

Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 3

# REFUGEES IN ARUA DISTRICT: A HUMAN SECURITY ANALYSIS

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## **REPORT SUMMARY**

**This report is the second in a four paper series on conditions for Sudanese refugees living in refugee settlements in the districts of northern Uganda. The overriding focus of these studies is the security situation within the refugee locations. Working Paper 3 concentrates on Arua district and considers this issue within the wider framework of general human security. Our research suggest that, while most refugees in Arua do not believe that their lives are threatened from external threat, they have severely limited access to material security. Furthermore, few of their psychosocial needs are met in their current circumstances.**

**The report is based on field research conducted in Arua District by Winifred Agabo, Kirk Huff, William Romans, and Eric Werker from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2001. The report was written by Dr. Lucy Hovil, Senior Research and Advocacy Officer at the Refugee Law Project, and Eric Werker, a Visiting Research Fellow from Harvard University, where he is currently undertaking doctoral studies. The authors are grateful to the Office of the Prime Minister, Directorate of Refugees, for permission to conduct the research. Comments from Zachary Lomo and Dr. Joe Oloka-Onyango have been invaluable in finalising the report.**

## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

DED: German Development Service

GoU: Government of Uganda

HDR: Human Development Report

IGA: Income Generating Activities

LC: Local Council

LRA: Lord's Resistance Army

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

OPM: Office of the Prime Minister

RDC: Resident District Commissioner

RWC: Refugee Welfare Committee

SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNRF II: Ugandan National Rescue Front II

WFP: World Food Programme

WNBF: West Nile Bank Front

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report is the second of four reports that focus on assessing and analysing the security situation for Sudanese refugees living in northern Uganda. The reports were instigated by recurrent complaints made to the Refugee Law Project's Legal Aid and Counselling department suggesting that there are a number of refugees who do not feel safe living in settlements in Uganda's northern districts, due to external threats. The first report, "Refugees and the Security Situation in Adjumani District", demonstrated that in Adjumani district there are two main sources of insecurity for refugees: attacks by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, and forced recruitment into the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA).<sup>1</sup> This second report focuses on Arua district and is set within a wider framework of human security, in order to assess the personal safety, access to goods and services, and relational well-being of the refugees.

In this working paper, we find that the human security situation of the refugees in Arua district is fragile. Many refugees fear for their personal safety, in the form of potential rebel activity, forced recruitment into the SPLA, tribal stigmatization, threats against women, abuse of power by camp authorities, and tensions with the nationals over the utilisation and sharing of scarce resources. At the same time, most refugees have limited access to material necessities, including food, medicine, and education, which is the second element in the human security framework with which the study is concerned. Relational well-being, the third tier of our framework, focuses on the extent to which coping networks have been weakened and investigates the attitudes of refugees to both their past and future.

The paper shows the extent to which difficulties of insecurity are self-perpetuating, wherein a refugee is unable to escape from continuous cycles of suffering. Those refugees in the settlements whose livelihood is centred on agriculture are particularly threatened, as the environmental situation in the settlements does not permit enough production to meet any needs beyond basic survival. At the same time, those who are self-settled find themselves without sufficient capital or business opportunities to generate income that would allow them better opportunities. In addition, the findings suggest that those refugees whose human security needs are better fulfilled tend to be among the better educated, to have more contacts in their surroundings from before entering exile, and to have entered Uganda with property of monetary or exchange value.

The report begins by presenting a theoretical framework for the study, followed by a brief background to Arua in Section 3, and an outline of the fieldwork methodology in Section 4. Section 5, which comprises the bulk of the report, deals with three different facets of human security: personal safety, material accessibility and relational well-being. Section 6 explores the characteristics associated with human security through statistical analysis. Section 7 concludes the study. Finally, an appendix is included for those who seek a deeper understanding of the econometric techniques and results behind Section 6.

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<sup>1</sup> Hovil, June 2001.

## 2 HUMAN SECURITY: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

This paper takes as its starting point the framework of human security developed in the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) *Human Development Report 1994* and expands upon it without modifying the original model. The reasons for this are simple: the UNDP framework is the most widely disseminated discussion of human security in its current characterization. It is not our intention to develop a controversial definition of human security; rather, we wish to apply an enhanced version of the original framework to the analysis of the situation of refugees in Arua District, Uganda.

The *Human Development Report 1994* (HDR) gives three overlapping definitions of human security. First, the report states that human security covers both chronic and acute conditions: “safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression . . . [and] protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life.”<sup>2</sup> Second, economic and social health are included along with the traditional safety component of insecurity: “freedom from fear and freedom from want.”<sup>3</sup> It is noteworthy that this definition places the defining in the hands of the individual at risk. Instead of enumerating a set of requirements that would satisfy any individual’s human security needs, this definition relies upon “fear”, the perception of danger, and “want”, the perception of need.

The third definition is the most precise and thus forms the main foundation for our analysis. The HDR outlines seven categories of security that, taken together, are meant to cover the range of issues that can impact on human security.

1. *Economic security* entails having access to basic income or some publicly-financed safety net.
2. *Food security* is concerned with “physical and economic access to basic food.” The possibility of intra-household disparities is noted.
3. *Health security*, particularly in developing countries, is negatively impacted by infectious and parasitic diseases, many of which are linked with poor nutrition and an unsafe environment, especially polluted water. Health security also encompasses access to health services.
4. *Environmental security* has to do with the land: namely, its resistance to drought or floods, the onset of desertification, and water supply. Moreover, environmental security is threatened when people are living on marginal land.
5. *Personal security*, or security from physical violence, is concerned with the safety from threats of torture, war, ethnic tension, gangs, or individuals.
6. *Community security* exists when individuals in a community, whether of gender, ethnicity, or language, do not feel threatened based on their membership in that community.
7. *Political security* focuses on the state’s respect for human rights and its refraining from repressive activity.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> UNDP 1994, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP 1994, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> UNDP 1994, pp. 24-32.

It is apparent from this framework, even in its most simple definitions, that there is substantial overlap across the categories. For example, health security is dependent on food and environmental security, while community and personal security are prerequisites to personal security. In addition, all these factors are contingent upon refugees having freedom of movement.

In a recent study, Leaning and Arie point out the lack of social or psychological components in the UNDP definition of human security. The authors establish three psychosocial categories: “a sustainable sense of home; constructive social and family networks; and an acceptance of the past and a positive grasp of the future.”<sup>5</sup> These are especially applicable to the refugee community. A sense of home brings with it notions of comfort and stability, yet the refugee has fled his or her original home. Social and family networks help one cope in times of trouble, however many old networks are disrupted as a result of war and dislocation. Lastly, comfort with the past and future have a positive impact on perceptions of the present, but refugees often possess tragic histories and their transient state may discourage them from preparing for the future.

We merge the Leaning/Arie contribution with that of the HDR 1994 to arrive at three broad categories of human security: *Personal safety*, comprising of personal, community, and political security as defined by the HDR; *Material accessibility*, encompassing economic, food, health, and environmental security as defined by the HDR, and including access to education; and *Relational well-being*, with relations to home, networks, past, and future, as developed by Leaning and Arie.

### 3 BACKGROUND TO ARUA

At independence, Arua was part of the then West Nile district, comprising present day Nebbi, Moyo, Adjumani and Arua districts. Today, it borders the districts of Moyo to the east, Nebbi in the south and Gulu in the southeast. It also borders Sudan to the north and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. It covers an area of 7,830 square kilometres. The principal town is Arua, the administrative headquarters for the district, with Koboko as the second largest town in the district.<sup>6</sup>

The two refugee settlements within Arua are Rhino Camp and Imvepi Refugee Settlements, with refugee populations of 34,215 and 17,900 respectively.<sup>7</sup> In addition, refugees are self-settled throughout Arua district, in particular in Arua and Koboko towns, as well as clustered along the Sudan/Uganda border.

### 4 METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork in Arua sought to find a balance between an open-ended, ethnographic approach attempting to draw out the story and concerns of each interviewee, and a quantifiable survey. We asked refugees a common set of questions about their

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<sup>5</sup> Leaning and Arie, 2000, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Rwabowoogo, 1998, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR data, as of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

perceptions of the various categories of human security, and encouraged them to expand on any of the points and bring up new ideas as they occurred. The data thus emerged in two forms: first was the qualitative evidence, composed of direct quotations from the refugees, and second was the quantitative database, in which all the quantifiable information about the refugees was entered for statistical analysis. Some data was entered directly, such as number of years since the refugee left his/her home, whereas other information had to be coded from an open-ended question. For instance, when we asked whether the relationship with the nationals was good, our criterion for coding was whether the refugee mentioned any feelings or incidences to express otherwise.

The process of interviewing refugees was not random. Upon entering a settlement in Imvepi or Rhino Camp, we would first seek permission from the chairperson to speak with the residents. After some formalities, the researchers would request to speak with a diverse range of ages, gender, education level, and ethnic group. Most interviews took approximately one hour. Not all the settlements were covered, and the choice of the settlements followed no specific regime other than attempting to ensure a rich variety of respondents. In Arua town, we relied on two contacts in the refugee community who brought to our lodging a diverse group of refugees. In Koboko, researchers travelled to different neighbourhoods in the town known to have higher concentrations of refugees.

There were inevitable biases in this approach, notably a bias towards English speakers and refugees with “something to say”. While no refugee we asked refused to be interviewed, settlement chairpersons were eager to put their most eloquent speakers forward. Occasionally we received requests from individual refugees to be interviewed, which we generally honoured. In addition to interviewing refugees, we spoke with various district officials, implementing partners, and refugee leaders in open-ended conversations.

