

RELOCATIONS TO AJOUNG THOK REFUGEE CAMP

UNITY STATE, SOUTH SUDAN

ASSESSMENT REPORT
DECEMBER 2014



REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
Figures, Table and Maps	2
Geographic Classifications	2
Abbreviations and Acronyms	2
INTRODUCTION	3
METHODOLOGY	4
Objectives and Research Questions	4
Data Collection	4
Analysis Plan	5
Analysis Framework	5
Analysis Flow Model	6
Finding verification	7
FINDINGS	8
Relocation Findings	8
Thematic Findings	9
Security and governance	10
Access to basic services & food	11
Education and vocational training	11
Livelihoods	12
CONCLUSION	13

About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH's mission is to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter @REACH_info.

Figures, Table and Maps

Figure 1: Data flow model.....	7
Table 1: FGD participants	4
Table 2: Individual Interview Participants.....	5
Table 3: Attitudes and perceptions by population groups	9
Map 1: Refugee Relocation and new arrivals.....	10

Geographic Classifications

Boma	Lowest level of local government administration
Payam	Intermediate administrative level including several Bomas
County	Primary administrative level below the State including several Payams
State	Administration of local government including several Counties

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AT	Ajourng Thok
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
II	Individual Interview
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Health
VTC	Vocational Training Centre

INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on refugee experiences of relocation to Ajoung Thok camp in Pariang County, South Sudan. The majority of these refugees had been in South Sudan since 2012, when the escalation of violence in the South Kordofan region of Sudan forced tens of thousands of people to flee across the border into Unity State, South Sudan. By mid-2013, over 70,000 refugees were estimated to be residing in Pariang County, the majority in Yida camp.

The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian partners created a new site, Ajoung Thok, in efforts to decongest Yida and other smaller camps. In May 2012, humanitarian partners began to facilitate the relocation of refugees from Yida to Ajoung Thok. Humanitarian partners also facilitated the relocation of refugees from smaller sites, including Nyeel and Pariang. At the time of data collection (December 2013), the population of Ajoung Thok was 6,691,¹ while the population of Yida was still over 70,000.

REACH conducted this assessment to develop a qualitative understanding of the relocation experience for refugees and the factors affecting the decision to relocate. The study seeks to understand how refugees have settled in Ajoung Thok, the community and camp government governance structures, and information on specific sectors including, food, education and livelihoods. The report addresses questions from humanitarian partners about the relocation process, with the aim to inform future refugee camp planning and relocation processes in South Sudan.

The report is structured in two sections, beginning with a description of the methodology, including the objectives and research question, the data collection process and analysis plan. The second section of the report focuses on the findings of the study, beginning with the relocation process, followed by a description of access to food, services, education and training, livelihoods, and governance. The conclusion summarises trends, perceptions and attitudes of refugees with respect to the relocation, and describes key issues identified by refugees in Ajoung Thok.

¹ UNHCR Data Portal, Population Statistics as of 14-Dec-13 Ajoung Thok

METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the objectives and research questions that will be addressed in this report. It explains the approach implemented by REACH to collect and analyze data, which was divided into three distinct phases: 1) preparation with local stakeholders; 2) data collection at camp-level (including training and pilot of moderators); and report writing.

Objectives and Research Questions

The **overall objective** of the report is to inform future refugee camp planning and relocation processes in South Sudan. The **specific objective** of the survey is to observe the establishment of a new camp, relocation and settlement process in Ajoung Thok.

In order to inform the above objectives, REACH has identified the following research questions:

1. Which have been the driving forces behind the relocation process?
2. Did refugees have the opportunity to make an informed decision about the relocation of their household?
3. What are the issues related to the relocation process that have been experienced by refugees?
4. What key issues related to the relocation process have been experienced by the host community?
5. How have refugee households settled in Ajoung Thok individually?
6. How have refugee households settled in Ajoung Thok as a community?

In order to answer to these research questions, REACH collected qualitative data through FGDs with refugees and host communities and IIs with refugees and aid workers.

