coverage of birth registration services. In Ethiopia, there is no national database system for birth certificate in place. The Government has made initial steps towards establishing a system and a consultative workshop was held early 2015. However, the Government clarified that the system to be established does not contemplate birth registration for foreigners including refugees as this will only benefit Ethiopian nationals. Presently, refugees are provided only with birth notifications in order to be converted into birth certificate in the future). There are also on-going advocacy with the Bureau for Registration to include refugees in the birth registration when it is eventually rolled out.

In Sudan, South Sudanese families residing in Sudan prior to the secession of South Sudan, face an additional legal barrier as many have not received the identification documentation, a pre-requirement for the registration of a newborn. However this has been overcome by the agreement reached between the Directorate General of Passports and Immigration (IPP), Commissioner Office for Refugees (COR), and UNHCR in December 2014. Under this agreement, IPP has issued identity cards to South Sudanese above five years. These ID cards serve as a recognized proof of identity and seeks to provide South Sudanese the same rights and services as Sudanese citizens, including the right to work and to buy property, as well as freedom of movement and the right to live anywhere in the country. These cards do not carry an expiration date. As of May 2015, 153,500 have been registered in Khartoum and 18,000 in White Nile. No disaggregated data is available as to how many of these figures are children.

Best Practices under Objective 1: Registration

- ❖ **KAKUMA, KENYA:** In regards to registration and case management, an integral system that economizes procedures and ensures follow up on children has been successfully put in place. UASCs and other vulnerable children are identified at the reception center, accompanied by child protection staff throughout the process and have special procedures (including accelerated access to individual registration on a specific day). There is a child protection desk at the reception center in Kakuma to receive, assess (through BIAs), and refer children for further assistance. BIAs are done immediately upon registration using CPIMS formats, and all cases are entered into the CPIMS (using the proGres individual number as a unique reference code).
- ❖ **ADJUMANI, UGANDA:** in addition to 12 campaigns conducted on birth registration since 2014, UNICEF has supported the Ugandan authorities to set up a new birth registration center in the north of the country. This has helped to ensure refugee children born in Uganda receive birth certificates.



Tong, 3, is a newly arrived refugee from South Sudan to Kakuma. His family fled their country in 2013 when fighting broke out in many parts of the country. This area was initially where the lost boys of South Sudan were settled before many of the boys were resettled to Canada or the States.

**Refugee boy,
Kakuma, Kenya,**

Objective 2: Ensure that refugee girl and boys have access to child friendly procedures

The establishment and application of child friendly procedures is a positive aspect of the child protection response. Procedures have been put in place, not only for child protection but also other sectors, such as in food distribution, registration, or health facilities. In Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and South Sudan, important efforts have been made to build the capacity of staff in contact with children. Numerous trainings have been conducted for child protection and other sectors' staff on child friendly procedures, including communication with children.

In Sudan, efforts for establishing child friendly procedures have begun recently with improved access to refugee locations. In the first quarter of 2015, a training was conducted with social workers on child protection issues, placing special emphasis on alternative care arrangements. More recently, a training was conducted for senior management staff of line Ministries responsible for different aspects of general protection and community based protection.

To ensure children can access services available, help desks have been set up in all countries, and awareness campaigns have been advanced, to ensure children understand when, where and how to access services. In South Sudan and Kenya, the dissemination of services has been broadcasted using local radios. Despite these efforts, most locations do not have offices or specific areas for the interview and discussion of issues with children, aggravated by the fact that the child protection offices tend to be too far from the camp or settlement.

Table 15: Objective 2 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of help desks established	19	2	22	3	2	48
# of children that have benefited from the desks	15,000	8,083	61	no info	1,923	25,067
Children/ helpdesk ratio	7,580	29,050	6,323	29,583	44,277	13,432

Also in all five countries, child protection partners have involved children in discussions and assessments as part of the program implementation. This has been achieved through the rapid needs assessments, or through the more comprehensive Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming process. However, as the figures below exemplify, there is still room for improvement to ensure a more regular and comprehensive involvement of children in the response, as well as in the refugee government structures.

