



RWAMWANJA PROJECT NEEDS ASSEMENT REPORT

ENERGY AND GBV



PRESENTED TO OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (OPM)

BY

**AFRICAN AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT (AAID)
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1.0. Executive summary

Displacement of people as a result of conflict is not a new situation, but this represents a new challenge because of effects of climate change and increased depletion of natural resources. There is a gap between the needs of growing numbers of refugees and the available resources. Energy is one critical area which illustrates this gap, but also offers potential for practical durable solutions. Energy services are essential for basic human protection and dignity, in the critical areas of development and humanitarian assistance. Energy services for cooking, lighting, heating and economic activities form the core of income activities in Rwamwanja refugee settlement.

Many refugees world over lack access to clean, safe and secure energy services, in part because funding for such services is inadequate. The lack of reliable data on energy use in humanitarian setting shows that it is a neglected area. But the evidence in the course of this rapid assessment reveals a huge opportunity to provide alternative and environmentally sustainable energy services. Through observations, open-source data, interviews and field surveys, this report offers an overview of the state of energy use among refugee and host community population in Rwamwanja. It also provides a critical assessment of the energy needs in Rwamwanja refugees settlement, alternative sources of energy, alternative cooking mechanisms and GBV cases associated with energy sourcing and energy use.

Energy use by displaced people is economically, environmentally and socially unsustainable. Children and women bear the greatest costs. Findings indicate that over 95% of the refugees in Rwamwanja refugee settlement have absolutely minimal access to energy, with high dependence on traditional biomass for cooking and no access to electricity. There has been extensive cutting of trees in the settlement and one can hardly see any tree in Rwamwanja refugees settlement. There is booming charcoal business in the settlement and we found it during the assessment that charcoal is mainly originating from the host communities. The fact that there are no more trees in the settlement, interest has now been turned to the remaining trees in the host communities. Exploring new delivery models for energy provision for displaced people needs to move away from a model based on handouts and requires an overhaul of current practices. The designs of energy interventions must ensure that, needs and capabilities of refugees and host communities are integrated in the performance of energy interventions for sustainability.

1.0. Introduction

This report presents findings and recommendations from a rapid assessment of the energy needs in Rwamwanja refugee settlement and the relevance of the Energy and GBV project that African Agency for Integrated Development (AAID) is introducing to Rwamwanja refugee settlement in Kyegegwa District. AAID has secured funding from OPEC to implement an Energy and GBV project in Rwamwanja refugee settlement. The purpose of the project is to support the communities in Rwamwanja refugees settlement explore alternative energy sources such as improved energy saving stoves, charcoal briquettes and heat retention baskets as a means of promoting environment protection and mitigating effects of climate change and GBV. The major purpose of the rapid assessment is to evaluate the relevancy of the project to the refugee community in Rwamwanja and the host community. The specific objective of the rapid assessment is to establish an overview of;

- the status of knowledge on improved cook stoves,
- energy efficient cooking practices, perception and adoption within households,
- general incomes and income generating activities households are involved in,
- household energy and fuel supply and use within the settlement,

- the common benefits perceived by the households
- the market access for energy services.

1.1. Geographical study area

The rapid project needs assessment was conducted in the 3 zones of Kyempango, Kikurrira and Mahega in Rwamwanja refugee settlement. These 3 zones were purposively selected because they neighbor Katonga Forest Reserve where most refugees in these zones go to collect firewood and where some GBV incidences have allegedly been reported.

1.2. The Refugee Situation in Uganda

In the last five years multiple armed conflicts forced millions of people to flee. According to UNHCR, more than 65 million people were displaced in 2015, of which around 21 million were refugees. About 86% of the refugees are hosted in developing countries. Uganda, as one of the top receivers currently hosts more than 1.1 million refugees, mainly from South Sudan. More than 80% of these refugees live in rural refugee settlements. Even though refugees do not necessarily need to be a burden to the local economy, both, refugee and host communities in Uganda largely remain vulnerable due to poverty and weak basic service delivery, poor infrastructure and limited market opportunities. Especially the provision of basic energy services remains neglected. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), around 97% of the refugees in Uganda lack adequate access to safe, clean and sustainable energy. The Ugandan refugee policy aims to tackle these issues by progressively promoting the integration and peaceful coexistence of refugee and host communities in form of the Settlement Transformation Agenda, which promotes self-reliance of refugees, integration and equal social development for the wider refugee hosting areas. The Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE) supports the implementation by bringing in donors, development actors and the private sector. Energy related service delivery in refugee settlements is addressed in the UNHCR Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy (SAFE) Strategy for Uganda.

