

Enhancing Employability
of
Youth, Women, and Girls
in
West Nile Refugee Settings
using
Inclusive Vocational Education & Training



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*ANCHOR and GECT Staff engaging trained masons and tailoring students during field survey in Yumbe District
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Acronyms

ANCHOR –	Africa Non-profit Chore
BET –	Biomass Energy Technologies
BMO –	Business Membership Organization
BTVET –	Business, Technical, and Vocational Education and Training
CRRF –	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DIT –	Directorate of Industrial Training
GDP –	Gross Domestic Product
ILO –	International Labour Organization
LLG –	Lower Local Government
ReHoPE –	Refugee and Host Populations Empowerment strategy
RWC –	Refugee Welfare Committee
VET –	Vocational Education and Training

o Key Findings and Recommendations

#1: Training Interests and Market Employment Demands are Mismatched

Top skills identified by targeted refugee and host communities, including driving and tailoring, are stereotyped and often not informed by market demands.

Career guidance must be provided through multi-media tools to attract target group interest towards critical low-interest trades. Selection of trades for training must be linked to changing market opportunities.

#2: Existing VET Facilities are Limited and Distant from the most vulnerable

Existing VET facilities are either limited or too distant from target group locations - therefore limiting access.

There is therefore need to establish flexible training programs including using mobile or makeshift centers within close proximity of the target groups to increase training convenience and VET completion rates. In partnership with participating subcounty and zone authorities, open-air training sheds may be established.

#3: Lack of Information and Organization affecting Youth Employment

Several employment opportunities within refugee settings, including for construction, exist with private companies who have the organizational capacity and information networks to compete and thereafter employ their pre-existing staff. The uptake of new employees within camps is therefore highly curtailed by the inability of trained refugee and host community members to organize and win employment contracts.

Trained youth, women, and girls intending to be self-employed should be facilitated through on-the-job training placements, mentorship, and business incubation for at least three months post-project.

#4: High Poverty Levels affecting Sustainability of Skilling Interventions

Findings indicate that graduates from past training programs are failing to transition into work and are selling off their start-up kits provided from previous trainings. This is impacting skilling project sustainability poorly.

Where start-up kits are provided, doing this within group settings as much as is practicable will leverage collective responsibility and reduce the risk of their misappropriation. Rigorous life skills and mentorship support delivered alongside core skills training modules can enhance the life choices beneficiaries make.

#5: Community Conflict Impacting Sustainability of Livelihood Initiatives

Refugee hosting sites in West Nile, do not have sufficient capacity to prevent or mitigate against conflict and violence between refugee ethnic groups, and with refugee hosting populations. This is bound to negatively impact the viability of long term livelihood interventions including skilling especially among girls and women.

Skilling initiatives must include foundational modules on peace education, environmental conservation, and promotion of improved biomass energy technologies using a market based approach. Skilling programs must be designed using a Do-No-Harm approach including maintaining a healthy refugee to host community trainee balance, auditing compliance, and ensuring that community perceptions are managed continuously.

#6: Fast-Track Skilling Interventions can Alleviate High Skills Demand

There's a high lack of employable skill levels in refugee settings which calls for increased investment in fast-tracked education and skilling which is driven by market demand and/or community needs. Where the community need is obvious but beneficiary interest is low – such as in the green economy – investments must be directed towards creative awareness campaigns to create demand. ANCHOR has piloted this through local marketing campaigns using multi-media and creative drama with the objective of increasing the uptake of improved biomass energy technologies among refugee and host communities in Rhino camp. This will generate the needed demand for briquettes and echo stoves required to employ trained youths in sustainable environmental conservation and enhance private sector investment in the green economy.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

In West Nile, motivated by a large refugee influx from South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo, there are growing signs of youth unrest and social tensions. The low productivity of land [worsened by land degradation] is affecting the ability of refugee households to self-sustain. A single refugee mother in Bidibidi refugee settlement stated that, “the UN is now our husband”. Girls and young women are also turning to ‘survival sex’ to cope with hunger and poverty.¹

The UNESCO Third International Congress on TVET, held in May 2012 in Shanghai, China, was significant in marking the turning point when technical and vocational education and training (TVET) was no longer thought of as simply responding to labour market needs, but that it also contributes to inclusive education and sustainable development.²

The government of Uganda has demonstrated its commitment for skills development through the National Development Plan II (NDP II) and the Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVE) Plan which collectively aim to increase the quality of, and access to, demand-driven vocational training programs designed to link those outside the formal education system to employment opportunities by equipping them with appropriate skills for the job market.

ANCHOR is a non-profit non-governmental organization empowering disadvantaged communities to better manage conflict and to create sustainable economic opportunity. ANCHOR is committed in equipping vulnerable and disadvantaged youth and women groups with practical on-demand vocational skills that enhance their continuous employability.

1.2 Problem Statement

There have been a number of labor market studies conducted in West Nile including Lakwo³ and Work4Youth⁴. However, a number of them are based on the analysis of secondary data. Moreover, most have not been location based, assessed the economic viability of trades, quantified labour market absorption capacity by trade, or integrated a gender-sensitive lens to the inquiry.

This study is based on the analysis of both secondary and primary data, and applies a mixed research design of both a quantitative and qualitative approach to obtain a composite ranking of marketable skills for Rhino camp and Bidibidi refugee settings. Parameters of selection include but are not limited to: geographic location, absorption capacity, market viability, environmental impact, and gender prioritization of trades. The study further identifies priority areas for complimentary skills to address potential risks that would otherwise negatively impact the long term success of skilling interventions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to identify employable practical skills gaps among youth, women, and girls in refugee settings of West Nile.

¹ ANCHOR (2017) *Rapid Assessment of the South Sudanese Refugee Situation in West Nile*

² UNESCO-UNEVOC (2017) *Promoting Learning for the World of Work*. Accessed from UNESCO website <https://unevoc.unesco.org/go.php> Jan 28, 2019

³ Lakwo, Alfred (2017) *Secondary Labour Market Study in Northern Uganda*

⁴ Work4Youth (2016) *Labor Market Transition of Young People in Uganda (2016)*

Specific objectives include:

- Locating marketable employment opportunities in the local refugee economies
- Matching refugee and host community career interests to available opportunities
- Ascertaining bottlenecks obtaining in the delivery of skills training interventions
- Making strategic recommendations to funders and implementers of skilling programs

1.4 Scope of the Study

1.4.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted within Uriama and Odupi sub counties of Rhino camp settlement – Arua District, and Romogi sub county of Bidibidi settlement – Yumbe District. However, several respondents who were considered relevant to the study were drawn from diverse locations including Kampala, Arua and Yumbe.

1.4.2 Time Scope

The study was conducted between the months of August and October of 2018.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study will first and foremost contribute towards the implementation of Uganda’s Business, Technical, and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) Strategic Plan 2012-22 to address the five key areas of:

- Relevance to economic growth
- Quality of skills provision
- Access and Equity
- Organizational Effectiveness, and
- Financial and Internal Efficiency.

Funders and policy makers will find the study useful in informing the efficient and effective allocation of resources towards equipping youth, women, and girls with market-driven skills.