Table 16: Objective 2 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
% of children who have participated in FGDs	0.08%	0.41%	0.07%	0.86%	4.99%	48

There is also room for improvement regarding the setup of mechanisms that elicit children's feedback. This includes procedures to ensure that actors are held accountable for actions taken on identified issues. Only in Kakuma (Kenya) there are formal complaint mechanisms, under which complaints submitted by children are to be responded to within 14 days. Another good practice in Kakuma are the two hotlines set up to receive queries and complaints from both host and refugee communities.

Another key challenge identified in some locations is the lack of understanding of what child friendly procedures and their implementation entails in practice. This is also impacted by the capacity of social workers and child protection partners to understand the aspects and impact of these procedures, and to pass the adequate information on to the children. This relates back to the need for facilitating opportunities for individuals from both the host and refugee communities to access education and training for careers in social work.

The final challenge identified under this objective is the lack of child friendly procedures for children in conflict with the law. This includes the lack of presence of law enforcement agents in some of the refugee locations, particularly in South Sudan. This is an important area which requires development due to the sensitive nature and the complexity of legal procedures. This is reported to be particularly relevant for cases related to children victims of SGBV, and also for enhanced accountability of perpetrators of violence against children.

Best Practices under Objective 2: Child Friendly Procedures

- ❖ In KAKUMA, KENYA, several initiatives offer meaningful possibilities for the refugee children to provide feedback and seek help. Two hotlines have been set up, one for refugees and one for the host community. A formal complaints and feedback mechanism has been set up in the camp, under which complaints submitted by children are to be responded to within 14 days. Complaint and feedback boxes have been set up in the community and youth centers. There are plans to set up talk boxes in all primary and secondary schools, and teachers have already been trained on how to handle and refer these cases.

Objective 3: Ensure that refugee girls and boys are *protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation at home, in the community and when in contact with humanitarian services*

Protection from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation is one of the core objectives of the child protection response, therefore receiving significant attention and resources from child protection actors.

One of the main emphasis of the child protection response has been the facilitation of opportunities for play and recreation, particularly through the setup of child friendly spaces (CFS). CFS are areas where children affected by conflict and displacement can return to a normal routine by being offered structured activities, games and informal education. CFS are generally well recognized and appreciated areas of reference within the camps and settlements. This was identified by the review team during discussions with partners and refugee communities. As Table 15 shows, when refugees were asked what services they knew about, CFS was the most frequently mentioned. CFS have also served as a platform for case identification and referrals, as well as the provision of psychosocial support. However CFSs often only operate for children up to six years. Even if some contexts CFS may not have capacity to accommodate more children, in others it is an opportunity loss, given the significant needs of older children for designed areas for recreation and play.

“Children came here confused from the war. Now in the Child Friendly Space they can’t think about it –they are free”

**Child Protection Committee member
Kiryandongo, Uganda,
May 2015**

105 CFS have been set up in the five different countries, benefiting approximately 24% of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children. This represents impressive coverage, though a careful look at the ratios of children per CFSs indicate that the quality of services and activities may fall below standards. In Uganda, South Sudan or Sudan, the ratio is below 500, in Ethiopia, the ratio is close to 7,000.

Table 17: Objective 3 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of child friendly spaces established	11	8	47	7	32	105
# of children participating in child-friendly activities	76,515 53%	11,000 19%	20,319 15%	3,500 4%	14,144 16%	125,478 24%
Children attending : child friendly space ratio	6,956	1375	432	500	442	1,195
# of children participating in psychosocial support activities	900	8,450	No info	N/A	8,876	18226

Another important pillar of this objective is the set up and strengthening of the community based approaches, including the provision of opportunities for participation of children and youth. Different awareness raising campaigns and initiatives have been conducted for varying child protection concerns such as SGBV, child labor or family separation. Furthering this goal of awareness raising and strengthening of community based approaches, most operations have developed information, education and communication (IEC) materials. As a result of these efforts, 22% of the South Sudanese population received protection messages.

Table 18: Objective 3 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of children that had received protection messages through awareness-raising activities	52,000	20,492	18,590	654	24,427	116,163
% of children that had received protection messages through awareness-raising activities	36%	35%	13%	1%	28%	22%
# of children's committees, groups and other structures that facilitate children's participation	54	95	62	no info	146	357
Children/committee ratio	2,667	612	2,244	no info	607	2,204

Children have participated in numerous activities which promote their agency and self-empowerment, providing them with opportunities to contribute to their own protection and those of their peers. For example in Kakuma, Child Rights Clubs have been formed to promote children's participation and empowerment. This provides a platform for community based activities where the voices of children are heard. In Uganda, peer to peer groups have been active in identifying and reporting child protection issues among children and establishing outreach activities. Specific life and vocational skills, peace-building and peaceful coexistence initiatives and other activities for adolescents and youth have been organized, benefiting approximately 22% of this population. Nevertheless, both community members and partners repeatedly mentioned the pressing need for scaling up activities for the adolescents and youth.