In no way can the data collected be seen as a representative survey of the refugee population in Arua District, and neither can it be construed as material for an evaluation of the activities carried out by the Local Councils (LCs), the Refugee Welfare Committees (RWCs), the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Arua District. Our analysis is primarily people-centred, and intended to complement—rather than compete with—more technical studies.

## **5 ARUA: A HUMAN SECURITY ANALYSIS**

Arua was considered a good location in which to conduct our human security analysis because many of the refugees have lived there for a number of years. Due to this relative demographic stability, the main focus for NGOs working with refugees is on development rather than crisis management—the former being of prime importance in a situation that has moved from being a short-term emergency to a long-term dilemma. Thus the following sections contain an analysis of the human security situation for refugees in Arua along three divisions: personal safety, material accessibility and relational well-being.

## 5.1 Personal Safety

Of primary concern in this section was whether refugees felt safe living in their particular location. Of all the refugees we spoke with, 37% said they did not feel safe. Among the refugees living in the settlements, 43% did not feel safe, whereas only 24% of the self-settled did not feel safe. Three main sources of potential threat, corresponding with the three human security categories of personal safety, were identified: physical insecurity from external threats, insecurity within the refugee communities, and political insecurity. This section deals with each category in turn, seeking to identify the extent to which each are a perceived or actual threat and, therefore, a challenge to the personal safety of refugees.

### 5.1.1 External threats

There are two main groupings that were seen to have the potential to be, or to have been, a danger to the physical security of refugees living in Arua district. The first of these are rebel groups who have been operating in the region, and the second is the threat associated with the ease of movement for members of the SPLA between southern Sudan and northern Uganda. These two sources of insecurity will be considered in turn.

***A recent history of rebel attacks.*** Arua district has, in recent history, been vulnerable to attack, being situated in an area that has seen a number of rebel groups operating since President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986. The two groups that have had the greatest impact on general security in the area are the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Although the former has died out, a remnant appears to have remained under the guise of the Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF II). The LRA, on the other hand, is still operational, and is the cause of untold misery for many people living in the north of Uganda generally.<sup>8</sup> In Adjumani district, for instance, refugees in some settlements located close to the Zoka forest appeared to be particularly vulnerable to attack because the forest provides the rebels with a degree of physical cover. This vulnerability is an ongoing problem and has created a climate of fear amongst the southern settlements.<sup>9</sup>

In Arua, on the other hand, rebel attacks on refugee settlements appear to be much more of an historical issue. Many of those interviewed— both refugees and officials alike— told stories of attacks by rebel groups, in particular the WNBF and UNRF, but emphasised the fact that the last attack was in 1997 (although the rebels appear to have approached Koboko in 1998 but did not attack). Such incursions by the rebels clearly made a lasting impact on the communities, however, and are an acknowledged component of their common history. In particular, when refugees spoke about the rebels, they emphasized the atrocities committed. One man described an attack that had taken place five years previously:

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<sup>8</sup> The main focus of their attacks is Gulu and Kitgum districts. However, other areas of northern Uganda are vulnerable to attack, even if with less intensity and frequency.

<sup>9</sup> Hovil, June 2001.



In 1996 when the rebels came they shot people. During the night they came and picked out people's teeth and cut the ears off the men.<sup>10</sup>

Several other informants also referred to men getting their ears cut off. For instance one young man talked of an attack in which the rebels cut off two people's ears and killed one woman on the spot. As he went on to say,

If they heard that we have received food, they would like to come and root our property. Secondly, they would like us to go back to Sudan. That's why they used to cut off our ears.<sup>11</sup>

Another man described how rebels destroyed people's properties and abducted and raped girls.<sup>12</sup> In fact, many of the self-settled currently living in Koboko and Arua towns had originally been settlement residents, but had left as a result of insecurity due to the rebel attacks. One informant stated that he had seen the rebels passing through earlier in 2001 (he was not sure of which month), but that they did not do anything.<sup>13</sup> Although this information was unconfirmed, reference to rebels acknowledges the fact that rebels are viewed as a latent threat by the refugees. Thus, although the general feeling was that the rebels no longer presented immediate danger to the refugees living in Arua, they were part of their recent memory. In addition, as Arua district remains close to territory where rebels are active, it could conceivably become a source of attack in the future.

***SPLA activities within Arua.*** A more contemporary external threat named by some of the informants was that of the war in Sudan. Arua district borders Yei River district in southern Sudan and is, therefore, in proximity to a war that has been raging since 1983 and which, inevitably, has repercussions that spill over the border into Uganda.<sup>14</sup> The war, essentially between the military government in the north and the SPLA in the south—but with numerous other facets—has created the large number of Sudanese refugees currently residing in northern Uganda and elsewhere. Most of those who have fled are southerners who have found life in southern Sudan's war-torn territory intolerable, and many have had some past involvement with the SPLA. Numerous refugees acknowledged the continuing presence of individuals identified as SPLA personnel within the district. From the perspective of this study, the main issues of concern was whether or not their presence was seen as a threat to the human security of the refugees.<sup>15</sup>

On the one hand, many refugees referred to the presence of SPLA personnel but did not consider it as being a particular threat to their own personal safety—they were simply a visible presence. There was frequent reference to the movement of SPLA soldiers

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<sup>10</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Male refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Male refugee, Tika VI, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Male refugee, Yelelu, Rhino, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>14</sup> For information on the Sudan war see, for instance, Burr 1998, African Rights 1995.

<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that, due to the highly sensitive nature of the subject matter, it is hard to know to what extent refugees were inclined or able to be fully factual in the information given.

between Sudan and Uganda, visiting relatives in the settlements or stocking up on food and medical supplies. As one self-settled refugee in Arua town testified:

They are here around but they don't come with guns. Me, I have seen them walking, but without guns. They are coming to buy their things then go back.<sup>16</sup>

He went on to deny that any recruitment was taking place, and emphasised that their presence was not considered a threat. Another refugee in Arua similarly talked of how the SPLA often come to the town to buy food and seek medical treatment, but they do not carry guns or wear uniforms. When asked whether or not they were seen as a threat the answer was simply, "they don't tell us their plans."<sup>17</sup> In addition, a refugee and local business leader described the SPLA's presence in this way:

We believe that everyone is an SPLA. It's a matter of how much you can contribute. Farmers contributing food are more of a soldier than those fighting . . . Nobody comes here with uniforms or guns. It is the whole population that is fighting the Arabs.<sup>18</sup>

What these testimonies reveal is the extent to which the SPLA is viewed as being present within the location, but that their presence is not perceived as a threat. Instead, their movement to and from the area is seen as a legitimate and acceptable means of furthering their aims within Sudan. It perhaps reflects the tacit support that the SPLA inevitably enjoys amongst a refugee population that has had to flee their homes due to attacks by the Government of Sudan.

However, not all refugees felt this way. The interviews revealed that some refugees, despite having fled to Uganda for safety, still did not feel safe living within the settlements or the self-settled areas.<sup>19</sup> Such individuals revealed how they lived in fear of being recruited or re-recruited into the SPLA. For instance, a 15-year-old boy in Rhino Camp, who is an unregistered refugee in the camp and a former SPLA soldier, told of a recent incident in which the SPLA came to his school to try and take him to fight. He had originally run away from the war due to being tortured and facing food scarcity, and is now afraid to go back to school because he believes that even amongst his own people, there are spies who will reveal him to the SPLA authorities. It was not possible to do an extended interview with this young man, however, as he was understandably nervous about discussing such sensitive issues and insisted that the interview be conducted in the bushes, out of sight.<sup>20</sup>

Another man told of how a teacher and his family were attacked in Rhino Camp in September 2000. The teacher was apparently targeted due to the fact that when the SPLA had come to train his student children, he had resisted, was arrested, and then escaped to Uganda. He was then abducted by armed men who were identified as being SPLA, and

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<sup>16</sup> Male refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>17</sup> Female refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>18</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Similar concerns were raised through interviews conducted in Adjumani. See Hovil, June 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Male refugee, Rhino Camp, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

taken back to Sudan.<sup>21</sup> A self-settled man in Koboko talked of such happenings in more general terms:

There is mobilisation going on. In Koboko it happened last year. They will just come; it will be during the night hours. You will be asleep; they will come and take you. There will not be meetings. There were some who were in school here. It was during the holidays they were taken . . . they are there now but they don't write. They were not having identity cards saying they were students. That's why they were taken . . . And sometimes [SPLA members] were conducting meetings with chiefs. They will mobilise the chiefs to get the persons they want for their activities.<sup>22</sup>

Likewise, a self-settled minor in Koboko talked of what happened to him when he was living in Sudan, and expressed fear for his safety:

I was taken by the SPLA for training . . . when I was in Sudan . . . After three weeks training, I ran away. They followed me until I was wounded by a blade. When I was wounded, I moved following the river and I pushed to Congo and then came directly here . . . Since that time I didn't go back to Sudan. They are looking for me and if I saw any other vehicle hiding from Sudan, I do not show myself. If they get me here they will take me . . . My brother was also taken from [Imvepi]. They took him back and I have not heard from him since . . . My neighbours told me my bother is taken [and that] I should not stay there because if I do I will also be taken . . . So I can stay in some place for only two weeks so they cannot know where I am staying."<sup>23</sup>

Officials both within the Arua district administration and the refugee administration, on the other hand, acknowledge the SPLA's presence but stated that they were not aware of such forced recruitment taking place. As the RWC III chairman claimed:

Once any person who had been in SPLA, once he is here, cannot be organised to rejoin SPLA. There is no danger because SPLA personnel are not entering the settlement . . . [Voluntary mobilisation] is not allowed because according to the Refugee Convention of 1951, the refugees are not allowed to play politics.<sup>24</sup>

This statement suggests a gap between policy and individual perception. The weight of evidence from particular refugees suggests that there are those who believe they are in specific danger from SPLA recruitment drives, and who do not feel adequately protected in their current location. Many of the refugees living in the settlements and surrounding areas are either ex-combatants from the SPLA, or young men who are a particular target for recruitment. They thus comprise a vulnerable group within their specific location: they feel threatened by the presence of the SPLA and claim that those who are supposed to ensure their safety compromise their protection.