Data Collection

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Individual Interviews (IIs) have been selected through a convenience sampling approach. The purpose of KIs and IIs was not to generalize findings over the entire population, but rather to understand issues, determining their ranges, and identify refugees' insights on the Ajoung Thok relocation process. Therefore, while a certain degree of randomization has been used, this was not a main factor of participant selection for FGDs and IIs. Basic randomization of participant selection has been used in order to avoid bias inherent to certain forms of personal, tribal, or family selection process.

A formal screening was not developed to recruit research participants. Regardless, moderators selected a high degree of homogeneity across FGDs participants. The following common homogeneity characteristics have been used for the study: a) age; b) sex and c) area/camp of origin. Other characteristics were also recorded when relevant.

#	AGE GROUP	SEX	AREA/CAMP OF ORIGIN	OTHER CHARACTERISTIC
1	18 - 25	Men	AT Host Community	None
2	26+	Men	AT Host Community	None
3	18 - 25	Women	AT Host Community	None
4	26+	Women	AT Host Community	None
5	18 – 35	Men	New arrivals	Not enrolled in formal education
6	18 – 35	Men	Nyeel	Enrolled in formal education
7	18 – 35	Men	Pariang	Not enrolled in formal education
8	18 – 25	Men	Yida	Enrolled in formal education
9	18 – 25	Women	New arrivals	Not enrolled in formal education
10	18 – 25	Women	Pariang	Enrolled in formal education
11	18 – 35	Women	Nyeel	Not enrolled in formal education
12	18 – 35	Women	Yida	Enrolled in formal education

Table 1: FGD participants

#	AGE	SEX	AREA/CAMP OF ORIGIN	OTHER CHARACTERISTIC
1	15	Woman	Nyeel	With ration card
2	18	Woman	Pariang	With ration card
3	19	Woman	Yida	No ration card
4	20	Woman	Pariang	With ration card
5	20	Woman	New arrival	With ration card
6	24	Woman	Yida	No ration card
7	27	Woman	New arrival	With ration card
8	30	Woman	Yida	No ration card
9	33	Woman	Nyeel	With ration card
10	35	Woman	Yida	With ration card
11	27	Woman	Yida	With ration card
12	33	Woman	Nyeel	With ration card
13	20	Woman	Pariang	With ration card
14	NA	Woman	New arrival	With ration card
15	14	Man	Yida	With ration card
16	17	Man	Pariang	With ration card
17	21	Man	Yida	No ration card
18	23	Man	New arrival	With ration card
19	25	Man	Nyeel	With ration card
20	26	Man	Pariang	With ration card
21	30	Man	Yida	No ration card
22	48	Man	New arrival	With ration card
23	55	Man	Pariang	With ration card
24	56	Man	Nyeel	With ration card
25	34	Man	Yida	With ration card

Table 2: Individual Interview Participants

Analysis Plan

Analysis Framework

The analysis of the FGDs and IIs relied on field notes taken by moderators and assistant moderators. FGDs and IIs were not recorded because the option was not available at the time of the surveys. The note-based analysis was considered sufficient at the design stage due to the fact the purpose of the study was narrowly defined by the terms of reference.

All notes of FGDs and IIs have been reviewed and manually coded. Notes were split into sentences then divided according to the key Area of Investigation (AoI) that the research intended to address. At this stage, the analysis started by identifying key issues in each AoI and defining brief summaries accordingly. The analysis focused on:

- **Frequency:** the analysis takes into account how many times issues were reported by FGD and II participants. However, as per best practice in qualitative research, frequency has not been associated with higher or lower importance. It has informed the analysis on how much these specific issues are spread amongst the research target groups.
- **Specificity:** more emphasis has been given to specific, detailed issues that were reported.
- **Emotion and behaviors:** more weight has been assigned to themes and comments that participants reported that showed enthusiasm, passion or intensity
- **Extensiveness:** extensiveness of comments is linked to how many different participants have reported a specific comment or issue.