Table 19: Objective 3 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
% of adolescents participating in targeted activities	35%	40%	3%	1%	21%	20%

Another challenge identified was the need to strengthen prevention activities geared towards certain specific issues such as SGBV and early marriage. According to child protection actors, cultural attitudes constitute the second most important challenge following the insufficient provision of education, as shown in Table 9. Programs based on community dialogue and the theory of change can work towards shifting cultural attitudes away from these harmful practices.

Another significant challenge identified is that of child labor, particularly in South Sudan and Kenya. This trend is often the result of poverty and a lack of opportunity for refugees and their families within the camps. As a result, many children live and work in the market, exposing them to exploitation and abuse. The challenge this presents to child protection actors is significant as the root causes for this phenomenon often extend beyond the circumstances of the child alone and are difficult to address and to change in a sustainable manner. For example during a discussion with children living in a market in Yida, South Sudan, it was noted that many of the children living in the market are not attending school due to a lack of support and inability to pay fees. In addition, it was also mentioned that many of these children have run away from foster care families due to mistreatment. As mentioned above, in Kakuma (Kenya), the government reported from an assessment that at least 3,000 children from both refugee and host communities work in the refugee camp. As this exemplifies, tackling the challenge of child labor requires a holistic effort including but not limited to education, foster care support and health.

Best Practices under Objective 3: Protection from violence, abuse, exploitation

- ❖ In UGANDA, several peer-to-peer support groups for children have been established. In Kiryandongo these groups of very active and well-trained children impressed reviewers with their knowledge of child protection issues and referral mechanisms. They identify children who need support, listen to their concerns and refer them if necessary.

Objective 4: Ensure that girls and boys with *specific needs* are identified, prioritized, and provided ongoing, appropriate, and targeted support

Objective 4, together with Objective 3, is the backbone of the child protection response. In all five countries, important efforts have been made for the setup of a case management system for the follow up and assistance of children with specific needs. Clearly, the majority of children identified receive support; the key bottleneck, however, is the full identification of all children with specific needs.

As described above, in Kenya and Ethiopia the CPIMSs have been established, with the support of UNICEF, as a platform for the case management, with particular emphasis on UASC. In Uganda, Rapid FTR tool currently operates and plans are already in place to set up the CPIMS too. Effective Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and referral pathways, essential in providing holistic care for children with specific needs, have been established in all countries apart from Sudan in order to better serve children with specific needs. In Sudan, steps have been taken towards the establishment of a case management system, despite the additional challenge posed by the lack of individual registration for the identification and referral of children.

Children suffer the most. They fled South Kordofan without clothes (...). Some orphans are living alone or are heads of households. Girls survivors of rape are forced into early marriage (...). Children are also lured by traders to work for them at home, in the market."

**Refugee leader, Maban,
South Sudan,
June 2015**

Table 20: Objective 4 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
% children with SN identified receiving appropriate services	50%	100%	86%	no info	87%	92%

Case management systems are informed by the Best Interest Procedures in all countries. Best interest assessments (BIAs) are conducted upon registration or immediately after, as a basis for prioritization and further follow up. In Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda, the Best Interest Determination (BID) panel, composed by UNHCR, key child protection partners and the government, is fully functional. In South Sudan, the BID panel has been set up, but is not yet fully functional.

Table 21: Objective 4 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of BIAs finalized	248	5,535	1,954	81	2,735	10,553
# of children identified in need of a BIA or with BIA in process	525	5,523	2,064	456	1,948	10,516
% BIAS finalized	32%	50%	49%	15%	58%	50%
# of BIDs finalized	No	1023	0	0	35	1,058

Emphasis has been placed on the assistance of UASC, with a strong system in place for the identification and follow up of these children. The achievements in this field are primarily related to the strengthening of foster care arrangements as well as general care and protection. In all countries, foster families for the placement of UASC have been identified, trained and supported, building upon existing South Sudanese kinship care systems. However, given the vulnerability of the households (many of them single woman headed), and the large number of UASC, the number of foster care families identified falls short of the need, and those identified are often unable to provide the required care for the children. In some instances, child-headed households have been formalized with the supervision of an adult and close follow up by child protection actors.