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<sup>21</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, July 2001.

<sup>23</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, July 2001.

<sup>24</sup> RWC III Chairman, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

### 5.1.2 Community security

Apart from the two main sources of external threat mentioned above, questions were asked relating to problems of internal security within the refugee communities. The two dominant issues that emerged under this category were ethnic tensions and the abuse of women. Both categories contain a plethora of complex issues, and the information collected was intended as an indicator of the threat each factor posed, rather than a conclusive analysis of the subject.

**Ethnic tensions.** The majority of those refugees living in Arua district are Kakwa and, perhaps because they are numerically dominant, did not appear to feel threatened on account of their ethnic identity. The main grouping that did mention that they felt threatened in some way because of their ethnic group was the Dinka. Thus while only 3% of Kakwa mentioned any stigma, and 6% of other ethnic groups mentioned anything, 36% of the Dinka we spoke with gave some account of unease or discrimination. The Dinka are strongly associated with the leadership of the SPLA, and there are negative stereotypes attached to them. For instance a Kakwa woman in Rhino Camp mentioned that the Dinka sell rations to buy local brew. They then get drunk and start fights. She saw this as being typical of Dinka people, claiming “they are warriors and like fighting so much.”<sup>25</sup>

Several of the Dinkas interviewed expressed their feeling of vulnerability due to their ethnic background. One unaccompanied minor protested about having to pay school fees, claiming that he was discriminated against because he was a Dinka. He quoted a refugee programme co-ordinator as telling him; “you are a Dinka. It is because of you that we are fleeing this war.”<sup>26</sup> Another student reiterated the issue in this way:

There is a problem. The people say the Dinka are not good, that they are the ones who caused this war . . . they are looters.<sup>27</sup>

Likewise a Dinka girl described how she feels discriminated against at school:

At school I have no friends, and I am the only Dinka girl in the whole school so I fear to communicate to other students.<sup>28</sup>

The above issues are far more complex than the scope of this study, but the findings indicate that Dinka refugees living in the Arua area feel discriminated against in some way. Although the problem did not appear to be a major threat to individual security, it is nevertheless a source of tension that has the potential to escalate.

**Gender based persecution.** Perhaps a more serious threat to security within the refugee communities was that of the abuse of women. Testimonial evidence indicates that early marriage is common, that young girls are often defiled, and domestic violence is not

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<sup>25</sup> Female refugee, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>26</sup> Young male refugee, Arua district, July 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Female refugee, Wanyange, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Female refugee, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

unusual. For instance, a young mother whose husband is fighting in the SPLA in Sudan said that men frequently harass her:

I have been disturbed so much by men in the camp. They come at night asking me for sex. But I have refused and rejected all of them . . . They have disturbed me so many times but I keep on threatening them that I will make an alarm and call the RWC chairman so they get scared and run away.<sup>29</sup>

Likewise, a woman active in Imvepi Settlement's RWC talked about how young women succumb to false dependency on men:

In a family, women with our culture struggle more than men. They are supposed to dig and produce food for their family. But now the weather is not here . . . due to poverty, women can succumb to 'luxury love' where the man promises support or provides some gifts initially. But when she becomes pregnant he will leave . . . [Single mothers] are deceived by other men . . . When she becomes pregnant the man goes away, leaving the lady stranded. She thought the man would help her in other ways, giving her assistance or whatever.<sup>30</sup>

Another woman in Imvepi Settlement talked of how adultery is rampant and rape is common, describing how just the previous day a woman had got drunk and was raped by several men.<sup>31</sup>

Again, the scope of this study does not do justice to the serious and complex issues which surround problems of domestic violence within the camps. What this brief mention does do, however, is highlight two potential sources of insecurity within the refugee communities, and place problems of ethnic tension and domestic violence within the general framework of human security. In so doing, it reveals the extent to which both issues, particularly the latter, challenge the measure of security enjoyed by refugees living in Arua district and give cause for concern.

### ***5.1.3 Political security***

As well as external threats and community stability, the third area of potential insecurity fell under the category of political security. Issues of political security were divided into three main categories: the relationship between the refugees and the camp authorities, between refugees and the Government of Uganda (GoU), and between refugees and nationals. Each will be considered in turn in order to assess whether or not those who hold political power threaten the security of refugees and, if so, to what extent.

***Camp Authorities.*** The interviews revealed that problems relating to Camp authorities fell into two distinct categories: general complaints relating to the power that the authorities were seen to wield, and a specific problem that related to a subordinate of the camp commander in Imvepi Settlement. In the case of the former, some informants expressed general complaints about the authorities. For instance one refugee said, "they

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<sup>29</sup> Female refugee, Arua district, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Female refugee, Imvepi, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>31</sup> Female refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

don't take action if there are problems facing refugees."<sup>32</sup> Another complained that food distribution was "not a bit fair", and that camp authorities abused their power in the distribution of food.<sup>33</sup>

Others saw the authorities as not only unfair, but as a direct threat to themselves. This came through, for example, with reference to the census that was being conducted around the time of the fieldwork, and was viewed with suspicion by some informants. One woman in Rhino Camp said she felt disturbed by the census, saying how every time they come to talk about the census they say they might increase the rations, "but they don't." She went on to add that she has heard rumours that as a result of the census some residents will be returned or imprisoned.<sup>34</sup>

The authorities were seen as threatening in other ways. For instance, a young man talked of how he was compelled to deal with a refugee programme co-ordinator who had a grudge against his family. The co-ordinator had apparently told him that "because of what your grandfather did to my uncle I can do the same to you."<sup>35</sup>

Other than these more general complaints, there was one specific complaint that was made by a number of different refugees against an official (not the camp commander) in Imvepi Settlement. This particular man, who has apparently since been removed from the settlement, allegedly caned refugees during food distribution. One man said with regard to this official:

I fear [he] is very cruel. In fact when we see him coming we all run away to hide because he beats us terribly. He just hates us too much. He doesn't like any suggestions of complaint from us. He wants us to take his orders by force. Even when you want to discuss something with him, he orders police to torture us.<sup>36</sup>

An 18-year-old man described how this same official had caned two different refugees with a stick. When asked why the man did this, he replied:

If you stand nearby he is just beating you. I don't know what is the problem . . . I am afraid when I wait for my food during the distribution.<sup>37</sup>

Another refugee in Imvepi Settlement talked of how the official resorted to violence if someone questioned the ration they were being given:

When I measured my ration on the scale because I was in doubt, I don't have anyone powerful to go to. When you ask for the food [to be measured], he may laugh at you and reply with the stick. He will beat you as soon as you reply.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>33</sup> Male refugee, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>34</sup> Female refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>35</sup> Male refugee, Arua district, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Male refugee, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>37</sup> Male refugee, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>38</sup> Male refugee, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.



The interviewee went on to describe how he had himself been hit twice, and showed the interviewer the scar. When asked if he had reported the incident, he replied, “If you report this case he is the very person to [whom] you report.”<sup>39</sup>

Although many of the complaints mentioned above were unverified, what is revealed is that on occasion the camp authorities are perceived to abuse their position of power either through withholding food and other items, or through physical violence. In this way they present a threat to the security of refugees. What complicates the matter further is that such authorities are supposed to be assisting and defending the refugees. If they abuse their positions of power—and this study by no means intends to suggest that this is the norm—then refugees are put in a vulnerable position, as they have no other source of authority to whom to voice a complaint.

***The Government of Uganda.*** There was little concern expressed over the relationship between the GoU and the refugee population. The main problem that emerged was the extent to which refugees feel that they do not have freedom of movement. For instance, a woman who had recently arrived in Rhino camp said that she felt it was like living in prison.<sup>40</sup> Likewise a self-settled woman in Arua recounted the story of a girl who had tried to register to go to a camp on the previous Saturday, but was refused by officials on grounds that she had no documentation showing that she was from Sudan.<sup>41</sup>

The main issue, therefore, was the requirement by officials for refugees to be able to identify themselves as such. This was reiterated by a refugee who said that officials sometimes harass refugees because they do not have identification papers.<sup>42</sup> Although this was not a challenge to the security of refugees in itself, it was seen as a major imposition on their freedom of movement. The larger issue is, of course, the legal and policy framework that not only confers such power on officials, but also correspondingly places such limitations on the rights of refugees.

***The relationship between refugees and nationals.*** The final area of political security that was investigated was the relationship between refugees living in Arua district, whether self-settled or in settlements, and nationals living in the same area. With the specific dynamics created by the influx of aid associated with refugees on the one hand, and by the demands being made on land on the other, there is potential for nationals and refugees to feel hostile towards each other. Our research, however, suggested that although there is a degree of tension between the two groupings, this tension is rarely a threat to the physical security of the refugees. In many instances, refugees were positive about the way they were treated by nationals. As one female teacher said, “The nationals are around here, so they come in and integrate: in the markets and in the churches. There are some activities we do with them.”<sup>43</sup> Likewise, an educator in Koboko talked of the

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<sup>39</sup> Male refugee, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Female refugee, Wanyange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Female refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001. Clearly, the GoU is justified in not giving material assistance to anyone who approaches him or her, without identification, claiming to be a refugee. That having been said, many refugees have fled without documentation or lost it along the way.