The following analytical framework has been used²:

Analysis Plan	Objective	Outcome	Outputs	Process
<i>Constant Comparative (Focus Group Discussions)</i>	To identify patterns and discover relationship between ideas and concepts from FGDs and IIs	Understanding of different trends across the target groups	Identification of common experiences, disaggregated by refugees' gender, age, and area of origin	a) Open coding. Grouping of experience as per similar dimension; b) Axial Coding. Dimension are compared and categories are created c) Patterns and categories are linked according to relationships
<i>Key Concepts (Individual Interviews)</i>	To identify factors of central importance related to the AT relocation process	Understanding refugee perceptions and opinions about the relocation process	Identification of significant refugee experiences and comments	Moderators asked II participants to identify key concepts and lessons learned on the AT relocation process

Constant comparative analysis has been processed through a three phase approach:

- Open Coding: all collected data has been consolidated into small units. A code, or descriptor, has been attached to each small unit.
- Axial Coding: small units have been aggregated into categories according to their codes. For instance, Access to Health services categories have been created by associating coding such as Hospital, Water Borne Diseases, Reproductive Health, Child Care, Vaccination, etc.
- Selective Coding: One or more thematic has been identified by grouping categories. For instance the thematic "Access to Basic Services" has been identified by associating health, protection, and wash services categories.

This analysis approach serves as proxy for theoretical sampling. It helps identify if themes that emerged from a specific group or individual are relevant to other groups or individuals. This approach also assists analysis to quickly reach data saturation, therefore saving time and resources.

Key concept analysis was used to analyze individual interviews. Individual surveys are useful to test FGD findings and verify their importance and relationships. After the completion of the constant comparative analysis, the identified categories and summary have been tested against the IIs findings. Hierarchy of problematic findings were defined and contradicting comments were addressed.

Analysis Flow Model

The research focused on interrelated aspects of the Ajoung Thok relocation. For this reason, the research did not focus on two variables out of an interacting set of influences. All contrary findings were collated in order to construct an analysis out of the set of comments, ideas and experiences shared by refugees. The analysis started as soon as data collection began, as per best practices in qualitative analysis.

The ongoing analysis during the data collection allowed adjustment to the data collection process when data saturation was reached on certain issues and new concepts appeared. Through this *progressive focusing*³ approach, the research evolved from its original ToR, which is reflected in findings outlined in this report.

² The analysis framework is adapted from Krueger – Casey, *Focus Group Discussions*, 2009, Sage Publications

³ Parlet & Hamilton, 1976

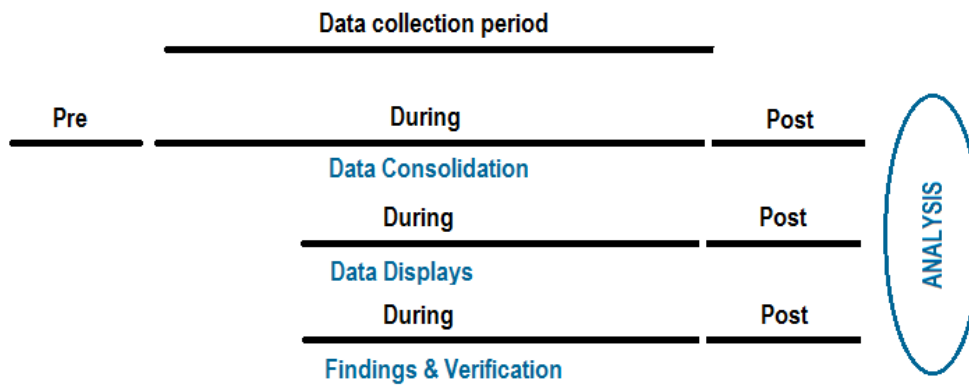


Figure 1: Data flow model

Finding verification

No set standards are available for evaluating the validity or authenticity of conclusions in qualitative studies⁴. Secondary data was used to verify the findings as much as possible, however very little data is available for Ajourng Thok besides demographics and key camp indicators. Therefore collected data has been verified instead through a four step/question approach:

- 1) How credible was the informant/participant who provided the comment/idea/experience?
- 2) Was the comment/idea/experience completely spontaneous in the discussion or was in direct answer to a moderator's question or comment?
- 3) How did the presence or absence of the moderators influence actions and statements of the participants?
- 4) Did the comments, ideas and experiences match with knowledge that moderators heard throughout study?