Despite the improvement of and investment in the case management system and the reduction of the backlog of children requiring BIAs, only 25% of UASC have finalized BIAs. However for all children identified as having special needs, including UASC, the data shows that 50% of BIAs have been finalized. As highlighted by the figures, there are significant disparities across countries in the performance of this indicator. There are several constraints to the further improvement of the case management and BIA system, the most prominent being the limited number and capacity of case workers. On average, the ratio of social worker per child with specific needs is 76, which is three times above the standard. As a result, there is a need for further simplification and prioritization of systems for case management. In operations with refugee settlements spread across wide areas, such as South Sudan and Sudan, or where several partners are working on case management, such as Uganda and Ethiopia, a harmonization of approaches and activities is urgently required.

Table 22: Objective 4 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
Number of caseworkers (handling individual cases)	265	60.9	51	14	41	431.9
Children/Social worker ratio	543	954	2,727	3,993	2,159	1,124
Children with SN/Social worker ratio	72	107	161	44	90	76

Family tracing and reunification remains a challenge across all countries. Some progress has been made by various organizations. In Uganda, the ICRC and the Red Cross Society, and in Kenya, primarily LWF and UNHCR, have managed to conduct a number of reunifications. Many of them, particularly in Uganda, were “on spot reunifications” of children reunited with family members who arrive shortly after the child to the transit centers and/or settlements.

Given the complexity of tracing activities, frequently with cross border implications, partners lack the capacity to meet the demands. There has been some progress towards the clarification of roles and responsibilities for tracing activities and the setup of referral mechanisms with the ICRC and the Red Cross Societies. However there is still a need for further clarification. In Uganda for example, different partners have taken the leading role for separated children and for those who are unaccompanied, which has resulted in a complex and cumbersome coordination of tracing activities. Despite the importance of children being aware of the whereabouts and existence of their families, focus group discussions have identified a general lack of knowledge among refugees regarding tracing services¹⁰.

Regionally, an Information Sharing Protocol was finalized and endorsed by UNHCR, UNICEF, LWF, Save the Children International, Plan International and World Vision in May 2015, for the set-up of a system for the tracking and tracing of children based on database matches between proGres and a Regional CPIMS, the later managed by Save the Children. This system, which is at the time of the writing in the phase of technical conceptualization, will aim at complementing the ongoing efforts at the country levels, capitalizing on the two database systems referred above.

Table 23: Objective 4 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
% of registered UASC in appropriate interim or long-term alternative care	37%	12%	30%	28%	98%	35%
% of UASC for whom a best interest process has been initiated or completed	5%	93%	12%	0%	98%	25%
total UASC reunified in-country by ICRC/ Red Crescent or Cross	0	0	10	0	530	540
total UASC reunified in-country by child protection partners	120	805	25	25	0	975
Total reunified in-country	120	805	35	25	530	1,515
total UASC reunified cross border by ICRC/Red Societies	0	1	20	2	0	23
Total reunified	120	821	55	26	530	1,537

¹⁰ As table 13 shows, tracing services were not mentioned by refugees as services they identify in any of the focus group discussions.

A challenge stressed across the region is the identification of all SGBV cases due to cultural sensitivities. Disparities across the figures, and especially high number of SGBV survivors identified in Kenya, does not necessarily reflect a higher prevalence of SGBV violence, but likely better mechanisms for SGBV identification. A specific issue highlighted on this matter is the implication of the weak justice systems and ineffective law enforcement. Lack of accountability and consequences for perpetrators leads to impunity, leaving children vulnerable to be re-victimized. This is particularly relevant for victims of SGBV, as the perpetrators of violence stay within the community, creating additional risks and a severe emotional stress on the survivors.

Table 24: Objective 4 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
# of child survivors of sexual violence receiving appropriate multi-sectorial (material, psychosocial, legal, medical) support	54	568	91	No info	24	683

Finally, child protection actors identified challenges related to the inclusion of children with disabilities into their interventions. The need for improved services and integration into the community for these children was mentioned across all countries. This highlights the need for a more holistic response and a stronger emphasis of identification of other vulnerable children, and the ability to serve the various needs and abilities of all children.