<sup>42</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>43</sup> Female refugee, Point D Extension, Imvepi, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

charitable attitude of the nationals towards them: “They are the ones who give us land to build on; they are the ones who give us land to dig.”<sup>44</sup> For many refugees, the two groups were living in relative harmony with each other.

However, some refugees expressed complaints reflecting competition over scarce resources. For instance, boreholes appeared to be a major focus of dispute. As a self-settled refugee living in Koboko said with regard to nationals living in his area, “we can stay together at school and at home and be friends with them. But at the borehole the women will fight, and sometimes even box each other.”<sup>45</sup> Likewise a 19-year-old man said that use of boreholes can create tension between nationals and refugees, with people rushing to get water and “exchanging bitter words.”<sup>46</sup>

Another major source of tension was over the allocation and ownership of land. As an uneducated widow and mother of five said, “I also fear nationals as I have to beg for land to dig.”<sup>47</sup> Another claimed that nationals sometimes take their land, and if they complain to OPM the nationals can retaliate and “attack in the gardens.” He went on to say that when refugees quarrel with nationals over land, “they can call on their beliefs to make you sick and poison and curse the land.”<sup>48</sup> Another woman described how she felt threatened by the nationals as a result of such competition:

I am scared of the nationals who are now saying we should be chased away and leave their land. Even the nationals send their cows and goats to feed on our food crops in gardens and if you complain they automatically become our enemies . . . Land was taken away from me and a national told me to go back to Sudan and that I own no land here.<sup>49</sup>

What these quotations show is the extent to which competition over scarce resources can lead to disputes, which occasionally result in physical violence. However, the overall impression was that although this was at times a problem, it did not pose a serious threat to the security of the refugees. In most instances it was more a source of tension created by the circumstances of living in a harsh environment that was not designed to accommodate the numbers of people currently living there. Such circumstances are outlined in the following section, in which the issue of the material security for refugees is considered in detail.

## 5.2 Material Accessibility

In this section we are concerned with five areas of material accessibility—economic, food, health, environmental, and educational security—showing the extent to which each is fragile among the refugee population surveyed in Arua District. In order to do this, we begin by examining each area of material accessibility, before exploring the interrelations between the categories and drawing some initial conclusions.

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<sup>44</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>45</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, July 2001.

<sup>46</sup> Male refugee, Wantange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>47</sup> Female refugee, Tika VI, Imvepi, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>48</sup> Male refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>49</sup> Female refugee, Wanyange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.



### 5.2.1 *Economic Security*

The study revealed the extent to which economic security was weak, especially among refugees living in the settlements. Although refugees living in the settlements were given land to cultivate, only 27% of those surveyed (including dependents) were able to sell any of their crops, while 64% needed to resort to other forms of work. The two most common forms of additional income were working for Ugandan farmers and engaging in casual labour. However, these three principal sources of livelihood—selling crops, working in agriculture, and engaging in casual labour—are not secure. The sale of crops requires decent soil and accommodating weather, two conditions that are often not met. Almost all the settlement refugees who raised crops but did not sell any expressed their frustration with the conditions, rather than their desire to maintain a subsistence lifestyle, as the primary reason. As one male farmer with 10 years of formal education asked, “Which [crops] are you going to sell? You dig, but there is no proper yield.”<sup>50</sup> At the same time, working for Ugandans in agriculture also depends on the weather, but such employment opportunities coincide with the refugees’ opportune times to work on their own land. Moreover, even if employment is secured, a wage is not. One man in Rhino Camp complained that refugees might get sent away with nothing after digging in the field all day.<sup>51</sup> Finally, casual labour opportunities were rare in the settlements, and refugees would often have to travel hours away to Arua or Koboko in search of work.

Because of the insecurity of these three primary sources of income to the unskilled refugees,<sup>52</sup> the food rations themselves were increasingly turned to as a source of income. For instance, a widowed mother of four, receiving 20% rations, said, “I sell part of the ration to buy soap, salt, and drugs.”<sup>53</sup> Likewise, a recently arrived man on 100% rations sometimes sells a portion of his food to buy soap or medicine, and he sells some oil to pay for the grinding of maize at the mill.<sup>54</sup> In recognition of the problem of economic insecurity, German Development Services (DED) has programs in skills training and income-generating activities (IGAs), yet the reach of these programs had yet to be felt by most of those with whom we spoke.

Among the self-settled refugees we interviewed, however, there was an observably higher access to income. At the same time, it must be noted that there are two potential sources of selection bias to prevent one from concluding that refugees would be better off self-settled: first, those refugees who can do better fending for themselves are more likely to attempt it; and second, our selection of self-settled individuals may not be representative of the group as a whole. The most common form of income among the self-settled refugees we interviewed was activity in the informal labour force, revolving around the production and sale of goods at the market. Formal skilled labour and casual labour followed in frequency, the latter including washing clothes and bricklaying.

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<sup>50</sup> Male refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>51</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>52</sup> Clearly, those educated refugees employed as teachers, etc., within the settlements had much greater economic security.

<sup>53</sup> Female refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>54</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

### 5.2.2 *Food security*

The research likewise revealed the extent to which food security was weak. As a result of the implementation of the self-reliance strategy, most of the refugees we interviewed (84%) were receiving only partial rations. At the same time, the majority of refugees in the settlements would experience a seasonal change in the quantity of their diets: the rains would bring more food in addition to more variety—for most refugees in the settlements, greens were only available in the rainy seasons. Similarly, the majority of self-settled refugees would experience a change in the daily quantity of their diets. The amount consumed was dependent on the availability of work, of bills to be paid, or of success in the market.

Among refugees interviewed, 41% claimed never to be able to afford fish, chicken, or meat. A further 31% were able to consume from that category, usually small fish sold by the cup, up to twice each month. Only 16% were able to afford eggs at all, and some of these would reserve the egg for the smallest child.

### 5.2.3 *Health security*

Health security in the settlements, in the view of those interviewed, was threatened primarily by a lack of medicine. Over the previous year, settlement refugees have received free, yet incomplete, medical care.<sup>55</sup> The RWC chairman of Rhino Camp, explained: “Currently there are not enough drugs in the health centre . . . I can’t tell why there are no drugs. The stock is not brought.”<sup>56</sup> Likewise a 24-year-old male in Rhino Camp corroborated, “Whenever you go, they say there are no drugs. And then people come back with no treatment.”<sup>57</sup> Additionally, waiting times to see health staff were reportedly long, with a mean time mentioned of six hours. On a more positive note, however, water was generally perceived to be clean and available in both Rhino Camp and Imvepi Settlement.

The self-settled, on the other hand, had to pay for medical care, whether US\$ 500 at a medical centre, or sometimes more at a private clinic. Waiting times were minimal at the clinics, but up to a few hours at the centre. Two of the self-settled refugees complained of discrimination at the health centres. For instance a mother in Arua said:

Sometimes we don’t get doctor. Especially when you are a refugee and you can’t speak the language of the nationals, nobody cares for us. Even if the doctor is available they tell us he is not there.<sup>58</sup>

Another women in Arua had a similar story:

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<sup>55</sup> Some refugees in the settlements (18%) believed that the medical care was not free. The researchers were unable to ascertain whether the refugees were misinformed, had not visited the health centres in the previous year, or had been unfairly charged.

<sup>56</sup> RWC Chairman, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>57</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Female refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

But these people, when you go there, they ask if you are Sudanese. They ask you for [UShs] 2000. And also, they will not take you to a doctor; they will take you to a medical assistant. He will tell you the medicine is not there, so you go and buy then from the pharmacist.<sup>59</sup>

This refugee said that Ugandans need only pay UShs 500, and are more likely to see a doctor.

In addition, multiple refugees complained about the water situation in Koboko. One woman said that people could wait six to seven hours to get one jerry can of water.<sup>60</sup> A student who lives in a predominantly refugee neighbourhood gets his water from the streams because the nearest borehole is four kilometres away. He does not boil the water because charcoal is too expensive. “It will make your stomach fail after drinking,” he admitted.<sup>61</sup>

#### **5.2.4 Environmental security**

Environmental security was tenuous in most of the settlements. Most farmers had not seen a decent crop since 1998 or 1999, as drought had affected the area for the previous two years. Some settlements had fertile soil while others were situated on rocky ground. One refugee best summarized the situation: when asked about the quality of the soil, he replied that he could not tell exactly because of the lack of rain.<sup>62</sup> The implementing partner introduced “drought-resistant crops” such as bulrush millet that did not work as well as they were supposed to, and half the settlement was badly affected by the drought. DED contacted the World Food Programme (WFP) who then came to do an emergency food assessment, but DED is still awaiting the results of that assessment.<sup>63</sup> The Resident District Commissioner (RDC) mentioned a food survey commissioned in response to reports of a famine in Rhino Camp. Those results confirmed food scarcity in the settlement and found that the land was sandy and rocky, and that the refugees could not grow enough food with the drought.<sup>64</sup>

The RWC chairman of Rhino Camp described the system of land distribution. Refugees are allocated a fixed plot of 0.3 hectares, he said, yet the soil fertility typically lasts three years.<sup>65</sup> It was thus not surprising that some refugees who had been longer in the settlements described the land as “tired”<sup>66</sup> or “exhausted”<sup>67</sup>. One teacher in Imvepi commented, “We don’t know if it is political logic or whatever, but we are placed in a barren place . . . Here they are telling us we should be self-reliant, but we can’t do that.”<sup>68</sup> At the same time, improving the land was rarely an option since almost none of the refugees in the settlements were able to afford fertilizer.

<sup>59</sup> Female refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>60</sup> Female refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>61</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>62</sup> Male refugee, Point D Extension, Imvepi, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>63</sup> Project coordinator, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>64</sup> RDC, Arua town, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2001.