⁴ Becker, 1958

FINDINGS

This section of the report presents the main findings from the Ajoung Thok relocation research. This section is comprised of:

- **Relocation findings** that have been identified within FGDs and individual interviews. These major findings summarize the overall key issues that have been experienced by refugees during the relocation process.
- **Thematic findings** about sector specific information such as community and/or camp governance, education, and livelihoods. Finally, other issues that have been reported but not fully discussed by this study are also briefly outlined as these could require additional research from an agency involved in the refugee response.

Relocation Findings

The research focuses on the relocation process from Yida, Nyeel and Pariang to Ajoung Thok that took place between December 2013 and January 2014. However, during the survey, the assessment team also included in the FGDs and the individual interviews process a number of individuals and households that had recently arrived from Sudan and were not yet registered.

From the surveys and discussion groups, it is clear the experience of the relocation process and settling in Ajoung Thok camp was subjective to the group or community to which refugees belong. It is safe to assume that each population group and/or community experienced the relocation in a different way, with different expectations and driving forces. If a refugee was previously displaced in Nyeel he/she will share different opinions and needs than someone displaced in Pariang or Yida. Furthermore, it is possible to identify differences if the participant was previously a registered refugees in a South Sudanese camp or if he/she just arrived from the Southern Kordofan region of Sudan. REACH collected evidence about different types of relocation support provided to previous refugees or to new arrivals from South Kordofan. Unfortunately, REACH was unable to collect any evidence related to different types of relocation support between refugees located in Nyeel, Pariang or Yida. The refugees who were located in Nyeel, Pariang and Yida experienced a fairly simple journey compared to the new arrivals (see map n.1). **No major issue or concerns have been reported related to logistics. Transportation was adequately provided by UNHCR and NGOs.**

Different experiences have been described regarding the decision making process at the origin of their relocation. All camp populations seem to have a proper understanding of the main causes behind the relocation decision, such as security and proximity with Sudan for Yida, or recurrent flooding for Nyeel and Pariang. **The majority of FGD participants and individual interviews reported very limited problems during relocation decisions process. Usually, a mutual decision was agreed upon by both refugees and aid actors; or at a minimum, the refugee household provided consent prior to the relocation.** In some case refugees anticipated their relocation and managed to move their families and belongings to Ajoung Thok without any assistance from UNHCR or NGOs. A few refugees complained that their ration card was arbitrarily changed and they could no longer access aid in Yida and had to move to Ajoung Thok as a result. This specific issue has proved difficult to verify. It is, however, consistently reported, especially by those individuals who used to live in Yida camps and came back to South Kordofan for one or two months in order to resolve family or business issues. Most of them had their ration card “changed” when they came back from Sudan.

New arrivals had to follow difficult routes to reach Ajoung Thok. Routes were different according to their area of origin in Sudan.

As the map no.1 shows, most of the new arrivals belonging to the Moro, Kadugli, Otoro and Diri tribe crossed the border with South Sudan in the proximity of Yida camp. Yida camp was their primary destination when they left Sudan. However, once they arrived in Yida, most of the refugees reported that while they have been able to settle within their respective communities (Otoros with Otoros refugees, etc.) they could not obtain a ration card at this camp. As a result, the majority decided to leave Yida after only a few days for Ajoung Thok, where they were able to register.

New arrivals from Kawnyaro and Kologi areas had a far longer journey to Ajoung Thok. They crossed the South Sudan border close to Kodok and then travelled to Malakal. In Malakal, they received assistance before being transported by boat to Bentiu and finally by road to Ajoung Thok. **The new arrivals who passed through Malakal and Bentiu received assistance throughout their journey. However, the entire journey was described as difficult and in some case traumatizing. Refugees had little participation in the decision making process related to their relocation.**

New arrivals left some of their family members behind in Southern Kordofan. In general, **elders and people with disabilities did not travel to South Sudan** because refugees felt that they could have not survived the displacement or would have slowed down the rest of the household, jeopardizing everyone's security. The study did not address this issue in detail and it is therefore not possible to assess if any specific arrangements have been taken at a community level to guarantee the survival of these vulnerable groups. In the case of several female-headed households, the husband accompanied the family to South Sudan but subsequently travelled back to Southern Kordofan to maintain and protect their livelihood assets (trade, agricultural land or livestock). Other new arrivals were mainly minors and youth who have been sent to South Sudan camps by their parents in the hope that an education would be provided to them. **Security and access to quality education services have been the main driving forces behind the displacement of these new arrivals.**