Community leaders will be facilitated with information needed to direct community interest towards obtaining market-driven skills.

The study will enhance the economic inclusion of otherwise underserved groups including but not limited to women, girls, refugees, and host communities.

Through facilitating the self-reliance of refugees, the study will contribute towards the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) strategy including but not limited to enhancing early return to country of origin.

2 Literature Review

Globally, the forcibly displaced population increased in 2017 by 2.9 million.⁵ With a total estimated migrant count of 1.4 million total, the South Sudanese and DR Congo influx into - mostly - northern Uganda is estimated to have contributed about 30% of this increase⁶.

South Sudanese fleeing from intertribal conflict in their country, are finding themselves embroiled in another interethnic conflict in exile⁷. These tensions risk escalation into secondary conflicts⁸.

Refugees in West Nile are faced with sex and gender based violence, low food availability and access, limited access to wood fuel and shelter materials, income generating opportunities, and arable land for farming.⁹

The Ugandan government promotes local integration of refugees¹⁰. Host communities that have shared their land have benefited from new schools and health centers. But expectations are not always met and there are increasing tensions as refugees and locals compete for services and natural resources. Girls and women are turning to 'survival sex' to cope with hunger and poverty¹¹.

The Ugandan economy is now on a path of rapid and sustained growth. However, the number of new jobs arising from this growth has been low and hardly inclusive. Although the economy grew by an average of 4.5% year-on-year between FY15/16 and FY17/18, the number of people living in poverty increased in the same period from 19.7% in FY15/16 to 21.4% in FY17/18.¹² Among households headed by subsistence farmers, the percentage poor increased from 20.3% to 38.2% between 2012/13 and 2016/17. Moreover, Poverty increased from 23% to 36% among those reporting crop/ subsistence farming as their main source of income.¹³ With a median age of 15.8 years, Uganda is the world's third youngest country.¹⁴ An increasing working-age population is a major opportunity for economic growth in Africa. The World Bank estimates that this demographic dividend could generate 11-15% GDP growth between 2011 and 2030. However, without jobs and economic opportunities, social stresses such as unemployment could lead to unrest. A 2014 UN report highlighted this risk. The authors write: "lack of meaningful work among young people is playing into frustration that has in some instances contributed to social unrest or unmanaged migration."¹⁵

The UNESCO Third International Congress, held in May 2012 in Shanghai, China, affirmed that technical and vocational education and training was no longer thought of as simply responding to labour market needs, but that it also contributes to inclusive education and sustainable development.¹⁶

In Uganda, the commitment for skills development is upheld through the National Development Plan II and the Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTNET) Plan which collectively aim to increase the quality of, and access to, demand-driven VET programs to link those outside the formal education system

⁵ UNHCR (2018) *Global Trends Report 2017*

⁶ ANCHOR (2018) *Review of Refugee Trends*

⁷ ACCORD (2018) *Intertribal Conflict among Refugees – The Case of South Sudanese Refugees in Boroli Refugee Settlement*

⁸ *The Observer* (2018) *Ten Refugees Arrested over Death of Four During World Cup Game*

⁹ ANCHOR (2017) *Rapid Assessment of the South Sudanese Refugee Situation in West Nile*

¹⁰ Merle Kreibaum (2014) *Their Suffering, Our Burden? How Congolese Refugees Affect the Ugandan Population*

¹¹ ANCHOR (2017) *Rapid Assessment of the South Sudanese Refugee Situation in West Nile*

¹² PwC (2019) *Uganda Economic Outlook 2019*. PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1 Colville Street, Communications House P. O. Box 8053, Kampala, Uganda.

¹³ UBOS (2017) *Uganda National Household Survey Report*.

¹⁴ WPR (2018) *Countries by Median Age 2018*. Accessed at World Population Review website <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/median-age/>

¹⁵ Myers, Joe (2016) *The World's 10 youngest populations are all in Africa*. WEF. Accessed <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/> on Feb 11, 2019

¹⁶ UNESCO-UNEVOC (2017) *Promoting Learning for the World of Work*. Accessed from UNESCO website <https://unevoc.unesco.org/go.php> 28/01/2019

to employment opportunities by equipping them with appropriate skills for the job market. Unfortunately, the BTVET sector has been poorly implemented with several new government centres failing to attain sufficient enrolment, being poorly facilitated, or lacking the organizational capacity to run effectively.

In West Nile, motivated by a large refugee influx from South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo, there are growing signs of youth unrest and social tensions. The low productivity of land [worsened by land degradation] is affecting the ability of refugee households to self-sustain. A single refugee mother in Bidibidi refugee settlement stated that, “the UN is now our husband”¹⁷. Girls and young women are also turning to ‘survival sex’ to cope with hunger and poverty.

Often, refugees are increasingly perceived as a burden due to economic recessions and as relief agencies have tended to prioritize them over host communities. In such cases, perceptions of resource use conflict and inequality are mutually reinforcing. In the worst scenarios, conflict following refugee settlement leads to further population displacement, aggravating the very problem to which such settlements are a response.

A report authored by Alon Mwesigwa and published by the Guardian in 2014, claims youth unemployment in Uganda to be the highest in Africa. A recent study, *Lost opportunity? Gaps in youth policy and programming in Uganda*, published by ActionAid, put youth unemployment at 62%, although the African Development Bank says it could be as high as 83%.¹⁸ This further exposes the lack of capacity for hosting refugees.

ILO concurs with the view that training institutions continue to produce graduates whose skills do not match what the market wants. This mismatch makes it harder to tackle youth unemployment.

According to the government of Uganda, the industries employing the highest number of persons are the Agriculture, forestry and fishing; and Trade (Figure 1).¹⁹ However this study does not adequately present the context within local refugee and host communities in West Nile.

Industry of employment	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	35.5	35.9	48.0	11.7	35.7
Trade	18.3	28.6	19.1	30.1	22.9
Manufacturing	8.3	7.4	8.2	7.4	7.9
Transport and storage	9.9	0.0	4.4	7.6	5.5
Construction	8.2	0.1	3.9	5.9	4.6
Education	4.1	4.8	3.8	5.5	4.4
Other service activities	3.4	5.4	2.5	7.6	4.3
Hotels , restaurant eating places	1.3	6.6	2.8	5.4	3.7
Other industrial activities	11.3	11.1	7.3	18.7	11.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: UNHS 2016/17, UBOS

Figure 1 Employment of Persons (14-64 years) in Uganda disaggregated by industry

A recent secondary labour market study for northern Uganda identified carpentry and bakery, and bricklaying and welding as the priority marketable trades in the manufacturing and construction sectors respectively.²⁰

¹⁷ ANCHOR (2017) *Rapid Assessment of the South Sudanese Refugee Situation in West Nile*

¹⁸ Action Aid (2018) *Lost Opportunity? Gaps in Youth Policy and Programming in Uganda*

¹⁹ UBOS (2018) *Uganda Statistical Abstract 2018*. Accessed at Uganda Bureau of Statistics website www.ubos.org on June 11, 2019