Best Practices under Objective 4: Support for children with specific needs

- ❖ In GAMBELLA, ETHIOPIA, a clear prioritization criteria in terms of vulnerability of the children (high, medium, low priority) has been established in the SOPs, and partners have been trained on that prioritization and are widely aware of the criteria.
- ❖ In MABAN, SOUTH SUDAN, a case conference system has been established, where all the partners meet regularly to jointly discuss and agree on the way forward for those cases which are more complex and that require a coordinated approach.
- ❖ In KAKUMA, KENYA, information on children with tracing needs is regularly shared among child protection partners, UNHCR, ICRC and the Kenyan Red Cross. LWF, the main child protection partner, has managed to carry out 805 inter-camp family reunifications. Kenya Red Cross provides regular feedback on the outcomes of the tracing activities conducted, and on the quality of referrals made by partners.

Objective 5: Improve the protection and wellbeing of refugee children and adolescents through education

In general, there is a recognition of both the huge progress made in the education field, but at the same time, the wide gap that remains ahead to provide inclusive and adequate education for all girls and boys. In regards to the linkages between education and protection, efforts have been made to build the capacity of teachers on child protection, as well as to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable children in the education systems. In Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan, despite the limited resources and the class congestion, South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children have in fact performed very well at official examinations¹¹.

“If we sit here like animals we will become nothing. We want your support through the schools.”

**South Sudanese teacher,
Bantiu, Sudan,
June 2015**

Largely, education has served as a referral mechanism and an entry point for the child protection response. 781 teachers have been trained since the beginning of the emergency on child protection referral mechanisms, and on psychosocial support. To ensure a safe learning environment, partners have developed a Code of Conduct that has been signed by teachers and reinforced in the schools. Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are in place to support the running of the schools and mobilizing communities on issues related to the school.

Despite efforts, with an average of 56% of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees enrolled in primary school, providing sufficient education services remains a hard to reach goal. Child protection actors in each location highlighted the limited capacity of schools to provide sufficient coverage for all the refugee children and the limited space available in the classrooms. In Gambella (Ethiopia), for example, at a ratio of 100 pupils per class, it has been estimated that it would still be necessary to build 850 classrooms. Access to education remains minimal and girls' enrolment, being relatively good in early primary, drops substantially in post-primary. In addition, the lack of secondary education opportunities for adolescents and youth remains a critical gap, leaving youth with no productive opportunities to grow and advance as they reach adulthood.

Table 25: Objective 5 - Achievement Indicators

Indicator	ETH	KEN	SSD	SDN	UGA	ALL
Gross enrolment rate	43%	65%	78%	34%	58%	56%
# of teachers trained on child protection referral mechanisms and psychosocial support	97	120	284	22	258	781

¹¹ An example of this was Naomi Chol in Kakuma (Kenya), a South Sudanese refugee girl who was the top performing graduating student in Turkana County, where Kakuma camp is located. Naomi was awarded a scholarship and even met the President of Kenya.

4.3. REFUGEES' AND HOST COMMUNITIES' FEEDBACK

Primary protection concerns reported by refugees and host communities were reported in section 4.1. This section will provide a summary on the feedback of the communities in regards to the response and child protection related services offered.

The community identified most often CFS, schools, case management services, and recreational activities as services available for children in the camps/settlements. The first two are not of surprise: what girls, boys and communities demand for children is essentially education and play. Aside from visible services such as CFS and schools, it is interesting that participants in the focus group discussions identified less tangible services such as case management and community structures, often before more noticeable services such as hospitals. It is plausible that this was a case of interviewer bias; as the questions were designed by child protection