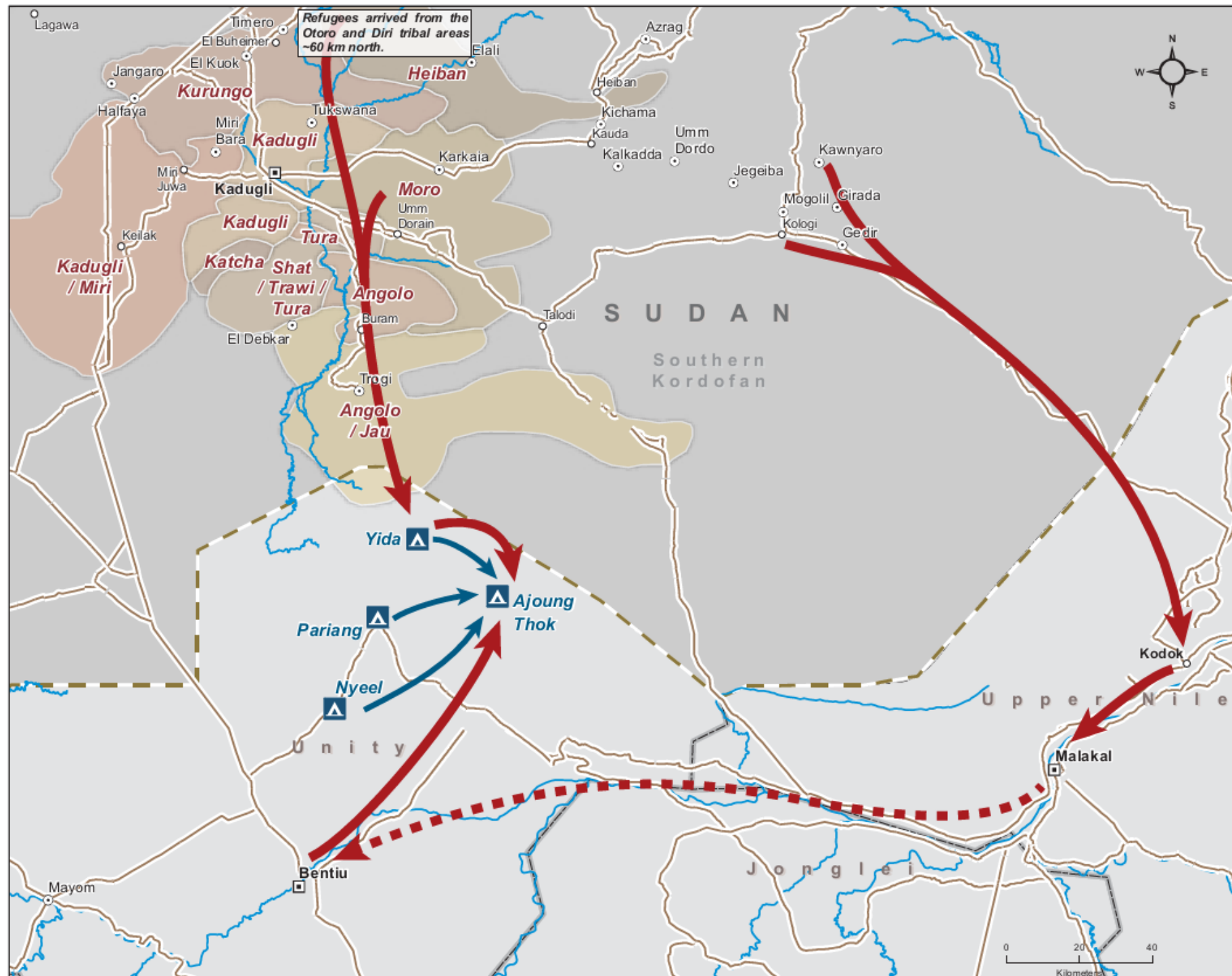
Thematic Findings

This section will illustrate the thematic findings of the survey. These findings focus on refugees' attitudes and perceptions, disaggregated by population groups involved in FGDs and IIs. Based on the analysis of FGDs and IIs, the surveys concentrated on themes which received the most attention during FGDs. These identified themes are: relocation to Ajoung Thok, camp security, camp governance, access to basic services, education, food, and livelihoods.

