Oruchinga settlement, opened as a transit center in 1959 and officially established in 1961, hosts more than 6,900 refugees from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. The settlement is not receiving new arrivals, aside from family reunifications, referrals, and protection cases. Although shelter and infrastructure are developed, and the refugees seem to be well integrated with the host community, protection concerns and conflict over land and resources remain a challenge.

Gaps & Challenges

Overcrowded schools with few teachers, steep fees for secondary school, and inadequate facilities reportedly lead many children and youth to drop out of school. Refugees reported that many schools lack enough basic items such as desks, chairs, and school materials. Other challenges to education include long distances to school locations and language barriers between pupils and teachers.

Refugees reported instances of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and other violence, with inadequate assistance. Refugees reported feeling afraid and threatened, especially while collecting firewood in neighboring communities. Young girls, pregnant or single mothers, and orphans are particularly vulnerable groups in terms of security.

Weak local economies and lack of vocational training limit livelihood opportunities for refugees. Some refugees use to attend vocational training in Nakivale, but the program was discontinued in 2017. Many resort to performing manual labor for members of the host community, but seek to develop skills outside of traditional agricultural activities. For the elderly and refugees with special needs, options to earn an income are even more limited because of their incapacity to farm.

Lack of access to sizable farming plots and agricultural inputs, coupled with inconsistent and insufficient food distribution, compromises refugees’ access to food. The increase in refugees across Uganda and breakages in the food pipeline decreased the amount of food available for refugees by 2017. When refugees can afford seeds to cultivate, droughts often ruin their harvest. Delayed distributions leave families without food for weeks. Refugees, especially women, reportedly beg from the host community when food runs out or resort to negative coping mechanisms, including survival sex in order to be able to feed their children.

Medical services in health centers in the settlement are limited, lacking sufficient medication and comprehensive emergency and maternal health services. When health center pharmacies run out of stocks—provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), MTI, and national medical stores—refugees struggle to afford private clinics to purchase necessary medication and often resort to medicinal herbs and traditional remedies.

Strengths & Opportunities

Refugee communities are led by established, experienced, and organized leadership councils at the village and local level, creating a positive relationship among community members, UNHCR, and Uganda’s Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

Partners coordinate and cooperate closely to meet the needs of the refugees. There is close monitoring of service delivery to ensure that issues are addressed as they arise.

There is a strong desire among refugees to develop skills in order to improve livelihood. The community expressed enthusiasm about any type of adult literacy program, vocational skills development, or innovative agricultural training. In the past, community members and partners developed alternatives to farming. For example, during seasons of drought, refugees participated in beekeeping and fish harvesting to deal with poor farming conditions.

Partner organizations

AIRD, ARC, CAFOMI, HIJRA, MTI, Nsamizi, RLP, SP, WFP, WTI, URCS, UNHCR
Protection

- 34 new arrivals reported in the past three months still need biometric registration and identification.
- 0 new arrivals reported in the past three months have received biometric registration and identification.
- 212 live births reported in the past three months have yet to receive official documentation.
- 0 live births reported in the past three months have received official documentation.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

- 14 SGBV cases reported in the past three months, with those receiving support in:
  - Livelihoods: 7
  - Legal services: 4
  - Health services: 2
  - Psychosocial services: 14

Persons with specific needs (PSNs)

- 45 disabled PSNs have received services for their specific needs.
- 83 elderly PSNs have received services for their specific needs.

Child protection

- 605 adolescents not reached through targeted trainings or programming.
- 465 adolescents reached through targeted trainings or programming.
- 5 child friendly spaces needed.
- 34 community-based committees or groups working on child protection.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

- 0.9 additional litres of water per person per day (w/p/d) required.
- 19.1 litres of w/p/d provided.
- 3% of water needs met through water trucking.
- 2 motorized boreholes operational or planned.
- 2 additional motorized boreholes needed.
- 1,678 household latrines completed.
- 77 additional household latrines needed.
- 2 active hygiene promoters.
- 12 additional hygiene promoters needed.

Education

- 13 permanent classrooms constructed.
- 2,326 refugees are attending school in or around the settlement, with gross enrolment rates:
  - 922 refugees aged 3-5
    - 44% eligible for education
  - 519 refugees enrolled
    - 56% eligible for education
- 1,975 refugees aged 6-13
  - 87% eligible for education
  - 1,726 refugees enrolled
- 681 refugees aged 14-17
  - 85% eligible for education
  - 81 refugees enrolled

Gross enrolment rates

- Pre-primary: 44% and 56%
- Primary: 87% and 85%
- Secondary: 88% and 85%

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Food assistance

- 30 eligible beneficiaries did not receive in-kind food assistance in the last distribution.
- 6,649 eligible beneficiaries received in-kind food assistance in the last distribution.
- 0 agencies conducting unconditional cash for food distributions.

Livelihoods and environment

- 1,052 households have not received technology support for production.
- 703 households have received technology support for production.
- 0 organizations conducting livelihoods trainings do not monitor participation of PSNs.
- 3 organizations conducting livelihoods trainings monitor participation of PSNs.

Health and nutrition

- 2 primary healthcare facilities.
- 2 of 2 outpatient therapeutic programmes and supplementary feeding programmes meet the minimum standards, with average rates of:
  - Outpatient therapeutic programme: Recovery rate 100%, Death rate 0%
  - Supplementary feeding programme: Recovery rate 70%, Defaulter rate 15%, Death rate 5%
- 110 PSNs are enrolled in short-term livelihoods trainings.
- 289 PSNs have graduated from short-term livelihoods trainings.

Shelter, site, and NFIs

- 120 additional PSN shelters needed, but a lack of data on existing PSN shelters prevented the gap from being measured.
- 120 additional PSN shelters needed.
- 1 ADIRD, HIJRA.
- 1 additional PSN shelter needed.
- 6 UNHCR/partner facilities have been constructed.
- 2 additional UNHCR/partner facilities are needed.