1.3. Rwamwanja refugee settlement

Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement is a refugee camp in Kamwenge District in southwestern Uganda and is home to nearly 76,000 refugees. It was established in 1964 to host refugees from Rwanda and closed in 1995. Rwamwanja refugee settlement was reopened in 2012 to accommodate refugees from DRC's North and South Kivu provinces. The Rwamwanja camp is managed by the UNHCR and the Ugandan Office of the Prime Minister's Department of Refugees (OPM). Services to refugees are implemented by a host of "implementing partner" NGOs, principally the Lutheran World Federation, the Windle Charitable Trust, Africa Humanitarian Action and African Initiative for Relief Development.

Most of the current residents of the Rwamwanja settlement are Congolese nationals who fled the M23 rebellion and the broader Kivu conflict beginning in early 2012.

It is divided into 10 administrative zones i.e. Kyempango, Kaihora, Mahani, Nkoma, Ntenungi, Base Camp, Mahiga, Kikuura, Waijagahe and Buguta

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Data Collection Methods and Sampling Units

A combination of qualitative techniques such as focus group discussions, survey questionnaires, field visits and observations were used. Sampling units were the potential beneficiaries of the project and

these were purposefully selected from three zones in Rwamwanja Refugee settlements (Sweswe, Mukondo and Kaborogota).

3.0 Findings from the Settlements

3.1 General Demographics of Respondents in Rwamwanja Refugees Settlement

The great majority 30 in 35 (92%) in Kyempango, Kikurrura and Mahega Zones in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, were refugees of DRC-North Kivu Origin. For this category of respondents majority (over 85%) were old caseloads who had lived in the settlement between 3 -15 years. 7 in 35 (16%) of the proportion of respondent were nationals of host community.

3.2. Energy and GBV Partners in Rwamwanja refugee settlement:

Nsamizi is the energy focal partner of UNHCR in Kyaka II refugee settlement and Alight is the GBV focal partner for UNHCR. The other partners in energy and GBV in Kyaka II are LWF, VSO, Brave Hearts Foundation and OPM.

3.3. Household Size and Characteristics: In the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, the household sizes ranges from 4-6, 7-9 and 10-15 with majority (68%) of the households lying in the 6-8 individuals per household. There are more elderly and young within each household compared to adult able persons.

3.4. Fuel Utilization

In the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, 28 in 35 (85%) of respondents use firewood and crop residue in dry season, and charcoal in wet season, while 8 in 35 (15%) use firewood and charcoal concurrently throughout the year and 2 in 35 (4%) use exclusively crop residue for cooking. Refugee Households reported using mainly firewood in dry season and some charcoal in wet season.

3.5. Time Spend on Fuel Collection

In Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, the time spent collecting firewood varied widely according to zone or village in the settlement. Households surveyed reported spending between average 5-8 hours per trip to collect a bundle/headload of firewood of about (25-30 kgs). Firewood was mainly collected from the nationals and specifically from Kabamba government army barracks. The collection of firewood was primarily role of adult women and girls, who usually complete these tasks in small groups of 2 to 3 people. Adolescent girls were reported responsible for cutting and piling and carrying the wood back is by both the adult females/mothers and teen girls.

3.6. Cost of Fuel for Household Cooking

Context information gathered from the local markets and community members showed a headload/bundle (Average 25-35kg) of fire wood costs UGX 3,500 and a bag of charcoal (average 45-50 Kg) costs UGX 40,000 within the settlement and UGX 28,000 when purchased from the distant forested areas.

All the Local host community households visited, reported they do not buy firewood/charcoal for cooking, while 28 in 35 (82%) of refugees said they buy firewood and charcoal from host community and 8 in 27 (33%) collect their wood fuel from within or outside the settlement or use crop residue.

3.7. Stove Utilization and Other Cooking Devices

Frequently used stoves in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement are the traditional three stoves, metal fabricated stoves and few fixed Lorena build in open spaces and most common cooking equipment

are the open metal pans often without lids. This tends to extend duration it takes to prepare a standard meal leading energy and time losses during routine cooking.