Attitudes and perceptions are summarized in the table below:

Population group	Gender	Relocation	Security	Governance	Basic service access	Education	Food	Livelihoods
Nyeel Refugees	Male	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
	Female	Negative	Negative	Positive	Negative	Negative	Negative	Neutral
Pariang Refugees	Male	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Negative	Negative
	Female	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Yida Refugees	Male	Positive	Positive	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Negative
	Female	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Neutral
New Arrivals	Male		Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative
	Female		Negative	Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Negative

Table 3: Attitudes and perceptions by population groups



Thematic Data: REACH, ACTED
Administrative boundaries: UNOCHA

Projection: GCS WGS 1984

File: REACH_SSD_Map_Displacement_05NOV2014

Contact: reach.mapping@impact-initiatives.org

Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associates or donors mentioned on this map.

Security and governance

Established and pre-existing refugees communities, such as the one from Nyeel, Pariang or Yida, **managed to relocate in Ajoung Thok and keep their homogeneity and social structure**. Homogeneity was secured through a well-defined occupation of specific blocks and camp territory. **Very often, pre-existing refugee communities had moved together and secured a sort of “community land tenure”** within certain blocks in the camp. This type of informal control over territories within the camp is guaranteed by the block leaders, who are usually the same leaders of previous camps, and are also community sheikhs. Using community sheikhs as block leaders proved to be effective and well received by refugee communities. To the contrary, issues were reported when camp leadership did not match with community leadership structures—for instance when sheikhs and block leader are two different individuals or when there are multiple sheikhs in the same camp area and fewer block leaders appointed. When this is happening, **there is no clear understanding about who should be the ultimate camp authority because responsibilities of block leaders look very similar to those traditionally held by community sheikhs**.

When such traditional community leadership is maintained, it has positive and negative consequences on camp social cohesion and refugee security:

- a) Possible positive outcomes: at both individual and household level, refugees reported finding the same social environment as before and therefore **feel that Ajoung Thok provides a more comfortable and secure environment**. Moreover they are able to apply the same strategies as before in terms of support for services referral, facilitation of aid provision and dispute resolution within the community
- b) Possible negative outcomes: individuals who are located in the same blocks as these communities but do not belong to them feel that they have very little audience with block leaders. **They feel that they are discriminated against, both in terms of security provision and when judgement is made on disputes**. Finally they may refer to community sheikhs that are not “endorsed” as camp block leaders, which may create confusion in terms of governance as well as spark misconceptions among the different tribes.

New arrivals, especially youth, provide less recognitions to sheikhs. Their communities are still somehow located in South Kordofan and they feel that camp sheikhs provide little if no guidance to the youth. Moreover, when located in camp areas where communities and tribes have a strong grip on resources and governance, youth struggle to get proper representation or consideration. However, some contradictory FGDs reported that new members had been welcomed by other community leaders. The research has not been able to conduct further FGDs in order to solve this contradiction.

Male FGDs and IIs identified several security issues since relocation to Ajoung Thok. Besides the issues related to leadership and governance described above, **men are concerned that security issues increase immediately before or after global food distributions** and that existing camp security is not able to cope with increased insecurity, especially at night. Men are also concerned about increasing tensions with host communities surrounding access to resources such as fire wood and land. As a result, male refugees in Ajoung Thok feel they have limited freedom of movement around the camp.

Female FGDs and IIs have reported major concerns related to security, especially regarding their own physical security. This is especially true at night and for those women who are heads of household, with no differences reported as a result of age. **Women usually report that “men come in to their shelter uninvited at night”; “those without a husband are fearing at night”**. This is particularly true for those women who live in plots on the outskirts of the camp, while those living in the geographical centre of the camp feel more secure, or at least less exposed. The women from Pariang described the situation in Ajoung Thok as worse than in their previous camp. According to these women, the cause of such increased insecurity feeling was the fact that in

Pariang they felt that their community was providing some sort of protection that is missing in Ajoung Thok: “in Pariang we had people looking after us”. This is also true for those who belong to Nyeel and Yida communities. In addition to physical insecurity, women also reported having concerns related to theft. In some cases, women tend to remain on their plot as much as possible, which can limit their ability to access camp services.