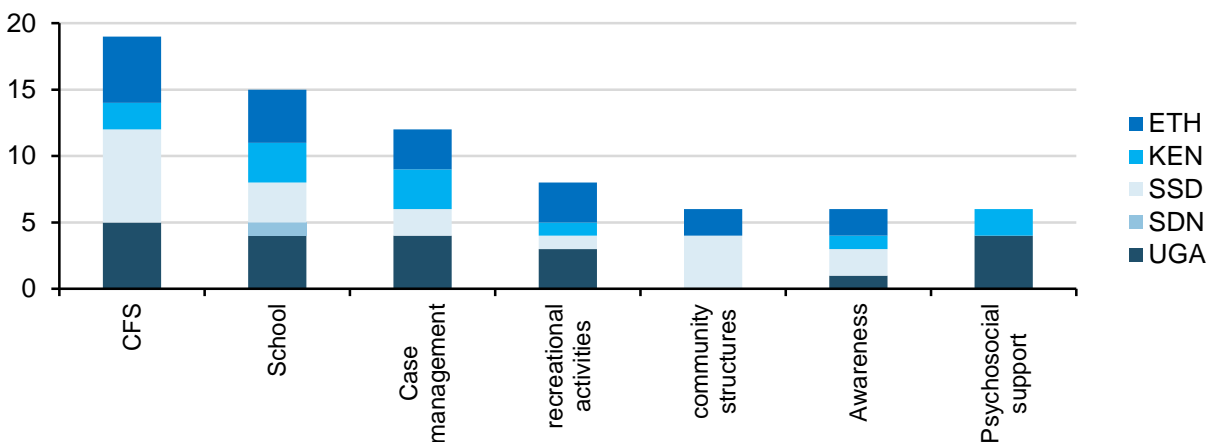
actors and respondents may have focused more on services related to protection. Nevertheless, it is a good indication that there is a relatively positive level of awareness around services provided. As mentioned above however, the lack of mentioning tracing services (both by refugee adults and by children) was surprising, particularly when taking into account the large number of UASC children that participated in the focus group discussions. This is an indication of the need to raise awareness of this service.

With regards to CFS, focus group participants often cited positive values taught in CFS including respect, peaceful coexistence and the role of CFS in the recovery process of dealing with events and traumas in the past. This feedback should also encourage child protection actors to expand the age coverage of CFS for older children when feasible, as well as provide a wider outreach of activities in the CFS.

"I came with my brother and sister. We ran away, we went to Juba, then to Kakuma. Nobody helps you, we have a lot of stress. We go to school, but we don't have uniform. In the school, they tell you to go ask your neighbors. We have no parents, we just stay here, no one to ask, no one at home to cook for food, you worry at night."

**South Sudanese Girl,
Kakuma, Kenya,
May 2015**

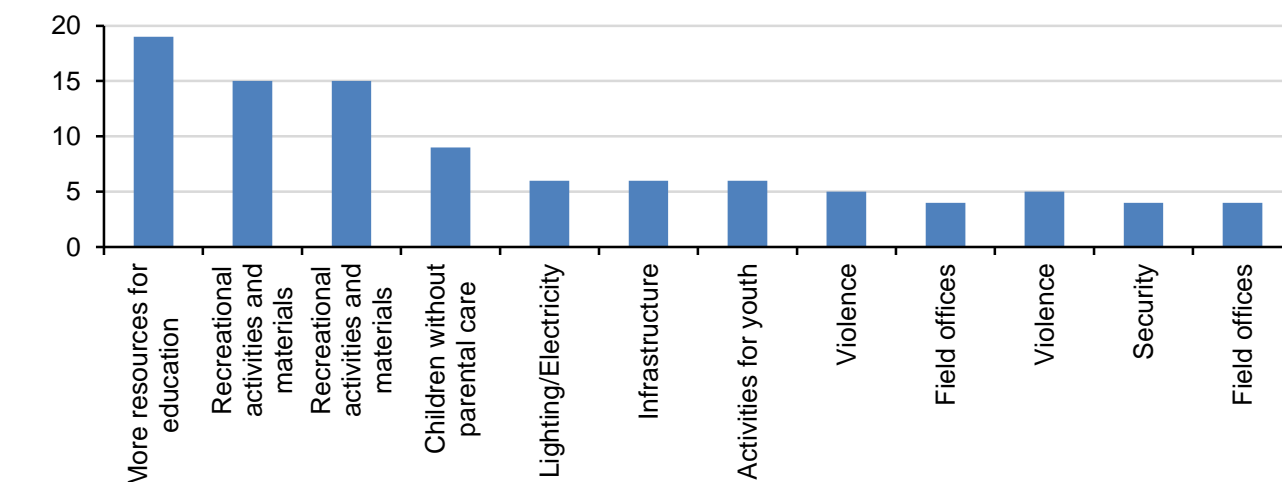
Table 26: Services identified by the community



Schools were also mentioned as a recognized service for children, but also one requiring improvement due to the high number of child refugees across the region. Specifically, as the table 21 exemplifies, education related materials and provisions were highlighted as an improvement required.