²⁰ Lakwo, Alfred (2018) *Secondary Labour Market Study in Northern Uganda*

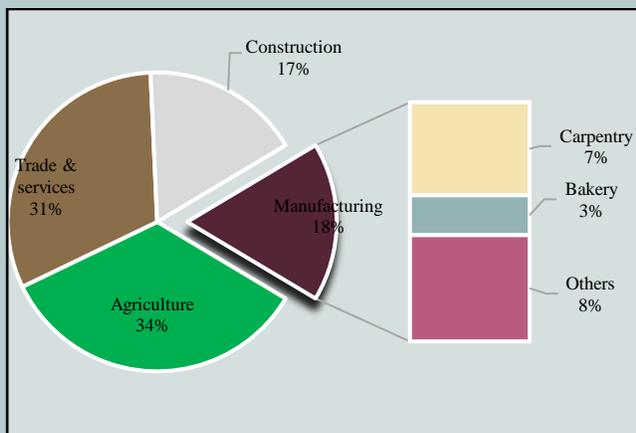


Figure 2 Priority Marketable Trades in the Manufacturing Sector

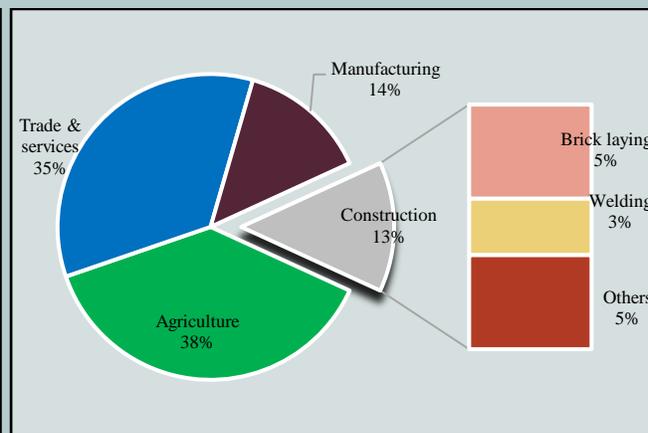


Figure 3 Priority Marketable Trades in Manufacturing Sector (Source: Lakwo A., 2018)

There are several other publications that provide generic information regarding the situation of youth unemployment within refugee settings in West Nile. However, none of those reviewed were location-specific, based on a primary study, or provides gender-disaggregated analysis needed to make an informed design of demand-driven vocational skills for youth, women, and girls in Arua and Yumbe districts.

3 Presentation of Results

This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objectives of the study. Findings are presented in percentages and frequency distributions. A total of 501 questionnaires were issued against a targeted minimum sample size of 384. In addition to this, 12 VTIs, 10 community leaders and government agents, and at least 15 master craftsmen were interviewed as Key Informants.

3.1 Demographic Characteristics

3.1.1 Age Distribution

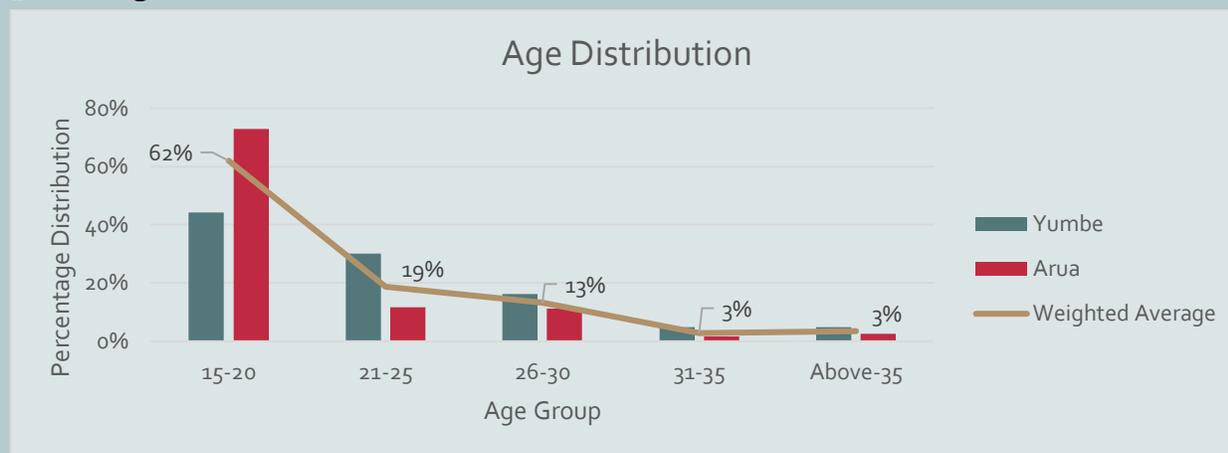


Figure 4 Age Distribution of Study Respondents

Results from Figure 4 above show that the majority (62%) of respondents were between 15-20 years. The remainder were distributed with 19% between 21-25, 13% between 26-30, 3% between 31-31, and another 3% above 35%. Skilling programs selected must consider this in its design and delivery.

3.1.2 Gender Distribution

As further supported by Figure 5 below, the participation of women and girls in vocational skilling programs is generally low and may be influenced by repressive socio-economic structures.

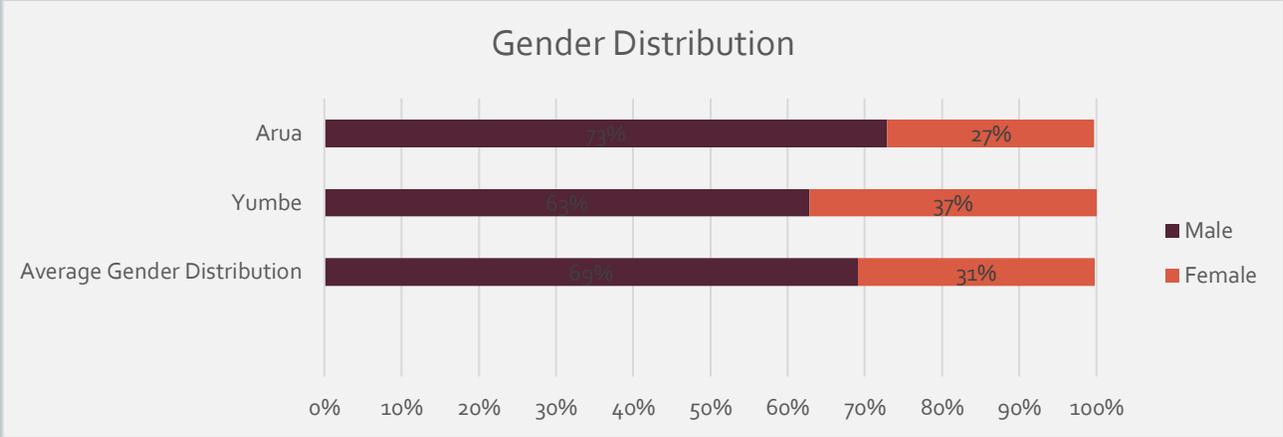


Figure 5 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Moreover, women and girls caught up in the South Sudanese refugee crisis are experiencing challenges arising from sudden changes in their gender roles. In order to be successful, new skilling interventions must intentionally mobilize the participation of women and girls. This must be done with the involvement of men and cultural institutions in order to affect constructive behavior change and obtain community-wide buy-in.