3.8. Time Spent Cooking a Meal

The average time taken by the households to prepare a whole-meal (Dry Beans/Peas + pasting and Mingling Ugali) for a house size of 6-8 individuals is 5-6 hours on traditional three stone oven and 2-3 hours for those using improved cook stoves. However it was noted that a lot of time was lost cooking because majority of the households' do not cover the food while cooking and heat is lost. This was observed to be partly cultural habit and lack of awareness.

3.9. Cooking Habits

In Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, 29 in 35 (91%) had open kitchen or cooking spaces where traditional three stone stoves are laid in series and several items cooked at once different pans. This was the most prevalent habit observed, 5 in 35 (10 %) had constructed kitchens or build cook space on the verandas' of main houses. Several households who received improved cook stoves under different projects seem not to put them to use. Survey team show some ILF type and unbranded "clay and metal" type, stoves inside houses not used. Access and use of portable improved stoves is low. Of the 10 % above, only (3 in 35) 6.5% of the households visited were actually using them. Food is often left on fire attended to by kids to push in the firewood as the mother is in the garden or doing other chores and this delays process of preparing a meal as well as wasteful use of food fuel.

3.10. Economic activities

The main sources of livelihoods activities most households engage in was sales of agricultural produce mainly among the old caseloads of 3+ years in the settlement and the national host community. The other business in the settlement was sale of charcoal.

. 3.11. Types of Stoves Adopted and Cooking Area:

The assessment noted in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, cooking habits influenced the type of stoves to be used by the households. (90%) visited had open kitchen or cooking spaces where traditional three stone stoves are laid in series and several items cooked at once different pans. This was the most prevalent habit observed, 10 % had constructed Lorena in kitchens or build cook space on the verandas' of main houses. Several households who received improved cook stoves under different projects seem not to put them to use

3.12. The Seasonal Calendar of the Community in Rwamwanja Refugees Settlement

In Rwamwanja Refugees Settlement, the old caseload, Responses reported using more firewood in wet season than in dry season. In dry season, more crop residue like maize stalks are available and there is relative ease of access of alternative fuels from own farm yards. Charcoal is used most frequent during wet season when access to firewood is difficult and price of charcoal is relatively lower at the same time the crop residues are not yet available. The energy products such as improved cook stoves are often purchase or build during rainy period in the veranda or inside the house.

3.13. Stove Utilization: Cooking Equipment The traditional three stoves, metal fabricated stoves and few fixed Lorena build in open spaces and were most common cooking ovens in Rwamwanja. In addition, open metal pans were often used without lids.

3.14. GBV and energy

The assessment found out that daily collection of firewood is a female responsibility, which often makes women more vulnerable to SGBV. Female refugees collect firewood from forests within the settlement and adjacent areas bordering a Ugandan army barrack and there have been reports of sexual harassment and abuse.

4.0 General Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

- From the rapid assessment, significant proportion of beneficiaries' households appreciate energy conservation, and are willing to adopt energy efficient cooking methods and technologies, however, appropriateness and cost cut issues should be addressed and incorporated during planning phase of the project.
- Awareness and training will enhance knowledge and improve perception, attitude and cultural paradigms, affection adoption levels of clean energy practices in the refugee and host communities. There is therefore need to continue raising awareness on the benefits of improved cook stoves, involve community leaders and enthusiastic stove users as early adopters to help promote the use and marketing of ICS by private traders.
- Use of firewood remains prevalent in both the settlements and host communities in Rwamwanja refugee settlement. The access to wood fuel is free for host population and refugees pay when they get it from the hosts and free when they fetch within or from nearby natural areas of settlement. This is not sustainable, there is need to develop, train and strengthen energy committees, to promote SAFE strategy and to sensitize on fuel conservation and promotion of energy efficient cooking technologies.
- Current financing and methods of obtaining energy devices by refugees is economically, unsustainable. It puts a lot of burden on the UNHCR or other development partners financing such projects. Few refugees have access to modern forms of energy, yet there are no current initiatives to improve energy access. Majority of the refugees in the settlements have absolutely minimal access to energy, with high dependence on traditional biomass for cooking and no access to solar or electricity.
- Exploring new delivery models for Energy provision for refugees needs to move away from a handout based model to allow market-based approaches to thrive. Where possible, to encourage the use of local markets to sustain and cultivate energy solutions, incubate novel ideas, such as Energy kiosks and attract investments from private sector actors.