The second issue mentioned for improvement, recreational activities and materials, is a reminder of the importance of these activities. Recreation gives children not only opportunities to socialize and to remain occupied, but also an essential aspect of psychosocial stability and a sense of returning to normalcy. The third area mentioned by the children requiring improvement is the support of children without parental care. Given the high numbers of UASC, it is not surprising that this issue comes at the top of the ranking of needs. Finally, material needs such as clothing, uniforms, and other specific requests including sanitary pads or electricity, were also important elements reported by the community. Access to these material needs facilitates and strengthens other areas of the response, such as education. Often children are unable to attend school if they do not have a uniform, therefore the provision of uniforms facilitates children's access to the education system and associated child protection mechanisms. In addition, lighting and electricity can be used as an effective tool to combat violence such as SGBV.

Table 27: Improvements to services identified by the community

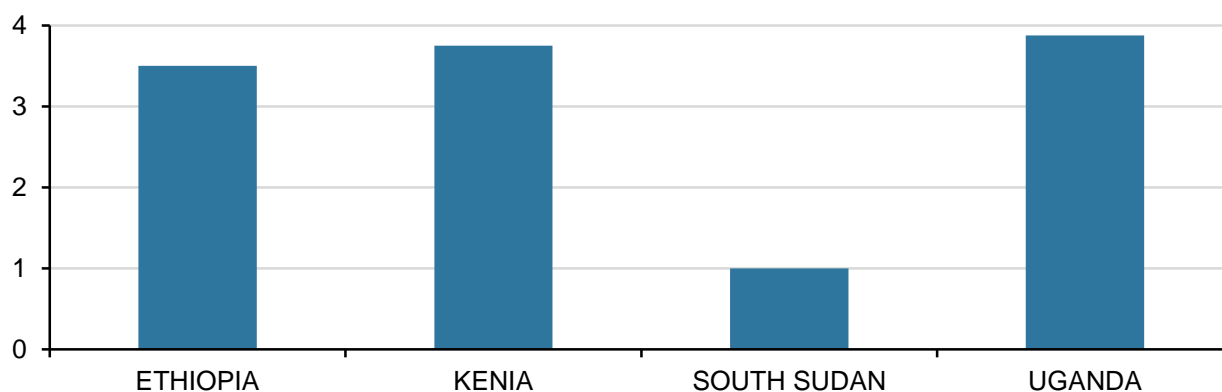


In South Sudan and Uganda, there was significant variation between respondent groups and location as to whether and which services were considered positive or presented a gap. For example, children in Adjumani, Uganda, expressed the lack of consultation on participation in and information about humanitarian services. This was in contrast to child protection actors' conviction that instituting child friendly procedures was an area of success. This could be due to the work advanced in Uganda with peer-to peer and other Child Rights' Clubs towards the empowerment of children, which has resulted in them being more vocal about their demands for space for participation, but may be also factored by the lack of full understanding what child friendly procedures entail, as stated above. In any case, disparities such as these must be investigated in order to ensure the provision of adequate opportunities for participation.

5. FEEDBACK ON THE REGIONAL CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK

In all locations, with the exception of South Sudan (where it was not known), the *Regional Child Protection Framework* was deemed as a useful tool for strategic and planning guidance, provision of a specific menu of activities for the achievement of each objective, and for the development of funding proposals.