<sup>65</sup> RWC Chairman, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>66</sup> Male refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>68</sup> Male refugee, Point H, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

### 5.2.5 *Educational security*

Educational security was mixed. Primary education was free, and due to creative and entrepreneurial partnerships on the part of the RWCs, individual refugees, DED, and the UNHCR, the refugees have access to reduced-cost O-level education. That aside, O-level education still remains inaccessible to many refugees, particularly girls. A-levels are only an option for those with well above-average incomes or one of the very limited sponsorship spots.<sup>69</sup>

### 5.2.6 *Interrelations*

The study also revealed the extent to which the five components of material accessibility were closely intertwined, and it is important they are viewed as such. For example, chickens are both economic and food generators, yet five refugees independently said that chickens and eggs would be sold in order to pay for medical expenses that arose. One 20-year-old male equated educational insecurity with economic insecurity: “There is a lack of finance to pay school fees. To get that amount makes you not go to school.”<sup>70</sup> Likewise a 19-year-old stopped school in order to work to put his younger brothers through secondary school.<sup>71</sup> Rations are regularly sold in order to buy health or other food products that refugees judge as more essential.

Yet for rural refugees, the most crucial part of the system appears to be the land. When the land is not producing, there is no food; there is no money; medicines and education and beddings all become inaccessible. “Because of the weather, the refugees cannot have that access to pay for their children to attend secondary school,” commented a refugee leader.<sup>72</sup> One man talked of how he spends most of his time waiting inactive in the settlements, but if the weather allows he plans to raise crops for market, using the money to buy other products to sell in order to continue his education.<sup>73</sup> Likewise, a mother of five finances medicine through her harvest: “If the food is good, I sell some food to get money for buying drugs if the children are sick.”<sup>74</sup> A farmer in Aligoi, however, was less optimistic: because of the drought, he said, “there are no resources for assisting yourself.” The refugees needed a place with the potential to grow sufficient crops “for us to do anything economically, socially—even spiritually.”<sup>75</sup>

Thus we see the extent to which material insecurity of one sort means material insecurity of the other, so long as goods can be exchanged. If a refugee has food but no blankets, he will sell some food and buy some blankets. If he has two goats but no money for school fees, he may sell the goats. Food aid is access to medicine, and land awarded is access to education. Certainly some services can be delivered which do not allow the refugees to choose their own bundle of necessities—health care provision or primary education, for

<sup>69</sup> According to the RWC Chair of Rhino Camp, 15 sponsorships were being given to A-level students from Rhino camp, and all to females. Interview 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>70</sup> Male refugee, Wanyange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>71</sup> Male refugee, Wanyange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>72</sup> Male refugee, Rhino Camp, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>73</sup> Male refugee, Wanyange I, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>74</sup> Female refugee, Tika VI, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>75</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

example—and, undoubtedly, the presence of food aid in lieu of monetary assistance means that more food relative to alcohol and nicotine are consumed. Yet maintaining assistance at a below-subsistence level permits the refugees to avoid hunger in good times, and to scrape for their survival in bad times as they balance the multiple demands of their basic needs. At its worst, this creates impossible choices for refugees, exemplified by the story of a 20-year-old woman who was caring for her three brothers and could not afford the medicine prescribed for their mother, who later died.

This lack of material security gives rise to a vicious circle described by the RWC Chairman of Rhino Camp:

People are now arriving up to the next season and up to now they are seeing whether there will be rain, and the problem is how people have energy to work in their villages when the current food is so little.<sup>76</sup>

Without secure material access it is difficult to seize the small opportunities to bettering one's situation, especially when some form of handout is due around the corner. For the 94% of the refugees interviewed who were unable to afford any fertilizer or investment goods to enhance their ability to earn a living, the future is likely to hold only another season of material insecurity.

### **5.3 Relational well-being**

In addition to the lack of material security outlined above, the results of the fieldwork reveal the extent to which the psychosocial security of the refugees was challenged by a violent and fragmented history, an uncertain future, and a sometimes-alienating present. At the same time, however, this category of inquiry revealed a strong amount of resiliency present in the refugees, offsetting many of the challenges for this at-risk population. Following the pattern of the previous sections, we examine each dimension of relational well-being—sense of home, family and social networks, and sense of past and future—individually before establishing links between them and drawing initial conclusions.

#### **5.3.1 Sense of home**

When asked how comfortable they felt calling their current dwelling their “home”, most refugees responded in one of three ways: they were uncomfortable because it was lacking a necessary element to be labelled a home; they were uncomfortable because it was inferior to their previous home; or they were at least somewhat comfortable because of new advantages relative to the situation in Sudan.

Refugees found several elements of home lacking in their current situation. One 21 year-old male said he was not comfortable calling Rhino Camp his home because he was unable to attend school, but “if I went to school I would be comfortable.”<sup>77</sup> A female teenager mentioned that a sense of happiness was lacking:

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<sup>76</sup> RWC Chairman, Rhino Camp, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>77</sup> Male refugee, Ngurua, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

I am not comfortable in the settlement surroundings because of our culture. Normally we like dancing but in this settlement we cannot because we are not happy here.<sup>78</sup>

A male teenager felt unwelcome by the nationals: “I cannot call this place home. The local people make us feel unwelcome.”<sup>79</sup> Two of the self-settled refugees felt uncomfortable calling their Arua houses their home because they were not the owners of the houses they were living in, and one of these added the insecurity of his employment: “When you are in a critical condition like this—you are renting, you don’t have proper job—you don’t feel like there is somewhere like home. It is really useless.”<sup>80</sup>

In addition, some refugees in the settlements could not call their dwellings home, as they were not active participants in creating their current environments. A 43-year-old man in Rhino Camp said he was “not comfortable because I am allocated by someone.”<sup>81</sup> Thus whereas in many village tenure systems a chief or elder might allocate land, the system in the settlements may have seemed too distant or random and therefore has become impersonal. An 18-year-old orphan receiving full rations equated home with providing for oneself: “It is not our home because we don’t have the garden here. We just settle here and we await the food and that is not enough.”<sup>82</sup> Here the notion of land resurfaces, showing the extent to which, for many of the refugees from rural areas, land is a prerequisite not only for access to material items, but also for feeling at home.

Many refugees mentioned similar reasons but would voice such thoughts with a direct comparison to their original residence. A young male echoed the complaint of passivity in choice: “Tika VI is my settlement—the place I have been located by UNHCR—but my motherland is Sudan.”<sup>83</sup> A 15 year-old unaccompanied minor felt out of place in the settlements: “I may feel as a person who is having a different home. When I differentiate Sudan and Uganda the best place is Sudan.”<sup>84</sup> A 32 year-old Kakwa woman was more direct: “I don’t even want to stay here for a minute longer. I want to go back home.”<sup>85</sup>

Nonetheless, a substantial number of refugees were able to find positive elements of home in their new surroundings. A man conceded that the settlements could not be compared with his native home, but here “you don’t hear the sounds of the gun.”<sup>86</sup> Some refugees with considerable achievements in Arua District felt a tie to the new location. For instance a mother who was providing for her four children while her husband was absent in battle, and had been elected as settlement chairlady, felt comfortable calling Rhino Camp her home. Likewise, a man who had helped found the refugee self-help

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<sup>78</sup> Female refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>79</sup> Young male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>80</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>81</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>82</sup> Young male refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>83</sup> Young male refugee, Tika VI, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>84</sup> Young female refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>85</sup> Female refugee, Point D Extension, Imvepi, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>86</sup> Male refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.



secondary school in Koboko so that his children could have access to an education felt comfortable calling Koboko his home.

Thus, what this information reveals is the extent to which there was substantial variation in feeling of home among the refugees we interviewed. The question merits a more sophisticated analysis, presented in Section 6 of this study.

### **5.3.2 Social and family networks**

The networks of family and friends of the refugees we spoke with had changed considerably since their time in Sudan. Many children and teenagers had lost one or both parents, many women had a husband in the war or were widowed, nephews were living with uncles and some had arrived completely alone. Approximately 50% of the refugees interviewed knew no one in their present location from before, while 30% knew a few people, and 20% knew many. If the numerically best-represented Kakwa are removed from the sample, those figures change to 68%, 21%, and 11%.

Even if they have close friends and family still alive, refugees usually found it difficult to maintain communication with those who were not living in the same place. Almost half of the refugees living in the settlements had no outside communication. For instance one young man in Rhino Camp has some friends in Koboko, but he says communication is difficult: “It takes long because you need permission and you are only given a few days to be back.”<sup>87</sup> By contrast, of the self-settled refugees in Arua and Koboko, 85% had at least some communication with friends or relatives outside the towns.

On the positive side, over two-thirds of the refugees said they had made many new friends since arriving, of which neighbours in the settlements, members of the same church, and schoolmates were the most commonly mentioned. There was disagreement on whether these new networks could provide the same safety net as previous ones. “I visit my sick friends and assist in every way. Likewise, they do the same to my family,” said a widowed mother of four in Imvepi.<sup>88</sup> A young man in Arua offered a different story: “From school I can have friends just to talk to there but that is not my real friends. Just me and my [15 year-old] nephew.”<sup>89</sup>

### **5.3.3 Sense of past and future**

The past was still very much alive in the present for many of the refugees. Even those who had fled Sudan in 1990 or before often had not known much safety since becoming refugees, as transit camps and settlements have been prone to attack by rebels. Refugees were asked to speak about how they felt about the circumstances that had made them go into exile. Some answers focused on painful losses: “I feel bad because we lost relatives, lost properties,” one university-educated woman in Koboko said.<sup>90</sup> “We have lost our

<sup>87</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>88</sup> Female refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>89</sup> Male refugee, Arua town, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>90</sup> Female refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

children, our brothers. Even gunships, killing people: Antonovs, bombing people,” a man in Imvepi agreed.<sup>91</sup> The war, to these refugees, remained a personal tragedy.