Access to basic services & food

Generally speaking, refugees that were previously located in Nyeel are unsatisfied with the access and quality of basic services provided in Ajoung Thok. Most of these refugees report to have benefitted from better services previously. Refugees that were previously located in Pariang and Yida have mixed attitudes about basic services available in Ajoung Thok, but their satisfaction rate is higher compared to households in Nyeel.

Access to water sources was perceived as satisfactory by all groups, while women's FGDs report some concerns about access to health services and quality. Shelter was not mentioned as an issue or concern in any of the FGDs or individual interviews. To the contrary, firewood for cooking was reported as one of the main concerns for all target groups. Refugee households need to walk long distances to fetch firewood, sometimes leading to disputes with the host community about firewood. Women's FGDs reported household items as key needs, especially blankets.

All participants in both FGDs, and individual surveys, complained about food rations and food distribution. Concerns were mainly related to the quantity provided through a food ration, as well as the monotony of the diet. Refugee communities also reported that concerns related to food rations was also due to the fact that they had little, if any, access to land on which to cultivate and grow vegetables or fruit. Most of the tribes currently located in Ajoung Thok had previously engaged with agricultural activities in Sudan prior to their displacement and would like to replicate such livelihood activities.

Education and vocational training

Education has been the main driving force behind refugees' decision to move to Ajoung Thok from other camps, as well as for those new arrivals from South Kordofan. The opportunity to access better education services monopolized most of the FGDs discussion as well as individual interviews. This was true throughout all target groups, regardless of age and sex. **“Education is the best thing about living in Ajoung Thok”** is a direct quote from a male FGD, and provides a good summary of the general attitude towards education services and has been widely endorsed by all individuals involved in the survey. However, some concerns were also reported relating to education services, which were mainly related to girls' and women's access to both school and adult-only education services.

Women and girls reported that for instance they could not go to school during menstruation. Despite being provided with washable sanitary towels, these towels were not enough and did not last an entire school day. In addition, schools do not provide private spaces for girls and women to replace them or dispose of sanitary towels, and as a result, girls and women prefer not to attend school during this time of the month. **Another issue reported by girls and women is unexpected pregnancies that may occur while they are attending school or classes. They reported to have little knowledge about contraceptives and that proper awareness activities could be of benefit to them.** Finally, due to the lack of electric lighting in the evening, very few girls and women were able to do their homework or prepare for exams because they have to first finish many household tasks that are normally assigned to women in their cultural setting. Reproductive roles within the family may undermine school performance, as well as further education opportunities after the second cycle of education, and in some cases even after the first cycle.

The subject of adult education and vocational training raised significant interest from FGD participants and many comments and suggestions were recorded. **One of the main findings of the survey is that women and men**

may need different vocational training classes because of their different availability during the day. Timetabling and the availability of classes should take in to consideration the gender roles particular to the local culture and context. If not, some target groups, such as young women with children, will never be able to attend education on offer. A second important finding is that **most of the requests for adult education and vocational training are linked with an unclear understanding of the labour market and livelihood opportunities available in Ajourng Thok.** Most of these requests are influenced by the desire to be hired by NGOs, rather than by integrating into opportunities in the local market. Therefore, aid actors engaging in such activities should consider performing further surveys of the labour and goods markets, in order to identify niches in the local context that will remain economically viable in the longer term.

Livelihoods

Discussions and interactions about livelihoods have been largely dominated by two main issues: a) unemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities for refugees, and b) the market and possible relationships between refugees and host community.

Unemployment and lack of job opportunities has been by far the most important finding of both FGDs and IIs. Unemployment equally affects men and women, both adults and youth. Most refugees complained about being unable to cultivate vegetables and fruit, due to a lack of access to lands (and also seeds and tools). Moreover they usually report that they lack the skills and experience to access employment with NGOs (assuming that this is possible) as well as the very few trade opportunities with other communities outside the camps. Unemployment is also linked to the lack of access to credit and/or capital to fund small production or trade businesses. **Among the different target groups, unemployment seems to particularly affect youth groups,** who lack of any alternatives to occupy themselves besides training and classes, usually idling in the camps, **and women, particularly single heads of household,** who have no other source of income and are fully dependent on aid.