3.1.3 Distribution by Nationality

The study accessed 93% of South Sudanese refugees and only 7% of Ugandans from the host community (Figure 6) against 70% and 30% respectively targeted based on the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) policy benchmark.

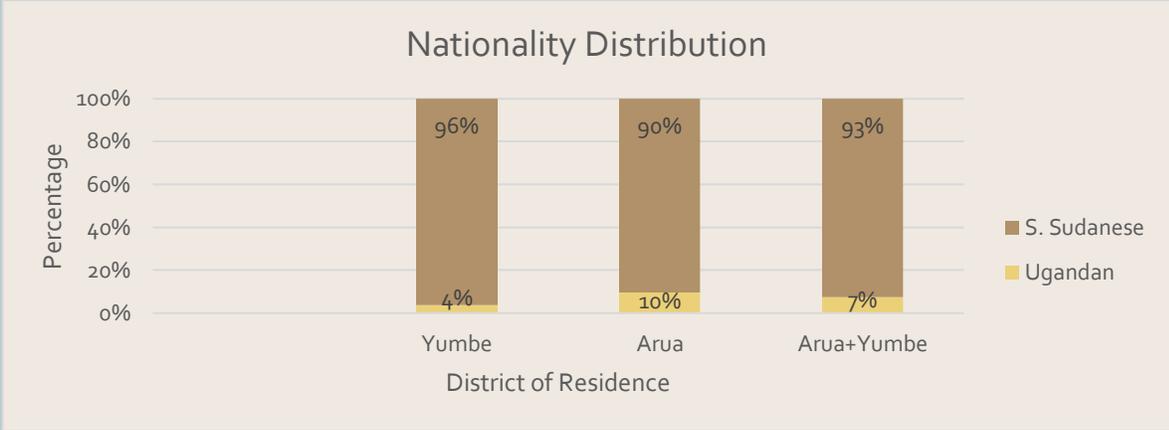


Figure 6 Nationality Distribution

A key challenge in accessing host community members was encountered due to their seasonal migratory patterns motivated by farming seasons. Final selection of training beneficiaries must adhere to a healthy balance between multi-national refugees and host community members to prevent the risk of tensions or reprisals arising from only targeting a single group.

3.1.4 Residential Distribution by Sub County

Whereas the study covered Yumbe and Arua districts, respondents were only drawn from the three hosting sub counties of Romogi, Uriama, and Odupi (Figure 7).

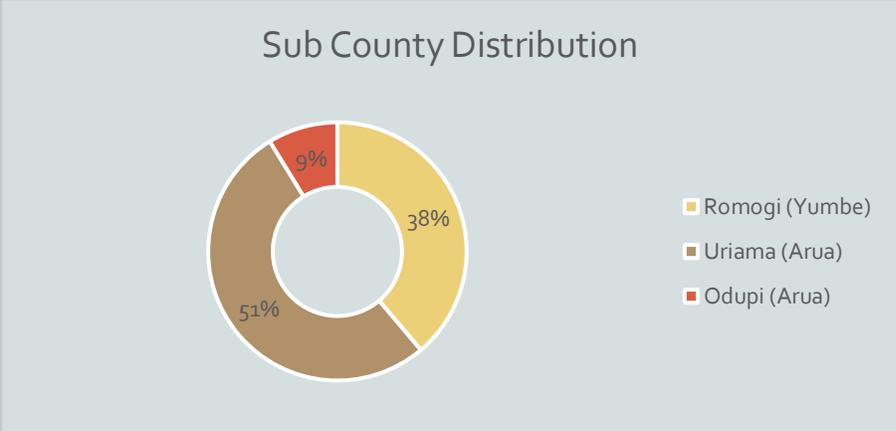


Figure 7 Distribution by Sub County of Residence

Under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) of Uganda, sub counties hosting refugees are considered as host communities and therefore eligible for resource allocation with refugees. During final selection for training, community members from other sub counties hosting refugees may therefore be considered to be eligible.

3.1.5 Distribution by Level of Formal Education

Figure 8 below shows a large percentage of respondents (68%) to be either pursuing or having completed primary education.

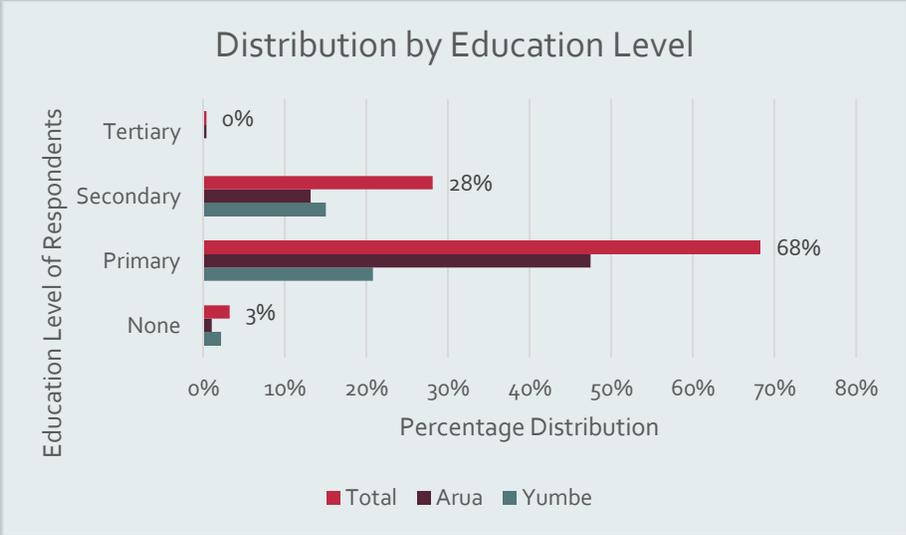


Figure 8 Distribution of Respondents by Level of Formal Education

In selecting trades for practical skills training, emphasis should be given towards those requiring basic numeracy and literacy skills. E.g. Nursery bed works and bakery may demand for more basic eligibility needs than say PV solar repairs or electronics. Trades requiring shorter training durations are encouraged because they generally provide a fast-tracked route to employment with minimum disruption to ongoing livelihood and social commitments of the target groups.

3.1.6 Distribution by Employment Rate

Figure 9 below shows a very high unemployment rate among the respondents with 75% being students and unengaged persons which justifies intensified investments in marketable skilling.