Other refugees emphasised the systemic characteristics. For instance, a man in Koboko offered the following analysis: “Our relationship between north and south Sudan; we are the weaker one, so we are the refugees . . . there are a lot of things nagging in one’s mind.”<sup>92</sup> Another refugee was less diplomatic: “I know that I came here because of the war by the Arabs, that they are the trouble-causers of this suffering we are going through. I am bitter.”<sup>93</sup> This resentment was sometimes expressed emotionally. For example, one older woman said, “I feel feverish and I shake with anger and rage when I remember what happened when I was in Sudan.”<sup>94</sup>

In many ways the past overshadowed the future for the refugees, as most continue to feel dominated by the same violence from which they fled. Asked to specify how long they envision themselves remaining refugees in Uganda, the vast majority of replies were indeterminate, referencing the improvement of the situation in south Sudan. “I will continue staying in Uganda because Sudan is still unsafe. Sudan still has a long way to go. But when the country becomes safe I will go back,” one refugee ventured, citing the end of the war as the determining factor.<sup>95</sup> A father of five children spoke of educational quality: “But certainly we stay here because of education. Our home area is safe now, but since there is no education system back home, we stay.”<sup>96</sup>

Planning for the future with uncertain weather, uncertain peace, and little or no capital can be an intimidating experience. The settlement situation of partial handouts and limited opportunities was not always conducive to thinking about the future. Indeed, one 17-year-old in Imvepi Settlement claimed, “I have many future plans, but this place has made me have no plans.”<sup>97</sup> Some refugees, nearly all of who were living in the settlements, chose to put it off until normal life resumed. “I don’t have a plan. The plan I can make in my home, but not here when I am a refugee,” said a 31 year-old man.<sup>98</sup> “I don’t have [plans]. Me, I am depending on the UN. As you know, we don’t have business,” offered a young man just finished his O-level.<sup>99</sup>

Many rural refugees saw the environmental situation as preventing them from planning. For example, a Rhino Camp farmer said that to plan for the future, he would “need fertile land with adequate soil.”<sup>100</sup> A widow in Imvepi Settlement said, “I have no plans now that there is no rain. I would dig and get food to sell and educate my children. Cost

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<sup>91</sup> Male refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>92</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>93</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>94</sup> Female refugee, Tika VI, Rhino, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>95</sup> Female refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>96</sup> Male refugee, Koboko, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>97</sup> Male refugee, Point D Extension, Imvepi, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>98</sup> Male refugee, Ariwa III, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>99</sup> Young male refugee, Ngurua, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>100</sup> Male refugee, Aligoi, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.



sharing at school is too much—I am now stuck.”<sup>101</sup> Another farmer in Rhino Camp echoed similar sentiments: “I am totally confused because my main objective is to have crops and cultivate them and send my kids to school. But as they have put me in a drought area I can not plan for the future.”<sup>102</sup> Another man said he was “defeated” by the drought.<sup>103</sup> The importance of land to many agriculturalist refugees is again highlighted, as their willingness to consider the future seems contingent on having dependable land.

That having been said, a lot of refugees were able to forge towards the future in some capacity. For instance, school was well attended by the settlement residents and in the self-settled communities of Arua and Koboko, women’s organisations were being formed or were already active. The RWC system in the settlements and a refugee organisation in Koboko gave the refugees some sense of self-empowerment. One refugee in Koboko had started a radio station, while another had been a key impetus behind the establishment of the refugee self-help secondary school.

Thus what this section portrays is that, in general, refugees see their situation as a temporary one. However, for many there was a clear determination to activate change wherever possible, despite circumstances often working against them. Refugees are battered from all sides: a violent past, an impoverished present, and an uncertain future. Many have lost their closest and most dependable allies and most do not feel at home, yet the extraordinary outcome of all this is their resilience.

## 6 DETERMINANTS OF SECURITY

Much of the preceding analysis has been dedicated to exploring the violations of the different components of human security, identifying the abuses of human rights or infringements upon freedoms as experienced by a vulnerable population. In addition, it bears witness to the fact that most refugees in Africa are highly unlikely to have all their threats to human security looked after.

Having said that, in any given situation there are going to be some individuals whose human security needs are better met than others. It is important to identify the characteristics that describe these individuals—both as a means of revealing what is positive about a situation, and for the purpose of highlighting potential avenues of policy response. In this section of the study, we isolate one measure of each of the three categories of human security and conduct multivariable analysis using data from the refugee interviews. The end result of such an exercise should be to show, at the very least, which individual-level characteristics and experiences tend to be associated with human security.

The individual background characteristics we tested were gender, age, ethnic group, and childhood socio-economic status, while the experience characteristics were education, whether the refugee ended in the same type of surroundings as they had left (i.e. rural to

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<sup>101</sup> Female refugee, Point G, Imvepi, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>102</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, Rhino, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

<sup>103</sup> Male refugee, Yelulu I, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

rural), whether the refugee knew people in their surroundings from before, and whether the refugee arrived in Uganda with substantial belongings. This section offers a summary of the results intended for a general audience and draws initial conclusions. Those readers with some statistical background are encouraged to read the discussion and econometric results in Appendix 1 in conjunction with this section.

## **6.1 Determinants of personal safety**

The statistical analysis sought to determine which background and experience characteristics of the refugees are associated with their perception of physical safety. Of the background characteristics, we found that the male refugees we interviewed were much less likely to feel safe than female refugees. This corroborates the findings of Section 5.1, where some of the physical insecurities disproportionately affected male refugees, namely the fear of forced recruitment into the SPLA and physical abuse from camp authorities. Additionally, the two most prevalent ethnic groups, the Kakwa and Dinka, were more likely to feel safe than the minorities, among them the Sudanese Acholi, Madi and Kuku.

Of the experiential characteristics, those refugees who arrived with significant belongings were much more likely to feel safe than those who did not. This may be because those with some initial capital were better prepared to establish a safe lifestyle. It may also be that other factors associated with reaching the border with belongings—whether being physically tough or well connected, for example—are also associated with feeling safe. None of the other experience characteristics tested were statistically significant.

## **6.2 Determinants of material accessibility**

Refugees are perceived by the outside community to be a homogenous group, dependent on aid and thus on an equal footing with one another. A striking result of this section is the heterogeneity of the refugee experience as regards consumption patterns. To look at which characteristics predict security in material accessibility, we used a measure of the frequency of consumption of meat or fish. A strong result of the analysis of Section 5.2 was the inter-changeability of the different subcategories—showing, for instance, how food can be traded for medicine. Thus, using consumption of one tradable commodity should be a reasonable—though imperfect—measure of access to material needs. Males were consuming meat/fish less often than females, although some of that may be a matter of taste: we interviewed some widowers and male unaccompanied minors who would have been less likely to prepare balanced meals for themselves.

Refugees with more education were consuming more meat/fish, suggesting that taught skills may still be useful in the refugee setting. Additionally, refugees who knew more people from previously were likewise eating meat/fish more often. This evidence supports the view held by some refugees, as shown in Section 5.3, that new friends made in Uganda did not provide the same level of support as previous social networks in Sudan. Where a refugee is fortunate to have ended up in a place where he or she has friends from before, s/he is better off. Moreover, having arrived with substantial

belongings in Uganda is another positive predictor of material security. It appears, then, that initial differences in capital remain important even when asylum occurred several years ago. Refugees, at least those fortunate enough to have reached the border with some valuables intact, seem to be competent in maintaining an income stream of sorts.

### **6.3 Determinants of relational well-being**

For relational well-being, we measured which characteristics were associated with the refugee feeling comfortable enough to call his/her surroundings in Arua “home”. The fieldworkers’ perception from the interviews was that this was a fair gauge of the refugee’s overall comfort level and strength of new networks. Again, males were much less comfortable than females in calling their surroundings home. Many had lost the roles that had defined them in their lives in Sudan, such as owning cows or successfully growing cash crops, whereas the females had some of their previous roles, such as caring for children and raising crops for home consumption, intact.

As with the other two areas of human security, having arrived in Uganda with significant belongings was strongly associated with relational well-being. Perhaps the same factors that allow refugees to turn initial capital into material security also provide them with emotional and relational security. Likewise, education and knowing other refugees from before are positively associated with feeling at home, although neither is statistically significant. Finally, there was one surprising result. If a refugee has settled in the same type of area as s/he previously lived in Sudan (i.e. town to town or rural to rural), s/he is much less likely to feel that s/he can call her surroundings in Uganda home. The anecdotal evidence in Section 5.3 suggests a potential reason, where refugees often compared Uganda with their home in Sudan. Perhaps if the two places are similar, but one is inferior, then the inferior one could not be called home.

### **6.4 Initial conclusions**

This section has illuminated some patterns across the different categories of human security. Male refugees largely see themselves as living in a less secure environment than women. Much of this difference may be attributed to attitudes or perceived relative differences, but this runs counter to the notion that women are the vulnerable group.<sup>104</sup> Being a Kakwa or a Dinka is associated with greater human security, while childhood socio-economic status appears largely irrelevant as a predictor of security attainment. It thus appears that continued contact with members of the same group is more important in the refugee situation than developmental experience now in the past.

Education is correlated with human security, suggesting that learned skills could still be utilized in the restricted environment within which the refugees live. A refugee settling in the same type of environment as where s/he had lived in Sudan does not appear to have

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<sup>104</sup> As an example of the consensus view, a statement by the UNHCR administration in 1994 read as follows: “Women and children are the most frequent and the most vulnerable victims of humanitarian tragedies, when conflict erupts and refugees flow across borders.” UNHCR, 1994.

any beneficial effects on human security. Finally, knowing people from before and beginning one's career as a refugee with some belongings, are strongly associated with human security among the refugees we interviewed in Arua district.