Access to market has also proved to be an issue both for refugees and the host community, although this seems to have been partially solved by the presence of aid actors. **Refugee households complains about the distance between their plot and the market, as well a lack of access to its services.** The lack of access is reported not only by those households which are merely customers but also by those which would like to join the market as “producers” or “traders”.

Despite this, the host community did not want to have a separate market for refugees only in Ajourng Thok camp and strongly advocated to have a single market that could serve both communities. Host community FGDs were able to better explain such hostility towards an eventual dual market solution: **wealthier groups within the host community—especially its leaders and local authorities—had livelihoods directly linked with the market and benefit directly its performance and growth.** Tax and fees are collected from the different services available in the markets (including grinding mills and slaughterhouses) and another market, dedicated to refugees, would therefore be perceived as a competitive unit. According to the host community, another market unit in the area would a) benefit from external aid that could be somehow redirected to the host community market and b) remove potential income that could benefit host community elites.

The market therefore plays a critical role at a pivot point between different local “livelihood zones” and supply chains. It links: a) the camp community, who receive economical inputs from the aid community (exogenous inputs); b) the host community, who act more as a liaison/trading platform, producing added value through services rather than through production; and c) the payam/county, whose produce is transferred to Ajourng Thok market in exchange for cash or other goods and supplies.

CONCLUSION

The report findings provide a clear insight about the relocation process from Yida, Nyeel and Pariang to Ajoung Thok that took place between December 2013 and January 2014. The study identified some clear answers about how the refugee community perceived and participated in the relocation process, as well as the experience reported by those households that were recently displaced from South Kordofan. In addition, it has been possible to clarify how the community settled in Ajoung Thok, and how they adapted their social structures—or not—to their new environment. Finally, thematic findings provided a better understanding of access to services, education, and livelihood opportunities.

Refugees both understood and participated in the decision to relocate. Usually, a mutual decision was been made with both refugees and aid actors; or at a minimum, the refugee household gave consent prior to the move. The main reasons behind the relocation were widely understood (security, floods, etc.) and additional driving factors, such as access to better education, were endogenous to the communities.

In general, no major problems were reported by refugees in terms of logistics and transportation. However, households more recently displaced from South Kordofan had a difficult journey to Ajoung Thok. Among these households, many reported that elders and people with disabilities were not able to travel to South Sudan and therefore several families remain divided between Sudan and South Sudan. Regular movements to and from Sudan are reported, although it remains unclear how these households continue to communicate and support each other.

Perception and attitudes towards the relocation process and towards the Ajoung Thok depend on the group or community to which refugees belong. Refugees previously located in Nyeel are generally speaking more negative about Ajoung Thok because they feel that standards are lower in the new camp. To the contrary, refugees from Yida and Pariang have usually more satisfied with the services and infrastructure in Ajoung Thok.

Refugee communities retained the same social structure and camp governance model as they did prior to displacement. The relocation had a limited impact on most of the community, who occupied specific blocks within the camp through a sort of “community land tenure”. In these cases, block leaders remained the same as before, and in addition were often sheikhs within that community. When this happened, the camp governance perfectly matched the community governance structure. In other cases where this was not possible, misunderstandings have arisen around the roles of block leaders and the community sheikhs in the day to day life of the camp.

Women have reported major concerns related to their physical security, especially at night. This is particularly true for women who are heads of household and/or live on plots in the outskirts of the camp. **In contrast, men are concerned that global food distributions usually spark insecurity** and that better security management should be implemented by camp authorities before and after these distributions.

While the Ajoung Thok relocation process seems to have brought positive outcomes to the refugee population, **it is worth mentioning that, in the longer term, refugees and the host community may face more disputes and increased tensions over available resources and livelihood opportunities.** In addition, the ongoing internal conflict in South Sudan is adding further constraints to the refugee response, which may be an aggravating factor in the near future. This research could not focus on such issues in sufficient detail, but it is recommended that future assessments are conducted to address this issue and related information gaps in order to inform better planning for the refugee response.