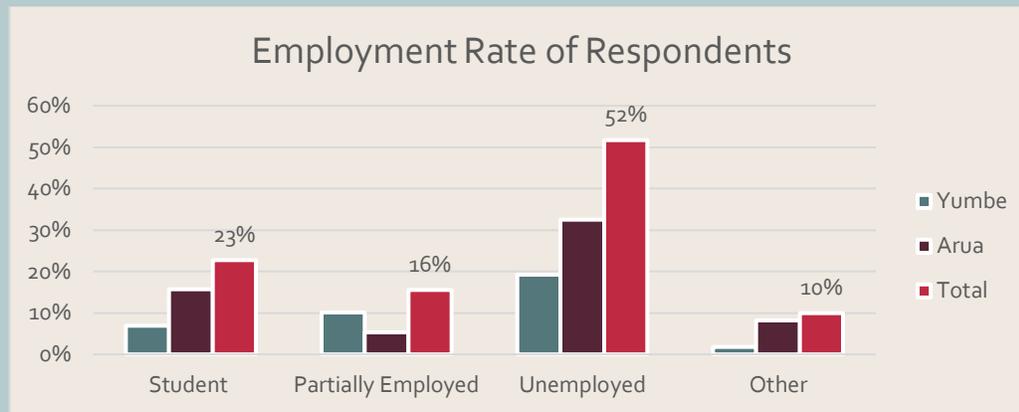


Figure 9 Employment Rate of Respondents

A high unemployment rate among youth may fuel conflict and violence owing to desperate youth providing cheap labor for conflicts. On the other hand, self-reliance of refugees is known to quicken their return as well as to act as a backbone for economic reconstruction after war back home

3.1.7 Distribution by Marital Status

Existing vocational training facilities either have a limited uptake or are too distant from target group residences - therefore disrupting their livelihoods. This includes at least 48% and 20% of respondents in Yumbe and Arua respectively, who are married and may be unable to attend boarding training programs (Figure 10).

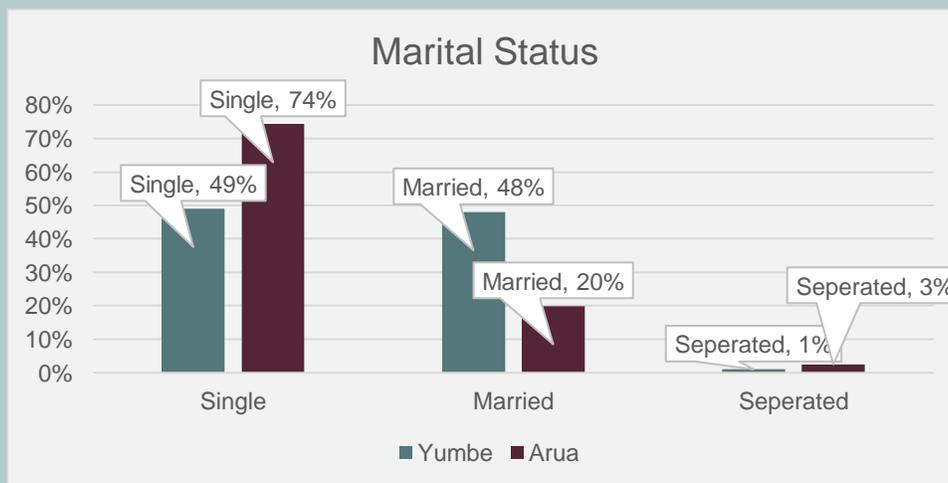


Figure 10 Marital status of respondents (Source: ANCHOR, 2018)

Training programs established must provide for locational and time flexibility which may be achieved through using mobile or makeshift classrooms within close proximity of the target groups to increase training convenience and trainee retention rates. In partnership with participating subcounty and zone authorities, training hubs can be established using highly adaptable shelter materials commonly available in the market. Training hubs can subsequently be transformed into business incubation workshops for use by alumni who may opt for self-employment. Alternatively, flexible training sessions may be negotiated that utilizes existing primary school infrastructure during daily hours when the classrooms are not being used.

3.1.8 Distribution by Employable Skills Levels

In spite of the high propagation of practical skills training programs in the study area, 86% and 77% of respondents interviewed stated that they did not have employable skills in Yumbe and Arua districts respectively (Figure 11).

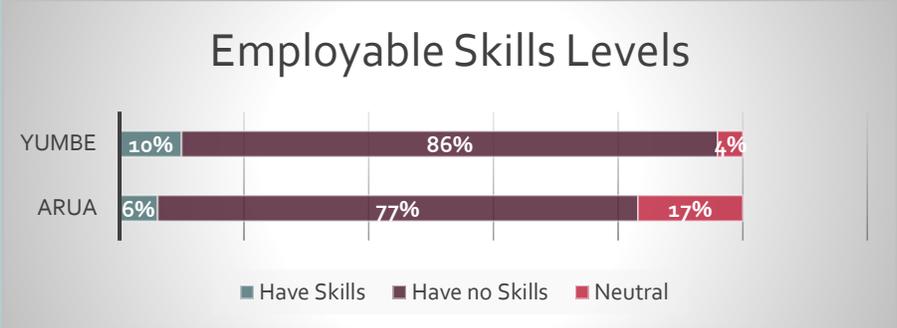


Figure 11 Skills Rates in Rhinocamp and Bidibidi Refugee Settlements (Source: ANCHOR, 2018)

The high lack of employable skill levels in refugee settings calls for increased investment in fast-tracked education and skilling which is driven by market demands and/or community needs. Where the community need is obvious but beneficiary interest is low – such as in the green economy – investments must be directed towards creative awareness creation to generate demand. For instance, ANCHOR has developed local marketing campaigns using multi-media and drama with the objective of increasing the uptake of improved biomass energy technologies among refugee and host communities of Rhino camp. This will generate the needed demand for briquettes and echo stoves required to sustainably employ trained and skilled youths.

3.2 Bivariate Analysis

3.2.1 Trades Preferred by Respondents in Yumbe and Arua Districts

Top skills identified by targeted refugee and host communities, including driving and tailoring, may be stereotyped and not necessarily informed by market demands (Figure 12).