These patterns are remarkably consistent across the three categories of human security we developed in Section 2: personal safety, material accessibility, and relational well-being. From the multivariate analysis, this does not signify that strengthening one category will improve the others, although this may be the case. It does imply, however, that those individuals who are enjoying one category of human security also tend to be enjoying the other categories at a higher rate than the rest of the sample population.<sup>105</sup>

## 7 CONCLUSION

The intention of this report was to explore the situation of refugees in Arua district and, in addition, to give a voice to the refugee community. By presenting the material through a human security lens, we have sought to give a glimpse into the everyday lives of the refugees living within a specific geographical area. Although the study is far from exhaustive on any of the facets of human security presented, there is an overwhelming impression of the hardships endured by the refugees concerned.

The findings suggest that personal safety is affected by the recent memory of rebel attacks and, for some individuals, fear of forced recruitment into the SPLA. At the same time, women refugees were identified as being vulnerable due to domestic violence, defilement, and early marriage. There was also concern among some refugees, particularly in Imvepi Settlement, that settlement authorities were abusing their positions of power. Furthermore, the report suggests that there is potential for conflict over scarce resources between the nationals and the refugees to escalate beyond the verbal level.

At the same time, data gathered made it clear that material accessibility is severely limited for most of the refugees we spoke with. There is limited and insecure access to money for basic needs; food is scarce, uncertain, and not usually well balanced. Health care is available, although the follow-up prescription drugs are often unavailable or unaffordable. Moreover, the land and climatic conditions for the refugees in the settlements are inadequate to produce crops sufficient to meet the families' needs. Education at the primary level seems satisfactory and well attended, but for refugee children to be able to advance to secondary level, substantial creativity and sacrifice on the part of individuals or families was required.

Findings on relational well-being, on the other hand, were less consistent. Many refugees did not feel comfortable calling Uganda their home; however, while previous social and family networks were injured, new ones were formed in Uganda. For some refugees we interviewed, the past contained an element of bitterness, and many were pessimistic about their future.

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<sup>105</sup> Statistical tests confirm this, with correlation coefficients between the different indicators of human security ranging from 0.22 to 0.35.

Thus it can be ascertained that the human security of the refugees living in Arua is currently unmet, to the extent that the majority of refugees we spoke with appeared to be trapped in cycles of insecurity. Although personal safety was largely secure for the majority of refugees, for those who did experience fear and insecurity, this lack of safety was a restricting factor in their material and relational pursuits. In addition, refugees who suffered from extreme poverty—which, in this case, was the vast majority—often faced conflicts between meeting their basic survival needs and preparing for a better future. Refugees could not work and attend school at the same time, or eat and be able to save, or dig while famished. This poverty trap, as with physical insecurity, would lead the refugees to feel alienated, bitter, and pessimistic, further eroding their potential to achieve human security.

Yet amongst these cases were a minority who had been able to meet more of their human security needs. Such refugees tended to be better educated, to know more people from before having sought asylum, and to have arrived in Uganda with belongings of value. Perhaps, then, improving the skills base of refugees, giving refugees information on where other refugees are living in Uganda, allowing refugees to choose their own settlement or town of residence, and encouraging small loan and income-generating activities would improve the human security situation of refugees in Uganda.

This study has highlighted the plight of those who are attempting to develop while being recipients of largely humanitarian assistance. The results suggest that treating refugees as a temporary phenomenon does not empower them to work towards their own future. However, as with any population, there are those who achieve against adversity. Among the refugees in Arua, a typical—and rare—success story would be a refugee who is eating fish once per week, who is unafraid for his/her life, and who feels somewhat at home in Uganda. For the average refugee, however, the conditions faced in Arua district do not permit escape from the cycle of hardship.

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## **Appendix 1: Determinants of Security**

This appendix is directed towards an audience with a greater interest in the econometric analysis behind Section 6 and assumes a higher level of familiarity with statistical techniques. It first includes a discussion of the data, attempting to address the extent to which our sample can be generalized to the refugee population in Arua district, before presenting the findings of the analysis. Some of the main findings here will also have been reported in Section 6 of the report. The conclusions of Section 6 apply equally and will not be repeated.

### **A1.1 Appropriateness of the Data**

It is not essential to have a completely random or representative sample in order to test hypotheses using multiple regression or probit analysis. The one necessary assumption is that once we have controlled for the background characteristics, the sample does become random. In other words, the 22-year-old male with 11 years of education who left Sudan 8 years ago and is now living in Arua who we interviewed is randomly drawn from the refugee pool of identical characteristics. Such a refugee may be over-represented in our sample, yet that does not affect the validity of the technique, so long as he is representative of others with similar characteristics that we control for in the regressions. The analysis of this appendix is presented under such an assumption. However, if it is believed that, even after controlling for background characteristics, interviewed refugees are somehow different from non-interviewed refugees, then the findings would be less conclusive.

This should by no means be considered an exhaustive examination. First, we rely on self-reporting, and there may be systematic bias or “measurement error” in the responses. Second, we did not have access to any data from an implementing partner on a specific program that might have been undertaken, so were unable to test the effects of actual programs that have been put in place since the refugees established themselves in Uganda. Third, there are always “missing variables” when the thing which we are trying to predict is as elusive as human security. Finally, the sample size is too small to allow for instrumental variable techniques to measure the contribution of characteristics where the direction of causality is questionable. Thus this research should be read more as a gateway to more rigorous studies on the human security of vulnerable populations than as a conclusive set of results.

### **A1.2 Determinants of Security**

The logic behind the statistics is as follows. First, we choose a “variable of interest” that we wish to understand the determinants of. As mentioned in the body of the report, those variables will be measures of each of the three categories of human security. Second, we isolate “background variables” or characteristics that are unable to be changed by any policy or stroke of luck but which are potentially correlated with the variable of interest. These characteristics we choose to be age, gender, ethnic group,<sup>106</sup> and childhood socio-

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<sup>106</sup> Dummy variables for Kakwa and Dinka, the two most represented ethnic groups.



economic status, measured by whether the father had been in the skilled labour force<sup>107</sup>. Third, we isolate “experience variables” that may have additional effects on the variables of interest even after controlling for background characteristics. The benefit of these experience variables is that, in some cases, the results may suggest creative policies through which the variable of interest could be targeted.

There are four experience variables we wish to examine. The first variable is called “match” and is whether the refugee was living in the same type of area as that from which s/he was from. For example, if a refugee came from a rural area and was settled in a rural area, she would receive a 1, but if s/he came from a town and was settled in a rural area, s/he would receive a 0. The idea behind this choice is that coping skills may be underutilized if the refugee is placed in the wrong environment. The second variable is education and is meant to get as close as we can measure to any formal skills that the refugee may have. This will be used to test whether taught skills can be useful towards realizing human security. The third variable is called “connections” and is a measure of how many people in the refugee’s current location she knew from before.<sup>108</sup> From this, we can ask whether having previous connections contributed to the security of the refugee. The fourth variable is called “belongings” and is a measure of whether the refugee arrived in Uganda with any significant personal belongings.<sup>109</sup> Many refugees were unable to take anything with them when they left, and others were looted along the journey. We can test whether having reached the border with their belongings intact, however many years ago, contributes to human security in the present. This is in order to explore whether initial differences in wealth between refugees remain or disappear over time. We now consider each of the variables of interest in succession.

### ***A1.2.1 Determinants of personal safety***

The measure used for physical safety is whether the refugee said they felt safe. When the refugee replied that they did feel safe, they received a value of 1. Refugees who did not feel safe received a value of 0. As we are predicting a variable that takes on only two values, we use a probit technique where the coefficients reported next to each variable are the change in probability of the variable of interest scoring a one for a change in that variable. The first column of Table A1.1 contains the results.

Of the background characteristics, being male is a strong negative predictor of feeling safe. Controlling for the other factors, a male is 34% less likely to feel safe than a female. The result is highly statistically significant, or unlikely to be a fluke of the data. This suggests that the issues of physical safety most threatening the refugees are

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<sup>107</sup> Childhood socio-economic status versus previous socio-economic status was chosen because it is less likely to suffer from joint causality problems. For example, one’s adult socio-economic status in Sudan is very likely to be predicted by the same things as one’s status in Uganda. If this were largely true, using it in the analysis would render the other results meaningless especially with missing variables.

<sup>108</sup> This variable takes on the values 0 (knew nobody), 1 (knew few people), and 2 (knew many people). Knew people, rather than current friends, was used because of potential reverse causality. For example, people will likely want to be friends with someone who is very psychosocially secure. So using number of new friends made to predict psychosocial security would produce meaningless results.

<sup>109</sup> This variable takes on a value of 1 if yes and 0 if no. Significant would include items like a bicycle, grinding machine, or US\$ 50,000, but would not include items such as a saucepan or blanket.