Table 28: Rating of the usefulness of the *Regional Child Protection Framework*



Some suggestions for improving the framework were also made. Many operations emphasized the importance of reinforcing monitoring and information management in terms of response measurement and suggested this be a priority in an updated *Regional Child Protection Framework*. There was a recommendation for an increased focus on durable solutions, as well as the need to set clear benchmarks and goals. There was also calls for the strenghtening of the Framework's linkages with Education and SGBV components. For Education, it was suggested to restrict the elements of the *Regional Child Protection Framework* to those clearly related to child protection, so that accountability and division of labour is clearly established with Education. The importance of connecting the *Regional Child Protection Framework* to funding was emphasized. It was also recommended that the timeframe of the *Regional Child Protection Framework* be extended, as the original time frame was not long enough and did not provide sufficient opportunity for full implementation.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Scale up and efficiency improvement.** Scale up child protection programming, including through the expansion of activities offered, and the allocation of more dedicated staff for child protection, based on numbers of children with specific needs and other standardized ratios. Since this has funding implications and cannot be acted upon immediately, it is urgent to improve the skills as well as the management (including time allocation and performance) of child protection human resources, taking into account the high ratio of social workers per child with specific needs. This would include a clear division of labor, capacity building initiatives, setting up clear regular goals according to optimum planning and prioritization, and arranging for a system for monitoring of activities.
2. **Harmonization.** Enhance the harmonization of activities and standards among partners. Despite the positive relationship among partners and efforts for coordination, there are disparities in the design and the standards amongst the different partners, especially in the contexts where the distribution of responsibilities are geographically (camp or settlement) based, rather than content based.
3. **Government engagement.** Invest in measures to strengthen linkages between the national child protection system and the refugee response, by setting up channels for structured interaction among the existent coordination structures for refugee and non-refugee children. Advocate for national public policies to ensure the access of refugee children to national protection and social welfare services, and for the improvement of law enforcement within the refugee camps/settlements. Engage local government authorities in best interest procedures.
4. **Birth registration.** Strengthen the government birth registration systems, ensuring that adequate provisions for the registration of new born children are incorporated, including for late registration and for children born outside health facilities. Advocate with the host government so that civil registry services are available in the areas of settlement of refugees, and carry out campaigns to disseminate the procedures and to increase the awareness among the refugee population of the importance of birth registration.
5. **Child friendly procedures.** Establish child friendly facilities or desks near the refugee camps and settlements, so that children have a one-stop-shop reference location they can go to, within their reach, to seek advice or support. Establish and improve feedback mechanisms (for example, suggestion boxes) that elicit children's feedback and complaints, and set up measures so that child protection actors are held accountable for acting on identified issues.
6. **Community based protection.** Being aware that a funding surge to increase staff allocation to child protection activities may not be possible, it is important to increase the engagement of the communities and develop strategies based on community protection to increase outreach and coverage. Also, it is recommended to develop a specific strategy based on community dialogue with particular emphasis on SGBV and early marriage, including assessments to identify root causes of harmful practices, and cases of violence.

- 7. Case management system** for children with specific needs. Strengthening the case management system, by simplifying the procedures and economization of forms, and through the establishment of a clear prioritization criteria, which allow child protection actors to concentrate on high priority cases. Best interest procedures should be initiated as soon as possible, especially for the most urgent cases and not just for UASC, so that UNHCR and partners can prioritize children based on a holistic consideration of their situation, not just on their separation status. BIAs should be done at the point of registration when feasible, using a unique form as BIA that can also serve for registration in the CPIMS or similar databases.
- 8. Unaccompanied and separated children.** Strengthen the response for UASC through the provision of a targeted financial and material support to foster care families, and by establishing foster care parents reference groups. In regard to tracing, clarify roles and responsibilities and establish clear SOPs for tracing and family reunification, disseminate further the tracing services of child protection partners and restoration of family services of ICRC, and increase the efforts of all partners to improve the inter-camp and cross border tracing and reunification.
- 9. Adolescents and youth.** Enhance children's and youth's participation and agency by providing expanopportunities to engage in program design and delivery, as well as in decision making fora such as the refugee government coordination structures. Prioritize programming for adolescents and youth, including their involvement in peace building programs and other self-led initiatives.
- 10. Play and recreation.** Provide more opportunities for children for play and recreation, and increase outreach and age beneficiaries of CFS, with a particular focus on girls and children with disabilities. Incorporate more robust psychosocial programming for children who have experienced traumatic events.
- 11. Grave violations against children in armed conflict.** Clarify and implement arrangements on monitoring and reporting grave child rights violations as per global UN obligations, and explore the possibilities of using the information collected by the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) under Security Council Resolution 1612 to identify child victims based on trends identified by the MRM.
- 12. Education.** Strengthen the linkages between the child protection systems and education by improving the reporting and monitoring mechanisms in schools, further training the child protection focal points/counsellors, set up schedules for social workers assigned to regularly visit the school, and by increasing the capacity of children and youth on the identification of children at risk and referral to services.

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