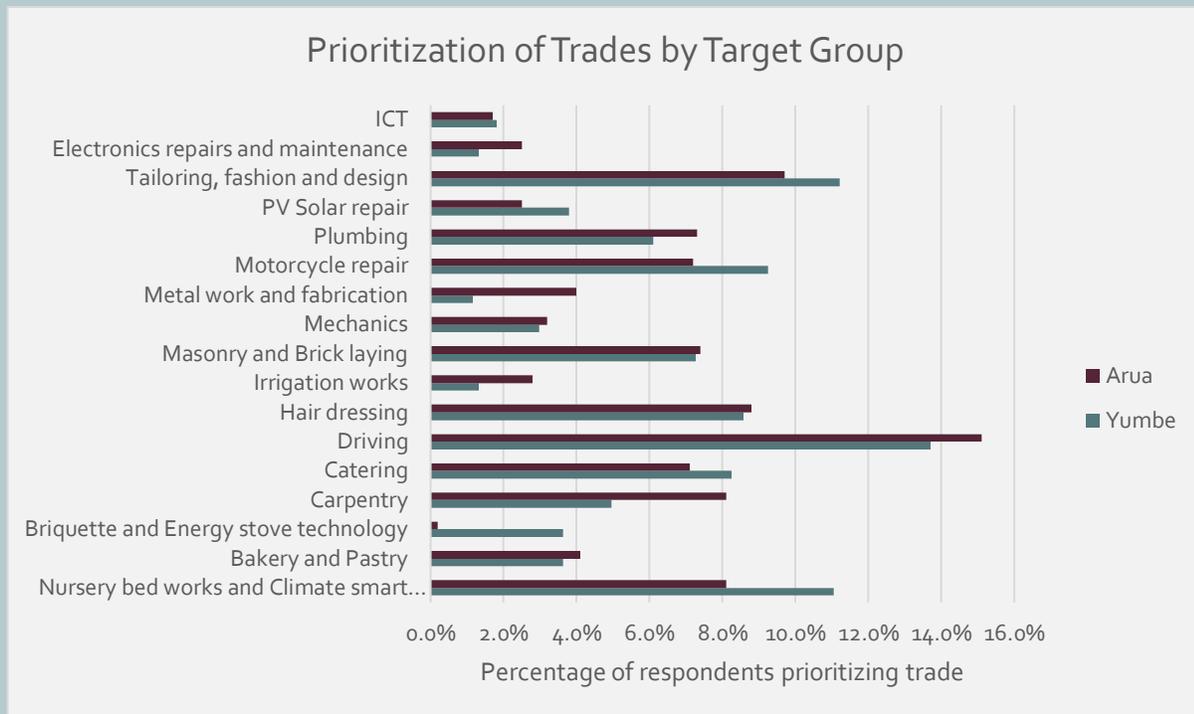


Figure 12 Employment opportunities identified by Rhinocamp and Bidibidi Target Groups (Source: ANCHOR, 2018)

Career guidance must be provided through multi-media tools to attract target group interest towards marketable opportunities. Selection of trades for training must match expectations to available opportunities including but not limited to: revenue sustainability, skill saturation, environmental impact, transferability of the skills into refugee countries of origin, gender, and scalability.

3.2.2 Choice of Trades Disaggregated by Gender

There is a distinct disparity of trades selected based on gender preferences (Figure 13).

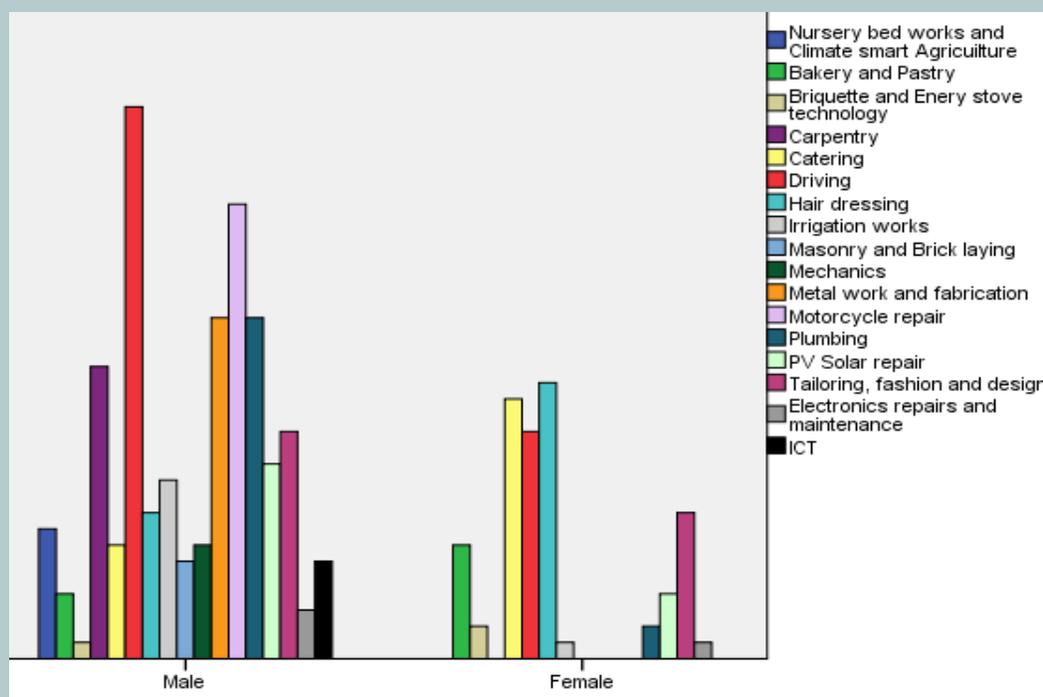


Figure 13 Gender Disaggregated Prioritization of Trades by Target Group

Top trades preferred by male respondents included driving, motorcycle repair, metal fabrication, plumbing, and carpentry while those for female respondents are hairdressing, catering, driving, tailoring, and bakery.

Whereas a number of the top preferred skills may be based on stereotyped perceptions, final selection of trades were filtered through a gender-sensitive lens as indicated in Figure 15 and Figure 16.

3.2.3 Comparison of Beneficiary preference vs marketable opportunities

There is a distinct mismatch between training skills preferred by respondents in refugee settings and market opportunities available to them. Of the top five (5) ranked trades selected by the target group, only one (1) trade, namely; Nursery bed works and climate-smart agriculture was among priorities identified by the study as scoring highly on the composite index for proposed skilling based on market size, employment absorption capacity (skills saturation level), training and startup cost, gender, and environment (Figure 14).

Rank	Ranking by Preference	Ranking by Marketable Opportunities
1	Driving	Nursery bed works and Climate Smart Agriculture
2	Tailoring, fashion, and design	Masonry
3	Nursery bed works and climate smart agriculture	Carpentry
4	Hair dressing	Baking and Pastry
5	Motorcycle repair	Briquetting and Energy Stove Making

Figure 14 Ranking of trades by beneficiary interest vs marketable opportunities (Source: ANCHOR 2018)

Investments need to be directed toward awareness creation using creative multi-media tools in order to direct target group interest towards identified market opportunities for employment.

3.3 Main Employment Challenges in Refugee Settings

Challenge 1: Training Interests and Market Employment Demands are Mismatched

Among the top five trades preferred by respondents, only Nursery bed works and Climate-smart agriculture matched the assessed market demand. Top skills identified by targeted refugee and host communities, including driving and tailoring, are stereotyped and often not informed by market demands. Respondents

choice of trades tended to be affected by their previous knowledge of existing trades, what was commonly within their sight, or trades that are perceived to carry a higher social stature informed by peer perceptions.

Challenge 2: Existing Skills Training Facilities are Limited and Distant

Existing VET facilities are either limited or too distant from target group locations - therefore limiting their access. At least 48% and 20% of respondents interviewed in Yumbe and Arua districts respectively, were married and stated that they were unable to attend boarding training programs due to competing social and economic demands. A number of child-heads of households including girls interviewed had other domestic chores including looking after younger siblings while their parents were away which automatically disqualified them from attending training programs outside a reasonable walking distance from their homes.

Challenge 3: Lack of Organization and Access to Market Information affecting youth employability

Several employment opportunities within refugee settings, including for construction, exist with private companies who have the organizational capacity and information networks to compete and thereafter employ their pre-existing staff. The uptake of new employees within camps is therefore highly curtailed by the inability of trained refugee and host community members to organize and win employment contracts.