**Table A1.1 Determinants of security among refugees in Arua District<sup>110</sup>**

	<b>personal safety</b>	<b>material accessibility</b>	<b>relational well-being</b>
<i>Male</i>	* -.337 (.148)	* -.667 (.363)	* -.488 (.200)
<i>Age</i>	-.003 (.006)	-.013 (.012)	-.004 (.008)
<i>Kakwa</i>	.223 (.170)	.483 (.440)	.301 (.195)
<i>Dinka</i>	* .306 (.150)	.307 (.474)	.254 (.208)
<i>Father skilled</i>	.110 (.163)	.141 (.391)	-.144 (.157)
<i>Education</i>	.005 (.019)	.065 (.039)	.026 (.018)
<i>Match</i>	-.004 (.161)	-.097 (.384)	* -.444 (.206)
<i>Connections</i>	.099 (.103)	* .351 (.154)	.169 (.127)
<i>Belongings</i>	* .377 (.113)	* 1.521 (.875)	* .886 (.325)
<i>Constant</i>		.514 (.885)	* .640 (.362)
<i>R-squared</i>	.113†	.278	.309
<i>number observations</i>	59	55	60

disproportionately frightening the males. This is consistent with the findings of Section 5.1, where two types of insecurity—forcible recruitment into the SPLA and physical abuse from the camp authority—exclusively affected male refugees. None of the other background characteristics are statistically significant except the Dinka variable, which is positive. There are two potential reasons for this. First, due to social norms or different prior experience, Dinkas on average may be less likely to express fear. The second potential reason, perhaps more likely as the coefficient on Kakwa is also positive though not statistically significant, is that being a member of one of the two numerically dominant tribes may enhance your feeling of safety.

<sup>110</sup> Robust (White) standard errors are in parentheses. †Under multiple regression.

Of the experiential characteristics, the only one that is statistically significant is belongings. Someone who arrived with significant belongings was 38% more likely to feel safe. There are several potential reasons for this. One, those who were lucky to reach the border without being looted of everything might feel somewhat invincible. Two, the belongings may have given the refugee the economic advantage that he needed in order to establish a safe lifestyle. Three, perhaps something which allowed the refugee to reach the border with belongings—whether friends in high places or physical strength—continues to benefit him today. Testing between such hypotheses is beyond the scope of the data.

### ***A1.2.2 Determinants of material accessibility***

As mentioned in Section 5, we observed strong interrelationships between the five categories of material accessibility. An extreme view would be that to measure the security of any one of the categories you are implicitly measuring the other four. There is potential for mismeasurement with such a view, however. If one person prefers medicine to education, and education is the variable of interest, that person will appear not to have as much material security as s/he does. In other words, some of what are really his/her tastes or preferences for medicine will appear to be insecurity.

We take as the variable of interest for material accessibility to be the amount of fish, meat, or chicken consumed.<sup>111</sup> Of all the quantifiable data on material access that we collected from the refugees, this happened to offer the most variation while at the same time exhibiting consistently higher-quality answers. In order to correct for the potential taste bias as mentioned above, we adopt a middle ground and assume that the background characteristics describe the tastes of the refugee. Under those assumptions, the coefficients on the experience variables should be descriptive of the refugee population in Arua. Since the variable of interest can take on any positive value, multiple regression is used. The second column of Table A1.1 shows the outcome.

The coefficients on the background characteristics suggest that males' taste for meat or fish may be less strong than that of females. To be sure, the truth is more complicated. Intra-household meat/fish distribution more likely than not favours the man. Yet there were male unaccompanied minors and widowers in our sample who may have been less likely to prepare balanced meals for themselves, which is probably explaining the negative coefficient.

Among the experience characteristics, the coefficient on education was positive and nearly statistically significant. It does appear, then, that taught skills are useful in the refugee situation.<sup>112</sup> Additionally, both connections and belongings were statistically significant and positive. Those with prior connections and those with prior belongings

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<sup>111</sup> Actually, the square root of number of servings per month is used. The reason for this is that the bulk of the refugees consume very little, so the square root reduces the domination of the data by the few refugees who consume such food daily. A logarithm could have also been used.

<sup>112</sup> Of course, it may be that there is some missing variable, such as "attitude", which leads to higher education in good times and stronger resilience in bad times. However, controlling for childhood socio-economic status, tribe, and gender should reduce the bias on this coefficient to some degree.

were more likely to have access to their material needs. This corroborates the poverty trap story of Section 5.2, for it suggests that the best way to not be in the poverty trap is to have education, connections, and capital. None of these are attainable to the poor, however, as they can neither afford school fees, communication and transportation to a place where they are well-known, nor start-up capital for a business.

### ***A1.2.3 Determinants of relational well-being***

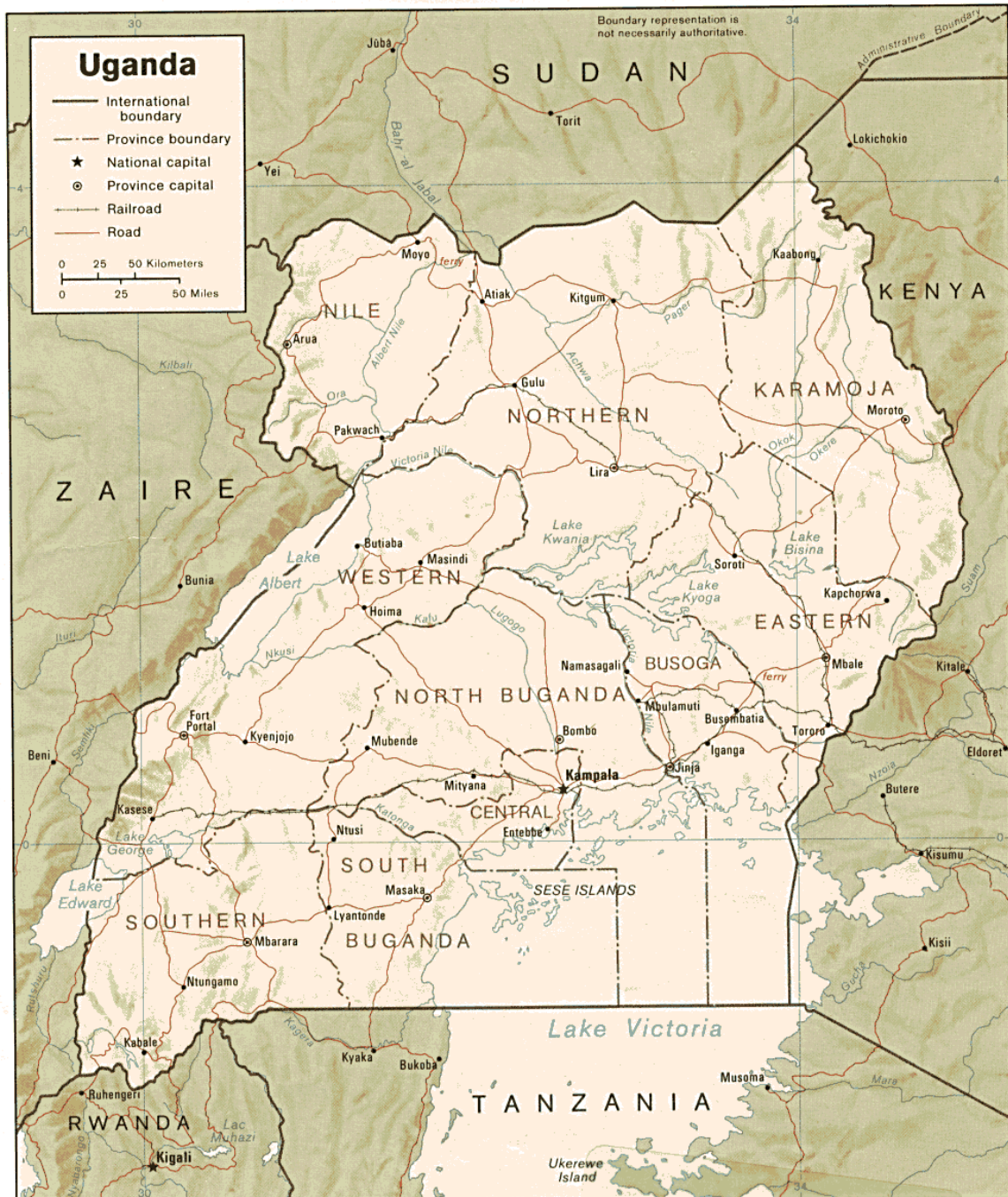
The variable of interest in the psychosocial category of human security is sense of home, as it seems to bridge home, social networks, the past, and the future better than any other indicator. Field researchers were asked to assign a value to the refugee's feeling at home, with a 0 being awarded for uncomfortable, a 2 for comfortable, and a 1 for something in between. As with material accessibility, multiple regression was the statistical technique used, and the results are found in the third column of Table A.1.

Among the background characteristics, females were much more likely to feel at home than males. This is consistent with the feel the researchers had in the interviews, especially among the rural refugees. The lives of the women had not changed much from before: in Sudan, they had struggled to keep their families fed and the children brought up as well as the circumstances could allow, and they were continuing to do that in Uganda. The men, however, often felt idle and useless in the settlements. Many had been pastoralists on large tracts of land or had grown cash crops that were not viable in the drought conditions. Again, the signs on Kakwa and Dinka are positive though not significant, suggesting there may be a sense of home that comes with being among many of your own tribe.

Of the experience variables, there was one surprising result. Match was strongly negative and statistically significant; refugees who had settled in Uganda in the same environment as they had known in Sudan were *less* likely to feel at home than those who had made a switch. A reason for this is suggested by the analysis of Section 5.3 when many refugees could not help but compare Sudan with Uganda. Perhaps the town dwellers of Sudan who settled in Koboko or Arua could not attain the status they once had, just as the frustrated farmers in the settlements could not grow enough to feed themselves as they once surely had, and it was this inferiority—rather than complete uprooting—which caused their feeling not at home.

Education, connections, and belongings were all positive predictors of relational well-being, with belongings significantly so. It is understandable how knowing old friends and having your own stuff would make you more secure and at home, but the route through which education works is unclear. Perhaps formal education improves one's ability to cope with a new situation, or perhaps the knowledge of English learned in secondary school in Sudan assists the refugees in fitting in better in Uganda.

### Appendix 2: Map of Uganda



Base 800376 (A05372) 7-86