The existing communication channels and structures including through sectoral coordination meetings, Refugee Welfare Committees (RWC), and lower local government (LLG) coordination set-ups are often ineffective and poorly facilitated. Several refugee youths interviewed had a negative perception about the ability of RWCs to provide employment information transparently and generally felt these leaders had vested interests. LLG leaders interviewed stated that they did not have the necessary logistics to attend sector coordination meetings which inhibited their access and contribution to employment information.

Challenge 4: High Poverty Levels affecting Sustainability of Skilling Interventions

Reports from Key Informants indicate that some frustrated VET graduates who fail to obtain immediate employment were selling off their start-up kits provided at the end of their previous trainings. This has impacted project sustainability for several skilling interventions poorly.

Challenge 5: Refugee hosting sites in West Nile do not have sufficient capacity to prevent or mitigate against conflict and violence between refugee ethnic groups, and with refugee hosting populations.

Longstanding conflicts between refugee ethnic groups are being escalated by natural resource pressures including the scarcity of wood for cooking, heating, and shelter. Girls and young women are spending considerable amounts of time foraging wood further away from their homes with detrimental repercussions to their personal safety and school attendance. This is negatively impacting the viability of livelihood interventions including skilling especially among girls and women. Past efforts to restore the balance of forest cover and address energy insecurity have been poorly conceptualized and their implementation flawed, hence the low uptake of improved biomass energy technologies by refugee and host communities.

Challenge 6: Focus on Formal Skilling Interventions inappropriate for inclusion in Refugee Settings

There's a high lack of employable skill levels in refugee settings which calls for increased investment in fast-tracked education and skilling which is driven by market demand and/or community needs. Low literacy and numeracy levels is locking many youths, women, and girls from accessing formal education and training programs. A number of social and economic challenges are preventing willing refugee and host community members from accessing employable skills. These include but are not limited to the long duration current training programs take to complete, entry requirements, and delivery approaches.

3.3.1 Strategic Recommendations to VET Funders and Implementers

Recommendation 1: Match training trades to available marketable skills

In order to direct target group training preferences towards existing marketable employment opportunities, career guidance must be provided through multi-media tools and local community structures. Selection of

trades for training by existing VET service providers must match them to available opportunities informed by factors including industry contribution to the local and regional economy, prevailing skill saturation and uptake levels, environmental impact, transferability of the skills into refugee countries of origin, gender participation, and scalability. There's need to expose the target group through educational tours to help them appreciate non-common trades as well as inspire them to invest in acquiring unique skills.

Recommendation 2: Improve management of transition of graduates from school to work

Where start-up kits are provided, doing this within group settings and in a tailored way linked to post-training planning as much as is practicable will leverage collective responsibility and enhance proper use. Rigorous life skills and mentorship support must be delivered alongside core skills training modules to enhance the life choices target group members make during and after training. Investing in the identification of industrial training placements pre-training, and sustaining contact and support with beneficiaries through mentorship and market linkages for at least three months post-training will enhance early employment success. Entrepreneurship training and technical assistance in business start-up needs to be integrated more into VET design and implementation to direct more graduates towards self-employment. Digitization may be used to link trained craftsmen to robust market networks to enhance their continuous learning and guarantee future employment. MEL frameworks for VET must include tracking of employment rates as outcome indicators to promote learning.

Recommendation 3: Improve VET program design to enhance target group access and completion

There is need to establish flexible training programs including using mobile or makeshift centers within close proximity of the target groups to increase convenience and VET completion rates. In partnership with participating subcounty and settlement zone authorities, open-air training sheds or shared training spaces with existing primary schools can be established. Revising training periods later in the day can ensure the least disruption to farming and other economic activities normally competing with traditional morning training periods. Providing school meals will further enhance inclusion of vulnerable groups in VET.

Recommendation 4: Improve employment information channels and processes

There's need to review the selection of refugee leaders with the aim of enhancing participation of and accountability to the target groups. The effectiveness of existing communication channels needs to be audited frequently and local leaders need to be equipped with knowledge and skills to improve accountability and service delivery. Opportunities need to be explored to leverage digitization in communication between local community leaders and their key stakeholders. There's need to better coordinate partner interventions to tackle the potential market disruptions being caused by the proliferation of free energy products that can negatively affect the sustainability of market-based green-economy skilling interventions. Skilling initiatives must include foundational modules on peace education, environmental conservation, and promotion of improved biomass energy technologies using a market based approach.

Recommendation 5: Intensify marketing campaigns to stimulate growth of critical economies

Where the community need is obvious but beneficiary interest is low – such as in the green economy – investments must be directed towards creative awareness campaigns to create demand. ANCHOR is piloting this through local marketing campaigns using multi-media and creative drama with the objective of increasing the uptake of improved biomass energy technologies among refugee and host communities in Rhino camp. This will generate the needed demand for biomass efficient technologies (BET) for cooking including the use of briquettes and echo stoves required to employ trained youths in sustainable environmental conservation. Current BET initiatives are still inadequate and poorly coordinated.

3.4 Conclusion

Demand-driven Employment Skills in West Nile Refugee Settings

The ANCHOR primary study established that Carpentry, Masonry/ Bricklaying, and Baking and Pastry were the most marketable vocational skills identified within refugee settings in Yumbe and Arua. This validates the Secondary Labour Market Study within refugee settings of northern Uganda.²¹ Additionally, nursery bed works and climate-smart agriculture, liquid soap making, and briquette and improved stove making ranked highest among instant skills most needed. The uptake for efficient biomass energy technologies notably lower than expected considering the obvious challenges faced by competition for wood fuel. This was in part due to lack of awareness of its benefits as well as the disruption of the market by free stoves distributed by some NGOs.

²¹ *Lakwo, Alfred (2018) Secondary Labour Market Study in Northern Uganda.*

4 Appendix I: Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional design because information from refugee and host community members was collected at point in time. The research design also enabled the researchers to have an in-depth understanding of the marketable, low investment, and high-impact skills available within the present refugee and host community economy as well as upon return to refugees' countries of origin.

4.2 Study Area

Interviews were held in Yumbe, Arua, and Kampala districts. Arua and Yumbe were selected because they host a combined refugee population of 32.4%²² and are within the operational jurisdiction of the ANCHOR Arua Field Office. Kampala was selected due to its central location to the key information hubs and partners including but not limited to the Directorate of Industrial Training, and various skills training service providers.

4.3 Study Population

The study population was drawn from youth, women, and girls above 15 years of age and residing within Rhino camp and Bidibidi refugee settlements, as well as their hosting sub counties. The study attempted to give prominence to refugees and host community members aged between 15-35 years of age due to their perceived capacity to succeed from practical skills training as well as ability to utilize the practically acquired skills. A combined refugee population of 374,437 was used for Rhino camp and Bidibidi (ibid).

4.4 Sampling

4.4.1 Sample Size

Using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula, the sample size was calculated as shown below:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{[d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)]}$$

Where:

S is the sample required

N is the population size estimated at 330 - from Crisis Tracker estimates

P is the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

X is the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level of 1.96

$$X^2 = 3.841$$

d = degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

$$S = \frac{3.841 * 374,437 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}{[0.05^2(374,437-1) + 3.841 * 0.5(1-0.5)]} = 384$$

²² UNHCR (2018) Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal. Accessed on October 31 at <https://ugandarefugees.org/en/country/uga>.

4.5 Sampling Procedure

The study applied non-probability sampling procedures of purposive as well as snowball sampling techniques.

4.5.1 Purposive Sampling

At the first stage, purposive sampling was applied to filter respondents according to:

a) Location

Locations were selected for the study based on information regarding the position of beneficiaries of previous and ongoing skills training programs by partners. Settlements hosting large refugee populations as well as within the operational jurisdiction of the ANCHOR Arua field office were selected for ease of subsequent project implementation.

b) Age

An age filter was applied in order to eliminate respondents below 15 or above 35 years, and to target youth, women, and girls considered to be capable of making independent decisions and benefiting most from practical skilling due to their prior primary and secondary education and physical capabilities.

c) Validity

A question of data validity arises from whether or not respondents were significantly biased towards portraying themselves as not having employable skills during interview in order to benefit from perceived startup kits and training food rations. This risk was addressed by working through local leaders and skills training organizations who have data on recent trainees.

4.5.2 Snowball Sampling

At the second stage of sampling, selected respondents were used to identify subsequent participants until the requisite number of respondents had been obtained or until it was no longer possible to proceed.

4.6 Data Collection

Primary and secondary data of both quantitative and qualitative nature was collected by the researchers during the study. Primary data was collected using personal structured interviews whereas secondary data was obtained from reviewed literature – both published and unpublished as reflected below.

4.6.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data was gathered through conducting interviews of the following:

- (501) Past and present beneficiaries of accelerated learning programs
- (12) selected Vocational Training Institutes
- (10) Community leaders
- Related government agencies including the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT), Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), District Education Office, District Community Development Office
- Master craftsmen in various trades
- Various ANCHOR and partner staff members

4.6.2 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data was collected through reviewing past literature with the aim of obtaining relevant information for the study. Information was sourced research reports, field activity reports, internet, text books, and various policy documents. This was preferred because of its cost effectiveness.

4.7 Data Collection Instruments

Primary data was gathered using structured self-administered questionnaires and open ended guides through conducting interviews.

The questionnaires data collection method involved use of a set of questions printed in a definite order as proposed by Kothari (2004). The interviews were structured with a set of predetermined questions and adhered to the order and wording of the questions as well as the instructions.

4.8 Data Reliability

A major concern potentially affecting data reliability arose from sampling errors inherent in the snowballing technique as well as limitations by respondents to identify employable skills outside the limitations of their exposure. Potential interviewer bias was addressed through incorporating a structured as well as contingency questionnaire section. Computing the reliability coefficient is outside the scope of this study.

4.9 Data Validity

Several external factors beyond the scope of this study may affect the validity of results. Notably, the generalizability of study findings is limited to refugee and host community youths, women, and girls in the 15-35 year age bracket. The lack of information by respondents and leaders may also impact their opinions regarding the market dynamics in the refugee economy. For instance, while there is an acute need for addressing deforestation and environmental degradation, study respondents did not identify this as a critical area of investment in practical skilling.

4.10 Data Processing and Analysis

Quantitative data was collected, sorted, arranged, entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) which was used to summarize the coded data to produce required statistics for the study. The data was then analyzed basing on quantitative research techniques in line with the research questions to seek for consistency, accuracy, reliability, and relevance of the information. Univariate analysis was conducted using the frequency distribution table to assess and describe the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents such as their age, gender, marital status, nationality, etc. Descriptive statistics was employed for other variables that were of particular interest to the study for a clearer presentation and measurement of responses. Bi-variate analysis was utilized to identify patterns of associations.

A forcefield analysis was finally employed to rank marketable trades based on total scores obtained from the sum of points allocated using a Likert scale with a range of 0-5 (0 being the weakest score and 5 the highest score) obtained using a diverse set of variables.

Variables considered were:

- a) Target group preference or **interest**: This was obtained through administering a questionnaire and asking respondents to score their interest on a scale of 0-5.
- b) Potential **revenue** earned by trained craftsman: This was obtained from factoring the labour participation rate of persons aged between 14-64 years in the various industries of the Ugandan economy (Figure 1) adjusted for the skills uptake level of that specific sub sector within the local refugee economy which was obtained through observation and key informant interviews. For instance, Solar PV repair which should otherwise have scored highly because it is in the trade sector (representing 23% of employed Ugandans) was rated at 2/5 for revenue as a result of the projected low skills uptake level due to the likelihood that owners of the mostly cheap solar products will instead choose to buy new products to replace damaged ones instead of repairing them.

- c) **Capacity gaps** considered the availability of skilled trainers and equipment in the private sector to conduct the training and the perceived ease with which to mobilize them. The assessed the responsiveness of solicited trainers during a scan of the market and related interviews held.
- d) **Start-up costs** assessed the cost for start-up tools and equipment as well as perceived complexity of the related market towards transitioning graduates from school to work
- e) **Training costs** were scored based on the required investments needed to introduce non-existent trades into existing VET centers and their willingness to expand.
- f) **Crosscutting issues** that are critical to sustainability and inclusion including gender preferences and attributes, contribution to the green economy, and peaceful co-existence were scored.

5 Appendix II: Study Limitations

Purposive and snowball sampling techniques applied means the findings may not be generalizable beyond Arua and Yumbe districts where the study was undertaken.

Whereas the skills prioritized by the study are not anticipated to change in the very short term, the cross sectional nature of the survey will limit the validity of the findings as time progresses.

6 Appendix III: Composite Ranking Table of Trades

Composite Trade Ranking Table (Rhino camp)

Trade	Interest	Revenue	Capacity gap	Startup cost	Training cost	Gender + Green	Rank
Carpentry	5	5	5	4	5	3	1
Nursery + Climate Agri	1	5	4	5	5	5	2
Masonry	0	5	5	5	5	4	3
Baking	0	5	5	3	5	5	4
Liquid soap	0	4	5	5	5	3	5
PV solar repair	1	2	5	4	4	5	6
Irrigation works	1	5	5	2	3	5	7
Plumbing	3	5	5	4	0	4	8
Briquette and stove	0	2	5	2	5	5	9
Boda repair	2	3	5	4	4	2	10

Figure 15 Composite Ranking of Employable Trades for Rhinocamp (Source: ANCHOR, 2018)

Composite Trade Ranking Table (Bidibidi)

Trade	Interest	Revenue	Capacity gap	Startup cost	Training cost	Gender + Green	Rank
Nursery + Climate Agri	1	5	4	5	5	5	1
Masonry	1	5	5	5	5	4	2
Baking	1	5	5	3	5	5	3
Carpentry	0	5	5	4	5	3	4
Liquid soap	0	4	5	5	5	3	5
Boda repair	3	3	5	4	4	2	6
Irrigation works	0	5	5	2	3	4	7
PV solar repair	1	2	4	4	4	4	8
Briquette and stove	0	2	5	2	5	5	9
Metal works	0	5	4	3	5	2	10

Figure 16 Composite Ranking of Employable Trades for Bidi Bidi (Source: ANCHOR, 2018)

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